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Influence of Parental Participation in School Activities on Learners' Academic Performance in Public Junior Schools in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kajiado County

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Abstract

This study investigated parental involvement on learners' academic performance in public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kajiado county. Research question that guided the study is: How does parental participation in school activities affect learners' academic performance in public junior schools in Kajiado's West sub-county? The study was grounded on Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory. The study adopted a convergent mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative component used a Cross-sectional survey, while the qualitative strand applied a phenomenology design. The target population included 76 junior schools, 76 head teachers, 238 teachers, 580 parents, 5,400 Grade 8 and 9 learners, and one SCDE. Stratified and simple random were employed to obtain a sample of 8 schools, and 47 teachers, purposive sampling for 8 head teachers and one SCDE, systematic sampling for 280 learners, and cluster sampling for 58 parents. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussion guides, a document analysis guide, and observation guide. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 28 to generate descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically using NVivo software. Findings were presented using tables, graphs, and narrative descriptions. Content validity was ensured through expert review, while reliability was established using internal consistency measures of alpha 0.70 and above. Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the study. The study established that the involvement of parents in school activities has a positive influence on the academic performance of learners in public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County. It found that effective parent–school engagement improves learners' motivation, supervision and academic support. The study suggests regular parent-teacher communication, school meetings and structured opportunities for parents to participate actively in their children's education.

Key Words: Parental participation, School activities, Learners' academic performance, Public junior schools, Parental involvement.

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Background to the Study

Parental participation in school activities is the active involvement of parents in school-based activities that support their children's education. These include attending parent-teacher meetings, academic clinics, school functions, progress meetings and consultations with teachers. Parental participation involves activities of the learners done thru the school and contact with teachers concerning the progress of learners, as explained by the authors. The independent variable in this study is parental participation in school activities while the dependent variable is the learners' academic performance. Academic performance is used to denote the educational results which are measurable such as assessment scores, grades, examination results and academic progress. The recent Kenyan study also measured academic performance by documented learner examination results (Kabugu & Olendo, 2024).

Education is a joint responsibility of schools, families and communities, and parents are key stakeholders in education. Parental involvement in school activities increases their awareness of their learners' academic progress, school expectations and learning challenges. They can also work with teachers to identify ways to improve learner achievement. UNICEF (2024) also emphasizes the significance of parental involvement as a key element of learning, especially when literacy, numeracy, and the overall educational growth of children. Similarly, UNESCO (2024) stresses the importance of schools, parents and communities working in partnership to improve educational outcomes. These perspectives suggest that parental involvement should not be viewed as passive participation at school events, but as a collaborative relationship in which families are engaged in the academic development of learners.

Recent studies tend to show a positive relationship between parental involvement and students' academic achievement, although this relationship varies according to the type of involvement, globally. Kim (2022) performed a second-order meta-analysis and reported a general positive relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. In the same vein, Wang and Wei (2024) reported positive links between parental involvement and mathematics achievement, however, the size of the effects varied by grade level, location, and type of involvement. These results suggest that parental involvement can lead to improved academic outcomes. However, they also illustrate the need to study participation in specific educational and social contexts, as the same parental practices may not translate into the same outcomes for different learner populations and school systems.

Recent global evidence also suggests that the quality of parental participation is more important than presence. Park and Kim (2024) found that parents' involvement was associated with a positive effect on the academic achievement of adolescents, which was partially mediated by school adjustment and academic engagement. Hernández-Padilla et al. (2023) also differentiated between school-based parental participation and other types of parental support at home. Purposeful parent – teacher interaction, attendance at academically relevant meetings, and participation that strengthens learner engagement are what works. What doesn't always work is assuming that all parental involvement is automatically a good thing irrespective of its quality or purpose. Effective participation involves substantial communication, pertinent academic information and positive collaboration between parents and school personnel, not symbolic or sporadic attendance.

Improving school–family relationships is also a priority for international education stakeholders. Parents can participate in school governance, communication and joint educational activities to contribute to the achievement of goals in schools (UNESCO, 2024). UNICEF (2024)

also emphasizes the value of empowering parents and communities to better support children's learning. The World Bank has also explored the role of parental engagement in educational outcomes and school improvement (Wang & KCP Program Management Unit, 2022). However, these organizations recognise that socioeconomic inequalities, lack of information, poor communication structures and limited opportunities created by schools may affect parental participation. Therefore, the parental involvement will be most effective when schools provide clear, inclusive, and structured opportunities for parents to participate meaningfully.

In Africa, parents are still very involved, but a range of social and economic challenges constrain the effectiveness of that involvement. In South Africa, parent–teacher relationships and communication were found to be important in improving parental engagement and academic achievement (Letswalo and Rapeta, 2025). But employed parents often struggled to engage consistently due to work commitments and lack of time. Similarly, Seleka and Masoabi (2024) found that in a rural South African setting, parents were poorly involved, and there were problems related to parents' educational backgrounds and weak relationships between schools and families. Therefore, the evidence from Africa shows that structured communication and supportive school environments work, while irregular communication, limited parental capacity and demanding work schedules reduce effective participation. This suggests the need to consider parental participation in particular local contexts.

