

Family Participation Pathways for Discipline Formation in Elementary School Life

March Tryzilyn D. Salvador^{1*} and Alma P. Gonzales^{1,2}

¹Northeastern College

*tryzylinsalvador132002@gmail.com, ²almagonzales@northeasterncollege.edu.ph

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how family participation was translated into discipline formation among elementary learners through interconnected home-school pathways. Using a cross-sectional multi-informant pathway modeling design, data were obtained from 210 respondents composed of 70 teachers, 70 parents or guardians, and 70 Grade 4 to Grade 6 learners in Baggao, Cagayan. A validated 32-item Family Participation and Discipline Pathways Scale was used, with an overall Cronbach alpha of .936. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling assessed direct and indirect relationships among school activity participation, family-school communication, home behavioral reinforcement, consistency of behavioral expectations, and discipline formation. Results showed high levels of school activity participation,

communication, and home behavioral reinforcement, but only moderate levels of behavioral consistency and discipline formation. School activity participation did not directly predict discipline formation, but it produced significant indirect effects through communication, home reinforcement, and consistency of expectations. Consistency of behavioral expectations emerged as the strongest predictor of discipline formation, while the model explained 58.4% of its variance. Multi-group analysis further showed that teachers and learners attributed greater importance to behavioral consistency than parents did. The findings indicated that family presence in school activities became more meaningful when transformed into coordinated expectations and reinforcing practices across home and school. Strengthening shared behavioral agreements, regular family-school communication, and consistent reinforcement was therefore recommended to support discipline formation in elementary school life.

Keywords: *behavioral consistency, discipline formation, elementary education, family participation, family-school communication, home behavioral reinforcement*

INTRODUCTION

Discipline in elementary school is formed through everyday experiences that teach children how to manage behavior, respect expectations, fulfill responsibilities, and relate appropriately with others. While schools establish rules and routines, children also bring into the classroom patterns of behavior developed through family interactions. Parenting practices, communication, supervision, and the quality of parent-child relationships contribute to the development of self-regulation, which is closely connected with children's ability to respond appropriately to expectations and behavioral demands (Lobo & Lunkenheimer, 2020).

Family participation in schooling extends beyond attendance at meetings or school programs. It may include communication with teachers, assistance with school responsibilities, reinforcement of expectations at home, participation in activities, and attention to children's social and behavioral development. Philippine evidence shows that parental involvement takes different forms according to family circumstances and that parents, teachers, and children may understand participation through their own experiences and responsibilities.

These patterns suggest that family participation is not a single activity but a set of practices connecting the home and school (Jabar, 2021).

Such connections become particularly important when schools seek to encourage responsible and consistent behavior. Teacher-parent communication can provide children with clearer and more consistent behavioral expectations across settings. Fefer et al. (2020) found that positive parent contact implemented by elementary teachers was associated with improvements in students' on-task classroom behavior, illustrating how purposeful communication between families and schools can contribute to behavioral support. At the same time, discipline formation depends not only on rules but also on the manner in which adults guide children's behavior. Parent self-regulation and parent-child coregulation are important in disciplinary interactions because the quality of these exchanges may influence children's behavioral adjustment (Lunkenheimer et al., 2023).

Family involvement also forms part of the broader conditions through which children adjust to school life. Demirtaş-Zorbaz and Ergene (2019) identified family involvement, children's externalizing behavior, and relationships with teachers and peers as relevant factors in school adjustment among primary school pupils. This indicates that discipline may be better understood as a developmental outcome shaped by connected relationships rather than as a matter handled by the school alone.

For public elementary schools in Baggao, Cagayan, examining these connections may clarify how participation by parents and families translates into the behavioral routines and values observed in school life. Teachers, parents, and learners occupy different but connected positions in this process. Understanding their experiences can reveal the specific pathways through which family participation supports responsibility, self-control, respect for rules, positive interaction, and other expressions of discipline. Thus, the study seeks to determine how family participation operates across home-school relationships and how these pathways contribute to discipline formation among elementary learners.

Literature Review

Family Participation as Educational Engagement

Family participation in elementary education includes both visible school involvement and less visible support provided at home. Parents contribute through encouragement, monitoring, communication, expectations, and participation in learning activities, although these forms of involvement do not produce identical outcomes. A broad synthesis by Kim (2022) found a positive relationship between parental involvement and student achievement, with parental expectations and aspirations showing stronger associations than direct homework assistance. Similarly, structured parental involvement programs have been found to improve both academic and nonacademic outcomes among young children, indicating that purposeful family engagement can influence wider aspects of learner development beyond school performance (Cosso et al., 2022). These findings support viewing family participation as a set of interconnected practices rather than limiting it to attendance at formal school activities.

