

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN FATHERS' WORK-RELATED ABSENCE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG SCHOOL-GOING CHILDREN

Mr. Asad Habib¹, Dr. Gulzar Usman², Parveen Akhter^{3*}, Sajid Hussain⁴, Gazala Soomro⁵, Sajid Hussain⁶

¹MSN Scholar People's Nursing School Lumhs Jamshoro

²MBBS, Mph, Dfnc, Chpe, Phd, Associate Professor Community Medicine

³MPH, Phd Scholar, Director People's Nursing School Lumhs Jamshoro, Parveenimdad@Gmail.Com

⁴MSN Scholar People's Nursing School Lumhs Jamshoro

⁵MSN Scholar People's Nursing School Lumhs Jamshoro

⁶Bachelor Of Science In Nursing

*Corresponding Author: Parveen Akhter, Parveenimdad@Gmail.Com

ABSTRACT

Background: Father contribute to children's educational progress through Academic guidance, supervision, and emotional support. However, evidence regarding the association between father's work-related absence and children's academic outcome's remains limited, particularly in Pakistan.

Objective: This study aimed to assess and compare academic performance including attendance, classroom interaction and grades among school-going children whose fathers were work-related absent and consistently present at home.

Methods: A comparative cross-sectional study was conducted among 183 male students enrolled in class 7-10 from three government schools in Hyderabad, Pakistan. Participants were classified into father-present (n=109) and father-absent (n=74) groups according to predefined eligibility criteria. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of the Children's perception questionnaire (CPQ), Teachers' perception questionnaire (TPQ), and official school records for annual academic performance and attendance. Descriptive Statistics and independent-samples t-test were performed using SPSS version-23.0, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Students whose fathers were consistently present at home demonstrated significantly higher academic performance (72.05% vs 66.66%, $p=0.002$) and school attendance (78.83% vs 71.50%, $p<0.001$) than those experiencing work-related paternal absence. The father-present group also reported greater enjoyment of attending school and spent more time studying at home, while teacher reported higher classroom participation and homework completion. Overall TPQ scores did not differ significantly between groups. Notably, student in father-absent group demonstrated significantly greater participation in extracurricular and creative activities ($p<0.001$), despite lower academic engagement and achievement.

Conclusion: Consistent paternal presence at home was associated with higher academic performance, school attendance, and selected indicators of academic engagement among school-going boys. Work-related paternal absence was associated with lower academic engagement and achievement while greater extracurricular participation among these students represents an important finding for future research.

KEYWORDS: Father Presence; Work-related father absence; Academic Performance; School attendance; Academic engagement; Pakistan

BACKGROUND

The family is a child's first learning environment, and parental involvement plays an important role in educational development. Fathers contribute through guidance, encouragement, supervision, and emotional support, and their involvement is associated with improved academic achievement, attendance, motivation, and study habits.^{1,2} Consistent paternal presence may also support children's discipline, time management, and engagement in learning. However, work-related paternal absence may reduce opportunities for regular academic supervision, guidance, and emotional support.^{3,4} Academic performance extends beyond examination grades and may include attendance, classroom participation, and study-related behaviours.^{5,6} These indicators provide both objective and subjective measures of students' educational engagement and outcomes. In the present study, academic performance was assessed using grades and attendance together with classroom participation and study-related behaviours. Although parenting research has historically focused more on mothers, evidence increasingly recognizes fathers as independent contributors to children's

educational development.^{7,8}In Pakistan, studies have also reported positive associations between paternal involvement and students' academic motivation.¹⁴ However, evidence specifically examining work-related paternal absence and academic performance remains limited.⁸ In Sindh, previous research has examined parental involvement from the perspectives of head teachers, teachers, and mothers in different educational settings.⁹However, these studies have not specifically compared children whose fathers are consistently present at home with those experiencing work-related paternal absence¹⁰. Existing research also commonly relies on a single source of information, whereas integration of student responses, teacher assessments, and objective school records such as attendance and grades is less common.^{11–13}

Therefore, the present study examined the academic outcomes of school-going children according to fathers' work-related absence versus consistent home presence, using student reports, teacher assessments, and official academic records.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the academic performance of school-going children with fathers absent due to work-related reasons, including attendance, classroom interaction, and grades.
2. To assess the academic performance of school-going children with fathers consistently present at home, including attendance, classroom interaction, and grades.
3. To compare the academic performance of school-going children whose father were absent due to work-related commitment with those whose father were consistently present at home.

Rationale of the Study

The role of fathers in children's academic development has received increasing attention in educational research. However, evidence from Sindh, Pakistan, remains limited as most available studies have focused on mothers or general parental involvement, with comparatively little attention given to the specific role of fathers. Therefore, examining fathers' work-related absence and presence at home is both relevant and timely. The study also addresses an important methodological gap by combining information from students, teachers, and official school records to provide a broader assessment of children's academic performance. By generating context-specific evidence, this study may help inform educational strategies, assist policymakers, and strengthen family–school partnerships, thereby contributing to improved academic outcomes and supporting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education.¹⁴

Significance of the Study

The present study contributes to understanding how fathers' work-related absence influences the academic performance of school-going boys. The findings may assist teachers, parents, and policymakers in understanding how family work patterns are associated with children's learning, attendance, and classroom participation. The study may also help schools develop appropriate support measures for students whose fathers are frequently away from home because of work-related commitments.

Operational Definition

1. **School-going Children:** Male students aged 12–16, who were enrolled in Grades 7–10 of selected schools.
2. **Work-related Absence:** A fathers who remained away from home for at least four days per week because of work-related reason for a minimum period of one year.
3. **Father's Presence:** A fathers lived consistently with the family, and had no more than 2 days of work-related absence per week.
4. **Work:** Any income-generating activity requiring the father to be away from home including formal employment, business, trade, labor etc.
5. **Academic Performance:** Educational outcome assessed through student's annual academic grades, school attendance percentage, and questionnaire-based measure of academic engagement and classroom participation reported by the students and teachers.
6. **Nuclear Family:** A household consisting of parents and children only.
7. **Joint Family:** Household including parents and extended relatives.

