

## THE FAMILY-SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN BASIC EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to discuss how the family-school involvement is established with a view to promoting this relation and students' academic performance. In this work, we analyzed how parents and teachers from four public schools in the city of Gravataí/RS perceive themselves and each other in relation to their school involvement and shared routine, and how this relation can favor the students' academic success in Elementary School I. Thus, a comparative observational study of a quantitative and cross-sectional nature was carried out with 101 family members and 12 teachers of students in a situation of academic success. The results highlighted significant differences in some domains, showing a more positive assessment by teachers regarding their commitment to this relation. They suggest, specifically in the guidance and information domains, that the parents and teachers' attitude when guiding, supervising and assisting each other in their roles and the student can lead to better academic performance.

**Keywords:** family; school; academic achievement; elementary school

## Compromiso familia-escuela y sus implicaciones en el rendimiento escolar en la Educación Primaria

### RESUMEN

En este estudio se pretende problematizar cómo se establece el compromiso familia-escuela visando a la promoción de esa relación y del rendimiento escolar de los alumnos. En este estudio, se analizó cómo padres y profesores de cuatro escuelas públicas de la ciudad de Gravataí/RS perciben a sí mismos y al otro frente a su compromiso escolar y rutina compartida, y cómo esa relación puede favorecer el éxito escolar de alumnos de la Enseñanza Primaria I. Así, se realizó un estudio observacional comparativo, de carácter cuantitativo y corte transversal, con 101 familiares y 12 profesores de alumnos en situación de éxito escolar. Los resultados apuntan diferencias significativas en algunos dominios, evidenciando una evaluación más positiva de los profesores con respecto de su compromiso con tal relación. Sugieren, específicamente en los dominios *orientación* e *información* que la actitud de los padres y profesores al orientar, supervisión y ayudar uno al otro en sus funciones y al alumno puede favorecer un mejor rendimiento académico de este.

**Palabras clave:** familia; escuela; rendimiento escolar; enseñanza de primer grado

## Envolvimento família-escola e suas implicações no desempenho escolar na Educação Básica

### RESUMO

O estudo pretende problematizar como se estabelece o envolvimento família-escola visando à promoção dessa relação e do desempenho escolar dos alunos. Neste trabalho, analisou-se como pais e professores de quatro escolas públicas da cidade de Gravataí/RS percebem a si mesmos e ao outro frente a seu envolvimento escolar e a rotina compartilhada, e como essa relação pode favorecer o sucesso escolar de alunos do Ensino Fundamental I. Assim, foi realizado um estudo observacional comparativo, de caráter quantitativo e corte transversal, com 101 familiares e 12 professores de alunos em situação de sucesso escolar. Os resultados destacaram diferenças significativas em alguns domínios, evidenciando uma avaliação mais positiva dos professores a respeito de seu comprometimento com tal relação. Sugerem, especificamente nos domínios *orientação* e *informação* que a atitude dos pais e professores ao orientar, supervisionar e auxiliar um ao outro em suas funções e ao aluno pode favorecer um melhor desempenho acadêmico deste.

**Palavras-chave:** família; escola; desempenho escolar; ensino fundamental

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## INTRODUCTION

Parents or legal guardians play a significant role in the education of their children. School and the relation between school and family have implications on student performance. There seems to be a relevance attributed to families by school and such attribution often disregards individual aspects of the children such as psychosocial factors, their insertion at school and out of it, as well as the methodology used by teachers and the school's pedagogical methodology itself. It is known that, according to the hygienist model, there is a trend in which educational institutions tend to blame families instead of collaborating with them. Assessment of such relation has found evidence of how permeated with constant blaming its search for solutions and explanations has been (Lima & Chapadeiro, 2015; Oliveira & Marinho-Araújo, 2010).

In the learning process, some factors that contribute to success or failure refer to cultural standards, to language, to the socializing process (the children's relationship in family and community), to the students' and the teachers' individual variables, to the teaching methodologies used in the classroom, and to the relations in the school environment. The student's specific variables include: motivation, skills, and attitude regarding school and learning (Almeida et al., 2005; Silveira & Wagner, 2012). The variables that refer to the teachers are: their competence, leadership, and their ability to promote the teacher-student relation concerning communication, teaching and examination methods, the school environment for relations within its premises, and the institutional environment (Almeida et al., 2005).

