

Empowering Learning Through Dialogue: The Impact of Parental Academic Socialization on Student Success in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: Introduction & Objective: Parental involvement strongly influences student achievement. Among its forms, academic socialization—parents' communication of educational values, goals, and expectations—plays a particularly important role. This study explores how academic socialization shapes student outcomes in Indonesia and compares its effects with other types of involvement. Methods: Data were collected from more than 2,000 secondary students in four provinces. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) and mediation analysis were used to test the effects of parental involvement, with cultural capital as a mediator. Results: Academic socialization showed the strongest positive effect on GPA, attendance, and aspirations ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < .001$), stronger than home- or school-based involvement. Cultural capital significantly mediated these relationships. Conclusion: Academic socialization is a strategic pathway for improving student success in Indonesia. Schools and policies should focus on strengthening parents' ability to communicate academic goals and values, especially in low-SES communities.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Academic Socialization, Student Success, Cultural Capital, Indonesia, Educational Equity.



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INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a critical factor influencing student academic success, particularly in low and middle income countries (LMICs). While various forms of parental participation ranging from assisting with homework to attending school meetings are often emphasized in policy and practice, recent literature points to academic socialization as an especially potent, yet underexplored, dimension. In contrast to physical presence or direct support, academic socialization centers on how parents communicate expectations, instill educational values, and connect school learning to broader life goals. These practices, though less visible than traditional involvement, may yield more consistent effects on students' educational trajectories.

In LMICs, the need for effective parental engagement strategies is particularly acute. Educational systems often struggle with resource constraints, teacher shortages, and inequities in access, placing

additional pressure on families to compensate. In such environments, committed parental support can address critical gaps in the education system. Chun and Devall (2019) emphasize that parental engagement, even when informal, enhances student outcomes by providing motivational and emotional scaffolding that schools may not always supply. Importantly, this role becomes more pronounced in households and communities where external academic support is limited.

Academic socialization, specifically, operates through mechanisms that align closely with students' internal motivation and long term aspirations. Parents who engage in goal setting conversations, emphasize the value of education, and relate school tasks to future opportunities help shape a student's academic self concept and resilience. Lara & Saracosti (2019) find that such practices are positively correlated with academic achievement, particularly when students internalize educational expectations as part of their identity. In these interactions, the role of the parent shifts from a supervisor of tasks to a mentor of aspirations.

This mentoring role is both socio-cultural and psychologically significant. Benner et al. (2016) show that parental expectations strongly motivate students, particularly those from disadvantaged groups. High expectations foster a home culture of achievement, reinforcing academic identity and performance. In Indonesia, similar patterns have been observed: Puspitasari et al. (2021) found that collaboration between parents and schools enhanced student character and learning outcomes.

This study situates itself within Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and Hoover Dempsey's process model of parental involvement, both of which offer theoretical insight into how parental expectations are transmitted and received. The integration of cultural capital with academic socialization allows us to conceptualize parental influence not as a one time act of involvement but as an ongoing, culturally embedded process. It is through this lens that the Indonesian context is particularly intriguing.

Indonesia's education policy has historically emphasized institutional reform curricular redesign, infrastructure investment, and standardized testing often at the expense of community and family engagement. However, this is gradually shifting. Recent initiatives under the Ministry of Education have attempted to incorporate family engagement more directly, including efforts to involve parents in decision making and school based programs. Angwaomaodoko (2023) notes that such policy shifts reflect a growing recognition of the importance of holistic, community grounded education strategies. Yet, despite this progress, the dominant models still prioritize ceremonial involvement over substantive academic collaboration.

Global policy frameworks offer additional perspectives. In many LMICs, governments and NGOs have begun to invest in parental training programs that emphasize academic dialogue, goal setting, and home based support mechanisms. These programs seek to enhance parental self efficacy and provide culturally appropriate tools for engagement. Day & Dotterer (2018), for instance, describe interventions that equip low income families with the knowledge and confidence to support their children academically. Similarly, Young (2020) highlights the role of community school partnerships in amplifying the effects of academic socialization by providing parents with access to support systems and informational resources.

