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## HOME-BASED PARENTAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN FUNDONG MUNICIPALITY

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### Abstract

This study examined the relationship between parental input in home-based tasks—specifically chore/task assignment and follow-up for task completion—and students' engagement in classroom activities in selected secondary schools in Fundong Municipality. The study adopted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected using a 4-point Likert-scale questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.798, while qualitative data were gathered through a structured interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's product-moment correlation, whereas qualitative responses were subjected to thematic content analysis. Findings from the first research objective revealed a significant moderate positive correlation between parental task assignment and students' engagement in classroom work ( $r = 0.446$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ). Over 70% of students reported that being assigned home tasks positively influenced their classroom engagement. Interview responses further indicated that parents perceived domestic task assignment as a means of fostering responsibility, discipline, independence, and active participation in school learning. Results from the second objective showed a strong positive correlation between parental follow-up on task completion and students' classroom engagement ( $r = 0.618$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Approximately 83% of students acknowledged that parental monitoring and feedback enhanced their attentiveness and participation in classroom activities. Based on these findings, the study concludes that consistent parental involvement in assigning and monitoring home tasks contributes significantly to students' behavioural engagement in school. It is therefore recommended that parents intentionally assign age-appropriate responsibilities and



regularly follow up on task completion, providing guidance and encouragement to promote discipline, self-reliance, and meaningful engagement in classroom learning.

**Keywords:**

*Home-Based, Parental Academic Support, Classroom Engagement, Secondary School Students, Fundong Municipality*

**Résumé**

*Cette étude a examiné la relation entre l'implication parentale dans les tâches à domicile — notamment l'attribution de corvées/devoirs et le suivi de leur accomplissement — et l'engagement des élèves dans les activités en classe dans certaines écoles secondaires de la municipalité de Fundong. L'étude a adopté un devis mixte explicatif séquentiel. Les données quantitatives ont été recueillies à l'aide d'un questionnaire à échelle de Likert à 4 points présentant un coefficient de fiabilité de 0,798, tandis que les données qualitatives ont été obtenues au moyen d'un guide d'entretien structuré. Les données quantitatives ont été analysées à l'aide de statistiques descriptives et du coefficient de corrélation produit-moment de Pearson, tandis que les réponses qualitatives ont fait l'objet d'une analyse thématique de contenu. Les résultats du premier objectif de recherche ont révélé une corrélation positive modérée et significative entre l'attribution de tâches par les parents et l'engagement des élèves dans le travail en classe ( $r = 0,446$  ;  $p = 0,010$ ). Plus de 70 % des élèves ont indiqué que l'attribution de tâches à domicile influençait positivement leur engagement en classe. Les réponses issues des entretiens ont également montré que les parents considèrent l'attribution de tâches domestiques comme un moyen de développer le sens des responsabilités, la discipline, l'autonomie et la participation active aux apprentissages scolaires. Les résultats du second objectif ont mis en évidence une forte corrélation positive entre le suivi parental de l'exécution des tâches et l'engagement des élèves en classe ( $r = 0,618$ ;  $p = 0,001$ ). Environ 83 % des élèves ont reconnu que le suivi et les rétroactions des parents amélioraient leur attention et leur participation aux activités en classe. Au regard de ces résultats, l'étude conclut que l'implication constante des parents dans l'attribution et le suivi des tâches à domicile contribue significativement à l'engagement comportemental des élèves à l'école. Il est donc recommandé que les parents attribuent intentionnellement des responsabilités adaptées à l'âge des enfants et assurent un suivi régulier de leur réalisation, en offrant orientation et encouragement afin de favoriser la discipline, l'autonomie et un engagement scolaire significatif.*

**Mots-clés :** *soutien parental à domicile, accompagnement académique parental, engagement en classe, élèves du secondaire, municipalité de Fundong.*

**Introduction**

Across educational systems worldwide, growing attention has been directed toward the role of the home environment in shaping students' academic behaviours and learning dispositions. While schools remain the primary sites of formal instruction, learning does not occur in isolation from the family context. Increasingly, scholars argue that students'

classroom engagement is deeply intertwined with the forms of academic support they receive at home, especially in contexts where institutional resources are limited and families play compensatory roles in learning processes (Epstein, 2018; Hill & Tyson, 2009). Within this discourse, home-based parental academic support has emerged as a crucial determinant of students' motivation, responsibility, and participation in classroom activities.

Home-based parental academic support broadly encompasses the intentional actions parents take to facilitate learning outside school settings. These actions include supervising homework, assigning domestic responsibilities that cultivate discipline, monitoring academic progress, and providing encouragement or guidance related to schoolwork (Jeynes, 2016). Unlike school-based parental involvement, which often depends on formal engagement with teachers or school events, home-based support operates within the everyday rhythms of family life and is therefore more consistent and culturally embedded. Scholars have noted that such support contributes not only to academic performance but also to non-cognitive outcomes such as self-regulation, persistence, and engagement (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Pomerantz et al., 2007).

Classroom engagement, in turn, has become a central construct in contemporary educational psychology because of its predictive value for academic success and long-term learning trajectories. Engagement is generally understood as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing behavioural participation, emotional investment, and cognitive involvement in learning tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004). Students who are actively engaged are more likely to attend to lessons, contribute to discussions, complete assignments, and demonstrate sustained effort. Conversely, disengagement often manifests in inattentiveness, low participation, and eventual academic decline. Given its centrality to effective learning, identifying contextual factors that foster engagement remains a pressing concern for educators and policymakers.