On the other hand, criticism does not befall families only. It is also addressed to school as a result of parents' expectations when they question the incomplete nature of the educational and behavioral objectives or results for their children. In other words, there are criticisms for both parties and responsibility is not shared (Lima & Chapadeiro, 2015; Oliveira & Marinho-Araújo, 2010). For decades, school psychology has been reflecting on the absence of intersectoral public policies and there are implications on the production of phenomena such as evasion and student failure, for example (Patto, 2000).

Concerning parental and educational expectations, student performance is a variable that has stood out in recent studies (Bartholomeu, Montiel, Néia, & Silva, 2016; Marturano & Pizato, 2015; Ribeiro & Freitas, 2018). Some studies focus specifically on high performance and/or educational success, problematizing this phenomenon in contrast with student failure, which has been studied in depth in the last decades by researchers with national reference in the area (Patto, 2000). Such studies stand out for their criticism against the reductionist, limiting, and naturalizing vision in which student failure in Brazil is deemed as the students' fault. According to this vision,

it is also caused by families and by social inequality while society releases authorities, policies, and educational institutions from any accountability for the absence of any exchange between society and school, the absence of educational responsibility for schools, and the disregard for the wellbeing of teachers (Patto, 2000).

The assessment of the factors related to student failure and success sometimes yields contradictory results. That seems to reveal the importance of the theme in the Brazilian educational context. The low expectations of teachers regarding the academic performance of students in situations of vulnerability, or of students that teachers consider to be in socio-economic disadvantage, usually produces a negative impact on educational results. According to Saraiva and Wagner (2013), when teachers realize that some students have good potential and fit into certain criteria, such as having an engaged family with enough material resources, there is a probability that teachers will invest more on these students. This view of the lack of conditions and of participation by family members in the academic life of their children is also present in studies on family – school engagement. Likewise, it presents itself as a belief of the educational system regarding families from more vulnerable contexts (Oliveira & Marinho-Araújo, 2010; Silveira & Wagner, 2012), also intensifying criticism regarding the production of student failure (Castro & Tavares Júnior, 2016; Saraiva-Junges & Wagner, 2013; Souza, 2013).

In the study by Saraiva-Junges and Wagner (2016), the role of the family as facilitator in the process of educational development and its engagement as promoter of the family-school relation and the forms of family communication and participation are seen as predictors of student success. However, the authors point at the difficulty to establish such a necessary partnership. Fernandes, Leme, Elias and Soares (2018), developed a study with the objective to assess the relation of family, emotional communication, social skills, and their influences on good academic performance. Researchers realized the examination of 311 students in the 8th and 9th year of elementary education with a prediction model for academic performance, which linked the socioemotional development of the students with social skills and social support. It is possible to highlight the fact that children with a failure record presented negative academic performance, and the children with good development of social skills and perception of social support by the teacher presented positive results. Based on these results, there is equal emphasis on the importance of the students' resources and their environment so that school can promote academic performance with the students, families, and teachers. In this sense, there also the challenge of promoting academic performance even in situations where resources are scarce.

### **Family and academic performance: variables to problematize**

Family is the first source of social support that individuals are provided with. Family is the means by which we legate cultural capital<sup>1</sup>, with the transmission of mother tongues, social coexistence norms, and informal education. The school environment is the place where formal education is built. The parents play a pivotal role in their children's education process, expressed by means of psychological, social, economic, and cultural characteristics that are transmitted by means of family relations (Carvalho, 2010; Moreira & Gabriel, 2013; Polonia & Dessen, 2005).

According to the Latin American Laboratory of Education Quality, or "Laboratório Latinoamericano de Avaliação da Qualidade da Educação" (LLECE), entitled Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study, or "Terceiro Estudo Regional Comparativo e Explicativo" (TERCE), which assessed, in 2013, a representative sample of the performance of students from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades of Elementary School in Math, languages (reading and writing) and natural sciences, parents have a lot of influence on the performance of their children at school. Thus, by assessing Brazil, with application on 25 of the 27 states of the federation, obtained the following results: the engagement of parents in school development had a significant relation with the results in Math for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, whereas the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, who were also engaged in some sort of professional activity in addition to attending school, obtained results that were significantly lower than their classmates in Reading and Math. On the other hand, students from families of underprivileged economic level and social experience obtained, in average, a significantly poorer academic performance. In addition, this study demonstrates the role of parental expectations and support regarding the academic performance of their children. When such family support is high, the obtained results are consequently better (National Report, 2015).

