

UNRAVELING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATED PARENT INVOLVEMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF ITS INFLUENCE ON INTERCONNECTED DIMENSIONS OF A CHILD

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ABSTRACT

Parental Bonding is an important variable for the nourishment of a child. Numerous studies have emphasized that parental involvement plays a significant role in the development of a child. The role of a mother is extensively studied but the role and involvement of the father is not studied well in previous research. This research aims to highlight the positive contributions of both father and mother, specifically educated parents in the development of interconnected dimensions of a child. A qualitative research method was employed including interviews with middle-class educated parents. Thematic Analysis of the qualitative data revealed four themes which were: Academic performance, Leisure time activities, Moral values, and Dietary habits which underscore the prominent roles of Educated Parents in promoting the holistic development of a child.

Keywords: *Educated Parents, Interconnected Dimensions, Parental Involvement, Holistic Development, Mother`s Education, Father`s Education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Children reflect their parents and parents play a pivotal role in shaping their child's personality, character, and social and moral values (Harwood et al., 2019). Students outside school have been enormously influenced by their parents (Rahimah & Koto, 2022). A strong direct relationship exists between a mother's education and her child's academic achievements (Cui et al., 2019). Additionally, studies also revealed that parents retain knowledge and experiences from their school years which influences how they interact with their children during their learning activities at home (Eccles, 1993, Davis-Kean et al., 2021).

The educational background of parents also plays a crucial role in a child's cognitive development (Cave et al., 2022). The selection of school, food, gatherings, and dressings for a child all depend on parents. Educated parents

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provide entirely different sets of physical, social, and mental activities as compared to illiterate parents. They engage their children in literacy activities during leisure time which has been observed to facilitate ease in their learning, higher academic achievements, and development of talent and skills than illiterate parents. (Hemmerechts et al., 2016). Children who maximize their potential in schooling often receive full attention and support from their parents which plays a key role in achieving their benchmarks (Gutman & Feinstein, 2008). Several factors such as the background of parents, attention to their child, warmth, and parenting style all are associated with a child's life outcomes. Studies declared that educated parents who communicate with their children in a variety of languages often use complex words for communication which contributes to better language acquisition and reading skills from early childhood (Hoff 2003).

It is commonly observed that a child spends most of their time with their parents, especially with their mother. Parents serve as children's closest friends and support them. They possess the ability to read the mind of their child and adjust their approach accordingly because every individual is different and unique. Therefore, the developmental process of a child including personality development becomes a great task for Parents (Fan & Williams, 2010). Educated parents can make more efforts to enhance their child's skills, values, and knowledge therefore child would show outstanding performance in educational organizations. Those parents who are literate and spend time with their children, communicate with them, and use different languages for communication with their children have more vocabulary and they know better language and reading skills.

Parents play a crucial role in a child's development including their education, physical growth, and intellectual progress. Parents should be aware of development work and know pedagogical information recognizing that education is the right of every child (Ceka & Murati, 2016). Although numerous studies have been done in the past to assess the influence of parenting styles specifically mother association and education and its effect on child development, there is limited research analyzing the extent to which educated and literate parents; both mothers as well as fathers contribute to the holistic development of a child. This research focuses on parental literacy and its significance in the acquisition of social, ethical, and moral values shaping them to become good and educated citizens. The study is conducted by collecting interviews of mothers and fathers of school-going children of three middle-class families in different areas of Karachi. They are utilizing purposive sampling which may limit the generalizability of Research. The education of

parents is very crucial during a child's holistic developmental process, underscoring the need for parents to prioritize their education.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The real love for a child comes from his parents. (Sabey et al., 2017) When a child opens his eyes in this world, he feels secure and then later develops self-esteem with the care and affection of his parents. Parents are the first and most precious gift for a child. (Määttä & Uusiautti, 2013) Mother must set up an enclosure around the soul to keep out unnatural influences. She is the first to protect barriers against the world (Maselko et al., 2010). To educate children rightly, start with the education of mothers. The mother also needs the father to educate the child so that the family will be automatically strengthened. Family harmony leads to social reforms. Parental involvement develops proper social-emotional function (Sheridan et al., 2010), and helps in the academic achievements of a Child (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Literate parents expect extraordinary performance from their children because they provide all basic opportunities to their children which are necessary for the child's development (Furstenberg, 2000). The development and grooming of a child are affected by parenting and socializing factors (Thein-Lemelson, 2014). The higher the level of attainment, the more the child's abilities are polished (Nelson & Geher, 2007). Green Field has described the influence of socio-demographic factors on a child's learning environment in which parenting values play the role of a mediator (2009). The education which is provided by parents to their children is home education. The child acquires a variety of experiences from their home by performing several types of activities. These activities depend on the parent's personalities and educational background (Breiner et al., 2016). Family must act as a symbol of love and respect for each other. Understanding, affection, and sacrifice dominate family relationships. (Emerllahu, Dali, 2001).