These global insights underscore the need to reconceptualize parental involvement beyond conventional metrics. In Indonesia, this means shifting attention from school visits and committee participation toward at home practices that are both contextually grounded and empirically supported. Given the existing literature, the hypothesis of this study is that academic socialization measured through indicators such as parental expectations, goal discussions, and future orientation is the most consistent and impactful predictor of student success.

This chapter has outlined the theoretical and empirical foundation for focusing on academic socialization. It has drawn from global research, introduced relevant models of cultural transmission, and contextualized these within the Indonesian education system. By doing so, it sets the stage for an empirical investigation of how academic socialization functions, how it compares with other forms of parental involvement, and how it may inform educational policy in Indonesia moving forward.

METHOD

This chapter outlines the methodological approach undertaken to examine the relationship between parental academic socialization and student success among secondary school students in Indonesia. It describes the study design, sampling procedure, instrumentation, and analytic strategy, with particular attention to validated measurement tools and multilevel statistical modeling techniques.

A cross sectional survey design was employed to capture data from students and their schools at a single point in time. This design was selected to assess the associations between various forms of parental involvement particularly academic socialization and academic outcomes. The multilevel nature of educational systems, with students nested within schools, necessitated a statistical approach that accounts for this data hierarchy.

The study targeted secondary school students (Grades 7–10) across four Indonesian provinces, selected to reflect variation in urbanicity, socioeconomic context, and school governance models. A stratified cluster sampling method was used, with schools serving as primary sampling units. The final sample included approximately 2,000 students across 100 schools, ensuring adequate statistical power for hierarchical modeling and mediation analysis.

Measurement of parental academic socialization relied on adapted versions of the Parental Academic Socialization Scale (Chun & Devall, 2019), a validated tool used to assess how parents communicate educational expectations, values, and goals. Items measured the frequency and clarity of goal setting conversations, discussions of school relevance, and future aspirations.

Additional instruments included the Family School Partnership Survey (Lara & Saracostti, 2019), used to capture broader parental involvement patterns (home based and school based), and items reflecting Indonesian educational policy contexts, including parental participation in school committees and the P5 curriculum initiative.

Cultural capital was assessed through a composite index incorporating number of books at home, frequency of reading, and cultural activities. Socioeconomic status (SES) was measured using parental education, occupation, and home assets. Student success was operationalized via GPA, attendance rate, and aspiration scores.

All instruments were translated into Bahasa Indonesia and piloted for clarity and reliability. Reliability indices (Cronbach's α) exceeded 0.75 for all multi item scales.

Data were collected via in school surveys administered under the supervision of trained enumerators. School administrators provided contextual information regarding location (urban/rural), P5 implementation, and institutional support for parental involvement.

Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was the primary analytic method, appropriate for the nested structure of the data. Following Benner et al. (2016) and Rasool et al. (2023), the HLM framework allowed for the partitioning of variance at both the student (Level 1) and school (Level 2) levels. Three primary models were specified:

Model 1: Student Success \sim Academic Socialization + SES + Controls (Level 1)

Model 2: Addition of home based and school based PI types for comparative effects

Model 3: Testing mediation of Academic Socialization \rightarrow Cultural Capital \rightarrow Student Success

To test mediation effects, multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) techniques were integrated. This approach allowed for the simultaneous estimation of within and between group effects. Following Day & Dotterer (2018) and Young (2020), bias corrected confidence intervals and bootstrapping (1,000 iterations) were used to assess indirect paths. All analyses were conducted using statistical software packages that support multilevel mediation modeling

The study adhered to ethical standards for educational research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and their guardians. Data confidentiality and anonymity were ensured at all stages, and ethical clearance was secured from a recognized institutional review board.

In summary, the methodology employed combines robust instruments and advanced analytic techniques to investigate the mediating role of cultural capital in the relationship between parental academic socialization and student success, within the Indonesian educational context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study, organized into three core subsections: the effects of academic socialization, mediation by cultural capital, and comparative analysis of parental involvement types. The data are derived from multilevel models that account for the nested structure of students within schools. Findings are supported with relevant literature.

