

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL: PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement at school is a construct that encompasses different behaviours and attitudes. Being multidimensional, it involves all the parental practices developed by the family, from study habits and communication with the school to initiatives aimed at the child's success at school. This study aims to analyse not only parents' perceptions of their own involvement with their children's school, but also their children's perceptions of their involvement with their school. It also explores the comparison between parents' and children's perceptions of perceived parental involvement. A total of 526 families took part in this study and the data was collected using the Parental Involvement Questionnaire. Both parents and children perceived a high level of parental involvement with the school, but there were significant differences between their perceptions. These results make it possible to reflect on the trends, challenges and implications of this concept, presenting the implications for practice and research.

Keywords: school parental involvement; primary school; education

Envolvimiento parental en la escuela: perspectivas de padres e hijos

RESUMEN

El involucimiento parental en la escuela es un constructo que engloba distintos comportamientos y actitudes, de carácter multidimensional, abarcando todas las prácticas parentales desarrolladas por la familia, desde los buenos hábitos de estudio y la comunicación con la escuela, hasta iniciativas que tengan el objetivo el éxito escolar de los hijos. Los objetivos del presente estudio fueron analizar las percepciones, de padres y de los hijos, sobre el involucimiento de los padres en el contexto escolar de los hijos y comparar la percepción de padres e hijos sobre ese aspecto. Participaron en este estudio 526 familias y se utilizó el Cuestionario de Envolvimiento Parental para la recolecta de datos. Padres y alumnos describieron un elevado involucimiento parental en el contexto escolar. Sin embargo, se percibió la existencia de diferencias significativas entre las dos perspectivas. Estos resultados posibilitan una reflexión sobre las tendencias, desafíos e implicaciones de este concepto, siendo discutidas sus implicaciones para la práctica y para la investigación.

Palabras clave: involucimiento parental en la escuela, escuela elemental, educación

Envolvimento parental na escola: perspetivas de pais e filhos

RESUMO

O involucimento parental na escola é um construto que engloba diferentes comportamentos e atitudes, de carácter multidimensional, envolvendo todas as práticas parentais desenvolvidas pela família, desde os bons hábitos de estudo e a comunicação com a escola, até iniciativas que visam o sucesso escolar dos filhos. O objetivo do presente estudo focou-se na análise das perceções, tanto de pais como dos filhos, sobre o involucimento dos pais no contexto escolar dos filhos e comparar a perceção de pais e filhos sobre esse aspeto. Participaram neste estudo 526 famílias e utilizou-se o Questionário de Envolvimento Parental para recolha de dados. Pais e alunos descreveram um elevado involucimento parental no contexto escolar. Todavia, verificou-se a existência de diferenças significativas entre as duas perspetivas. Estes resultados possibilitam uma reflexão sobre as tendências, desafios e implicações deste conceito, sendo discutidas as suas implicações para a prática e para a investigação.

Palavras-chave: involucimento parental na escola; escola primária; educação

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The family plays a fundamental role in social relationships and in the increasingly complex and challenging learning experiences that occur in the lives of children, with the consensus that children need a family that provides them with emotional, cognitive and material support, enhancing their development and allowing them to grow in a healthy way (Berger, 2000). Thus, the relationships established between parents and children are essential, since parents are their first agents of socialization, in the behavioural, emotional and cognitive level. (Piccinini, Frizzo, Alvarenga, Lopes, & Tudge, 2007), being decisive for children's success. The family, namely the parents, are involved in the different stages of their children's development, both in informal moments and activities, as well as in their schooling process (Eccles & Harold, 1996). Parental involvement with the school, has deserved the attention of the investigation as one of the variables of the family context related to the children's school education (Costa, 2015; Epstein, 1987; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Wilder, 2013) and with their academic success (Epstein, 1987; Goodall, 2013; Gubbins & Otero, 2020b; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Wilder, 2013).

