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## Parents' Levels of Involvement and Role Construction in Children's Reading at Home

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### ABSTRACT

Using a descriptive research methodology, this study determined parents' levels of involvement and role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home. This study surveyed 379 parents of Grade 4 pupils from the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte for school year 2019-2020. The Assessment Tool on Parents' Levels of Involvement in Children's Reading at Home and Levels of Role Construction Regarding Involvement in Children's Reading at Home was used to gather data. Mean was used to describe their responses to the survey-questionnaire with respect to modeling, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of parental involvement; and their levels of role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home. Majority of the parents had low levels of involvement in the modeling, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions; their level of role construction was high.

### INTRODUCTION

In both developed and developing countries context, reading is considered as an instrument for learning that appears to be a priceless activity. According to Guthrie, Benneth and McGough (2017), reading is a multifaceted cognitive process of building meaning of the texts written in different sources. Research supports that those children who read at early age are likely to exhibit greater interest in reading at later ages (Arnold & Whitehurst, 2014). Additionally, Weinberger (2016) suggested that children who were attached to books at the age of three, could best perform in higher grade levels.

Unfortunately, studies on pupils' reading achievement indicates that a significant number of children in several parts of the world are not able to read at their class levels (Maduekwe and Adeosun, 2010). For example, a study on early grade reading acquisition in Timor-Leste (World Bank, 2011) found that by the end of grade one, 70% of the pupils could not read a single word in Portuguese. Similar studies conducted in Uganda and Tanzania recorded poor literacy levels. Specifically, in Tanzania the study found that, 92.3% of the standard three pupils could not read a class two text in English.

In the Philippine context, the education system also faces a dilemma due to a wide spread and rapid deterioration of language skills particularly in reading. In 2017, the study of Synergia Foundation revealed that 53% of the elementary pupils in the country were found frustrated readers; 23% could not comprehend; and 7% could not read at all (Imam, 2016). Furthermore, Dr. Yolanda Quijano, former head of DepEd's Bureau of Elementary Education, attributed reading problems as the main culprit for the poor performance of some students in the National Achievement Test (NAT). The records of the Department of Education (DepEd) show a declining achievement level of elementary pupils based on the

National Achievement (NAT) results from 2010 to 2017. The efforts of the government by implementing the K to 12 curriculum did not do much to change the status quo (Imam, 2016). In fact, among 79 participating countries and economies, Philippines scored the lowest in reading comprehension for both boys and girls in the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), a worldwide study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development that examines students' knowledge in reading, mathematics and science.

Specifically, the Phil-IRI report of the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte for school year 2018-2019 reveals that out of the 3630 enrolled Grade 4 male pupils who took the Phil-IRI test, 305 were non-readers during the pre-test while 88 remained as non-readers during the posttest. On the other hand, out of the 3470 enrolled Grade 4 female pupils who had the same test, 205 were non-readers during the pre-test while 51 were non-readers during the posttest.

The reading comprehension difficulties may be attributed to many contributing factors, such as national budget, lack of structural support, training of teachers, teachers' qualification, quality of instruction, quality of instructional materials, students' backgrounds, and condition of physical facilities (Pajo, 2011). However, these findings did not look into parental involvement in the modeling, cognitive and behavioral dimensions. This argument builds the basis that parents' role is without doubt very critical in the lives of their children. Available studies on parental involvement in early childhood have focused more on emergent and informal literacy (Maina, 2010; Wambiri, 2017), while studies on parental involvement in children's conventional reading at the lower primary school level have not received due attention.

Without doubt, the close link between home and school is recognized worldwide as an essential factor in

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facilitating improvement of literacy skills among children. Parents as first teachers of their children need to focus on developing reading habits such as reading for pleasure and out of school reading, so that it can further help them to read easily at school and beyond. Studies inform that reading as a routine activity helps the learners in obtaining meaningful and desirable Vol. 5 No. 1 (June 2018) Role of Parents in Developing Reading Habits 44 knowledge. Bashir and Mattoo (2012 as cited in Owusu-Acheaw, 2014) believe that it is the good reading habits that act as a strong weapon for the students to excel in life. Further, other studies extensively support the idea that parents who read in front of their children, can inspire them towards reading books and resultantly they are attracted automatically towards reading (Morrow, 2013). Also, parents who read regularly can influence their children to engage with reading (Cunningham & Stanovich, 2017). In most if not all cultures, parenting is seen as an integral social role with great influence on the lives of children and of parents themselves (Alampay, 2014). The importance of parenting is particularly highlighted in Philippine society, in which the family is generally seen as central to one's social world (Jocano, 2018). Local and cross-cultural researchers have described the Filipino family as characterized by cohesiveness, respect for elders, deference to parental authority, and fulfillment of mutual obligations (Chao & Tseng, 2012).

