



PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONAL PATTERNS OF HIGH AND LOW ACHIEVING IX GRADERS

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Abstract

The present study was carried out to study parent-child interactional patterns of high and low achieving IX graders. The sample comprised of 100 students of class IX of the age ranging between 13-15 studying in private and government schools of Chandigarh. The independent variable in this study was parent-child interaction and dependent variable was achievement. A qualitative analysis of responses of parents on parent child interaction scale revealed that parents of both high and low achievers were willing to devote time to their children's academics. But, parents of high achievers provided more academic guidance than parents of low achievers. Direct instruction by parents was more popular among low achievers group than the high achievers group. Parents of low achievers were found a little higher on verbal facility with their children. However, verbal contact with the child was almost the same for both the groups. Parents of high achievers were found higher on providing emotional security to the children as compared to their counterparts. Parents of low achievers showed more inclinations in boosting educational aspirations of their children than parents of high achievers. Better intellectual climate at home was provided by parents of high achievers than the parents of low achievers.

Keywords: Parent-child interaction, achievement, high achievers, low achievers

Introduction:

Parent-child interaction implies how the parents involve themselves in developing the overall personality of the child, parental involvement in school activities and in the student's school work forms an integral part of successful academic performance. Parent involvement, for e.g. can mean assessment of school-home communication, parental involvement at school and involvement in the student's learning activities and in school decision making and governance (Christenson, Rounds & Gorney, 1992).

Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the activity

of raising a child rather than the biological relationship. Parenting is a complex process that includes many specific behaviors that work individually and together to influence child' outcomes (Davis, 2000).

In the child development literature, parental involvement is described as the degree to which the parent is committed to his or her role as a parent and to the fostering of optimal child development (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Parent child interaction is an aspect of parent child relations and is concerned with the amount and quality of social interaction between them and implications of such interaction are not only on the quality of their relationship but upon the child and parents.

Parent child interaction can help parents to emphasize good work habits, value learning and good character, set high expectations for their children, stay informed about their children's progress and monitor their children's activities. Parent child interaction plays an important role in shaping the personality of the child. If the parents are rational and their attitude towards the child is logical and considerate, it is sure to pick up a behavior pattern which is analytical and co-operative. In case parents are too emotional and their attitude is non-rational and they act more in terms of expediency in an authoritative manner, child will fail to have a proper emotional training, thus lacking in emotional normality. When the interaction between the child and parents is less, the child develops a sense of loneliness and in later life; he may also become a confined individualist, self-seeking and introvert.

It has been realized that links between the school, home and community by involving parents can benefit students by giving their academic learning relevance in terms of their home environments and community (Kevorkian, 1997).

Student achievement improves when parents become involved in their children's education at school and in the community.

The most important aspects of parental involvement appear to be direct interaction with the child in educational situations and the ability to respond in expansive verbal ways to child behavior. Parental involvement is a multidimensional concept and parent child interaction is a part of it. It can be studied through:

- time spent with the child,

- academic guidance,
- use of reward and verbal communication etc.

Zellman and Waterman (1998) conducted a study on understanding the impact of parent school involvement on children's educational outcomes. They found that parent school involvement contributes to positive child outcomes. However, such involvement appears to be a manifestation of parental enthusiasm and positive parenting style.

Sadanandan and Laurduswamy (2011) conducted a study on parental influence on academic achievement of higher secondary students and found that there exists a significant relationship between scholastic performance of students and parental influence.

OBJECTIVE

To study the parent-child interactional patterns of low and high achieving IX graders.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The present study was primarily designed to determine the parent-child interaction of low and high achievers. The independent variable in this study is parent-child interaction and dependent variable is achievement.

SAMPLE

The research investigation was carried out on 100 students of class IX of the age ranging between 13-15 studying in private and government schools of Chandigarh.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The tools used for this study are:

1. Parent Child Interaction Scale (Sharma, 2000)
2. Achievement scores were taken as cumulative percentage of marks obtained by students in the house tests, unit tests and annual examination.

DATA ANALYSIS

A qualitative analysis of responses of parents on parent child interaction scale:

The patterns of parent child interactions as reported by parents of high and low achievers were drawn on the basis of cumulative scores on various dimensions of parent child interaction scale. The parent child interaction scale covered three types of parent child interactions viz.

