PERSPECTIVE ARTICLE

The Role of Family and Family Context in the Learning Process of Children

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ABSTRACT
The family is regarded as the essential institution since it is where young children first acquire acculturation, values, and a sense of belonging. Childhood influences one's life direction. Parents are usually the most significant teachers. A family's influence on education extends beyond childhood. The family is the first significant educational institution in the context of other community groups. Thus, the context of family influences children's education and learning process directly and indirectly. This article concentrates on how family context may affect the learning process of family members. It also explains how the family socio-economic status shapes children's learning process and the way the relationship between parent-school and family members within family institutions affects schooling. The findings show that family definitions vary with beliefs and societal evolutions and the degree of the relationship between family socio-economic status and academic achievement differs by various factors. They reveal that family interactions provide a valuable social and emotional backdrop for children as children to gain confidence, feel safe, and explore their surroundings. They also show school-family partnerships help children grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally; and effective home-school relationships take time to build.

1. INTRODUCTION

Family, school and society are the three factors that strongly and deeply influence students in their learning process. The role of the family is essential for their children's growth and development. Parents and other significant caregivers - grandparents, siblings, and others - protect and nurture children, are their first teachers and of course, the emotional safe haven within which children grow best. When children begin their education, the family continues to remain important for their development. Students' school, social, and emotional growth are influenced by their family and parents, reinforcing and improving their learning experiences. In the twenty-first century, family continues to remain as important as before, but modern, globalizing social forces are leading to many changes in its structure, functioning, and roles. Therefore, the degree of influence of the family on the learning process of student family members have also changed.

The aim of this study is to provide a better understanding of the role of the family in different contexts. This is an attempt to understand how family socioeconomics, family forms, family and school relationships, and intra-family relationships affect the learning process among children.

Specifically, the study answers the following questions: What is the role of family status in the child's learning process?; How effective is family-school communication in the learning process?; What role do family members play in the child's learning process?

To answer these questions, the study relies on the literature to provide current knowledge on the topic.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept "home education" refers to the family's educational effect on children. It is shown that children grow through a variety of experiences in a variety of family environments through participation in a variety of activities and are constantly exposed to a spectrum of effect and expectations from the people with whom they reside. Home education differs from traditional schooling in two ways: (1) the primary pedagogical site is the family home rather than a school or traditional classroom and (2) parents perform most of the family's pedagogical functions (Harding, 2011).

The family, as a unit, acts with love and respect, and in the unit, there is understanding, affection, dedication, and childcare. As a result, a family atmosphere is created to work, laugh, play, and raise children (Ceka & Murati, 2016). The interactions of factors such as the child, the parent, and the social environment shape the role and contribution of family over their children's development. This relationship is often seen as a mutual impact and process moving from the parent to the child and vice versa. When it comes to their children's growth and education as a whole, parents play a vital role, as they are the ones who are responsible for their children's overall physical and intellectual development before they are independent and prepared to confront the complexities of the world they live in. In reality, a child's first and most significant educational medium is his or her family. Additionally, like schools, a family is a centre of education for children. Since their birth, they would be taught by their parents and others in the extended family in what is referred to as "family schools". Now is an important time to build a family's relationship with the children's education because families can teach lessons children cannot learn in school. A well-rounded education should be provided to the children from the family, for it is time to lay a firm foundation for their character and education.

According to a number of studies, parents do have the greatest effect on their children's development and educational attainment. When parents are engaged, students receive higher grades and perform well on regular tests. Additionally, children with involved parents have better attendance records, lower dropout rates, higher aspirations, and more positive attitudes toward school and homework (Bogenschneider & Johnson, 2004). In a fast evolving world, with schools that vary greatly from those at the turn of the century, one essential feature of children and families has changed little. That is, families' key role in the academic attainment of their children remains primary and responsible for the education of their children.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Thematic analysis was employed to analyse qualitative data based on existing knowledge in literature. After collecting articles relevant to the research questions, the researchers conducted a thorough analysis of the data to discover common themes - topics, concepts, and patterns of meaning that recurred repeatedly. They also went through the phases of familiarising, coding, developing themes, and reviewing themes to write up the data analysis.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Family institution and its forms

Families have been the most influential institutions in shaping human life. Although marriage and family relationships are fundamental institutions for both the people involved and society, they are continually changing, evolving, and adapting to their environments. Family activities and relationships are entwined with a variety of other activities and relationships. As a result, family relationships must be seen as a part of a larger cultural context.