Variables of Study

1	Independent Variable	Fathers' work-related absence, Fathers' Home presence
2	Dependent Variables	Annual grades/scores, School attendance, Classroom participation and engagement, Study habits and homework completion
3	Demographic Variables	Age of student, Grade, Family type, Number of siblings

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parental involvement is consistently associated with children's academic performance. Both mothers and fathers contribute to learning through guidance, motivation, study support, and engagement in education. Previous studies have linked greater parental involvement with improved academic motivation, study habits, engagement, and educational outcomes, while limited involvement has been associated with lower academic interest and greater learning difficulties.^{11, 15} Longitudinal evidence from Chinese adolescents further demonstrated a reciprocal relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement, suggesting that sustained parental support during early adolescence may contribute to improved academic performance over time.¹⁶

Father presence and active paternal involvement are associated with children's academic achievement, motivation, executive function, resilience, and positive classroom behaviour.¹⁷ Paternal supervision, guidance, and educational engagement may strengthen children's self-regulation and ability to cope with academic challenges, thereby supporting learning outcomes.²² Father involvement in school-related activities may also strengthen family-school connections and contribute to improved academic outcomes.²⁰ Recent evidence further suggests that fathers' physical and mental well-being may influence their capacity for sustained involvement with their children.²¹ Fathers' work-related absence may have both positive and negative implications for children's educational outcomes. Increased household income, remittances, and access to educational resources may provide indirect educational benefits, although these effects appear to depend on family and socioeconomic circumstances.²² Conversely, prolonged paternal absence has been associated with reduced supervision, emotional distress, lower academic engagement, irregular attendance, poorer homework completion, and reduced learning motivation.²²

Available evidence indicates that father presence and active involvement are positively associated with children's academic and educational outcomes. Ahmad²³ reported higher academic achievement among children from intact families than those from father-absent households, while broader evidence links father absence with poorer educational attainment and adverse social-emotional outcomes.²⁰ Active paternal involvement has also been associated with improved academic performance, educational engagement, and self-efficacy.¹⁷ However, the effects of paternal absence may vary according to socioeconomic circumstances; evidence from Vietnam showed that children from two-parent households had higher school enrollment, with stronger adverse effects of parental absence among poorer families and those with lower parental education.¹⁶

The relationship between parental involvement and academic performance is influenced by socioeconomic conditions, parental expectations, student engagement, and caregiving arrangements.²⁶ Maternal support and extended-family involvement may buffer the adverse effects of father absence, particularly in socioeconomically disadvantaged families. The benefits of parental involvement may also vary according to child gender and the consistency and quality of parental engagement, suggesting that responsive support tailored to children's needs may enhance educational outcomes.²⁹

Gaps in Current Research

International evidence indicates that parental involvement and resilience can support children's academic outcomes despite socioeconomic disadvantage or parental absence. An Oman study found that parental involvement improved academic motivation and proficiency among secondary students¹⁵ while a Philippine study highlighted resilience as a protective factor among students experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and parental absence.²⁹ However, limited evidence specifically compares fathers' work-related absence with home presence using objective academic outcomes. In Pakistan, paternal involvement has been associated with better academic outcomes, while paternal work-related absence may increase truancy and reduce school engagement. Waqar et al. reported increased truancy among Grade 10 students whose fathers worked abroad^{30,31} while Gohar et al. identified parental participation as a significant predictor of academic success among secondary school boys.³¹ Evidence from Sindh remains limited. Chachar et al. reported that work-related limitations in parental involvement contributed to poor academic performance in Hyderabad³². Khan et al. found educational benefits associated with paternal remittances among children in Khairpur³³, while Ahmad reported differences in academic achievement between children from intact and father-absent households.²³

METHODOLOGY

Study Design and Setting

This study employed a cross-sectional, comparative design to compare the academic performance and school attendance of school-going children according to their fathers' work-related absence or consistent presence at home. The study compared two groups: children experiencing work-related paternal absence and those whose fathers' were consistently present at home to assess differences in educational outcomes at a single point in time.

The study was carried out in three government educational institutions located in Hyderabad district, representing both urban and semi-urban student populations. The selected schools were:

Government (N) Noor Muhammad High School, Hyderabad, Government (N) Himayat ul Islam Boys High Secondary School, Qasimabad, and Government Higher Secondary School, Muhammad Bux Shoro.

These institutions provide education to school-going boys enrolled in Grade 7 to 10 and serve students from diverse family and socioeconomic backgrounds. They provided an appropriate setting for examining the relationship between fathers' work-related absence and children's educational outcomes, as students with both regular paternal presence and frequent work-related paternal absence were represented within the study population.

The schools also provided access to relevant educational records, including students' academic performance and attendance, while teachers provided information regarding students' classroom participation, homework completion, and other academic behaviours. This combination of student responses, teacher assessments and school records provided an appropriate setting for comparing educational outcomes between students experiencing different patterns of paternal presence.

Sample Size

The sample size was determined for comparison between two groups using a medium expected effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.50$), 80% power and a two-sided significance level of 0.05.³⁴

The following formula was used:

- n = required sample size **per group**
- $Z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$ for a two-sided $\alpha = 0.05$
- $Z_{\beta} = 0.84$ for 80% power
- $d = 0.50$ = expected medium effect size

$$n = \frac{2(Z_{\alpha/2} + Z_{\beta})^2}{d^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2(1.96 + 0.84)^2}{(0.50)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2(2.80)^2}{0.25}$$

Thus, approximately 63 students were required per group, giving $n = \frac{15.68}{0.25} = 62.72 \approx 63$ and sample of 126 students. In accordance with the approved study proposal the planned sample was 135–150 students (65–75 per group) to allow for potential non-response and incomplete questionnaires. A total of 201 questionnaires were distributed across the three study sites in Hyderabad. After data collection, the questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency. Seventeen questionnaires were excluded because of incomplete responses or inconsistencies in official school records, and one participant withdrew after recruitment. Therefore, 183 participants were retained for the final analysis, comprising 109 students in the father-present group and 74 in the father-absent group. The final sample exceeded the calculated minimum required sample and was considered adequate for the planned comparison between the two groups.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to recruit eligible students from the selected schools. Students were screened according to the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria using available school records and a brief parental screening checklist. Based on their fathers' household status, eligible students were classified into two study groups: the father-absent group, comprising students whose fathers were regularly away from home due to work-related commitments, and the father-present group, comprising students whose fathers were consistently present at home.