1. Behavioural involvement with the child which includes activities like:

- a. Academic Guidance by parents
- b. Amount of direct instructional time
- c. Parent's willingness to devote time to child

2. Personal involvement:

- a. Planned cultural activities
- b. Nature of discipline
- c. Verbal facility of parents
- d. Involvement in management
- e. Frequency of verbal contact between parent and child
- f. Emotional security

3. Cognitive stimulation

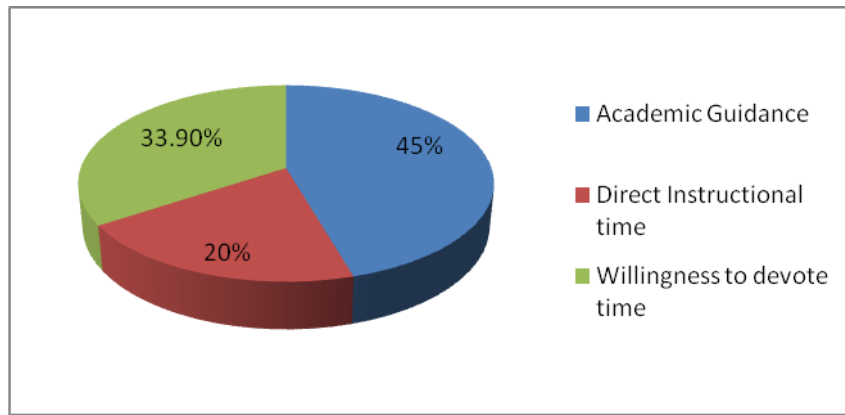
- a. Boosting educational aspirations of the child
- b. Intellectual climate at home
- c. Parent's work habits

The scores of parent's response on each dimension were pooled and transformed into percentages. This was done separately for high achievers and low achievers.

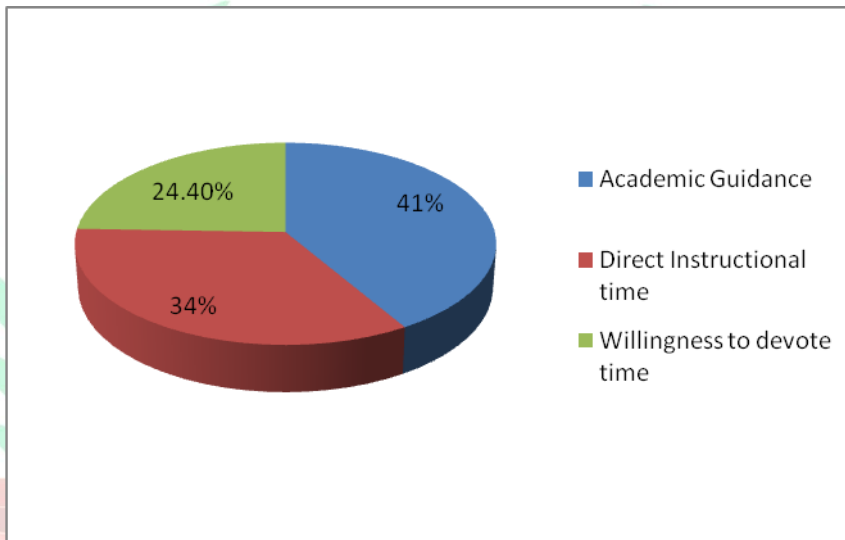
Behavioural Involvement of Parents with their Children:

Pie Diagram Fig. 1 show response patterns of parents on Behavioural Involvement dimension of Parent Child Interaction. It may be seen from the diagrams that 45% parents of high achievers provide academic guidance to their children whereas in the low achievers group only 41% children receive academic guidance from their parents. This seems to be almost an equal proportion of parents who are really willing to provide guidance in the academics of their children whether they are high achievers or low achievers. It is interesting to note that under this dimension of Behavioural Involvement, parents of both high and low achievers provide direct instruction to their children. Almost 20% parents of high achievers and 24% parents of low achievers devote time for direct instruction. Almost equal percentage of parents 33.9% (high achievers) and 34% (low achievers) has shown their willingness to devote time to their child's academics.

Fig. 1: Pie Diagrams showing response patterns of parents of high and low achievers on personal involvement dimension



