

Exploring Full-Time Mothers' Support and Its Influence on the Academic Experiences of Kindergarten Learners: A Case Study

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Abstract

This qualitative case study explored the influence of full-time mothers' support on the academic experiences of kindergarten learners in a public school in Palo, Leyte, Philippines. Guided by Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, the study examined how maternal involvement contributes to children's early learning and academic development. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with nine full-time mothers who served as the primary caregivers of kindergarten learners during the school year 2025–2026. Using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework, several key themes emerged describing how mothers support their children's education. These include strong parent–child relationships, encouragement of positive educational values, establishment of structured home learning routines, direct academic guidance, and monitoring of school tasks. The findings revealed that these forms of maternal support enhanced children's emotional security, motivation, engagement in learning activities, and the development of foundational literacy and numeracy skills. The study also identified challenges experienced by full-time mothers, particularly time constraints due to work and household responsibilities, which sometimes limited their ability to consistently assist their children or attend school activities. Despite these challenges, mothers employed coping mechanisms such as using practical home-based learning strategies and maintaining communication with teachers. Overall, the findings highlight the critical role of full-time mothers and emphasize the importance of strengthening family–school collaboration to support young learners' academic experiences.

Keywords: *parental support; full-time mothers; kindergarten learners; academic experiences; parental involvement early childhood education*

1. Introduction

Early childhood is a critical stage in a child's cognitive, social, and academic development, where foundational learning skills are formed through interactions within the home and school environments. During the formative years of schooling, children's learning is influenced not only by teachers but also by the support they receive from their families, particularly their parents. Parental involvement has been widely recognized as an essential factor that contributes to children's academic success, motivation, and overall learning experiences. However, in many contexts, including the Philippines, parents often face challenges balancing employment, household responsibilities, and active participation in their children's education, which may limit the extent of their involvement in supporting early learning (Santiago & Marquez, 2025).

International research consistently emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in early childhood education. Studies show that children whose parents actively engage in their learning—through reading together, assisting with homework, and maintaining communication with teachers—demonstrate stronger academic performance, higher motivation, and improved social-emotional development (Goodall,

2022). Similarly, research by Wilder (2021) highlighted that parental engagement plays a crucial role in fostering positive learning attitudes and strengthening early literacy and numeracy development among young learners. These findings suggest that parental support provides children with the guidance and encouragement necessary to succeed academically during their early years of schooling.

In the Philippine context, several studies have explored the role of parental involvement in supporting children's education. Bartolome, Mamat, and Masnan (2020) documented teachers' perspectives regarding parental participation in kindergarten education, emphasizing that structured home-based learning support and effective school–family partnerships contribute significantly to children's academic readiness. Furthermore, Bartolome and Mamat (2022) examined kindergarten learners' perspectives and found that children value both parental support at home and parental presence in school activities, as these forms of involvement enhance their motivation and engagement in learning tasks.

Local and regional studies also confirm the importance of parental support in early learning. For instance, Escol and Alcopra (2024) reported a strong positive relationship between parental engagement and students' academic performance in core subjects, demonstrating that collaborative involvement between families and schools contributes to improved learner outcomes. Similarly, Balderas (2025) found that parental participation significantly influences the development of early Filipino language skills among young learners, highlighting the importance of parent–child interaction in supporting language acquisition at home. Meanwhile, Dantes and Marquez (2025) observed that although many parents provide educational materials and assist with homework, consistent monitoring of children's learning and regular communication with teachers remain areas that require further strengthening.

Despite the documented benefits of parental involvement, several challenges continue to limit parents' ability to actively participate in their children's education. Research has shown that time constraints, work commitments, and limited knowledge about child development often hinder parents from providing sustained academic support at home (Calderon-Villarreal et al., 2025). These barriers are particularly relevant for full-time working parents who must balance multiple responsibilities while attempting to support their children's learning experiences.

The importance of parental involvement is also reflected in educational policies both globally and nationally. Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) emphasizes the need to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, highlighting the importance of strong family–school partnerships in supporting early childhood education (United Nations, 2023). In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) also underscores the role of parents as key partners in education, promoting programs and initiatives that encourage collaboration between schools and families to enhance learners' academic development (DepEd, 2023).

Although previous studies have established the positive relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance, there remains a significant research gap in understanding how different types of parental support—such as emotional encouragement, structured home learning routines, academic guidance, and school participation—specifically influence the academic experiences of kindergarten learners, particularly from the perspective of full-time mothers. Many studies focus on general parental involvement or quantitative relationships between involvement and academic outcomes, but limited qualitative research has explored how mothers actively support their children's learning and how these forms of support shape the learners' day-to-day academic experiences in early childhood education.

