

The Analysis of factors affecting parental participation in early childhood education management in Jiangmen City

Cai Mingming and Poramatdha Chutimant

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand.

Corresponding Author, E-mail: caimingming7@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Family education plays a crucial role in shaping children's development, especially within Chinese culture where traditional values profoundly impact parenting practices. In Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, understanding parental involvement in early childhood education is essential, as traditional authoritarian styles may hinder children's independence and holistic growth.

Aims: (1) Evaluate parental involvement and satisfaction with kindergarten activities. (2) Perform exploratory factor analysis on parental involvement in early childhood education. (3) Develop a predictive model to analyze the influence of parental involvement on early childhood education outcomes.

Methodology: A sample of 104 kindergartens in Jiangmen was selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected from parents, teachers, and administrators through questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods and exploratory factor analysis, while qualitative data provided deeper insights into parental engagement practices.

Results: The study found that parental involvement in kindergarten activities is notably high, with satisfaction scores averaging between 4.50 and 4.80. Key themes included effective participation in children's growth, collaboration with teachers, and the importance of a supportive home environment. Exploratory factor analysis revealed a significant component labeled "Parental Education Involvement," representing critical dimensions of engagement. A predictive model was developed based on the component score matrix, highlighting the positive influence of active parental involvement on early childhood education outcomes.

Conclusion: The findings indicate a positive shift in parental attitudes toward education, moving from traditional authoritarian approaches to more collaborative and supportive practices. This emphasizes the significance of home-school cooperation in enhancing early childhood education outcomes. The study recommends strategies to further encourage parental involvement and suggests areas for future research to support children's comprehensive development in a rapidly changing educational landscape..

Keywords: Factors Affecting; Parental Participation; Early Childhood Education; Management; Jiangmen City.

Received: September 28 2024; Revised: October 3 2024; Accepted: October 6 2024

Introduction

Family education plays a crucial role in shaping children's personalities and development, particularly in the context of Chinese culture, where traditional values and historical influences profoundly impact parenting practices. In China, the family environment is often rooted in Confucian ideals, which emphasize respect for authority and hierarchical relationships within the family structure (Xing, 2019). These principles can lead to authoritarian parenting styles that may inadvertently stifle children's independence and self-expression. Current research highlights the need to reassess these traditional approaches, especially as societal changes push for more holistic educational methods that include active parental involvement in children's schooling (Dai, 2021).

Despite the recognized importance of parental engagement, many Chinese parents remain focused primarily on academic achievement, often at the expense of emotional and social development. The pressure to excel in a competitive educational system can lead to a narrow view of success, where grades take precedence over character development (Ho, 1995). Furthermore, the historical preference for male children can contribute to inequities in parental attention and support, particularly impacting girls' educational opportunities (Keith, 2009). As home-school cooperation becomes more prevalent, understanding the dynamics of parental involvement in early childhood education is essential for fostering a supportive learning environment that balances academic achievement with personal growth.

This research focuses on the involvement of Chinese parents in their children's education during the critical early years, from ages three to six. This period marks the transition from home-based learning to formal schooling and is vital for nurturing children's interests and intellectual growth. As parents are often the first educators, their active participation can significantly influence their children's emotional and cognitive development. By exploring effective management practices in the context of parental involvement, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how family education can evolve to better support children's comprehensive development in today's rapidly changing educational landscape.

In summary, Chinese family education faces significant challenges due to traditional parenting practices rooted in Confucian ideals, which may limit children's independence and self-expression. The overwhelming focus on academic achievement often overshadows emotional and social development, leading to a narrow definition of success. Additionally, historical gender biases contribute to inequities in parental support, particularly affecting girls' educational opportunities. These issues highlight the need for reassessing parental involvement strategies to promote a more balanced approach that fosters both academic excellence and personal growth in early childhood education.

This paper is presented to investigate the complexities of parental involvement in early childhood education within the Chinese cultural context. By examining effective management practices and the impact of traditional values on parenting styles, the study seeks to provide empirical insights and practical recommendations. The goal is to inform educators and parents on how to evolve family education practices, ensuring they better support children's comprehensive development amid societal changes and modern educational demands.

Research Objectives

1. To evaluate parental involvement and satisfaction with kindergarten activities.
2. To perform exploratory factor analysis on parental involvement in early childhood education.
3. To develop a predictive model to analyze the influence of parental involvement on early childhood education outcomes.