The important role of parents and guardians in making sure that the learning of their children will continue amid expected disruptions has been underscored by the Department of Education (DepEd) as the country prepares for the "new normal" in education due to the changes brought about by the COVID-19 crisis (Malipot, 2020). DepEd Undersecretary Annalyn Sevilla said that the cooperation and support coming from parents will be very important as the entire basic education system braces for the so-called "new normal."

Indeed, parents can provide many other opportunities to their children to start reading different texts for their academic improvement as well as for their general knowledge. Moreover, parents can provide materials related to reading at home that can enhance children's reading achievement and cognition (Stuart et.al, 2018). Similarly, Kaiser et. al (2013) acknowledged that for children, their parents serve as their first teachers, who can develop a love for reading that could enable them to excel in their academic as well as social life. Thus, the effective role of parents in improving reading engagement cannot be ignored (Baker, 2012), which ultimately helps their academic achievements (Pressley, 2018). Therefore, in order to understanding their critical role, parents should contribute in the success of their children by listening to them while they read their school books and other texts of their interest (Tizard, Schofield & Hewison, 2012).

It is in this context that the researchers were encouraged to determine the levels of parents' involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modeling, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of parental involvement and

role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home. It is hoped that the results of this study can encourage school authorities and policymakers to develop intervention materials that will increase parental involvement and role construction in their children's reading at home.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is defined as parents volunteering in schools and parent input at home. Parent involvement is an integral part of the learning process because parents are stakeholders in their children's academic achievement. The issues of how and why parents become involved are critical to making the most out of their input. The distinction between parent involvement in the school and on the home is vital because of parent input and the effects on the student.

Dauber and Epstein (2011) listed five types of parent involvement including basic obligations of families, basic obligations of schools, involvement at school as a volunteer, involvement in learning activities at home, and involvement in decision making. The same research also notes that a sixth type of involvement has been suggested and is still being researched, that of collaboration and exchanges with community organizations.

More recently, Epstein (2015) reported that there is a strong correlation between school and community. Small businesses in the community can be eager to build an affinity with local PTAs. Small businesses generate revenue and build rapport. The PTA gets a sponsor for various projects.

According to Epstein and Dauber (2011), the basic obligations of families are to maintain children's health and safety begin parenting and child rearing skills, and create a positive home environment. The basic obligation of schools involves communicating all pupil progress and all necessary information to the home by many different forms. Involvement at school as a volunteer means assisting teachers, administrators, and other personnel in different areas of the school. Involvement in learning activities at home includes helping children understand the guidance from teachers on their home assignments, promoting a home learning environment, and helping to create study strategies.

Parental involvement in decision making includes parents taking participating roles in PTAs, school governments, and advisory councils (Epstein & Dauber, 2011). Pomerantz, Moorman, and Litwack (2017) pointed out that school-based involvement means parents making actual contact with schools, including being present at PTA meetings and teacher conferences, and volunteering at school. Reading is frequently described as an interactive activity in which the author and the reader collaborate to achieve comprehension. In a collaborative effort, the author must formulate the content in such a way that it is interpretable, while the reader must mobilize the skills and knowledge required to comprehend it. The reader, on



the other hand, is the most likely to sabotage the process by failing to comprehend, giving in, and stopping reading. As a result, the reader is regarded as the most important factor in comprehension.

### Levels of Parental Involvement

**Modeling Dimension.** When parents read frequently in their children's presence, they act as positive role models since young children want to be like their significant others "their parents". Research conducted by Holdaway (2010) indicates that by reading daily, parents act as positive role models that children strive to emulate. Accordingly, this emulation results in children attempting to read on their own and when parents reinforce these attempts, children's reading skills improve significantly.

