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# The Role of Parents in Shaping Discipline Among Elementary Learners at San Francisco Elementary School

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## **Abstract**

Learner discipline is a critical component of effective schooling, influencing academic engagement, social behavior, and overall school climate. While schools play a central role in establishing behavioral expectations, parental involvement remains a significant factor in shaping learners' discipline, particularly at the elementary level. This study examined the role of parents in shaping discipline among elementary learners at San Francisco Elementary School. Using a mixed-methods descriptive design, the study explored parental practices related to guidance, monitoring, communication, and value formation, and how these practices are reflected in learners' behavior in school. Quantitative survey data and school discipline records were complemented by qualitative interviews with teachers and parents. Findings indicate that consistent parental guidance, clear behavioral expectations at home, and regular parent-school communication are strongly associated with positive learner discipline, while inconsistent supervision and limited parental involvement are linked to recurrent behavioral concerns. The study underscores the importance of strengthening home-school partnerships to promote positive discipline among elementary learners.

**Keywords:** parental involvement, learner discipline, elementary education, home-school partnership, child behavior

## **1. Introduction**

Discipline among elementary learners plays a vital role in fostering a safe, supportive, and productive learning environment. At this developmental stage, children are still acquiring self-regulation, moral reasoning, and social responsibility, making external guidance from adults essential. While schools



implement rules, routines, and behavior management systems, the influence of the family—particularly parents—remains foundational in shaping learners' attitudes toward discipline.

Parents serve as children's first socialization agents, modeling behaviors, setting expectations, and reinforcing values that guide children's conduct both at home and in school. Research has consistently shown that parental involvement in children's education extends beyond academic support to include behavior monitoring, moral guidance, and emotional support, all of which contribute to positive discipline outcomes. Conversely, lack of parental supervision, inconsistent discipline practices, and weak communication with schools may contribute to behavioral challenges among learners.

In the Philippine elementary school context, teachers frequently report that learners' disciplinary behaviors are closely linked to home practices, family routines, and parental attitudes toward schooling. However, empirical studies examining the specific roles parents play in shaping discipline at the school level remain limited. This study therefore sought to examine the role of parents in shaping discipline among elementary learners at San Francisco Elementary School, with the goal of informing school-based interventions and strengthening parent-school collaboration.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a multidimensional construct encompassing parenting practices, communication with schools, and participation in educational activities. Studies indicate that parents who establish clear behavioral expectations, provide consistent supervision, and use positive discipline strategies tend to have children who demonstrate better self-control and fewer disciplinary problems in school.

Research on parenting styles suggests that authoritative parenting characterized by warmth, consistency, and clear boundaries is associated with positive behavioral outcomes, including respect for rules and self-discipline. In contrast, permissive or inconsistent parenting has been linked to higher incidences of misbehavior and difficulty following school rules. Furthermore, effective parent-school communication enables consistency between home and school expectations, reinforcing appropriate behavior and addressing emerging concerns early.

Recent studies in elementary education emphasize that discipline is most effective when schools and families adopt a shared responsibility framework. Positive discipline approaches that focus on guidance, modeling, and reinforcement, rather than punishment alone, have been shown to improve learner behavior and emotional well-being. These findings highlight the importance of parental engagement as a critical component of comprehensive discipline strategies.

## **3. Methodology**

This study employed a mixed-methods descriptive research design to examine the role of parents in shaping discipline among elementary learners at San Francisco Elementary School. The mixed-methods approach allowed for the integration of quantitative data on parental involvement and learner discipline with qualitative insights from parents and teachers, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.



Participants included elementary learners, their parents, and classroom teachers. Learners were selected from various grade levels to represent a range of disciplinary experiences, while parents were invited to participate based on their willingness and availability. Teachers were included due to their direct involvement in managing learner behavior and observing discipline-related patterns in school.

Quantitative data were collected through a parent survey that examined parenting practices related to discipline, including rule-setting, supervision, communication, and reinforcement strategies. School discipline records were also reviewed to identify common behavioral concerns. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with selected parents and teachers to explore their perspectives on discipline practices, challenges, and home-school collaboration.

Data analysis involved descriptive statistical analysis of survey results and discipline records, followed by thematic analysis of interview data. Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the results.