Family-School Partnership and Shared Expectations

Children encounter behavioral expectations both at home and in school, making coordination between families and teachers important in establishing consistency. Family-school partnerships allow adults to exchange information, clarify expectations, and jointly respond to learner needs. Smith et al. (2020), in a meta-analysis of 77 family-school partnership intervention studies, found positive effects on academic achievement, behavior, social-behavioral competence, and mental health. Such evidence suggests that the value of family participation lies partly in the relationship created between home and school. When parents and teachers work from compatible expectations, learners receive clearer guidance concerning responsibility, appropriate conduct, and participation in school life.

Discipline Formation and Social-Behavioral Development

Discipline formation involves more than compliance with school rules because it also requires children to develop social competence, behavioral control, and appropriate responses to others. Family participation can contribute to these qualities when behavioral guidance at home is connected with support provided by teachers. Sheridan et al. (2019) reported significant positive effects of family-school interventions on children's social-behavioral competence and mental health across 117 studies. Their analysis further identified communication, collaboration, parent-teacher relationships, home-based involvement, and behavioral support as important components associated with positive outcomes. These findings provide a strong basis for examining discipline as a product of coordinated experiences across family and school settings rather than as an outcome of classroom management alone.

Family Participation and Learner Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is closely related to discipline because learners must gradually develop the ability to manage attention, actions, emotions, and responsibilities without continuous adult control. Calderon-Villarreal et al. (2025) found significant associations between parental involvement and self-regulation among primary school learners, while also identifying limited parental time as an important barrier to sustained involvement. This indicates that discipline-supporting participation depends not only on parents' willingness to engage but also on whether families have practical opportunities to maintain their involvement. The finding is especially relevant when examining participation pathways because differences in family availability may affect how consistently expectations, routines, and behavioral guidance are reinforced between home and school.

METHODS**Research Design**

The research employed a cross-sectional multi-informant pathway modeling design. This design allowed family participation to be examined as a network of connected practices rather than as a single involvement score. Information from teachers, parents, and learners was used to model the links among participation in school activities, family-school communication, home behavioral reinforcement, consistency of expectations, and discipline formation. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling was integrated into the design to estimate direct and indirect pathways and to determine which participation processes carried the strongest association with learner discipline. The design was appropriate because the study focused on identifying relational pathways without manipulating the respondents' school or family experiences.

Research Locale

The research was conducted in public elementary schools in Baggao, Cagayan. The locale provided an appropriate setting because elementary education in the municipality involved continuing interaction among schools, families, and learners through academic, co-curricular, and community-linked activities.. No individual school was identified in the reporting of the research to preserve institutional confidentiality.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study involved 210 respondents, composed of 70 public elementary school teachers, 70 parents or guardians, and 70 Grade 4 to Grade 6 learners who had participated in school activities. A multistage balanced stratified random sampling technique was applied. Eligible respondent lists were organized according to respondent group and school location, after which participants were randomly selected within each stratum. Teachers were required to have direct experience working with families through school activities, while parents or guardians had participated in school-related programs or activities involving their children. Learners were selected from the upper elementary grades because they could provide more independent judgments of family participation and school discipline practices. Equal allocation across the three groups was maintained to support

meaningful multi-group pathway comparisons. Using the inverse square root approach of Kock and Hadaya (2018), a minimum group size of 69 was required for a minimum expected path coefficient of .30, a .05 significance level, and 80% statistical power. The final allocation of 70 respondents per group therefore satisfied the analytical requirement.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using the researcher-developed Family Participation and Discipline Pathways Scale (FPDPS). Three parallel versions were prepared for teachers, parents, and learners using equivalent statements adjusted only to the perspective of each respondent group. The instrument contained 32 items covering school activity participation, family-school communication, home behavioral reinforcement, consistency of behavioral expectations, and discipline formation. Responses were recorded through a five-point scale ranging from 1, representing the lowest degree of observed practice, to 5, representing the highest.

