Exploring the relationship between educational involvement and school performance at the early education level

Explorando la relación entre la participación educativa y el rendimiento escolar en el nivel de educación inicial

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Sumary

This scientific article investigates the intrinsic relationship between educational involvement and school performance, with a special focus on the influence of parents, caregivers, and the community in the educational process. A comprehensive definition of educational involvement is provided, highlighting its importance in fostering collaboration between families and schools. Various forms of involvement are explored, ranging from attending school meetings to collaborating in academic activities. A thorough review of diverse research underscores the positive impacts of educational involvement on students' academic achievement, establishing a direct correlation between increased involvement and better school performance. However, contextual factors that can modulate this connection, such as socioeconomic status and the school environment, are acknowledged. The article also delves into the pivotal role played by educational involvement in academic performance, as well as the factors that influence the success of such involvement and its impact on school performance.

Keyword Educational involvement, school performance, early education, family-school collaboration, and educational participation.

Resumen

El artículo científico investiga la relación intrínseca entre la participación educativa y el rendimiento escolar, con un enfoque especial en la influencia de padres, cuidadores y la comunidad en el proceso educativo. Se proporciona una definición integral de la participación educativa, destacando su importancia para fomentar la colaboración entre la familia y la escuela. Se exploran diversas manifestaciones de participación, desde la asistencia a reuniones escolares hasta la cooperación en actividades académicas. La revisión exhaustiva de investigaciones diversas subraya los impactos positivos de la participación educativa en el logro académico de los estudiantes, estableciendo una correlación directa entre una mayor participación y un mejor desempeño escolar. Sin embargo, se reconocen los factores contextuales que pueden modular esta conexión, como el estatus socioeconómico y el entorno escolar. El artículo también profundiza en el papel fundamental que desempeña la participación educativa en el rendimiento académico, así como en los factores que influyen en el éxito de dicha participación y su impacto en el rendimiento escolar.

Palabras claves: Participación educativa, rendimiento escolar, educación inicial, colaboración familia-escuela y participación educativa.

Introduction



Parental involvement in their children's education is a topic of great importance today. Numerous studies have demonstrated that collaboration between parents and teachers can significantly enhance students' academic performance and overall development. This article addresses the relationship between educational involvement and school performance at the early education

level. Different approaches and strategies are presented that parents and teachers can utilize to encourage active parental participation in their children's educational process. Additionally, the benefits of effective communication among parents, teachers, and students are discussed, along with highlighting practices that can be implemented to enhance the educational quality for students. This article serves as a valuable tool for parents, teachers, and anyone interested in enhancing children's education at the early education level.

Educational Involvement of Parents and Caregivers of Children

The involvement of parents or parental participation in school education constitutes a valuable strategy to elevate educational quality. According to Driessen *et al.* (2005), this involvement expands the cognitive and social capacities of students. The terms used to refer to this participation vary: "parental involvement," "parent participation," "educational collaboration," and "parental engagement," as mentioned by these authors. On the other hand, Hujala *et al.* (2009) describe it as a collaboration between parents and teachers, while Alasuutari (2010) refers to it as relationships between parents and professionals.

Following the same line, according to Delgado (2019), "la participación de los padres en el proceso educativo implica que tanto maestros como padres compartan la responsabilidad de educar a los alumnos y colaboren para alcanzar los objetivos educativos" (parr. 1)¹. Uludağ (2008) defines parental involvement as the collaboration between parents and teachers in a child's learning. However, the term is complex due to divergent perspectives mentioned by Rapp & Duncan (2012), who point out that there are differing opinions among teachers and parents. Regarding this matter, Anderson & Minke (2007) suggest that teachers consider involvement to be active in school, while for parents, involvement in their children's learning could mean providing what they need in their educational institution.

From our perspective, an education based on shared responsibility is required, involving both educators and parents, transcending the exclusive responsibility of teachers, the educational institution, and the State. Educational involvement encompasses active and committed collaboration among parents, caregivers, community members, and the educational institution. Its objective is to enrich students' educational experience and improve their academic performance.

This topic has been extensively addressed in scientific research. In this regard, Blanco & Uma-yahara (2004) pointed out that there are three approaches through which parental involvement is addressed. One of them evaluates the relationship between family-school collaboration and improved educational performance in elementary school children. Others place fundamental importance on parents, mothers, caregivers, and the community during the early years, con-

¹ Our translation: The involvement of parents in the educational process implies that both teachers and parents share the responsibility of educating students and collaborate to achieve educational objectives.



sidering that quality education translates to enhanced child learning development. However, it is also argued that the family has the potential to expand the scope of primary education.

According to Blanco & Umayahara (2004), family involvement in education implies "opinar, tomar ciertas decisiones, proponer y disentir en los diversos espacios de la institución educativa" (p. 26)². Therefore, the act of participating goes beyond merely attending school meetings, providing contributions to educational institutions, or volunteering in the institution. In this sense, mothers have the opportunity to approach institutions and establish direct contact with teachers to better understand how they can support their children's education, which not only improves children's living conditions but also significantly contributes to their learning process.