2.1 Moral values

Moral values are more commonly defined as a principle that a person adheres to distinguish between right and wrong. Moral values are virtues that are considered most important in building up the personality of a child (Chauhan & Saxena, 2022). Honesty, integrity, truthfulness, love, helpfulness, hard work, etc. are included in moral values (Chen et al., 2011). Before inculcating morality in children, it is important to understand the nature of emotions which are regarded as Meta Emotions (Gottman et al, 1997). Parents who are the most important representatives of a child should also be responsible for the affective developmental nature of a child and should

understand and control the emotions of a child (Lv et al., 2019). Social factors influence the development of several types of moral and social values by elements like life experiences, parents, and culture (Smetana, 1999). Parents should facilitate their children so their affective and cognitive development can play a vital role in the development of moral values. Moral development starts from home which affects the type of morals under which a child is developing. However, morality is constructed from reciprocal social interactions of a child, it is important to note that all social concepts are not moral which parents need to counsel (Smetana, 1999). Warmth of Parent's child relation is also especially important in a child's emotional and moral development process (Hou, 2023). Sometimes moral conflicts and misdeeds also affect the behavior and moral values of a child (Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969). Supportive parenting strategies help to develop rules, regulations, and a sense of morality in children. (Healthcare, 2022). Two key elements were declared for Parenting styles that can nourish moral development and they are: Control and Responsiveness. (Baumrind, 1971). Parents use innovative methodologies. Parents' Affection and Encouragement is a tool for fostering a Child's Emotional Regulating abilities and illustrating morality which includes all aspects of human function (emotions, cognition, and behavior). Parents as well as peers also play a positive role in a child's moral development (Arsenio & Lemerise, 2004) Moral transgressions like injury or loss, emotional reactions, and evaluations of rights, as well as responses and commands to cease the offending behavior are all moral values. Parents' responses are important in the construction of more mature moral concepts (Batool & Shehzad, 2019).

2.2 Academic Performance

A child's Academic Performance is achieved through competence and the development of motivational forces. Parents are the major source of influence on a child's learning (Ceka & Murati, 2016). It has established the impact of parental involvement aspiration on general academic achievement in US adolescents (Fan & Williams, 2010). However, some studies found no association between parental involvement and academic achievements (Reynolds, 1992; Okpala, Okpala, & Smith, 2001) and some have even found negative associations between parental involvement and academic achievements (Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996). One of the research "Parents Involvement and Children's Academic and Social Development in Elementary School" investigated that students' trajectories of social as well as academic development in first, third, and fifth grade reports were obtained using hierarchical linear modeling and examined parents' involvement and children's standardizes achievement scores, social skills and problems in behaviors found

out the grade level, children intellectual abilities and parenting styles all effect on academic achievements (El Nokali et al., 2010)

One more study specifically revealed the significance of Parental Engagement and Style in Mathematic Achievement (Silinskas & Kikas, 2017). Other suggestions to improve reading acquisition (Castro et al., 2015) consider that parents are also social agents and they provide orientation for children to initiate any task, intrinsic motivation and physical developmental process are also reflections of parents Carr and Hussey (1999), The time spent by a mother with his child especially mother-child reading time plays a key role in the improvement in academic performance of child. (Price & Kalil, 2018).