Despite the well-documented link between parental involvement and academic outcomes, much of the existing literature is dominated by studies conducted in Western and urban contexts. These studies frequently assume relatively stable school systems and high parental literacy levels, conditions that may not hold in many sub-Saharan African settings (Ngware et al., 2012). In African communities, parental academic support often takes culturally distinct forms that extend beyond direct homework assistance. For example, assigning household responsibilities may be viewed as a means of socializing children into discipline and accountability, values that are believed to translate into school behaviour. However, such practices are sometimes misunderstood within formal educational frameworks, where domestic chores are perceived as distractions rather than developmental tools.

In Cameroon and similar contexts, the realities of schooling further complicate the dynamics of parental involvement. Many secondary school students navigate overcrowded classrooms, limited instructional materials, and varying teacher support, conditions that place greater importance on external learning reinforcements (Tchombe, 2011). Additionally, socioeconomic disparities, parental work demands, and differences in educational attainment influence how parents engage with their children's schooling. While some parents actively supervise academic tasks, others provide indirect support through moral guidance, structured routines, or expectations of responsibility. These variations

underscore the need for localized research that captures the nuanced forms of parental academic support within specific communities.

Fundong Municipality provides a particularly compelling context for examining these dynamics. As a semi-rural area characterized by diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and evolving educational aspirations, Fundong reflects many of the tensions between traditional child-rearing practices and modern schooling expectations. Families often balance subsistence livelihoods with increasing demands for formal education, creating unique patterns of parental involvement. In such contexts, home-based academic support may not always take the form of direct instructional help but may instead manifest through structured responsibilities, monitoring, and value transmission. Understanding how these practices influence students' engagement in classroom activities is therefore both empirically and socially significant.

Although previous studies have established general links between parental involvement and student outcomes, fewer investigations have specifically examined how home-based parental academic support relates to classroom engagement at the secondary school level in localized African settings. Much of the available research focuses on academic achievement rather than engagement, thereby overlooking the behavioural and motivational processes that precede performance (Fredricks et al., 2016). Moreover, secondary education represents a developmental stage where parental involvement often declines due to assumptions of adolescent independence, yet this is also a period marked by heightened academic demands and vulnerability to disengagement (Hill & Tyson, 2009). This gap suggests the need for empirical inquiry that foregrounds engagement as a key outcome of parental support.

Furthermore, the relationship between home-based parental academic support and classroom engagement may not be uniformly positive. Some scholars caution that excessive monitoring or rigid control can undermine intrinsic motivation, particularly during adolescence (Pomerantz & Moorman, 2010). Similarly, in contexts where domestic responsibilities are extensive, home demands may compete with study time, potentially diminishing academic engagement. These contrasting perspectives highlight the importance of critically examining not only whether parental support matters, but how specific forms of support function within particular sociocultural environments.

Given these considerations, this study seeks to critically explore the relationship between home-based parental academic support and classroom engagement among secondary school students in Fundong Municipality. By focusing on localized experiences and culturally embedded practices, the study aims to contribute to a more contextually grounded understanding of family-school dynamics in African education. It also responds to calls for research that moves beyond deficit narratives about parental involvement in developing contexts and instead recognizes the adaptive strategies families employ to support learning (Chowa et al., 2013).

Examining home-based parental academic support through the lens of classroom engagement provides a more holistic perspective on student learning. Rather than treating engagement as solely a product of classroom pedagogy, this study positions it as an outcome shaped by intersecting home and school influences. Such an approach not only enriches theoretical discussions on ecological models of learning but also offers practical insights for educators, parents, and policymakers seeking to foster more responsive and

collaborative educational environments. By illuminating how home practices intersect with classroom participation, the study contributes to ongoing efforts to strengthen learner engagement and educational quality in contextually relevant ways.

### **Understanding Home-Based Parental Academic Support and Classroom Engagement**

Students' academic development is a complex and multidimensional process shaped by factors that extend well beyond the classroom. While school quality and individual ability remain central determinants of learning outcomes, a growing body of research highlights the enduring influence of the home environment and parental involvement in shaping students' academic trajectories (Eccles & Harold, 1993). Parental input plays a foundational role in children's learning experiences by fostering supportive environments, monitoring academic progress, and cultivating habits that sustain persistence and responsibility. Consequently, the relationship between parental involvement and student outcomes has remained a focal concern for both researchers and practitioners (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Epstein, 2001).

Home-based parental academic support encompasses a wide range of everyday practices embedded within family life. These include assigning responsibilities, supervising task completion, providing feedback, and creating emotionally supportive learning environments. Research grounded in motivational and developmental psychology suggests that parental behaviours that promote autonomy, competence, and relatedness significantly contribute to the development of engagement-oriented learning dispositions (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Deci & Ryan, 2000). When parents structure home experiences in ways that encourage responsibility and independence, they indirectly nurture behavioural patterns that support active participation in classroom learning.

For example, assigning structured tasks at home and offering guidance during their completion can help students develop a sense of autonomy and competence, both of which are essential for sustained academic engagement (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Similarly, involving children in shared responsibilities fosters responsibility and self-efficacy, which are transferable to school-based learning contexts (Hill, 2015). Consistent parental follow-up further reinforces accountability and self-regulation, key predictors of engagement in academic settings (Zimmerman, 2000). Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes that parental support is not limited to direct academic assistance but also includes emotional encouragement, value transmission, and the provision of structured routines that reinforce learning (Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

This study focuses specifically on selected dimensions of home-based parental academic support: the intentional assignment of chores or responsibilities, monitoring for task completion, and the provision of feedback and encouragement. These practices are hypothesized to shape students' classroom engagement by strengthening behavioural and motivational capacities such as time management, persistence, adaptability, and self-efficacy. Students who internalize such competencies are more likely to demonstrate sustained attention, task commitment, and resilience in the face of academic challenges. In this sense, engagement skills cultivated within the family environment may serve as a critical bridge between home socialization and school success.



