

# Parental Education And The Socio-Emotional Development Of Children In The School Context: An Integrated Approach

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## Abstract

*This study investigated the importance of parental education and the interaction between family and school in the socio-emotional development of children. Based on a theoretical approach, it analyzed how balanced parenting practices that combine affection and discipline contribute to the strengthening of skills such as empathy, resilience, and emotional self-regulation. The findings highlight the direct impact of the family environment on children's behavior and academic performance, showing that emotional support and active parental involvement foster students' holistic development. Moreover, the partnership between school and family proved essential for creating a welcoming learning environment, promoting emotional well-being, and facilitating the early identification of difficulties. It is concluded that socio-emotional development is a dynamic process that depends on the continuous collaboration between different contexts, especially the family and the school.*

**Keywords:** *parental education, socio-emotional development, family environment, school-family partnership.*

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## **I. Introduction**

The development of socio-emotional skills plays a crucial role in the holistic formation of the individual, directly influencing personal growth, academic performance, and the ability to adapt to different contexts, including the workplace, as pointed out by Primi et al. (2016). These competencies are essential for the well-being of children and adolescents, serving as an important protective factor, especially for those in vulnerable situations.

The absence or deficiency of these skills can lead to significant challenges in personal, social, and academic domains, with repercussions that extend into adulthood (Durlak et al., 2011). Evidence from intervention studies suggests that higher levels of socio-emotional development are associated with a reduction in depressive symptoms (Garcia et al., 2019).

Considering that socio-emotional development begins in childhood, the implementation of educational programs aimed at promoting these competencies contributes significantly to the acquisition and consolidation of skills that favor healthier life patterns (Ortega-Navas, 2010).

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in initiatives and programs dedicated to socio-emotional development, particularly those based on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), which have demonstrated high efficacy in school settings (Durlak et al., 2011). These programs not only strengthen individual development but also foster a more welcoming environment conducive to learning and social interaction.

One of the most aggravating factors currently affecting the teaching-learning process is the presence of socio-emotional conflicts in schools, which often stem from students' difficulties in managing their emotions and social interactions. These conflicts may manifest in various ways, such as physical or verbal aggression, social isolation, and disruptive classroom behavior. Factors such as dysfunctional family environments, poor communication skills, and low self-esteem contribute to these issues. The lack of adequate support for students' emotional development can exacerbate these situations, negatively impacting academic performance and school climate, as highlighted by Santos, Pontes, and Oliveira (2019), who analyze the influence of these conflicts on the cognitive development of early childhood education students.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to the socio-emotional development of children and adolescents. Social isolation, combined with abrupt changes in school routines, negatively affected students' emotional well-being, resulting in increased levels of anxiety, stress, and difficulties in adaptation. According to Crispim, Teixeira, and Alves (2022), many students struggled to manage their emotions and maintain healthy social interactions during this period, highlighting the need for socio-emotional support strategies in the school context to mitigate the negative effects of this scenario.

In this light, socio-emotional development in the school context has become an increasingly relevant topic in educational research, especially considering the influence of external factors. Among these, parental education stands out, playing a fundamental role in shaping emotional and social skills essential for students' academic and personal success (Bronfenbrenner, 1996).

Parental education, a widely discussed educational process, refers to the set of practices, values, and attitudes adopted by parents or guardians in guiding and supporting their children's emotional and behavioral development. These practices directly impact how children manage emotions, build interpersonal relationships, and face challenges in school environments (Baumrind, 1991). In this sense, the family's role goes beyond material support and involves the promotion of a safe and affectionate environment where dialogue, empathy, and mutual respect are emphasized.

Given the negative impact observed on students' socio-emotional development especially due to external factors such as the family environment the guiding question of this study arises: How can parental education contribute to enhancing students' socio-emotional skills within the school context? This question aims to understand the relationship between parenting practices and children's emotional development, considering the family's fundamental role in fostering essential skills for social interaction and academic success.

The objective of this study is to analyze how parental education through practices and strategies adopted by families affects the socio-emotional development of students in the school environment. The intention is to highlight the potential of these practices to promote emotional and behavioral balance among students, contributing to a more positive school climate and improved academic performance.

This research stands out by exploring the relationship between parental education and the development of socio-emotional skills within the school context to an essential topic for building more harmonious and productive educational environments. The study's relevance lies in the need to understand how active family participation in the educational process can help prevent conflicts, strengthen students' emotional well-being, and promote more effective learning. Additionally, by investigating the impact of parenting practices on the school environment, the study offers valuable input for the development of educational policies and programs supporting children's socio-emotional formation. A literature review was adopted as the research method, given its relevance in constructing a solid theoretical foundation essential for guiding methodological decisions and data analysis. This method allows for a deeper understanding of the topic, fostering critical reflection from various theoretical

and empirical perspectives. According to Gil (2008), the literature review is fundamental for identifying gaps in existing knowledge and for minimizing the influence of superficial perceptions, contributing to a broader and more grounded understanding of the phenomena studied.