Parents' involvement in academic performance as a path and role of educational institutions like schools is to enhance the achievement of underperforming high school students (Anguiano, 2004). Teachers, childcare takers, and policymakers all emphasize parental involvement as a key determinant in student success (Epstein and Sheldon, 2002). The Role of Parents in Facilitating Self-Regulation for Education" identifies self-determination theory which is composed of three dimensions of parenting that are autonomy support versus control, involvement, structure, and school serves as facilitating children's autonomous motivation provided by school—external Factors surrounding parents and child influence and facilitate development of a child. Undermining parenting produces conducive autonomous motivation (Grolnick, 2009). Parents sometimes need guidance. Self-Regulated Learning plays a significant role in student's academic achievements, and parents when properly educated on how to implement will serve better results in their children's academic skills development. (Saifuddin, Asif, & Dilshad, 2003)

2.3 Interplay of Personal Traits on Parental Academic Involvement

A widely accepted truth is that mothers and fathers both are equally important in child development, yet more studies were conducted on mothers and their involvement and influence on child Bronfenbrenner (1986a, p. 725). Past few studies have confirmed that father's involvement at home is equally contributed as of mothers but in schools, fathers are involved less s (Larson & Richards, 1994; Nord, Brimhall, & West, 1997). In terms of academic assistance, it is found that mothers help children till grade V (Eccles and Harold, 1996) whereas fathers help young adolescent children and perform the role of a teacher to them (Larson and Richards, 1994). It has been observed that mothers attend school meetings more as compared to fathers (Nord et al., 1997) and are more attentive to school issues (Miller, 1983). As the gender of parents plays distinct roles, a child's gender may also influence parental involvement

like interaction with boys would be different as compared to girls. (Shumow & Miller, 2001). One of the studies found out that parents of male of eighth graders provide more homework supervision as compared to girls although their participation in school conferences was found to be at equal levels (Ho & Willms, 1996). Bronfenbrenner theory suggests that Children's intellectual level is also one of the factors of parental involvement (1992). It is observed that parents spend less time in academics with struggling students (Ho & Willms, 1996) but some studies also suggest that parents are involved more with struggling students as compared to others who did not reveal any learning or behavioral problems (Baker & Stevenson, 1986).

Socioeconomic status can also encompass educational attainment (Kellaghan et al., 1993). Parental education level does not always directly correlate with academic achievements (Eccles and Harold 1996). Sometimes it can produce other variables like gender and culture in which the mother must raise the children and the father must work for breadwinning (Hoffman & Kloska, 1995). It might not be correlated with parental involvement as it has been shown that less educated parents show much involvement at schools as compared to educated parents. (Shumow & Miller, 2001). On the contrary, it has been observed that educated parents are involved much in reading practice as compared to less educated parents (Marsiglio 1991). The studies revealed a confusing character of literate parents and their influence on their children's development. The present study was designed to further explore the importance of educated parents in their child's holistic development.

2.4 Dietary Plan

Feeding habits and parenting are inevitably interrelated. The bi-directional interaction of parent feeding routines and children's eating behaviors affects the early feeding habits of children (Daniels, 2019). A healthy diet is related to a healthy individual; Health care providers have therefore empowered parents to take care of the healthy diet of their children (Haines et al., 2019). All over children learn dietary patterns and social behaviors from their family. Simultaneously schools and communities are also a source of education to children to guide them on what and how much they need to eat (Briefel, Wilson, & Gleason, 2009; Couch, Glanz, Zhou, Sallis, & Saelens, 2014). It is stressed in the literature that parents need to know about positive body image and how to guide their children to acquire positive shape by adopting healthy lifestyles (Hart et al., 2015). Research highlights a major gap that requires parents to know about healthy eating patterns and positive body image (Scwartz et al; 2011).

Healthy diet consumption helps to prevent malnutrition and other communicable diseases and the mother's role is remarkable in that context (Ghafoor and Shehzadi 2019). But now dietary styles have changed, and frequent use of frozen and processed foods has changed the lifestyle of society. It has also shifted dietary patterns. People prefer to consume food high in energy, fats, and sugar-free products (2020; McDonald et al., 2018). Many people do not eat fruit, vegetables, and other grains. A balanced diet is especially important for all ages. Everyone needs the same types of nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. The intake of food supplements varies from age to age and parental role in that case is prominent (Falah et al., 2022).

Eating habits and behavioral patterns of a person are formed in childhood and are exceedingly difficult to change. One of the most important things in eating patterns is quality and quantity which should be balanced because it plays a vital role in health and outbreak of diseases (Haidar et al., 2017). An eating pattern is developed by their parents. Necessary food supplements that enhance the growth of a child should also be given from an early age (Abdul & Wan, 2020 Vaughn et al., 2016).

