

# The role of parental practices and family transaction patterns in children's school success

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## Abstract

In this paper we will attempt to present the socialization practices, the composition and the psychological function of the family and how all the above influence the child's behavior and consequently his/her school performance to be successful.

**Keywords:** Parental Behavior Pattern; Parental Involvement; School Success

## 1. Introduction

1. Social development is a two-part process that includes personality development - formation and socialization (Cole & Cole, 2002, pp.186-187). During the process of socialization and sense of identity, children learn what behaviors are right and wrong based on social norms and rules (Cole & Cole, 2002, p.216). Successful socialization is based on children's acceptance of a set of socially acceptable rules and the adoption of adult behaviour that act as norms (Cole & Cole, 2002, p.218). The family is one of the contexts in which a child's socialization develops and which influences the child's cognitive skills and, at the same time, his or her personality. Specifically, it is parents who, through their attitudes, influence their children's development while also choosing the contexts in which their children will be exposed to and relate to each other (Cole & Cole, 2002, p.262). The parent-child relationship is a two-way street. The parent influences the child's development and behaviour but children also shape the parents' attitudes - behaviour. The composition and form of the family, as well as cultural norms and social values, shape parental parenting practices (Cole & Cole, 2002, pp.263-264).

## 2. Cross-cultural studies of family organization

Beatrice and John Whiting (1975) examined various families in different socio-cultural environments and came to the following conclusions regarding child parenting:

- The Gusii children exhibited two types of behaviour: a) a so-called "caring-responsible" characterized by responsibility and offering help and b) another known as "authoritarian-aggressive" sign of anti-sociality and hostility towards other group members.
- United States children exhibited a less helpful and responsible behaviour, termed as "dependent-dominant" and yet "social-constrained" manifested by physical contact and noisy behaviour.

The above research leads to the general conclusion that children's behaviour can be explained in each case on the basis of the principles and values that each family 'carries' and with which it raises its children.

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According to Earl Schaefer (1959), parental behavior in the United States differs in two dimensions. The first is characterized by a great deal of strictness or a great deal of autonomy on the part of parents in attempting to control their children's behavior, and the second refers to the degree to which the parent expresses affection for the child either with tenderness and warmth or with coldness and indifference. Therefore, although there are many parenting practices, in general Schaefer (1959) classifies them into two broad categories.

Eleanor Maccoby and John Martin's (1983) research confirmed the findings of Schaefer's research by proposing a two-dimensional schema in which the different types of parenting behaviour are integrated with their key characteristics. It summarizes four patterns of parenting behaviour: a) authoritative-reciprocal, b) tyrannical-authoritarian-authoritarian, c) permissive-epic and d) permissive-differential.

Baumrind (1971) studied how the parenting methods adopted by parents correlate with children's behaviour and development. Her research sample was preschool children and she recorded seven different behaviors of children depending on the parental behavioral style of the family from which they came. She came up with three patterns of parental behaviour:

- The tyrannical parental pattern which is purely traditional and based on strict control, obedience, frequent punishment and lack of dialogue.
- The authentic parental pattern is one where parents believe that children also have rights and are encouraged by parents to show more mature and independent behaviour. Also, obedience to authority is not seen as a virtue and discussion and dialogue is a key tool in educating and explaining the rules.
- The permissive parenting pattern is one that is characterized by great flexibility and laxity in the way children are brought up. There are no boundaries and rules and generally no control over children's behaviour.

According to Baumrind (1971) both the parent-child relationship is bidirectional i.e. both the temperament of the child influences parental behaviour and the parenting and behavioural style adopted by the parents influences the formation of the child's personality and subsequently their academic performance.

### **2.1. Factors that influence school performance**

Literature has shown that there is a strong relationship between parental involvement and children's school performance. Research supports that authentic parenting style influences children's "psychosocial maturity" which in turn influences school performance (Kordi, A., & Baharudin, R., 2010, p.218).

Jeynes (2000) argues in her research that teachers attach enormous importance to the impact of parental involvement in certain aspects of child rearing. Specifically, Jeynes (2003) analyzing the results of a longitudinal study, concluded that parental attitudes and behavior influences the academic achievement of subsequent students in all the marginalized groups that were the sample of the study.

Leung, Lau and Lam (1998) in their research on the effects of the behavioural style adopted by Chinese, Australian and American parents in raising children and how it relates to children's academic achievement, found that academic achievement is positively related to the authoritarian behavioural style of Chinese parents and furthermore it is not negatively affected by the low educational level of American and Australian parents.

Chao (1994) had done similar research. In addition, however, he concluded that certain elements of Chinese culture and upbringing related to education bring about high achievement without being associated with the authoritarian type of upbringing which is more ethnocentric in nature.