Similarly, recent studies in Kenya show that the involvement of parents can influence academic performance. Anami et al. (2022) study on parental involvement in school activities among public secondary-school students in Kakamega East Sub-County found that participation in school activities was associated with learners' academic outcomes. Kabugu and Olendo (2024) also found a positive and significant relationship between parental involvement and Biology performance in public secondary schools in Kilifi County. However, these studies were mostly at the secondary school level and often conflated school participation with other forms of parental involvement. Thus they do not identify clearly the unique effect of participation in school activities. This produces a conceptual gap that warrants the study of parental participation as an independent variable in the present study.

The Kenyan educational context also points to the need for research that focuses specifically on Junior Schools. The Ministry of Education (2024) reported on the continued implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum and the transition of learners to Junior School under new assessment and instructional arrangements. This educational structure differs from the traditional system of primary and secondary schools studied in many previous studies. Therefore, evidence of prior schooling levels may not adequately account for the impact of parental participation on learners in the current Junior School setting. It is particularly relevant to consider their participation in school activities because competency-based education requires parents to work closely with schools. The present study therefore fills a gap in the educational level by specifically targeting learners enrolled in public junior schools.

Recent studies in Kajiado County show that parental factors are being increasingly studied, but there are still important gaps. Kerei et al. (2024) studied home and school-based parental involvement in public primary schools in Kajiado County but the findings were on access and retention and not academic performance. The study by Kuria et al. (2025) in Kajiado North Sub-County indicated that parental participation in school activities was associated with higher motivation and performance among Grade Six pupils. In contrast, they noted weaknesses in contact with parents and their participation in decision making at school. Njambi et al. (2024) examined parental education and enrolment but not school participation and academic

performance. These studies are related but not directly on the public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County.

The literature reviewed so far shows conceptual, contextual, outcome, and educational-level gaps. The conceptual combination of school participation with homework support, provision of resources, expectations and supervision at home makes it difficult to disentangle the specific influence of participation in school activities (Kim, 2022; Wang & Wei, 2024). As far as context is concerned, previous studies from Kajiado have predominantly been focused on Kajiado North or the county in general leaving Kajiado West largely unstudied. Some local studies focus on access, retention or enrolment rather than academic achievement in terms of outcomes. Educationally, much of the available research is on primary or secondary schools, rather than Junior Schools. The current study therefore examines the effect of parental involvement in school activities on academic performance of learners in public Junior Schools in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kajiado County.

Statement of the Problem

For example, parental involvement in school activities such as parent–teacher meetings, academic clinics, school functions and consultations regarding learners' progress can have a positive impact on learners' academic performance. Research has shown that strong parental involvement has a positive impact on students' academic achievement, motivation, and engagement (Anami et al., 2022; Kim, 2022). Participation, however, is inconsistent especially when parents are faced with socioeconomic limitations, demanding work schedules, geographical mobility, and weak communication between schools and parents. Recent studies in Kajiado County have identified differences in parental participation and school-family interaction (Kerei et al., 2024; Kuria et al., 2025). These challenges raise concern on whether parents in Kajiado West Sub-County participate enough in school activities to enhance learners' academic performance.

Recent Kenyan studies acknowledge the significance of parental participation but there are still important contextual and educational gaps. Anami et al. (2022) focused on public secondary schools in Kakamega East while Kuria et al. (2025) examined Grade Six learners in public primary schools in Kajiado North Sub-County. Similarly, Kerei et al. (2024) studied parental involvement in Kajiado County but concentrated on access and retention instead of academic performance. Thus, there is scanty recent evidence on how the independent variable, parental participation in school activities impacts the dependent variable, learners' academic performance in public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to investigate the effect of parental participation in school activities on learners' academic performance in public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kajiado County.

Research Question

How does parental participation in school activities affect learners' academic performance in public junior schools in Kajiado's West sub-county?

Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded in the Theory of Overlapping Spheres of Influence by Joyce L. Epstein and recently extended by Epstein, Sheldon, and Hine, 2025. The theory advocates that the educational development of learners is influenced by three interrelated spheres, namely family, school and community, with the learner at the center. The central premise is that academic and developmental outcomes are improved when these domains converge thru shared responsibility and meaningful partnerships. The major tenets are parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and working with the community. The overlap may be more or less depending on the age of the learners, family circumstances, school practices and community conditions, therefore cooperation and communication are central tenets of the theory.

One of the great strengths of Epstein's theory is that it takes a holistic, practical approach to understanding parental participation. It acknowledges the shared responsibility of families, schools and communities in education, rather than laying the blame solely on either parents or teachers for learners' achievement. The six dimensions also provide clear categories for researchers and schools to employ in identifying and measuring various forms of participation. Manilal and Jairam (2023) proved that the framework can be applied in both privileged and underprivileged schools' settings reflecting its versatility to different socioeconomic contexts. Recent meta-analyses also show that the more parents are involved, the better children do in school, although the size of the effects depends on the type of involvement, grade level, and where in the world the students live (Wang & Wei, 2024).