Holdaway further contended that, the interest and enthusiasm that parents express as they read motivates children to try to read available reading materials themselves. As a result, children practice reading on their own thereby improving their reading skills significantly. In addition, modeling is particularly influential when the children perceive the models as being competent and possessing reading skills and abilities. This often makes the parent a significant and powerful model for the child (Bandura, 2016). These studies, however, did not examine factors that influence parents modeling reading at home. In addition, the studies did not specify the type of materials parents read in their children's presence.

### Cognitive Dimension

Children who are introduced to reading activities at home during their early years learn to read early. Studies conducted in the west to explore the relationship between children's home reading environment and their literacy acquisition indicate that children whose parents read books, newspapers, and magazines with them, tell stories and listen to them read story books in the early classes have an advantage over their peers without such experiences.

Research revealed that experience with print and non-print reading materials at home has a facilitative effect on children's reading (Cornille, Mullis, Ritchson *et al.*, 2014). These studies, however, only investigated the cognitive dimension of parental involvement and did not examine other parental involvement dimensions. Regular parent-child practice to read improves the child's reading ability. A five years' longitudinal study on parental involvement in the development of children's reading skills conducted by Austin (2017) reported that story book reading by parents at home positively influences children's reading fluency. The study also found that when parents taught letter sounds and word reading to their children at home, there was a significant improvement in children's reading skills. He argued that families where children are at risk of failing to read should take up these practices in order for their children to succeed in school. The study, however, only investigated parent involvement in the cognitive dimension of parental involvement in children's

reading and did not focus on activities in the modeling and behavioral dimensions.

Parents' involvement in children's reading-related activities at home is a very effective form of parent involvement. Studies have proved that when parents read to their children and listen attentively as children read aloud regularly, they help children to comprehend the relationship between the pronounced word and the written word thereby promoting children's reading development (Denton, Reaney & West, 2011).

### Behavioral Dimension

Exposing children to environments with varied reading materials and allowing them to interact with available materials promotes their literacy development. In a study to compare gains in reading and mathematics by children from low- and middle-income households in Baltimore Schools, Entwisle, Alexander and Olson (2010) demonstrated that low-income children made comparable grade equivalent gains in reading and mathematics during the academic school year as those from middle-income children; though children from middle income households achieved higher in reading tests. They stated that the differences in children's achievement was due to pre-existing differences upon entrance to kindergarten and the experiential learning opportunities and home resources (e.g., books, computers, visits to museums, libraries, plays or movies) available for children from middle income households particularly during summer months.

Although this study gives insights on gains made by exposing children to a literacy-rich reading environment, it did not investigate the factors influencing parental involvement in children's reading at home. A literacy-rich home environment positively influences children's reading achievement. Maduekwe and Adeosun (2010) highlighted that a home environment that has plenty of reading materials strongly correlates with children's reading achievement in school. They stipulated that an effective learning home environment includes high parent aspiration and expectation, rich learning environment, academic support, guidance and stimulation that lead to higher achievement in reading tests. These studies, however, did not investigate factors that influence parents' involvement in their children's reading at home.

### Extent of Parental Involvement in Children's Reading

Higher levels of parental involvement positively influence children's reading achievement. Various studies conducted all over the world have shown that there has been low parental involvement in children's reading. Studies conducted in the United States of America (USA) for example, indicated that parents were not adequately involved in their children's reading. Brandt (2011) noted that most teachers reported low parental involvement in schools in the United States of America. These teachers reported that majority of parents fail to attend parent-teacher meetings, school functions and do not assist their

children with assignments and projects. Similarly, MetLife (2011) found that teachers in USA ranked strengthening parents' roles in their children's learning first, among the issues that should receive the highest priority in the public education policy. These studies, however, did not indicate factors that contribute to the low levels of parental involvement other than lack of time.

A study by Finney (2013) reported that 40% of the parents across the United States were not devoting enough time to their children's education. Similarly, Anderson *et al.*, (2011) found that only 64% of three- to five-year-olds children had parents who read to them or told stories to them on a regular basis. He however, reported that the percentages of the parents who were involved in their children's reading differed across different races as follows; Whites (69%), Blacks (56%), Asians (66%), Hispanic (53%) and American Indians (50%). Smith (2016) also found minimal parental involvement in children's education in the USA. Smith attributed the low involvement to lack of education and lack of time.

Studies held in the United Kingdom reported low levels of parental involvement in their children's education. In a study involving fathers in 26 families in Britain, Welsh *et al.*, (2012) found that parental involvement in their children's reading and support in homework assignments were rated least among other aspects of parental involvement. The study noted that out of the eight aspects of involvement that were measured, the lowest scores were in reading and in the supervision of homework. The study reported that some of the fathers in the study indicated that they did not have the necessary ability to help their children with school work.