High Achievers



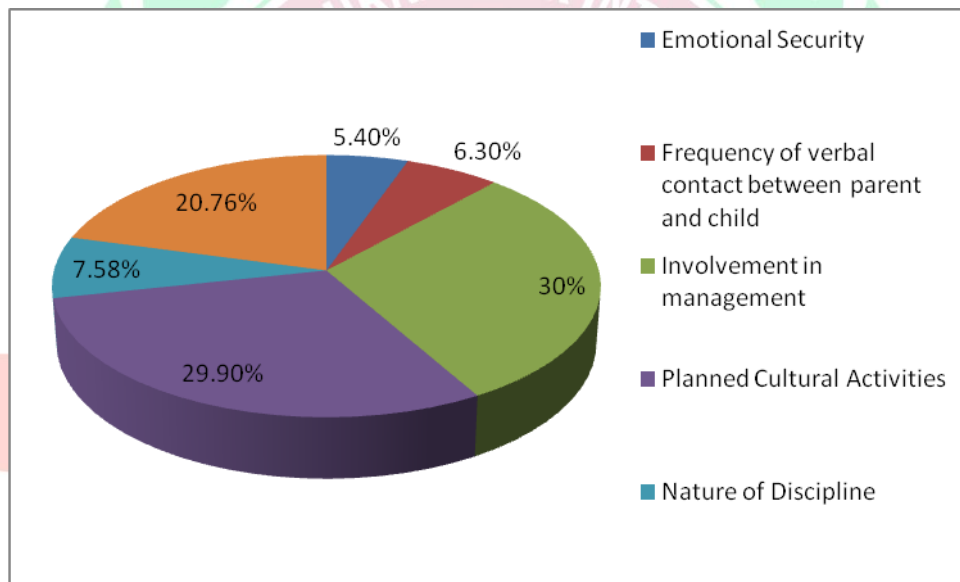
Low Achievers

Personal Involvement of Parents with their children:

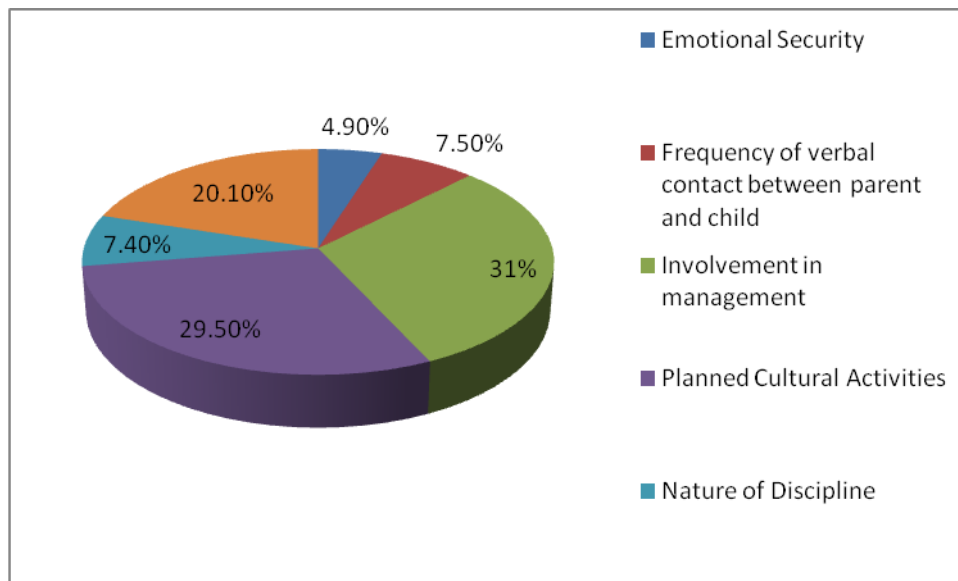
Pie diagrams Fig. 2 show response patterns of parents on Personal involvement Dimension of Parent Child Interaction. It may be seen from the diagram that almost equal percentage of parents 29.9% (high Achievers) 29.5% (low achievers) plan cultural activities like picnics, going to temple, etc. with their children. It may be noted that parents of both high and low achievers adopt almost similar discipline at home. Only 7.58% parents in case of high achievers and 7.4% parents in case of low achievers have shown an inclination to discipline their children. It is surprising which is 7.5% whereas 6.3% in case of high achievers. This shows that the communication between parents and low achievers is more of verbal nature as compared to parents of high achievers. The high achievement may

be attributed to other factor than the verbal communication. The diagrams depicts that almost equal percentage of parents 30% of high achievers and 30.6% of low achievers are involved in managing activities related to their children like deciding about their career. The pie diagrams depict that there is almost an equal percentage of parents 20.76% of high achievers and 20.1% of low achievers who are engaged in verbal contact with their children. The frequency of verbal contact between parents and child is equally preferred by parents of both high and low achievers. The emotional security provided to students by parents is higher which is 5.4% in case of high achievers whereas it is 4.9% in low achievers groups.

