



A Family & its Role in the Shaping of a Child

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Abstract:

This paper explores the impact of specific variables on the educational environment within families and the academic achievement of children. The objectives were to examine the influence of parents' education, the number of children in the family and the type of family structure (nuclear or joint) on these factors. The study involved 103 seventh-grade students, who were instructed to distribute a questionnaire to their parents. Consequently, the sample comprised 103 families (either the father or mother). The survey method was employed and a specially designed questionnaire was used to gather data on the family's educational environment. Data analysis highlights the significant role of the mother's education in shaping the findings.

Keywords: Family, Child development, Emotional support, Nurturing environment

1. Introduction

“Education is the manifestation of perfection already in men”, thus it was defined by the modern sage Swami Vivekananda. Mahatma Gandhi views, “By education I mean all-around development, drawing out of the best in the child-man body, mind and spirit.” According to him, a real education is not a solitary process but an it is all-round development so it can't be possible between four walls of classroom. The role of society and role of family is also important in education of a child. Swami Vivekananda states, “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet.” The expansion of intellect can be achieved in school but the development of remaining merits call forth the help of one's family and society. The very existence of human being requires the base of civilized society wherein he passes through the process of development and change. In the creation of good human being, a society plays an important role. According to Auguste Comte (Father of sociology), “Society is a social organism, which has harmony of structure and action”. (Phillips, J. & Penhale, B.1996). The most important and basic organ of society is a family. Every child comes into possession of pattern of behavior from this basic organ of society. Hence it is not wrong to say that the first possession of the patterns of behavior begins from one's family. This pattern affects student's daily activities, education, diet, habits and many other things. Among all these things education is the most important because education can change persons' pattern of thinking and behavior. In fact, education is the process of cultivating good behavior pattern in a person. In this paper an attempt has been made to learn the impact of family on the education of one's child.

2. Family and Education of Child

Family plays vital role in education of a child. Most important factor in a child's success or lack of success in school is from the caring support and encouragement given by their parents (Berger, 2004). Thirty years of research confirms that family involvement is a powerful influence on children's achievement in school (Henderson & Berla, 1994; Ziegler, 1987). Family's involvement in one's children's education can affect in the following ways:-

- improve children's learning habits,

- change in behavior pattern
- build positive attitude in children
- improve academic result
- affect children's regularity and also
- help in the achievement of higher goal than less involved family.

Family member can direct participate in schools' activities. In Indian primary schools there is a School Management Committee (SMC). In SMC there are 11 members, from them, 9 members are parents. Earlier there was a Village Education Committee (VEC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Through these associations parents and other family members can play direct role of decision maker in village education system. These supportive partnerships make education a shared responsibility among them. Even research conducted by Burns (1993) results those Children, families, and teachers benefited individually and their partnership enhances the entire process of education.

3. Role of Family

Researcher Henderson and Berla (1994) derived four basic roles of family that encourage students' outcomes: 1. as teachers 2. as Supporter 3. as advocates and 4. as decision maker. Family can provide such an environment which supports students' mental, physical, spiritual and emotional development. Family members can play role of teacher for education of life skill and other co-curricular activities. Members of family can establish importance of education and cultivate good learning habits in their child.

Nowadays the scope of family participation in schools has expanded beyond the traditional thinking regarding education as volunteering, helping with homework, and fund raising (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995; Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspro, & Fendrich, 1999; Trusty, 1999). However, above mentioned three elements provide narrow meaning of education. Academic learning is a part of education and not complete education. According to Swami Vivekananda, education is a man making process. It involves physical, psychological, social and moral development of child. Children acquire life experience from family and society haphazardly. To large extent, as per researchers, these life experiences form children's character, feelings, values not only this but they provide the window through which they will view the world (Scott, 1992). Thus, experiences provided by family and society members are important for all round development of a child.

Every family has their own living style and different family environment. Positive learning environment created by family make drastic change in holistic development of children. However there are barriers of family involvement. In Indian setting, especially in rural area, the main obstacle is the lack of knowledge among the parents that proves as the major block in the shaping of academic environment in their home. In the following part of the paper some tasks are suggested which will enhance family involvement in child's education.