Content validation was undertaken by five specialists in elementary education, educational research, measurement and evaluation, child development, and family-school partnership. The scale obtained a Scale Content Validity Index based on average agreement of .956, while item-level validity coefficients ranged from .80 to 1.00. Recommendations from the validators resulted in minor revisions to wording, sequencing, and age suitability.

The revised instrument was pilot-tested with 45 respondents, consisting of 15 teachers, 15 parents, and 15 upper elementary learners who were not included in the main investigation. The instrument produced an overall Cronbach alpha coefficient of .936. Reliability coefficients for the five domains ranged from .861 to .923, confirming strong internal consistency. The teacher, parent, and learner versions produced alpha coefficients of .925, .931, and .918, respectively. These results supported the use of the instrument for the main data collection.

Data Gathering

Administrative permission was secured before respondent recruitment. Eligible participant lists were coordinated with authorized school personnel, after which random selection was carried out according to the sampling procedure. Teachers, parents, and learners received separate copies of the questionnaire to minimize influence from other respondent groups. Teacher and learner forms were administered during scheduled periods that did not interfere with instruction, while parent forms were distributed during arranged school-family activities. Written parental consent and learner assent were completed before learners answered the instrument. Accomplished questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded without respondent names, and encoded into a consolidated dataset for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling using SmartPLS. Construct-level means and standard deviations were first computed to describe the observed strength of each study dimension without generating respondent profiles. The measurement model was examined through indicator loadings, composite reliability, ρ_A , average variance extracted, and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. The structural model was then evaluated using standardized path coefficients, coefficient of determination or R^2 , effect size or f^2 , predictive relevance or Q^2 , and variance inflation factors.

A 10,000-resample bootstrapping procedure was used to test direct and indirect effects at the .05 significance level. Indirect-effect analysis identified whether family-school communication, home behavioral reinforcement, and consistency of behavioral expectations functioned as significant pathways connecting family participation with discipline formation. Measurement Invariance of Composite Models was subsequently assessed before PLS Multi-Group Analysis was conducted to determine whether the identified pathways differed significantly among teachers, parents, and learners. This approach permitted the study to identify not only whether family participation was associated with discipline formation, but also which participation route carried the strongest explanatory contribution.

Ethical Considerations

Participation remained voluntary throughout the study. Teachers and parents provided informed consent, while learners participated only after parental consent and personal assent had been obtained. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the research, their right to decline or discontinue participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Names and identifying school information were excluded from the dataset, collected materials were securely maintained, and findings were reported only in aggregated form to protect the privacy and welfare of all participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Descriptive Results for Family Participation and Discipline Formation*

Construct	Teachers M (SD)	Parents M (SD)	Learners M (SD)	Overall M	Interpretation
School Activity Participation	3.93 (.53)	4.25 (.49)	4.07 (.57)	4.08	High
Family-School Communication	3.70 (.58)	4.07 (.55)	3.69 (.63)	3.82	High
Home Behavioral Reinforcement	3.51 (.62)	3.98 (.58)	3.58 (.68)	3.69	High
Consistency of Behavioral Expectations	3.16 (.70)	3.59 (.69)	3.18 (.76)	3.31	Moderate
Discipline Formation	3.22 (.66)	3.75 (.61)	3.17 (.71)	3.38	Moderate

Table 1 presents the level of family participation and discipline formation as viewed by teachers, parents, and learners. School activity participation obtained the highest overall mean of 4.08, indicating that families were generally present in school-related activities. Family-school communication and home behavioral reinforcement were also rated highly. However, this participation did not fully translate into consistent behavioral guidance. Consistency of behavioral expectations received a moderate mean of 3.31, while discipline formation obtained 3.38. Parents consistently gave more favorable ratings than teachers and learners, particularly for behavioral reinforcement and discipline formation. This difference suggested that parents perceived their involvement as more effective than it was experienced within school life. The pattern pointed to a central concern of the study: participation was present, but alignment between what was expected at home and what was reinforced at school remained uneven.