During data collection, the number of eligible students experiencing work-related paternal absence varied across schools and grade levels. Therefore, all eligible students meeting the criteria for the father-absent group were invited to participate. Students in the father present-group were recruited from the same schools and grade levels to provide an appropriate comparison group. The final sample therefore consisted of eligible participants available during the study period and allowed comparison of academic performance and related educational outcomes between the two groups.

Inclusion Criteria

Students were eligible to participate if they meet the following general and group-specific criteria:

General Criteria:

- **Demographics:** Male students enrolled in Grades 7–10, aged between 12 and 16 years.
- **Enrollment History:** Continuous enrollment in the selected schools for at least one full academic year.
- **Data Availability:** Availability of complete school records for attendance and academic performance records.
- **Family Status:** The students biological father was alive at the time of the study.

Group-Specific Criteria:

- **Absent Group (Father Absence):** Student whose father lived away from home because of work-related commitments for at least one year and were absent from household for at least 4 days per week, (approximately 16 days per month) due to work-related reason. This included occupations requiring repeated or continuous work-related absence from home such as laborers, drivers, transport workers, shopkeepers, small business owners, barbers, skilled workers).

- **Present Group (Father Presence):** Students whose fathers lived with family and had no more than 2 days of work-related absence per week.

Exclusion Criteria

Students were excluded if they met any of the following criteria:

- **Non-work-related Paternal Absence:** Cases where the father was absent due to death, divorce, separation, imprisonment, substance use, military service, religious commitments (e.g., Tabligh), or multiple marriages.
- **Prolonged Absence Threshold:** Fathers absent beyond one continuous month were excluded to maintain the focus on regular labor migration rather than long-term abandonment or overseas migration.
- **Incomplete or Inconsistent Records:** Students with incomplete or inconsistent school records, including missing information on attendance or academic performance, recent transfer to the selected school, or incomplete academic records due to grade repetition.
- **Health-related Factors:** Students with documented chronic illnesses, physical disabilities, or other medical conditions that could influence regular school attendance and academic performance were not included in the study to reduce the effect of potential confounding factors.

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed for this study to assess students' academic engagement, classroom behaviour and educational outcome to their fathers' work-related absence or presence at home. The questionnaire was developed under the guidance of the research supervisor and co-supervisor and was aligned study objectives. Relevant published literature and existing materials related to student engagement, academic behaviour and questionnaire development were reviewed to guide the formation of the questionnaire.^{8,35,36}

The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

- **Section 1: Demographic Profile:** Collected information on students' age, grade level, family structure, number of siblings, and the specific frequency of fathers' work-related absence.
- **Section 2: Student Academic Indicators:** Assessed students' study habits, learning attitudes and school engagement through students' self-reported response.
- **Section 3: Teacher Perceptions:** Recorded teachers' assessments of students' classroom participation, academic performance and overall classroom behavioral.
- **Section 4: Academic and Attendance Records:** Obtained students' cumulative academic scores and attendance percentage from official school records.

Validity and Reliability of Tool

The questionnaire was reviewed for face and content validity by field experts, including the co-supervisor, and their recommendations were incorporated before finalizing the instrument. A pilot study was conducted among 28 students to assess the clarity, applicability, and internal consistency of the questionnaire. 12 item questionnaire demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.744. The 28 students who participated in the pilot study were excluded from the final study sample.

Data Collection Process

Data were collected during Term II, of 2025–26 academic session so that all participants were assessed within the same academic period and school environment. Information was obtained from students, teachers, and official school record, to provide comprehensive assessment of the study variables. The data collection process involved the following procedure:

- **Unified Proforma and Consent:** Before data collection, a single proforma was used to obtain written consent from parents or guardians, assent from participating students, and consent from the respective teachers. The proforma also record the participant's basic demographic information.
- **Teacher Evaluations:** The class or subject teacher of each participating student's completed the Teacher Perception Questionnaire (TPQ). The questionnaire consisted of six items rated on a 5-point Likert scale and focused on classroom participation, homework completion, teacher-student interaction, academic task performance and participation in extracurricular and creative activities.
- **Student Self-Reports:** Eligible students completed the Children Perception Questionnaire (CPQ) independently during school hours. The questionnaire consisted of 6 items rated on 4-point Likert scale to obtain information on study habits and learning attitudes, school attendance and classroom engagement.
- **Official School Records:** Annual academic performance percentage and attendance percentages were obtained from official school record with the permission from school administration. These records were used as objective measures of academic performance and attendance.

Data Analysis

The collected data were coded, entered and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 23.0). The data analysis was carried out both according to study objectives using descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Participants' demographic characteristics including age, grade, family type, and number of siblings were summarized using frequencies and percentages. Academic performance, attendance, and Questionnaire scores were presented as mean (M) and standard deviations (SD).
- **Inferential Statistics:** Independent Samples t-Test was used to compare the mean scores of academic performance, attendance, and classroom interaction between the "Absent" group and the "Present" group. A p-value of < 0.05 was considered statistically significant for all analyses.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in strict accordance with international ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. The following protocols were implemented:

- **Institutional Approval:** Formal ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Research Committee (ERC) of the Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences (LUMHS), Jamshoro, prior to the commencement of data collection.
- **Informed Consent and Assent:** Written informed consent was secured from parents, guardians, and teachers. Additionally, verbal and written assent was obtained from the student participants.
- **Administrative Permission:** Formal permission was granted by the respective school authorities to access the students' official academic and attendance records.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Participation was entirely voluntary. All participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative repercussions.

