

Validation of the Model of Parental Participation in School Educational Decision-Making

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The present study aimed to validate a comprehensive model of parental participation in school educational decision-making.

Methods and Materials: This study employed a quantitative, applied, and descriptive-correlational design using a survey approach. The statistical population consisted of teachers, school principals, vice-principals, and educational experts working in secondary schools in Mazandaran Province. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire developed based on the conceptual dimensions of parental participation in educational decision-making. The instrument included components related to causal factors, central phenomena, contextual factors, intervening factors, strategies, and outcomes. Face and content validity were established through expert review, while construct validity and reliability were assessed through structural equation modeling. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS software.

Findings: The results demonstrated that all constructs possessed acceptable reliability and validity. Factor loadings exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were above 0.70, and AVE values confirmed convergent validity. Discriminant validity was also supported. The structural model showed substantial explanatory power, with R^2 values ranging from 0.613 to 0.770 and Q^2 values ranging from 0.368 to 0.603. The overall goodness-of-fit index ($GOF = 0.554$) indicated strong predictive capability.

Conclusion: The findings confirmed the validity of the proposed model and demonstrated that parental participation in educational decision-making is a multidimensional process shaped by interconnected motivational, contextual, organizational, and strategic factors.

Keywords: Parental Participation, Educational Decision-Making, Family-School Partnership, Parent Engagement, School Management

1. Introduction

Parental participation in education has increasingly been recognized as one of the most influential factors in enhancing educational quality, promoting student achievement, and strengthening the relationship between schools and communities. Contemporary educational systems no longer view parents merely as recipients of educational services; rather, they are considered active stakeholders whose perspectives, experiences, and contributions can enrich decision-making processes and improve educational outcomes. As educational institutions confront increasingly complex social, cultural, and technological challenges, the importance of collaborative governance and shared decision-making has become more pronounced. Within this context, parental participation in school educational decision-making has emerged as a critical component of effective school management and educational reform (Kirmaci, 2023; Wei et al., 2025).

The concept of parental participation extends beyond traditional forms of involvement such as attending school events, assisting with homework, or contributing financially to school activities. Contemporary perspectives emphasize meaningful engagement in educational planning, policy formulation, curriculum-related decisions, and school improvement initiatives. Such participation reflects a shift from passive involvement toward active partnership, where parents are viewed as co-educators and co-decision-makers alongside teachers and school administrators (Gaspar & Sahay, 2025; Underwood, 2023). This transformation has been driven by growing evidence demonstrating that schools perform more effectively when families are actively involved in educational processes and when parents are granted opportunities to influence decisions affecting their children's learning experiences (Mugumya, Mwesigye, et al., 2023; Seni & Onyango, 2021).

Research conducted across different educational systems consistently indicates that parental engagement contributes significantly to students' academic achievement, motivation, social adjustment, and psychological well-being. Studies have shown that students whose parents actively participate in school affairs generally demonstrate higher levels of academic performance, stronger educational aspirations, and more positive attitudes toward learning (Djekourmane et al., 2025; Mugumya, Mwesigye, et al., 2023). Furthermore, parental involvement has been associated with improved school attendance, reduced behavioral problems, and enhanced communication between educational institutions

and families (Seni & Onyango, 2021; Sung et al., 2022). These findings suggest that parental participation represents a valuable resource that can contribute to educational effectiveness and student success.

Despite widespread recognition of its importance, parental participation remains a complex and multidimensional phenomenon influenced by numerous individual, organizational, cultural, and policy-related factors. Parents differ substantially in their willingness, capacity, and opportunity to engage in school decision-making processes. Similarly, schools vary in the extent to which they create structures and opportunities that facilitate meaningful parental participation. Consequently, understanding parental participation requires a comprehensive framework that accounts for both facilitating and constraining conditions affecting family-school relationships (Mayger & Provinzano, 2022; Nelson & Wambuwa, 2021).

Educational policy literature increasingly emphasizes the role of governance structures in shaping family-school relations. Policies that promote transparency, inclusiveness, and stakeholder participation are more likely to encourage parental engagement and strengthen trust between families and educational institutions. Conversely, centralized decision-making systems and limited opportunities for stakeholder input often discourage active participation and reduce parents' sense of ownership over educational processes (Antony-Newman, 2023; Kirmaci, 2023). As a result, educational policymakers have increasingly focused on developing mechanisms that institutionalize parental participation and integrate family voices into school governance structures.

The significance of parental participation becomes even more evident when viewed through the lens of educational equity and social justice. Numerous scholars have argued that meaningful family engagement can reduce educational inequalities by ensuring that diverse family perspectives are represented in school decisions and by fostering more responsive educational environments (Ma, 2023; Song et al., 2023). However, research has also demonstrated that participation opportunities are not always distributed equally among different social groups. Factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural background, language proficiency, and historical patterns of exclusion may influence parents' ability to engage effectively in school affairs (Aguayo, 2022; Shah & Grimaldos, 2022).

Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of culturally responsive approaches to family engagement.

Schools serving diverse populations increasingly recognize that effective parental participation requires sensitivity to cultural differences, family values, and community contexts. Educational leaders who adopt culturally responsive practices are often more successful in establishing trusting relationships with families and encouraging meaningful parental involvement in decision-making processes (Cuevas, 2023; Hernández, 2025). Such approaches acknowledge that families possess valuable knowledge and experiences that can enrich educational decision-making and improve educational outcomes.