Fig. 2: Pie Diagrams showing response patterns of parents of high and low achievers on personal involvement dimension



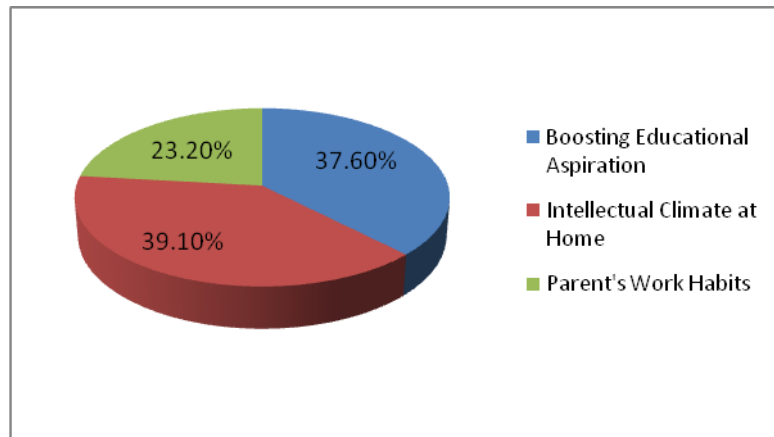
High Achievers



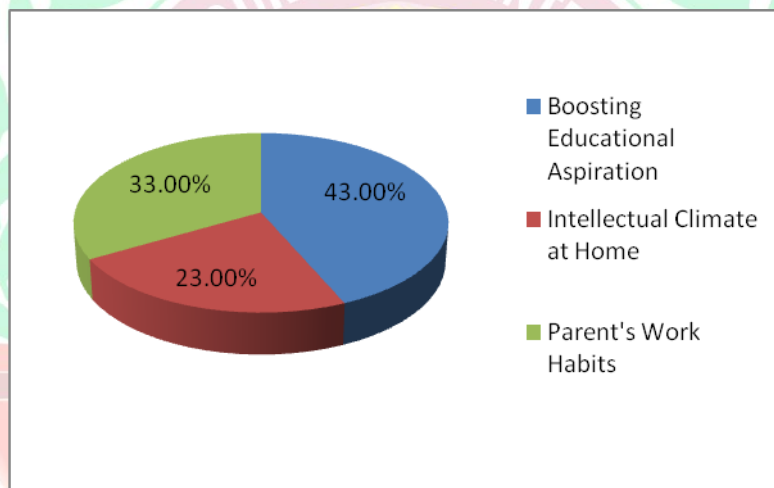
Low Achievers

Cognitive Stimulation by Parents:

Pie diagrams Fig. 3 show response patterns of parents on Cognitive Stimulation Dimension of Parent Child Interaction. It may be seen from the diagrams that 37.6% parents of high achievers boost educational aspirations of the child whereas in the low achievers group 43% parents boost educational aspirations of their children. It is interesting to note that parents of low achievers take active interest in boosting the morale of their children and inspire them to perform better. This may be due to the fact that the parents of these children are more aspirant themselves and want to see their children as high achievers. But, in fact their children are low achievers. This may be impelling the parents to boost their wards more than parents of high achievers have to do. The pie diagrams depict that the percentage of parents taking initiative in building intellectual climate at home is higher in case of high achievers (39.1%) than that of low achievers (33%). Intellectual climate at home facilitates learning and may have contributed to higher achievements of these children. Parent's work habits are almost similar in high and low achievers group. It is 23.2% in case of high achievers and 24% in case of low achievers.



High Achievers



Low Achievers

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of observations based on Pie diagrams following conclusions were drawn:

The interactional patterns of parents of high and low achievers were analyzed along three dimensions and it was observed that there were certain activities under each of these three dimensions, on which the parents of high and low achievers showed similar interactional patterns and there were a few activities along which they were different.

On Behaviour Involvement Dimension

- Parents of both high and low achievers are willing to devote time to their children's academics.

- Parents of high achievers provide more academic guidance than parents of low achievers.
- Direct instruction by parents is more popular among low achievers group than the high achievers group.

On Personal Involvement Dimension

- Planning and implementing cultural activities like arranging picnics, going to temple or market etc. are organized almost equally by the parents of high and low achievers.
- Equal number of parents of both the groups seemed to discipline their children at home.
- Parents of low achievers were found a little higher on verbal facility with their children. However, verbal contact with the child was almost the same for both the groups.
- Parents of high achievers were found higher on providing emotional security to the children as compared to their counterparts.

On Cognitive Stimulation Dimension

- Parents of low achievers showed more inclinations in boosting educational aspirations of their children than parents of high achievers.
- Better intellectual climate at home is provided by parents of high achievers than the parents of low achievers.
- The parents of both the groups were found similar on their own work habits.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Parent – teacher meetings should be brought about frequently at schools, where the parents should be educated or provided with information regarding the nature of their interaction with their children and its probable results on their academic achievement.
- Parents should be encouraged to have interactive family climate at home and take active part in their child's academics and other related activities like deciding about their career.

- Parents of low achieving students should provide emotional security to their children rather than rebuking them, as this may be the reason for achieving low.
- The development programs for children in which parents can also participate should be arranged. The interaction and co-operation of parents and teachers can help in creating a wholesome environment for children for their development.

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