Literature Review

1. The Role of Family Education in Child Development

Family education plays a pivotal role in shaping children's cognitive and emotional development. Research indicates that parental involvement in early childhood education enhances children's academic performance and social skills. For instance, a study by Ho (1995) highlights that children whose parents actively participate in their education tend to exhibit better academic outcomes and emotional resilience. Similarly, a comprehensive review by Kapur (2018) found that engaged parenting practices are strongly linked to positive developmental trajectories in early childhood, underscoring the importance of family support in educational contexts.

2. Cultural Influences on Parenting Styles

Cultural values significantly influence parenting practices, particularly in the context of Chinese family education. The Confucian emphasis on authority and respect often leads to authoritative parenting styles, which can pressure children to conform (Keith, 2009). This cultural backdrop can affect children's emotional and social development, as noted by Chen and Yu (2007), who argue that traditional parenting methods may stifle individual expression and creativity. As such, there is a growing need to balance these traditional values with modern educational approaches that foster children's autonomy and critical thinking skills.

3. Socioeconomic Factors and Parental Involvement

Socioeconomic status (SES) has a profound impact on parental involvement in children's education. Research by Dai (2021) indicates that parents from higher SES backgrounds are more likely to engage actively in their children's education, often due to greater access to resources and information. Conversely, lower SES families may face barriers that limit their involvement, leading to educational disparities. This disparity is further emphasized in a study by Sapungan (2014), which illustrates how varying levels of parental engagement across different socioeconomic groups can significantly influence children's educational experiences and outcomes.

4. Home-School Cooperation

The significance of home-school cooperation has gained increasing attention in recent years, reflecting a recognition of the crucial role parents play in their children's education. Research by Guan (2006) demonstrates that effective communication between parents and educators can lead to improved academic performance and emotional well-being in children. Additionally, a study by Kim (2011) suggests that collaborative partnerships between families and schools foster a supportive environment that enhances children's learning experiences. Despite this, many parents still perceive their role as secondary to that of teachers, which can limit their participation and the overall effectiveness of home-school cooperation initiatives.

This literature review emphasizes the complex and multifaceted nature of parental involvement in early childhood education, highlighting the need for targeted strategies that address cultural, socioeconomic, and relational dynamics to promote effective educational outcomes.

Research Methodology

This study investigates the factors affecting parental involvement management in early childhood education in Jiangmen, focusing on the dynamics between parents, educators, and the educational environment. The methodology is structured into five key components: population and sample, research tools, data collection, data analysis, and conceptual framework.

1. Population and Sample

The population for this research includes children, parents, and teachers from kindergartens in Jiangmen City, Guangdong Province. There are 148 kindergartens in the Pengjiang District, comprising 104 private and 44 public institutions. For the sample, 104 kindergartens were selected through simple random sampling, representing a mix of private and public settings. Specifically, the research respondents included two teachers, two parents, and one administrator from each selected kindergarten, aiming to gather a comprehensive perspective on parental involvement.

2. Research Tools

Two primary research instruments were utilized in this study: questionnaires and an interview protocol. The questionnaires were designed to assess parental involvement and participation in kindergarten activities, divided into two parts. The first part collects demographic information about the respondents, such as gender, age, educational background, and experience in child education. The second part focuses on various aspects of parental involvement, including the effectiveness of kindergarten management, the degree of parents' participation in learning activities, and the development of home-school cooperation.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the questionnaires were reviewed by specialists before deployment. Additionally, the interview protocol was developed to delve deeper into the content and context of parental involvement, allowing for structured and unstructured interviews with parents and educational stakeholders.

3. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted in several phases. Initially, questionnaires were distributed electronically to parents, educators, and administrators through platforms like WeChat and email. This approach facilitated accurate and comprehensive data collection. Following the questionnaire distribution, face-to-face interviews were conducted with selected respondents, allowing for deeper insights into parental involvement practices. The interviews were recorded, and responses were later translated and summarized for analysis.

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis consisted of two parts. First, quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using statistical methods to calculate means and standard deviations, providing insights into the levels of parental involvement in kindergarten activities. The second part involved qualitative analysis of the interview data, where thematic coding was used to extract key opinions and suggestions from interviewees regarding parental participation in early childhood education.