Family-school partnerships are also particularly important within inclusive education settings. Parents of children with special educational needs frequently play a critical role in advocating for appropriate educational services and supporting individualized educational planning. Research indicates that successful inclusive education depends substantially on collaboration among educators, families, and other stakeholders (Gaspar & Sahay, 2025; Salehiamiri et al., 2025). Moreover, family engagement has been identified as a key factor influencing the quality of inclusive educational experiences and the effectiveness of support services provided to students with diverse learning needs (Francis et al., 2020; Lieb et al., 2023).

The emergence of participatory and collaborative leadership models has further strengthened interest in parental involvement in school governance. Contemporary leadership theories emphasize distributed decision-making, stakeholder empowerment, and collaborative problem-solving as essential characteristics of effective educational leadership. Within these frameworks, parents are viewed not merely as external stakeholders but as active contributors to school improvement efforts (Johnson & Flückiger, 2022; Woulfin & Yurkofsky, 2025). Schools that foster participatory leadership cultures often report higher levels of trust, stronger community relationships, and greater stakeholder commitment to educational goals.

At the same time, parental participation faces numerous barriers that may limit its effectiveness. Individual-level barriers include limited time, insufficient knowledge of school procedures, lack of confidence, competing work responsibilities, and previous negative experiences with educational institutions. Family-related factors such as socioeconomic challenges and limited access to resources may further constrain participation opportunities (Al-Mahdi & Bailey, 2022; Mugumya, Karooro, et al., 2023). Organizational barriers may include ineffective communication systems, limited participation channels,

bureaucratic procedures, and school cultures that do not genuinely value parental input. Such obstacles can discourage parents from engaging actively in educational decision-making and weaken family-school partnerships.

Research also indicates that broader social and policy environments influence parental participation patterns. Community norms, cultural expectations, legal frameworks, and educational policies all shape how parents perceive their role in schooling and the extent to which schools encourage their involvement (Brien & Stelmach, 2023; Wilinski & Vellanki, 2020). In some contexts, parents are encouraged to act as partners and collaborators, whereas in others they remain largely peripheral to educational decision-making processes. These variations underscore the need to examine parental participation as a context-dependent phenomenon influenced by multiple interacting factors.

The growing emphasis on accountability and school improvement has further increased interest in family engagement as a mechanism for enhancing educational quality. Studies suggest that schools characterized by strong family-school partnerships often demonstrate more effective organizational functioning, higher levels of stakeholder satisfaction, and greater responsiveness to student needs (Baxley, 2024; Calderon, 2024). Through participation in decision-making processes, parents can contribute valuable insights regarding student experiences, community expectations, and educational priorities, thereby enriching organizational learning and supporting continuous school improvement.

Recent developments in educational measurement have also contributed to a more sophisticated understanding of parental participation. Researchers have increasingly emphasized the need for reliable and valid instruments capable of capturing the multidimensional nature of family engagement. Advances in scale development and psychometric evaluation have enabled scholars to assess various dimensions of parental participation more accurately and systematically (Caliskan, 2025; Nathans & Brown, 2021). Nevertheless, many existing instruments focus primarily on traditional forms of involvement and may not adequately capture participation in educational decision-making processes.

Another important consideration concerns the relationship between parental participation and social capital. Active family engagement can strengthen networks of trust, cooperation, and mutual support among parents, teachers, and school leaders. These relationships contribute to the development of social capital, which in turn facilitates

collective action and enhances educational effectiveness (Kuttner et al., 2022; Nelson & Wambuwa, 2021). Schools that successfully cultivate social capital often benefit from increased stakeholder commitment, stronger community support, and improved organizational resilience.

The digital transformation of education has introduced additional opportunities and challenges for parental participation. Digital communication platforms, online learning environments, and virtual engagement tools have expanded possibilities for family-school interaction while simultaneously creating new forms of inequality related to technology access and digital literacy (Sung et al., 2022; Wei et al., 2025). Understanding how these technological developments influence parental participation has become increasingly important for contemporary educational systems seeking to promote inclusive and equitable engagement practices.

Although the existing literature provides substantial evidence regarding the importance of family engagement, relatively limited attention has been devoted to developing comprehensive structural models that explain how various causal, contextual, intervening, strategic, and outcome-related factors interact to shape parental participation in educational decision-making. Many studies have examined isolated dimensions of participation, but fewer investigations have attempted to integrate these dimensions into a coherent conceptual framework capable of explaining the complexity of parental involvement within school governance systems (Akakpo, 2024; Ndwiga et al., 2022). Consequently, there remains a need for empirically validated models that identify the key determinants, mechanisms, and outcomes of parental participation in educational decision-making.

Given the increasing emphasis on participatory governance, educational equity, family-school partnerships, and stakeholder engagement in contemporary educational systems, developing and validating a comprehensive model of parental participation in school educational decision-making can provide valuable theoretical and practical insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers. Therefore, the present study aimed to validate the model of parental participation in school educational decision-making.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The present study was conducted using a quantitative, applied, and descriptive-correlational design with a survey approach. Since the main purpose of the study was to validate the proposed model of parental participation in school educational decision-making, the research design was based exclusively on quantitative data collection and statistical model testing. The study focused on examining the psychometric adequacy of a researcher-made questionnaire and testing the structural relationships among the components of the proposed model through structural equation modeling. From the perspective of purpose, the study was applied because its findings can be used to improve decision-making processes in schools and strengthen structured parental participation in educational affairs. From the perspective of data collection, it was a field survey because the required data were gathered directly from the target respondents through a questionnaire.

