Predictors of Parental Home Involvement in Low-Income Families in Tanzania

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Abstract
Understanding factors influencing parents' involvement in education activities is essential in tailoring strategies to encourage and maximize their participation. This study assessed predictors of parental home involvement in low-income families in four regions of Northern Tanzania. The questionnaires assessed 1176 parents of grade two children from 55 primary schools invited to teacher-parent meetings. The hierarchical multiple regression analyses showed that parents' perception of general school invitation, specific teacher invitation, specific child invitation, parents' knowledge and skills, parents' level of education, and marriage conditions were the strongest predictors of parental home involvement. However, parents' past school experience (valence) did not predict their present involvement at home. This study underscores the pivotal role of teachers and schools in instigating and fostering parental involvement at home. Teachers can create a collaborative learning environment beyond the classroom by implementing activities designed to arouse parents' interest and stimulate their desire to participate actively in their children's learning. The study recommends the interconnectedness of the educational ecosystem, where the efforts of schools and teachers serve as catalysts for meaningful parental involvement at home.

Keywords: *Parental Involvement, Home Involvement, School-family partnership, Low-income families, Primary School*

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania makes a significant step in increasing access to basic education by implementing the fee-free education policy in seven years of primary education and four years of ordinary secondary education. With all these efforts to increase the enrollment rate, the quality of education and equality in learning opportunities between children are still questionable (Twaweza, 2019; 2017). These uncertainties cause a significant achievement gap between children living in low-income families in

public schools and children living in middle-income families in private schools (UNESCO, 2019; URT, 2020; 2021).

Although many discussions and concerns have been directed toward the quality of classroom instructions, efficiency of teachers and other school factors, little attention has been paid to the role of parents in children's learning. The insignificant improvements in early literacy development raise concern about the limited involvement of parents in their children's education (Kigobe et al., 2018; Kigobe et al., 2021). To address these concerns, it is crucial to understand the factors influencing parental involvement in the education and schooling of primary school children in Tanzania, particularly within low-income families. By identifying these factors, educational stakeholders can develop targeted interventions and strategies to promote parental engagement. This can, subsequently, contribute to reducing the achievement gap between children from low-income families and their more privileged peers (Gregory, 2016; Nyembeke, 2016).

Owing to multiple roles that parents play in reducing achievement gaps, it is essential to explore the specific challenges and barriers that may prevent them from actively participating in their children's education in Tanzania. Understanding the socio-cultural context, economic constraints, and potential communication gaps between schools and families could provide valuable insights into designing effective interventions that encourage and facilitate parental engagement.

Supportive relationship between schools, parents, and the community, the education system in Tanzania can create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all children, irrespective of their socioeconomic backgrounds. Research on the role of education in reducing achievement gaps affirmed that involving parents and caregivers in children’s learning is crucial to reducing achievement gaps. According to Dearing et al. (2006), families' involvement in their children's schools is central to most public efforts to reduce the achievement gap between children living in low-income families and their wealthier peers. This study assessed factors that influenced parental home involvement in low-income families in Tanzania.

Parent Involvement and Socio-Economic Conditions

Understanding the unique challenges and opportunities within different socio-economic contexts is essential for designing targeted interventions

and support systems that can bridge the gap in parental involvement. This can promote a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Several studies (Abrams & Gibbs, 2002; Borgonovi & Montt, 2012; Li et al., 2000) have proven that parental involvement is very minimal in low-income families as compared to middle and higher-income counterparts. Lower involvement of low-income parents denies their children educational benefits more than children from higher-income homes (Taylor et al., 2004; Smith, 2006). As a result of this, children from low-income households who start school frequently lag behind their peers from more affluent families (Ferguson et al., 2007). If this problem remains unaddressed, the achievement gap between children from families with low incomes and those from families with moderate or higher incomes will continue to persist.

Smith (2006) argues that children who come from households with poor incomes are at a greater risk of academic underachievement than children who come from wealthy families with highly educated parents. In addition, children who originate from households with low incomes and parents with low levels of education are at an extremely elevated risk of academic failure. In order to get access to and promote parental engagement, it is vital to consider social and economic structure, which defines and stratifies parents.