Research Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study explores the multifaceted dynamics of parental involvement in early childhood education within Jiangmen. It aims to understand how various factors influence the extent and nature of parental engagement, which is critical for children's development and educational success. The framework identifies key components, including the role of cultural influences, the quality of educational settings, socioeconomic factors, and their collective impact on educational outcomes (Figure 1). By examining parental involvement through these lenses, the framework highlights the significance of communication between parents and educators, as well as the effects of traditional values and economic pressures on parental engagement.

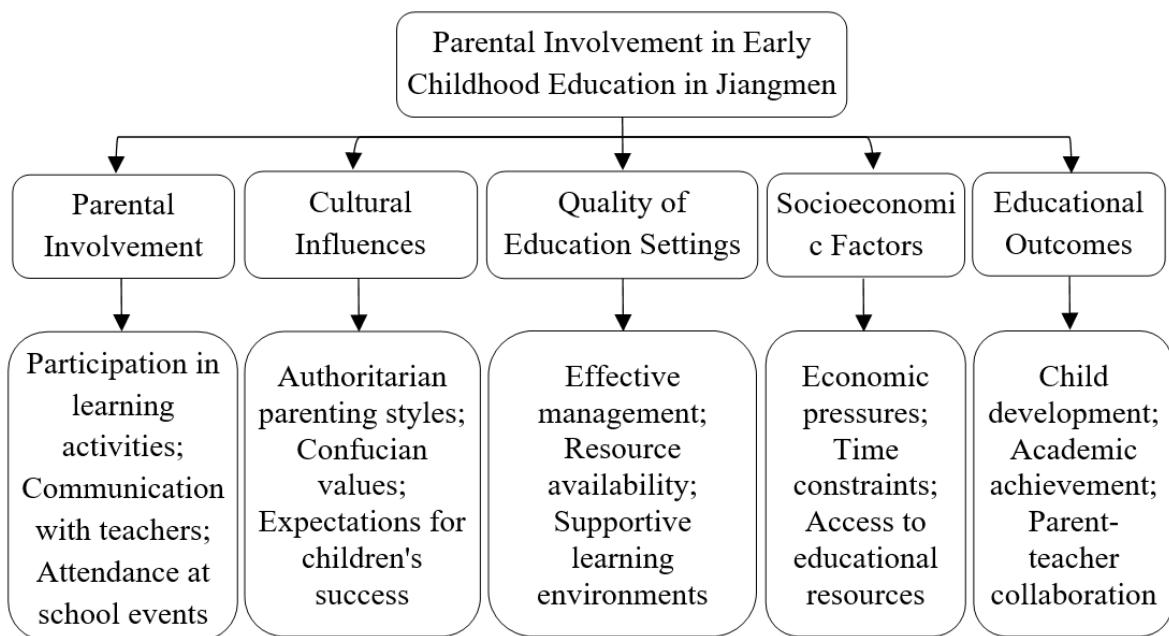


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework
(Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2024)

Research Results

1. The Development of Factors in Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Management in Guangdong Province

The researchers designed a questionnaire, which aims to investigate parents' involvement in kindergarten activities and parents' own assessment of family education. The total population counted was 113, divided into five levels: 5: The degree of meaning is at the highest level; 4: The meaning level is at a high level; 3: The meaning level is medium; 2: The degree of meaning is at a low level; 1: The degree of meaning is at the lowest level, the results areas follows as Table 1.

Table 1 Parents 'Satisfaction With Kindergarten Teaching

No.	Factors Affecting Parental Involvement Management in Early Childhood Education in Jiangmen	\bar{X}
Q1	Effective participation in kindergarten teaching for children's growth.	4.64
Q2	Cooperation with tasks assigned by teachers for children's learning experience.	4.74
Q3	Involvement in home-school activities and guiding children's participation.	4.79
Q4	Attention to child's growth during parent-child time.	4.72
Q5	Clear understanding of teaching content and methods in kindergarten.	4.51
Q6	Comprehensive family education and emphasis on its importance.	4.68
Q7	Critical thinking about traditional education, comparing strengths and weaknesses.	4.53
Q8	Timely assistance during child's learning.	4.65
Q9	Family environment conducive to child's growth.	4.71

From table 1, it is found that among the factors of parents 'participation in early childhood education management in Jiangmen, Guangdong Province, the average value results is between 4.50 and 4.80, and most of the degree proportions are mainly concentrated in degree 5 and degree 4, indicating that parents' Involvement and attention to kindergartens are quite high.

