

Free literature review on family educational developmental context in adolescents...

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Literature Review: Family Educational Developmental Context in Adolescents

According to Steinberg 2011, Educational achievement is the overall academic performance of children or learners in relation to their Grade Point Average (GPA). Learners take their courses in bits known as units which are spread over a given period of time. To ascertain a learner's educational achievement, the average of these courses taken in sessions is calculated. In other words, educational achievement is a long process that encompasses various stages of cognitive and social development of a child. A good educational achievement of a child requires a cohesive relationship between his or her internal and external environments. If in any case something goes wrong during this process, the resultant educational achievement of that child becomes a compromise. The family should therefore be in the fore front in ensure that this process run very smoothly.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model approaches the child's development context from his or her immediate environment. It therefore looks into various complex components or layers of the environment in which a child grows. In this theory, Bronfenbrenner integrates biological and environmental aspects of development. The interaction between these various components of the bio-ecological surrounding explains a child's development. However, he cautions that a child's development should not only be tagged on its immediate environment but also the larger environment.

Within the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model, there is the microsystem that constitutes the child's immediate environment. This environment is the

closest to a child and it entails the structures which the child has a direct contact with such as family, school, childcare and immediate neighborhood environments. Bronfenbrenner asserts that at this level, the effects of relationships take two distinct directions. These two crucial directions include both away from and towards the child. For instance, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model cites that if parents of a child have a direct effect on their child's behavior and beliefs, then the child may also have a similar effect on his or her parents' beliefs and behavior. This is what Bronfenbrenner refers to as a bi-directional influence in a child's development process. To reiterate his point, his Ecological Model goes ahead to clearly show how they occur at different levels of environmental interactions. For instance, he reveals the strength of the bi-directional interactions within the microsystem level and the greatest impact it has on a child's development. In this context therefore, the importance of the family structure in the education and social development of a child is perfectly echoed in this model.

A very close analysis of this model shows that family is a very crucial, most durable and very influential bridge between the various components of any child's microsystem. For instance, the family links the child's school to his or her parents or between child's church and his or her immediate neighborhood. Actually, the influence of the family is felt in all aspects of a child's educational and social development such as language, nutrition, health, security including cultural beliefs. The development of these factors is highly dependent on the input and behavior related feedback in the family. In a school for example, the teachers interact and deal with a variety of

family set ups. So to better understand and deal with these children, the teachers must first understand this broad variety of family systems.

Empirical Literature Review

In relation to the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model, child development is discussed all the way from birth to adulthood. This implies that the crucial adolescence period that ushers children to adulthood is fully taken care of by this model. Everything that happens within the family set up directly has either a negative or positive effect on the child. Pamela Davis-Kean in her article explores the process in which social and economic income and level of education directly or indirectly relates to a child educational development. She did a very credible research that covered both rural and urban areas and children of different categories and of ages between 8 and 12. Her work especially in this article agrees with other researchers that the parents' level of education is a very crucial determinant factor in a child's academic achievement. Children whose parents are well educated subsequently have very academic pace-setters. This implies that parents with good educational background strive to give their children excellent education as well.

The role of parents as a key constituent of the family in relation to the performance of their children is very important. However, children must also cooperate with their parents. Parents should contribute positive towards their children's performance in school. In fact, parents should play the role of providing proper guidance and counseling in case the children deviate from their norms. The strictness of the some culture should also be a factor of review in accordance to modern technology. The world is changing so fast

and at times some of the traditional and religious practices become incompatible with the modern technology. They can provide modern learning equipment like computers to enhance the learning at school. As Gonzales, Cause, Friedman and Mason put it, family status variables are very crucial of educational achievement among learners. Their discussion narrows down to parental education, social and economic family status as well as family structures to assess the educational achievement among African American students.