This dimension has been defined in different ways by several authors, encompassing different behaviours and attitudes performed by parents, to support and collaborate in their children's educational process (Costa, 2015; El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Goodall & Montgomery, 2013). Thus, it seems clear that it has a multidisciplinary nature, since it involves all parenting practices developed by the family, from good study habits and communicating with the school, to initiatives that aim at the child's academic success (Kohl, Lengua, & MacMahon, 2000; Goodall, 2018; Gubbins & Otero, 2020a; Prego & Mata, 2012). According to Fan and Chen (2001) it also integrates parental educational behaviours and practices, such as parental appreciation of the school, participation in school activities and events, relationship with teachers or even rules imposed in the family context that increase school learning (Fan & Chen, 2001). Also for Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) this construct includes the parents' attitudes, perceptions and expectations about the school and their role in and their role in promoting their children's motivation to learn. Marques (1997) adds that the involvement of parents in the school consists of the responsible, dynamic and constant integration of families, both in the educational process of the students and in the school's projects, constituting a fundamental variable in the quality of the children's learning process. This heterogeneity of behaviour gives this concept a multifaceted and multidimensional nature, which can be carried out in several ways, more specifically, being reactive, namely the participation of parents in school initiatives; or proactive, in which the activities promoted stand out for being the parents' initiative (Marques, 1997).

Two structural aspects can also be distinguished in parental involvement with the school. One referring to parenting strategies focused and oriented towards school, and the other to strategies developed within the family, but also oriented towards school education (Epstein, 1987). The first dimension includes communication between parents and teachers, the participation of parents in school events or in the parents' association or in other formal and informal groups at the school (Driessen, Smit, & Slegers, 2005). In turn, the strategies developed in the family are related to parental supervision and support, the reinforcement of learning at home, support in carrying out schoolwork and homework, the creation of adequate study spaces and the organization of study plans (Wong, 2008).

McBride, Dyer, Liu and Brown (2009) also make a distinction between these two types of parental involvement. According to these authors, the involvement of parents in strategies developed within the family consists of carrying out learning activities that parents develop outside the school context, but oriented towards school education, such as visiting libraries, bookstores, attending events that promote children's learning, but also guidance and monitoring of their work. The involvement of parents in school-focused strategies, is understood as their participation in activities and events held by the school, such as, for example, parents participating in meetings and activities promoted by the school.

Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994), using a factor analysis of a set of parental behaviours related to school involvement, defend the existence of three facets of it: behavioural, cognitive-intellectual and personal involvement. The first, focused on both the family and the school environment, includes active parent-school communication, participation in school events and homework support. In turn, cognitive-intellectual involvement describes parenting efforts to provide children with intellectually stimulating educational activities and experiences. Finally, personal involvement encompasses parental attitudes and expectations towards school, with emphasis on the family's appreciation of school education.

More recently, Lorenz and Wild (2007) presented another theoretical approach regarding parental involvement, operating it in four structuring dimensions. The first, referring to parenting practices to support autonomy, describes the encouragement of parents to involve their children in activities that enhance their initiative and their behavioural self-regulation. The second dimension refers to parental control and pressure, encompassing the parental effort to pressure the children to achieve school success, the rewards for good results and the direct instructions to orient the study. This dimension sometimes tends to weaken the children's intrinsic motivation as well as their autonomy.

The third dimension, called structure, refers to the organization of the family environment to provide clear and consistent rules and norms, as well as expectations regarding learning and school tasks. A high degree of structure can promote success if the child or adolescent is able to discriminate this dimension from that of control. Otherwise, this dimension merges with the control one, with a negative impact on school autonomy and performance. Finally, the dimension of emotional responsiveness is related to the availability of parents to meet the needs and feelings of their children, supporting them in cases of failure.

Epstein (2001), stresses that in this construct it is important to reflect on the way the academic community deals with parental involvement with regards to their participation in school, developing a model that includes a typology that facilitates the understanding and study of relationships between the school and the family, analysing the two environments as systems that can move away or get closer, depending on their interpersonal practices and forces. This model also includes the opportunity to develop an orientation and supervision program for parents, so that they can improve their skills as caregivers capable of helping their children in matters involving social interaction and learning, as well as enhancing their personal, family and school performance. All six types of parental involvement based on the model are intended to create schools open to families and communities and to help students achieve better results (Epstein, 2001). It should be noted that each type of parental involvement presents particular challenges, associated with different results, whether directed to students, parents, teaching methods or the school context (Lopes & Paiva, 2008).

This model developed by Epstein (1992) integrates and develops Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model, which considers the influence of the different contexts in which the subjects are inserted, also analysing the individual impact that each one has on the subject, but also the impact of the various systems and their interrelationships in human development. For each context to influence human development, there must be communication and participation between the different systems of the subject's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1988), as is the case, for example, of the connection between the family and the school. In human development, the systems in which the subject is inserted have an important role in the way the subject perceives what surrounds him and in the way he changes according to his exposure and interaction with that system (Morgan, 2017).