Due to the presence of fee-free education, teachers have expressed their worries about the extent to which parents in public schools define their roles and engagement in their children's education (Gregory, 2016; Maliti, 2018). Therefore, it is essential to ensure that parents participate well in their children's learning process regardless their socio-economic backgrounds. In the meta-analyses, which included 95 studies of family involvement, Van Voorhis et al. (2013) proved that regardless of their background, parents from diverse backgrounds, when given direction, can become more engaged with their children learning. Moreover, when parents are more engaged, children tend to do better in school.

Theory of Change: From School-Centric to Family-Centric Schools

Lawson (2003) defines "school-centric" activities as primarily consisting of attendance at school-organised events (i.e., parent-teacher conferences, volunteering, parent involvement in the classroom as teachers' aides, parent involvement on field trips, and involvement in other school related

activities. Traditional research on parent involvement is school-centric, focusing on parents' interactions with and attendance at school events. This school-centric approach, however, fails to incorporate the conjoint influence of parenting practises, parenting styles, parent-child relationship quality, and family structure (Malczyka & Lawson, 2019). The fact that many parent participation programmes are centred on the school rather than the home is a fundamental weakness that has led to a rise in educational disparity. Pushor and Ruitenberg (2005) argue that in school-centric approaches, what constitutes "parent involvement" is defined and controlled by school administrators and teachers. It affords little or no space for parent knowledge or voice in constructing their children's school experience or the school's place (Stitt & Brooks, 2014). Researchers have found that parent involvement in school-centric programmes and activities is often minimal, sporadic, or non-existent (Alameda-Lawson & Lawson, 2012; Lareau, 1996). Literature on parent involvement in low-income school communities suggests that complex sociocultural and political factors may contribute to low levels of parent involvement and engagement in school-designed activities. Despite the benefits and barriers included in the parent involvement literature, it remains necessary to analyse and clarify the often-unarticulated assumptions and implicit theories of action that undergird what parent involvement means.

Walker et al. (2011) assert that schools should be skeptical of assuming that parents who are not regularly present at school are not involved in supporting children's learning; parents may provide more support for their children's schooling at home than school personnel perceive based on visibility. Kigobe et al. (2018) argue that parents are more involved in home-based activities than school-based activities. Perceptions of available time and energy are the strongest predictors of school-based involvement rather than working hours.

It is evident that school-based parental involvement might not be possible for most parents in Tanzania. That necessitates schools and teachers to think beyond the physical presence of parents as the most convenient way of getting parents involved in their children's education. The experience from the urban context of Tanzania motivated the exploration of homes in other places in Tanzania. This study aimed to understand home-based involvement in rural low-income families in Tanzania. The theory of change that assumes that motivational factors promote parental home

involvement. This helps teachers and policymakers to think about effective ways of stimulating parental involvement activities at home. Hence, studying the factors influencing home involvement activities is very crucial.

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement

This study employed the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of parental involvement. The model underscores the multidimensional nature of parental involvement and highlights the significance of understanding the complex interactions between parents, schools, and communities in fostering effective collaboration and support for children's educational success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Walker et al., 2005).

The model is constructed around three main questions: (a) why families do (or don't) get involved in educational activities; (b) what families do when they do get involved; and (c) how family engagement in children's education improves student results. Along with the reasons parents decide to get involved, the model demonstrates how they get involved and the results of their involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997).

The model is organised into five levels that show a linear process of parental involvement. In Level one, parental involvement decisions are affected by parents' role construction, parental self-efficacy, general invitations from school, and specific invitations for involvement from the child and the child's teacher. Life context variables such as knowledge and skills, time, and energy are also considered. Level two includes the parents' choices about how they want to be involved (i.e., involvement activities at home and involvement activities at school).

Level three indicates how parental involvement affects a child's educational and developmental outcomes, including modelling, reinforcement, and instruction. Level fourth indicates the main factors that affect parental involvement, such as how well the parents' actions match up with the child's developmental needs. Finally, level five is about the outcomes for the child's learning, such as skills and knowledge, and self-efficacy for school success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995).