Epstein's theory, despite these strengths, has limitations, particularly when applied in economically and culturally diverse communities. The framework may presume that parents have adequate time, resources, confidence, literacy and opportunities to engage in activities such as meetings, volunteering and decision making. Jacobs (2024) argues that traditional models of parental involvement may disregard collectivist African family structures and may judge disadvantaged families against Western middle-class norms of participation. Visible school participation may be constrained by poverty, employment demands, mobility, and alternative caregiving arrangements, and may not reflect parental disinterest. Moreover, the effect of parental involvement is not the same for the academic context, but rather depends on the type, geographical area, and characteristics of the learner (Wang & Wei, 2024). So the theory is to be used with the context as well as the socioeconomic factors.

Epstein's theory is applicable to the present study because it provides a direct explanation for the way the independent variable, parental participation in school activities, could impact on the dependent variable, learners' academic performance. The increased overlap between the family and school spheres includes participation in parent-teacher meetings, academic clinics, school programs, decision-making and communication with teachers. Such cooperation may enhance monitoring, learner motivation, information sharing and coordinated academic support. The framework is also applicable to the Kenyan context. Wangui et al. (2025) applied Epstein's theory to the study of parental involvement and academic performance in West Pokot County and found a significant difference between perceived parental roles and the actual level of involvement.

Review of Related Empirical Literature

Bond (2024) conducted a study in Wales, United Kingdom to assess the functioning of parental involvement in school activities and engagement in children's learning in socioeconomically challenged neighbourhoods. The purpose was to investigate the structural, social and cultural factors influencing school-parent partnerships and their influence on student outcomes. The study followed a mixed conceptual-empirical approach, involving document analysis, school case studies and interviews with parents, teachers and senior leaders. Results showed that socioeconomic constraints, school climate, and clarity of invitations sent to parents were strongly associated with parental participation. Schools that built trust, offered flexibility in participation, and clearly communicated expectations saw higher levels of student engagement and better academic behaviours. Bond suggested that relational trust should be improved, inclusive school-based engagement models should be put into practice and participation possibilities should be tailored to the needs of underprivileged families in an effort to improve academic trajectories for students.

Bond's (2024) study concentrated on socioeconomically disadvantaged schools in Wales, but did not explore the impact of parental participation in school activities on academic outcomes in African or Kenyan rural-urban mixed contexts like Kajiado West sub-county. The study also elaborated on the dynamics of the school–parent interaction without measuring specific parental activities such as attendance at school events and volunteering and their tangible impact on learner achievement. This study seeks to address these gaps by measuring patterns of parental participation and linking them directly to academic performance, as well as contextualizing findings within the local cultural and socioeconomic realities.

An empirical study was conducted by Kim (2023) in several developed country school settings to investigate the role of parental school-based involvement in the relationship between family socioeconomic position and early learners' academic achievement. The study aimed to explore if parental involvement in school-related activities such as volunteering, attending meetings and school events serve as a channel thru which socioeconomic disparities translate into different academic outcomes. Parent-child dyads from different primary schools were analysed using a large-scale quantitative approach with structural equation modelling. Parents' higher SES predicted more involvement in school activities, which was associated with better behavioural, reading and numeracy outcomes. But schools that intentionally created opportunities for inclusive participation diminished socio-economic differences. Kim suggested that schools focus on designing accessible, culturally appropriate participation programs and developing communication techniques so that equitable parent engagement can take place regardless of socioeconomic background.

Kim (2023) analyzed the influence of parental school-based involvement on socioeconomic status impacts in developed countries, but the study did not address low-income, multicultural areas like Kajiado West sub-county where parental involvement is influenced by particular cultural norms and school structures. The research mainly focused on SES pathways without consideration of other variables such as school atmosphere, family education, resource availability, etc. The present study examined multiple school-based parental actions, contextual variables and their direct influence on learners' academic achievements, thereby filling these gaps.

Mulokozi and Boniface (2025) examined the effect of parental involvement on students learning and school performance in high performing public secondary schools in Tanzania. The purpose was to find out if higher academic success was related to more active parental involvement, such as school-based activities, communication with teachers, and home support. The authors chose the correlational research design to survey the parents, instructors, and students across various secondary schools. The results showed a significant positive relationship between parental involvement and student achievement. Students with more involved parents either thru regular communication, involvement in school activities or monitoring had higher academic achievement. The report recommends schools to institutionalize systems for meaningful parental engagement, regular conversation with parents and inclusive participation initiatives to sustain students' academic performance.