In the developing world, parental involvement in children's reading was found to be equally low. A study conducted by Manjula *et al.*, (2014) in India, revealed that 80% of pupils who had reading difficulties studied on their own at home without any parents' support. A study on the level of parents' involvement conducted in 40 primary schools in Hong Kong (Ho, 2010), found that 30% of the parents ranked their involvement as low, 40% as medium while only 30% ranked their involvement as high.

Lemmer (2012) observed that parental involvement has been limited to financing schools and volunteering. She noted that although parental involvement is linked to school success, parental participation is not significant in many schools in South Africa. She reported that many developing countries including South Africa, tend to give parents increased roles in governing schools; while relatively few parents are actively involved in their children's reading. Similarly, a study involving 21 parents who were serving in the school governing bodies, 5 school principals and 1 headman conducted in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa reported very low levels of parental and community involvement (Msila, 2012). Msila reported that parents were of the opinion that teachers had the necessary skills to lead schools without parents' support. On the other hand, the school principals concurred that parental involvement would

improve learners' performance and school success in general. However, these studies, did not explore factors contributing to parents' failure to be involved in their children's learning.

### **Factors Influencing Parental Involvement in Children's Reading at Home**

Research suggests that several factors influence parental involvement in children's reading. These factors include; parents' role construction, teacher invitation, education level, self-efficacy, socio-economic status, time constraint, child's age, type of school the child attends, teachers' attitudes towards parental involvement and teachers' perception of parents' efficacy. However, local studies on parental role construction and teachers' invitation for parental involvement particularly at the lower primary school level have not attracted much attention. This study, therefore, focused on parental role construction and teacher's invitation.

### **Parents Role Construction**

Parents who have a positive role construction regarding their involvement in their children's reading development are more likely to be involved than those who have a negative role construction.

According to Bandura (2016), parents' role construction regarding their involvement in children's reading serve as a motivator and regulator of their involvement. Parents' beliefs about their role in assisting their children to improve their learning therefore establishes the range of activities that they construe as important, necessary and permissible to engage in (Hoover *et al.*, 2015). Accordingly, parents decide to be involved in their children's reading when they understand that being involved is part of their role as parents. They attest that once parents decide to be involved, they choose specific activities to be involved based on their beliefs about what they are supposed to do so that they can improve their children's reading. These studies, however, did not explore factors that influence parents' involvement in their children's reading. A study to examine parents' role construction and its impact on their levels of involvement was, therefore, necessary.

Parents' beliefs about appropriate support roles in children's education influence their role construction. A study conducted in England by Williams, Williams and Ullman (2012) found that 2% of parents who took part in the study felt that the responsibility for children's education belonged to the school while 58% believed that they had at least equal responsibility. The study concluded that the way parents perceive the responsibility for their children's education is a critical factor in shaping their views about being involved. This study however, examined children's education in general but did not focus on a particular education aspect such as reading development or the reasons for expressed views. There was, therefore, a need to explore parents' construed roles in children's reading.

Parents' perception of their role in children's reading

determines their decision to be or not to be involved. A study conducted in Scotland by the Scottish Executive Social Research (SESR) found that most parents believed that teaching children to read was the responsibility of teachers. The study also found that some of the parents argued that homework supervision at home interfered with the quality time that parents should spend with their children. Other parents believed that their children were capable of fulfilling the demands of the school and did not require parents' monitoring.

Parents' role construction serves as a motivator for involvement in children's reading. Studies by Hoover-Dempsey *et al.* (2015) found that when parents perceive their involvement in children's learning as their responsibility, they engage in activities that they construe as important, necessary, and permissible. Similarly, Bandura (2016) asserts that from the construed roles, parents set goals that are related to desired outcomes. Parents' beliefs about their roles in children's reading enable them to plan and engage in activities that in their opinion assist their children's literacy development. Parents' perception of their roles in children's reading and reasons for these perceptions needed to be explored. Studies conducted in Thika district in Kenya found that parents' perception influences their involvement in children's reading-related activities.

A study on factors influencing caregiver's behavior with print and children's emergent reading behavior found that caregivers' perceptions about their role in stimulating children's reading related development is a major factor that influenced their decision to stimulate children's emergent reading development (Wambiri, 2017).