Table 2. *Measurement Model Reliability and Convergent Validity*

Construct	Loading Range	Cronbach α	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
School Activity Participation	.731–.872	.881	.887	.914	.640
Family-School Communication	.754–.898	.902	.907	.928	.684
Home Behavioral Reinforcement	.709–.874	.867	.875	.906	.617
Consistency of Behavioral Expectations	.738–.891	.895	.899	.923	.666
Discipline Formation	.762–.896	.918	.921	.939	.719

Table 2 shows that the measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability and convergent validity. Indicator loadings ranged from .709 to .898, indicating that the retained items represented their intended constructs adequately. Cronbach alpha values ranged from .867 to .918, while composite reliability values ranged from .906 to .939. All average variance extracted values exceeded .50, with discipline formation producing the highest AVE at .719. These findings confirmed that the five constructs had adequate internal consistency and captured sufficient common variance for structural pathway analysis. No item was removed because all retained indicators satisfied the measurement criteria.

Table 3. *Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratios for Discriminant Validity*

Construct	SAP	FSC	HBR	CBE	DF
School Activity Participation (SAP)	1.000				
Family-School Communication (FSC)	.742	1.000			
Home Behavioral Reinforcement (HBR)	.681	.718	1.000		
Consistency of Behavioral Expectations (CBE)	.646	.779	.793	1.000	
Discipline Formation (DF)	.581	.704	.748	.824	1.000

Table 3 presents the discriminant validity results. All HTMT values remained below the .85 threshold, ranging from .581 to .824. The highest association occurred between consistency of behavioral expectations and discipline formation, indicating that the two constructs were strongly related but empirically distinct. The finding was important because it demonstrated that discipline formation was not simply another measure of parental participation or behavioral reinforcement. Rather, it represented a separate learner outcome that could be explained through the participation pathways specified in the structural model.

Table 4. *Direct Structural Path Estimates*

Structural Path	β	t	p	f ²	VIF	Decision
SAP → FSC	.610	11.452	<.001	.480	1.000	Significant
SAP → HBR	.470	7.846	<.001	.280	1.000	Significant
SAP → CBE	.290	4.214	<.001	.100	1.592	Significant
FSC → CBE	.310	4.931	<.001	.130	1.824	Significant
HBR → CBE	.370	5.876	<.001	.190	1.672	Significant
FSC → DF	.180	2.706	.007	.050	1.913	Significant
HBR → DF	.240	3.842	<.001	.090	1.861	Significant
CBE → DF	.420	6.927	<.001	.260	2.104	Significant
SAP → DF	.080	1.309	.191	.010	1.786	Not Significant

Table 4 reveals that family participation affected discipline primarily through intermediate processes rather than through participation alone. School activity participation strongly predicted family-school communication ($\beta = .610$, $p < .001$) and also increased home behavioral reinforcement ($\beta = .470$, $p < .001$). The strongest predictor of discipline formation was consistency of behavioral expectations ($\beta = .420$, $p < .001$), followed by home behavioral reinforcement ($\beta = .240$, $p < .001$). Family-school communication also exerted a smaller but significant effect ($\beta = .180$, $p = .007$).

A notable result was the nonsignificant direct relationship between school activity participation and discipline formation ($\beta = .080$, $p = .191$). This indicated that attending activities, meetings, or school programs by itself did not guarantee disciplined learner behavior. The contribution of participation became meaningful when it produced communication, behavioral reinforcement, and consistency between adults. This finding explained why relatively high family participation in Table 1 coexisted with only moderate discipline formation. The problem was therefore not simply insufficient family presence, but the limited conversion of that presence into stable and shared behavioral expectations.

Table 5. *Indirect Effects and Predictive Capacity of the Structural Model*

Indirect Path	Indirect β	t	p	Interpretation
SAP → FSC → DF	.110	2.612	.009	Significant
SAP → HBR → DF	.113	3.274	.001	Significant

SAP → CBE → DF	.122	3.641	<.001	Significant
SAP → FSC → CBE → DF	.079	3.104	.002	Significant
SAP → HBR → CBE → DF	.073	3.367	.001	Significant
Endogenous Construct	R ²	Q ²	Predictive Interpretation	
Family-School Communication	.372	.233	Moderate	
Home Behavioral Reinforcement	.221	.137	Small to moderate	
Consistency of Behavioral Expectations	.548	.392	Substantial	
Discipline Formation	.584	.418	Substantial	

Table 5 confirms that the effect of school activity participation on discipline formation operated through several significant indirect routes. The largest single indirect pathway was through consistency of behavioral expectations ($\beta = .122$, $p < .001$), followed closely by home behavioral reinforcement ($\beta = .113$, $p = .001$) and family-school communication ($\beta = .110$, $p = .009$). Two sequential pathways were also significant. Participation that strengthened communication and subsequently produced consistent expectations contributed positively to discipline formation, as did participation that supported behavioral reinforcement and then strengthened consistency.

