

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE PARENTS AND THEIR CONCERN FOR THE DAILY ACTIVITY OF THE STUDENTS

<http://doi.org/10.26758/12.1.16>

Adriana ALBU (1), Serghei CEBANU (2), Cătălin Dragoș GHICA (3)

(1) (3) "Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Iași, E-mail: adrianaalbu@gmail.com (1); dragos.ghica@yahoo.ro (3)

(2) "Nicolae Testemițanu" State University of Medicine and Pharmacy Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, E-mail: serghei.cebanu@usmf.md

Address correspondence to: Adriana Albu, "Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Strada Universității 16, Iași, 700115, Ph.: 0232301600; E-mail: adrianaalbu@gmail.com

Abstract

Objectives. The objective of this research was knowing how the family is involved in solving school problems and the student's free time activities.

Material and methods. The study was conducted on a group of 204 students from "D. Cantemir" High School in Iași. There were 122 young people (59.81%) from the 9th grade and 82 (40.19%) from the 12th grade. The students completed a questionnaire about their parents' educational level and their concern regarding the school and free time activities of their children. The results were processed by using Pearson's chi-squared test.

Results. In most cases, the father had high school education (60.78%), the differences calculated according to the student's level of education being statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$). The mother had, most frequently, high school education (50.49%), with insignificant differences by classes ($p > 0.05$). Parents' concern for homework preparation by students is especially "rarely" (36.76%) or "most often" (26.96%), with significant differences by class ($p < 0.01$), which draws attention to the parents of students in the 9th grade who were more interested in this aspect. Concern for leisure was predominantly "rarely" (40.19%) or "most often" (37.25%), with statistically significant differences by class ($p < 0.01$).

Conclusions. The society is witnessing a worrying situation in which the family's concern for the student's school and free time activities is modest.

Keywords: parents, school activity, free time.

Introduction

The family is the environment in which a young person develops fully. Studies on children who have been raised by animals show the existence of behavior similar to that of animals. Children raised by animals for more than three years could no longer be socially inserted. Man needs to socialize in a timely manner, and this socialization is ensured in the first years of family life (Popescu, 2015).

The role of the parent becomes more nuanced during adolescence when the group of friends appears. They need to become a support for the teenager in everything they do. The parent must pay constant attention to his/her child's school and free time activities. They must also pay special attention to the psychological reactions of the young person to his problems and concerns.

Particular attention should be paid to diet and eating habits learned in the family because there may be a risk of progression to obesity, which raises problems especially for young women (Manyanga, El-Sayed, Dokum, & Randall, 2014). The aspects related to eating habits must be carefully studied in our country because there is a strong anchoring in the traditions of families, an element that can create problems when you want to change your diet (Albu, Moraru, & Hodorcă, 2015).

A special problem currently arises related to the identification with the current ideal of beauty. The mother is constantly preoccupied with her body appearance, so the teenager will take over this concern. There are studies in which a positive correlation was obtained between the value of the body mass index in mother and child, which can raise problems. The adolescent can have an adequate weight and is in the process of growing up, but she is losing weight because she has seen it in the family (Meraz, Guzmán Saldaña, López-Rodríguez, & Galván, 2019).

Free time activity is a problem for most families because their parents are very busy and barely have time to solve the usual problems of daily life. However, they need to pay attention to this aspect because they can become a role model for teenagers. When the parent is concerned with physical activity and the student will focus on the movement practiced systematically (Tanaka, Okuda, Tanaka, Inoue, & Tanaka, 2018).

The parent will become a role model for the student, being important the moments when they will perform physical activities together which will strengthen the relationships between family members. They will have common activities that can be discussed, collaborated to achieve a certain result. In this context, a healthy behavior in the family develops, but also an adequate communication between its members based on collaboration and mutual respect (Bringof-Iser et al., 2018). Also, the life habits learned in the family in childhood can persist in adulthood, an essential aspect especially for those who will contribute to maintaining good health.

The objectives of the study: evaluating the educational level of parents; appreciation of the interest shown by them for the student's school activity; the parents' concern for the way of spending the student's free time; evaluating the possible correlation between the parents' educational level and their concern for the student's school and free time activity; identifying family factors that may be associated with school failure.

Material and methods

The study was conducted on a group of 204 students from the "Dimitrie Cantemir" High School in Iași, of which 122 young people (59.81%) in the 9th grade and 82 (40.19%) in the 12th grade. The young people completed a questionnaire with questions regarding the parents' educational level and their concern for school and free time activities.

To estimate the educational level of the parents (father/mother) the level of education was taken into account: middle school, high school, university, post-high school, vocational school. Parents' concern for the student's activity was assessed with the help of two questions: Do the parents (at least one of them) have time available to deal with how you prepare your homework?; Do your parents have time to organize your free time? The answers specified were: "always", "most of the time", "rarely" and "never".