The contribution of parents or mothers can manifest in various ways by providing support to their children's education. According to Silinkas & Kikas (2019), parents or caregivers have the possibility to complete school tasks or assignments together with children, establishing a conducive learning environment at home. On the other hand, Benner et al. (2016) point out that parents can play an active role by providing stimulation and educational enrichment activities, thus promoting the holistic development of their children beyond the classroom. Additionally, collaboration in parent-teacher organizations is also a significant form of involvement, as it strengthens the connection between school and home, promoting a more robust and beneficial educational environment for students.

One of them involves establishing a daily structure that includes dedicated study and exploration time, resulting in the creation of a stable routine for children. Furthermore, in line with these support strategies, it is essential to share the experience of reading by practicing reading books together and engaging in conversations about the stories to cultivate a love for reading. At the same time, by engaging children in conversations about a variety of topics, their vocabulary can be expanded, and the development of critical thinking can be fostered, known as "Meaningful Conversations." These practices, supported by Silinkas & Kikas (2019) and Benner *et al.* (2016), reinforce the fundamental role of parents in education and the holistic growth of their children.

On the other hand, a connection with nature can be a valuable means to stimulate children's curiosity by exploring the environment through outdoor outings. Active involvement extends to practical activities such as cooking, measuring, and building together, allowing the application of mathematical and scientific concepts in real situations. Additionally, artistic expression can be encouraged by involving children in activities like drawing, painting, and crafts. Support in school tasks when needed promotes the child's autonomy, and supervising and selecting online educational resources are also part of the process. All these concrete actions by parents significantly contribute to the education and comprehensive growth of children.



² Our translation: opining, making certain decisions, proposing, and dissenting in various spaces within the educational institution.

Fundamental Role of Educational Involvement in Academic Performance

From our perspective, educational involvement has a significant impact on students' academic performance. According to the study by Topor *et al.* (2010), it is concluded that children whose parents are more engaged in their education achieve a higher level of academic performance compared to those whose parents are less involved.

Therefore, according to Sánchez et al. (2010), the level of parents' participation and satisfaction serves as an indicator of the quality of the educational system. This aspect possibly constitutes one of the reasons why a connection is established between parental involvement and academic performance. In this relationship, it is relevant to cite authors like Castro et al. (2015) who assert that without positive cooperation between the family and the school, it is not possible to meet the high standards set for educational outcomes by a demanding society.

On the other hand, Jeynes (2016) found a significant relationship between overall parental involvement programs and academic performance, both for younger and older students. Likewise, Rogers et al. (2009) maintain that the effects of parental involvement are mediated by children's academic competence. These studies confirm the interactive influences of parental educational involvement and children's personal characteristics in predicting school performance.

In this sense, the active participation of parents and caregivers in education shows students that they have support and value in their learning process. This can increase their motivation to achieve optimal academic performance, as they perceive their efforts to be recognized and appreciated. As Rodríguez (2016) argues: "los padres son los mejores agentes para ayudar a sus hijos" (p. 2) in developing their skills and cultivating a sense of satisfaction and motivation.

It is important to note that parents, caregivers, or guardians who actively participate in their children's education often set clear expectations regarding academic achievements and behavior. This approach can help students understand the relevance of education and strive for higher goals. Likewise, parental involvement allows for closer monitoring of students' academic progress, enabling them to identify areas where a student may need additional support and take action to address those needs in a timely manner.

In this context, communication among parents, teachers, and students plays a crucial role in understanding students' strengths and weaknesses. Parents can provide valuable information about their children's needs and personality, which in turn enables teachers to adapt their pedagogical approach and address those needs effectively. In relation to this, Zambrano et al. (2019) state that "una comunicación sólida en el seno familiar para establecer vínculos fuertes,



³ Our translation: parents are the best agents to help their children.

no confundidos con un régimen riguroso de disciplina, sino más bien un entorno saludable donde prime la confianza y el respeto" (p. 141).

When parents actively participate in their children's learning process, they can provide additional support outside the classroom, assist with assignments and projects, and offer explanations and clarifications when necessary, thereby reinforcing learning and improving comprehension of concepts. Additionally, involved parents can detect academic or behavioral problems at an early stage, allowing them to address these issues before they become significant obstacles to academic performance.

Educational involvement is also related to creating a positive learning environment at home. Parents can foster a love for learning, provide educational resources, and establish routines that support academic success. Furthermore, students often emulate the behavior of adults in their lives. If they see their parents caring about education and actively participating in it, they are more likely to value and engage in their own learning.