This study focused on the first and second levels of the model. It assesses how various factors surrounding parents affect their involvement choices.

Although the second level of the model describes two forms of involvement (i.e., school and home involvement), educators and teachers focus more on school involvement. Previous studies (Kigobe et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2011) have found that parents manage to be more involved at home than in school activities. Green et al. (2007) recommends examining the specific contribution of socioeconomic variables when using the model in assessing parental involvement decisions. Thus, we included parent valence towards school as suggested by Walker et al. (2005) to assess the effect of parents' own school experiences on their presenting practices in their children's schooling.

The Current Study

This study used the baseline data collected in a larger project designed to promote parental involvement through capacity building (teachers' training) on parental involvement. Previous studies confirmed that parents in Tanzania are willing and positive about being involved in their children's education (Kigobe et al., 2018). Specifically, this study explored two research questions: i) what are the predictors of parental home involvement in low-income families? ii) how do parents' perceptions of involvement invitations predict home involvement compared to their personal motivators?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study involved parents of children from 55 primary schools in 10 districts of four regions in Northern Tanzania. In total, parents were (n = 1176), whereby a maximum of (n = 27) and a minimum of (n = 19) parents per school were involved**.** Among the families, 22% had only one child; 20.8% had two children; 19.6% had three children; 18% had four children; and 14.1% had five or more children. The category of parents involved mothers (52%), and fathers (48%).

Of all the involved parents, 67.7% were married, 27% were unmarried, and 5.3% did not disclose their status. Approximately 63.5% of involved parents had a low income (under 2,000 Tshs per day), 19.7% had an income ranging from 2,001 to 5,000 Tshs per day. Additionally, 7.8% were parents with a middle income between 5,001 and 10,000 Tshs per day, 4.1% had an income between 10,001 and 15,000 per day, 3% had an income of 15,001 to 20,000 per day, and 1.9% had an income of 20,001 and above per day. Regarding education level, 70.4% of involved parents

had primary education, and 7.3% were uneducated, 13.9% had secondary education, 3.2% had college certificates and diplomas, 1.4% of parents had bachelor's degrees, 0.2% had postgraduate degrees.

Procedures

Parents were invited to teacher-parent meetings in schools. These meetings were officiated by district and ward educational officers to bring community awareness to the importance of parental involvement. Parents were asked to sign a consent form to participate in the study and allowed their children to participate. To coordinate the exercise and minimise social desirability, 12 trained research assistants who were tutors from five teacher colleges were sent to four regions of the project to guide parents and teachers in survey administration.

Measures

All measures were adopted from Walker et al. (2005), who revised Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model of parent involvement. The study assessed home involvement (second level of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model) as an outcome variable against eight predictor variables (first level of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model). The predictor variables are parents' school valence, parents' role construction, parents' sense of efficacy, parents' perception of general school invitations, parents' perception of teacher invitations, parents' perception of specific child invitations, parents' knowledge and skills, and parents' energy and resources.

The home-based involvement activities: This was measured by four items assessing parents' academically focused home involvement activities (Walker et al. 2005). Parents rated their perceptions on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (daily). Item examples are: (a) "Talks with this child about the school day", (b) "Supervises this child's homework". The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .69, indicating a moderate internal consistency.

Parents' personal Motivators

Parent Self-Reported Valence towards School: This was measured by six items assessing parents own general experiences at school, their teachers and school staff. (e.g., “My school 1 = I disliked, 6 = I liked”; “My teachers: 1 = ignored me, 6 = cared about me”). Higher scale scores indicated a stronger attraction to or good experiences with the school.

The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .76, indicating a good internal consistency.

Parental efficacy for helping children succeeds: This was measured by four items from Walker et al. (2005). However, two negatively worded items were deleted because of low alpha the scale provided when these two items were included. Parents rated their self-efficacy beliefs on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (disagree very strongly) to 6 (agree very strongly). The two items were (a) "I Know how to help my child to acquire reading skills", and (b) "I feel successful about my efforts to help my child to learn". Higher scores indicated that parents have a higher sense of efficacy. The Cronbach's alpha of the two items in the scale was .63, indicating a moderate internal consistency

Parents' role construction: This was measured by nine items which describe beliefs that parent, school, and partnership focused on (Walker et al. 2005). Parents rated their role beliefs on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (disagree very strongly) to 6 (agree very strongly). Item examples are: "I believe it is my responsibility to (a) volunteer at the school (b) communicate with my child's teacher regularly". Higher scores indicated that parents have higher belief about their roles in children's education The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .80, indicating a good internal consistency.