RESULTS

Figure No. 1 Distribution of Participants by Father's Presence Status

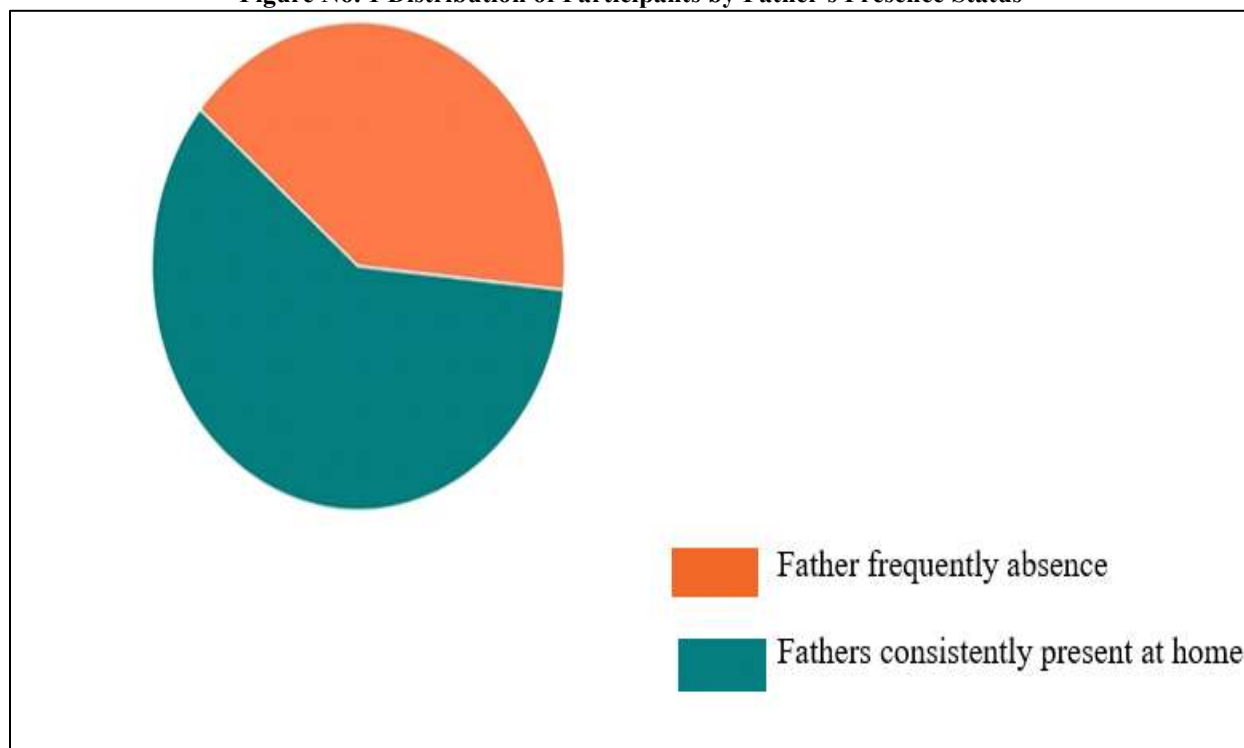


Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of participants according to father presence status ($N = 183$). Of the total participants, 109 (59.6%) reported that their fathers were consistently present at home, whereas 74 (40.4%) reported frequent father absence due to work-related reasons. The majority of participants experienced regular paternal presence, although a substantial proportion reported frequent work-related paternal absence.

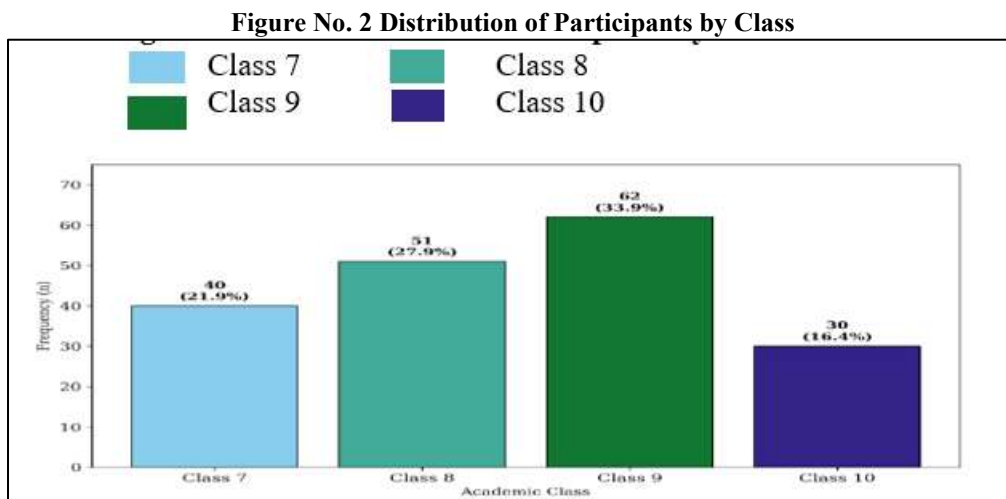


Figure. 2 presents the distribution of participants across classes. Among the total sample (N = 183), the highest proportion of students belonged to Class 9, representing 33.9% (n = 62), followed by Class 8 with 27.9% (n = 51). Class 7 accounted for 21.9% (n = 40) of the participants, whereas Class 10 accounted for the lowest proportion at 16.4% (n = 30). Overall, students from class 7-10 were adequately represented in the study.