Academic Socialization Effects

Multilevel regression analyses revealed that academic socialization significantly predicted student success outcomes. The standardized coefficient for academic socialization in predicting GPA was $\beta = 0.42$ ($p < .001$), indicating a strong positive effect consistent with international meta analyses (effect size range: 0.20–0.60). This aligns with Liu et al. (2023) and the 2022 review that emphasized the cross cultural robustness of academic socialization's impact.

Age related variation was observed: academic socialization had stronger effects among younger students (Grades 7–8) compared to older cohorts. While earlier stages benefit more from direct engagement, parental expectations remain relevant at higher grade levels, especially during educational transitions.

Patterns of parental goal setting emerged clearly: students whose parents engaged in structured educational discussions reported higher academic motivation and aspirations. These patterns validate Tan, (2017) and Hadjicharalambous (2021), confirming that communicated expectations foster resilience and academic self concept.

Transmission of aspirations was moderated by SES and cultural norms. Higher SES families showed greater consistency in educational messaging, while lower SES families faced structural barriers. However, positive parent–child communication, regardless of SES, remained a protective factor (Waterman et al., 2022).

Table 1. HLM Results for Academic Socialization and Student Success

Predictor	β	SE	p value	95% CI	Random Effects
Academic Socialization	0.42	0.05	<.001	[0.33, 0.51]	Yes
Home Based PI	0.18	0.04	.002	[0.10, 0.26]	No
School Based PI	0.06	0.05	.215	[0.04, 0.16]	No
Cultural Capital (med.)	0.25	0.06	<.001	[0.13, 0.37]	Yes
SES	0.31	0.05	<.001	[0.22, 0.40]	Yes
Urban School (1=Yes)	0.12	0.04	.010	[0.03, 0.21]	Yes
P5 Participation (School)	0.15	0.06	.012	[0.03, 0.27]	Yes

These results show that while home-based involvement ($\beta = 0.18$, $p = .002$) had a modest effect, its impact was still weaker than academic socialization. School-based involvement was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.06$, $p = .215$), suggesting that school presence alone does not improve outcomes unless linked with academic dialogue at home. Thus, academic socialization clearly emerges as the strongest predictor of student achievement.

Mediation by Cultural Capital

Cultural capital emerged as a significant mediator. Academic socialization indirectly influenced student GPA through literacy practices and exposure to cultural activities ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < .001$).

Practices such as shared reading and educational outings helped reinforce learning orientations, consistent with Koustourakis et al. (2016) and Ishimaru et al. (2016).

The mediation path also highlighted disparities: children from high SES backgrounds benefited more from enriched environments, while low SES families transmitted limited cultural capital, confirming patterns noted by Šarvajcová & Rybanský (2020). Nonetheless, even modest literacy engagement at home significantly improved outcomes, reaffirming Jeong & Veenstra (2017).

Cultural capital was assessed using a composite index, including books at home, frequency of reading, and parental educational background. These variables collectively captured the mechanisms theorized by Bourdieu.

Comparative Analysis of Parental Involvement Types

In comparison to academic socialization, school based PI (e.g., volunteering, PTA attendance) showed weak, non significant effects ($\beta = 0.06$, $p = .215$). While such activities promoted school–community ties, they were not directly associated with improved academic outcomes unless linked to at home educational practices (Strømme & Helland, 2020).

Home based PI, such as homework help, showed moderate associations ($\beta = 0.18$, $p = .002$), but its effects were complex. Excessive parental help sometimes fostered dependency, which could impede self regulated learning (Veenstra & Jeong, 2016). Balanced, supportive strategies proved more effective.

Subject specific effects were also detected. Parental engagement in language related activities (e.g., reading) correlated more with literacy outcomes, while math related engagement had a distinct influence (Jæger & Karlson, 2018; Sortkær, 2019). These variations suggest the need for tailored involvement strategies.

Finally, cultural norms and local expectations influenced how parents engaged with schools. In communities where parental involvement was culturally embedded, engagement levels and academic outcomes were higher (Njuguna, 2021).

Overall, academic socialization demonstrated the most robust and consistent effects on student success, with cultural capital serving as a meaningful explanatory mechanism.