Parents' perceptions of invitation to be involved

Parents' perceptions of general invitations from school: This was measured by six items developed by Walker et al. (2005). Parents rated their perceptions on a 6- point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (disagree very strongly) to 6 (agree very strongly). Item examples are: (a) "Teachers at this school are interested and cooperative when they discuss my child reading and literacy development", and (b) "This school lets me know about meetings and special school events". The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .65, indicating a moderate internal consistency.

Parents' perceptions of specific invitations for involvement from teachers: This was measured by five items examining how often the child's teachers contact or make any communication with a parent (Walker et al. 2005). Parents rated their perceptions on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (daily). Item examples are: (a) "My child's teacher asked me or expected me to help my child with

homework", and (b) "My child's teacher asked me to attend a special event at school" about meetings and special school events". The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .86, indicating strong internal consistency.

Parents' perceptions of specific invitations for involvement from the child: This was measured by five items. Parents rated their perceptions on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (daily). Item examples are: (a) "My child asked me to supervise his or her homework" and (b) "My child asked me to talk with his or her teacher" The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .82, indicating a strong internal consistency.

Parents' perceived life context variables

Parents' understanding of their own skills and knowledge: This was measured by six items examining parents' understanding of their own skills and knowledge (Walker et al. 2005). Parents rated their perceptions on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (disagree very strong) to 6 (agree very strong). Item examples are: "(a) I know effective ways to contact my child's teacher (b) I know how to supervise my child's homework." The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .79, indicating a good internal consistency.

Parents' perceptions of the time and energy: This was measured by 6 items referring to how parents perceived time and energy in their decision about involvement (Walker et al. 2005). Parents rated their perceptions on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (disagree very strong) to 6 (agree very strong). Item examples are: "I have enough time and energy to (a) communicate with my child about the school day (b) attend special events at school." The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .68, indicating a moderate internal consistency.

Analysis

We first computed descriptive statistics, whereby Spearman correlations were calculated between the parent's characteristics (such as gender and income) and all variables. Moreover, Pearson correlations were calculated between the outcome and all independent variables. Second, we conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses to examine the variables that predict parental home involvement. We assessed the multicollinearity of all variables. The calculation of the variance inflation

factor (VIF) for each variable is one way to identify multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is indicated when the VIF value is larger than 1.5 for any of the variables being examined.

The multicollinearity analysis found that seven variables had tolerance values greater than.10 and the variance inflation factor values were less than 1.5. This indicates that there is no multicollinearity within independent variables and dependent variable. However, parents understanding of their skills, and knowledge and parents' perception of time and energy showed a VIF of more than 2. This suggests that there is collinearity among these two variables. When VIF is too high, it is advised to remove highly correlated predictors from the model. Hence parents' time and energy were removed from regression model.

The hierarchical multiple regression had four blocks, the first of which included three control variables (level of education, marital status, and income). The second block variables related to motivational factors (role construction, self-efficacy, and parents' school valance) were added. The third block variables related to parents' perceptions of invitations to be involved (general school invitations, general teacher invitations, and specific invitations from a child) were added. The fourth block variables related to parents' perceived life context (parents' understanding of their own skills and knowledge, and parents' perceptions of time and energy) were added. The descriptive, correlational, and regression analyses were conducted through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.0 (IBM, 2021).

FINDINGS

Concerning the first analysis step, the descriptive statistics of the study variables are presented in Table 1, and Spearman and Pearson correlations are presented in Table 1. All correlations among the included study variables were observed to be significant. Analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between home involvement as an outcome variable and all eight independent variables (see table 1).