The foundation of this study is grounded in Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes that learning is a socially mediated process where children develop cognitively through interactions with more knowledgeable individuals such as parents, teachers, and peers (Vygotsky, 1978; Liu et al., 2024). In the context of kindergarten education, full-time mothers' support—through guiding homework, providing learning materials, and engaging in educational activities—serves as an essential form of social interaction that facilitates children's cognitive growth. This theory suggests that learning occurs within a supportive social environment where parental involvement plays a crucial role in shaping children's understanding,

problem-solving skills, and motivation to learn. Applying Sociocultural Theory in this study allows for a deeper examination of how various forms of parental support contribute to early academic development and influence children's learning experiences.

Given the importance of parental involvement in early childhood education, this study aims to explore how different forms of support provided by full-time mothers influence the academic experiences of kindergarten learners in a selected school community. By examining both the positive contributions and challenges faced by mothers in supporting their children's learning, the study seeks to generate insights that may strengthen family-school collaboration and inform strategies for improving parental engagement in early childhood education. The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable recommendations for educators, parents, and policymakers in enhancing support systems that help kindergarten learners build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do full-time mothers' support affect the academic experiences of their kindergarten learners?
2. What challenges and coping mechanisms do full-time mothers encounter in supporting their kindergarten learners' academic experiences?

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This study used a Qualitative Research, particularly a Case Study design, because it allowed a closer look at the everyday experiences of full-time mothers and their kindergarten children. In order to comprehend how parental support affected learning, this study concentrated on actual experiences and observations. In order to consider both the home and school perspectives, information was acquired through parent interviews, straightforward surveys, and observation of classroom interactions. By combining these techniques, the study aimed to document not only what parents did but also how their participation affected kids' performance and self-esteem. Even though the focus was on a single school community, educators, parents, and legislators who wished to improve parent-school relationships and support the success of young students could use the insights acquired as useful models.

2.2. Research Locale

This study was conducted in a public kindergarten school in Palo, Leyte, Philippines, which served learners from families engaged in fishing, small businesses, farming, and other livelihoods. Parents in the community often balanced work and household duties, affecting their ability to support their children's education. The school was chosen because of its active home-school collaboration through meetings, events, and programs, making it an ideal setting to examine how parental support influenced the academic performance of kindergarten learners.

2.3. Research Participants

The participants of this study were 9 full-time mothers of kindergarten learners from a public school in Palo, Leyte, for the school year 2025–2026, and they were chosen because they were the primary caregivers who actively supported their children's learning at home and in school. To be included, participants had to be parents or guardians involved in their child's education, such as helping with homework or participating in school activities. Parents or guardians of children in other grade levels or those who were not the main caregivers were not included. A purposive sampling method was used to select participants who

could provide valuable insights into parental support. This approach allowed the study to examine how parents' involvement affected young learners' academic performance.

2.4. Research Instrument

The study used semi-structured interviews for full-time mothers of kindergarten learners to explore how parental support affected academic performance and how different forms of support improved learning. Open-ended questions allowed parents to share their experiences and challenges, providing rich, detailed insights. This method was ideal because it directly addressed the research questions while capturing meaningful information about the role of parental involvement in early academic success.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedures

Data for this study was collected through semi-structured interviews with full-time mothers of kindergarten learners. The researcher first secured permission from the school administration and informed parents about the study's purpose, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. Interviews were scheduled at convenient times for parents and conducted in a comfortable setting, allowing them to share their experiences, practices, and challenges in supporting their children's learning. Responses were audio-recorded with consent and later transcribed for analysis. This method enabled the researcher to gather rich, detailed, and meaningful qualitative data that directly addressed the research questions about how parental support affected academic experiences and enhanced learning in kindergarten learners.

2.6. Data Analysis

The interview data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Transcripts were read carefully to identify key ideas and recurring themes about full-time mother support, its effects on academic performance, and challenges faced by parents. These themes were then organized and interpreted to answer the research questions and provide a clear understanding of how different forms of parental involvement contributed to the learning of kindergarten learners.

2.7. Ethical Considerations

This study upheld the highest ethical standards to protect all participants. Informed consent was obtained from parents before the interviews, and they were informed that participation was voluntary and they could withdraw at any time without consequences. Confidentiality was strictly maintained by removing names from transcripts and securely storing all audio recordings and notes. Permissions were also secured from the school administration prior to data collection. Additionally, the researcher ensured that the interviews were conducted respectfully and without any form of coercion, creating a safe and comfortable environment for parents to share their experiences.