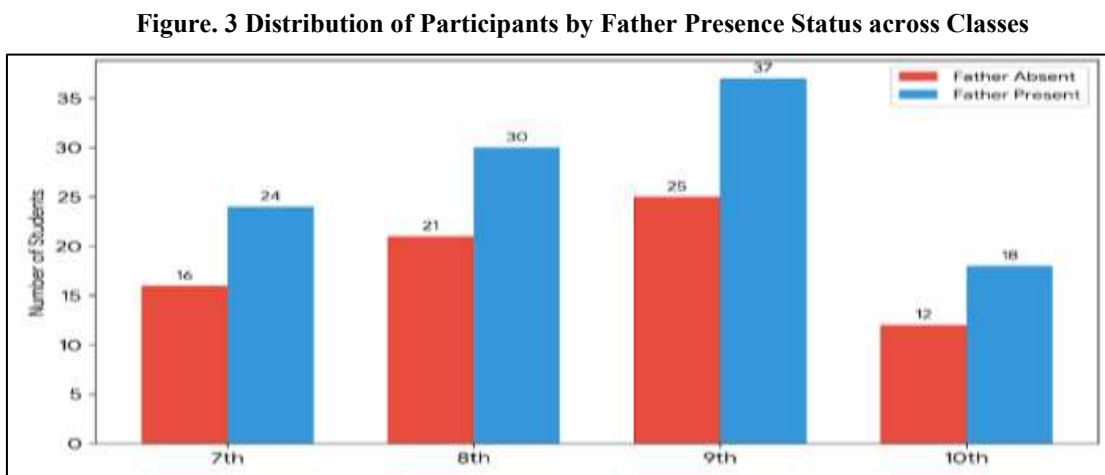


Figure 3 presents the distribution of students across grade levels according to fathers' household status. Students in the father-present group outnumbered those in the father-absent group at each grade level. The highest number of participants was observed in Grade 9, followed by Grades 8, 7, and 10 in both groups. The father-present group included 37 students in Grade 9, 30 in Grade 8, 24 in Grade 7, and 18 in Grade 10, whereas the father-absent group included 25 students in Grade 9, 21 in Grade 8, 16 in Grade 7, and 12 in Grade 10. Although the number of students differed slightly across class levels, participants from all four grades were represented in both the father-present and father-absent groups. This distribution facilitated comparison of academic outcomes between the groups.

Table No. 1 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables Among Students with Father Absence (n = 74)

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
CPQ Total	74	1.50	3.33	2.20	0.43
TPQ Total	74	1.17	3.17	2.14	0.46
Academic Performance (%)	74	40.00	93.00	66.66	11.42
Attendance (%)	74	20.00	94.00	71.50	14.87

CPQ=Children's Perception Question, TPQ=Teacher's Perception Question, SD=Standard Deviation

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables among students whose fathers were absent due to work-related reasons (n = 74). The mean CPQ score was 2.20 (SD = 0.43), representing the average level of students' academic engagement and study behaviors. The mean TPQ score was 2.14 (SD = 0.46), indicating the average teacher-

rated classroom participation and academic behavior. In addition, the mean academic performance was 66.66% (SD = 11.42), while the mean attendance was 71.50% (SD = 14.87) among students in the father-absent group.

Table No. 2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables Among Students with Father Presence (n = 109)

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
CPQ_Total	109	1.00	3.50	1.88	0.56
TPQ_Total	109	1.00	3.33	2.09	0.55
Academic Performance (%)	109	35.00	92.00	72.05	11.78
Attendance (%)	109	44.00	97.00	78.83	10.16

CPQ=Children's Perception Question, TPQ=Teacher's Perception Question, SD=Standard Deviation

Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistics of the study variables among students whose fathers were consistently present at home (n = 109). The mean CPQ score was 1.88 (SD = 0.56), representing the average level of students' academic engagement and study behaviors. The mean TPQ score was 2.09 (SD = 0.55), indicating the average teacher-rated classroom participation and academic behavior. In addition, the mean academic performance was 72.05% (SD = 11.78), while the mean attendance was 78.83% (SD = 10.16) among students in the father-present group.

Figure No. 4 Comparison of Mean Study Variables by Father's Presence Status

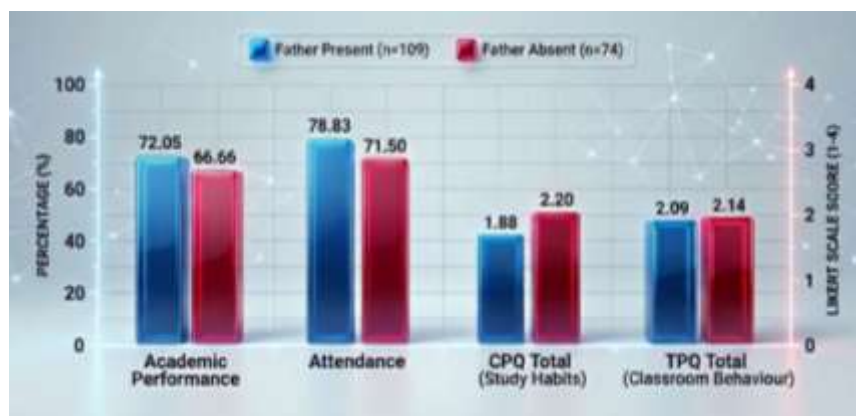


Figure. 4 compares the mean values of study variables according to fathers' presence status. Students whose fathers were consistently present at home had a lower mean CPQ score (1.88) than those whose fathers were absent due to work-related reason (2.20), indicating more frequent engagement in the assessed study behaviours among students in father-present student group. The mean teacher-rated performance (TPQ) score was similar between the two groups (2.09 vs. 2.14). In contrast, the father-presence group achieved higher mean academic performance (72.05% vs. 66.66%) and higher mean attendance (78.83% vs. 71.50%) than the father-absence group.

Table No. 3 Comparison of Study Variables Between Father-Present and Father-Absent Groups

Variable	t-value	df	p-value	Mean Difference	Significance
CPQ_Total	-4.191	181	0.001	-0.323	Significant
TPQ_Total	-0.566	181	0.572	-0.044	Not Significant
Academic Performance (%)	3.073	181	0.002	5.384	Significant
Attendance (%)	3.960	181	0.001	7.326	Significant

Independent sample t-test

Table 3 compares the study variables between the father-present and father-absent groups using the independent samples t-test. Statistically significant differences were observed in CPQ scores ($p < 0.001$), academic performance ($p = 0.002$), and attendance ($p < 0.001$). However, no statistically significant difference was observed in TPQ scores ($p = 0.572$).