Table 1: Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach's alphas of all Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Parents' Gender															
Employment status	.01														
Parents' Education Level	-.04	-.22***													
Parents' Marital status	.02	.04	.01												
Number of children	-.00	-.01	-.03	-.26***											
Parents' Income	-.01	-.21***	.24	-.11***	.04										
Home involvement	-.03	.01	.10***	-.165***	-.03	.14***									
Parents' school valence	.01	.03	-.02	.02	.03	-.05	.15***								
Parents' sense of efficacy	.01	-.03	.03	-.04	-.06	.09**	.21***	.23***							
Parents' Role construction	-.01	.03	.06*	-.12***	-.07*	.14***	.31***	.16***	.21***						
School invitation	.00	-.01	-.05	-.07*	-.06	.04	.34***	.30***	.30***	.23***					
Teachers' invitation	-.01	-.10***	-.01	.04	-.06	-.03	.21***	.08**	.12***	.12***	.32***				
Child Invitation	-.03	.02	-.02	-.05	-.02	.02	.53***	.09***	.18***	.29***	.40***	.38***			
Parents' Knowledge and skills	-.03	-.03	-.02	-.13***	.02	.15***	.50***	.23***	.33***	.49***	.34***	.17***	.34***		
Parents Energy and Resources	.02	.01	.06*	-.06	-.01	.15**	.40***	.25***	.32***	.48***	.37***	.15***	.31***	.70***	
M	1.48	4.24	1.53	1.77	2.80	1.69	5.04	5.80	5.04	5.33	5.13	3.26	4.29	5.24	5.36
SD	0.50	1.40	0.97	1.39	1.38	1.16	1.02	0.48	1.18	0.62	0.76	1.55	1.38	0.78	0.73
Cronbach's alpha							.69	.76	.63	.80	.66	.86	.82	.79	.68

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$. Spearman non-parametric correlations were calculated between parent's characteristics and other variables; Pearson correlations were calculated between all other variable

Predictors of parents' home-based Involvement

The regression analysis model showed that all four blocks of the variables were significant by $p < .001$). The three control variables in block one contributed 4.3% of the total variance in the model, with F (3, 1067) = 16.04, $p < .001$. The variables in the second model contributed 11.5% to the variance explained by parental home involvement (Fchange (3, 1064) 48.61, $p < .001$). The variables in the third block contributed 25.8% of the total variance in the model and explained parental home involvement by F (3, 1061) = 120.88, $p < .001$. Parents understanding of their own knowledge in the fourth block added 4.2% of the variance in the model. The regression analysis showed that among the first three control variables in the first block, parents' level of education and marital status were strongly related to parental home involvement (see Table 2).

The final regression model (see Table 2) showed that parents' perception of school invitation, parents' perception of teacher invitation, parents' perception of child invitation, and parents' understanding of their own skills and knowledge were the main predictors of parental home involvement. Furthermore, parent role construction showed a mild prediction of home involvement while parents school valence did not predict parental home involvement at all (see Table 2).

Table 2. Predictors of parents' home-based Involvement

		B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*	*Tolerance*	*VIF*
1	(Constant)	5.00***	.08			
	Education	.11***	.03	.10***	.910	1.099
	Marital status	.11***	.02	.15***	.988	1.012
	Income	.04	.03	.05	.904	1.107
2	(Constant)	.95*	.41			
	Education	.09**	.03	.09**	.907	1.102
	Marital status	-.09***	.02	-.13***	.976	1.024
	Income	.02	.03	.02	.895	1.117
	Parents' valence	.21***	.06	.10***	.920	1.087
	Role construction	.44***	.05	.26***	.931	1.074
	Parents' efficacy	.10***	.03	.11***	.897	1.115
3	(Constant)	.55	.36			
	Education	.09***	.03	.09***	.906	1.103
	Marital status	-.09***	.02	-.13***	.964	1.037
	Income	.03	.02	.03	.892	1.121
	Parent valence	.11*	.06	.05*	.859	1.164
	Role construction	.27***	.04	.16***	.887	1.127
	Parents efficacy	.027	.023	.031	.857	1.167
	School invitation	.18***	.04	.13***	.713	1.403
	Teachers' invitation	.05**	.018	.08**	.801	1.248
	Child Invitation	.285***	.021	.385***	.734	1.362
4	(Constant)	.43	.34			
	Education	.11***	.03	.10***	.903	1.107
	Marital status	-.07***	.02	-.10***	.948	1.055
	Income	.00	.02	.00	.880	1.136
	Parents' valence	.03	.05	.01	.840	1.191
	Role construction	.11*	.04	.06*	.760	1.316
	Parents' efficacy	-.01	.02	-.01	.825	1.212
	School invitation	.14***	.04	.11***	.707	1.414
	Teachers invitation	.05**	.02	.08**	.801	1.248
	Child Invitation	.25***	.02	.34***	.713	1.403
	Knowledge and skills	.36***	.04	.27***	.635	1.534