2. Exploratory factor analysis results of parent participation in early childhood education in Guangdong Province.

Table 1 KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.888
	Approx. Chi-Square	1023.779
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	36
	Sig.	.000

Based on Bartlett's test of sphericity and the KMO test, if the KMO value is greater than 0.5, the data is considered suitable for factor analysis. If the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that the data has passed Bartlett's test of spherical as well as is appropriate for factor analysis. The test consequences exhibit that the KMO value is greater than 0.5, and Bartlett's test of spherical is significant at the 95% confidence standard, indicating that influence analysis can be performed.

Table 2 Total Variance Explained

Comp onent	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Q1	6.612	73.466	73.466	6.612	73.466	73.466
Q2	0.645	7.170	80.636			
Q3	0.412	4.575	85.211			
Q4	0.387	4.299	89.510			
Q5	0.376	4.182	93.692			
Q6	0.231	2.570	96.262			
Q7	0.140	1.550	97.812			
Q8	0.116	1.288	99.099			
Q9	0.081	0.901	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

According to Table 2, the first common factor was extracted according to the standard that the eigenvalue was greater than 1, and the cumulative contribution rate was 73.466%.

According to the scree plot, the curve levels off after the initially component, so the first common effect is extracted (Figure 2).

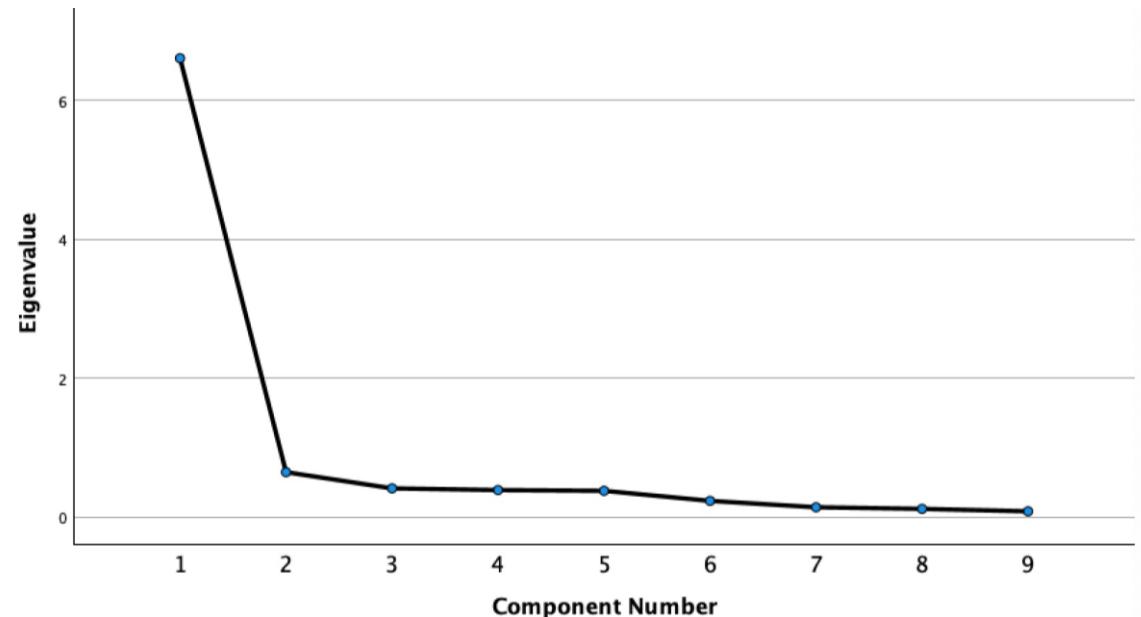


Figure 2 Scree plot
(Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2024)

Table 3. Component Matrix

No.	Factors Affecting Parental Involvement Management in Early Childhood Education in Jiangmen	Component (1)
Q1	Effective participation in kindergarten teaching for children's growth.	0.797
Q2	Cooperation with tasks assigned by teachers for children's learning experience.	0.899
Q3	Involvement in home-school activities and guiding children's participation.	0.815
Q4	Attention to child's growth during parent-child time.	0.856
Q5	Clear understanding of teaching content and methods in kindergarten.	0.819
Q6	Comprehensive family education and emphasis on its importance.	0.872
Q7	Critical thinking about traditional education, comparing strengths and weaknesses.	0.873
Q8	Timely assistance during child's learning.	0.903
Q9	Family environment conducive to child's growth.	0.873