The statistical population consisted of teachers, school principals, vice-principals, and educational experts working at the secondary-school level in Mazandaran Province. These participants were selected because they were directly familiar with school management processes, parent-school interaction, educational planning, and the practical mechanisms through which parents can participate in educational decision-making. The sample size was determined according to the requirements of structural equation modeling and the item-to-sample ratio, in which the number of respondents should be sufficient for estimating the measurement and structural models. Accordingly, the final sample consisted of respondents who met the inclusion criteria and completed the researcher-made questionnaire. The inclusion criteria were employment or professional activity in secondary education, familiarity with school educational decision-making processes, experience of interaction with parents or parent-teacher associations, willingness to participate in the study, and completion of the questionnaire. Questionnaires with substantial missing data, repetitive response patterns, or unclear completion status were excluded from the final analysis. Sampling was carried out using an accessible sampling method among eligible educational personnel in Mazandaran Province, and participants were informed that their responses would remain confidential and would be analyzed only for research purposes.

2.2. Measure

The sole data collection tool in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire designed to validate the model of parental participation in school educational decision-making. The questionnaire was developed based on the theoretical foundations of parental involvement, school-family interaction, educational decision-making, and school governance. Its items were formulated to measure the main dimensions of the proposed model, including the factors that encourage or limit parental participation, the central concept of participation in educational decision-making, contextual and institutional conditions, facilitating and inhibiting mechanisms, school-level strategies for strengthening participation, and the educational and organizational consequences of parental participation. The questionnaire was designed in a closed-ended format and all items were scored using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Higher scores indicated a higher level of agreement with the presence or importance of each component in the model of parental participation in school educational decision-making.

To examine the validity of the researcher-made questionnaire, face validity and content validity were first assessed through expert judgment. A group of specialists in educational planning, school management, curriculum studies, and educational administration reviewed the items in terms of clarity, relevance, conceptual coverage, wording, and consistency with the research objectives. Based on their comments, ambiguous items were revised, overlapping items were modified, and the final version of the questionnaire was prepared for administration. In the quantitative validation stage, construct validity was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis within the structural equation modeling framework. Convergent validity was evaluated using factor loadings and the average variance extracted, while discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. Reliability was also assessed using Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability coefficients for each construct. These procedures were used to ensure that the questionnaire had adequate internal consistency, acceptable construct validity, and sufficient psychometric quality for testing the proposed model.

2.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in two main stages: descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. In the

descriptive stage, demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age, educational level, job position, and work experience, were examined using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. In addition, descriptive indices of the questionnaire items and research variables, including mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores, were calculated to provide an overall picture of the distribution of responses and the status of the main components of the model.

In the inferential stage, structural equation modeling based on the partial least squares approach was used to validate the proposed model and examine the relationships among its components. The analysis was performed using SmartPLS software. First, the measurement model was assessed to determine the adequacy of the observed items in measuring the latent constructs. In this stage, factor loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted, the Fornell-Larcker criterion, and the HTMT index were examined. Factor loadings were used to evaluate the strength of the relationship between each item and its corresponding construct. Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability were used to assess internal consistency, and average variance extracted was used to evaluate convergent validity. Discriminant validity was examined to ensure that each construct was empirically distinct from the other constructs in the model.

After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was assessed. In this stage, path coefficients, t-values, significance levels, coefficient of determination, predictive relevance, and overall model fit indicators were examined. The significance of path coefficients was tested using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The coefficient of determination was used to determine the explanatory power of the independent constructs in predicting the dependent constructs, while predictive relevance was assessed to evaluate the model’s predictive capability. The overall fit and quality of the model were also examined using appropriate indices available in the partial least squares approach. Through these analyses, the validity of the proposed model of parental participation in school educational decision-making was evaluated, and the final model was confirmed based on the statistical adequacy of the measurement and structural components.

3. Findings and Results

In the first stage of quantitative data analysis, the descriptive characteristics of the research variables were

examined to provide an overall picture of the participants' responses and the distribution of scores. For this purpose, descriptive indices including mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation were calculated for all components of the model. These indices made it possible to evaluate the

general status of the main dimensions of the model of parental participation in school educational decision-making before conducting the measurement and structural model analyses. The results of the descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of the research variables

Variable	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Standard Deviation
Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	20.41	22	17	2.69
Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	16.87	18	15	2.44
Structured and trust-based parental participation	17.03	18	16	1.89
Parents' concern for the child's development, future, and welfare	17.66	19	15	2.95
Parents' tendency to influence and play a role in education	13.09	15	11	2.71
Quality of home-school interaction and communication	15.82	17	13	2.88
Parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate	14.02	15	12	2.11
Cultural-communicational context of parental participation in school	12.35	14	9	2.56
Managerial-social context of parental participation	14.44	17	11	3.22
Individual and family barriers to parental participation	8.96	10	7	1.77
Structural and organizational barriers to participation in school	9.11	10	8	1.52
Facilitating mechanisms of parental participation	7.90	9	6	2.33
Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	12.22	13	10	2.07
Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	9.07	10	8	1.61
Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	8.88	10	7	1.90
Improvement of students' educational and developmental quality	12.68	14	11	2.41
Strengthening convergence and social capital between home and school	15.01	18	12	3.70
Participatory transformation in school structure and management	12.03	13	10	2.18

The descriptive results showed that the mean scores of most components were close to the upper range of their possible values, indicating that the respondents generally evaluated the components of parental participation in school educational decision-making at a relatively favorable level. Among the central components, active and effective parental participation in school educational processes had a high mean score, suggesting that respondents recognized this component as a prominent aspect of the model. The components related to parental concern, quality of home-school communication, and parents' evaluation of the school climate also showed relatively high mean values. In contrast, the components related to barriers had lower mean scores compared with their maximum values, indicating that although obstacles to participation were present, they did not

dominate the overall pattern of responses. The standard deviations also showed an acceptable level of dispersion, suggesting that the response pattern was sufficiently varied for subsequent structural equation modeling.