Figure 4.5 Comparison of Children's Perception Questionnaire (CPQ) items Between Study Groups

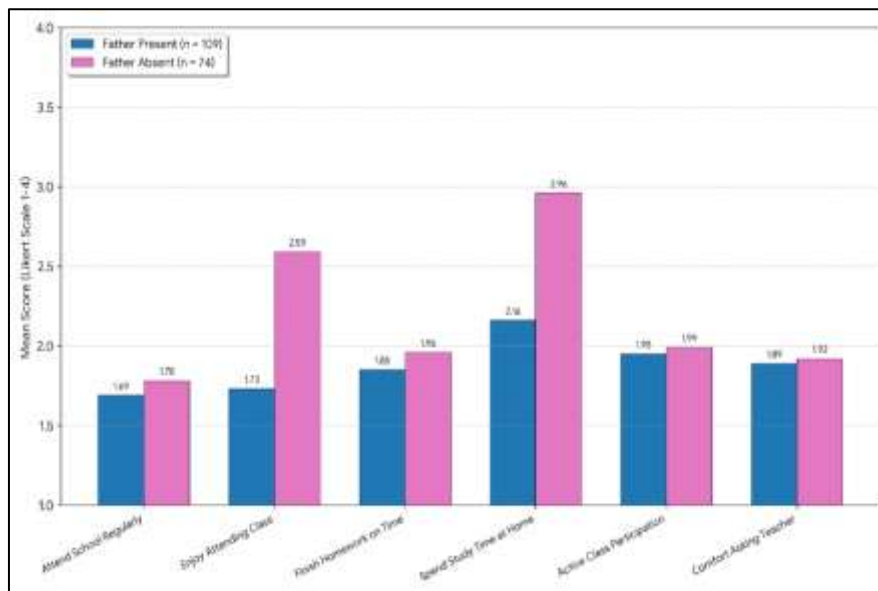


Figure. 5 compares the six student-reported Children's Perception Questionnaire (CPQ) items between the father-present and father-absent groups. Statistically significant differences were observed for enjoyment of attending class ($p < 0.001$) and time spent studying at home ($p < 0.001$). No statistically significant differences were observed for regular school attendance, homework completion, classroom participation, or comfort in seeking help from teachers (all $p > 0.05$).

Figure. No 6 Comparison of Teacher-Perception Questionnaire (TPQ) Items between Study Groups

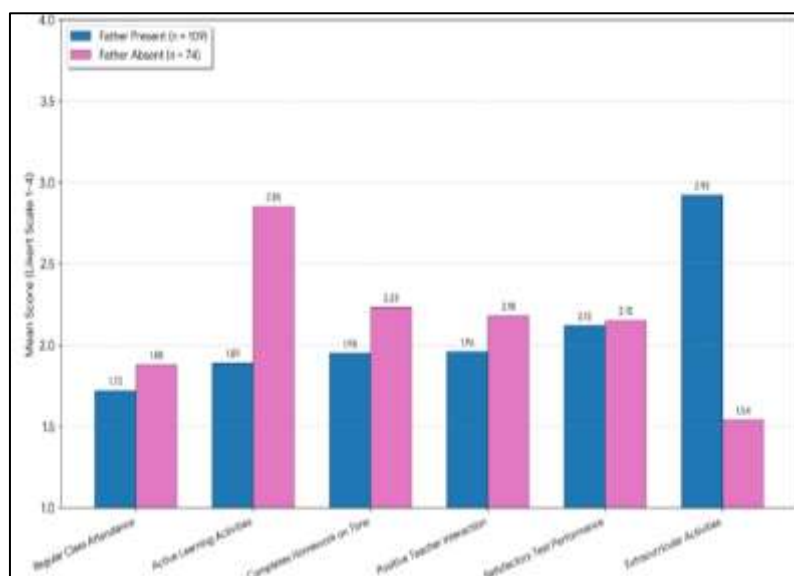
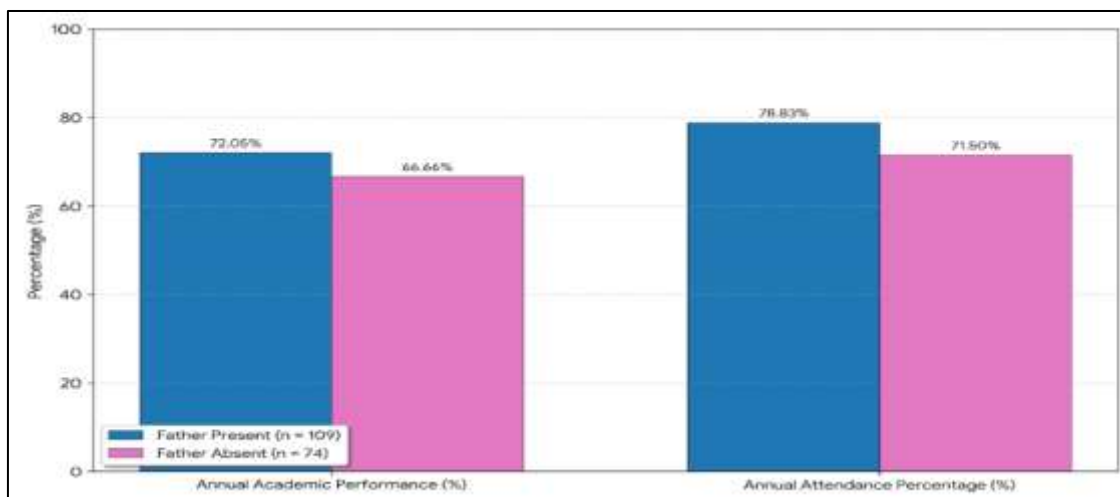


Figure 4.6 compares the six teacher-rated Teacher's Perception Questionnaire (TPQ) items between the father-present and father-absent groups. Statistically significant differences were observed in teacher-rated classroom participation ($p < 0.001$), homework completion ($p = 0.031$), and participation in extracurricular and creative activities ($p < 0.001$). No statistically significant differences were observed for regular attendance, teacher–student interaction, or performance in classroom tests (all $p > 0.05$).