The correlation between the parents' educational level and their concern for the student's school/leisure activity was also analyzed. The focus was on how parents' interest in the student's activity does or does not change depending on their studies, meaning the information they have access to. The processing of the results was performed using the Pearson CHI square test.

The questionnaire was applied without asking for the students' names, so it was not necessary to obtain the consent of the teenagers or their parents. As the name was not requested, there were no ethics issues that required the agreement of the ethics committee.

Results

The study looked at the differences between classes of the educational level of the parents, their concern for the school and free time activity of the students and the correlations that appear between them.

The emphasis was on the educational level of fathers but also of mothers. Fathers had a dominant high school (60.78%) or university level, with statistically insignificant differences ($p > 0.05$, $f = 4$, $\chi^2 = 6,454$) between classes (Table 1).

Table 1

Paternal educational level

| | Educational level | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | Middle school | High school | University | Post-high school | Vocational school |
| 12th grade | 2 | 50 | 23 | 7 | 0 |
| 9th grade | 1 | 74 | 24 | 21 | 2 |
| Total (no.) | 3 | 124 | 47 | 28 | 2 |
| % | 1.47 | 60.78 | 23.03 | 13.72 | 0.98 |

By classes, mothers also dominated high school (50.49%) or university (33.82%), the calculated differences being statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$, $f = 4$, $\chi^2 = 8.567$) (Table 2).

Table 2

Maternal educational level

| | Educational level | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | Middle school | High school | University | Post-high school | Vocational school |
| 12th grade | 4 | 46 | 23 | 6 | 3 |
| 9th grade | 0 | 57 | 46 | 14 | 5 |
| Total (no.) | 4 | 103 | 69 | 20 | 8 |
| % | 1.96 | 50.49 | 33.82 | 9.80 | 3.92 |

The second aspect taken into account was the one related to the parents' concern for the student's school and free time activity.

Homework preparation is a permanent concern of 12.74% of parents, in most cases they are rarely interested (36.76%) in the student's school work. The differences calculated by classes were statistically significant at a $p < 0.01$ ($f = 3$, $\chi^2 = 16.146$) and led to a greater concern of parents of 9th grade students for homework preparation (Table 3).

Table 3*Parents' concern for preparing the homework of the students surveyed*

| | Frequency | | | | Total |
|------------------------|-----------|------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Always | Most of the time | Rarely | Never | |
| 12 th grade | 9 | 11 | 35 | 27 | 82 |
| 9 th grade | 17 | 44 | 40 | 21 | 122 |
| Total (no.) | 26 | 55 | 75 | 48 | 204 |
| % | 12.74 | 26.96 | 36.76 | 23.52 | |

Free time activities must be carefully managed, especially for students in the last year of high school. The permanent preoccupation of the parents for the way of spending the free time of the students was modest (8.82%), in most cases (40.19%) the answers being "rare" (Table 4).

Table 4*Parents' concern for students' free time*

| | Frequency | | | | Total |
|-------------|-----------|------------------|--------|-------|-------|
| | Always | Most of the time | Rarely | Never | |
| 12th grade | 5 | 23 | 34 | 20 | 82 |
| 9th grade | 13 | 53 | 48 | 8 | 122 |
| Total (no.) | 18 | 76 | 82 | 28 | 204 |
| % | 8.82 | 37.25 | 40.19 | 13.72 | |

The statistically significant differences at a $p < 0.01$ ($f = 3$, $\chi^2 = 15.486$) obtained draw attention to the parents of students in the ninth grade who are more concerned with these issues. The third element that must be carefully studied is the correlation between the parents' educational level and their concern for the student's activity. Mothers with higher education were not very concerned with the evaluation of students' school activity so that the calculated differences were statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$, $f = 12$, $\chi^2 = 16.085$) (Table 5).

Table 5*Correlation of maternal educational level/concern for homework preparation*

| Frequency | Educational level | | | | | Total |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Middle school | High school | University | Post-high school | Vocational school | |
| Always | 0 | 8 | 14 | 3 | 1 | 26 |
| Most of the time | 1 | 27 | 19 | 8 | 0 | 55 |
| Rarely | 3 | 41 | 22 | 6 | 3 | 75 |
| Never | 0 | 27 | 14 | 3 | 4 | 48 |
| Total | 4 | 103 | 69 | 20 | 8 | 204 |

The family, especially the mother, must be concerned with the student's free time, especially in the 12th grade. Unfortunately, no increased concern has been found even in families

where parents' aspirations are high, so calculated were statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$, $f = 12$, $\chi^2 = 15.510$) (Table 6).