After examining the descriptive characteristics of the variables, the measurement model was assessed in order to determine the reliability and validity of the constructs. In this stage, factor loadings were used to examine the relationship between each observed item and its corresponding latent construct. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used to evaluate internal consistency, while the average variance extracted was used to assess convergent validity. The results of the measurement model for all dimensions and components are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE for the dimensions and components of the model

Dimension	Component	Items and Factor Loadings	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Central phenomenon	Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	Q15 = 0.835; Q16 = 0.645; Q17 = 0.681; Q18 = 0.752; Q19 = 0.551	0.570	0.851	0.825
Central phenomenon	Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	Q20 = 0.621; Q21 = 0.716; Q22 = 0.703; Q23 = 0.667	0.503	0.789	0.747
Central phenomenon	Structured and trust-based parental participation	Q24 = 0.725; Q25 = 0.822; Q26 = 0.799; Q27 = 0.531	0.622	0.808	0.778
Causal factors	Parents' concern for the child's development, future, and welfare	Q1 = 0.780; Q2 = 0.596; Q3 = 0.689; Q4 = 0.633	0.577	0.803	0.771
Causal factors	Parents' tendency to influence and play a role in education	Q5 = 0.714; Q6 = 0.586; Q7 = 0.664	0.558	0.764	0.745
Causal factors	Quality of home-school interaction and communication	Q8 = 0.640; Q9 = 0.771; Q10 = 0.606; Q11 = 0.734	0.565	0.814	0.784
Causal factors	Parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate	Q12 = 0.763; Q13 = 0.825; Q14 = 0.643	0.642	0.880	0.790
Contextual factors	Cultural-communicational context of parental participation in school	Q45 = 0.493; Q46 = 0.645; Q47 = 0.632	0.512	0.869	0.821
Contextual factors	Managerial-social context of parental participation	Q48 = 0.504; Q49 = 0.649; Q50 = 0.524; Q51 = 0.671	0.562	0.840	0.808
Intervening factors	Individual and family barriers to parental participation	Q52 = 0.847; Q53 = 0.806	0.683	0.852	0.818
Intervening factors	Structural and organizational barriers to participation in school	Q54 = 0.851; Q55 = 0.792	0.676	0.836	0.806
Intervening factors	Facilitating mechanisms of parental participation	Q56 = 0.816; Q57 = 0.743	0.609	0.784	0.756
Strategies	Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	Q28 = 0.846; Q29 = 0.660; Q30 = 0.756	0.574	0.829	0.800
Strategies	Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	Q31 = 0.633; Q32 = 0.727	0.682	0.846	0.811
Strategies	Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	Q33 = 0.691; Q34 = 0.922	0.664	0.828	0.795
Outcomes	Improvement of students' educational and developmental quality	Q35 = 0.871; Q36 = 0.740; Q37 = 0.786	0.642	0.880	0.842
Outcomes	Strengthening convergence and social capital between home and school	Q38 = 0.826; Q39 = 0.642; Q40 = 0.607; Q41 = 0.462	0.603	0.771	0.735
Outcomes	Participatory transformation in school structure and management	Q42 = 0.559; Q43 = 0.581; Q44 = 0.878	0.590	0.831	0.798

The results of the measurement model indicated that all factor loadings were above the acceptable threshold of 0.40, with values ranging from 0.462 to 0.922. Therefore, all items had an acceptable relationship with their corresponding latent constructs and no item was removed from the model. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.735 to 0.842, and composite reliability values ranged from 0.764 to 0.880, indicating that all constructs had acceptable internal consistency and reliability. In addition, the AVE values for all components were higher than 0.50, ranging from 0.503 to 0.683, which confirmed the convergent validity of the

constructs. Overall, the results showed that the researcher-made questionnaire had adequate psychometric quality and that the measurement model was suitable for further structural analysis.

After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was assessed using the coefficient of determination and predictive relevance indices. The R^2 index was used to determine the explanatory power of the model for endogenous constructs, while the Q^2 index was used to evaluate the predictive relevance of the model. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

R² and Q² values for endogenous constructs

Endogenous Construct	R ²	Q ²
Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	0.613	0.368
Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	0.629	0.381
Structured and trust-based parental participation	0.650	0.395
Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.706	0.568
Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.668	0.411
Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.621	0.372
Improvement of students' educational and developmental quality	0.770	0.583
Strengthening convergence and social capital between home and school	0.727	0.603
Participatory transformation in school structure and management	0.691	0.426

The results of the structural model showed that the R² values ranged from 0.613 to 0.770, indicating that the model had a moderate to strong explanatory power for the endogenous constructs. The highest R² value was related to the improvement of students' educational and developmental quality, showing that a considerable proportion of variance in this outcome was explained by the model. The Q² values ranged from 0.368 to 0.603, all of which were above the threshold for strong predictive relevance. These findings demonstrated that the structural model had acceptable explanatory and predictive power and was capable of explaining the main endogenous constructs related to parental participation in school educational decision-making.

The overall goodness-of-fit of the model was also assessed using the GOF criterion. The mean value of

communality was 0.457 and the mean value of R² was 0.675. Based on the formula $GOF = \sqrt{(\text{mean communality} \times \text{mean } R^2)}$, the GOF value was calculated as 0.554. Since this value was higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.30, the overall fit of the model was confirmed. This result indicated that the proposed model had an appropriate overall quality and sufficient predictive capacity for explaining the latent endogenous variables.