Currently, this concept is considered as important as other elements of the individual's educational process, since it can be associated to several aspects related to schooling, which regard schools as physical spaces as well as spaces of fundamental interactions for the development of children and professionals (Bhering, 2003).

Parental involvement in education points to an understanding of the complex interactions between parents' motivation, existing family interaction, students' learning, the methods adopted by teachers at school, the school climate and intervention strategies (Morgan, 2017). It is important to promote connections between the family, the school and the community, since besides being able to improve the entire school context, they can also help families to communicate with each other and with the other contexts that surround them (Costa, 2015; Goodall, 2018; Jaynes, 2018; Ramírez, Nuñez, & Guzmán, 2018). However, the main reason for promoting partnership between the family, the school and the community is to help children and young people achieve personal and school success, where parents and teachers should consider themselves partners in education and jointly promoters of success (Epstein, 2001; Goodall, 2018; Gubbins & Otero, 2020a, 2020b; Prego & Mata, 2012).

The way the family relates to teachers and the school in general is influenced by multiple factors, namely socio-cultural, economic, ethnic, family structures, age, gender and parents' education, as well as the performance of students (Pereira, Canavarro, Cardoso, & Mendonça, 2003; Epstein, 1992; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl et al., 2000).

In general terms, studies emphasize the positive association between parental involvement with school and academic success (Gubbins & Otero, 2020b; Hill & Craft, 2003; Hoover-Dempsey & Sander, 1995), academic motivation (Ibanez, Kuperminc, Jurkovic, & Perilla, 2004), feelings of belonging and the children's own involvement with the school (Kuperminc, Darnell, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2008). The most monitored students therefore feel more encouraged and motivated in the face of school challenges and demands (Prata, Barbosa-Ducharne, Gonçalves, & Cruz, 2013). The present study emerges in this context, aiming to analyse the perception of parents or guardians responsible for children's education of their own parental involvement in the children's school context, their children's perception about the parents' involvement and the comparison between the perceptions of parents and children about parental involvement in the school context.

METHOD

Participants

In this study, 526 parents of students from the 3rd year of the primary school took part (445 mothers (84.7%) and 67 fathers (12.7%)). The mothers were 38.44 years old in average ($SD = 5.92$, $Min = 20$, $Max = 56$) and the fathers were, in average, 40.98 years old ($SD = 6.39$, $Min = 26$, $Max = 65$). Thus, these participants were guardians of 526 students from the 3rd year of the primary school, 250 females (47.5%) and 276 males (52.5%), aged between 8 and 11 years old ($M = 8.27$, $SD = 0.50$) and had, on average, 1.32 siblings ($SD = 1.27$,

Min = 0, Max = 7). They lived mostly with their nuclear family (85.5%, n = 401), but 159 (12.6%) also lived with some members of their extended family and 7 (1.5%) lived only with extended family members. Only 0.4% (n = 2) of the participating students lived in other contexts other than family. Most participating students live in intact families (95.2%, n = 438), with only 4.8% (n = 22) living in reconstructed families. Likewise, most of the participating students also lived in two-parent families (76.7%, n = 336).

The parent or guardian responsible for the child's education was mostly the mother (84.6%, n = 445). Only 12.7% (n = 67) were fathers and in 14 cases (2.7%) this role was attributed to another family member or someone from outside the family.

Instruments

The sociodemographic data was obtained, both with parents or guardians and children, by filling out an individual identification form built in the scope of the present research. The sociodemographic data was obtained by filling out an individual identification form built in the scope of the present research. Parental involvement in the school context was evaluated through the parental version of the Parental Involvement Questionnaire (Pereira et al., 2003). This is a self-report questionnaire that includes a version for children and another for parents, and in this research both versions will be used. Both versions are answered on a 5-point Likert scale (from Totally Disagree to Totally Agree) and are TNota: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ composed of 4 factors or subscales. The first factor consists of items belonging to the family involvement in activities at school dimension, being it designated by parental involvement in school activities and volunteering. The second factor consists of all the items of the family involvement dimension in home-based learning activities, entitled parental involvement in home-based learning activities. The third factor refers to school-family communication, especially to communication that derives from the parents' initia-

tive. The fourth factor concerns parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings and emphasizes the more traditional ways of parental involvement in school. The version for children also includes a fifth factor regarding reinforcements and punishments that parents attribute to their children because of schoolwork. Both versions also include an overall score, which is obtained from the sum of the items of the questionnaire and concerns the overall parental involvement. In the parents' version, the questionnaire consists of 24 items, with the overall score varying between 24 and 120, while in the children's version the questionnaire consists of 28 items, with the overall score varying between 28 and 140.