## 4. Results and Findings

### 4.1 Quantitative Results

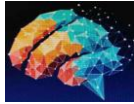
Table 1 presents a summary of parental practices related to discipline and their observed influence on learners' school behavior.

**Table 1. Parental Practices and Observed Discipline Outcomes of Elementary Learners (n = 120 pupils)**

Parental Practice	Description	Learners Exhibiting the Practice (%)	Mean Discipline Score*	Average No. of Behavioral Referrals (per quarter)
Consistent rule-setting	Clear and regularly enforced home rules	68% (n = 82)	4.32	0.8
Parental supervision	Monitoring of homework and daily routines	72% (n = 86)	4.18	1.1
Parent-school communication	Regular contact with teachers	61% (n = 73)	4.05	1.3
Inconsistent discipline	Irregular or unclear consequences	39% (n = 47)	2.74	3.6

\*Discipline score based on teacher rating using a 5-point scale (1 = very poor discipline, 5 = very good discipline)

The data indicate that learners whose parents practiced consistent rule-setting demonstrated the highest mean discipline score (M = 4.32) and the lowest average number of behavioral referrals (0.8



per quarter). This suggests that clarity and consistency in home rules are strongly associated with positive learner discipline in school.

Similarly, parental supervision of homework and daily routines was reported for 72% of learners and was associated with a high mean discipline score ( $M = 4.18$ ) and relatively few behavioral referrals. This finding indicates that active monitoring at home supports self-regulation and compliance with classroom expectations.

Learners whose parents maintained regular parent-school communication also showed favorable discipline outcomes ( $M = 4.05$ ), with behavioral issues typically resolved promptly due to coordinated responses between home and school. Although the mean discipline score for this group was slightly lower than that of consistent rule-setting and supervision, the data still suggest a positive association between communication and learner behavior.

In contrast, learners exposed to inconsistent discipline practices at home exhibited the lowest mean discipline score ( $M = 2.74$ ) and the highest average number of behavioral referrals (3.6 per quarter). This pattern indicates that unclear or irregular consequences may contribute to confusion regarding behavioral expectations, resulting in recurrent misbehavior in school.

Hence, the statistical trends support the conclusion that structured, consistent, and communicative parental practices are significantly associated with better discipline outcomes, while inconsistent discipline is linked to higher rates of behavioral concerns. Learners whose parents demonstrated consistent rule-setting and supervision showed fewer discipline-related concerns in school. In contrast, inconsistent discipline practices at home were associated with repeated behavioral issues, such as non-compliance and disruptive behavior.

## 4.2 Qualitative Findings

### Qualitative Findings and Thematic Analysis

Qualitative analysis of interview data from teachers and parents revealed three interrelated themes that explain how parental involvement shapes discipline among elementary learners. These themes highlight the importance of alignment between home and school expectations, parental role modeling, and contextual challenges affecting sustained parental engagement.

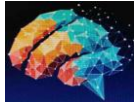
#### Theme 1: Consistency of Discipline Between Home and School

A prominent theme that emerged from the data was the importance of consistent discipline practices between home and school. Teachers repeatedly emphasized that learners demonstrated more appropriate and predictable behavior when parents reinforced school rules and expectations at home. Consistency across settings helped learners internalize behavioral norms and reduced confusion regarding acceptable conduct.

#### Participant Responses

One teacher shared:

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“Kapag pareho ang patakaran sa bahay at sa paaralan, mas madali para sa mga bata na sumunod. Alam nila kung ano ang tama at mali kahit saan sila naroon.”

Similarly, a parent noted:

“Kapag may sinabi ang guro tungkol sa ugali ng anak ko, agad naming pinapaliwanag sa bahay at pinapaalala ang tamang asal.”

These findings suggest that discipline is more effective when learners receive clear and consistent messages about behavior from both parents and teachers. This supports ecological systems theory, which emphasizes that children’s development is influenced by the interaction of multiple environments, particularly the home and school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Empirical studies confirm that consistency between home and school discipline practices is associated with lower levels of behavioral problems and stronger self-regulation among elementary learners (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Murray et al., 2018). Regular parent–school communication further strengthens this consistency by enabling parents to respond promptly to behavioral concerns and reinforce expectations at home.