Before interpreting the structural paths, the overall model fit indices were examined to determine the extent to which the empirical data were consistent with the proposed model. The indices included SRMR, d_ULS, d_G, and NFI. These indices provide evidence about the level of discrepancy between the observed and estimated matrices and the general quality of model fit. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Model fit indices

Fit Index	Symbol	Calculated Value
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual	SRMR	0.084
Squared Euclidean Distance	d ULS	4.543
Geodesic Distance	d G	2.689
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.901

The fit indices showed that the model had an acceptable level of fit. The SRMR value was 0.084, which was close to the commonly accepted threshold of 0.08 and indicated an acceptable residual difference between the observed and estimated matrices. The NFI value was 0.901, exceeding the threshold of 0.90, which supported the adequacy of the model fit. The d_ULS and d_G values also indicated that the discrepancy between the empirical data and the model was within an acceptable range. Therefore, the overall results confirmed that the model had sufficient fit and could be used

for interpreting the structural relationships among the constructs.

After confirming the measurement model, structural model, and overall model fit, the path coefficients were examined to determine the direct effects among the constructs. The significance of the paths was evaluated using the t-statistic obtained through the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. Paths with t-values greater than 1.96 were considered statistically significant. The results of the path analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Results of path analysis

No.	Path	Coefficient	t-value	Result
1	Parents' concern for the child's development, future, and welfare → Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	0.379	3.021	Supported
2	Parents' concern for the child's development, future, and welfare → Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	0.280	3.064	Supported
3	Parents' concern for the child's development, future, and welfare → Structured and trust-based parental participation	0.325	3.310	Supported
4	Parents' tendency to influence and play a role in education → Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	0.248	5.604	Supported
5	Parents' tendency to influence and play a role in education → Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	0.332	5.701	Supported
6	Parents' tendency to influence and play a role in education → Structured and trust-based parental participation	0.304	3.059	Supported
7	Quality of home-school interaction and communication → Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	0.337	3.758	Supported
8	Quality of home-school interaction and communication → Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	0.458	5.796	Supported
9	Quality of home-school interaction and communication → Structured and trust-based parental participation	0.338	3.867	Supported
10	Parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate → Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes	0.532	5.694	Supported
11	Parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate → Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school	0.245	2.433	Supported
12	Parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate → Structured and trust-based parental participation	0.460	5.093	Supported
13	Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.442	4.224	Supported
14	Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.319	3.121	Supported
15	Structured and trust-based parental participation → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.286	2.338	Supported
16	Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.368	3.638	Supported
17	Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.246	3.017	Supported
18	Structured and trust-based parental participation → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.329	4.807	Supported
19	Active and effective parental participation in school educational processes → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.364	4.360	Supported
20	Interaction, convergence, and shared responsibility between home and school → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.540	4.044	Supported
21	Structured and trust-based parental participation → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.337	3.180	Supported
22	Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school → Improvement of students' educational and developmental quality	0.558	6.609	Supported
23	Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation → Strengthening convergence and social capital between home and school	0.206	2.626	Supported
24	Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school → Participatory transformation in school structure and management	0.375	4.867	Supported

25	Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school → Improvement of students' educational and developmental quality	0.435	4.147	Supported
26	Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation → Strengthening convergence and social capital between home and school	0.360	5.064	Supported
27	Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school → Participatory transformation in school structure and management	0.327	4.229	Supported
28	Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school → Improvement of students' educational and developmental quality	0.682	3.447	Supported
29	Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation → Strengthening convergence and social capital between home and school	0.427	2.907	Supported
30	Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school → Participatory transformation in school structure and management	0.491	4.647	Supported
31	Cultural-communicational context of parental participation in school → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.249	3.635	Supported
32	Managerial-social context of parental participation → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.252	3.367	Supported
33	Cultural-communicational context of parental participation in school → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.303	4.031	Supported
34	Managerial-social context of parental participation → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.324	3.203	Supported
35	Cultural-communicational context of parental participation in school → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.287	3.124	Supported
36	Managerial-social context of parental participation → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.206	2.771	Supported
37	Individual and family barriers to parental participation → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	-0.206	3.080	Supported
38	Structural and organizational barriers to participation in school → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	-0.215	3.203	Supported
39	Facilitating mechanisms of parental participation → Institutionalization of parental participation structures in school	0.202	2.262	Supported
40	Individual and family barriers to parental participation → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	-0.342	4.391	Supported
41	Structural and organizational barriers to participation in school → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	-0.263	2.337	Supported
42	Facilitating mechanisms of parental participation → Empowerment and encouragement of parents for effective participation	0.214	2.777	Supported
43	Individual and family barriers to parental participation → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	-0.447	3.420	Supported
44	Structural and organizational barriers to participation in school → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	-0.345	3.351	Supported
45	Facilitating mechanisms of parental participation → Development of active cooperation and practical participation between home and school	0.352	3.440	Supported

