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Manifestation of parental support for primary form students learning at home

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Abstract. The research deals with the parental support for primary form student learning at home. The following problem questions were raised: what are the types of parental involvement in children's learning and how does parental support manifest in practice of children learning at home. The problem is also relevant because the primary form students' age is the time when parent support has the highest value and creates conditions for comprehensive personality growth: academic skills, children's future prospects, mental health and formation of social relationships. By applying the data collection method of in-depth interview, the conditions to understand what types of parental involvement in children's learning manifest while providing learning support at home have been created. The method of content analysis helped to reveal the following types of parental involvement in children's learning: control and autonomy supportive practice. Expression of the said roles manifested during the following parents' initiatives/actions: collaboration, motivation, intrusion of rules, instructions of parents, preaching, continuous observation.

Keywords. parental involvement in children's learning, learning support, education of parents

1. Introduction

When a child starts attending school, parents should admit that child's early experience often forms the fundamental of child's further learning. Scientists have it that child's maturity for school is closely connected to one's further success (Britto, 2012, Evans, 2013). According to scholars (Chai, Lieberman-Betz, 2016; Pomerantz, Monti, 2015, Cheung, Pomerantz, 2012; El Nokali, Bachman, Votruba-Drzal, 2010), parental involvement in teaching and learning of children as well as support for a child who is learning at home make impact on children's future prospects, mental health and formation of social skills, too. When parents involve in the process of child's learning, it helps them purposively form the required children's skills. Even in the cases when parents lack special pedagogical knowledge, the support provided to children provides conditions for a more efficient learning from own experience being gained (Bakker, Denessen, Pomerantz, Moorman, 2007; Pomerantz, Monti, 2015, Cheung, Pomerantz, 2012; El Nokali, Bachman, Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Sheridan, Clarke, Christenson, 2014).

Recently, a large part of research focus on investigation of the aspects of collaboration between parents and pedagogues concerning the learning of children (Patrikakou, Evanthia, 2016) or parental involvement in the children's learning process (Pomerantz, Moorman, Litwack, 2007; Pomerantz, Monti, 2015; Cheung, C. S., Pomerantz, 2012, Núñez et al., 2015). The latter

scholars substantiated that the effect of parental involvement in education of children on their learning achievement depends on characteristics of parents' behaviour with children. In other words, they investigated how various orientations of parents determine child's achievement in learning. In this context, it becomes relevant to explore what types of parental involvement in children's learning exist and how parents' support for children learning at home manifests in practice. The problem is also relevant because the primary form students' age is the time when the support provided by parents has the highest value and creates conditions for comprehensive growth of a personality (Moè et al., 2018).

2. Literature Review

Participation of both parents and teachers means two major variables responsible for student involvement in the learning at home (Lam et al., 2012). The research studies revealed that parental involvement in children's learning at home is one of the ways of how parents can influence students' motivation for and engagement with school. Parents who provide learning support when doing homework play a crucial role not only in stimulation of learning but also create conditions for the formation of skills of time management and problem solving (Moè et al., 2018). The research prove that one of the determining factors in children's learning is related to the type of parental involvement (Ng et al., 2007; Pomerantz et al., 2007; Patall et al., 2008; Karbach et al., 2013; Gonida and Cortina, 2014; Suárez et al., 2014; Núñez et al., 2015b).

Lorenz and Wild (2007) suggested four different types of participation of parents: "autonomy supportive practices (i.e. parents encourage self-initiated homework activities), control (i.e. parents pressure to complete their homework assignments and issue instructions that undermine autonomous behavior), structure (i.e. parents organize the homework environment), and emotional involvement (i.e. parents acknowledge children's feelings about homework)."

Karbach et al. (2013), Núñez et al. (2015) found out that academic achievements were negatively affected by parental control and strict structure (i.e. too high control of and pressure on children to complete the assignments, consistent guidelines and rules related to homework and school activities). The support provided for the sake of autonomy (parents who participate while providing assistance and support to child's independence) stimulates creation of a motivated orientation for learning and excellence. All this allows stating that the roles of parental involvement in children's learning at home are highly significant to both children's academic skills and maturity of their personalities.