Different cultures have different ideas of what constitutes a marriage or a family, but there is a consistent trend in the relationships between the sexes and generations in all societies. Family life is essential in developing people's character and shaping their most intimate feelings as they evolve, so will personal preferences, social arrangements, and even one's innermost thoughts. This diversity and changeability sometimes make it difficult to comprehend modern marriages and families.

There is no universally accepted concept of the family among sociologists. The definitions for family change according to doctrines and social evolutions. For functionalist sociologists, the family is made up of two parents based on agreed-upon relationships who live with their children. Traditional functionalist sociologists defined the family narrowly, which required two parents in a committed sexual relationship to live together with their children. George Peter Murdock, a functionalist sociologist, described family as:

"A social group characterised by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults" (Steel et al., 2012).

According to Leeder (2004), a family is a group of individuals who have close social ties and have shared history while the U.S Census Bureau (2013) defined family as "a group of two or more people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption". The concepts of post-modern and other sociologists are far broader. They prefer much wider definitions of the family, including anyone who a person considers to be a family member, such as friends or even pets. The above definitions include stepfamilies and single-parent families and do not mention the parents' sex or sexual identity, so same-sex families are included.

The various definitions of family in the literature all revolve around three forms to shape a family: biologically, legally, or socially. Biologically, family belongs to individuals that are by blood and are genetically linked to each other. Parents, children, aunts, uncles, second cousins, grandparents, and great-grandparents are examples of biological family relationships. Marriage, adoption, and formalised fostering are all legal ways to create a family. When there is no biological or legal relationship, families can be formed in a variety of ways through social connections. Neighbors, godparents, and lifetime friends are also called "family" (Hutchison, 2018).

Families are the main source of bonding, development, and socialisation for people in most cultures. Furthermore, they provide children with socialisation for life beyond the home as the fundamental unit for meeting the essential needs of its members. They establish a sense of boundaries for performing tasks in a safe setting. It is also family that develops a person into a functional adult, carries culture, and confirms humankind's continuity with precedent knowledge (Lander, 2013; Alhussain et al., 2019).

Different types of families have been documented by sociologists and anthropologists based on cultural differences that exist in various societies over time. Some sociologists have categorised families based on the number and generations of people included in the families and the leadership or power holders in the family. Here are the forms of a family on the basis of size and structure.

- *Nuclear family*: The nuclear family comprises a husband and wife and their unmarried children. They live together and form a social unit. In other words, it consists of a husband, wife, and minor children residing in a single residence. The nuclear family is widespread in human societies. It is often referred to as the "elementary family". The nuclear family is also categorised into two groups: (1) the family of orientation (nuclear family in which one is born and grows up) and (2) the family of procreation (nuclear family established when one marries and has children). Relationships with nuclear family members (parents, siblings, and children) prioritise most cultures over relationships with other relatives. Nuclear family organisation is common but not universal, and its social meaning varies greatly from one place to another (Kottak, 2015).

- *Single parent family*: A single-parent family is made up of a parent/caregiver and one or more children who may not get the support and presence of a spouse or adult partner to split parenting duties. Widowhood, divorce, or separation may all result in one-parent families. They could also emerge when a single parent, mainly a woman, raises her children independently.