The findings of this study confirm the pivotal role of academic socialization in shaping student success among Indonesian secondary students. This section interprets those findings within the broader sociocultural and policy context, emphasizing implications for practice, cultural adaptation, and educational reform.

The robust association between academic socialization and student outcomes highlights the transformative potential of goal oriented parental engagement. As the results demonstrate, students whose parents frequently engage in educational discussions and link school learning to future aspirations show higher levels of academic motivation and achievement. These patterns mirror global findings while underscoring their validity in Southeast Asian contexts. Yet, despite the strong evidence base, structural and cultural challenges continue to constrain academic socialization, especially in low socioeconomic status (SES) communities.

One significant barrier is the limited capacity of low SES parents to engage meaningfully in academic dialogue with their children. This gap is not a reflection of parental disinterest but often of insufficient access to educational resources, confidence, and cultural capital. Alameda-Lawson & Lawson (2016) argue that empowering parents through community based programs can mitigate such disparities. Initiatives that offer targeted training, mentorship from experienced parents, and family learning events have shown promise in enhancing parental agency. Antony-Newman (2023) further notes that when families are included in learning ecosystems beyond the classroom, they become vital co producers of educational success.

Schools thus hold a critical role in facilitating this engagement. Building parents' capacity to communicate academic goals requires intentional support. Macdonald & Boon (2018) highlight the importance of training educators to collaborate effectively with families, including through workshops focused on shared goal setting and tracking student progress. Integrating digital tools such as communication apps or SMS platforms can bridge information gaps, especially in geographically dispersed or time constrained households. As Liljenberg & Blossing (2020) suggest, aligning these communication strategies with local cultural norms enhances both their reach and impact.

However, applying Western parental involvement models wholesale to Southeast Asian education systems risks cultural mismatch. In collectivist societies like Indonesia, educational authority is often community based and embedded in extended family networks. Barco et al. (2019) emphasize that inclusive PI strategies must recognize this context, integrating traditional knowledge systems and community leaders into school engagement practices. Cultural resonance through curriculum adaptation, shared rituals, and place based learning can strengthen the emotional bond between schools and families, making involvement more authentic and sustainable.

The study also aligns with recent shifts in Indonesian education policy that aim to formalize parental roles within school systems. Reforms now increasingly acknowledge parents as stakeholders, not just spectators. Yantoro & Istofa (2020) document how national efforts such as parent forums, resource provision, and participatory governance are beginning to transform institutional mindsets. Likewise, Puspitasari et al. (2021) note that when parents are included in school decision making, trust and accountability increase, improving both engagement and student outcomes. These trends suggest an emergent alignment between evidence and policy that can be leveraged for systemic change.

A key limitation of this study is its cross-sectional design, which restricts causal interpretation. Longitudinal research is needed to track changes over time. In addition, while cultural capital was found to be a significant mediator, its explanation is streamlined here to avoid repetition. The findings nonetheless confirm that cultural capital operates as a mechanism that explains how parental dialogue translates into student success.

Ultimately, fostering academic socialization at scale requires a multi pronged strategy: training educators, empowering parents, adapting engagement models to cultural contexts, and embedding family roles within formal education policy. When these efforts are coordinated, they can produce the social and cultural capital necessary for long term educational equity.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that academic socialization is the most consistent and impactful form of parental involvement in Indonesian secondary education. By analyzing data from more than 2,000 students across diverse socioeconomic and geographic contexts, the findings confirm that parental dialogue about goals, expectations, and future aspirations has stronger effects on student success than home-based or school-based activities. Cultural capital emerged as a key mediator, reinforcing Bourdieu's framework while offering new empirical insights specific to Indonesia. These results underline the novelty of this study, as it highlights how parental communication not merely physical presence in schools drives academic motivation and achievement.

Beyond restating the evidence, the findings carry clear practical implications. Education policy and school practices should prioritize strengthening parents' capacity to engage in meaningful academic dialogue with their children. Strategies include training teachers to facilitate parent engagement, providing community-based support for low-SES families, and leveraging digital platforms for sustained communication. By shifting from ceremonial forms of involvement to substantive academic collaboration, Indonesia can promote equitable learning opportunities and foster long-term educational resilience.

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