2.8. Trustworthiness

The researcher ensured the trustworthiness of the study on the influence of school administrators' leadership skills among teachers in Palo, Leyte. The researcher established credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Credibility was ensured through member checking and the use of verbatim quotations to accurately reflect teachers' experiences. Dependability was maintained by keeping a clear audit trail of the research procedures and analysis. Confirmability was supported through reflexivity to minimize

researcher bias and ensure that findings were grounded in participants' narratives. Transferability was achieved by providing sufficient contextual details to help readers determine the applicability of the findings to similar settings.

2.9 Reflexivity

The researcher ensured that no personal biases influenced the data collection, analysis, or interpretation of the study's findings. All narratives and responses presented in the study were taken verbatim from the participants to accurately and authentically represent their experiences and perspectives.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study on the influence of full-time mothers' support on the academic experiences of kindergarten learners. Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework, the qualitative data gathered from the participants were carefully examined to identify recurring patterns and meaningful insights regarding how mothers support their children's learning. The analysis generated several themes that highlight the significant role of parental support in shaping children's emotional security, motivation, learning engagement, and early academic skill development. In addition, the study also explored the challenges encountered by full-time mothers in supporting their children's education and the coping mechanisms they employ to address these difficulties. The themes are discussed in detail with supporting narratives from the participants to illustrate how different forms of parental involvement influence the academic experiences of kindergarten learners.

Influence of Full-Time Mothers' Support on the Academic Experiences of Kindergarten Learners

Using the six-phase thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke (2006), the qualitative data revealed six major themes that explain how parental support significantly shapes the academic experiences of kindergarten learners. These themes demonstrate that parental support positively influences children's emotional security, learning engagement, academic motivation, and early skill development.

Theme 1: Strong Parent-Child Relationship

Across all participants, there is a consistent report of a positive and close relationship with their child. Most parents describe their relationship as "maupay gud" (very good), indicating emotional warmth and trust. This strong bond is fundamental as it forms the basis for meaningful academic support (Liu et al., 2024). The participants' narratives are presented below to provide a detailed account of their experiences and perspectives.

Significant response 1: "Maupay gud an akon relasyon ha akon anak. Ginbubuligan ko hiya ha iya homework ngan pirmi ako nakikig-istorya han iya eksperyensya ha eskwelahan." (I have a very good relationship with my child. I help him with his homework and talk a lot about his experiences at school.) (P₁, L₂₃₋₂₄)

Significant response 2: "Gin bubuhat ko an best as a nanay kun mayda pa ako oras na nahahatag ha iya gintatagan ko liwat hiya hin oras para tutduan ngan pahinumdumon ha iya na mag-upay hiya an iya paeskwela ngan mag-maintain an pagiging usa kamaupay na bata." (I do my best as a mother when I have the time to give her, I also give her time to teach and remind her to do well in school and to maintain being a good child.) (P₄, L₃₂₋₃₃)

Significant response 3: "Ha akon relasyon tak umangkon and han pagsuporta ko ha iya pag-eskwela is ginsusuportahan ko hiya pinaagi ha pag-aram ha iya eskwelahan tapos gin bubuligan ko hiya kun ano it

iya diri maaram sugad.” (In my relationship with my niece and with my support to her with her schoolworks, I support her by going to her school and then I help her with what she doesn't know.) (P2, L32-33)

Theme 2: Encouragement and Value of Education

Some parents, especially Participant 4, emphasized the importance of promoting good behavior and diligence in school, even when time is limited due to work. This shows that parental support extends beyond academic help—it also includes guidance in personal development and school attitudes (Hyder & Anbar, 2025).

As described by the participants in this study:

Significant response 1: “Gin tatagan ko liwat hiya hin oras para tutduan ngan pahinumdumon ha iya na mag-upay hiya an iya paeskwela ngan mag-maintain an pagiging usa kamaupay na bata. (I give her time to teach and remind her to do well in school and to continue being a good child.)” (P4, L32-34)

Significant response 2: “Kada adlaw gin papakita ko an suporta pinaagi hin pakigestorya ngan pagcheck han iya homework. (Every day I show my support by talking with her and checking her homework.)” (P5, L35-36)

Significant response 3: “Pirmi ko ginchecheck an iya mga assignments ngan gin papakianhan ko kun mayda hiya nakukurian nga lessons ngan kun nag-arano hira ha school. Gin papamatian ko hiya everytime nag-iistorya hiya parte pag-aram. (I always check her assignments and ask if she has difficulty with lessons or how they went at school. I listen to her every time she talks about her learning experiences.)” (P9, L43-46)

Theme 3: Establishment of Home Learning Routines

Several participants described having a structured routine at home where learning activities are done after basic needs such as eating are met. According to Bosire et. al, 2025, parents intentionally set time for writing, reading, and counting exercises before allowing leisure or play. The responses below provide empirical support for the emerging theme.