Parental practices constitute an important dimension of childhood development, interfering with study habits and, consequently, with the academic performance of children. The family factors related to poor academic performance include: parents who are too authoritarian or too permissive, little or no parental engagement, use of coercion and punishment. Among such factors, it is possible to highlight parental attention to children and their activities (educational or not) such as the variable that seems to be most relevant in the acquisition of good educational results. Contrarily, results get worse when parents help too much in activities and thus diminish their children's autonomy (Salvador, 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> To Bourdieu (1998, mentioned by Cunha, 2007), cultural capital constitutes the element of family legacy that is believed to have the strongest impact in the definition of academic destiny.

The construction of a partnership between family and school is an important element for academic success, according to Moreira and Gabriel (2013), and Polonia and Dessen (2005), increasing the possibility for better learning and development by the students by means of new forms of problem resolution and promotion of success among children. The benefits of this engagement bring positive influences for the students' cognitive, affective, social, and individuality levels.

In order to comprehend the factors that benefit the engagement of family and school for academic success, literature brings us the study by Andrade and Raitz (2012). The authors assessed the factors that led two public schools, one in the state of Paraná and the other in the state of Santa Catarina, to have the best results in the Index of Development of Basic Education, or "Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica" (IDEB) from 2009, demonstrating the quality of education and the success of these schools. In the answers, the authors proved the relevance for success of sharing with parents, students, and teachers the responsibility concerning the children's performance and the work of the administration team, the parents, and the community in general regarding the quality of education.

Thus, even if school has a good curricular program, learning seems to be more consolidated for students when they are provided with support and attention by the family and community network. Although it is a challenge when it comes to the Brazilian educational context, it is necessary to highlight the importance of guidance, integration, and participation of families and the community in the approaches applied (Oliveira & Marinho-Araújo; 2010; Polonia & Dessen, 2005; Teixeira & Marin, 2021).

Moreira and Gabriel (2013), in a study with eight teachers in Elementary Education, investigated the importance of family participation in the academic life of their children, and the means by which family and teachers can improve the education of students, while identifying the negative impact generated when family does not participate and the reasons for this lack of support. It is possible to highlight in the results of this study, among the teachers' answers, that the lack of participation by the family has a deleterious effect on the students' performance. These students have no assistance to do their homework or educational activities in general. To the authors, parents must be active participants in the education of their children, which is evidence that there must be engagement at home and at school. However, the study does not bring the perspective of the families regarding the importance and frequency of this participation, which might contribute to the scapegoating of families for the poor academic performance of students.

When it comes to family-school engagement towards the academic success of students, it is possible to highlight the following characteristics:

family characteristics, engagement and participation in educational routines; socio-cultural and institutional factors, such as organization, planning, leadership, skills, teachers' competences, capacities, pedagogical methodologies, and examination methods. There is no individual emphasis, however, on any of these concerning academic success/failure, with the notion that academic performance is a multifactorial phenomenon (Fernandes et al., 2018; Marturano & Pizato, 2015).

Thus, this study was developed with the objective to get to know how engagement and a shared routine among parents and teachers can be achieved, while assessing the influences of shared routines among family and school and their implications on academic success.

### METHOD

This is a research of quantitative, (Creswell, 2010), exploratory, cross-sectional nature with the objective to measure the level of assistance provided by parents and legal guardians in the educational activities of their children and the teachers' routine activities towards the engagement of families and school for children experiencing academic success (Weber & Dessen, 2009).

The sample for this study was made up of 101 family members and 12 teachers of children experiencing academic success. The teachers were working with students aged between 10 and 12 years, enrolled in elementary education at four municipal public schools in the city of Gravataí, metropolitan region of Porto Alegre/RS. The recommendation of schools was realized by the Municipal Bureau of Education, or "Secretaria Municipal de Educação" based on performance in the IDEB (Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica – Index of Basic Education Development), considering the criteria of academic success that can be achieved by these institutions.