In Cameroon, the dynamics of parental involvement in education are closely tied to historical transformations in educational practice. Prior to colonial intervention, education was largely informal and community-based, with families transmitting cultural values and survival skills through experiential learning such as farming, storytelling, and apprenticeship (Mbiti, 1990; Fafunwa, 1974). Colonial rule introduced formal schooling systems that prioritized Western epistemologies, often marginalizing indigenous languages and knowledge systems (Banya, 2006; Ela, 1995). Following independence in 1960, educational reforms positioned schooling as a central pillar of national development, introducing bilingual education and expanding access to formal learning opportunities (Kouega, 2003; Nsom, 2013). These transitions gradually reshaped parental roles, shifting families from purely custodial responsibilities toward more active participation in their children's educational journeys.

As education formalized, parental inputs expanded in both scope and significance. Parents increasingly engaged in practices that supported not only academic achievement but also the development of work-related learning skills such as discipline, perseverance, and responsibility (Epstein, 2001; Hill, 2015). These inputs manifest in diverse forms, including assigning domestic responsibilities, supervising academic routines, and offering emotional or logistical support for schooling (Zimmerman, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Importantly, the effectiveness of such inputs is often mediated by contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, parental education, and the quality of parent-child relationships (Hill, 2015).

Within many Cameroonian communities, especially rural settings, children's participation in household tasks remains a central feature of socialization. Such practices are not merely utilitarian but are embedded in cultural expectations about responsibility, interdependence, and communal contribution (Nsamenang, 2005; Neba, 1999). The nature of assigned tasks often reflects gender norms, age hierarchies, and economic realities, with rural children frequently engaged in farming activities while domestic chores are distributed along gendered lines (Fonjong et al., 2008). These experiences can foster discipline, time consciousness, and resilience—qualities that are potentially transferable to academic engagement. However, the degree of parental monitoring and feedback varies widely, influencing how effectively such experiences translate into school-related competencies (Cheka et al., 2012).

Socioeconomic disparities further complicate this dynamic. Children from more affluent households may experience fewer domestic demands yet lack opportunities to develop practical responsibility and time-management skills, while those from less privileged backgrounds may acquire these skills through necessity (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Such contrasts underscore the importance of examining not only the presence of parental inputs but also their qualitative nature and developmental implications. Understanding how these inputs relate to classroom engagement is particularly important in contexts where formal learning environments must coexist with strong cultural traditions of home-based socialization.

Theoretically, the relationship between home-based parental academic support and classroom engagement can be understood through several complementary frameworks. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) emphasizes the interdependence of environmental systems, highlighting how interactions within the home microsystem shape behaviours that manifest in school contexts. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977)

further explains how observational learning enables children to internalize parental behaviours such as organization and persistence, which later influence academic engagement. In addition, Self-Determination Theory posits that environments that support autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster intrinsic motivation and sustained engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Together, these perspectives provide a robust conceptual foundation for understanding how parental practices embedded in everyday family life can shape students' engagement in classroom activities.

Against this backdrop, examining home-based parental academic support within Cameroonian secondary schools offers an opportunity to bridge global theoretical insights with localized realities. By situating parental practices within specific sociocultural and educational contexts, this line of inquiry contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how engagement is cultivated across interconnected home and school environments. Ultimately, exploring these dynamics may yield valuable insights for educators, families, and policymakers seeking to foster meaningful student engagement through culturally responsive and contextually grounded approaches.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Parental Input**

Parental input is a crucial factor in shaping students' academic engagement, as it can influence children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. Seginer (2006) defines parental input as the assignment of home tasks, monitoring completion of home chores, and follow-up, which are critical for fostering self-regulation and motivation. Such inputs are essential and necessary for developing responsibility and accountability in students, qualities that could be directly linked to classroom engagement. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) found that parental support, involvement, and guidance contribute to the fostering self-regulation and motivation. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, particularly through task assignment and follow-up, they help their children develop skills such as time management, prioritization, and self-discipline—skills crucial for effective engagement in classroom tasks.

The role of parental inputs in promoting academic success can also extend to emotional and social support. According to Hill and Tyson (2009), parental inputs include providing resources, support, and guidance to facilitate cognitive, emotional, and social development. This can take the form of providing educational resources, attending school events, and encouraging children in their academic pursuits. Parental engagement in children's education not only supports academic achievement but can also promote emotional resilience and a sense of self-efficacy, which are essential for maintaining focus and perseverance in the classroom. Deslandes and Bertrand (2005) echo this sentiment, emphasizing that parents who offer both material and emotional support contribute significantly to a child's ability to stay engaged and motivated in academic activities. This holistic support ensures that students feel equipped and confident to engage with classroom tasks effectively. Additionally, parental inputs can help foster self-regulation, which is a key component of classroom engagement. According to Zimmerman (2000), parental monitoring and follow-up on task completion are vital for promoting self-regulation and academic achievement. When parents monitor and provide feedback on students' work, it encourages accountability and encourages students to take ownership of their learning. This process not only boosts academic engagement but can also nurture autonomy in students. As Coleman (1988) suggests, parental input is an investment in

social capital that fosters cognitive and social development. This active involvement in students' learning, through both direct interactions and the structuring of the learning environment, can support student engagement in the classroom by helping them develop the necessary skills to manage their academic workload and succeed.

### **Parental home task assignment**

According to Seginer (2006), parental task assignment refers to the "assignment of activities and responsibilities to children to promote self-regulation, motivation, and academic achievement". In the same light Wentzel (2002) defines parental task assignment as the engaging children in tasks and responsibilities to promote socialization, motivation, and academic achievement. For Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994), parental task assignment refers to the assignment of tasks and responsibilities to children to promote autonomy, motivation, and self-regulation. That is why Wentzel (2002) emphasizes that parental task assignment promotes socialization, motivation, and academic achievement, suggesting that assigning tasks not only fosters independence but also helps children develop social skills, which can enhance classroom participation and peer collaboration. The tasks assigned by parents provide children with opportunities to practice and refine skills that are directly transferable to the academic environment, fostering a stronger sense of responsibility towards their schoolwork.