Similarly, a study in the same district on parents' involvement in pre-school children's reading development found that parents' role construction influenced their involvement in children's literacy development (Maina, 2010). These studies, however, targeted parents of children who had not entered primary schools. Studies on parental involvement in children's reading development during the lower primary school are necessary because children are usually introduced to conventional learning at this level.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Design

The study employed the descriptive research design. According to Ethridge (as cited in Antonio, 2018), descriptive research seeks to describe the current status of an identified variable. It is characterized as simply the attempt to determine, describe or identify what is all about the variables.

### Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte, Philippines. There are four zones in this schools division. These are the Central Zone, East Zone, North Zone, and South Zone. Said schools division has a total of 318 public elementary schools.

### Population and Sampling

The target population of this study were parents of Grade 4 learners in the public elementary schools of the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte for school year 2019 - 2020. A sampling percentage was used to identify the number of respondents to be taken from each zone in SDOIN, treating each as a single stratum regardless of their differences in their population size. To warrant the sufficiency of data, the sampling procedure was set at 53 percent. This means 53 percent of the population of parents of Grade 4 learners in every zone was taken as respondents for this study.

### Instrumentation and Data Collection Procedure

This study used a survey-questionnaire, Assessment Tool on Parents' Levels of Involvement in Children's Reading at Home and Levels of Role Construction Regarding Involvement in Children's Reading at Home, which was composed of two parts. Attached to the survey-questionnaire was a letter indicating provision for the parent-respondents' full consent in their participation in the study and that all disclosed information was held with utmost confidentiality.

### Survey on the Parents' Levels of Involvement in Children's Reading at Home and Levels of Role Construction Regarding Involvement in Children's Reading at Home

Part I of the survey-questionnaire, which was in a rating scale, included the Survey on the Parents' Levels of Involvement in Children's Reading at Home and Levels of Role Construction Regarding Involvement in Children's Reading at Home. This instrument was adopted from the instrument developed by Kimathi (2014). This survey determined the parents' levels of involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modeling, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of parental involvement, and levels of role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home. To measure parents' level of involvement in children's reading at home, the following scale was used:

Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
4	Very Often (VO)
3	Often (O)
2	Sometimes (S)
1	Rarely (R)
0	Never (N)

Each of the three parental involvement dimensions (modeling, cognitive and behavioral) has five items. Frequencies of parents' responses in the study items were calculated to establish parents' scores. To obtain parents' level of involvement in each of the three parental involvement dimensions, scores were grouped into two categories. Parents who scored 0 to 10 were placed in the low level of involvement category while those who scored 11 to 20 were placed in high level of involvement category.

### Survey on Parents' Levels of Role Construction Regarding Involvement in Children's Reading

Meanwhile, the second part of the instrument, which was also in a rating scale, contained the Survey on Parents' Levels of Role Construction Regarding Involvement in Children's Reading, which was adopted from the instrument developed by Kimathi (2014). To measure the parents' level of role construction, a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" was used. Parents' responses to the 15 items were calculated. The responses were assigned the following scores:

Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
4	Strongly Agree (SA)
3	Agree (A)
2	Slightly Agree (SA)
1	Disagree (D)
0	Strongly Disagree (SD)

To determine the level of parents' role construction, scores were grouped into two categories. Parents, who scored 15 to 45, were categorized as having a low level of role construction, and those who scored 46 to 75 were categorized as having a high level of role construction.

Prior to the distribution of the survey questionnaires, the researchers requested for permission from the schools division superintendent of Ilocos Norte for the conduct of the study. After securing permission from the superintendent, the researchers identified the grade 4 pupils enrolled in each zone of said schools division for school year 2019-2020 based on the list that was given by the planning officers of the schools division. Then, the researchers got the names of the parents of these grade 4 pupils from the LIS coordinator in each school district. Then, the survey questionnaires were floated to the parent-respondents. For parents who could not read nor write, the researchers facilitated the answering of said survey questionnaires. The results of the survey were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

The data gathering was conducted with ethical considerations in mind. Throughout the course of this study, the respondents' rights were protected or safeguarded. The respondents were given an explanation of the study, as well as the potential benefits. It was highlighted that their willingness or will to participate in the study would determine their involvement. Nonetheless, they were asked to give their informed consent.