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. *B* = Regression coefficient; *Beta* = Standardised regression coefficient

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this research study was to investigate the predictors of parental home-based involvement in low-income households living in rural Tanzania. Parents' reports, level of education, marriage conditions, general school invitations, invitations from teachers, and specific child-initiated invitations were identified as the most influential factors predicting parental involvement at home. Conversely, personal motivators and role constructions displayed relatively low predictive

power. At the same time, parents' sense of efficacy and valence towards school (based on their school experience) did not predict home involvement.

This study's findings are fascinating and insightful, showing the predictive power of schools, teachers, and child invitations in parental home involvement since these variables are usually connected to school involvement. These results are consistent with Deslandes and Bertrand (2005), who also observed that teachers and children's invitations played a role in promoting home involvement. Parents' opinions of their child's invitations were the main predictor of parental participation at home across all three grade levels. Both teachers and children's invitations played a role in encouraging home involvement. They concluded that when children personally invited their parents, they were more likely to regard their participation as desired and anticipated. As a result, parents felt obligated to be involved.

The findings revealed that parents' sense of self-efficacy and valence towards school did not predict parents' home involvement at all. Role construction was significant in some way, albeit not to the same extent as general invitations from schools, teachers, or a specific invitation from a child. Several studies, such as Walker et al. (2011) and Green et al. (2007) confirmed the prediction power of parents' perceptions of the invitation to involvement from teachers and their child. This result contrasts the findings of Kigobe et al. (2018), who, despite discovering that parents in Tanzania are more involved in home-based involvement activities, parents' sense of self-efficacy was the most significant predictor of parents' home involvement.

Based on the above findings, it is essential to acknowledge the role of schools and teachers in promoting parents' sense of efficacy and helping parents redefine their roles in children's education. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) affirmed that when parents have a strong sense of role formation and self-efficacy, they are more likely to be involved in their children's activities, regardless of the number of competing demands. However, this might only sometimes be the case for low-income and less-educated families, who are constantly struggling and work for many hours to sustain their families. The difficulties that come along with living in poverty are the reason for the low levels of parent involvement in school-based activities. Poverty might be why low-income parents feel more

comfortable to engage their children's education at home, at their convenience, when asked by schools, teachers, or even by their children.

Walker et al. (2011) explained that parents may be more convinced to be involved at home because opportunities for home-based involvement may appear any day and any time. Home involvement differs from school-based involvement, whose opportunities are generally limited to hours and events made available by the school. Fixed school involvement might be unfeasible for some parents because disadvantaged low-income parents are more likely to require consistent satisfaction of their essential needs before making decisions about their involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995).

The findings of this study showed that parents' level of education was a strong predictor of parents' home involvement even after the addition of parents' personal motivator variables, invitation variables, and life contextual variables in the model. In this study, most parents had a lower level of education, and their role construction and sense of self-efficacy were considerably lower. Kigobe et al. (2018) emphasized that for effective parental involvement in a child's education, teachers and schools should recognize the home as the primary starting point.