- *Joint or Extended Family*: The size of an extended or joint family is usually large. It consists of at least three generations of family members: grandparents, married offspring, and grandchildren. This family is a continuation of the parent-child bond and descended from a long line of ancestors, i.e the family is the extension of nuclear units. Nuclear units can be extended vertically or horizontally. It is vertical if the addition is made by the third generation members such as the spouses' parents, and horizontal if it is made by members of the married couples' own generation, such as the husband's brother or an extra wife (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008).

- *Reconstituted family*: a reconstituted family is a sociological term for joining two individuals who have had prior relationships and children by marriage, cohabitation, or civil partnership. This type of family is often referred to as a blended or stepfamily. At least one step-parent, step-siblings, and/or half-siblings are needed in a blended family. A step-parent is the spouse of the child's biological parent (Duberman, 1975).

- *Compound Family*: It is a family made up of three or more partners and their children. This family structure can be thought of as an overlapping set of nuclear families, each with the same man as the family head. It is made up of a man (head of household), wives and concubines, and their children who live in separate homesteads. In this scenario, the wives each take charge of their own household while the man maintains and manages them (Jackson, 2015).

4.2. Family socio-economic status (SES) and learning

Socio-economic factors may have a direct impact on student competencies through parental support. The influence of family SES on children's academic outcomes has been emphasised by theoretical and empirical work, to analyse mechanisms with which family SES is linked to children's achievement, and has identified possible

channels behind relationships using three types of capital: economic, cultural, and social capital. In other words, inequalities in children's academic achievement arise due to variations in the amount of these types of capital across households (Broer & Fonseca, 2019).

Bourdieu (1986) suggested that capital would take three essential forms: the basis of all other types of capital is the economic capital. The other capital types are considered as concealed and modified types of economic capital, i.e. other sources of capital can be pursued using economic capital.

Family earnings may be spent to fund planned after-school activities, favored educational possibilities, or create useful social networks. The financial support available to children from low-income families and to their families is restricted. Thus, economic capital determines how much parents can finance the academic paths of their children (Crosnoe & Cooper, 2010).

As claimed by family investment theory, a family's socio-economic status is a thorough representation of their economic, labour, and social capital. High social status families will likely have plenty of money to invest in their children's growth. As a result, if the socio-economic status of a family is higher, they will provide better conditions and encouragement that will enable their children to learn. On the other hand, children from low-income households will have fewer educational possibilities because of the absence of such conditions/stimuli (Conger & Donnellan, 2007). Since those children's learning will be disrupted by bigger family opposition and a lack of educational opportunities and experiences, they are more likely to be unmotivated to learn. Studies from some states have found a strong link between a family's socio-economic status and learning burnout. Children from low-income backgrounds, for example, are more probable to have a negative outlook toward learning (Terenzini et al. 2001; Randolph et al. 2006).

The decisions by parents on how to allocate a number of resources (investment model) such as income, time and energy have been applied to understand the effect of a socio-economic disadvantage on growth of children. The money parents spend on their children (e.g. books and toys) and the time they spend together (e.g. reading books) are considered investments which improve cognitive abilities and language in children. The investment model often clarifies the connection between family income and children's cognitive and linguistic development. The relation between socio-economic deprivation and children's behavioral functioning, on the other hand, is explained by the impact of poverty on parental skills and capacities (family stress model) (Gershoff, 2007; Linver et al., 2002).

Parental involvement in home learning has been related to children's fast linguistic and cognitive development and emergent literacy, the two of which are predictors of school performance, particularly in reading (Whitehurst et al., 1999; Hartes, 2011). Pre-schoolers who are provided with books and other print tools and whose parents engage them in child-friendly learning environments benefit from reading and language development, as well as emotional and behavioral management. Parents involve their children in activities including reciting rhymes and songs sharing stories, and teaching the alphabet, numbers, and letters in addition to reading (Fernandez-Fein & Baker, 1997; Boyle, 2002).

