

# A META-ANALYSIS: THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RELATIONAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND STUDENT AND PARENT OUTCOME VARIABLES

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## Abstract

This paper shares the results of a meta-analysis on the parental-relational component of parental-involvement and its association with the academic and behavioral outcomes of urban students. This meta-analysis includes 80 quantitative studies. The results indicated that statistically significant effects emerged across students of differences backgrounds, including difference by age groups, race, gender, and nationality. The results were also substantial in the highest quality studies. The significance of these results is discussed.

**Keywords:** *Parental involvement, parental engagement, relational parental involvement, parenting, academic achievement, academic outcomes, student behavior, family structure, relationships, education.*

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## 1. Introduction

Parental involvement has become one of the most debated facets of education today (Ferrara, 2009; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006). Meta-analyses undertaken over the last twenty years have examined the relative contributions of different facets of parental involvement. A meta-analysis statistically combines all the relevant existing studies on a given subject, in order to determine the aggregated results of said research. A meta-analysis is among the most popular types of academic article, as measured by citations, because it enables people to grasp what the overall body of research on a given topic indicates (Cooper, Hedges, and Valentine, 2019).

As time has passed and more sophisticated quantitative studies, especially meta-analyses, have been done, it has become evident that the early parental involvement theorists examined parental involvement in too narrow a way, particularly in two respects: 1) they paid little attention to the number of dimensions of home-based parental involvement and 2) they overlook the place of relational parental involvement. Relational parental involvement considers the quality of the relationships between the parents and the child, the parents and the teacher, and the parents' relationship with each other, if applicable.

Increasingly, meta-analyses have revealed that the "how to" directives that the essence of myriad expressions of school-based family involvement yield not particularly large effect sizes, when it comes to raising academic achievement. In addition, over the years an increasing body of research suggests that the quality of parental *relationships* is important.

## 2. Design

This research paper includes a meta-analysis on the relational component of parental involvement and its relationship with the scholastic and behavioral outcomes of urban students. The meta-analysis includes eighty quantitative studies. The results indicated that statistically significant effects arose across students with difference in backgrounds, including differences by age groups, race, gender, and nationality. The results were also strong, when even only examining the highest quality studies.

### 3. Objectives

To determine: 1) The overall effects for *Relational Parental Involvement*, 2) the relationship between *Relational Parental Involvement* and academic achievement, 3) the relationship between *Relational Parental Involvement* and student behavior, 4) might the results differ by the nation in which the study was done, 5) might the results differ by the age (grade level) of the students, 6) The effects for *Relational Parental Involvement* for high quality studies, and 7) might the results differ by the whether the students were majority or minority students.

### 4. Methods

In this project, 60 major data bases were searched (Psych Info, ERIC, Sociological Abstracts, Wilson Periodicals, and so forth) to find studies examining the effects of relational parental involvement on the academic and behavioral outcomes of urban children from grades K-college freshmen. I also searched journal articles on relational parental involvement to find additional research articles that addressed this issue for urban students. Although this comprehensive search yielded hundreds of articles and papers on this topic, nearly all of these articles were not quantitative in nature. Ninety-five studies were found that quantitatively addressed the relationship under study and 80 studies of those that had a sufficient degree of quantitative data on urban students to include in this meta-analysis.

*Calculating average effect sizes.* A weighting procedure was used to calculate average effect sizes across all the comparisons. First, each independent effect size was first multiplied by the inverse of its variance. The sum of these products was then divided by the sum of the inverses. Then, 95% confidence intervals were calculated. As Hedges and Vevea (1998) recommend, all the analyses were conducted using fixed-error assumptions in one analysis and applied random-error assumptions in the other. Random-error assumptions were the ones presented in this paper, because this procedure yields more conservative effect sizes.

If there was more than one effect size presented in the results section, the effect size that was chosen was based on that which referred to: a) the overall sample and b) the purest measure of relational parental involvement, as explained in the section below on study quality. In the case of results that included clear statistical outliers, the presence of these outliers was acknowledged, and then supplemental analyses were run without such an outlier in order to estimate the degree to which the presence of an outlier might have affected the results.

Tests of homogeneity were completed on the relational parental involvement measures to gain a sense of the consistency of specific relational parental involvement scales across studies.

#### Defining of Variables

For the purposes of this study, parental involvement was defined as parental participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children. Relational parental involvement was defined as parents having strong and positive relationships with their child (student under study), the other parent of the child, and the teacher.

### 5. Discussion

There were several research questions addressed in the study. They included: 1) The overall effects for *Relational Parental Involvement*, 2) the relationship between *Relational Parental Involvement* and academic achievement, 3) the relationship between *Relational Parental Involvement* and student behavior, 4) might the results differ by the nation in which the study was done, 5) might the results differ by the age (grade level) of the students, 6) The effects for *Relational Parental Involvement* for high quality studies, and 7) might the results differ by the whether the students were majority or minority students.

### 6. Conclusion

Perhaps the most remarkable finding regarding the effects of the relational parental involvement is its consistency across almost all variables. The results are consistent across age, race, gender, academic measure, and scholastic subject. These findings are encouraging and suggest that relational parental involvement may be of help across population groups.

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