Table 1 presents *cronbach's alpha* obtained in the present study, for both versions (parental and students).

Procedures

This research obtained once the results were concordant, it was decided to present the results of the parametric tests, following a recommendation by Fife-Schaw (2006).

RESULTS

School parental involvement from the guardians' or parents' perspective

Table 2 presents the descriptive measures of school parental involvement as well as the correlations between these variables.

The means obtained in the various factors of the questionnaire ranged from 2.31 (parental involvement in school activities and volunteering) to 3.54 (parental involvement in home-based learning activities), with the existence of significant differences between the results obtained in these two factors, $t(526) = -41.66$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.72$, 95% CI [-1.28, -1.17]; and the average of global parental involvement result was 75.26.

It was also found that the various factors correlated significantly with each other in a moderate or strong

Table 1 - Cronbach's Alpha of Parental Involvement Questionnaire (Pereira et al., 2003), For Both Versions (parental and students).

	Parental version	Students version
	α de Cronbach	α de Cronbach
Parental involvement in school activities and volunteering	0.84	0.82
Parental involvement in home-based learning activities	0.81	0.80
School-family communication	0.76	0.72
Parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings	0.69	0.71
Reinforcements and punishments	NA	0.81
Global parental involvement	0.87	0.85

Note: NA: not applied.

Table 2 - Intercorrelations and Descriptive Measures of Parents' Involvement With the School, from the Perspective of Parents or Guardians and Children.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Parents' or guardians' perspective on parental involvement in school activities and volunteering	1										
2. Parents' or guardians' perspective on parental involvement in home-based learning activities	.40**	1									
3. Parents' or guardians' perspective on school-family communication	.43**	.74***	1								
4. Parents' or guardians' perspective on parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings	.58***	.45*	.52*	1							
5. Parents' or guardians' perspective on global parental involvement	.72***	.72***	.74***	.69***	1						
6. Students' perspective on parental involvement in school activities and volunteering	.20*	.11	.21*	.24*	.25*	1					
7. Parental involvement in home-based learning activities students' perspective	.07	.15*	.17*	.26*	.18*	.61***	1				
8. School-family communication students' perspective	.05	.07	.16*	.19*	.17*	.66***	.74***	1			
9. Parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings students' perspective	.07	.15*	.17*	.20*	.18*	.64***	.78***	.70***	1		
10. Reinforcements and punishments students' perspective	.08	.05	.08	.09	.12	.53**	.56**	.56**	.54**	1	
11. Global parental involvement students' perspective	.10	.10	.18*	.22*	.21*	.76***	.84***	.79***	.86***	.73***	1
<i>M (SD)</i>	2.31 (0.72)	3.54 (0.40)	3.45 (0.47)	3.22 (0.59)	75.26 (10.73)	3.87 (0.87)	4.13 (0.74)	3.98 (0.78)	4.06 (0.82)	3.86 (0.84)	111.19 (20.35)

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

way. The existence of these correlations seems to show that parents who tend to be more engaged in the academic life of their children seem to do so in all their dimensions, investing significantly in the various tasks that the parental involvement with the school implies.

Aiming to analyse the relationships between school parental involvement and the sociodemographic variables, mean differences and correlations between the factors evaluated and the different sociodemographic variables were performed.

There was a significant correlation between the male guardians' age and the parental involvement factor in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings ($r = 0.15, p < .005$). The same correlation was observed between the female guardians' age and the same factor (parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings ($r = 0.18, p < .001$)). These results are further reinforced by a correlation between the age of the female guardians and the overall involvement with the school ($r = .22, p < .01$), that is, older female guardians tend to become more engaged in the school.

The existence of some relationships between the number of children and parental involvement was also evidenced. The more children the participants had the less involvement there was in learning activities at home ($r = -.15, p < .05$) and the lower school-family communication ($r = -.17, p < .05$) was.

School parental involvement students' perspective

Descriptive measures of parental involvement, according to the students' perspective, as well as the intercorrelations between the various subscales analysed are also shown in Table 2.

The averages obtained in the various subscales of the questionnaire ranged from 3.86 and 3.87 (parental involvement in school activities and volunteering and reinforcements and punishments) to 4.13 (parental involvement in home-based learning activities), and the

score in the overall parental involvement was 111.19. It was also found that the various factors correlated significantly, moderately or strongly.