3. METHODOLOGY

The present study aims to explore the influence of erudite parents on the holistic development of a child which can be best studied by adopting a qualitative methodology (Stake, 1995; Mertens, 2005). The study involved focus group interviews with three parents, one educated and another who is less educated. Focus groups allow the researcher to explore the topic and to find the insight of the parents about their parenting and the interconnected dimensions of their child's development. (George, 2021). Purposive sampling was done as the criteria was to have both parents educated and their willingness to participate and show openly about their parenting strategies and their children's development (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Aligned with the theoretical stance of the study, research questions thus constructed for the study include:

Q. 1 What are the roles and responsibilities of literate parents' involvement in a child's academic and physical development?

Q. 2. How do they satisfy their child to follow moral values?

Focus Group interviews were conducted with Parents which were recorded and edited transcription was done to get a clear response from the participants (Delve, 2022). The purpose of conducting focus group interviews was to explore and find out the sets of roles responsibilities and achievements of educated parents and how they influence the development of their child, therefore these interviews are best suited for it (George, 2022). Results obtained from the study were analyzed by Thematic Analysis prescribed by Creswell and Poth (2018, pg.264) which begins with the development of codes leading to the formation of themes, and then themes are organized into larger units of abstraction. For the present study extracted themes helped the researcher to propose the role of Educated Parents in developing and modeling the behavior and upbringings of their children, The Researcher was careful in conducting the interview, having taken the consent prior and with permission recorded the interview. After conducting the interview Researcher carefully transcribed the interview. Interviews were conducted in the national language i.e., Urdu to eliminate the language barrier and respondents could freely communicate with the Researcher.

5. FINDINGS

In this research, the focus of the researcher was to focus on the role of parents. How literate parents were different from others and how they developed their child. Researchers have found various important roles of literate parents that will have a positive effect on child's developmental process.

Four major themes have emerged for interconnected dimensions: Academic performance, Leisure time activities. Moral Values and Dietary habits. Both mothers and fathers spend time with their children despite their busy routines. There is a strong and friendly relationship between parents and their children. Parents are actively involved in their children's academic performance. There is one positive perspective generated by educated parents is that they prioritize learning instead of focusing on marks. Parents appreciate the efforts of their children in learning. They provide positive reinforcement to their children that boosts their confidence. All respondents emphasize the significance of the home environment in nurturing a child. Educated parents consistently provide healthy and fresh food to their children. Educated parents play a vital role in developing healthy dietary plans for their children (Abdul & Wan, 2020). The education of mother and father both plays a significant role

and is also especially important. Father and mother both understand their responsibility in the child development process.

5.1 Leisure Time Activities

Activities that children engage in during their free time play a crucial role in their development. Research has shown that children of educated parents often participate in leisure activities that promote their mental as well as physical and emotional growth. These parents take their children outside to parks and gardens to engage in outdoor activities that aid in stabilizing their physical development. They also involve them in participating in home chores as involving in home chores improves their sense of responsibility and skill development (White et al., 2018). Educated parents are aware of the type of play that is helpful in developing cognitive skills. They encourage and facilitate their children to engage in indoor games like LEGO and Blocks, ease them to do arts and crafts, and help them memorize the Quran as Reciting and Memorizing Quran accelerates intellectual skills. They leverage technology as a learning tool and hence direct the child into using technology in positive ways. By interviewing one of the parents, it was good to know that they know the psychological state of their children and that they find technology as a helping aid to manage their hyperactive children. They take technology as an educational aid to improve the communication and logistic skills of their children. Parents who are literate know how to utilize the free time of their children and make their time valuable for them.

5.2 Academic Performance

Studies have consistently shown that parental involvement always plays a significant role in child development and has a positive impact on their academic performances (Ceka & Murati, 2016 Fan & Williams, 2010). The current study also endorsed this fact and supports that the education of parents plays a key role in the academic growth of students. Through interviews and data collected it was revealed that the Involvement of Educated Parents contributes to various aspects of development such as:

- Promoting serene and tranquil study environment
- Foster confidence and instill strong Work Ethics
- Encouraging Consistent Practices
- Recognize and reward Special Achievements

The connection between Educated parents with their children nourishes children's academic performances. When interviewing with parents

they declared that they take exceptional care of their child's intellectual development:

During interviews, one of the parents expressed their efforts to provide their children with stress stress-free environment, which makes them calm and peaceful so that they can perform well.