3. Research Methodology

The data for research was collected by employing the in-depth *interview method*. Such approach facilitated the conditions for understanding what types of parental involvement in children's learning manifested while providing learning support at home. Applying the in-depth interview approach is favourable for approaching the character of people's perception, meanings, definition of situations and reality construction (explanation). In this research, it was important to have an opportunity to guide the survey intentionally (i.e. to find out the actions of parents as detailed as possible) (Ritchie J., Lewis, 2003). The construct of the questions/ statements was designed following the methods of in-depth interview (in the aspects of content representation and content retrieval questions) by J. Ritchie, J. Lewis (2003) (Table 1).

Table 1. The construct of in-depth interview questions/ statements

Factors	Questions
Parents' actions	<p>Questions regarding content representation: <i>FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE REPRESENTATION</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please tell how does your child ask for support that is related to education? 2. How do you behave and respond when your child is not willing to do the homework in the evening? <p><i>A REPRESENTATION QUESTION</i> Please remember a case when your child asked for support related to his/ her learning. Please tell how it happened (who said what? what was the response? how did you feel? etc.).</p> <p><i>QUESTIONS EXPANDING THE POINT OF VIEW</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How often does a mother/ father help to learn? What does she/ he do? How does the process evolve? - What is your behaviour when a child does the homework assignments? Do you allow him/ her complete the homework independently or suggest your support? Please remember a case when you offered your support, what was the child's response? (what did he/ she say; what did you say? how did you respond? how did the child respond? what did you think? what did you do in a different way next time?

By applying the said method, 7 parents of primary form students were selected. The data analysis employed the content analysis method. This allowed analysing the types, actions of parental involvement in children's learning while providing learning support at home. The data transcript, data depersonalisation were done. Answers of the informants were grouped according to semantic-lexical similarity, pointing out the analysis units, linking them to the research questions, forming sub-categories and grouping into categories (Mayring, 2014¹).

4. Analysis of the Results

Focusing on parents' initiative/ actions, the following types of parental involvement in children's learning were found out: control, structured and autonomy supportive practice. Manifestation of the underlined roles was expressed through the following parents' initiatives/ actions: collaboration, motivation, intrusion of rules, instructions of parents, preaching, constant observation (Table 2).

Table 2. Parents' initiatives/ actions when involving in children's learning at home

Sub-categories	Illustrating statements
Collaboration	<In general, I try to find a peaceful agreement...>; <I try to agree on good terms, we have a good conversation>; <simply I say to a child that if she does not learn we will have a long

¹ Mayring P., *Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation, Basic Procedures and Software Solution: Monograph*, Klagenfurt, Austria, 2014.

	conversation, discussion...>; <I try not to develop that conflict, I try to talk, discuss without raising my voice>; <I ask him why he did not say it to me because then we would have had a chance to solve that situation together...>; <then I ask him why didn't you tell me anything because I am willing to collaborate>; <We rush to do it together, I return and then we sit together>.
Motivation	<We should put efforts in our lives to sustain ourselves, to buy something >; <I try to guide her through this prism to make her understand that all things are necessary and that it is bad without education, without knowledge and without occupation...>; <when one completes homework assignments then will be allowed to play with friends...>; <only after the homework, in the evening, you will be allowed to visit a friend...>, <I try to trust him...>.
Intrusion of rules	<I order to follow the rules for him to have a habit, an agenda>; <I enjoy following the agenda very much; therefore, I force complying with it>; <the rules I have intentionally made have been suggested to the child to follow>.
Instructions of parents	<To make sure that when I am back home from work she has tidied up and completed her homework assignments>; <But usually instruction is needed, continuous checking is needed>; <I call from my work and ask whether one didn't forget to do something specific>; <but, of course, under observation, and when it is not done, we do it together>; <While I am at work, I always say to him to do the homework...>.
Preaching	<and always explanations why this must be done are needed>; <Well, reminders are constantly needed, even constant reproaching...>; <Nothing is forgotten about the homework assignments, but reminders are needed, actually constantly>; <I need to frequently remind about both a puppy dog and homework assignments, and to continue talking, explaining, even having my voice raised >.
Constant observation	<I sit beside and observe.>; <while she is working, I am watching every action she makes>; <We try to do the homework...>; <when she does it, I always sit beside her... Actually, I'm always sitting beside...>; <I am near and when the homework assignment is being done, she shows me how she did it>; <of course, I am near and continuously check. She feels a sense of security because she knows I sit and can say what should be done>.

Among all four different types of parental participation singled out by Lorenz and Wild (2007), the type of control oriented towards constant observation manifested in this investigation the most:

<I sit beside and observe>; < while she is working, I am watching every action she makes>; < I am near and when the homework assignment is being done, she shows me how she did it>; < of course, I am near and continuously check. She feels a sense of security because she knows I sit and can say what should be done>.