Hill and Tyson (2009), emphasizes the importance of parental task assignment in promoting cognitive development and academic achievement, developing motivation and self-regulation in children, problem-solving skills and critical thinking. It is clear that parental task assignments are characterized by immediate perception, practical engagement, and proactive practice. Research findings have shown that children who are involved in more household chores have stronger executive functions. Executive functions are a set of higher-order control functions, including the three core functions inhibition, working memory, and cognitive flexibility (Diamond & Lee, 2011; Miyake et al., 2000). There is a significant positive correlation between children's involvement in household chores and their working memory and inhibitory control (Tepper et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2011). This implies assignment and follow-up for home chore/task completion can actually be beneficial to children engagement in the classroom. In children, studies have found that engaging in age-appropriate chores can increase feelings of autonomy Weisner, (2001) and is associated with improved prosocial behaviours and greater life satisfaction (White et al., 2019). There is interest now in the purported relationship between engagement in household chores and child cognitive development (Rende, 2021), particularly executive functioning. For Deslandes and Bertrand (2005) parental task assignment refers to the "assignment of tasks and responsibilities to children to promote academic motivation, engagement., this definition highlights the importance of parental task assignment in promoting academic motivation and engagement, a sense of responsibility and accountability in children and academic achievement and performance. In this light Weinberger (1996), see "assignment of tasks and responsibilities to children as a way of promoting motivation, academic achievement, as well as problem-solving skills and critical thinking.

The assignment of tasks at home refers to the practice of parents or guardians assigning specific responsibilities to their children within the domestic setting (Eisenberg et al., 2003). This concept transcends merely delegating chores; it encompasses a deliberate effort to engage children in activities that promote responsibility, self-reliance, and a sense of



contribution to the household (Luster et al., 2004). The type, complexity, and frequency of assigned tasks vary based on factors such as a child's age, developmental stage, and the family's cultural background (Bornstein, 2015). Age-appropriateness is key to fostering a sense of competence and preventing frustration (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 1993). For instance, younger children might be asked to tidy up toys, while older children might be responsible for tasks like preparing simple meals or laundry. Effective task assignment involves clear communication of expectations, providing necessary resources, and offering support as needed. Furthermore, it involves a balance between prescribed tasks and allowance for individual choice and autonomy within these tasks to enhance intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The rationale for task assignment is not just about achieving specific outcomes (e.g., a clean room), but rather about cultivating essential life skills. When tasks are presented as opportunities for growth rather than simply obligations, they are more likely to be integrated into a student's sense of responsibility and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Therefore, task assignment is not just about chores, but about intentionally structuring the home environment to promote crucial work-learning skills. It also includes teaching students how to complete these tasks, thereby fostering a positive attitude towards learning new skills and taking responsibility (Gottfredson, 2002).

### **Parental Follow-up for Task Completion**

Parental follow-up for task completion can be a corner stone in supporting students' responsibility, self-regulation, and academic achievement, all of which are essential components of student engagement in the classroom. Seginer (2006) defines parental follow-up as the "monitoring and supervision of children's task completion to ensure responsibility, self-reliance, and academic achievement." This process directly contributes to student engagement by encouraging students to take ownership of their tasks, thus fostering a sense of responsibility that is crucial for managing classroom assignments. Similarly, Wentzel (2002) emphasizes that parental follow-up promotes socialization, responsibility, and academic achievement. This highlights the broader implications of follow-up, as students not only learn to manage their tasks but also develop the social and emotional skills necessary for effective collaboration in the classroom. When parents actively engage in their children's task completion, they help students build the skills needed to be engaged, motivated, and responsible learners in academic settings. The quality of parental follow-up is essential for promoting motivation and self-regulation in students. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) argue that parental follow-up involves providing feedback, guidance, and support to encourage autonomy, motivation, and self-regulation. This type of engagement fosters a student's sense of control and self-efficacy, which are vital for remaining engaged in classroom tasks. Hill and Tyson (2009) further underscore the importance of parental follow-up in promoting cognitive development, motivation, and academic achievement. By offering constructive feedback and guidance, parents help children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that are transferable to the classroom. This active involvement in overseeing task completion reinforces the idea that learning is an ongoing process that requires continuous self-regulation, thus contributing to a student's ability to stay focused and engaged in their academic work.

Moreover, effective parental follow-up can lead to improved student performance by providing essential support and encouragement. Pomerantz et al. (2007) emphasize that parental follow-up involves checking in, providing encouragement, and offering guidance. This type of involvement promotes a supportive learning environment where students feel encouraged to complete their tasks effectively. Baumrind (1991) highlights the importance of clear expectations and responsive support in authoritative parenting, which is relevant to

parental follow-up. The balance of clear expectations with emotional support allows students to feel motivated without being overly controlled. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) also note that parental follow-up facilitates skill development and resilience. By checking task completion, parents help students identify areas for improvement and encourage perseverance in the face of challenges, thereby increasing their engagement in classroom activities. When parents provide feedback and reinforce positive efforts, students are more likely to feel confident in their academic abilities and take an active role in their learning.