Figure No 7 Comparison of Annual Academic Performance and Attendance Percentages between Study



Groups

Figure. 7 compares the annual academic performance and attendance percentages between the study groups. Statistically significant differences were observed for both annual academic performance and attendance ($p < 0.01$). Students in the father-present group had a higher mean academic performance (72.05%) than those in the father-absent group (66.66%). Similarly, the father-present group demonstrated a higher mean attendance percentage (78.83%) than the father-absent group (71.50%).

Figure No. 4.8 Comparison of Selected Academic Indicators Between Study Groups



Figure.8 compares three selected questionnaire items between the study groups. Statistically significant differences were observed for all three items ($p < 0.001$). Students in the father-present group showed more favorable responses for study engagement at home (CPQ Item 09) and higher teacher-rated classroom participation (TPQ Item 13), whereas students in the father-absent group showed more favorable responses for participation in extracurricular and creative activities (TPQ Item 17).

DISCUSSION

The present study found that school-going boys whose fathers were consistently present at home had significantly higher academic performance (72.05% vs. 66.66%) and school attendance (78.83% vs. 71.50%) than those experiencing work-related paternal absence. Father-present students also reported greater classroom enjoyment and more home-based study time, suggesting that regular paternal availability may support learning through supervision, encouragement, and educational support.

These findings are consistent with previous evidence linking father presence and parental involvement with improved academic achievement, motivation, study habits, and educational outcomes.^{15,23} Reduced attendance and study engagement among students with absent fathers may reflect fewer opportunities for supervision and structured learning,

consistent with findings from Pakistan. However, supportive family relationships, resilience, and positive school environments may reduce the adverse effects of paternal absence.²⁹

An important finding was the greater participation in extracurricular and creative activities among students with absent fathers. As evidence on this relationship is limited, this finding should be interpreted cautiously, although such activities may provide opportunities for social interaction and constructive engagement.

Overall, work-related paternal absence was associated with lower academic performance, attendance, and home-based study engagement in this study. These findings do not establish causality, as socioeconomic conditions, maternal and extended-family support, school environment, and student resilience may also influence educational outcomes. The use of student responses, teacher assessments, and official academic and attendance records nevertheless provides a broader assessment of students' educational functioning.

CONCLUSION

The study found that students whose fathers were frequently absent due to work-related commitments had lower academic performance and school attendance than students whose fathers' were consistently present at home. Students in the father-present group had higher mean academic performance (72.05% vs 66.66%) and attendance (78.83% vs 71.50%), with statistically significant differences between the groups. The father-present group also showed more favorable study engagement at home, greater enjoyment of attending class, and higher teacher-rated classroom participation. In contrast, students in the father-absent group demonstrated greater participation in extracurricular and creative activities. Overall, consistent paternal presence at home was associated with better academic performance, attendance, and selected academic engagement indicators among school-going boys. Families should maintain regular academic, emotional, and communication support for children experiencing paternal work-related absence. Schools should monitor their attendance, academic progress, and engagement and provide appropriate support. Future research should use larger, diverse, and longitudinal studies to identify factors that protect children from the potential effects of paternal absence.

REFERENCES

1. Peixoto F, Radiši J, Campos M. Parental involvement , achievement and motivation : a longitudinal exploration of the interplay between parents ' practices and students ' mathematics achievement and motivation. 2026. doi:10.1007/s11858-026-01776-6
2. Jalaluddin J, Mahardani RA, Sartika S. Parental Involvement in Fostering Children's Learning Motivation. *Educatio*. 2024;19(2):398–404. doi:10.29408/edc.v19i2.27458
3. Yulianti, Putri AE, Yolanda, Putra RP. Efforts of Guidance and Counseling Teachers in Overcoming Cases of Bullying in Schools. *Int Res Educ J* [Internet]. 2024;6(1):70–7. Available from: <https://journal2.um.ac.id/index.php/irbej/article/view/46717/12226>
4. André S, Cammu N, Meuleman E. Fathers, Families, and Society: A Two-Decade Systematic Literature Review on the Contexts and Consequences of Paternity and Parental Leave for Fathers. *Soc Sci*. 2025;14(3). doi:10.3390/socsci14030168
5. Ha W, Liping Ma, Yulian Cao, Feng Q, Shangcong Bu. The effects of class attendance on academic performance: Evidence from synchronous courses during Covid-19 at a Chinese research university. *Int J Educ Dev*. Volume 104. doi:10.1016/j.ijedudev.2023.102952
6. Çali M, Lazimi L, Maria B, Ippoliti L. Relationship between student engagement and academic performance. Vol. 13. 2024;13(4):2210–7. doi:10.11591/ijere.v13i4.28710
7. Trepiak P, Deneault AA, Bureau JF. A systematic review and meta-analysis of parental mentalization in fathers and mothers. *Infant Ment Health J*. 2025;46(4):406–23. doi:10.1002/imhj.70001 PubMed PMID: 39901332.
8. Zulfiqar N, Shafi MT, Ajmal R. Academic Achievement of First-Generation University Students in Spotlight: Role of Parental Involvement, Autonomy Support, and Academic Motivation. *J Coll Student Retent Res Theory Pract*. 2025;27(1):157–77. doi:10.1177/15210251231160774
9. Rajput H, Rind Z ul abdin. Role of Parental Involvement in Government Primary Schools: a Study of District Matiari, Sindh Province, Pakistan. *Int Res J Soc Sci Humanit* [Internet]. 2024;3(1 SE-Articles):59–69. Available from: <https://irjssh.com/index.php/irjssh/article/view/77>
10. Chachar ZA, Buriro IB, Abdul Jalil Qureshi. The Teachers' Understanding Regarding the Impact of Parental Involvement in School Activities on Early Childhood Education in the Public Sector Schools in Pakistan: an Exploratory Study. *Jahan Tahqeeq*. 2024;07(02):698–713. doi:<https://doi.org/10.58921/jossams.08.0issue%201.0344>
11. Sujarwo, Sujarwo, Herwin H. Parental Involvement and Student Achievement : A Meta-analysis of Publications in the Scopus Database. *Int J Instr*. 2023;16(2):107–24. doi:10.29333/iji.2023.1627a
12. Fatimaningrum AS. Parental Involvement and Academic Achievement : A Meta-analysis. Vol. 4. 2021;4(2):57–67.
13. Adepoju AA, Pitan OS. Importance of Parental Involvement for Students ' Academic Motivation. *Educ Perspect*.