The data in the component matrix indicate that all the items have component loading between 0.797 and 0.903, displaying a high contribution of each item to a single component. This suggests strong internal consistency among the items, which can be summarized as a common underlying element. This factor likely represents parents' ability and enthusiasm in participating in early childhood education, covering aspects such as cooperating with teaching tasks, providing family education support, critical reflecting on traditional education, and creating a conducive growth environment for children. Comprehensive, parents demonstrate high levels of engagement and educational awareness in various areas, effectively supporting their children's learning as well as improvement. Consequently, this factor can be named "Parental Education Involvement."

Table 4. Component Score Matrix

No.	Factors Affecting Parental Involvement Management in Early Childhood Education in Jiangmen	Component (1)
Q1	Effective participation in kindergarten teaching for children's growth.	0.121
Q2	Cooperation with tasks assigned by teachers for children's learning experience.	0.136
Q3	Involvement in home-school activities and guiding children's participation.	0.123
Q4	Attention to child's growth during parent-child time.	0.129
Q5	Clear understanding of teaching content and methods in kindergarten.	0.124
Q6	Comprehensive family education and emphasis on its importance.	0.132
Q7	Critical thinking about traditional education, comparing strengths and weaknesses.	0.132
Q8	Timely assistance during child's learning.	0.137
Q9	Family environment conducive to child's growth.	0.132

Write the point formula built upon the score matrix:

$$F=0.121*Q1+0.136*Q2+0.123*Q3+0.129*Q4+0.124*Q5+0.132*Q6+0.132*Q7+0.137*Q8+0.132*Q9.$$

3. Research results on parent participation in early childhood education in Guangdong Province

The results from the questionnaires and exploratory factor analysis provide a deep insight into parental participation in early childhood education in Jiangmen. The data reveals that parental involvement is relatively high, with most parents demonstrating strong engagement in their children's early educational experience.

From the analysis of the questionnaire responses, several key themes emerged. First, parents' effective participation in their children's growth and educational development within the kindergarten setting stood out as a highly valued aspect. Most respondents highlighted that their involvement in school activities, collaboration with teachers, and active support of their children during learning activities contributed significantly to their child's overall educational experience. These findings underscore the importance of consistent home-school cooperation and how it plays a pivotal role in fostering children's development.

The factor analysis revealed a single strong component, labeled as "Parental Education Involvement." This component encapsulates critical dimensions of parental engagement, such as participation in school activities, provision of a supportive home environment, and critical reflection on traditional versus modern educational methods. The data suggests that parents who were more involved in their children's education also demonstrated a higher awareness of teaching methods, actively contributing to a comprehensive learning environment.

Lastly, the component score matrix, when applied to the overall results, reinforces the importance of parental engagement in shaping early childhood educational outcomes. The derived formula clearly indicates that factors like effective participation, cooperation with teachers, and timely assistance during learning activities have a direct positive influence on children's growth and success in early education.

Discussion

The discussion integrates research objectives, results, reflections on the findings, and comparisons with existing literature, ultimately concluding with insights into the evolving nature of parental engagement.

1. Research Objectives

The study aimed to investigate the factors influencing parental involvement in early childhood education in Jiangmen. Specifically, it sought to assess the current levels of parental participation, analyze key factors affecting this involvement, and gather insights from parents, teachers, and educational administrators.

2. Research Results

The findings indicated that parental involvement in kindergarten activities is high, with satisfaction scores ranging from 4.50 to 4.80 across various factors. Parents emphasized the significance of effective participation in their children's growth, collaboration with teachers, and maintaining a supportive home environment. The exploratory factor analysis identified a prominent component labeled "Parental Education Involvement," which reflects critical dimensions of parental engagement, such as active participation in school activities and timely support during learning.

3. Reflection These results suggest a positive shift in parental attitudes toward engagement in education. Parents appear to be moving away from traditional, authoritarian approaches influenced by Confucian values. Instead, they increasingly recognize the importance of emotional and social development alongside academic achievement. This observation aligns with the arguments made by Dong (2017), who highlights the necessity for parents to actively participate in kindergarten activities for effective child development.