When compared to other variables, socio-economic status has a relatively strong effect on parental participation. However, it is debatable how much a child's academic achievement can be motivated by the strength of his or her parents' socio-economic status. Parental participation has a constructive impact on student achievement at all socio-economic levels. Still, involvement is likely to be more significant in low socio-economic schools, where test scores and graduation rates are lower. Students with engaged parents, regardless of income, race, or background, are more likely to receive higher grades and test scores, have better attitudes, behaviour, attendance and continue their education. Higher parental engagement is linked to higher educational aspirations, participation in gifted and talented programs, and positive perception of school (Henderson, 1988).

Regardless of theoretical viewpoints, most studies focus on the processes and mechanisms by which a family's social-economic status influences the children's academic achievements. Among these, the human capital theory emphasises the role of family economic resources and educational investment in children's education. Cultural capital and social capital theory emphasise the role of parent education level and engagement on children's academic performance, and the school quality perspective contends that a family's socio-economic status influences children's academic performance. In fact, the effects of any form of factor cannot occur independently. All of the family's economic resources and the family atmosphere and school qualities are significant. Social capital refers to the resources found in social relationships that can be invested for anticipated returns.

Disparities in educational performance can be linked to different levels of established social capital generated in networks and connections of families served by the school. Coleman (1988) proposed a social capital conceptual framework in which social structure, such as family, school, and society, can produce social capital. The interactions

between the family and the community can be used to understand why students have higher educational accomplishments than predicted based on their socio-economic status.

Finally, although the ultimate association between family SES and academic attainment has been well developed in theoretical and empirical work, the degree of the association varies by region. This may be attributed to demographic shifts over time as well as inequalities in educational systems and jurisdictions.

4.3. Family-school partnership

Parental involvement is a collaborative effort between family members, schools, and communities. Family involvement is often viewed by district and school stakeholders as a two-way process that starts in early childhood education, continuing through high school and occurs in a variety of environments where children learn. Engaging families in their children's education is crucial to student achievement. When families are actively involved in their children's learning and development, it has a beneficial effect on their child's well-being, academic performance, and well-being outcomes (Epstein, 2018; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

The advantages of family-school collaboration for students are directly linked to parental involvement in student learning. Parental involvement provides the student with support for both ability and motivational development. Support may be given at home, such as when parents assist students with homework, or at school, such as when parents communicate with teachers. Efficient parental involvement does not occur in isolation. Parents must share knowledge and information with their child's teachers to provide sufficient support (Whalley, 2017). As a result, parents and teachers become partners.

School and family relationships can lead to an increase in student achievement, better student behaviour and attendance, lower absenteeism rates, and a more positive school. Parental involvement and collaborations allowed parents to be more effective in their children's education and provide inclusive learning environments through practices and processes such as improved communication about children's success, volunteering in school programs, and participation in school decision-making committees. This has a positive effect on the child's success climates (Sheldon, 2007; Christenson & Reschly, 2010).

According to Smith et al. (2019), family-school partnership (FSP) interferences had a considerable positive impact on children's educational and social-emotional functioning. Furthermore, in their study, they identified that school personnel training preparation improves teachers' family involvement practices, attitudes, and knowledge. The effects of these intervention elements were found to be moderated by age, with bi-directional communication and behavioural support being constructive for older children. Race/ethnicity had no impact on the results, suggesting that FSP interventions improved child results regardless of race.

Despite these, there are several obstacles to forming fruitful partnerships. Partnerships often require the contribution of capital, such as time and money. Schools can struggle to engage families and communities, particularly when language, socio-economic factors, parental work demands, prior negative experiences with schools, and gender are obstacles (Epstein & Sheldon, 2005; Mills & Gale, 2004).

Types of Parental Involvement as described by Epstein

Epstein (2018) and her collaborators developed a more systematic typology that has been widely used by researchers and practitioners alike. Epstein's typology illuminates the dimensions of communication, parent involvement at home, and parent involvement at school, as well as unique ways for parents to participate in each form. It outlines six forms of parental participation to collaborate and to improve student outcomes. These are the six forms of involvement:

- *Parenting*: The family's essential responsibility is creating a supportive home environment to promote school success. Some basic levels of support, for example, health and safety, nutrition, housing, the improvement of parenting skills, and child-rearing activities that prepare children for school are the first way parents can support their children's education. The role of assisting families in understanding how to create a home atmosphere conducive to optimal learning at all levels is particularly important. Parent education classes, family support services, and home visits are all examples of this form of involvement. Providing educational materials to all families can be a challenge for this kind of participation.

