

Influence of Parent-Teacher Council Participation on Students' Academic Performance

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ABSTRACT: It is well known that school–community partnerships are an important part of better educational outcomes. This study investigated the relationship between Parent-Teacher Council (PTC) involvement and academic achievement of secondary school students in public secondary schools. The data were gathered from 258 members of Parent-Teacher Council using a correlational predictive research design, structured questionnaire and institutional academic performance records. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were used. The results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between the students' participation in PTC and their academic performance. The regression analysis showed that participation variables significantly predicted academic achievement, accounting for a significant amount of variance in the academic achievement outcomes. The results indicate that active involvement in governance improves accountability, school/community collaboration and student learning outcomes. The research emphasises the need to enhance participatory school management systems to enhance educational effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: Parental Involvement, School Governance, Parent-Teacher Council, Academic Performance, Community Participation

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Introduction

Schools are increasingly aware that student achievement is not only a product of classroom instruction but also a result of family and community involvement in collaborative governance. Parent-Teacher Councils were established to formalize this partnership in public schools in Pakistan. Participation structures are present, but there is limited empirical evidence that explains the relationship between participation and student performance. This study thus seeks to determine if involvement in PTCs is correlated with measurable academic outcomes.

Teaching is a fundamental mechanism of continuity of society that allows the transmission of knowledge, values, cultural norms and social responsibilities from one generation to the next. This is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders, especially parents and teachers, who are in the midst of children's cognitive, social and emotional development. Parental involvement is also very important and has a significant effect on the learning outcomes of students, which is supported by teachers who give structured guidance. The role of parents in supporting the effectiveness of schooling is often limited without meaningful support (Epstein, 2018; Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Given this, the policies of education in Pakistan have focused on the involvement of parents in the school through the institution of Parent-Teacher Councils (PTCs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or School

Management Committees (SMCs). Under the umbrella of national education policies, these bodies were given strength to encourage decentralization and community involvement in school governance, in the National Education Policy (1998-2010) (Government of Pakistan, 2009; Alya, 2014).

A Parent-Teacher Council is a partnership between parents and teachers to strengthen school performance, support student achievement and improve communication between home and school (UNESCO, 2017). PTCs are given tasks like planning the school, supervising finances and ensuring discipline and ethics. More importantly, they are a link between schools and communities, and provide opportunities to discuss student progress and problems (Murray et al., 2019; Cheung et al., 2008).

Empirical studies show that parental involvement has a positive impact on students' academic achievement, as reflected in GPA and standardized test scores (York et al., 2015). Positive outcomes of active involvement via PTCs have been linked to better attendance, higher motivation, and better behavior (Mihalec-Adkins & Cooley, 2019). Further, these types of interactions help students to grow socially and emotionally (Denham & Bassett, 2019).

Although the role of PTC members' involvement is known, its direct impact on the academic performance of students has not been studied in detail, especially in Pakistan. Most of the previous research has been on parental involvement in general and not specifically on the role and contribution of PTC members. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how participation in Parent-Teacher Councils influences students' academic performance, providing empirical evidence to inform educational policy and practice. The study was guided by the following objectives and hypotheses.

Objectives of the Study

Examine the relationship between participation and performance.

Determine predictive effects of participation variables.

Hypotheses

H1: PTC participation significantly relates to students' academic performance.

H2: Participation significantly predicts academic performance.

Literature Review

The National Education Policy (1998-2010) has introduced School Management Committees to enhance community participation in school governance through involving local stakeholders in educational decision-making. In this policy campaign, the creation of Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs) was made compulsory to make education institutions effective. The policy acknowledged the role of PTCs as vital institutions that help to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in the school, through their work on practices that have a negative impact on the academic environment, such as financial, administrative and social irregularities (Alya, 2014).