### **Engagement in classroom work**

Engagement in classroom work refers to the degree of active participation, enthusiasm, and effort that students demonstrate while involved in academic tasks and activities. This concept encompasses various facets, including behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement, each contributing to students' overall involvement in learning activities. According to Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004), behavioral engagement refers to the extent to which students participate in academic tasks, such as attending class, completing assignments, and participating in discussions. Emotional engagement involves the students' emotional reactions to the learning process, such as feeling motivated or interested in the subject matter. Cognitive engagement, on the other hand, is related to the mental effort students invest in understanding and mastering content. These dimensions of engagement are crucial for academic success, as they influence students' persistence, academic performance, and overall learning outcomes. Parental input can contribute to students' engagement in classroom work by fostering motivation, self-regulation, and a sense of responsibility. According to Epstein (2001), parental inputs in students' education, including the assignment of tasks, providing support, and offering feedback, helps create an environment conducive to learning. By actively participating in their children's academic development, parents reinforce the importance of schoolwork, which can directly enhance behavioral and emotional engagement in the classroom. For instance, when parents set clear expectations for academic achievement and monitor task completion, students are more likely to approach their schoolwork with diligence and motivation. Additionally, parents who provide emotional and logistical support, such as helping with homework or attending parent-teacher conferences, contribute to students' emotional engagement and sense of belonging, which can result in higher levels of classroom participation.

### **Statement of the problem**

Student engagement remains a central concern in contemporary education because it directly influences learning outcomes, persistence, and overall academic success. Engaged students are more likely to participate actively in classroom activities, demonstrate sustained attention, and develop meaningful connections with academic content (Fredricks et al., 2004). However, despite increased access to formal education in many developing contexts, including Cameroon, concerns about low classroom participation, inattentiveness, and declining motivation among secondary school students persist. In many schools, teachers report that students struggle with focus, task commitment, and independent learning behaviours, which undermines both instructional effectiveness and academic performance.

While classroom-related factors such as teaching methods and learning resources have received considerable attention, the role of the home environment in shaping students' engagement has not been sufficiently explored within localized African contexts. Research

from Western settings consistently highlights the positive influence of parental involvement on academic outcomes, including improved motivation, discipline, and school participation (Epstein, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, much of this literature emphasizes school-based parental involvement, such as attending meetings or volunteering, with less focus on home-based academic support practices that are more prevalent in many African communities.

In Cameroon, particularly in semi-rural and rural municipalities, parental involvement often takes culturally embedded forms that differ from formal models described in global literature. Many families emphasize responsibility-building through domestic tasks, structured routines, and moral guidance rather than direct academic assistance (Nsamenang, 2005). While such practices are deeply rooted in cultural socialization processes, their implications for students' classroom engagement remain insufficiently understood. On one hand, assigning home responsibilities may foster discipline, accountability, and self-regulation—qualities associated with higher academic engagement (Zimmerman, 2000). On the other hand, excessive domestic demands or inconsistent parental follow-up may compete with study time or fail to translate into meaningful academic support.

Additionally, the rapid expansion of formal education in Cameroon has redefined parental roles in ways that are not yet fully understood. Although parents are increasingly expected to support schooling, disparities in literacy levels, socioeconomic status, and awareness of effective involvement strategies create uneven patterns of engagement. Some parents actively monitor their children's routines and provide structured guidance, while others offer minimal academic supervision due to occupational demands or limited educational backgrounds. These variations raise important questions about how different forms of home-based parental academic support influence students' behavioural engagement in classroom settings.

The problem is further compounded at the secondary school level, where parental involvement often declines due to assumptions that adolescents should be more independent (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Yet adolescence is also a critical developmental stage characterized by heightened academic demands and increased vulnerability to disengagement. In contexts like Fundong Municipality, where educational resources may be limited and home environments play a compensatory role, understanding the nature and impact of parental academic support becomes particularly important. Despite this, empirical studies examining the relationship between home-based parental support and classroom engagement among secondary school students in such localized settings remain scarce.

Moreover, existing research in Cameroon has largely focused on academic achievement as the primary outcome of parental involvement, often overlooking engagement as a foundational precursor to performance. This narrow emphasis creates a gap in understanding how parental practices shape students' everyday classroom behaviours, such as participation, attentiveness, and persistence. Without such insights, efforts to improve learning outcomes may overlook critical home-based influences that shape students' readiness to engage in academic tasks.

Given these gaps, there is a need for context-specific research that examines how home-based parental academic support relates to students' classroom engagement within semi-

rural Cameroonian settings. In particular, understanding how practices such as assigning responsibilities, monitoring task completion, and providing encouragement influence students' engagement behaviours could offer valuable insights for strengthening family-school partnerships. Addressing this problem is essential not only for advancing scholarly understanding of parental involvement in African contexts but also for informing practical strategies that enhance student engagement and educational quality.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between home-based parental academic support and classroom engagement among secondary school students in Fundong Municipality. By situating the inquiry within a localized sociocultural context, the study aims to generate evidence that can guide educators, parents, and policymakers in fostering more responsive and culturally grounded approaches to improving student engagement.

### **Specific objectives**

- To examine the influence of parental home task assignment on students' engagement in classroom work.
- To find out how parental follow-up for task completion influences students' engagement in classroom work.

### **Specific Research Questions**

- How does parental task assignment influence students' engagement in classroom work.
- To what extent does parental follow-up for task completion influences students' engagement in classroom works.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed method research design. With this approach the researcher first collected quantitative data using a student questionnaire; this was followed by the collection of qualitative data from parent using an interview guide.