Table 6

Correlation of maternal educational level/preoccupation for the student's free time

| Frequency | Educational level | | | | | Total |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Middle school | High school | University | Post-high school | Vocational school | |
| Always | 0 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 18 |
| Most of the time | 0 | 43 | 26 | 4 | 3 | 76 |
| Rarely | 4 | 39 | 23 | 13 | 3 | 82 |
| Never | 0 | 13 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 28 |
| Total | 4 | 103 | 69 | 20 | 8 | 204 |

Because these aspects include the whole family, the father's involvement was also evaluated. Those with higher education did not have a special concern for the student's school activity so the calculated differences are statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$, $f = 12$, $\chi^2 = 13.479$) (Table 7).

Table 7

Correlation of paternal educational level/concern for homework preparation

| Frequency | Educational level | | | | | Total |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Middle school | High school | University | Post-high school | Vocational school | |
| Always | 0 | 13 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 26 |
| Most of the time | 2 | 32 | 13 | 8 | 0 | 55 |
| Rarely | 0 | 50 | 13 | 11 | 1 | 75 |
| Never | 1 | 29 | 11 | 7 | 0 | 48 |
| Total | 3 | 124 | 47 | 28 | 2 | 204 |

The same result was obtained for the concern regarding the way of spending the student's free time, the calculated differences were therefore statistically insignificant ($p > 0.05$, $f = 12$, $\chi^2 = 13.596$) (Table 8).

Table 8*Correlation of paternal educational level/preoccupation for the student's free time*

| Frequency | Educational level | | | | | Total |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Middle school | High school | University | Post-high school | Vocational school | |
| Always | 0 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 18 |
| Most of the time | 2 | 43 | 23 | 6 | 2 | 76 |
| Rarely | 0 | 52 | 15 | 15 | 0 | 82 |
| Never | 1 | 17 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 28 |
| Total | 3 | 124 | 47 | 28 | 2 | 204 |

Discussions

The family is the environment in which a child develops fully. Careful supervision of parents reduces the risk of developing antisocial behaviors, alcohol or drug use, dropping out of study and career orientation (Zilanawala, Sacker, & Kelly, 2017). Unfortunately, there are many situations in which parents' attention to students' school and leisure activities is modest or non-existent. There are studies in which the involvement of young people in alcohol, smoking or antisocial acts is associated with a problematic situation in the family represented by a low economic level, with disorganized families where concern for the future of the young almost does not exist (Nagata, Ferguson, & Ross, 2016). Thus, it is essential to assess the degree to which parents are involved in youth issues related to the socioeconomic situation in the family (Harris et al., 2017).

The educational level of the parents is essential for their orientation towards a profession and their professional classification. In the study group, most fathers (60.78%) and mothers (50.49%) have high school education (secondary level).

The evaluation of the parents' educational level is present in numerous studies related to the evolution of adolescents, especially those in which nutrition and body weight control are appreciated. Adolescents in Poland where nutrition was appreciated found an increased consumption of vegetables in families where their parents have secondary education. (Łuszczki et al., 2019).

Evaluations conducted in Sudan highlighted the existence of a high percentage of parents with elementary education (41.9% for fathers and 33.8% for mothers), finding a significant relationship between BMI for age and mothers education, an aspect that must be carefully interpreted because of the socioeconomic level. of the family is low (Missa, Somiya, & Siham, 2018). In the northern part of Iran, research related to the eating habits of students, who are educated in the family, showed the existence of a high percentage of parents with high school education and a fairly good economic level but with a statistically significant correlation with a unhealthy eating behavior (Veghari & Mansourian, 2012).

It is important to assess the parents' concern for the student's school and leisure activities. In the study group, the most common answer is "rarely" (36.76%) with significant differences by class. The parents of the 9th grade students are much more interested in the student's school activity compared to those in the 12th grade. It is a strange result given that the school activity of the final year student is essential for taking the graduation exam. In a study also conducted in Moldova on 7th and 8th grade students, there is a concern of parents especially "most of the time" (36.23%)

which indicates a decrease in family interest in the school activity of the student as it matures (Albu, Cebanu, Indrei, & Dima, 2020).

Parents' concern for free time activities is present especially "rarely" (40.19%) with statistically significant differences that draw attention to students in the 12th grade who are very little controlled, so that the risk of school failure appears quickly. For students in the 7th and 8th grades, the dominant answer was "most of the time" (38.20%), a result that draws attention to the decrease in the family's interest in school and leisure activities of the student in the final year of high school when it is essential for taking the graduation exam.

Free time activities can be carefully monitored and even done together. One such activity is sports that can be done in the family. The collaboration between the coach, the family and the student allows his involvement in sports activities practiced systematically and which will contribute major to maintaining his health. There is also a strong interaction between student and parents during the preparation of a sports program and after the sporting event when the results obtained can be discussed (Lisinskien & Sukys, 2016). There are essential aspects that will greatly contribute to strengthening the relationship between family members in orienting the student to a healthy lifestyle and success in school and free time activities (Salam, Das, Lassi, & Bhuta, 2016).