4. Task of family for learning environment

From *Mahabharata* we get an example of Abhimanyu whose education begins right from the embryo. Foreign researches also indicate that children have an inborn capacity to learn (Forman and Kuschrer, 1983). Children start learning from mother's womb. They are ready to learn before birth. Even soon after birth children begin to learn from each and every aspect of the environment (Greenman, 1988; Penny-Velázquez, 1993; Adame-Reyna, 1995). They take a book - spectacles and try to read when they see some member reading in home. Thus the main responsibility of family is to be vigilant and provide them right experience. Family should turn daily experiences into learning opportunities. Children ask many questions. Family members should take advantages of their question to expand their learning. The games, toys, picnics and daily activity should be as they stimulate children's creativity and thinking.

The most important role a family can play in the development of one's child is to provide secure environment. As per Maslow (Psychologist) 'safety' falls second in the hierarchy of needs. If children feel secure, they take risks and take advantages of a learning experience. (Scott, 1992; González-Mena, 1991; Allen and Mason, 1989). The children who feel secure make more experiments in daily life and acquire more knowledge than children whose family is strict.

Family becomes a very first language teacher of one's child. Children acquire two basic skills listening and speaking from their families. Family members should provide opportunities to communicate ideas following friendly conversations with them. It is observed that children who have their grandparents with them, learn rapidly and communicate more precisely than those who are from nuclear family.

Thus, family plays several roles as effective teacher. The basic need is that they should be alert and should take chance to turn most of the activities in learning opportunity. Nowadays it is seen that family leaves children to learn alone. In today's world, everyone wants to have the best school for their children, but they don't know importance of home environment on children's education. There is an old saying which affirms, "The most important work you do takes place within the walls of your home" is true in this case. In the present study, the investigator inquired to learn the effect of family's educational environment on its child. The investigator had also exerted efforts to understand what the scenario of Indian families is.

5. Method

In the present study an attempt was made to know family's educational environment and achievement of child. The study was undertaken following the survey method. The main objective of the study was to know family's educational environment and achievement of the children in relation to certain variables. The relation of family's educational environment and achievement of child was also under the matter under the inquiry. The results of past examination were considered as an achievement of children. To know educational environment of the family an inventory was constructed by the researcher herself. Total score on educational environment was regarded as the educational environment of the children.

6. Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- 1.To study relation between family's educational environment and the achievement of the child.
- 2.To study family's education environment and achievement of children in relation to parent's educational qualification.
- 3.To study family's educational environment and achievement of children in relation to type of family.
- 4.To study family's educational environment and achievement of children in relation to number of children in family.

7. Measure

In order to learn the educational environment of the selected families, 'Family educational environment inventory' was constructed by investigator. Expert opinions of Hon. Vice Chancellor Divyanshu Dave (From Kutchh), Dr. H.P. Rana (From Mehsana) Dr. J. B. Patel (From Vadodara), Dr. A. N. Prajapati (From Patan), Dr. S.C.Padavi (From South Gujarat) and Yogendra Patel (From Kadi) were also taken into account for the construction of the inventory. Investigator attempted to collect varying views from the experts from all parts of the state to construct the inventory. The clear instruction had been given in the first part of the inventory regarding filling up the details. There were 35 statements in the 'Family educational environment inventory'. Statements regarding daily activities of the family, tradition of the family etc. were also included in the inventory. Five-point scale was adopted for the responses. The given options were Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely and Never. The score 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 had been allotted respectively for these options. One of objectives of the study was to know achievement of the

children in relation to certain variables. As an achievement of child score of past examination was taken into account.

7. Participants

For the study, students of the standard 7th were selected by purposive sample technique for selection of the school. Two schools were selected, one from urban area and one from rural area. For the selection of the students from the school, a cluster of the students of standard 7th were given preference. Proper instruction was meted out to the students regarding handover of the inventory to their parents and submitting back to their class teacher. There were 103 families (either mother or father) in the sample.

8. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data were analyzed as per the objectives of the study. To reach at objective as a statistical technique t-ratio was calculated. SPSS program was used for the data analysis. The results of analyzed data are given as follows:

8.1 Effect of the Area

Effect of Parent's Educational Qualification

•Mother's Educational qualification

Table 1: Statistics regarding Effect of Mother's Educational Qualification on the Achievement of Children and Educational Environment of Family

Variable	Mother's Educational Qualification	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t - ratio
Achievement of Children	Pre-Graduate	83	76.4458	11.96871	1.31374	5.865
	Graduate	20	86.1000	4.43550	.99181	
Educational environment of Family	Pre-Graduate	83	141.9277	19.94919	2.18971	0.910
	Graduate	20	146.2000	18.56312	4.15084	

Table 1 shows effect of mother's educational qualification on the achievement of children and on the educational environment of the family. As mentioned in the above table, the t – ratio between mean score of achievement of two category of the variable, was 5.865. The value of t- ratio was higher than the table value 1.96, i.e. difference is found to be significant. From the mean it becomes visible that the achievement of the child whose mother was graduated is higher than achievement of children whose mother was not graduated. Table 1 reveals that t- ratio between mean score educational environment inventory was 0.910 which was not significant. Mother's education did not affect the educational environment of the family.