### **Population of the study**

The population of the study consist of five secondary schools (public, lay private and mission) in Fundong municipality with a total population of 2700 students, 832 boys and 1868 girls who were enrolled for the academic year 2024/2025. By combining both the simple random and the purposive sampling techniques, a sample of 175 students and 10 parents was selected. The distribution of the student enrolment and sample by schools is shown below on Table 1

**Table 1:**  
**Population and Sample**

School	Targeted Population			Accessible population			Sample Size	
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Students	Parent
<b>GBHS Fundong</b>	223	695	918	223	695	918	<b>56</b>	3
<b>CKCHS Fundong</b>	96	328	424	96	328	424	25	2
<b>GTHS Fundong</b>	223	693	916	223	693	916	52	2
<b>FAC</b>	20	56	76	20	56	76	16	1
<b>SJC Fundong</b>	97	259	356	97	259	356	<b>20</b>	1
<b>GHS Aduk</b>	1	9	10	1	9	10	6	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>1868</b>	<b>2700</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>1868</b>	<b>2700</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>10</b>

*Source: Divisional Delegation for secondary education Boyo.*

### Instruments used for Data collection

A structured 4-point Likert scale questionnaire with an internal consistency of 0.798, and a parent interview guide was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: the first part focused on gathering demographic details of the participants, while the second part address the research questions through close ended questions. The questionnaire scale values ranged from 1 for "Strongly Disagree" 2, for disagree, 3 for agree and 4 for "Strongly Agree. The questionnaire had six items under each variable to enable the researcher gather clear and concise data from students. The parent interview guide consisted of 2 question guides in each section, addressed to capture parents' response about task assignment and follow-up for task completion. The numerical data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Pearson product moment correlation while the qualitative data was subjected to thematic content analysis.

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Results are presented beginning with the descriptive statistics explaining students work engagement in classroom. This is followed by presentation of descriptive, thematic and inferential results according to research questions

**Table 2:**  
**Presentation of Students engagement in classroom works**

Item	SA	A	SA/A	D	SD	D/SD	Mean	Std.
<b>I actively participate in class discussions</b>	47	103	150(86%)	15	10	25(14%)	3.07	0.763
<b>I consistently complete my class assignments on time</b>	60	78	138(79%)	21	16	37(21%)	3.04	0.912
<b>I stay focused and</b>	24	25	49(28%)	65	61	126(72%)	2.07	1.020



<b>dedicated to my tasks during class</b>								
The tasks my parents assign help me stay focused.	61	73	134(77%)	19	22	41(23%)	2.99	0.983
<b>I regularly track my progress in classroom activities</b>	43	83	126(72%)	30	19	49(28%)	2.86	0.914
<b>I make a effort to review my notes and lessons after class</b>	59	77	136(78%)	24	15	39(22%)	3.03	0.906
<b>Mean Response Score (MRS)</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>122(70%)</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>53(30%)</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>0.916</b>

Table 2 reveals varying levels of student engagement in classroom work, due to parental inputs. 86% of students actively participate in class discussions (mean = 3.07, SD = 0.763), indicating high engagement in this area, supported by parental encouragement. Similarly, 79% of students consistently complete their class assignments on time (mean = 3.04, SD = 0.912), showing that parental support in task assignment may promote academic responsibility. Additionally, engagement increases when it comes to staying focused during class, with 72% of students indicating that "I stay focused and dedicated to my tasks during class" (mean = 2.07, SD = 1.020), suggesting that parental inputs contribute to maintaining focus during lessons. The task assignment from parents appears to have a positive effect on engagement as 77% of students report that the tasks help them stay focused (mean = 2.99, SD = 0.983). Moreover, 72% of students track their progress in classroom activities (mean = 2.86, SD = 0.914), though this indicates room for improvement. Finally, 78% of students make an effort to review their notes and lessons after class (mean = 3.03, SD = 0.906), further supporting the positive impact of parental input in promoting study habits. Overall, the mean response score of 2.84 (SD = 0.916) suggests a moderate level of engagement, with higher levels of involvement seen in specific areas where parental inputs are more pronounced.

**Research Question 1: How does parental task assignment influence students' engagement in classroom work?**

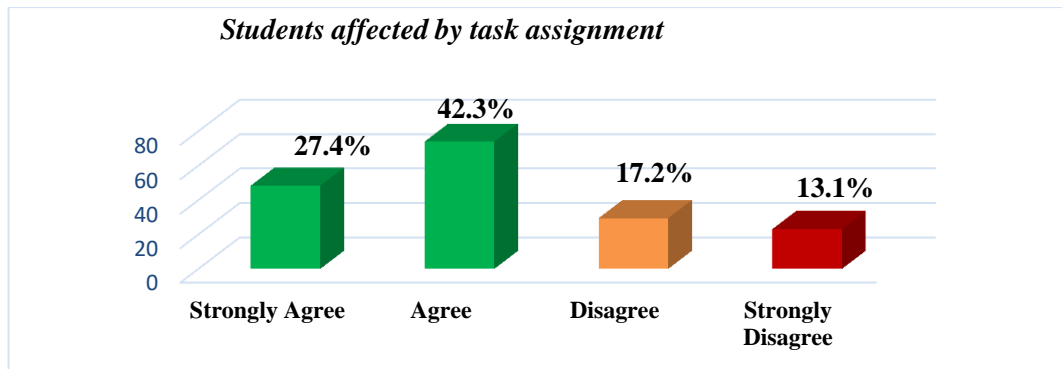
**Table 3:**

**Students Opinions of Parental task assignment at home**

Item	SA	A	SA/A	D	SD	D/SD	Mean	Std.
<b>My parents assign me to do home chores everyday</b>	69	69	138(79%)	31	6	37(21%)	3.15	0.831
<b>My parents assign me to do cleaning</b>	45	92	137(78%)	24	14	38(22%)	2.96	0.847
<b>My parents allow me choose the chores I want to</b>	26	69	95(54%)	44	36	80(46%)	2.49	0.982

do								
<b>My parents provide a reasonable timeframe for completing my chores</b>	48	69	117(67%)	31	27	58(33%)	2.79	1.015
<b>My parents give me easy and difficult chores like cooking</b>	30	75	105(60%)	35	35	70(40%)	2.57	0.997
<b>The chores I do at home can help improve my learning skills</b>	72	70	142(81%)	12	21	33(19%)	3.10	0.977
<b>Mean Response Score, MRS</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>122(70%)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>52(30%)</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>0.942</b>