The statistically insignificant correlation that appears between parents' educational level and their concern for students' school and free time activities is worrying. Even parents who have higher education and high aspirations for their children are too little interested in their work which can lead to school failure and modest results in the graduation exam.

Conclusions

The family is the right environment in which a student can make the most of his potential. Unfortunately, society is currently witnessing a modest concern of parents for the student's school and free time activities. If the school activity can be considered the concern of the educational environment, the free time belongs entirely to the family that must adequately guide the young person. Sadly, there are few concerns of parents about these issues which explains the difficult results that sometimes occur in exams and even failures in students with higher intellectual abilities.

Acknowledgements

A summary of this paper was presented at online international conference: Individual, family, society - contemporary challenges, fourth edition, 6 to 7 October 2021, Bucharest, Romania and published in the journal *Anthropological Researches and Studies*, No. 7/2021.

References

1. Albu A., Moraru C.E., Hodorcă R.M. (2015). The evaluation of some eating habits at a group of teenagers studying at Dimitri Catemir highschool in Iasi. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 197, 1947-1951. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.578>
2. Albu A., Cebanu S., Indrei L.L., Dima F. (2020). Analysis of leisure time and social relationships in a group of teenagers in Moldova. *Anthropological researches and Studies*, 10, 131-137. <http://doi.org/10.26758/10.1.14>
3. Bringof-Iser B., Schinder C., Kayser B., Suggs S., Probst-Hensch N., SOPHYA Study Group (2018). Objectively measured physical activity in population-representative parent-child pairs: parenteral modelling matters and is context-specific. *BMC Public Health*, 1024 (18), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5949-9>

4. Harris S.K., Aalsma M., Weitzman E., Garcia-Huidobro D., Wong C., Hadland S., Santelli J., Park J., Ozer E. (2017). Research on clinical preventive service for adolescents and young adults: where are we and where do we need to go? *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 60, 249-260. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.10.005>
5. Lisinkien A., Sukys S. (2016). Coach's role in encouraging parent-child educational interaction in sports. *Global Journal of Sociology*, 6 (1), 01-08. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjs.v5i1.293>
6. Luszczki E., Sobek G., Bartosiewicz A., Baran J., Weres A., Derén K., Mazur A. (2019) Analysis of fruit and vegetable consumption by children in school canteens depending on selected sociodemographic factors. *Medicina*, 55 (7), 397. <https://doi.org/10.3390/medicina55070397>
7. Manyanga T., El-Sayed H., Doku D.T., Randall J. (2014). The prevalence of underweight, overweight, obesity and associated risk factors among school-going adolescents in seven African country. *BMC Public Health*, 14 (1), 1-11. doi:10.1186/1471-2458-14-887
8. Meraz M.G., Guzmán Saldaña R.M.E., López-Rodríguez G., Galván M. (2019). Relationship between maternal and children body mass index in four educational systems in Higo, Mexico. *Spanish Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, 23(4), 252-260. <https://dx.doi.org/10.14306/renhyd.23.4.753>
9. Missa M.A.A., Somya G.S.M., Siham M.O.G. (2018). Assessment of nutritional status of the adolescents (13-18 yrs) studying in secondary schools in Elhafeir area-Dangle locality-northern state. *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 8(5), 1-5. doi:10.36106/ijar
10. Nagata J., Ferguson J., Ross D. (2016). Research priorities for eight areas of adolescent health in low-and middle- income countries. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 59, 50-60. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.03.016>
11. Popescu A.I. (2015). Family the center of qualitative development at the human species. *Anthropological Researches and Studies*, 5, 47-59. Retrieved in 2021, from <http://www.journalstudiesanthropology.ro/en/family-the-center-of-qualitative-development-at-the-human-species/a32/>
12. Salam R., Das J., Lassi Z., Bhuta Z. (2016). Adolescent health and well-being: background and methodology for review of potential intervention. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 59, S4-S10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.07.023>
13. Tanaka C., Okuda M., Tanaka M., Inoue S., Tanaka S. (2018). Associations of physical activity and sedentary time in primary school children with their parental behaviors and supports. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(9), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15091995>
14. Veghari G., Mansourian A.R. (2012). Breakfast consumption among school children in northern Iran. *J. Nepal. Paediatr. Soc.*, 32(3), 193-200. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jnps.v32i3.6095>
15. Zilanawala A., Sacker A., Kelly Y. (2017). Longitudinal latent cognitive profile and psychosocial well-being in early adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 61(4), 493-500. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2017.05.008>