The control demonstrated by parents is also demonstrated through intrusion of rules:

< I order to follow the rules for him to have a habit, an agenda>; < I enjoy following the agenda very much; therefore, I force complying with it>; < the rules I have intentionally made have been suggested to the child to follow>.

The control through direct instructions of parents is expressed especially often:

< To make sure that when I am back home from work she has tidied up and completed her homework assignments>; <But usually instruction is needed, continuous checking is needed>; <I call from my work and ask whether one didn't forget to do something specific>; < but, of course, under observation, and when it is not done, we do it together>; < While I am at work, I always say to him to do the homework...>.

The preaching of parents that transforms into control also manifested in the practice of parental involvement in the learning:

<and always explanations why this must be done are needed>; <Well, reminding is constantly needed, even constant reproaching...>; <Nothing is forgotten about the homework assignments, but reminders are needed, actually constantly>; <I need to frequently remind about both a puppy dog and homework assignments, and to continue talking, explaining, even having my voice raised>.

It can be stated that in practice parents involved in children's learning at home make pressure on children seeking to complete their homework assignments when it is convenient to parents, to intrude their rules, to create instructions for a child to follow when making actions, to constantly observe them and preach. All this makes harm to child's autonomous behaviour, does not bring the added value to academic and personality growth. Grounding on Fuligni et al., 2002; Pomerantz et al., 2005a, 2007; Epstein and van Voorhis, 2012), such type of parental involvement manifests when parents are disappointed about child's achievement at school, when they feel less competent to help child in one's learning process, i.e. parents lack self-confidence and competence to lead their children in other ways than controlling.

Another type that manifested in practice is related to the autonomy supportive practice. Parents are willing to collaborate when involving in children's learning at home:

<I try to agree on good terms, we have a good conversation>; <simply I say to a child that if she does not learn we will have a long conversation, discussion...>; <I try not to develop that conflict, I try to talk, discuss without raising my voice>; <I ask him why didn't he say it to me because then we would have had a chance to solve that situation together...>; <then I ask him why you did not tell me anything because I am willing to collaborate>; <We rush to do it together, I return and then we sit together>.

A high effect on independence is made by maintained motivation of a child. Manifestations of motivation support were observed in practice:

< We should put efforts in our lives to sustain ourselves, to buy something>; <I try to guide her through this prism to make her understand that all things are necessary and that it is bad without education, without knowledge and without occupation...>; <when one completes homework assignments then will be allowed to play with friends...>; <only after the homework, in the evening you will be allowed to visit a friend...>, <I try to trust him...>.

It can be stated that initiatives for child support are quite poor: there is lack of the culture of trust, maintenance of experience in problem solving, goal seeking, action planning, putting action planning into acting.

The following types of parental involvement in children's learning out of the four pointed out by Lorenz and Wild (2007) were not found in practice: "structure (i.e. parents organise the

homework environment) and emotional involvement (i.e. parents acknowledge children's feelings about homework)".

5. Conclusions

- In the process of education, parental involvement in child's learning as well as support for learning at home provided by parents are highly important, have the highest value. Moreover, it is important to observe how parents involve themselves and what effect is made to achieve success in child's learning. Parental involvement will make a positive effect on children's learning achievement if parents encourage child's autonomy, explore the process of child's learning in detail, demonstrate positive expectations when collaborating with children. Parental involvement in children's education positively influences not only children's motivation and learning achievement but also children's future prospects, mental health and social relationships with surrounding people. It is a long-term effect.
- The following types of parental involvement in children's learning were found out: control and autonomy supportive practice. Manifestation of the said roles was expressed through the following initiatives/ actions of parents: collaboration, motivation, intrusion of rules, instructions of parents, preaching, constant observation. The type of parents' emotional involvement, i.e. when parents are concerned about children's feelings regarding homework, is missing.
- The type of parental involvement in children's learning manifested mostly through the initiatives of control oriented to continuous observation, intrusion of rules, creation of instructions for a child to follow when acting and the preaching. Such type of parental involvement manifests when parents are disappointed about child's achievement at school, when they feel less competent to help child in one's learning process, i.e. parents lack self-confidence and competence to lead their children in other ways than controlling.
- The autonomy supportive practice lacks the culture of self-confidence, maintenance of experiences in problem solving, seeking goals, putting action planning into acting. It limits with collaboration and motivation support only.

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