The model explained 58.4% of the variance in discipline formation, indicating substantial explanatory power. It also accounted for 54.8% of the variance in consistency of behavioral expectations. Q² values were positive for all endogenous constructs, with discipline formation obtaining .418, confirming meaningful predictive relevance. Taken together, the findings indicated that discipline developed most strongly when participation moved beyond physical attendance and became translated into coordinated behavioral practices. The significant indirect effects, combined with the nonsignificant direct SAP to DF path, supported an **indirect-only mediation pattern**. Family participation therefore functioned as an enabling condition rather than an automatic source of discipline.

Table 6. *MICOM Assessment Across Teachers, Parents, and Learners*

Construct	Configural Invariance	Compositional Invariance	Equality of Means and Variances	Overall Result
School Activity Participation	Established	Established	Not fully established	Partial invariance
Family-School Communication	Established	Established	Established	Full invariance
Home Behavioral Reinforcement	Established	Established	Established	Full invariance
Consistency of Behavioral Expectations	Established	Established	Not fully established	Partial invariance
Discipline Formation	Established	Established	Not fully established	Partial invariance

Table 6 shows that configural and compositional invariance were established across the three respondent groups. This confirmed that teachers, parents, and learners interpreted the underlying constructs with sufficient similarity to permit multi-group comparison. Full equality of means and variances was not obtained for school activity participation, consistency of behavioral expectations, and discipline formation. These differences were consistent with the descriptive results, where parents rated the same practices more positively than teachers and learners. Because compositional invariance was achieved for all constructs, partial measurement invariance was established and PLS Multi-Group Analysis remained appropriate.

Table 7. *PLS Multi-Group Analysis of Selected Structural Paths*

Path	Teachers β	Parents β	Learners β	Significant Group Difference	p
SAP $\rightarrow$ FSC	.550	.690	.580	None	>.05
SAP $\rightarrow$ HBR	.430	.520	.450	None	>.05
FSC $\rightarrow$ DF	.240	.120	.170	None	>.05
HBR $\rightarrow$ DF	.200	.310	.190	None	>.05
CBE $\rightarrow$ DF	.480	.290	.510	Parent vs. Teacher	.041
CBE $\rightarrow$ DF	.480	.290	.510	Parent vs. Learner	.028
SAP $\rightarrow$ DF	.070	.110	.050	None	>.05

Table 7 presents the multi-group comparison of the structural relationships. Most pathways did not differ significantly among teachers, parents, and learners, indicating general agreement about how family participation operated. However, the relationship between consistency of behavioral expectations and discipline formation differed significantly. This pathway was strongest among learners ($\beta = .510$) and teachers ($\beta = .480$), but weaker among parents ($\beta = .290$). The result suggested that learners and teachers experienced consistency between home and school expectations as more central to discipline than parents perceived it to be.

This difference revealed an important practical problem. Parents tended to report relatively strong participation and reinforcement, yet they assigned less importance to the consistency of expectations as a mechanism of discipline formation. Learners and teachers, by contrast, appeared more sensitive to discrepancies between rules emphasized at home and those enforced in school. The strongest pathway in the study therefore centered not on the amount of family involvement but on whether adults communicated and reinforced compatible expectations. Overall, the findings supported a model in which family participation strengthened discipline when it was converted into communication, home reinforcement, and especially behavioral consistency across home and school.

CONCLUSION

Family participation contributed to discipline formation not through school attendance or participation alone, but through the quality of communication, behavioral reinforcement, and consistency of expectations shared between home and school. Although families were generally involved in school activities, discipline formation remained moderate because behavioral expectations were not always reinforced in the same way across settings. Consistency of behavioral expectations emerged as the strongest pathway to discipline, while the direct effect of school activity participation was not significant. The study therefore recommends that elementary schools in Baggao strengthen structured family-school agreements on behavioral expectations, establish regular two-way communication focused on learner conduct, and provide parents with practical guidance on reinforcing school-based discipline at home. Teachers and parents should also use common language, routines, and behavioral responses so that learners encounter clearer and more stable expectations. School activities should be designed not only to increase parental presence but also to deepen shared responsibility for learner behavior, while future studies may examine these pathways longitudinally to determine how sustained family-school coordination influences discipline over time.

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