Mulokozi and Boniface (2025) investigated the high performing public secondary schools in Tanzania, leaving a gap in understanding the impact of parental participation in school activities on learners' academic outcomes in other African settings, especially rural-urban mixed counties in Kenya such as Kajiado West sub-county. In addition, the study did not investigate the interaction of local cultural and socioeconomic factors with specific aspects of engagement such as volunteering, attending meetings at school or providing learning resources. This study is filling these gaps by investigating on various aspects of parental involvement and their joint effect on learner performance in Kajiado West sub-county's public junior schools.

Ruhindi, Kanyesigye and Nzarirwehi (2024) carried out a study in primary schools in Kabiira Sub-County, Mitooma District, Uganda to establish the impact of parental engagement on learners' academic achievement. This study was aimed at exploring the influence of parental factors like occupation, education and socio-economic status on children's involvement in school development and assistance in their education. Data collected from 60 randomly selected kids and their parents using questionnaires were analysed using descriptive survey approach via SPSS. Results indicated that the more educated the parent and the more stable his/her income, the more likely he/she was to support both the schooling of children and school programs, which was associated with higher student achievement. The authors recommend that schools and education authorities organize guidance and sensitization seminars for parents on the importance of active involvement in their children's education and encourage parental involvement thru flexible and inclusive school participation initiatives.

Ruhindi, Kanyesigye and Nzarirwehi (2024) focusing on primary schools in Mitooma District, Uganda found that parental education, occupation and socioeconomic position were determinants of involvement. But the types of parental engagement strategies and the short-term effects of school participation and communication with instructors on the academic outcomes of students were not taken into account. The present study sought to examine the effect of parental involvement in school activities, teacher-parent contact and availability of learning tools on academic performance in public junior schools in Kajiado West sub-county. The study took into account contextual and cultural factors to bridge these gaps.

Omae, Nyabero and Orao (2025) conducted a study to examine the influence of parental involvement on academic performance, attendance and socio-emotional development of students in junior schools in Kibra Sub-County, Nairobi, Kenya. The study used a convergent mixed methods design based on Epstein's (2001) model of parental involvement. Quantitative data were standardized exam results and attendance records from 12 public junior schools (n = 480 students). Qualitative data were 20 in-depth interviews with students and focus groups with teachers and parents . The results showed that greater parental engagement, such as monitoring of the child's academic performance at home, participation in parent-teacher associations and ongoing communication between parent and teacher, was associated with statistically significant gains in average term scores and learner attendance. Qualitative studies have also shown that parent involvement results in increased student motivation, improved classroom behaviour and improved social-emotional adjustment. The report recommends that indicators of parental involvement be included in school performance monitoring frameworks, that structured school-based parent engagement activities be institutionalized, and that focused parent training programs be expanded.

The Kibra study used a cross-sectional convergent mixed-methods design but did not describe the separate qualitative and quantitative designs used to generate its datasets. This prevented long-term outcome tracking, temporal ordering, causal inference and clarity of methodological rigour. Also, the sample frame was mostly from urban informal settings which limited the generalizability of the findings to rural or more diverse public school settings. The current study addressed these limitations by using a phenomenological design for the qualitative strand and a cross-sectional design for the quantitative strand. Data-collection methods were explicitly stated for each approach. This approach enhances methodological transparency and allows for a more granular analysis of the temporal patterns of parental-involvement effects.

Kanyoi and Kirimi (2025) investigated the influence of parental involvement on pupils' academic achievement in selected public primary schools in Makadara sub-county, Nairobi County, Kenya. Descriptive correlational design was used in the study. The participants were children, parents and teachers from a number of public primary schools. Quantitative data included pupil term scores and parent-survey indices (homework supervision, school event attendance, parent–teacher communication) in frequency tables. Qualitative comments supported interpretation. The study results show that parental involvement was positively and statistically significantly correlated with students' academic success; and homework supervision and regular parent-teacher communication were found to be particularly important. promote regular home-based learning support, strengthen school outreach and communication channels and deliver parent capacity trainings.

The design of the Makadara study was correlational/descriptive which restricts causal claims. It largely used self-report survey measures which means there are possible response and social-desirability biases. It also focuses on primary schools in one sub-county limiting the external validity for junior schools. The present study addressed these limitations by combining objective administrative performance (records of national exam and continuous assessment) with validated parental-involvement scales and no structured parental-engagement interventions.

Research Design and Methodology

This study used a mixed-methods convergent design, which allowed the simultaneous collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to provide a holistic understanding of the effect of parental participation in school activities on learners' academic performance in public junior schools (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The quantitative strand used a cross-sectional survey design to establish trends and connections between parental participation in school activities and learners' academic performance at a given point in time. The qualitative strand used a phenomenological design to investigate the experiences and perceptions of the participants on parents' participation in school activities. The combination of the two approaches strengthened triangulation, increased credibility and enabled a more comprehensive interpretation of the study findings. Creswell and Creswell (2021) describe mixed methods as a methodology that combines both quantitative and qualitative evidence within one study.