Figure 1

Model with Beta Coefficients

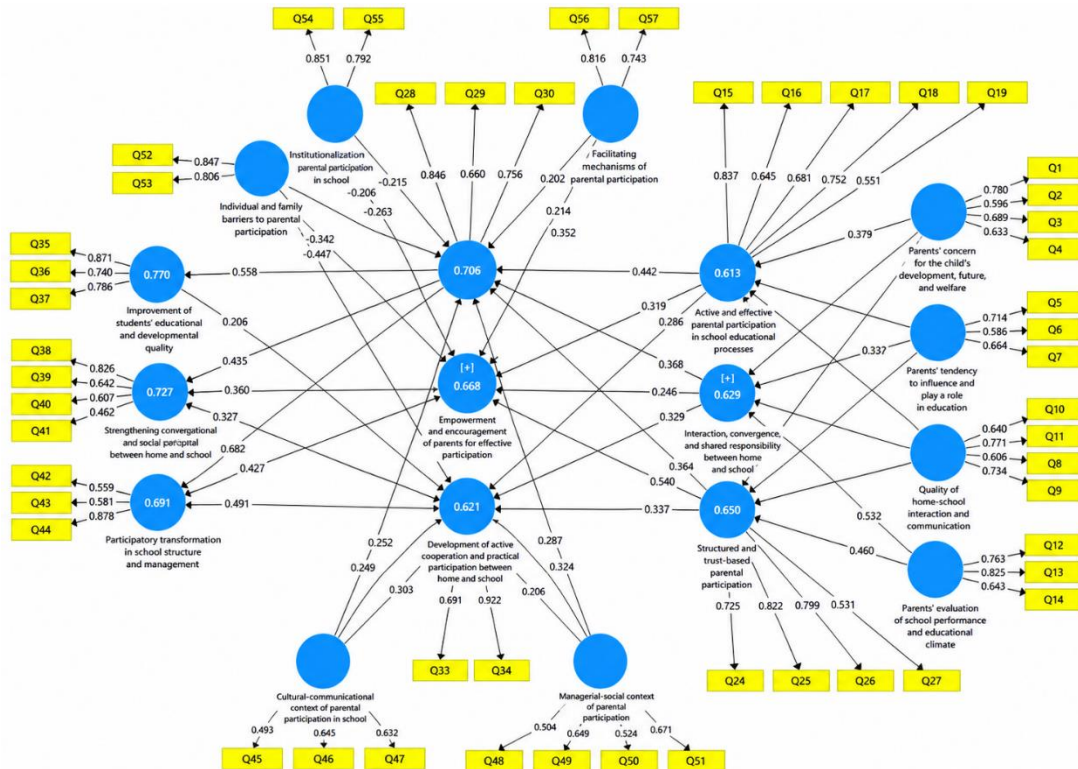
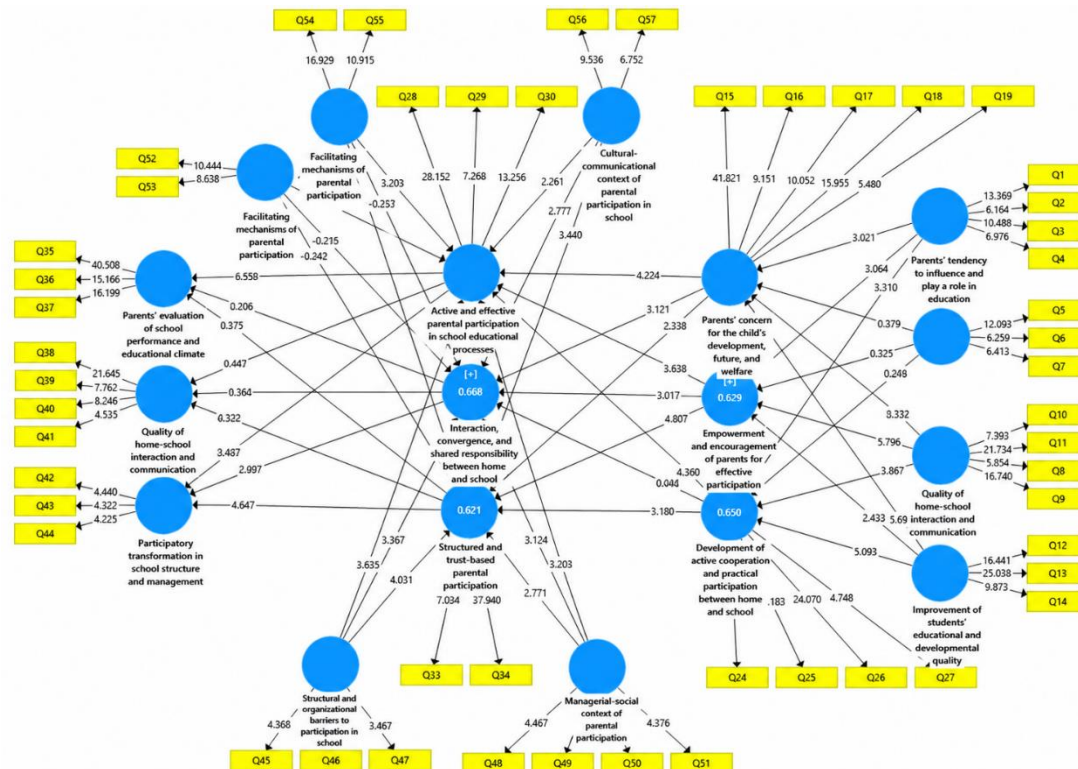