- *Communication*: Communication between home and school allows for the exchange of knowledge about the school curriculum and the child's development. Parent participation requires keeping parents updated and making it easy for them to ask questions or express concerns.

The design of efficient methods of communication in both home-to-school and school-to-home communication is regarded as parent involvement at school. Families have the right to know about school programs, activities, and student success, and schools are required to collaborate with them.

Conferences, weekly student work folders, progress sheets, report cards, phone calls, and memos are examples of best practices. To effectively use this form of involvement, new channels of interaction may be required. The idea is to bring the knowledge home to parents in a way that they can understand. Parents are expected to be aware of and follow their child's development, respond effectively to issues, and maintain relationships with their child's teacher and school. Knowledge will flow in both directions with effective education, family and community partnerships: school information to home and family information to school.

- *Volunteering*: Volunteering in the classroom or school is one of the most direct ways for parents to become involved in their children's education. Parents should be invited to assist in the classroom and make them aware of volunteering opportunities at the school, such as assisting with office work, assisting with safety patrols, running concessions at tournaments, etc.

The aim of this form of involvement is participation at any level and by everyone, including parents. Individuals who share the school's goals will be used as volunteers in the classroom and in the school before, during, and after school. Being supportive of school performances and sports activities is also important for this type of involvement. Volunteering initiatives, room parent programs, and parent patrols are examples of best practices. Steinberg (1996) discovered a strong link between parental attendance at school events, workshops, and extracurricular activities and students' achievements. The difficulty with this form of involvement includes all stakeholders and organising schedules to allow for parent participation (Epstein, 1987).

- *Learning at home*: Parents and other members of the family can bring valuable educational opportunities for students. Parents should be kept informed about homework assignments and projects to assist them in providing at-home learning. They can be also provided with resources to get to know the materials their children are taught. Furthermore, bringing home lists of voluntary reading and other activities will help parents realise that their children have opportunities to learn outside of the classroom.

Involvement at this stage helps parents become aware of their child as a learner. Teachers can assist parents in guiding their children with academic and other skills by providing information and instructional resources. According to Epstein (1995), this form of involvement is the most challenging to enforce as it needs every teacher to understand the link between the child in the classroom, the curriculum, and the family's connection to the child as a learner at home. According to studies, the majority of parents want to support, inspire, track, and discuss their child's schoolwork at home (Epstein, 1986; Epstein & Connors, 1992).

- *Decision Making*: Parental participation in school decisions and support for school reforms are encouraged. Parents and other members of the community are involved in decision-making, school leadership, and community groups. This type of parent involvement works to give parents a say in school policies and improvements that may affect their children. Children and their families must be involved in school decision-making. Parents benefit from connections with other families, a sense of belonging within the school group, and feedback into policy implementation (Epstein & Connors, 1992).

Parent participation at this level extends to a collaboration with agencies, organizations, and local groups that allows the community to interact with the school, children, and families. Investments in community collaborations to enhance education programs and improve family access to community and social services are to benefit all children (Epstein, 1987).

Active parents in the community are more likely to be involved in their children's schooling. Parents can be given information on group events for example, at local museums and parks to help them connect. Community service programs can be created to bring parents, teachers, and administrators together. Leaders from the community may also be invited to speak in the classroom and at parent events.