The study was carried out in Kajiado West Sub-County, Kajiado County. The study concentrated on public junior schools in the study area. The target population was 76 head teachers, 238 teachers, 5,400 learners in grade eight and nine, 580 parents and one sub-county director of education. To enhance representativeness and include respondents with relevant information, stratified, simple random, systematic, cluster and purposive sampling techniques were applied (Saunders et al., 2023). Eight public junior schools and Eight head teachers, 47 teachers, 280 learners, 58 parents and One Sub-County Director of Education were selected. The head teachers and the SCDE were purposively selected while probability sampling techniques were used for teachers, learners and parents. Saunders et al. provide current guidance on probability and non-probability sampling for research projects.

Data collection instruments suitable to quantitative and qualitative strands were used. Quantitative data was collected from teachers using structured questionnaires to determine the nature and extent of parental participation in school activities and its relationship with learners' academic performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The questions in the questionnaire focused on school-based parental activities such as attending meetings, academic clinics, school functions, consulting teachers and participating in school programs. Teachers were deemed suitable respondents because they interact with learners regularly and observe the involvement of parents in activities related to the school. Standardized questionnaire items were used to allow comparison of responses from sampled public junior schools, and to allow statistical analysis of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with head teachers, parents and the Sub County Director of Education and focus group discussions with Grade Eight and Grade Nine learners. These approaches provided more in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions on parental involvement and academic achievement. Additionally, observation checklists were used to verify evidence of parents' attendance and participation in school activities, and document analysis was used to examine relevant school records, parental engagement records and learners' academic reports. The triangulation was strengthened by using multiple instruments and reducing the reliance on a single source of information. Braun and Clarke (2021) also emphasise the systematic analysis of qualitative evidence for the identification of meaningful patterns across participants' accounts.

The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative procedures. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed using SPSS Version 28. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were used to summarize parental participation and learners' academic performance. The strength and direction of the relationship between parental involvement in school activities and academic performance was determined using Pearson's correlation coefficient (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Qualitative data were analyzed thematically using transcription, familiarization, coding, categorization and development of themes in line with Braun and Clarke (2021). The findings of both strands were combined in the interpretation. Ethical requirements: Institutional approval, NACOSTI authorization, informed consent and assent, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation and secure data storage.

Presentation, Interpretation, and Discussion of Findings

Teachers were asked to rate how parental involvement in school activities influence learners' academic performance. A five-point Likert scale, with 5 denoting strongly agree, 4 denoting agree, 3 denoting uncertain, 2 denoting disagree, and 1 denoting strongly disagree, was used to gauge responses. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Teachers' Responses to Parental Participation in Activities and Performance (n=40)

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Parents attend school meetings regularly.	13 (32.5%)	12 (30.0%)	4 (10.0%)	6 (15.0%)	5 (12.5%)	3.55	1.41
Parents participate in school academic events.	11 (27.5%)	13 (32.5%)	6 (15.0%)	7 (17.5%)	3 (7.5%)	3.55	1.28
Parents support school-organized learning activities.	13 (32.5%)	12 (30.0%)	5 (12.5%)	6 (15.0%)	4 (10.0%)	3.60	1.35
Parents volunteer in school programs when needed.	10 (25.0%)	14 (35.0%)	6 (15.0%)	7 (17.5%)	3 (7.5%)	3.52	1.26
Parents' presence at school activities motivates learners.	14 (35.0%)	12 (30.0%)	5 (12.5%)	8 (20.0%)	1 (2.5%)	3.75	1.21
Parental involvement strengthens home–school relationships.	12 (30.0%)	13 (32.5%)	7 (17.5%)	7 (17.5%)	1 (2.5%)	3.70	1.16
Parents engage in decision-making activities at school.	10 (25.0%)	12 (30.0%)	6 (15.0%)	8 (20.0%)	4 (10.0%)	3.40	1.34
Parents participate in class-related functions.	13 (32.5%)	14 (35.0%)	5 (12.5%)	6 (15.0%)	2 (5.0%)	3.75	1.21
Parental participation boosts learner academic confidence.	14 (35.0%)	13 (32.5%)	4 (10.0%)	5 (12.5%)	4 (10.0%)	3.70	1.34
Low parental participation affects academic performance negatively.	10 (25.0%)	12 (30.0%)	6 (15.0%)	7 (17.5%)	5 (12.5%)	3.38	1.37

Source: *Researcher (2026)*

The findings of the assertion that parents frequently attend school meetings show that teachers generally have a favourable opinion of its influence on learners' academic performance. The mean was 3.55 (SD = 1.41), with 13 (32.5%) highly agreeing and 12 (30.0%) agreeing, 4

(10.0%) unsure, 6 (15.0%) disagreeing, and 5 (12.5%) strongly disagreeing. The comparatively high overall agreement rate of 62.5% indicates that the majority of teachers thought that parents' frequent presence at meetings improved learner support and academic monitoring. This finding supports Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory, which emphasizes collaboration between home and school as a determinant of learner success. The outcome is consistent with Bond's (2024) findings that schools that promote organized communication and trust with parents report better academic behaviour and learner engagement.