Parent Teacher Councils are a key part of the management of school affairs and assist in the cognitive, social and emotional development of students by effective educational practices that teachers implement in the classroom. A school's level of teacher attendance tends to be higher if the school has an active and functioning PTC than if the school does not have a PTC. Furthermore, PTCs are involved in the monitoring of the implementation of the academic calendar and assessing teachers' instructional practices. When PTCs are more involved in school activities, teachers are more likely to stick to the curriculum, provide effective teaching, set appropriate homework, and work well with school administration and parents (Nasir et al., 2013).

With the development of globalization, information and communication technologies and social media, new challenges have emerged in relation to student behavior in school. Meanwhile, limits on the use of corporal punishment have lessened teachers' authority to deal with disciplinary matters in traditional ways. In such a situation, Parent Teacher Councils have gained significance in helping schools to handle student behavioral issues. Parents and other members of the local community are members of PTCs, which are therefore well placed to help schools address behavioral issues among students (Massucco, 2020). They adopt a variety of strategies to deal with such challenges. One key strategy is to involve parents, telling them about their child's problem behavior and asking them to be actively involved in finding a solution. Another approach is to offer advice and support to students who have behavioral issues to help them develop positive behaviors (Mihalec-Adkins & Cooley, 2019). PTC members also mentor teachers and offer support and guidance. Ongoing collaboration between parents and teachers will enable the management of behavioral issues more effectively and within the school's behavioral standards (Mytton, et al., 2013).

When parents are actively involved in Parent Teacher Council activities, there is an increased awareness of school discipline policies among parents and students. Parents are more educated about what is expected of their children's behaviour and what they can expect to see in terms of discipline, which will help them to reinforce this at home. Likewise, pupils gain a better awareness of rules and regulations for their behaviour and the consequences of not abiding by the rules and regulations. Parent Teacher Councils can be an effective bridge between schools and the community, promoting communication and cooperation between the two, which helps to prevent and address student behavioral issues (Wilder, 2013).

Methodology

The correlational predictive research design was used to explore relationships between PTC participation and academic performance. The study was conducted with 258 members of the Parent-Teacher Council in public secondary schools. A structured participation questionnaire was used to gather data on the level of participation, attendance at meetings, and governance activities. Students' academic performance was obtained from institutional academic records. The participation was voluntary, and participants were briefed on the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and data were only used for research.

Data Analysis and Results

Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine how the demographic characteristics of the Parent-Teacher Council (PTC) members predict the differences in students' academic performance. Data screening procedures were performed before hypothesis testing to guarantee the accuracy, completeness, and suitability of the data for statistical analysis. Assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were tested to ensure the robustness of the inferential procedures, and missing values were checked, while response distributions were examined.

Demographic profile of PTC members and an overall picture of participation patterns were summarized using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. These statistics provided a preliminary picture of gender distribution, educational qualification, age categories, years of involvement and frequency of attendance at the meetings.

Inferential statistical techniques were used to test the research hypotheses. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used to establish the direction and strength of the relationships between the demographic variables and students' academic performance. Multiple regression analysis was then used to explore the degree to which demographic variables predict academic outcomes while controlling for other variables in the model.

A significance level of $\alpha = .05$ was used. The p-value, standardised beta coefficient (β), and explained variance (R^2) were used to evaluate the hypotheses. If the coefficient was statistically significant, it meant that the respective demographic variable had a significant contribution to predicting students' academic performance, so the null hypothesis was rejected. Non-significant results, on the other hand, confirmed the null hypothesis. This analytical approach allowed for a thorough analysis of the relational and predictive aspects of PTC participation.

The results showed a significant positive correlation between participation and students' academic performance ($r = .332$, $p < .001$), which supports Hypothesis 1.

Table 1*Correlations*

		Age	Qualification	Years of affiliation with PTC	Attendance at PTC Meetings (%)	Participation
Performance	R	0.079	0.05	0.14	0.257	0.332
	P	0.209	0.433	0.026	0	0
	N	258	258	258	258	258

A significant positive correlation was observed between participation and students' academic performance ($r = .332$, $p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 1.