Scientific database searches including the CAPES Journal Portal, SciELO, and Google Scholar were conducted between January 5 and February 6, 2025. The research process used Boolean operators (OR and AND) to refine results and ensure the relevance of the selected materials. The search sequence used was: (("parenting education" OR "positive parenting") AND ("socio-emotional") AND ("emotional skill")), enabling the identification of studies addressing the relationship between parenting practices and the development of socio-emotional skills in educational contexts.

## **II. Parental Education: Concepts And Approaches**

Parental education refers to the set of practices, attitudes, and strategies used by parents and guardians to guide the emotional, social, and cognitive development of their children. This concept is deeply rooted in the idea that the family environment is the child's first learning space, directly influencing their socio-emotional and academic skills (Bronfenbrenner, 1996). According to the author, human development occurs within a complex ecological system in which interactions between the child and their immediate environment such as the Family play a fundamental role in shaping essential life competencies.

Among the main approaches to parental education is the parenting styles model proposed by Diana Baumrind (1991), which classifies parenting practices into authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. The authoritative style, characterized by a balance between affection and discipline, is considered the most effective for promoting positive socio-emotional development. This model emphasizes the importance of dialogue, active listening, and the establishment of clear boundaries, thus creating a secure environment conducive to the child's emotional growth (Baumrind, 1991).

Another relevant concept in the field of parental education is positive parenting, which seeks to foster healthy and respectful relationships between parents and children, based on empathy, emotional support, and effective communication. According to Bornstein (2015), positive parenting contributes to strengthening children's self-esteem, developing autonomy, and fostering important social competencies necessary for coexistence in different contexts. This approach recognizes the active role of parents as facilitators of their children's emotional and behavioral learning.

Additionally, attachment theory, developed by Bowlby (1982), offers a valuable perspective for understanding parental education. The author emphasizes that affective bonds established in early childhood have a lasting impact on children's emotional and social development. A secure attachment, built through consistent and responsive relationships, is fundamental for children to develop confidence in themselves and in others, enhancing their ability to regulate emotions and cope with challenges.

Lastly, the systemic approach contributes significantly by viewing the family as a dynamic system in which interactions among members influence individual behavior and development. According to Minuchin (1982), family dynamics—marked by communication patterns, roles, and rules—play a central role in forming children's socio-emotional competencies. This perspective reinforces the importance of a balanced family environment and healthy interpersonal relationships for the child's holistic development.

### **Socio-emotional Development in Childhood**

Socio-emotional development in childhood is a fundamental process that involves the acquisition of essential skills for children's emotional well-being and social interaction. These skills include the ability to recognize and manage emotions, establish and maintain healthy relationships, make responsible decisions, and demonstrate empathy toward others (CASEL, 2020). Mastery of these competencies is crucial not only for academic success but also for the development of a balanced and healthy life in various social contexts.

According to Denham (2006), socio-emotional development is influenced by both internal and external factors, such as a child's biological makeup, family interactions, and the school environment. The quality of interpersonal relationships established in early childhood particularly with parents, caregivers, and teachers plays a decisive role in the development of emotional competencies. The presence of positive behavioral models and the provision of a safe and nurturing environment are essential for fostering children's self-confidence and emotional self-regulation skills.

Erik Erikson's (1963) theory of psychosocial development also contributes to the understanding of this process, highlighting that human development unfolds in stages, each associated with specific challenges that must be overcome for healthy growth. In childhood, the central challenge is developing autonomy and initiative, which depends on the child's ability to explore the world around them with emotional security, fostered through supportive and trusting relationships.

Furthermore, studies on emotional intelligence, such as those by Goleman (1995), emphasize the importance of emotional skills for success in both personal and professional life. Emotional intelligence involves

recognizing, understanding, and managing one's own emotions, as well as the ability to positively influence the emotions of others. The development of these abilities in childhood serves as a protective factor against risky behaviors and future emotional difficulties, promoting resilience and psychological well-being.

Finally, it is worth noting that socio-emotional development is a dynamic and continuous process that benefits from the integration of family, school, and community contexts. Educational programs focused on teaching socio-emotional skills have shown positive outcomes in improving school climate, reducing problematic behaviors, and increasing academic engagement (Durlak et al., 2011). Collaboration among these different contexts is essential for creating a support network that fosters the holistic growth of children.

### **The Influence of the Family on Socio-emotional Development**

The family plays a central role in the socio-emotional development of children, being the first and most enduring context of socialization. According to Vygotsky (1978), social interactions are fundamental for cognitive and emotional development, and the family is the primary environment where these interactions occur in meaningful ways. Emotional support, effective communication, and the affective bond established with parents and caregivers directly influence how children manage their emotions and relate to the world around them.

According to Belsky (1984), the family environment influences socio-emotional development through three main factors: the individual characteristics of the parents, the relational context within the family, and the available social support. Emotionally available parents who are responsive to their children's needs tend to foster greater emotional security and self-esteem. This environment supports the development of emotional self-regulation skills, empathy, and social competence.