Findings showed that parents' marriage condition strongly predicted home involvement, indicating that non-married parents were more involved at home than married parents. With the active involvement of single parents, one might argue that they have more direct responsibility for their children's daily activities. The absence of co-parenting might allow some parents to make educational decisions independently, leading to a higher level of direct involvement in their child's educational journey. Also, single-parent households may experience a close parent-child bond due to the nature of shared experiences and responsibilities. A close parent-child relationship can facilitate open communication and involvement in educational matters. However, the degree of parental involvement in a child's education can vary widely, and many factors influence it. Thus, it is essential to recognize the diversity of family structures and avoid generalizations. Some studies have reported that single parenting hurts a child's academic performance (Cheung & Park, 2016). Hence, encouraging and supporting involvement from all parents, regardless of marital status, is critical to fostering a positive educational experience for children.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY AND LIMITATIONS

The study's primary contribution to knowledge lies in its focused evaluation of home as a distinct component of parental involvement in children's education. Treating home and school involvement as separate components adds depth and nuance to our understanding of parental involvement in the educational process. The recognition of home involvement as a separate aspect implies that interventions and strategies can be tailored towards addressing specific needs and challenges associated with it. This targeted approach can lead to more effective and relevant initiatives aimed at enhancing the overall quality of parental involvement in a child's education. Previous studies (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Green et al, 2007; Kigobe et al., 2018; Walker et al, 2011) have already stressed the importance of recognizing and studying parental involvement in education as a multifaceted concept. By specifically addressing home involvement as a unique dimension, this study contributes to this existing body of knowledge.

The study's focus is on families with low incomes in rural areas of Tanzania. This targeted approach not only addresses the specific needs of a particular demographic but also aligns with the context of Tanzania. Given that a large portion of Tanzanian primary school children come from low-income households, the study's focus aligns with the socio-economic reality of the country. Understanding the factors that inspire family involvement in education becomes particularly relevant in this context, and thereby contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies and interventions that are tailored to the specific needs of low-income families not only in Tanzania but also to other developing countries.

The adoption of the Hoover-Dempsey model as a framework for defining fundamental aspects of parental involvement practices in low-income families adds theoretical rigor to the study. This model is well-established and provides a structured way to analyze and understand parental involvement. The use of such a model enhances the study's conceptual framework and contributes to the overall understanding of the research phenomena.

Although the study has theoretical and practical advantages, it has some limitations. Relying solely on self-reported data through a questionnaire survey led the possibility of social desirability bias. Parents may respond

in ways they perceive as socially acceptable or expected, potentially leading to an inaccurate portrayal of their actual behaviours and attitudes. Moreover, while using questionnaire survey is valuable for collecting large amounts of data efficiently, it may not provide a deep understanding of the nuances involved in parental involvement. Observation can offer a more in-depth perspective of home-based parental involvement including non-verbal cues, environmental factors, and the dynamic nature of family interactions.

Given these limitations, future research endeavours in this area could benefit from a mixed-methods approach. Combining questionnaire surveys with observational methods and potentially qualitative interviews can offer a more comprehensive understanding of home-based parental participation. This approach would allow researchers to triangulate data from different sources, enhancing the overall validity and reliability of the study.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study's findings contribute valuable insights into the factors influencing home-based parental involvement in rural Tanzania, offering practical considerations for educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders involved in enhancing parental engagement in the educational process.

Policymakers can advocate for policies that support inclusive practices in education, ensuring that all parents, regardless of educational background, feel valued and included in their child's education at school and at home. This may involve guidelines for effective communication and outreach strategies. Moreover, policymakers can allocate resources and invest in programs that specifically target parental involvement at home, recognising it as a key component of a child's overall educational experience.

Schools and teachers can adopt tailored communication strategies to reach out to parents effectively. This includes clear and personalized invitations to engage parents in various aspects of their child's education, training and workshops: Offering training sessions and workshops for both teachers and parents can address the perceived knowledge and skills gap on home involvement by providing practical tips, resources, and guidance on how parents can support their child's learning at home.

The conclusion drawn from the findings emphasizes the proactive role of schools and teachers in promoting parental involvement beyond school boundaries. The identified responsibility calls for intentional and strategic efforts to empower parents, recognize diverse backgrounds, and foster a collaborative partnership that extends the learning experience into the home environment. Schools and teachers should implement specific initiatives designed to enhance parents' effectiveness at home. These initiatives could include workshops, informational sessions, and resources aimed at equipping parents with the knowledge and skills to actively engage in their child's learning outside of the school environment.

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