Table 3 above highlights students' views of how parental task assignments at home relates to their engagement in classroom work. A significant majority of respondents, approximately 79%, strongly agree that their parents assign them daily chores, and 81% believe these chores help improve their learning skills. These items have relatively high mean scores of 3.15 and 3.10, respectively, indicating a generally positive perception of the impact of regular household responsibilities on students' engagement skill development. However, when it comes to aspects like choosing the chores themselves or having reasonable timeframes to complete them, the agreement levels drop to 54% and 67%. This is reflected in the lower mean scores of 2.49 and 2.79, suggesting that students feel less autonomy and structure in how these tasks are assigned and managed. Overall, the average response score across all items is 2.84, which indicates a moderate level of agreement regarding the influence of parental task assignments on learning skills. The standard deviation of 0.942 suggests some variability in responses, pointing to differing experiences or perceptions among students. While the majority recognizes the value of task assignment in developing their engagement abilities, a minority about 30% either disagrees or strongly disagrees with these statements. This divergence highlights the complexity of parental inputs in household tasks and suggests that for some students, the way tasks are assigned or perceived may not support their engagement skills while a majority get engaged based on task assignment.

**Figure 1:****Students whose engagement are influenced by home task assignment****Table 4:**

**Thematic summary for interview question "Do you give house chores to your children, which? Do you think it can develop their classroom learning skills?"**

Response theme	Groundings	Sample quotation ("..")
<b>Domestic duties</b>	10	"...Yes, I give my children tasks, the older ones fetch water and firewood and the younger ones sweep the yard and do minor chores", "...Yes, they help in the farm to do planting, weeding and clearing", "...Yes, caring for the animals when they are free"
<b>Independence and Responsibility</b>	8	"...Yes, this is what make them to be responsible and contribute to family" "...Yes, it is hard work, but it teaches them discipline" "...Yes, this helps them handle things on their own", "...Yes, because they can be able to take decisions on their own", "...it makes sure students have knowledge on other things and be responsible in school" "...they can learn how to organize their work within home and in classroom"

From table 4, parent indicated that they often give domestic duties to students and doing these tasks helps teach responsibility, discipline, independence, and valuable learning skills back in school. This is seen in responses such as "...it makes sure students have knowledge on other things and be responsible in school" and "...they can learn how to organize their work within home and in classroom".

**Table 5:****Pearson Correlation between tasks assignment and engagement in classroom works**

		Engagement in classroom works
<b>Task assignment at home</b>	Pearson Correlation (r)	0.446**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.010
	N	175

From table 5 above, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) is 0.446, which suggests a moderate positive relationship between parental task assignment and student engagement in classroom works. This means that as parental task assignment at home increases, students' engagement in classroom work during learning also tends to improve. The significance level (p-value) associated with this correlation is 0.010,  $p < 0.05$  for statistical significance, thereby providing solid evidence against the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ).

**Research Question 2: To determine how follow-up for task completion influences students' engagement in classroom works in Secondary schools in Fundong Municipality**

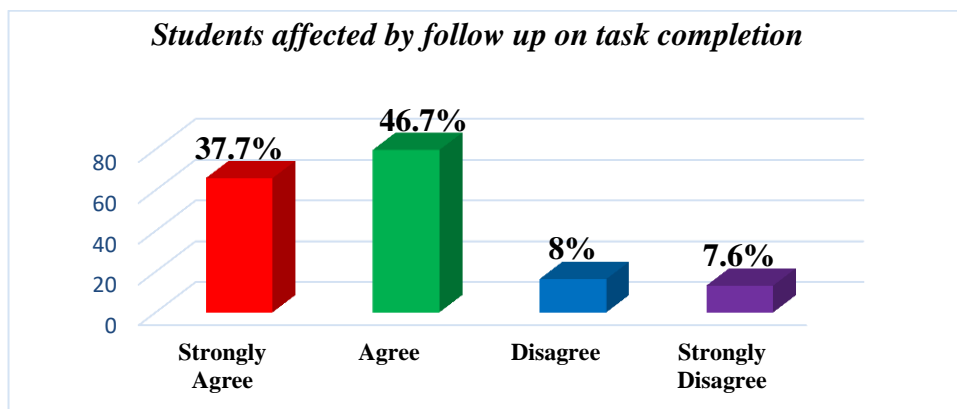
**Table 6:****Students' opinions of parental follow up on task completion**

Item	SA	A	SA/A	D	SD	D/SD	Mean	Std.
<b>My parents regularly check on my progress with assigned chores.</b>	55	81	136(78%)	19	20	39(22%)	2.98	0.940
<b>My parents provide helpful feedback when I complete my chores.</b>	64	74	138(79%)	27	10	37(21%)	3.10	0.862
<b>My parents offer support or guidance if I am struggling with a chore</b>	64	82	146(83%)	13	16	29(17%)	3.11	0.894
<b>My parents monitor the progress of the work and help me improve</b>	78	76	154(88%)	7	14	21(12%)	3.25	0.866
<b>My parents always remind me to complete my chores</b>	52	85	137(78%)	27	11	38(22%)	3.02	0.841
<b>My parents praise my efforts and give corrections where I go wrong</b>	82	80	162(93%)	5	8	13(7%)	3.35	0.749
<b>Mean Response Score (MRS)</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>146(83%)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30(17%)</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>0.859</b>