Figure 2

Model with T-Value



The results of the path analysis showed that all structural paths were statistically significant because all t-values were greater than 1.96. The causal factors had positive and significant effects on the components of the central phenomenon, indicating that parents' concern for their child's development, their tendency to influence educational processes, the quality of home-school communication, and their evaluation of the school's educational climate all contributed to strengthening parental participation in educational decision-making. The strongest effects in this section were related to parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate on active and effective parental participation and structured trust-based participation. The central phenomenon also had significant effects on the strategic components of the model, including institutionalization of participation structures, empowerment of parents, and development of active cooperation between home and school. The strategic components, in turn, significantly predicted the outcomes of the model, including improvement of students' educational and developmental quality, strengthening of social capital between home and school, and participatory transformation in school structure and management. Contextual factors had positive and significant effects on the strategic components, while individual-family and structural-organizational barriers had negative and significant effects. Facilitating mechanisms had positive and significant effects on the strategic components. Overall, the results confirmed the validity of the proposed model and showed that parental participation in school educational decision-making is shaped through a systematic relationship among causal factors, contextual conditions, intervening factors, strategies, and outcomes.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to validate a model of parental participation in school educational decision-making and to examine the relationships among the causal factors, contextual conditions, intervening factors, strategic mechanisms, and outcomes associated with parental engagement in educational governance. The findings demonstrated that the proposed model possessed satisfactory psychometric properties and acceptable explanatory and predictive power. The measurement model showed adequate reliability and validity, while the structural model confirmed significant relationships among the constructs. Overall, the results indicate that parental participation in educational decision-making is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped

by a network of personal, relational, organizational, and contextual factors.

One of the most important findings of the study was the significant influence of parental concern for the child's development, future, and welfare on all dimensions of the central phenomenon, including active participation, shared responsibility between home and school, and structured trust-based participation. This finding suggests that parental engagement is fundamentally rooted in parents' perceptions of responsibility for their children's educational success and well-being. Parents who are deeply concerned about their children's academic and personal development are more likely to seek opportunities to contribute to educational decisions and to collaborate with schools in meaningful ways. This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing that parental motivation and concern for children's future educational outcomes constitute a primary driver of family engagement (Al-Mahdi & Bailey, 2022; Seni & Onyango, 2021). Similarly, research conducted in different educational contexts has demonstrated that parents who perceive education as a critical determinant of their children's future success tend to engage more actively in school-related activities and decision-making processes (Djekourmane et al., 2025; Mugumya, Mwesigye, et al., 2023).

The findings also revealed that parents' tendency to influence educational processes significantly predicted all dimensions of parental participation. This result highlights the importance of parental agency in shaping educational engagement. Parents who believe that their opinions matter and who perceive themselves as capable contributors to educational decision-making are more likely to participate actively in school affairs. This finding supports the arguments advanced by scholars who emphasize that parental involvement is not merely a function of opportunity but also of perceived efficacy and influence (Aguayo, 2022; Johnson & Flückiger, 2022). The result is also aligned with research showing that families become more engaged when schools recognize their voices and provide meaningful opportunities for participation (Cuevas, 2023; Hernández, 2025).

Another significant finding concerned the role of home-school communication. The quality of interaction and communication between families and schools exerted positive effects on active participation, shared responsibility, and trust-based engagement. This finding reinforces the notion that communication serves as the foundation of effective family-school partnerships. Schools that maintain

open, respectful, and reciprocal communication channels are more likely to cultivate trust and encourage parental involvement in educational decision-making. Similar conclusions have been reported in studies examining family-school collaboration, which indicate that transparent communication strengthens mutual understanding, reduces misunderstandings, and promotes stakeholder commitment to educational goals (Brien & Stelmach, 2023; Kuttner et al., 2022). Research on culturally responsive family engagement has likewise demonstrated that effective communication is essential for building sustainable partnerships between schools and diverse family groups (Cuevas, 2023; Hernández, 2025).

The positive influence of parents' evaluation of school performance and educational climate on the central dimensions of parental participation also deserves attention. Parents who view the school environment positively and perceive educational practices as effective appear more willing to participate in governance processes and collaborative decision-making. This finding may be explained by the role of trust in institutional relationships. When parents trust school leaders and teachers, they are more likely to invest time and effort in school activities and perceive participation as meaningful and worthwhile. This interpretation is consistent with studies highlighting the importance of school climate and organizational trust in fostering stakeholder engagement (Calderon, 2024; Wilinski & Vellanki, 2020). Positive perceptions of school effectiveness may therefore function as a catalyst for parental involvement and collaborative governance.

The findings further indicated that the dimensions of the central phenomenon significantly influenced the strategic components of the model, namely the institutionalization of participation structures, empowerment of parents, and development of active cooperation between home and school. This result suggests that parental participation becomes sustainable only when it is translated into formal structures and practical mechanisms within schools. Participation cannot remain an informal or occasional activity; rather, it must be embedded in organizational routines, decision-making procedures, and governance frameworks. This interpretation corresponds with educational policy research emphasizing the importance of institutional arrangements in supporting stakeholder participation (Antony-Newman, 2023; Kirmaci, 2023). Schools that establish formal councils, committees, and collaborative structures create more opportunities for meaningful parental engagement and shared responsibility.

The role of contextual conditions was also confirmed by the findings. Both cultural-communicational and managerial-social contexts positively affected the strategic dimensions of parental participation. This result demonstrates that participation does not occur in isolation but is shaped by broader organizational and social environments. A supportive school culture characterized by respect, openness, and collaboration encourages parents to engage more actively in educational processes. Likewise, management practices that value stakeholder input and facilitate participation contribute to stronger family-school partnerships. These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the influence of organizational culture and leadership on family engagement (Baxley, 2024; Woulfin & Yurkofsky, 2025). Educational leaders play a crucial role in creating environments that support participation and foster collaborative decision-making.