Significant response 1: “Pag abot ha balay ginpapakakaon ko anay ngan kahuman gin papasurat ko hiya ngan kahuman ginpapagsurat ko hiya it iya ngaran ngan gintututduan ko hiya mag-ihap it numbers. (When we arrive home, I first let my child eat, then I let him practice writing, ask him to write his name, and teach him how to count numbers.)” (P1, L80-32)

Significant response 2: “Hin babantayan ko hiya kun naghohomework ngan ginbubuligan ha mga problem nga diri hiya maaram. Ginpapagbasa ko ngan papagsurat antis hiya magmulay ha gawas. (I watch him while he is doing his homework and help him with problems he does not understand. I let him read and write before he goes out to play.)” (P4, L86-88)

Significant response 3: “Ginbabantayan ko an iya mga homework. Nagbabasa kami hin mga libro ngan nagkakanta hin nursery rhymes para magpraktis han letra. (I monitor his homework. We read books together and sing nursery rhymes to practice letters.)” (P3, L84-85)

Theme 4: Direct Academic Instruction and Skill Development

Most parents actively support learning by teaching foundational skills such as writing names, reading, counting numbers, and letter recognition. According to Siason, et al. (2025), these activities are developmentally appropriate for kindergarten learners.

The participants expressed the following during the interview:

Significant response 1: “Nagbabasa kami hin mga libro ngan nagkakanta hin nursery rhymes para magpraktis han letra. (We read books together and sing nursery rhymes to practice the letters.)” (P3, L84-85)

Significant response 2: “Gin tututduan ko hiya pagbasa ngan pag-ihap. (I teach my child how to read and count.)” (P8, L96)

Significant response 3: “Gin pagpapasurat ko hiya hit iya ngaran ngan papagbasa. (I teach my child

how to read and count.)” (P₉, L₉₇₋₉₈)

Theme 5: Monitoring and Supervision of School Tasks

Some parents emphasized checking notebooks, assignments, and homework, ensuring that school tasks are completed and understood. This finding revealed that consistent monitoring enhances academic responsibility, improves task accuracy, and boosts learning motivation. According to Eker and Yildizli (2025), parental academic involvement has a significant positive direct effect on students' academic achievement. Below are significant responses of the participants:

Significant response 1: “Gin babantayan ko an iya mga homework. (I monitor his homework.)” (P₃, L₈₄)

Significant response 2: “Gin kikita ko iya mga notebooks ngan mga activities. (I check his notebooks and activities.)” (P₆, L₉₆)

Significant response 3: “Gin babantayan ko hiya kun naghohomework ngan ginbubuligan ha mga problem nga diri hiya maaram. (I supervise him while doing homework and help him with problems he does not understand.)” (P₉, L₉₇₋₉₈)

Challenges Faced by Full-Time Mothers and Their Coping Mechanisms in Supporting the Academic Experiences of Kindergarten Learners

Theme 1: Time Constraints Due to Work and Multiple Responsibilities

Lack of time due to work responsibilities is commonly reported as a major challenge that limits parents' ability to support their children's learning and participate in school activities (Calderon-Villarreal et al., 2025). Below are significant responses of the participants:

Significant response 1: “Kulang an oras tungod han trabaho ngan iba pa nga responsibilidad ha balay. (There is limited time because of work and other responsibilities at home.)” (P₁, L₃₂₀)

Significant response 2: “Danay diri ko hiya na aatiman kay naeskwela gihap ako. (Sometimes I cannot attend to my child because I am also studying.)” (P₉, L₃₂₉₋₃₃₀)

Significant response 3: “Kolang ang oras dre nako permanente natodloan. (I have little time, so I cannot always teach my child.)” (P₇, L₃₂₇)

Theme 2: Impact of Challenges on Participation and Support

Time constraints from work and household responsibilities can reduce parents' ability to attend school events, monitor learning, and assist children with academic tasks, which may also lead to feelings of inadequacy or guilt among parents who wish to be more involved (Calderon-Villarreal et al., 2025). Below are significant responses of the participants:

Significant response 1: “Mayda adlaw nga diri ako nakakapukos ha iya pagtutdo kay nga na busy ako. (There are days when I cannot focus on teaching my child because I am busy.)” (P₅, L₃₄₁)