In 1995, a study was conducted by McGrath, Emily, Repetti and Rena to see how whether and to what extent parents will show their satisfaction and give the appropriate importance-value to their children's progress can positively or negatively affect children's school performance (Kordi, A., & Baharudin, R., 2010, p.219).

According to Cohen, Deborah, Rice, and Janet (1997) how children perceive and receive their parents' behavior as authoritarian or permissive, this perception itself is related to their school performance, not how parents perceive, perceive that they are treating their children.

Kaisa, Hakan and Jari-erik (2000) found that there are four patterns of parental behaviour associated with adolescents' academic performance. These are: a) authoritative, b) authoritarian, c) permissive and d) mixed which borrows elements from all the previous types. The strategies that adolescents develop, in the process of learning, are

proportional to the family style from which they come. If the parental pattern is the authentic one, it brings progress and success while the mixed one brings failure and stagnation.

Finally, we will address the devastating effects of divorce on normal socialization and school performance. Researchers such as Hetherington and Clingempeel (1992) concluded that divorce has a negative impact on children's social development and academic achievement. Also, another indirect factor that affects school performance is, in addition to divorce, the economic poverty of a family. Many studies have found that low living standards and poverty lead to the creation of authoritarian parental behaviors and linking these to low school performance of children.

## 2.2. School success and the Greek reality

In the Greek reality, two important studies have been carried out on the way and degree of connection between the child's performance at school and parental behaviour.

The first research by Georgiou (2000), which concerned middle childhood, examines the causal relationship between school performance and the way the parent is involved in the educational process and children's learning (p.191).

### 2.2.1. The conclusions reached in the research were as follows

- The relationship established between parents' help in solving their children's homework and school success is not a cause-and-effect relationship. Just as "supervision of schoolwork" and "contact with school" are not "cause-and-effect" factors that account for a student's success at school. There is, however, a positive correlation between school success and parents' efforts to develop general interests (dance, music) in children and a negative correlation with parents' pressure on their children to perform better (Georgiou, S., 2000, p.198).
- The more strongly a parent believes in his/her child's potential to improve his/her school performance, the higher his/her actual performance will be (Georgiou, S., 2000, p.198).

The second study by Manolitsi (2004) examined the degree and form of parental involvement in preschool education (p.121). His findings are summarized as follows:

- A high degree of parental involvement in the classroom through educational activities, programs and celebrations as well as active involvement and systematic and quality psycho-educational involvement at home yields significant benefits in the development of various academic skills (Manolitsi, G., 2004, p.138).
- The mother's educational level is positively related to parental involvement during the pedagogical process at home and, by extension, the child's future social and cognitive development (Manolitsi, G., 2004, p.140).

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## 3. Out-of-school books and language development

There is a close relationship between reading books and early reading ability and language development in general (Natsiopoulou, T., 2011, p.45).

In general, however, children's exposure to books and how often parents teach their children to read and write did not seem to have any relationship with parental involvement in the development of literature. On the contrary, according to Senechal and LeFevre (2002), reading books is associated with children's language development while teaching reading is associated with the development of emergent literacy. In turn, emergent literacy activities and language "receptivity" may not be related to each other but are related to phonemic awareness (Senechal, M., & LeFevre, J. A., 2002, p.20).

Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002), after research, concluded that the more often parents read, the more children's language ability develops, especially their oral language, phonemic awareness and reading ability. Children's language development, however, is not only related to the amount of books read by parents but also to the adult's ability to provoke a conversation with the child, creating a pleasant atmosphere with positive comments and praise, dramatization and conversion of prose slang into straightforward dialogue are some of the techniques that lead to the development of vocabulary and early literacy of the child in preschool (Natsiopoulou, T., 2011, pp.47-48).

In conclusion, for reading to be constructive, the books read by adults should offer such knowledge that is a step above the average perceptual ability of children. "Thus, with the help of an older person and with discussions of a higher level of abstraction, we will be led to the development of vocabulary and precognitive skills (Natsiopoulou, T., 2011, p.49).

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, we would say that the attitude and style that parents adopt for the upbringing of their children affects their school performance and in particular has a positive effect when the parents' behaviour is characterized by stability, fairness, warmth, understanding and formality towards the rules.

Also factors that may influence children's social development and school success in infancy may not be valid in middle childhood.

It is equally important for parents to know what those factors are that lead to school success so that they can appropriately help their children in school. It is useful, therefore, to know that creating interest in children in extracurricular activities and showing confidence in their children that they will succeed, based on their own individual effort, greatly improves their actual achievement.

In pre-school age, the active participation of the parent in the events and gatherings organized by the kindergarten teacher and his/her participation in the pedagogical activities of the home, together with the high educational level of the mother, are the excellent conditions for a successful school career of the child.

Finally, it has been established that there is a special relationship between the parent's reading of books and the children's linguistic development which can only bring good things.

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