Two instruments were used in the research: 1) sociodemographic questionnaire targeted at legal guardians in order to get to know their family realities. The questionnaire was made up of 10 multiple-choice questions (age, gender, degree of relatedness, profession, and family income); and 2) The Shared Routine and Family School Engagement Checklist, or "*Checklist da Rotina Compartilhada e Envolvimento entre Família-Escola*" – and the versions for parents (mothers, fathers, or legal guardians) and for teachers by Weber and Dessen (2009). The used instrument had the objective to collect information from educational routine, taking into consideration the teacher's activities: dyadic (teacher-parents) and family activities: dyadic (parents-teacher). Both the parents' version and the teachers' version have two dimensions: academic areas (AA) (concerning the students' performance and formal education, and non-academic areas (NA) (comprehending activities related to informal educational practices and to socio-cultural events that might influence the behavior and the development of students). These two dimensions

are made up of domains referring to guidance (provision of information), participation (engagement in activities aiming at the parents' participation in general formation), information (transmission of information concerning events, facts, academic and personal situations) and assessment (situations and problems referring to both academic and non-academic areas of performance).

The questionnaire for teachers is made up of 46 items, and the questionnaire for family members is made up of 55 items to be answered with either "yes" or "no". For the tabulation of the scores for each domain, the affirmative answers were counted and then each score was generated.

With the data from the socio-demographic questionnaire and the checklist it was possible to construct a worksheet using the "*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*" (SPSS) program, by means of which the data were analyzed in a descriptive and inferential way, while searching for correlations (bivariate and/or multivariate) among all the academic and non-academic situations of family-school engagement in educational routines (and its dimensions) and the investigated sociodemographic variables.

The quantitative variables of the parent-teacher and teacher-parent dimensions were described by average and standard deviation, and the guidance, participation, information, and assessment domains were described by absolute and relative frequencies. In order to compare the averages between parents and teachers, researchers used the T-student test for independent samples; and in the comparison of proportions, Pearson's chi-squared test and Fisher's Exact Test were applied. The level of significance adopted was 5% ( $p \leq 0,05$ ), and the analyses were realized with the SPSS program, version 21.0.

The characteristics of the families of this study were: average age of the legal guardians ( $n = 101$ ) was 37 years and 3 months, 58% were married. Out of the responding parents or legal guardians and the sample, 88% were female and 13% were male, 84% of the respondents were mothers, the prevalent skin color was white (89%). Regarding the work regime of the respondents in this study, 45% reported that they worked over 40 weekly hours.

Thus, for research purposes, researchers chose parameters of situations of academic success by means of the analysis of previous investigations on the theme (Castro & Tavares Júnior, 2016; David, Morais, Primi, & Miguel, 2014; Soares, Antunes, & Aguiar, 2015) whose criteria were mostly based on: students who were in the academic year that corresponded to the expected age, and who had not had to repeat a year or had not quit school during their formative years and who, in quantitative terms, presented the best measured performance in average of grades in major subjects (math and Portuguese).

The project was authorized by the Research

**Table 1** - Comparison between parents and teachers regarding the percentage of “yes” answers for each domain and each area.

Domains	Parents	Teachers	p
	Average ± DP	Average ± DP	
Guidance			
academic area percentage	88,7 ± 14,0	94,3 ± 6,5	0,017*
Non-academic area percentage	95,1 ± 15,0	90,9 ± 14,3	0,326
Participation			
Percentage AA	46,9 ± 18,1	80,4 ± 21,8	<0,001*
Percentage NA	43,3 ± 20,3	88,1 ± 15,2	<0,001*
Information			
Percentage AA	60,9 ± 32,9	90,0 ± 17,1	<0,001*
Percentage NA	59,4 ± 49,4	67,9 ± 24,9	0,312
Assessment			
Percentage AA	56,3 ± 22,8	86,9 ± 18,7	<0,001*
Percentage NA	62,1 ± 21,9	-	-
total score	31,0 ± 8,6	42,2 ± 6,1	<0,001*

Note.: table produced by the authors.

Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Health Sciences – CEP-UFCSPA, under CAAE number 72366117.1.0000.5345. All methodological phases of the research safeguarded the privacy and faithfulness of collected data and were conducted in accordance with resolution number 466/12, of the National Health Council for research involving human beings. All participants signed a Free Informed Consent Term (TCLE).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to understand the inner works of the engagement and the shared routine between family and school (parents and teachers) and their implications in the academic performance of students in basic education in the studied sample, gathering of data was done in two moments. Initially, researchers realized the analysis of academic and non-academic dimensions, comparing the results of teachers and parents for each domain; and later on, comparing the teacher-parents and parents-teacher dyads in each domain in accordance with table 1.

By assessing the engagement of the family in academic (AA) and non-academic (NA) activities, it was possible to observe that the domain with the most affirmative answers was guidance, that is, parents feel that they are provided with guidance regarding information, which might lead to greater engagement towards improvement in the academic performance of their children. The teachers also obtained their best performance in the guidance domain in the two areas.

By comparing parents and teachers regarding the areas and domains, using the T-student test for independent samples, it was possible to observe significantly lower scores for parents in all domains in the academic area

( $p=0,017$  for guidance and  $p<0,001$  for all three other domains) and in only one domain in the non-academic area (participation:  $p<0,001$ ), compared to teachers. For the guidance and information domains, the differences were not significant ( $p=0,326$  and  $p=0,312$ , respectively).

There is evidence that when data are analyzed having as parameter all dimensions for teachers, they present a score that is significantly higher than the one for parents in basically all domains, except in guidance and information in the non-academic area (NA). Such scenario suggests that teachers tend to appreciate their own performance better than the parents' performance.

In order to understand how parents and teachers are perceived and proceed the matter of educational engagement and shared routines, and also to verify whether there are significant differences between these perceptions, researchers tried to compare educational engagement and shared routines among parents and teachers for each one of the domains in the academic and non-academic areas. However, these data were analyzed only in the teacher-parents and in the parents-teacher dimensions so that we can have a more accurate profile of the strong and weak points in the family-school relation in educational engagement and shared routines in situations of academic success, which is the objective of the present study.

Illustration 1 compares the affirmative answers for each domain between the teacher-parents and the parents-teacher dimensions. In the teacher-parents dimension, within the guidance domain in the academic area (AA), which concerns the strategies and/or systematized actions by the teachers with the objective

to improve the parents' performance pause (Weber & Dessen, 2009), results demonstrated that 100% of the teachers reported that they provide guidance to parents regarding the development of study habits, support for tasks to be done as homework, for examinations and in the development and general formation of children. On the other hand, the parents-teacher dimension, referring to such guidance that is provided to legal guardians, they reported that they do receive guidance according to what has been proposed, in 78.55% of the answers. In this context, some studies demonstrate that there is a different perception between teachers and parents, and the teachers tend to appreciate their own role better than the one by parents/family, source of many conflicts and standoffs in the family-school relation (Saraiva & Wagner, 2013).

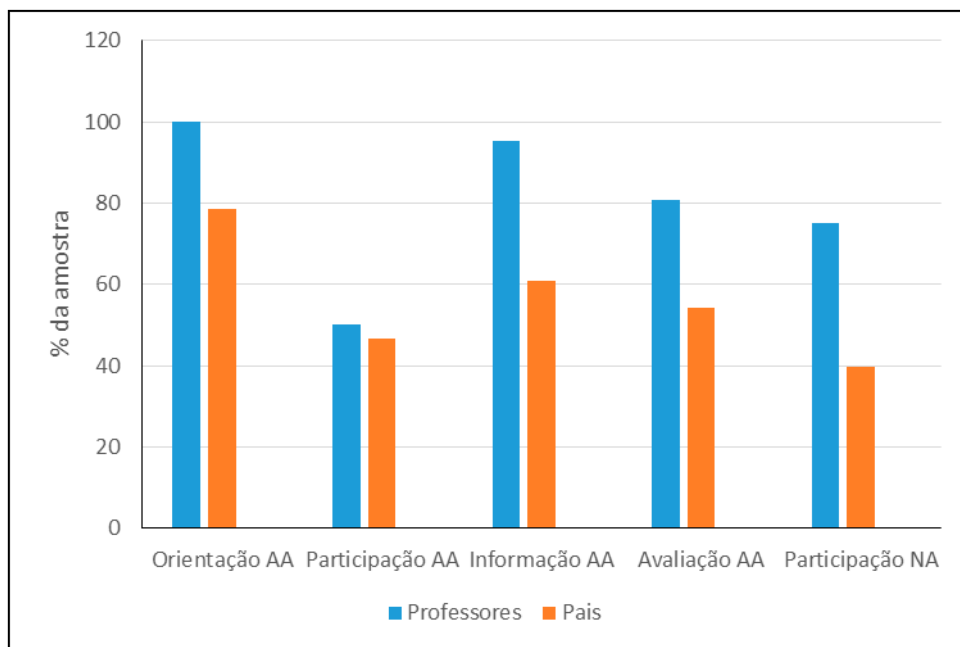
This phenomenon can be understood as the overlap of the systems ( educational and family) according to what was proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1996), where the systems in which individuals are inserted fit into other, while family and school are the first systems with which children have contact and that the author names