The findings indicate that 11 (27.5%) strongly agreed and 13 (32.5%) agreed with the statement that parents participate in school academic events, whereas 6 (15.0%) were undecided, 7 (17.5%) disagreed, and 3 (7.5%) strongly disagreed. This resulted in a mean score of 3.55 (SD = 1.28). This suggests that 60.0% of the teachers agreed that learners' performance is positively influenced by attending academic events like prize-giving days, academic clinics, and exhibitions. In addition to raising parental knowledge of school expectations, this kind of involvement frequently inspires learners to desire academic performance. This result is consistent with the Ecological Systems Theory, which holds that a child's development is greatly influenced by the interactions between their home and school contexts. The results are consistent with those of Omae, Nyabero, and Orao (2025), who found that better learner attendance, motivation, and academic performance were linked to parental participation in school activities.

The findings also showed that parents are in favour of school-organized learning activities, with 12 (30.0%) and 13 (32.5%) strongly agreeing, 5 (12.5%) uncertain, 6 (15.0%) disagreeing, and 4 (10.0%) strongly disagreeing. As a consequence, the mean was 3.60 (SD = 1.35). The majority of teachers believed that parental support for academic excursions, remedial programs, and extracurricular learning activities improved learners' performance, as indicated by the overall agreement level of 62.5%. This bolsters the Social Cultural Capital Theory, which contends that parents provide their children with social support, educational resources, and values that enhance their academic experiences. The results align with Kim's (2023) findings that improved reading, numeracy, and behavioural performance were greatly enhanced by school-based family involvement, especially in cases where schools purposefully provided inclusive possibilities for participation.

With a mean score of 3.52 (SD = 1.26), the findings show that 10 (25.0%) strongly agreed and 14 (35.0%) agreed with the statement that parents participate in school activities when needed, whereas 6 (15.0%) were undecided, 7 (17.5%) disagreed, and 3 (7.5%) severely disagreed. This indicates that 60% of respondents thought parental volunteering had a favorable influence on learners' academic performance. Volunteering can take many forms, such as helping with school functions, mentoring initiatives, and infrastructure upgrades, all of which support a positive learning environment. Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory, which emphasizes shared accountability between parents and schools, is supported by this finding. The performance is consistent with the findings of Mulokozi and Boniface (2025), who discovered a substantial correlation between increased learner academic performance in Tanzania and parental volunteering and active school participation.

The findings demonstrate substantial support for the claim that parents' attendance at school activities inspires students, with 14 (35.0%) strongly agreeing and 12 (30.0%) agreeing, 5 (12.5%) unsure, 8 (20.0%) disagreeing, and 1 (2.5%) strongly disagreeing. This produced one of the highest means in the table, 3.75 (SD = 1.21). The findings imply that parental involvement in school activities greatly increases learner commitment, morale, and academic effort. The Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasizes the significance of home-school relationships in

influencing learner motivation and development, is consistent with this. The findings are consistent with those of Omae, Nyabero, and Orao (2025), who found that parental involvement improved learner engagement, attendance, and classroom behaviour, all of which improved academic performance.

With 12 (30.0%) strongly agreeing and 13 (32.5%) agreeing, the statement that parental participation improves home-school ties also garnered substantial support, yielding a mean of 3.70 (SD = 1.16). This shows that 62.5% of educators believed that parental participation was essential to encouraging cooperation between the home and school environments. Regular communication, tracking student achievement, and early intervention for behavioural or academic issues are all made possible by strong home-school partnerships. Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory, which emphasizes collaboration as the foundation for better learner performance, is highly supported by this finding. The performance is consistent with Bond's (2024) findings that learner engagement and academic behaviour were enhanced by relational trust and successful school-parent collaborations.

A mean score of 3.40 (SD = 1.34) was obtained for parents participating in decision-making activities at school, with 10 (25.0%) strongly agreeing and 12 (30.0%) agreeing, 6 (15.0%) unsure, 8 (20.0%) disagreeing, and 4 (10.0%) strongly disagreeing. Despite the mean being marginally lower than other statements, most teachers still thought it had a favorable influence. Participation in choices about school growth goals, discipline strategies, and academic regulations fosters a sense of ownership and dedication to learner performance. The Social Cultural Capital Theory, which holds that parents' social networks and institutional involvement improve educational achievements, is consistent with these findings. The results align with the findings of Ruhindi et al. (2024), who found that learners' academic performance was positively impacted by parents who were more involved at school.

The mean score for the statement that parents participate in class-related activities was 3.75 (SD = 1.21), with 13 (32.5%) strongly agreeing and 14 (35.0%) agreeing, 5 (12.5%) unsure, 6 (15.0%) disagreeing, and 2 (5.0%) strongly disagreeing. This high mean indicates that learner performance is significantly influenced by parental participation in classroom-related activities like academic days and class meetings. Learners' sense of responsibility and academic seriousness are improved by this kind of engagement. The Ecological Systems Theory, which highlights the importance of interaction between learners' immediate contexts, is supported by these findings. The outcome is consistent with the findings of Kanyoi and Kirimi (2025), who discovered that parental involvement in school activities greatly enhanced learners' academic performance in Makadara Sub-County.