Similarly, girl child education should be embraced through encouragement and support. Again, it is the responsibility of the parents to provide material and moral support to their parents. They should ensure that their children do not engage in activities that could ruin their lives like drug and substance abuse. Children should avoid engaging in drugs and substance abuse. These substances can destruct the children's attention at school and eventually contribute to poor performance. The parents must act as role models since whatever they do has a direct influence on their children's performance and their general behavior. Religious guidance is also important as it shapes the spiritual well-being of a child. A religious child can rarely goes astray and fail in academic endeavors. As a parent, the child depends on you for moral support and encouragement. Research indicates that encouraging words from a parent can bring a positive result in a child's academic performance. The parent should always assess the progress of the child by constantly reward and advise their children. This makes the student feel that the parent is fully involved in his education. Provision of the necessary stationery for the child is very important. Parents should their children current books that give

comprehensive and simple information. Parents should also work to pay school fees for their children it the right of the child to get education. As such parents should pay school fees on time to avoid situation of children missing classes. In addition, parents should guide their children in career choice. Although children are the ones to make the final decision, the parent can advise them on the best career choices to maximize their potential. I still believe that the child has to work hard, with the help of parents and teachers to perform well academically. (Vellymalay, 2012)

While people believe that it is the responsibility of the child to excel academically, parents always want their children to be the best in academics. They always do their best to ensure that they children's academic needs are met without any compromise. This heavy investment calls for a strict supervision and tagging of high targets for these children. However, whenever these targets are not met, a lot of psychological and behavioral problems that may have adverse effects on the affected children. Even though parents try their best to ensure their children excel, they still face psychological and behavioral challenges among their children

Parental Expectations and Children's Psychological Problems such as depression are in most cases inevitable in a child's educational development process. Anna-Maija in her book, ' Depression and School Performance in Middle Adolescent Boys and Girls' states that depression is a psychological disorder in which a person feel disappointed and of low self esteem, mood and generally sad. She says that parents high expectations on the children's performance has very strong link to their children's depression especially when such children fail to meet their parents targets. Many parents in many

communities wish to see their children excel in their school performances and thus set for them high targets to meet. As much as these children strive to achieve these targets, in some cases they absolutely don't hit them. In many communities, parenting styles are highly based on the family and social systems which may be accompanied with a lot of strictness and authoritarian approach to their children. In other words, there are a lot of demands imposed on children by their parents regarding their school performance such as even setting for them the grades. (Nissinen, Pelkonen and Anna-Maija, 2008)

When these children's performance falls short of their parents' expectations, they are scorned, quarreled and at times punished. Even before these children inform their parents of their poor performance, they shy off due to the hostility they expect from their parents. Besides, most parents would wish or expect their children to join high careers such as engineering, medicine and aeronautics. Contrary to this, the parents do not look at professions such as arts and music as essential. Although children face such psychological challenges, parents need to work tooth and nail to improve their children's parents.

Parental Expectations and Children's Behavioral Problems such as conduct disorders. Conduct disorders in children refers to a repetitive and persistent pattern of an antisocial, aggressive and defiant behavior. These behavioral disorders are graver and go beyond the normal childish misconduct or misbehavior. Most children who are accosted by their parents due to poor performance in their school academics exhibit various forms of misconduct disorders. They do have a personal feeling that there are disappointment to

their parents and resort to mischievous behavior. These children may become victims to behavior such as being aggressive to people and animals, deceitful, destroy property and even indulge into juvenile delinquency. With the behavioral challenges, it is the responsibility of the parents to instill discipline in their children so that they can maximize their potential at school. (Taylor, Hill and Lorraine, 2004)

All these aspects of the family context of the child's educational achievement and general development have become inevitable component of our daily lives. However, these features are more pronounced in adolescents than other stages of a child's development. Academic performance of a child depends on his determination and hard work. The child should take it upon them to put more effort in academic work. The Arabian children should understand that their parent always work hard to ensure that they get the best out of the schooling process. Even if they don't live to their parents expectations, this should not be interpreted to be a condemnation. They should always take a low profile to ensure that they do not trigger anxiety and uncertainty in their parents. These students should always work extra hard to achieve in their academic performances. In cases where the students experience difficulties, they should seek the intervention of their teachers to talk to their parents.

In conclusion, the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model presents a very comprehensive approach of studying the educational development of adolescents. From his rich integration of both the immediate and the broader environments of a child, he leaves nothing unexplored. His model not only discusses the key features and components of a child's development but

also brings out an interconnected framework of the cohesion between these features. Parents and guardians who form the child's closest family members should ensure that they contribute positively towards the child's development. The blame game over the responsibility for the child's development should not be stage-managed against the children.

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