4. Consistent/Inconsistent The findings are consistent with previous literature, which emphasizes the benefits of parental involvement in children's education (Sun, 2009). However, they challenge the notion that Chinese parenting styles are predominantly authoritarian. Instead, the results show that parents are willing to engage in open communication with

teachers, reflecting an evolving parenting style. This transformation resonates with Tan (2010), who discusses the modern significance of adapting traditional educational values to foster autonomy and critical thinking in children.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the essential role of parental involvement in enhancing early childhood education outcomes. The high levels of engagement observed in Jiangmen highlight the importance of fostering home-school cooperation and effective communication. By embracing a collaborative approach, stakeholders can better support children's holistic development in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Ongoing research and practice should focus on empowering parents to engage meaningfully in their children's education, balancing academic success with emotional and social growth. The study provides a foundation for future initiatives aimed at strengthening parental involvement in early childhood education..

Recommendations

1. Theoretical Recommendations

To advance understanding of parental involvement in early childhood education, future research should explore the theoretical frameworks underpinning parental engagement. Specifically, integrating contemporary educational theories with traditional cultural perspectives can provide a comprehensive view of how these elements interact. Researchers might examine the role of cultural values, such as those rooted in Confucianism, in shaping parental expectations and practices. Additionally, studies could focus on the psychological aspects of parental involvement, assessing how beliefs about education influence engagement levels.

2. Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should consider developing initiatives that encourage active parental participation in early childhood education. This could involve creating community programs that educate parents on effective involvement strategies and the importance of emotional support in children's development. Furthermore, policies that promote collaboration between parents and educators, such as regular workshops and communication channels, could enhance home-school partnerships. Establishing clear guidelines for parental involvement in kindergartens will ensure consistency and support across different educational settings.

3. Further Research Recommendations

Future studies should aim to expand the scope of research on parental involvement by including diverse populations and varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into how parental engagement evolves as children progress through different educational stages. Additionally, research could investigate the impact of specific intervention programs designed to increase parental involvement, measuring their effectiveness in improving children's academic and social outcomes. Exploring the perspectives of fathers and male guardians, who were underrepresented in this study, would also enrich the understanding of family dynamics in education.

References

Chen, X. Z., & Yu, D. Q. (2007). Investigation and countermeasure analysis of parents' participation in kindergarten teaching activities. *Early Childhood Education Science*, 10. <https://doi.org/1004-4604>

Dai, Y. X. (2021). Problems and suggestions of Chinese family education taking two movies as examples for analysis. In *International Conference on Humanities Education and Social Sciences*. (Vol. 615, pp. 390-394).

Dong, Y. (2017). Problems and countermeasures of parents' involvement in kindergarten activities. This work supports the importance of parental participation in enhancing educational outcomes.

Guan, Y. (2006). *English Chinese Dictionary of Two-way Management*. Shanghai Jiaotong University.

Ho, S. C. (1995). Parent involvement: A comparison of different definitions and explanations. *Education Journal*. 23, 39–68.

Kapur, R. (2018). *Early childhood education* (pp. 1-31). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323961021_Early_Childhood_Education

Kevin, F. (2009). Tips for effective management. *School Business Affairs*, 34-37. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ919374.pdf>

Kim, R. X. (2011). The expression of the tendency of primary school in early childhood education (Chinese). *Studies in Early Childhood Education*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1007-5070.2013.24.313>

Keith, N. (2009). Three fundamental bonds and five constant virtues. *Comprehensive Index Starts*, 5. <https://chinaconnectu.com/wp-content/pdf/ThreeFundamentalBondsandFiveConstantVirtues.pdf>

Sapungan, G. M., & Sapungan, R. M. (2014). Parental involvement in child's education: Importance, barriers, and benefits. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences & Education*, 3 (2).

Sun, J. T. (2009). 30 years of educational management in China: Achievements, characteristics, and problems. This literature emphasizes the benefits of parental involvement in children's education.

Tan, M. (2010). On the modern significance of the value orientation of Confucian traditional education. This source discusses how traditional values can adapt to modern educational needs, aligning with the findings of evolving parental engagement.

Xing, X. L. (2019). Development history and influence of Confucianism. *Soochow University of Science and Technology*, 40 (8). [https://doi.org/104—5856\(2019\)08—0045—03](https://doi.org/104—5856(2019)08—0045—03)