“Microsystems”. Concerning the relation between the family and educational systems, any interference produces an influence and such influence can be positive or negative. Since teachers believe that they are doing their job well (lack of self-criticism) and by the negative perception they have of families, the families reported by means of this index that they are not being assisted in the necessary areas, they do not feel they are being provided with guidance (Damasceno & Negreiros, 2018).

In the guidance domain, in the academic area (AA), in the teacher-parents dimension, 78.57% of the teachers provided affirmative answers when they were asked whether they coordinate groups of parents for social cultural activities and meetings in order to promote an exchange of ideas and experiences. The teacher has provided affirmative answers in 92.8% of the questions referring to the identification of students who need specialized assistance, referrals, or guidance for parents. The questionnaire does not contemplate questions for the guidance domain in the non-academic area (NA).

And the participation domain, academic area (AA), which assesses the entrance of participants, in a colla-

**Illustration 1** - Comparison regarding the percentage of yes answers for each domain, and each area in the parents-teacher and in the teacher-parents dimensions<sup>1</sup>.



Words in the box  
 % of the sample  
 AA guidance  
 AA participation  
 AA information  
 AA assessment  
 NA participation  
 Teachers  
 Parents

Note. Illustration produced by the authors.

<sup>1</sup> Where AA = Academic Area and NA = Non-academic area.

borative way, voluntary or not (Weber & Dessen, 2009), in the teacher-parents dimension, 50% of the teachers reported that the parents participate in classroom activities. The results of the questions, in the teacher-parents dimension for this domain, were 46.53% of affirmative answers, which is close to the result of the teachers. When they were asked if they participated in class councils and in the handing out of school reports, 97% of the parents' answers were affirmative, indicating that this is one of the most common reasons for them to go to school. We verified that this set of questions a scarcity in the presence of parents in classroom activities, reinforcing what literature shows us: parents participate more when they are invited or summoned, many times due to attitudes of indiscipline by their children (Silveira & Wagner, 2012; Souza, Andrada, Pissolatti, & Venancio, 2013).

In the participation domain (NA) in the teacher-parents dimension, 75% of the teachers provided affirmative answers when they were asked about the spontaneous participation or lack of it by parents in the socio-cultural activities promoted by the school, such as science fairs and social events. In the parents-teacher dimension, in this same domain and area, only 39.6% of the parents, when asked, report that they participate and/or offer help to teachers in socio-cultural activities. There is a significant difference in the perceptions of participation: the teachers are more aware of parents' participation than the parents themselves are. Maybe since parents are not requested so often due to the good behavior and good grades of their children, they get the feeling that they participate less. And the teachers might consider that this participation (which seems scarce for parents) would be enough in their opinion.

On the other hand, when it comes to participation in the academic life of their children, in the participation domain, parents got medium-level evaluation by the teachers (50%) and perceive themselves in the same way, that is, they participated less in a spontaneous and collaborative way in the academic life of their children. This scarce participation by parents might be linked to the unattractiveness of school, where meetings are often planned solely by the school and there is no interaction; in most of the occasions when parents are invited to school, the reason is a complaint or a problem with their children, which makes the family-school relation not so friendly (Saraiva & Wagner, 2013; Saraiva-Junges & Wagner, 2016).