Moderating Factors of Educational Involvement and Academic Performance

Moderating factors play a crucial role in the relationship between educational involvement and academic performance. Moderating factors are variables that influence the strength or direction of this relationship. Among them, the following can be mentioned:

- Socioeconomic Level: The socioeconomic level of parents can moderate the relationship between educational involvement and academic performance. In families of higher socioeconomic status, it is more likely that resources and support are available for students, which could intensify the positive effects of parental involvement. According to León & Collahua (2016), "el nivel socioeconómico de las familias incide de manera positiva y significativa en el rendimiento de los estudiantes" (p. 120). In contrast, the findings of Korzeniowski (2016) corroborated that a lower socioeconomic level has a negative influence on children's academic performance.
- Culture and Ethnicity: Cultural and ethnic differences can influence how educational
 involvement is understood and carried out. Some cultures may value more direct participation in education, while others may prefer a more indirect approach. These cultural
 differences can moderate the relationship between involvement and performance. Studies by Miranda & Castillo (2016) have confirmed that families belonging to an indige-



⁴ Our translation: solid communication within the family is needed to establish strong bonds, not confused with a strict regime of discipline, but rather a healthy environment where trust and respect prevail.

⁵ Our translation: the socioeconomic level of families positively and significantly impacts students' performance.

nous ethnicity have a high rate of support and educational involvement compared to those not belonging to any ethnicity.

- School Support: The quality of the school environment and the degree of collaboration between the school and parents can moderate the influence of educational involvement on performance. A favorable school environment can amplify the positive effects of parental involvement. Lastre et al. (2017), Barbar & Coronel (2022), and Serrano & Figueroa (2016), Peña & Taboada (2018) state that children whose parents accompany them, provide feedback, and show interest in their school life tend to achieve higher levels of academic performance. When parents maintain effective communication, participate in school activities, monitor progress, and have high educational aspirations for their children, these children achieve notably superior academic performance.
- Parents' Educational Level: The parents' educational level can moderate the influence of their involvement in their children's education. In this line, research conducted by Rodríguez & Guzmán (2019) and Espejel & Jiménez (2019) highlight that parents with higher educational levels possibly have better tools to provide academic support and more effectively understand their children's needs.
- Parenting Style: Parenting style, including the combination of authority, support, and control, can moderate the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance. Parenting styles that promote autonomy and responsibility are often associated with positive academic outcomes. Ortiz & Moreno (2016) argue that parenting style determines whether academic performance is good or poor.
- Access to Resources: The availability of resources at home, such as books, technology, and a suitable study space, can moderate how parental involvement impacts school performance. Available resources can influence the effectiveness of the educational support parents can provide. However, as Gubbins & Ibarra (2016) assert, this resource availability is related to socioeconomic level; if income and cultural capital are low, there is less educational involvement, which impacts children's academic performance.
- Emotional and Social Support: The emotional and social support that students receive in the family environment can influence the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance. An environment that provides emotional support and security can lay the foundation for more effective learning and better educational achievement. Research conducted by Silinkas & Kikas (2019) supports the idea that parental support becomes emotional support when requested by children.

On the other hand, studies conducted by Hakyemez & colleagues (2018) explain that a strong interaction between parents and teachers can have a significant impact on children's academic performance, improving various aspects of their development and their ability to adapt, as well as their psychological well-being during early childhood. Addi-



- tionally, according to Bronfenbrenner (1987), these interactions positively contribute to children's socioemotional and cognitive development.
- Parental Work Flexibility: The ability of parents to be present and engaged in their children's education can be influenced by their work flexibility. Parents with more flexible schedules may have more opportunities to actively participate in the educational process. Studies by Kim (2020) confirm that work flexibility can contribute to promoting interactions between parents and children by improving the coordination between work and family responsibilities and, consequently, with their children's education. Alzahrani et al. (2019) mention "el desarrollo de estas habilidades socioemocionales llevará a mejores resultados escolares, una adaptación más efectiva al aprendizaje futuro, mayor bienestar y la capacidad para gestionar comportamientos positivos" (p. 148)⁶.
- School Communication and Collaboration: The relationship between the school and parents can influence how parental involvement impacts performance. Effective communication and collaboration between the school and parents can enhance the benefits of educational engagement. According to Western Governors University (2021), when a student's family can communicate with their child's teacher, both parties can work together to establish a relationship and create an optimal learning environment, both at home and at school.

Conclusions

- 1 After conducting the analysis of the relationship between educational involvement and academic performance at the early education level, the following conclusions can be drawn
- 2 Active parental involvement in their children's education is essential for improving academic performance and the holistic development of students. Parents can collaborate with teachers in planning educational activities and assessing their children's progress.
- 3 Effective communication among parents, teachers, and students is key to fostering educational involvement. Parents should be informed about their children's academic progress, and teachers should be willing to listen to parents' concerns and suggestions.
- 4 Shared reading and meaningful conversations are practices that parents can implement to foster a love for reading and the development of critical thinking in their children. These practices have been supported by scientific studies and can be used from an early age.



⁶ Our translation: that the development of these socioemotional skills will lead to better school results, more effective adaptation to future learning, greater well-being, and the ability to manage positive behaviors.

- 5 Collaboration between parents and teachers can be beneficial for students with special needs. Parents can provide valuable information about their children's needs, and teachers can adapt educational activities to meet those needs.
- 6 Community involvement in children's education is also important. Parents and teachers can work together to engage the community in educational activities and promote the significance of education in society.

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