Partnerships between schools and families help children develop academically, socially, and emotionally. It takes a long time to form and develop effective home-school relationships. The procedure requires continuous communication, creating a supportive and trustworthy relationship environment, engagement and clear written policies. The challenge for 21st-century schools is to prepare students for a rapidly changing environment. Fast-changing demographics, social systems, and economies require better individual preparation.
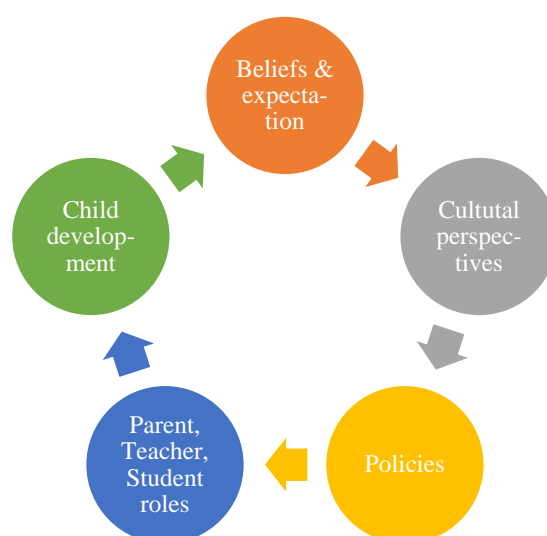
Figure 1. The multidimensionality of School-Family partnership

4.4. Family relationship and its effects

The importance of family in the growth of children cannot be overstated. Family relationships make an important backdrop for children's social and emotional growth. A parent-child relationship fosters the child's physical, mental, and social growth. It's a special connection where every child and parent share love and support. In the last decades, experts have conducted a large number of studies on the relationship between parent-children or family members and children's growth. A key protective element in assessing children's physical, social, mental, and behavioural characteristics is a healthy parent-child relationship. On the other hand, a risk factor for a child's emotional and behavioural issues can be a negative parent relationship (Buist et al., 2011; Branje et al., 2010). For instance, children with an especially hostile relationship with their parents have a significantly increased likelihood of aggression, with symptoms of depression or anxiety.

Educational performance has been extensively studied in the past few decades. College and university students find that parent-child relationship quality continues to have an important role in their academic success as they progress in their educational development (Ginsburg & Bronstein, 2003). Research has shown the importance of a parent-child bond in academic achievement (Parker et al.,1999). Some theoretical approaches that explain this connection, for example, the concept of attachment, value parents and children's importance in shaping their educational achievement. Infant research has shown that early on, a child's experiences with their caregiver contribute to their emotional and social development and cognitive growth. According to the British psychologist John Bowlby (1969), when children have their social and emotional needs met, they feel secure and gain the ability to explore their surroundings. The effects begin with the first steps of education as Bergin (2001) showed the effective nature of the parent-child relationship during sharing book reading among kindergarten and first-grade children.

Many studies demonstrated that academic success and social adjustment is more likely achieved among those children who have a positive relationship with their parents. Similarly, research has demonstrated that children who have a stable parent-child relationship have greater academic performance and test performance (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Melendez & Melendez, 2010).

Different factors shape the quality of the relationship between parents and children, such as family structure, culture and other socio-economic factors. Whatever the factors are, they have multidimensional influences on the life of children.

5. CONCLUSION

The main conclusions that can be drawn are while every culture defines marriage and family, there is a universal pattern in how the generations interact. Personal preferences, social structures, and even interior beliefs evolve due to family life. People attach, develop, and socialise most effectively through their families; therefore, understanding the family environment should be one of the fundamental steps in child learning processes. Understanding the family forms should also be updated as it evolves with the modern world.

One of the crucial factors that shape children's learning process is the family's socio-economic status. Research indicates that a student's ability to succeed in school is directly influenced by socio-economic issues, such as parental support, which has been studied theoretically and empirically. Parents should take an active role in their children's education and contribute to ensuring that all children receive high-quality education. A positive school-family partnership can be beneficial to both the child and the parents. It has been confirmed that when parents are involved in their children's academic advancement, they perform better and achieve more. When parents have a strong relationship with the school staff, their challenges can be addressed more efficiently. As the relationship with the school strengthens, parents have confidence that their children are receiving a quality education.

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