
NEWSLETTER

Effects of Home-school Partnerships on the Academic Performance of Urban and Rural Junior Secondary School Students

By Li, J. & Hu, Y.

Correspondence to: Yongmei Hu, Beijing Normal University, China. E-mail:

huym0718@bnu.edu.cn

THE analyses of factors in the disparity between urban and rural compulsory education are beneficial for developing a more balanced and high-quality education, improving social mobility of rural youngsters, and halting intergenerational transmission of poverty among rural families. It is well acknowledged that family capital is the most significant contributing factor in the academic performance gap between urban and rural students, outweighing school resources, particularly the quality of teachers. This study is a discourse on the two forms of home-school partnership, namely, the family-school communication and parental voluntary participation in school activities as well as their effects on the academic achievements of urban and rural middle school students. It was based on large-scale survey data and adopted the hierarchical linear model and the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method in the analysis.

The research findings indicate that: (i) parents of urban middle school students experience higher levels of family-school communication and voluntary involvement in school activities than their rural counterparts; (ii) family-school communication poses substantially positive effects on school results of urban junior secondary school students, but has no impact on those of rural middle school students; (iii) there is an inverted U shape relation between the frequency of parental participation in school activities and student academic results, with the optimal frequency being higher for urban parents than for their rural counterparts; (iv) the family-school communication is a significant factor in the academic achievement disparity between urban and rural middle school students, whereas it has not been remarkably affected by parental voluntary participation in school activities.

Based on the research results, the study recommends that the amount of parental participation in school activities be reasonably controlled with focus on its quality rather than formality. Meanwhile, help parents of rural middle school students to improve the effectiveness of their communication with schools. Rural parents' rights to involvement in child school education should be respected and recognized. In addition, it is necessary to provide ru-

ral teachers with specialized training on home-school partnership to enhance their awareness of family-school co-education and skills in communicating with parents of their students.

*Source: Journal of Educational Science of Hunan Normal University, 2023:
22(1):111-122.*