•Father's Educational Qualification

Table 2: Statistics regarding Effect of Father's Educational Qualification on the Achievement of children and Educational Environment of Family

Variable	Father's Educational Qualification	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t - ratio
Achievement	Pre-Graduate	63	77.8571	12.40169	1.56247	0.531
	Graduate	40	79.0500	10.19288	1.61164	
Educational environment	Pre-Graduate	63	143.0159	19.38031	2.44169	0.165
	Graduate	40	142.3500	20.36658	3.22024	

Table 2 shows the effect of Father’s educational qualification on the achievement of children and on the educational environment of the family. From the table – 2, t – ratio between mean score of achievement of two category of the variable was 0.531. The value of t- ratio was less than table value 1.96, i.e. difference is not significant. As well as t- ratio between mean score of educational environment inventory regarding two category of the variable was 0.165 which is not significant. Father’s educational qualification did not leave significant effects on the achievement of children and educational environment of the family.

8.2 Effect of Type of Family (Nuclear/ Joint)

Table 3: Statistics regarding Effect of Joint or Nuclear Family on the Achievement of Children and Educational Environment of Family

Variable	Type of Family	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t - ratio
Achievement	Joint	75	78.7600	10.78392	1.24522	0.568
	Nuclear	28	77.1429	13.55842	2.56230	
Educational environment	Joint	75	143.8533	20.83766	2.40613	1.039
	Nuclear	28	139.8214	16.11545	3.04553	

Table 3 gives statistics regarding effect of variable ‘Type of Family (Joint or Nuclear)’. The t – ratio for difference between achievement of children who were from the joint family and children who were from nuclear family was 0.568. The t – ratio between mean score of educational environment inventory of two categories of variable was 1.039. Both the values of t- ratio were lower than table value 1.96, i.e. difference is not significant. Thus, it becomes visible here that the type of family did not have significant effects on the educational environment of the family.

8.3 Effect of Number of children

Table 4: Statistics Regarding Effect of Number of Children on the Achievement of Children and Educational Environment of Family

Variable	Numbers of Child	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t - ratio
Achievement	1	33	77.0606	9.98104	1.73748	0.816
	2	70	78.9143	12.25188	1.46438	
Educational environment	1	33	144.6061	18.11239	3.15296	0.682
	2	70	141.8857	20.43409	2.44234	

Table 4 shows effect of variable number of children on the achievement of children and on the educational environment of the family. From the table – 4, t – ratio between mean score of achievement was 0.816. The value of t- ratio was less than table value 1.96, i.e. difference is not significant. As well as t- ratio between mean score of educational environment inventory was 0.682, which is not significant. Number of children, did not have significant effects on the achievement of children and educational environment of the family.

8.4 Correlation between Educational Environment and Achievement

In the present study it was also decided to learn the relation between Educational Environment of the family and the achievement of the children. The value of correlation was 0.319889. The value of correlation is found to be positive. It is not too strong but good. It means achievement of children was increased as educational environment of family grew upward.

9. Conclusion and Discussion

The result of the present study revealed that family's educational environment effects the achievement of the student. Educated mother or other family members could create more positive educational environment of the family. Achievement of children was higher in the family, in which mother was well educated. Effect of Father's Educational qualification could not be seen in the result of present study. The result indicates that father plays less important roll in the education of his child. This is the actual scenario of our society.

Educational environment of nuclear family was not seen more helpful for learning rather than joint family, how ever the effect was not significant. The economic crises lead Indian families to the nuclear family. Nowadays employment of both mother and father becomes essential part of the life style. It is fact that mother plays pivot role in child development. Due to over burden of the work mother can hardly take proper care of her child. Result of the present study also confirmed that father's education did not have any significant effect on achievement of children, while educated mother could improve achievement of children. If we want to nurture child properly and holistically, we have to focus on the involvement of both; father and mother. Thus, training program or counseling program is required for fathers so that they can cultivate better environment in their respective homes for of their children. Result reveled that number of children did not have any significant effect but achievement of children who were having siblings were more than those who did not have. From this result we can conclude that elder brother and sister can also become a guide for education of their younger siblings. By giving proper guidance, we make elders as mentor of children for their education.

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