In the information domain (AA) referring to the communication of facts, events and/or activities, by means of reports, newsletters, and/or personal contact from teachers to families (Weber & Dessen, 2009), in the teacher-parents dimensions, 95.23% of the teachers reported that parents contact them spontaneously in order to talk about the academic performance of their children. The teachers affirmed that there was informa-

tion on the week's programmed activities at school for parents. In the parents-teacher dimension, 89% of the parents reported that they contact the teachers to get to know about the educational development of their children and the activities they realize during the week. This difference of perception might be due to the fact that parents know about the good performance of their children and do not feel the need to contact teachers for further information, teachers might feel that the parents' contact is due to their children's needs.

In the assessment domain, which consists of the identification and analysis of situations and problems related to the academic area, with or without suggestions or advice for occasional changes (Weber & Dessen, 2009), in the teacher-parents dimension, 80.95% of the teachers reported that they discuss with parents the general problems of the class as a whole, the progress and the difficulties of the students and that they assess their performance as teachers. In the parents-teacher dimension, 54.26% of the parents provided affirmative answers on the assessment of the academic area. The differences in this domain can be explained by the fact that the questions for the teachers regard general issues of the class as a whole, and the questions for parents focused more specifically on their children's difficulties, which are minimal in this sample, because we are working with students who are identified as examples of academic success.

Concerning the information domain, it was possible, by means of the typology of Epstein et al. (2002), to highlight the fact that, concerning engagement in the family-school relation, the data in this study are close to type 2 engagement (name of type 2) because in this domain it was possible to observe that school has the responsibility to keep parents informed on what takes place in the school premises, and on the performance of their children. In the results, the teachers believe they provide guidance in 100% of the questions proposed by the theme and provide information in 95.23% of the occasions; parents feel they get guidance in 78.55% of the questions and informed in 60.89% of the questions regarding the theme. It is possible to see that teachers assess the parents in a more positive way, and the parents, in their turn, assessed the teachers in a more negative way.

The study by Wagner, Sarriera and Casas (2009 apud Saraiva & Wagner, 2013) obtained findings in the same direction. In the study by these authors, the teachers proved more critical in the assessment on the performance of the families of their students, assessing the educational tasks of the parents as inferior to theirs. Contrarily, parents seemed satisfied with the education provided to their children at school.

## CONCLUSIONS

By getting to know the school-family engagement

and the perception of parents and teachers regarding their participation in the shared routine aiming at the promotion of academic success, this study might explain important points on the reality and on the challenges of the family-school relation. The results led to an awareness that teachers and parents alike believe they provide and are provided with guidance regarding the development and the general formation of students, highlighting the importance of improving the integration of parents in the educational trajectory of their children by means of participation in school activities, voluntarily or not, assuming a collaborative role.

Maybe the fact that these domains (*information and guidance*) are the most punctuated ones is due to the prevalence of a hierarchical model, between knowledge from school and from family, where there is a need for families to adapt or "learn" about education and the best development for their children concerning their performance. It is also possible to think that there is an expectation, from both institutions, that approximation must get started on the family side towards the school, rather than the opposite direction.

Considering that we are talking about children who are academically successful, the participation of parents at school should be something positive and rewarding, because they would be able to see the success and good performance of their children. Reinforcing the previous hypothesis, it is possible to think of the existence of this one-sidedness in the established relation between family and school, where families are expected to participate in school activities.

We can suggest as a means to improve the family-school relation: transparent communication, the frequent participation of parents in projects, as co-organizers in partnership with teachers in science fairs, social events, and other socio-cultural activities. However, we understand that school, represented by the teachers, is responsible for promoting this approximation with parents because they are prepared to play that role and are often points of contact and dialogue between the two institutions.

As suggestions for ways to go deeper in the studies on these themes, it would be interesting to realize open interviews and produce a qualitative analysis in order to get to know the particularities of a diverse sample of families and teachers regarding the engagement between both parties and their distinct socio-demographic markers. It seems relevant to construct a comparative study based on this same reality in order to also investigate the students who do not experience academic success.

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