Moreover, studies by Lamb and Lewis (2010) emphasize that the active involvement of parents in their children's lives including school support and participation in daily activities is associated with better socio-emotional outcomes. Children who experience positive family relationships exhibit greater capacity to resolve conflicts, cope with frustration, and form healthy emotional bonds throughout life.

The quality of attachment established in early childhood, as theorized by Bowlby (1982), is also a determining factor in socio-emotional development. A secure attachment, characterized by consistent and sensitive caregiver responses, provides a solid foundation for children to explore their environment confidently, knowing they can rely on emotional support from their parents when needed.

Finally, it is important to consider the impact of contextual factors such as family stress, economic instability, and parental conflict on children's socio-emotional development. According to Conger et al. (2002), these factors can negatively affect children's emotional well-being, increasing the risk of behavioral problems and difficulties in social adaptation. Therefore, strengthening positive parenting practices and supporting families in vulnerable situations are essential strategies for fostering healthy socio-emotional development.

### **Interaction Between School and Family: Partnerships for Socio-emotional Growth**

Interaction between school and family is essential for the socio-emotional development of children, as collaboration between these two contexts promotes a more cohesive and meaningful learning environment. According to Epstein (2001), the school-family partnership strengthens parental involvement in their children's education, contributing to the development of essential socio-emotional skills such as empathy, self-control, and resilience. Mutual support between educators and family members creates a support network that benefits both academic performance and students' emotional well-being.

Christenson and Sheridan (2001) affirm that family engagement in school activities is associated with improved educational and behavioral outcomes. Active parental participation in meetings, events, and pedagogical processes allows them to better understand their children's emotional needs and collaborate in creating a positive learning environment. This interaction also enables the early identification of socio-emotional difficulties, facilitating timely and appropriate interventions.

Bronfenbrenner's (1996) ecological theory of human development highlights the importance of interactions between various systems influencing child development, such as family and school. Effective communication between these contexts is crucial for ensuring consistency in values, expectations, and emotional support strategies. Programs that promote dialogue and collaboration between parents and teachers have proven effective in improving school climate and reducing problematic behaviors (Weissberg et al., 2015).

Additionally, the development of educational policies that encourage family participation in schools is a determining factor in the success of these partnerships. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), schools that implement inclusive and welcoming practices for families are able to build relationships of trust and mutual respect, fostering an environment conducive to students' holistic development.

Lastly, it is essential to recognize that building effective school-family partnerships requires ongoing commitment from both parties. Investment in continuous professional development for educators focused on family engagement strategies and encouragement of active parental involvement in school life are promising paths for strengthening children's socio-emotional competencies.

### **III. Results And Discussion**

#### **1. The Influence of Parental Education on Socio-emotional Development**

The influence of parental education on children's socio-emotional development is evident in daily practices that promote self-esteem, empathy, and emotional self-regulation. Parents who adopt an authoritative approach balancing affection and discipline tend to create a secure environment that fosters healthy emotional growth (Baumrind, 1991). Emotional support and open communication help children develop the skills needed to face challenges, manage conflicts, and build positive social relationships.

#### **2. Effects of the Family Environment in the School Context**

The family environment has a direct impact on children's behavior and academic performance. Children raised in households with consistent emotional support demonstrate greater concentration, resilience in the face of academic challenges, and more adaptive social behaviors (Bronfenbrenner, 1996). In contrast, conflictual or neglectful family environments may lead to emotional difficulties, which can manifest as behavioral problems and poor school performance.

#### **3. Contributions of the School-Family Partnership to Socio-emotional Growth**

Collaboration between school and family is essential to enhance children's socio-emotional development. Programs that promote parental engagement in school life contribute to a more welcoming and effective learning environment (Epstein, 2001). The ongoing exchange of information between educators and families facilitates the early identification of emotional and behavioral challenges, enabling more assertive and effective interventions.

### **IV. Conclusion**

This study highlighted the importance of parental education and the interaction between family and school in the socio-emotional development of children. Parenting practices particularly those grounded in a balance between affection and discipline proved to be fundamental for shaping socio-emotional competencies such as empathy, resilience, and emotional self-regulation. The active role of parents, through positive parenting, strengthens children's self-esteem and their ability to cope with emotional and social challenges.

The family environment was shown to have a direct impact on behavior and academic performance, with emotionally supportive households providing a favorable context for children's holistic development. Conversely, risk factors such as family stress and a lack of emotional support can compromise socio-emotional well-being and academic success.

Moreover, the partnership between school and family proved essential in enhancing socio-emotional growth. Active parental involvement in school life contributes to a more welcoming learning environment, facilitates the early identification of emotional and behavioral difficulties, and enables effective interventions.

In short, the socio-emotional development of children is a multifaceted process that depends on collaboration across different contexts, particularly the family and the school. Strengthening these partnerships and promoting educational practices rooted in emotional support and ongoing dialogue are fundamental strategies for academic success and emotional well-being in children.

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