### Tools for Data Analysis

Mean was used to describe their responses to the survey-questionnaire along their levels of involvement in children's reading at home with respect to modeling, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of parental involvement; and their levels of role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home.

The following statistical ranges with their corresponding descriptive interpretations were used to describe the parent-respondents' levels of involvement in children's

reading at home with respect to modeling, cognitive and behavioral dimensions of parental involvement:

Scale	Range Interval	Descriptive Interpretation
4	3.51 – 4.00	Very Often Involved (VOI)
3	2.51 – 3.50	Often Involved (OI)
2	1.51 – 2.50	Sometimes Involved (SI)
1	0.01 – 1.50	Rarely Involved (RI)

In terms of the parent-respondent' levels of role construction regarding involvement in children's reading at home, the following statistical ranges with their corresponding descriptive interpretations were used:

Scale	Range Interval	Descriptive Interpretation
5	4.51 – 5.00	Strongly Agree (SA)
4	3.51 – 4.50	Agree (A)
3	2.51 – 3.50	Slightly Agree (SA)
2	1.51 – 2.50	Disagree (D)
1	1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree (SD)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Parent-Respondents' Level of Involvement in Modeling Dimension

This area refers to the parent-respondents' level of involvement in modeling dimension. Table 1 shows their scores and level of involvement in this dimension.

It can be gleaned from the table that majority of the parents (370 or 97.63%) recorded low level of involvement while only 9 or 2.37 are highly involved in modeling reading religious books; booklets such as church newsletters brochures, pamphlets; newspapers; magazines; and story books.

**Table 1:** Parents' scores and level of involvement in modeling dimension (n=379).

Range of Scores	Level	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 10	Low	370	97.63
11 – 20	High	9	2.37
Total		379	100.00

Holdaway (2010) stressed that by reading daily, parents act as positive role models that children strive to emulate. Accordingly, this emulation results in children attempting to read on their own and when parents reinforce these attempts, children's reading skills improve significantly. However, the results of this study suggest that majority of the children do not have the opportunity to emulate their parents as models in reading since parents rarely read in their children's presence at home. Parents reported that they read religious books such as the Bible and Quran though they could not read materials written in English. In addition, the findings corroborate with that of Similarly, Anderson *et al.*, (2011) that only 64% of three-to-five-year-old children had parents who read to them or told stories to them on a regular basis. He reported that the percentages of Asian parents who were involved



in their children’s reading is only 66%. Smith (2016) attributed the low involvement to lack of education. This is an interesting finding based on low levels of education among the parent-respondents. As emphasized by Lee and Bowen (2016), parents whose educational levels are low may be less involved because they do not feel self-confident enough to contact school staff. This is also in conformity with the claim of PIDS (2012) that children do not get enough support because many parents are not equipped with skills to support their children’s education. (Sheng, 2012).

**Parent-Respondents’ Level of Involvement in Cognitive Dimension**

This area refers to the parent-respondents’ level of involvement in cognitive dimension. Table 2 shows their scores and level of involvement in this dimension.

Table 2 reveals that majority of the parents (339 or 89.45%) has low level of involvement in the cognitive dimension while only 40 parent-respondents (10.55%) are highly involved. This points to the fact that most of the children are not supported to practice reading at home. This is because parents hardly engaged in reading related activities such as reading with children, listening to them read aloud or supervising, asking them to read while listening, asking questions from a passage to check their understanding of words and phrases read, explain the meaning of difficult words to them, and checking their homework.

**Table 2:** Parents’ scores and level of involvement in cognitive dimension (n=379).

Range of Scores	Level	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 10	Low	339	89.45
11 – 20	High	40	10.55
Total		379	100.00

The results jibe with the findings of studies conducted in the United Kingdom which reported low levels of parental involvement in their children’s education. In a study involving 26 families in Britain, Welsh *et al.*, (2012) found that parental involvement in their children’s reading and support in homework assignments were rated least among other aspects of parental involvement. The study noted that out of the eight aspects of involvement that were measured, the lowest scores were in reading and in the supervision of homework. The study reported that some of the families in the study indicated that they did not have the necessary ability to help their children with schoolwork.

Without doubt, parent-child reading activities at home play a key role in children’s reading achievement. Sui-chu and Willms (2015) determined that the most important factor in student achievement was home discussions, parents’ contact with school and homework supervision. The research also found that children with learning and behavioral problems had fewer home discussions and

were less supervised than the cohorts that did not exhibit learning and behavioral problems.