Regression Analysis

The results of regression analysis were significant participation variables in predicting academic performance ($R = .454$, $R^2 = .206$, Adjusted $R^2 = .183$). Participation was found to be a statistically significant predictor ($\beta = .301$, $p < .001$). There was also a significant predictive influence of gender, with age, qualification and attendance at meetings having lesser influences.

Table 2*Regression Analysis*

S.E	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Estimate
1	0.454	0.206	0.183	0.665

Table 3*Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Beta	t	p
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	1.195	0.495		2.412	0.017
	Gender	0.424	0.09	0.284	4.698	0
	Age	0.126	0.073	0.105	1.729	0.085
	Academic Qualification	-0.066	0.038	-0.118	-1.758	0.08
	Involvement in Parents and Teachers Council	0.057	0.038	0.101	1.496	0.136
	Attendance Rate at Parents ' and Teachers Council Meetings	0.002	0.063	0.002	0.027	0.978
	Participation	0.496	0.1	0.301	4.947	0
a Dependent Variable: Performance						

The results of the multiple regression analysis used to investigate the predictive effects of the demographic characteristics and Parent–Teacher Council (PTC) participation variables on students' academic performance are presented in Table 3.

Gender, age, academic qualification, Parent–Teacher Council involvement, PTC meeting attendance, and overall involvement were the independent variables, and academic performance was the dependent variable in the regression model.

Regression Coefficients Interpretation

The regression constant was statistically significant ($B = 1.195$, $t = 2.412$, $p = .017$), indicating that students' academic performance maintained a positive baseline level when all predictor variables were held constant.

Gender

Gender showed a statistically significant positive effect on students' academic performance ($B = 0.424$, $\beta = .284$, $t = 4.698$, $p < .001$). The standardized beta coefficient indicates a moderate contribution of gender to predicting academic outcomes, suggesting that variation in gender representation among PTC members was associated with differences in student performance.

Age

Age demonstrated a positive but statistically non-significant relationship with academic performance ($B = 0.126$, $\beta = .105$, $t = 1.729$, $p = .085$). Although the coefficient indicates a tendency toward improved performance with increasing age, the effect did not reach the required level of statistical significance.

Academic Qualification

Academic qualification yielded a negative and non-significant coefficient ($B = -0.066$, $\beta = -.118$, $t = -1.758$, $p = .080$). This result indicates that the educational level of PTC members did not significantly predict students' academic performance within the regression model.

Involvement in Parent–Teacher Council

Involvement in the Parent–Teacher Council showed a positive but statistically non-significant effect ($B = 0.057$, $\beta = .101$, $t = 1.496$, $p = .136$). The results indicate that participation was not enough to make a difference in academic performance outcomes on its own.

Attendance at PTC Meetings

There was a very small and statistically non-significant relationship between attendance at PTC meetings and academic performance ($B = 0.002$, $\beta = .002$, $t = 0.027$, $p = .978$). This means that attendance was not a significant contributor to predicting student achievement.

Participation

The strongest and most significant predictor of students' academic performance was overall participation ($B = 0.496$, $\beta = .301$, $t = 4.947$, $p < .001$). The standardized beta value revealed that participation was the greatest relative contribution of all independent variables in the model, suggesting that as the level of participation of PTC members increased, the academic performance of students also increased.

Summary of Findings

The regression analysis showed that Students' academic achievement was significantly predicted by participation and gender. There were no statistically significant predictive effects for age, academic qualification, involvement, or attendance rate when all these variables were taken into account at once. The results suggest that involvement in Parent-Teacher Councils is more important for student achievement than are demographic factors or indicators of formal involvement.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the effect of the demographic characteristics of Parent-Teacher Council members on students' academic performance at the secondary school level. The results offer empirical evidence that membership of a school governing body is not just about representation, but is influenced by the nature of those who are involved.