With 14 (35.0%) strongly agreeing and 13 (32.5%) agreeing, the findings further demonstrate that parental involvement increases learners' academic confidence, generating a mean of 3.70 (SD = 1.34). This implies that learners' self-esteem, confidence, and willingness to participate in academic tasks are positively shaped by active parental participation. The Social Cultural Capital Theory, which contends that parents instil in their children positive academic attitudes and values, is supported by the findings. The outcome is consistent with Kim's (2023) findings that learners' academic behaviour and confidence were much enhanced by parental participation, which led to better reading and numeracy achievement.

Finally, 10 (25.0%) strongly agreed and 12 (30.0%) agreed with the statement that low parental participation has a detrimental influence on academic performance; the mean score was 3.38 (SD = 1.37). This suggests that most teachers were aware of how poor parental involvement influence learners' academic performance. Poor motivation, poor discipline, and little academic

follow-up at home can all be consequences of a lack of support. This result validates Epstein's theory and is consistent with Mulokozi and Boniface's (2025) findings showing learners' academic performance was negatively correlated with low parental participation.

Table 1's findings show that parental involvement in school activities significantly improves learners' academic performance. With mean scores ranging from 3.38 to 3.75, the bulk of the statements showed higher proportions of teachers who strongly agreed and agreed, indicating that respondents generally believed parental engagement to be a significant factor in academic performance. Attending school meetings, taking part in academic events, volunteering for school programs, making decisions, and helping with class-related tasks were all seen as important ways to improve student motivation, self-assurance, discipline, and academic dedication. The comparatively modest standard deviations also point to a respectable degree of response consistency. In line with the theoretical stances of Epstein, Ecological Systems Theory, and Social Cultural Capital Theory, the results generally confirm that effective home-school collaboration produces a supportive learning environment that supports improved academic performance.

Using the observation guide, the researcher observed that parental involvement in school activities varied greatly among households and seemed to affect learners' academic performance. Learners demonstrated greater levels of enthusiasm, discipline, and involvement in class activities in schools where parents regularly attended meetings, school functions, and academic clinics. These learners were more likely to have a good attitude toward learning and finish assignments on time. On the other hand, the researcher found lower levels of learner motivation and less academic engagement in situations where parental participation was modest. Insufficient parental involvement in school events also limited teachers' and parents' ability to work together to address learners' academic difficulties, which had a detrimental impact on performance.

The researcher examined documents such academic progress reports, school event participation logs, and attendance registers for parent-teacher conferences using the document analysis guide. According to the data, learners' academic records tended to be more steady and improving when their parents regularly participated in school events. High parental involvement was linked to improved learner performance, according to meeting attendance records. Additionally, learners whose parents were actively involved had better behavior and performance, according to school reports and teacher remarks. Conversely, learners with minimal parental involvement often demonstrated uneven academic growth, highlighting the need of strong parental involvement in fostering academic success.

The quantitative findings suggesting parental participation has a positive influence on learners' academic performance were mainly corroborated by the head teachers' qualitative data. "When parents attend school meetings and academic events, learners become more serious with their studies because they know both the school and home are monitoring their progress," KWPJSHT 3 observed. "Parents who volunteer in school activities and communicate with teachers on a regular basis help us address learners' academic and discipline issues much faster," KWPCSHT 2 observed. Another respondent KWPCSHT 4 said, "Learners feel encouraged and their confidence improves whenever parents are present during prize-giving days or academic clinics." The survey findings shown in Table 4 are supported by these verbatim comments, which indicate that head teachers significantly link active parental involvement with increased learner motivation, confidence, discipline, and ultimately higher academic performance. One of the head teachers observed,

> Better student academic performance was greatly enhanced by parental involvement in school events. He clarified that attending school meetings on a regular basis improved communication between the home and the school, allowing for prompt intervention in learners' academic challenges. Learners who had parents involved in classroom activities, school events, and academic oversight tended to be more motivated, disciplined, and self-assured. However, learners frequently lacked sufficient academic follow-up at home when parental involvement was limited, which had a detrimental influence on their performance (KWPCSHT 4 Personal Communication, 30 March, 2026).

By highlighting how active home-school collaboration fosters a more supportive learning environment that improves learners' academic performance, the qualitative responses supported the quantitative findings.