Aiming to analyse the relationships between school parental involvement and the sociodemographic variables, mean differences and correlations between the factors evaluated and the different sociodemographic variables were also performed.

There were no significant differences associated with the participants' gender and perceptions of parental involvement in the school context. Negative weak correlations were found between participants' age and all subscales, except for the parental involvement in school activities and volunteering and reinforcements and punishments. Thus, the older the students were, the less school-family communication was reported ($r = -.18, p < .05$), the less parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings was identified ($r = -.19, p < .05$) and the less parental involvement in home-based learning activities ($r = -.22, p < .05$) and global parental involvement ($r = -.17, p < .05$) was perceived.

Similarly, there were equally weak negative correlations between the number of siblings and all participants' subscales of perception regarding parental involvement in the school context. Thus, the more siblings the participants had, the less they perceived parental involvement in school activities and volunteering ($r = -.19, p < .05$), parental involvement in home-based learning activities ($r = -.22, p < .05$), school-family communication ($r = -.18, p < .05$), parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings ($r = -.21, p < .05$), reinforcements and punishments ($r = -.17, p < .05$) and global parental involvement ($r = -.22, p < .05$).

School parental involvement: parents' and students' perspective

Finally, in order to compare the perspective of parents and children about parental school involvement,

Table 3 - Mean Differences of Students' and Parents' Perception of Parental School Involvement.

	Parents	Students	<i>r</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	95% CI
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>					
Parental involvement in school activities and volunteering	2.32 (0.73)	3.87 (0.87)	.07	503	-32.47***	1.93	[-1.64, -1.46]
Parental involvement in home-based learning activities	3.55 (0.39)	4.13 (0.74)	.02	503	-16.31***	0.98	[-0.65, -0.52]
School-family communication	3.44 (0.47)	3.98 (0.78)	.01	503	-14.09***	0.84	[-0.61, -0.46]
Parental involvement in school activities and participation in parent-teacher meetings	3.23 (0.59)	4.06 (0.82)	.01	500	-19.17***	1.16	[-0.91, -0.74]
Global parental involvement	75.34 (10.77)	111.19 (20.35)	.01	503	-37.17***	2.20	[-37.74, -33.95]

Note: *** $p < .001$.

paired *t-student tests* were performed, using the 4 subscales that are shared between the version of the parent and the child questionnaire. Table 3 shows the mean differences, as well as the correlations obtained.

When comparing the perspectives of parents and children on parental school involvement, it is possible to verify the existence of significant differences between the perception of parents and children, in all the subscales analysed. In all subscales, students perceived a higher parental involvement than that perceived by their own parents.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to characterize the parental involvement of parents or guardians for the 3rd year students of primary school, the characterization of their children's perception of parental involvement in the school context of their parents or guardians and the comparative analysis between these two perceptions.

The results of the study showed that the parents or guardians perceived, in general, their involvement in the school context of their children as average, since an average of 75.26 in the global parental involvement was obtained, in a maximum value of 120. This result seems to highlight that parents or guardians attribute themselves some importance as agents in the educational process of their students. However, there were significant differences between the factor in which parents reported being more involved (parental involvement in home-based learning activities) and that which they reported being less involved in (parental involvement in school activities and volunteering), which seems to show that parents consider their role in the school more related to their contribution at home, promoting and stimulating the children's learning, than to their contribution in the activities that can be carried out at school. These results seem to show that the participant parents or guardians used the strategies developed within the family oriented towards school education defined by Epstein (1987) or by Mc Bride et al. (2009) more frequently, namely parental supervision and support, reinforcement of learning at home, support in carrying out school and homework, when compared to focused and school-oriented strategies. Despite the present results, attention is drawn to the importance of focused and school-oriented parenting strategies, particularly in primary school, since Hill and Tyson (2009) found that in the early years of schooling, parenting strategies focused on school tend to be positively associated with school performance. According to these authors, parenting behaviours such as frequent visits to school and closer interactions with teachers increase the parents' knowledge of the curricular content taught, expand the family's social capital to the contacts of the school network and, thus, enhance the school success of students.

In the present study, in the parents or guardians perspective, it was also found that the various factors

correlated significantly with each other in a moderate or strong way. The existence of these correlations seems to show that parents who tend to be more engaged in the academic life of their children seem to do so in all of their dimensions, investing significantly in the various tasks that the parental involvement with the school implies.