The descriptive statistics in table 6 highlights the role of parental follow-up on students' engagement in classroom work through the completion of assigned chores. A substantial majority of students, approximately 83%, agree or strongly agree that their parents regularly check their progress, provide helpful feedback, and offer support when they face difficulties and just 17% disagree. These positive perceptions are reflected in the relatively high mean scores, all above 3.0, with the highest mean of 3.35 on a scale of 4 relating to parents praising efforts and giving corrections. This suggests that students not only appreciate parental

involvement but also recognize the constructive nature of the feedback and encouragement they receive, which likely enhances their motivation and ability to improve their skills. Furthermore, the item regarding parents monitoring progress and helping improve work scored an impressive 3.25, indicating that active parental engagement is seen as a key factor in students' learning development. The overall mean response score of 3.14, coupled with a standard deviation of 0.859, indicates a strong consensus among students about the positive influence of parental follow-up on task completion for their engagement in learning works, though some variability exists. While most students experience supportive and consistent parental involvement, about 17% expressed disagreement or uncertainty, suggesting that not all students receive the same level of follow-up or find it equally effective.

**Figure 2: Students whose engagement were impacted by follow up from task completion**



**Table 7:**

**Thematic summary for interview question "Do you check or follow up your children when you give them chores? Do you think your checkup, follow-up and giving feedback help them in their work learning skills?"**

Themes	Groundings	Sample Responses
Regular monitoring	6	"...Yes, I show them how to do it property and check just to make sure it was well done", "...I ask after sometime if they have done it well, if not I ask them to redo it", "...Sometimes I check and sometimes when I am busy, I don't check", "...Sometimes because when they say they are tired I just leave it"
Self-decision making and Responsibility	8	"...yes, this is what make them to be responsible in school", "...yes, this helps them handle things on their own even in school", "...yes, because they can be able to take decisions on their own", "...yes, it makes sure students have knowledge on other things, not only school things" "...they can learn how to organize things, work in the classroom"



From table 7, parents indicated that following up students for completion of their hom chores help them improve on their oragisation and work completion both at home and in school. For instance, “...yes, this helps them handle things on their own even in school”, “...they can learn how to organize things at home or work in the classroom”.

**Table 8:**

**Correlation between follow up on task completion and engagment in classroom work**

<b>Follow-up for task completion</b>	<b>Engagment in classroom work</b>	
	Pearson Correlation (r)	.618**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	175

From table 8 above, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) is 0.618, which suggests a strong positive relationship between parental task follow-up and student engagement in classroom work. This means that the more parent tends to check or follow up students on the completion of assigned home task, the higher their chances of engaging well in classroom work during learning. This relationship is significant with a p-value of .001,  $p < 0.05$  for statistical significance, thereby providing solid evidence against the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Firstly, the study found a statistically moderate positive significant relationship between task assignment at home and students' engagement in classroom work ( $r = 0.446$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ). Students score a mean of 2.84 on a scale of 4 with over 70% (122) agreeing of perceived influence of task assignment at home on their engagement in classroom works and this was supported by parents who said that they often give domestic duties to students while adding that these tasks help teach them how to be responsible, discipline, independence, and engaged in learning back in school. These results are in line with the work of Ndeh (2021) who upon examining how assigning domestic and academic tasks affect students learning skill, found a positive correlation between parental task assignment and students' development of learning skills. The findings suggest that regular engagement in tasks at home supports the cultivation of effective learning and engagement habits back in school. Similarly, Olaniyan and Olatunji (2019) in their study found that students who were frequently assigned responsibilities at home exhibited greater time management and responsibility in school work, reinforcing their engagement in classroom activities.

Lastly, the study also found a strong significant positive relationship between parental follow-up on task completion and students' engagement in classroom work ( $r = 0.618$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Over 83% (146) of students with a mean score of 3.14 on a scale of 4 agreed of perceived effect of follow-up for task completion at home on their engagement in classroom activities. Parents indicated that following up students on domestic task completion improves their organization and engagement skills both at home and in class. This study suggest that active parental engagement is seen as a key factor in students continuous learning skills development. The findings are similar to that of Kumncho, (2018) who upon studying the impact of parental assistant on homework and students' academic achievement in Buea, found that students whose parents assisted and follow up with their assignments had better academic performance. Additionally, findings are in line with Ngwa (2022) who focusing on

how parents' follow-up on academic tasks affects students' work behavior found a strong positive relationship between parental follow-up and students' self-discipline and accountability. Regular monitoring by parents encouraged students to be more consistent and responsible in managing school work.

## Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between parental inputs, specifically task assignment and follow-up for task completion, and students' engagement in classroom activities in selected secondary schools in Fundong Municipality. Findings from the first research objective revealed a significant moderate positive correlation between parental task assignment and students' engagement in classroom work. Over 70% of students reported that the assignment of home tasks positively impacted their classroom engagement. Additionally, parents highlighted that assigning domestic duties to students fosters responsibility, discipline, independence, and enhances their engagement in learning at school. These results underline the importance of home task assignments in developing critical engagement skills, which are essential for effective learning. Moreover, the second objective found a strong positive correlation between parental follow-up for task completion and students' engagement in classroom activities. A substantial 83% of students acknowledged the positive impact of such follow-up on their engagement in class. Parents further confirmed that regularly monitoring their children's completion of domestic tasks helps improve students' organizational skills and fosters greater engagement both at home and in school. This study, therefore, concludes that parental input through task assignment and consistent follow-up has a significant role in enhancing students' engagement in classroom activities, which is crucial for learning and for their academic success.

Based on the findings the study recommends that parents should frequently communicate with teachers about learning expectations and should assign tasks that are clear, specific and should regularly check in with their children to ensure tasks are completed, providing feedback and encouragement in order to help students develop essential life skills, such as being organized, disciplined, self-reliance and responsible for effective engagement in learning back at school.

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