Significant response 2: “Mayda adlaw nga diri ako makakadto ha meetings o school activities tungod hit kabusy. (There are days when I cannot attend meetings or school activities because I am busy.)” (P₃, L₃₃₇₋₃₃₈)

Significant response 3: “Diri ako perpekto na nakakaassist ha akon anak. (I am not perfect in assisting my child.)” (P₉, L₃₄₆₋₋₃₄₇)

Theme 3: Need for School-Provided Support and Resources

Schools can help parents overcome challenges in supporting their children's education by providing accessible learning materials, maintaining consistent communication, and encouraging parental engagement in learning activities (Yang et al., 2023). Below are significant responses of the participants:

Significant response 1: “Simple learning materials o worksheets ngan puydi buhaton ha balay.

(Simple learning materials or worksheets that can be done at home.)” (P₆, L₃₅₈)

Significant response 2: “Hin momotivate kami na mga kag-anak han ira teacher. (Teachers motivating us as parents is very helpful.)” (P₂, L₃₅₂₋₃₅₃)

Significant response 3: “Regular na komunikasyon ngan instruction ha simple nga pamaagi. (Regular communication and simple instructions.)” (P₃, L₃₅₄)

Theme 4: Coping Mechanisms Emphasizing Practicality and Motivation

Parents often cope with challenges in supporting their children’s education by using practical home-based learning strategies while receiving encouragement and guidance from teachers and the school community (Goodall, 2022). Below are significant responses of the participants:

Significant response 1: “Naghahatag hin clear guidelines o handouts nga puydi buhaton ha balay. (Providing clear guidelines or handouts that can be done at home.)” (P₄, L₃₇₂)

Significant response 2: “Pinaagi han pakikigcooperate ngan pagreremind ni teacher ha amon na mga kag-anak dako na nga bulig kay mas nagaguide nam an amon mga anak para mas matutduan an ira pag-aram. (Through cooperation and reminders from teachers to us parents, it greatly helps guide our children and supports their learning.)” (P₉, L₃₇₉₋₃₈₁)

Significant response 3: “Abri nga komunikasyon pinaagi hin chat, tawag o meeting para mauupdate an progreso han bata. (Open communication through chat, calls, or meetings to update the child’s progress.)” (P₈, L₃₇₇₋₃₇₈)

4. Conclusion

This study explored the influence of full-time mothers’ support on the academic experiences of kindergarten learners using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis framework. The findings revealed that parental support plays a significant role in shaping children’s emotional, behavioral, and academic development. A strong parent–child relationship characterized by trust, warmth, and open communication serves as the foundation for effective academic support, enabling children to feel secure and motivated in their learning. Full-time mothers demonstrated their support by encouraging positive attitudes toward education, promoting discipline and responsibility, and establishing structured home learning routines that include activities such as reading, writing, and counting. Many mothers also provided direct academic instruction and monitored school tasks by checking homework, notebooks, and assignments to ensure their children’s understanding and completion of schoolwork. Despite these positive contributions, the study also identified challenges faced by full-time mothers, particularly time constraints due to work, household responsibilities, and other commitments, which sometimes limit their ability to participate in school activities or consistently assist their children at home. Some mothers expressed feelings of inadequacy when they were unable to fully support their child’s learning; however, they employed coping mechanisms such as using practical home-based learning strategies, maintaining communication with teachers, and relying on simple learning materials provided by the school. Support from teachers through motivation, reminders, and accessible resources also helped mothers remain engaged in their children’s education. Overall, the findings highlight that the involvement of full-time mothers significantly enhances kindergarten learners’ academic experiences by fostering emotional security, strengthening learning routines, promoting motivation, and supporting the development of foundational literacy and numeracy skills, while also emphasizing the importance of strong collaboration between families and schools to support working mothers in their vital role in early childhood education.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, parents are encouraged to maintain strong relationships with their children and actively participate in learning activities at home, providing emotional support, monitoring homework, and establishing consistent routines. Schools and teachers should continue to foster parent-school partnerships through workshops, meetings, and guidance programs that equip parents with practical strategies to reinforce classroom lessons. The Department of Education (DepEd) and policymakers are urged to strengthen programs and policies that promote parental involvement, such as family literacy initiatives and community-based learning support. Future research should explore the long-term effects of various forms of parental support on children's academic and socio-emotional development, as well as examine these practices across different cultural and socio-economic contexts. By implementing these measures, stakeholders can create a supportive environment that enhances kindergarten learners' academic performance, motivation, and overall development.

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