Correlation between the age of the mother and the father and the number of children with their parental involvement were also verified. The results seem to demonstrate that the older the parents, the more they participate in school activities. These results can be due to several reasons: on the one hand, older parents can be more available and, for this reason, find it easier to attend the activities; on the other hand, they can value more these face to face and more traditional activities of the parental involvement. At the same time, the more children the participant parents had, the less involvement there was in learning activities at home and the lower the school-family communication was. These results may be due to the need for these participants to share their attention with more children, who may also attend the educational system, and also require the attention of their parents to these issues.

When we focus on the students' perspective on the school involvement of their parents or guardians it was found that the students perceived a high parental involvement in the school context, since the average values obtained in the various subscales approached 4 (the maximum possible value was 5). As in the results obtained with parents, students also perceived greater parental involvement in home-based learning activities and less involvement in parental involvement in school activities and volunteering. These data reinforce the need to raise awareness between parents and guardians to the importance of their involvement in school-focused strategies, to the development of their children and to their academic success. However, despite this being the factor with the lowest results, it is reinforced that the results obtained, according to the students' perspective, denote a high parental involvement in the school context, which seems to show a high perception of the students regarding their parents' participation in their academic and school life, which is a favourable result as the benefits of parental participation in the academic life for the children's school performance and their satisfaction with their academic life are clear. Likewise, in the students' perspective, it was also found that the various factors correlated significantly moderately or strongly. The existence of these correlations seems to show that, according to the students' perception, parents who tend to be more involved in their children's academic life seem to do so in all its dimensions, investing significantly in the various tasks that parental involvement with the school implies.

Negative weak correlations were found between the participant students' age and all subscales, except for the parental involvement in school activities and volunteering and reinforcements and punishments.

These results may report to parental expectations regarding the school performance of the participating students. Older students are those who are generally struggling and most likely to have been retained in previous years, which may lead their caregivers to have lower expectations for their academic performance, and so to be less engaged in the school life of these children. However, it would be extremely important for these parents to increase their involvement in the school context to motivate and encourage their children to learn.

Similarly, there were equally weak negative correlations between the number of siblings and all participating students' subscales of perception regarding parental involvement in the school context. These results may be justified by the need for parents of more than one child to have to divide their attention by the activities of two or more children, who may also attend the education system and who also require parental attention to these issues, which may lead to a lower participants' perception of parental involvement in their academic activities.

Finally, this study aimed to compare the perspectives of parents or guardians and students about parental involvement in the school context. There were significant differences between the two perspectives in all analysed subscales. The students perceived a higher parental involvement than that perceived by their parents. On the one hand, these results may be due to an overvaluation of students of parental involvement in the school context. Students can perceive greater parental involvement than that which actually exists. The social bias of participating students can also help explain these results. Participating students may have felt the need to please the researchers and/or to protect their parents. Students are successively sensitized by teachers to the importance of their parents' involvement in an educational context and, having been given a questionnaire on this theme, they may have felt the need to protect their parents, referring to a greater parental involvement than the one that occurs in reality. On the other hand, parents or guardians may have been too demanding and critical of themselves while answering to the questionnaire. Considering the importance they attach to themselves as educational agents, they may have considered that they would like to be more involved in the school context.

This study has some methodological limitations, so the results should be interpreted with caution. The first is due to the fact that students and parents or guardians were used as informants. In addition to their perception of parental involvement in the school context, they may be biased by a certain personal idealization. This concept is also influenced by the perception that the school has of the participants' parental involvement. Thus, it would be relevant to have teachers as sources of additional

information, in order to understand how the school context itself perceives the involvement of their students' parents in school activities. A second limitation is that the sample of families is voluntary. Only the families that wished to participate were a part of this study, which may cause some bias, such as, for example, the possibility of the participating families being mainly the families with greater parental involvement. Consequently, the sample is not representative of the population, and these results may raise some questions in terms of its generalization.

Despite the stated limitations, this research presents an important contribution to the study of parental involvement in the school context, pointing, nevertheless, to the need for more research, namely studies including more informants, who can be representative of the population and that follow participating families over several cycles of their children's learning, providing a more comprehensive view of this phenomenon.

Finally, it should be noted that the results presented and discussed earlier have implications for the intervention. The results point to the need for schools to continue to raise awareness among families, namely parents or guardians, to their importance as educational agents in the academic well-being of children and to their educational success. The results emphasise the lower involvement of families in strategies focused on the school. Consequently, there is a need for schools to implement educational strategies open to families, so that they feel comfortable and welcome during their participation, promoting a greater involvement in school-focused strategies.

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