## **Theme 2: Parental Modeling of Values and Behavior**

Both parents and teachers highlighted the role of parental modeling in shaping learners’ discipline. Participants consistently observed that children tended to imitate the behaviors, attitudes, and values demonstrated by their parents, particularly in areas such as respect, responsibility, honesty, and self-control. Discipline was therefore not only taught through rules but also learned through daily observation of adult behavior.

### **Participant Responses**

A teacher explained:

“Kung nakikita ng bata na marespeto ang magulang, dala-dala niya iyon sa loob ng silid-aralan. Makikita mo sa paraan ng pakikitungo niya sa guro at kaklase.”

A parent likewise reflected:

“Sinisikap naming ipakita sa bahay ang disiplina pagiging mahinahon at may respeto kasi alam naming ginagaya iyon ng aming anak.”

This theme reinforces social learning theory, which posits that children acquire behaviors through observation and imitation of significant adults (Bandura, 1977). Research consistently shows that positive parental modeling is associated with higher levels of prosocial behavior and better discipline among children (Pinquart, 2017). When parents demonstrate self-regulation, respectful communication, and responsibility, children are more likely to adopt these behaviors in school contexts. Conversely, inconsistent or negative modeling may undermine school efforts to promote discipline, highlighting the critical role of parents as behavioral role models.

## **Theme 3: Challenges in Sustained Parental Involvement**



Despite recognizing the importance of parental involvement in discipline, participants also identified structural and contextual barriers that limited parents' ability to engage consistently. Many parents cited work demands, household responsibilities, and time constraints as challenges that reduced their capacity to monitor children's behavior closely or participate actively in school-related activities.

### **Participant Responses**

One parent shared:

"Gusto naming tutukan ang ugali ng anak namin, pero minsan kulang ang oras dahil sa trabaho at iba pang responsibilidad sa bahay."

A teacher observed:

"Napapansin namin na ang mga batang kulang sa gabay sa bahay ay mas madalas magkaroon ng problema sa disiplina sa paaralan."

These findings suggest that limited parental involvement is not always a matter of indifference but often a result of socioeconomic and occupational constraints. Research indicates that parents facing time and work pressures may struggle to maintain consistent supervision, increasing the likelihood of behavioral difficulties among children (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). Studies further emphasize the need for schools to adopt flexible and inclusive engagement strategies that accommodate diverse family circumstances, such as alternative communication channels and parent support programs (Jeynes, 2016). Addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring that all learners receive consistent behavioral guidance, regardless of family constraints.

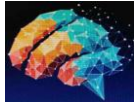
### **Synthesis of Themes**

Taken together, the three themes illustrate that learner discipline is shaped by the interplay of consistency, modeling, and contextual support. Consistent discipline across home and school provides clarity and stability, positive parental modeling reinforces values and self-regulation, and sustained parental involvement when supported by flexible school practices enhances discipline outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of collaborative, family-centered approaches to discipline that recognize parents as essential partners in shaping learners' behavior.

## **5. Discussion**

The findings of this study affirm that parents play a significant role in shaping discipline among elementary learners. Consistent with existing literature, the results show that clear expectations, supervision, and positive modeling at home contribute to improved learner discipline in school. The alignment between home and school discipline practices appears particularly important, as it reinforces behavioral norms and reduces confusion among learners.

The study also highlights the challenges faced by some parents in maintaining active involvement, suggesting that schools must adopt flexible and supportive strategies to engage families. Strengthening communication channels and providing guidance on positive discipline practices may help address these challenges and promote consistent behavioral support for learners.



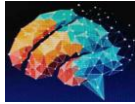
## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that parental involvement is a critical determinant of learner discipline at the elementary level. Parents who consistently guide, monitor, and model appropriate behavior contribute significantly to positive discipline outcomes in school. Conversely, limited or inconsistent parental involvement is associated with increased behavioral concerns among learners.

It is recommended that schools strengthen parent-school partnerships through regular communication, parent education programs on positive discipline, and collaborative behavior management strategies. Teachers may benefit from professional development focused on engaging parents as partners in discipline. Future research may explore the long-term impact of parental involvement on learner behavior and examine intervention models that effectively support families in promoting positive discipline.

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