**Parent-Respondents’ Level of Involvement in Behavioral Dimension**

This area refers to the parent-respondents’ level of involvement in cognitive dimension. Table 3 presents their scores and level of involvement in this dimension.

**Table 3:** Parents’ scores and level of involvement in behavioral dimension (n=379).

Range of Scores	Level	Frequency	Percentage
0 – 10	Low	356	93.93
11 – 20	High	23	6.07
Total		379	100.00

As shown in Table 3, it is evident that majority of the parents (356 or 93.93%) recorded low level of involvement in the behavioral dimension while only 23 or 21.9% of the parent-respondents are highly involved reminding children to read or complete homework at the designated reading place; accompanying them to the book store to choose reading materials; requesting teachers to recommend suitable reading books that can be borrowed from the library; reinforcing children effort to read (e.g. by praising, hugging or giving gifts to the child); and acquiring reading materials apart from those required by the school (by buying or borrowing from other parents).

This suggests that majority of the children in this constituency are hardly encouraged to read by being exposed to varied literacy materials, since parents rarely use strategies that motivate their children to practice reading.

The data corroborate with the findings of a study conducted by Ramsburg (2018) who found that children who are brought up in an environment with very few or no reading materials often develop a negative attitude towards reading and that they are more likely to experience difficulties in learning to read than their counterparts.

Indeed, a literacy-rich home environment positively influences children’s reading achievement. Maduekwe and Adeosun (2010) underscored that a home environment that has plenty of reading materials strongly correlates with children’s reading achievement in school. They stipulated that an effective learning home environment includes high parent aspiration and expectation, rich learning environment, academic support, guidance, and stimulation that lead to higher achievement in reading tests.

**Parents’ Level of Construction Regarding Involvement in Children Reading at Home**

Table 4 displays their scores and level of parents’ role construction regarding involvement in children reading at home. Based on the data, the level of role construction of the parent-respondents is high. The results suggest that most of the parents believe they have a role to play in children’s reading related activities at home.



**Table 4:** Parents’ scores and level of role construction regarding involvement in children reading at home (n=379).

Range of Scores	Level	Frequency	Percentage
15 – 45	Low	0	0.00
46 – 75	High	379	100.00
Total		379	100.00

The results agree with the claim of Tabbada-Rungduin, et. al. (2014) that Filipino parents always remind their child of the importance of going to school. The same study also found that parents believe that they are their children’s first teacher, especially in learning how to read. Also, the findings are similar to the study conducted in England by Williams *et al.*, (2012). In the study, majority of the parents were found to believe that although the school is responsible for their children’s education, they had equal responsibilities. These findings are also consistent with those of Maina (2010) who found that majority of parents of children in the school indicated that they had a role to play in their children’s literacy development. This suggests that in some cases parents believe that they have a role to play in their children’s learning, though they may actually not be involved.

On the other hand, the findings are inconsistent with those of a study conducted in Scotland (SESR, 2012). In this study, most of the parents believed that it was not their responsibility to teach their children to read but teachers. The study also found that some of the parents argued that homework supervision at home interfered with the quality time that parents should spend with their children. Other parents believed that their children were capable of fulfilling the demands of the school and did not require parents’ monitoring (SESR, 2012). The findings also disagree with those of Wambiri (2017) who found that majority of caregivers had negative role definition. Most of these parents also believed that reading stimulation is the role of the teacher and that parents had little to do with it.

Fortunately, the findings of the study suggest that most parents know that being involved in their children’s reading is part of their role as parents.

**CONCLUSION**

**Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn**

Majority of the parents recorded low levels of involvement in all the three dimensions, namely: modeling, cognitive, and behavioral.

On a positive note, parents’ level of role construction is high which implies that most parents know that being involved in their children’s reading is part of their role as parents.

Since the study only dealt with parents of Grade 4 learners, it is proposed that a follow up study be done to look into other parents’ levels of involvement and role

construction in children’s reading at home. Additionally, it is recommended that intervention materials be created and support system for parents be reinforced to increase their levels of involvement in their in children’s reading at home.

The findings of this study may encourage parents of the learners, together with the community, local government units, non-government organizations, and other stakeholders, to do their part in helping their children to enhance their reading skills and develop good reading habits at home.

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