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Parent, student and teacher beliefs about parental involvement in a child's learning: a mixed method study

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Caroline Transom

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Abstract

Parental involvement in a child's learning has a positive impact on a child's academic success and emotional wellbeing, yet there are differing views about what this entails (Lewin & Luckin, 2010; Selwyn, Banaji, Hadjithoma-Garstka, & Clark, 2011; Schnee & Bose, 2010). This study researched how parents, senior primary students and teachers in three New Zealand primary schools perceived 'parental involvement in learning' and the factors that influenced involvement. An explanatory sequential mixed methods research design was used so an understanding of the differing definitions could be gathered before they were explored in more depth in the qualitative stage of the study.

The findings of the study revealed that each group understood 'learning' differently and that these differences influenced their definitions of 'parental involvement in a child's learning'. These definitions of learning shaped the actions teachers acknowledged, or valued as parental involvement, helping to create a teacher discourse of under involved parents that was not reflected in the parental data. Possible suggestions for practice and further research are explored in the study.

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