2025;13(2):311–22.

14. Marongwe N, Godfrey Mutesasira. Harnessing Parental Involvement and Educational Equity for Sustainable Development in South African Schools. *Interdiscip J Soc Stud*. 2024;4:1–15. doi:10.38140/ijss-2024.vol4.24
15. Shebani Z, Aldhafri S, Alsaïdi F. The effect of parental involvement on academic passion : the mediating role of student motivation in learning English online. *Int J Adolesc Youth*. 2025;30(1). doi:10.1080/02673843.2025.2467109
16. Yang Y. Reciprocal Relationships Between Parental Involvement and Academic Performance in Early Adolescence : A Two-Year Longitudinal Study in China. *J Youth Adolesc*. 2025;876–89. doi:10.1007/s10964-024-02102-7
17. Lazović N, Krulj J, Vidosavljević S, Marković E. The Correlation Between Father Involvement and The Academic Achievement of Their Children: Meta-Analysis. *Int J Cogn Res Sci Eng Educ*. 2022;10(3):53–60. doi:10.23947/2334-8496-2022-10-3-53-60
18. Tasneem Saifuddin SME. Exploring the influence of father involvement on academic achievement of children: A comprehensive review. *AITU Sci Res J*. 2024;3882:26–32.
19. Haiyan C, Yucai X, Jiajia G, Zhao J. The impact of fathers ' involvement on preschoolers ' resilience : a moderated mediation model. *BMC Psychol*. 2026;14.
20. McBride BA, Schoppe-Sullivan SJ, Ho MH. The mediating role of fathers' school involvement on student achievement.pdf [Internet]. 2005. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2004.12.007>
21. Thomas A, Walsh T, Cryer-coupet QR, Harty J, Pate D. The Health Implications of Fatherhood : A Comprehensive Literature Review. *Annu Rev Public Health*. 2026;249–66.
22. Khan H, Ullah R, Nabi M. Effects of Paternal Labour Migration on Left-Behind Children in District Bajaur: Guardian Perspectives. Vol. 6. 2024;6(1):1–8.
23. Qureshi MS, Ahmad A. Effects of Father Absence on Children's Academic Performance. *J Educ Heal Community Psychol*. 2014;3(1):1–6.
24. Yaseen G, Mukhtar M. Prevalence of Parents ' Involvement in Educational Activities and Student ' s Performance : an Analysis of Cross-Sectional Survey in Multan , Pakistan. *Khaldunia J Soc Sci* [Internet]. 2022;2(1):1–16. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.36755/khaldunia.v2i1.33>
25. Kara D, Sümer N. The Role of Paternal Parenting and Co-parenting Quality in Children's Academic Self-Efficacy. *Front Psychol*. 2022;13(March):1–14. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.772023
26. Gu X, Hassan NC, Tajularipin Sulaiman. The Relationship between Family Factors and Academic Achievement of Junior High School Students in Rural China : Mediation Effect of Parental Involvement. *Behav Sci (Basel)* [Internet]. 2024;(October 2021). Available from: <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14030221>
27. Kucukkaragoz H. Review of the research literature on the impact of father absence on child development in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *J Lifestyle SDGs Rev*. 2025;5:1–67.
28. Zhu W. The Mediating Role of Gender in the Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Children ' s Academic Achievement. Vol. 0. 2026;0:119–25. doi:10.54254/2753-7048/2025.21482
29. Daud KD, Mindanao UN, Marawi K. The Influence of Parental Absence on Academic Achievement : An Empirical Analysis. *Fam J Pendidik Kesejaht Kel* [Internet]. 2025;11(1):33–40. Available from: <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/familyedu/index>
30. Waqar S. Perception of Teachers and Mothers about Impact of Father Absence and Presence on the Truancy Behavior of Secondary School Students. III. 2022;III(2):55–64. doi:10.5281/zenodo.10257115
31. Gohar A, Reba A, Islam T. Parental Involvement and Student ' s Academic Performance at the Secondary Level : A Case Study of Frontier Children ' s Academy. Vol. 02. 2023;02(2):12–21.
32. Chachar ZA, Buriro IB, Abdul Jalil Qureshi. The Teachers' Understanding Regarding the Impact of Parental Involvement in School Activities on Early Childhood Education in the Public Sector Schools in Pakistan: an Exploratory Study. *JAHAN TAHQEEQ*. 2024;07(02):698–713.
33. Khan S, Haider SI, Ali M, Sociology MS. The Role of Fathers' Overseas Migration in Educational Performance of Female Children in Sindh, Pakistan. Vol. 3. 2020;3(2):1–8.
34. Chuan CL, Penyelidikan Jabatan. Sample size estimation using Krejcie and Morgan and Cohen statistical power analysis: a comparison Chua Lee Chuan Jabatan Penyelidikan. *J Penyelid IPBL*. 2006;7:78–86.
35. Mahendra JP, Rahayu F. Fatherless Phenomenon After Divorce and Its Impact on Children's Social and Academic Behavior. *Int J Educ Inf Technol others* [Internet]. 2024. Available from: <https://jurnal.peneliti.net/index.php/IJEIT/article/view/11051>
36. Gilbert M, Faustin M. Leaners' Participation in Class Activities and Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Huye District. *Int J Manag Dev Stud*. 2025;14(1):20–32. doi:10.53983/ijmds.v14n1.004