The findings suggesting parental participation has a positive influence on learners' academic performance were largely corroborated by the parents' qualitative data during interview responses. "I always attend school meetings because they help me understand how my child is progressing in class and what support is needed at home," said (KWPCSP 28). "I make sure to attend whenever the school has academic days or meetings because it motivates my child to work harder," said a different parent (KWPCSP 24, 26, 28, & 30). Another responder said, "My child becomes more disciplined and serious with schoolwork when I communicate with teachers and participate in school activities." These same response show that parents are aware of their responsibility to support learners' drive, academic discipline, and self-assurance. The quantitative findings indicating active parental involvement enhances learner performance are strongly supported by the direct opinions of parents. One parent during the interviews explained,

> Attending school meetings and academic events on a regular basis allowed them to keep a close eye on their children's development and pinpoint areas that needed help. The learner felt appreciated and inspired by attending school events, which enhanced academic confidence and classroom participation. Early resolution of behavioural issues and academic deficiencies was facilitated by regular communication with teachers. Job obligations occasionally restricted the number of school visits, which would lower the degree of academic follow-up (KWPCSP 40 Personal Communication, 31 March 2026).

The broad conclusion that significant parental involvement improves home-school collaboration and has a beneficial impact on students' academic performance was often supported by the parent's response.

The idea that parental involvement in school events has a major influence on learners' academic performance was supported by the SCDE's interview responses. "Schools where parents attend meetings, academic events, and volunteer in programs consistently show better learner discipline and academic performance," according to the SCDE. "Active parental involvement ensures that both home and school are aligned in supporting the child's learning, which positively influences motivation and confidence," they added. "When parents are involved in decision-making and class-related activities, learners understand that their education is valued, and they tend to take schoolwork more seriously," the SCDE added. According to these claims, the SCDE believes that parental involvement is essential to fostering a positive learning environment and raising learner achievement.

According to the SCDE's interview, schools that had a high level of parental involvement in meetings, academic events, and volunteer work frequently had superior classroom discipline and learner performance. She underlined,

This kind of involvement fosters collaboration between the home and the school, enabling prompt intervention for behavioural and academic problems. Learners who have involved parents are more likely to be disciplined, driven, and self-assured in their academic pursuits. Parental involvement varied according to socioeconomic variables, with some parents being limited by employment obligations (SCDE Personal Communication, 31 March, 2026).

The SCDE found that in order to improve academic attainment and promote home-school collaboration, organized parent engagement activities are crucial.

The learners' responses during group discussions demonstrated how parental involvement improved their academic performance and motivation. "When my parents come to school and see how I perform in class, I feel encouraged to work harder," said one learner (KWPCSL 98). "I feel proud when my parents attend school events like prize-giving or academic competitions; it makes me want to do my best," said another (KWPCSL 46). "I understand lessons better and feel more confident answering questions in class when my parents talk with teachers and help me with homework," stated a third learner KWPCSL 109). Echoing the quantitative results and bolstering the theoretical stances of Epstein and Social Cultural Capital, these statements imply that students view strong parental involvement as inspiring, boosting confidence, and directly enhancing academic accomplishment.

The learners also expressed how their parents' participation in class activities, attendance at school meetings, and academic events helped them feel appreciated and inspired to improve their academic performance. They stated that they received advice on how to improve their schoolwork and gained confidence in the classroom when parents volunteered or spoke with teachers about their achievement. Some learners said that low parental participation or absence occasionally caused them to feel neglected and less motivated to study. The learners came to the conclusion that regular and obvious parental involvement had a beneficial influence on their academic performance, discipline, and confidence, supporting the conclusion that effective home-school collaboration is essential for student success.

According to Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory, the findings show that parental involvement in school activities improves learners' academic performance by fostering greater cooperation between the home and the school. Qualitative responses from head teachers, parents, learners, and the SCDE validated quantitative findings that demonstrated a beneficial association between parental participation and academic performance. Attending parent-teacher conferences, academic clinics, PA meetings, prize-giving ceremonies, and school development events allowed parents to keep an eye on their children's progress, talk with teachers about their performance, and determine the best course of action. Learner motivation, discipline, accountability, and prompt academic help were all improved by this involvement.

Conclusion

Findings The study found that parental involvement in school activities is a significant factor that influences the academic performance of learners in public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County. Meaningful participation in parent-teacher meetings, academic clinics, school functions, consultations and school decision making can strengthen communication between parents and teachers and improve monitoring of learners' academic progress. However, socio-economic conditions, work demands, mobility and weak structures of communication between schools and parents may influence the effectiveness of such participation. Thus, improving academic performance requires not only motivating parents to participate in school activities but

also ensuring that the participation is meaningful, regular, inclusive and directly related to the educational needs of the learners.

Recommendations

The study recommends that public junior schools in Kajiado West Sub-County should develop clear and flexible mechanisms of enhancing meaningful parental participation in school activities. Regular parent–teacher meetings, academic clinics, progress consultations and inclusive school programs should be held by head teachers and teachers. Parents should also be provided with timely information about learners' performance. Schools should also be responsive to parents with work, distance or pastoral mobility constraints by offering flexible meeting times and appropriate communication channels. Education officers should intensify sensitization and capacity building programs for parents on the importance of school participation. Future studies should investigate other contextual factors that may mediate the relationship between parental involvement and learners' academic achievement.

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