The findings concerning intervening factors provide additional insight into the complexities of parental participation. Individual-family barriers and structural-organizational barriers exhibited significant negative effects on the strategic dimensions of the model, whereas facilitating mechanisms had positive effects. These results indicate that even highly motivated parents may encounter obstacles that restrict their participation. Time constraints, economic pressures, lack of information, insufficient confidence, and previous negative experiences may discourage engagement. At the organizational level, bureaucratic procedures, limited access to decision-making forums, and ineffective communication systems can similarly impede participation. These findings correspond with research documenting the challenges that families face in engaging with schools and educational institutions (Akakpo, 2024; Mugumya, Karooro, et al., 2023). Conversely, schools that implement facilitating mechanisms such as accessible communication channels, flexible participation opportunities, and supportive policies can significantly enhance parental involvement (Sung et al., 2022; Wei et al., 2025).

A particularly important finding of the study relates to the outcomes of parental participation. The institutionalization of participation structures significantly contributed to improvements in educational quality and student development. Similarly, parental empowerment strengthened social capital between home and school, while active cooperation promoted participatory transformation in school management and organizational structures. These findings support the argument that parental participation is

not merely beneficial for families but also generates substantial organizational and educational benefits. Enhanced family engagement contributes to stronger school communities, improved educational practices, and more responsive governance systems. These findings are consistent with studies demonstrating positive associations between family engagement, educational quality, and organizational effectiveness (Mugumya, Mwesigye, et al., 2023; Nelson & Wambuwa, 2021).

The relationship between parental participation and social capital is especially noteworthy. The findings indicate that empowering parents and encouraging active involvement contribute to stronger networks of trust and cooperation among families, teachers, and administrators. This result is consistent with theoretical perspectives emphasizing that social capital emerges through sustained interactions, reciprocal relationships, and shared goals (Johnson & Flückiger, 2022; Kuttner et al., 2022). Increased social capital can enhance communication, facilitate problem-solving, and strengthen collective commitment to educational improvement.

The findings also contribute to discussions surrounding educational equity and inclusion. Contemporary educational systems increasingly recognize that meaningful parental participation can reduce inequalities by ensuring that diverse voices are represented in educational decision-making. The validated model demonstrates that participation is influenced not only by individual parental characteristics but also by contextual and structural conditions that either facilitate or constrain engagement. This perspective aligns with research emphasizing the importance of inclusive educational policies and equitable stakeholder participation (Ma, 2023; Song et al., 2023). Furthermore, studies focusing on marginalized communities and culturally diverse populations have highlighted the need to address structural barriers and create inclusive participation opportunities (Aguayo, 2022; Shah & Grimaldos, 2022).

The study's findings are also relevant for inclusive education settings. Research has consistently emphasized the central role of families in supporting students with diverse educational needs and advocating for appropriate educational services. The present model demonstrates that effective participation depends on supportive structures, trust-based relationships, and collaborative communication. These elements are particularly important within inclusive educational environments, where coordination among multiple stakeholders is essential for student success (Gaspar & Sahay, 2025; Salehiamiri et al., 2025). Similar

conclusions have been reported regarding family experiences in inclusive educational and childcare settings (Lieb et al., 2023; Underwood, 2023).

Another contribution of the study concerns the measurement and validation of parental participation as a multidimensional construct. The results confirmed acceptable reliability and validity across all dimensions, supporting recent calls for more comprehensive and psychometrically sound measures of family engagement (Caliskan, 2025; Nathans & Brown, 2021). The validated model captures multiple dimensions of participation, including motivational factors, contextual conditions, barriers, strategies, and outcomes, thereby providing a more comprehensive framework than many existing approaches.

Overall, the findings support the view that parental participation in school educational decision-making is a dynamic and systemic process influenced by interrelated personal, relational, contextual, and organizational factors. Effective participation emerges when motivated and concerned parents encounter supportive school environments, inclusive leadership practices, facilitating mechanisms, and formal participation structures. Under such conditions, parental involvement contributes not only to educational quality and student development but also to stronger social capital, collaborative governance, and organizational transformation. The validated model therefore provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and strengthening parental participation within contemporary educational systems.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted within a specific educational and geographical context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational systems or cultural environments. Second, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire data, making the findings potentially susceptible to response bias and social desirability effects. Third, the cross-sectional design of the study did not allow for examination of changes in parental participation over time or the establishment of causal relationships. Finally, although the proposed model included a broad range of factors, additional variables such as socioeconomic status, digital literacy, parental educational background, and school-level characteristics may further influence participation patterns and were not directly examined in the present study.

Future studies may extend the current research by testing the validated model in different educational levels, regions,

and cultural contexts to assess its external validity. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to investigate how parental participation evolves over time and how changes in school policies affect engagement patterns. Researchers may also explore potential mediating and moderating variables that influence the relationships identified in the model. Comparative studies across public and private schools, urban and rural settings, and diverse demographic groups could provide deeper insight into contextual differences in participation. In addition, mixed-method and qualitative investigations may help uncover the lived experiences and perceptions underlying the quantitative relationships identified in the present study.

Educational leaders should establish formal structures that enable parents to participate meaningfully in educational decision-making processes. Schools should develop transparent communication systems, create regular opportunities for dialogue with families, and encourage collaborative problem-solving. Training programs for school administrators and teachers may enhance their ability to engage parents effectively and build trusting relationships. Policymakers should support family engagement initiatives through appropriate regulations, resources, and institutional mechanisms that promote inclusive participation. Schools should also identify and reduce barriers that discourage parental involvement while implementing supportive strategies that empower families to contribute actively to educational planning, governance, and school improvement efforts.

Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were under the ethical standards of the institutional and, or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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