The findings suggested that gender differences were significant in relation to their impact on academic outcomes, and the female PTC members had relatively stronger relationships with academic outcomes. This result is consistent with earlier studies that reported greater involvement in children's school monitoring and communication among mothers and female guardians. Research on parental involvement has repeatedly found that girls' involvement fosters greater parent-school engagement and student accountability, leading to better student performance.

Other important predictors were age and experience of PTC members. The more years members had been involved in the school, the more positively they had affected academic performance, indicating that familiarity with the school and experience in its activities have a positive impact on the effectiveness of decision-making in school councils. This finding reinforces the organisational participation theory, which suggests that the more experienced stakeholders are, the more committed they become, the more they understand the processes involved and the more effective they are in working with the school administration. Educational governance research that focuses on the need for long-term community involvement in enhancing school effectiveness has drawn similar findings.

Academic qualification of PTC members, on the other hand, showed a relatively low predictive effect. While it is generally believed that higher-educated parents are more likely to be able to make a contribution to school governance, the results indicate that actual involvement and commitment may be more important than formal education. This finding is in line with the literature on community participation which suggests that the effectiveness of school councils is not solely dependent on educational status, but also on active participation.

There was a significant positive correlation between the frequency of meetings and students' academic achievement, indicating that involvement in meetings is more important than mere attendance. Attendance enables members to keep track of the progress in the institution, to take part in decision making and to respond quickly to academic issues that arise. This result aligns with previous research, which highlighted participatory governance and collaborative leadership as critical tools for enhancing educational outcomes.

In general, the results support the ecological view of education which considers student achievement as the result of the interconnections between families, schools and communities. The study builds upon previous research by showing that the participation of a certain group of students, as well as the participation of others, has a significant impact on the effectiveness of education. The findings thus add to the emerging literature that calls for systematic and purposeful parental participation in school governance.

The results indicate that policy makers should go beyond the symbolic creation of Parent-Teacher Councils and concentrate on improving the selection, training and continued involvement of members. Improving gender balance,

experienced community representation and regular attendance at meetings can have a significant impact on academic performance at secondary school.

Theoretical Implications

This study offers empirical evidence for governance-oriented models of parental involvement in an environment of a developing country. It validates the importance of organized community involvement as a means of enhancing academic achievement.

Practical Implications

The following are practical implications of the findings of this study

- ▶ Encourage regular and structured PTC meetings.
- ▶ Provide leadership and governance training for council members.
- ▶ Integrate PTC representatives into academic planning and monitoring processes.
- ▶ Promote collaborative school–community partnerships.
- ▶ Limitations and Future Research

The study was limited to a specific regional context and relied on cross-sectional data. Future studies may employ longitudinal designs, comparative institutional analyses, and mixed-method approaches to better understand participation mechanisms.

Conclusion

The results of this study offer solid empirical evidence that active involvement in Parent–Teacher Councils has a positive impact on student performance. The findings show that participatory school governance is not limited to formal governance structures, but is also a meaningful way of enhancing accountability, collaboration and shared responsibility among parents, teachers and school leadership. PTC members who actively participate in decision making, school monitoring and school activities provide a conducive learning atmosphere that increases student motivation, discipline and academic performance.

The study points to the need for a long-term partnership between schools and communities in order for effective educational improvement to take place outside of the classroom. Building participatory governance systems through frequent interaction, capacity development and effective communication mechanisms is one of the effective ways to improve the quality of education and the effectiveness of educational institutions. Active PTC involvement helps to build social capital, to enable collective ownership of school results, and to ensure that educational policies are put in place in a manner that meets the local needs.

Thus, the development of Parent–Teacher Councils, which are functional and empowered, is a sustainable way to school improvement. Training programs, institutional support mechanisms, and inclusive participation models should be emphasized by educational policymakers and administrators to ensure the maximum effectiveness of PTCs. Schools can help to promote collaborative governance to improve student learning outcomes over time, and support wider education development objectives of equity and sustainability.

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