".... We always try to keep my child calm & relax during Study."

They further suggest that they keep on making trials so that children can learn from reinforcement for rewards. Parents are also proactive in motivating and rewarding their children to raise their level of interest. This can be deduced by the statement:

.... "We give rewards for the remarkable performance of the child e.g., change of stationery box, bring story books, stickers."

They keep on motivating their children by praising them and giving them some gifts that will increase their interest level. They gave facilitation in writing even, as most of the children do not have fun learning to write.

"Provide whiteboard to the child for writing "child does not take interest in writing in a copy"."

Overall, Educated Parents possess an understanding of the distinction between rote learning and conceptual development and henceforth they always actively discourage rote memorization. They believe that children enjoy their learning "Prefer learning with fun avoid rote learning."

5.3 Moral Values

The most crucial element of the interconnected dimension is to develop a good moral human being. Moral development can result when a child is counseled with moral principles and values. A current study revealed that educated parents help to instill moral values in their children. The study seconds an especially important quote and that is "Values are Caught and not Taught." That suggests that a child does what he watches not what he is said to do "Action speaks louder than words." Whatever a child sees his parents doing he will start to learn the same practices. Educated Parents believe in counseling, they spend time with their children, and tell them about honorable deeds and moral values. This will help their child to develop virtues. It is suggested to use respectable words for children, and they will learn this to address others. Scolding will not help a child, Practices and counseling will play a critical role in bringing up moral values and principles.

5.4 Dietary Habits

Past studies have supported the fact that parental involvement is immensely helpful in maintaining proper healthy dietary habits in children. Schools and communities also support helping children to know what to eat and how much to eat. (Briefel, Wilson, & Gleason, 2009; Couch, Glanz, Zhou, Sallis, & Saelens, 2014). The present study also shows that educated parents play a crucial role in developing proper dietary plans and habits for their children. They do this by several means like ignoring their unhealthy demands and at the same time substituting it with healthy nourishments. Parents must educate their children about the health benefits of fruits and vegetables and discourage their demands of unhealthy foods. They need to tell their children about what junk food can do with their body, provide them with a substitute for junk food. In this era of social marketing, children are prompted by advertisements and wanted to eat delicious edible items, as they are young so they focus on tastes only and not on nourishment but if parents educate them, guide them they will know the difference and will adopt healthy lifestyle. One of the parents while interviewing has suggested that they discouraged the eating habits of bread and whenever the child demands they provide them wheat chapatis as wheat is healthier as compared to white flour. Parents need to search and find out some adverse health effects of junk food and when children observe they will automatically get rid of eating unhealthy food.

Based on the available data of the present study, it was found out that educated parents have a pivotal role in their children's development, father, and mother both are important in their children's holistic development. Further their education shaped the personality and attitude of their children and helped to develop a good human being that will serve society.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Present research has unfolded multiple dimensions of a child's development and how educated and erudite parents play their part in this development. Present research recommends parents to keep their child busy with mental and physical activities and use technology in a positive way. It is observing that mostly literate parents either live in joint family or nuclear family, but they only involve themselves in child development process. The researcher recommends that socialization is also particularly important in child developmental process so give some space to their children and learn by own to survive without the help of parents. One respondent highlighted that developing writing skills in a child is exceedingly difficult and their child does not focus on writing on copy, so they use white board for developing writing skills. Sometime parents should give some reward to their child for their

successful completion of learning. This will help in sustaining their interest in academics.

This research is qualitative research, and a researcher has found out the basic role of parents. This research opens a gateway for other new research like "How literate parents play role in professional development of child." In this research the target population of researcher was all respondents are from middle class family. Future research may be performed with parents that are literate but from upper class families. The family size of all respondents is maximum three kids. New research can also be performed that what kind of responses will be obtained if a family size is more than three kids.

One perspective is that literate parents emphasize that social media and advertisement companies are promoting junk food in their advertisement. This view opens a new and vast research that what will happen if social media does not promote unhealthy food advertisements.

After an unbelievably detailed study of parents' involvement in their child developmental process, the researcher has concluded that literate parents are the change agent of society. No doubt it is a time taken process and needs a whole generation to bring change in society, but this process is the most powerful tool for any nation. So, it is the responsibility of government and parents to focus on education for the betterment of the future of the nation. Availability of healthy and constructive environment is a basic right of every child from their parents.

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