

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HOME: A LOOK AT FAMILY STRUCTURES AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS OF STUDENTS

Arinda Rosa Casalins Camacho¹
Alexcosisky Armando Castilla Anaya²
Manuela Cecilia Castro Pacheco³
Javier Alfonso Tortello Castañez⁴

1. UNIVERSIDAD POPULAR DEL CESAR
arindacasalinsc@unicesar.edu.co
2. UNIVERSIDAD POPULAR DEL CESAR
alexcosiskycastleilla@unicesar.edu.co
3. UNIVERSIDAD POPULAR DEL CESAR
manuelacastro@unicesar.edu.co
4. UNIVERSIDAD POPULAR DEL CESAR
jtortello@unicesar.edu.co

Summary

The determining role that the family has on the education of children led to a systematic review of the literature based on search and analysis criteria, with the aim of determining the various family typologies that prevail today in their constitutive structure and how this would affect their participation in the educational process of students. The identification and recognition of family typologies, as well as the family factors that influence the educational process, yielded results that, although they cannot be conclusive, reveal that the presence or absence of parents in single-parent families, shared cohabitation in composite families, belonging to adoptive, foster or homoparental families can negatively affect the educational process by generating an unstable family scenario. lacking attention or object of rejection.

Keywords: *family structure, family support, family involvement, family factors, educational process*

Introduction

A person's belonging to a family group determines characteristics derived from kinship and socio-affective ties in accordance with values, principles, as well as family ways, among other traits that forge identity. Being considered as the first institution that forms values and knowledge, the family is called to be a guide and enhancer for the integral development of the student, since the norms, attitudes and skills that are reinforced in school are learned at home. (Razeto, 2016)(Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991)(Santelices & Scagliotti, 2005; Vielma, 2020)

From this premise, the need for family involvement in the educational process of children is clear, helping them, accompanying them and supporting them in the formation of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes in learning for the achievement of academic achievements. However, work within the classroom often reveals a decrease in the level of school performance, especially in students of low socioeconomic and cultural status, this being attributed by teachers to the poor capacity of families to support them, for various reasons such as, for example, the socioeconomic and cultural level of the parents, as well as deficit characteristics of the students, taking into account that the family nucleus influences the construction of personality and beliefs that provide elements for the development of the human being.(Bolaños & Stuart, 2019)(Jadue, 2003)(Mejía & Arroyo, 2022; Méndez, 2018)

The problem of the lack of participation of parents in the education of their children, given its repercussions, has been investigated in Latin America, confirming the need for support from families in the process of student education, since its lack has a negative impact on student performance. The educational process requires family participation, beyond the mere visit to receive the fines for learning; it is called to be actively involved in school co-management, so that they can take an active part in decision-making based on the knowledge of the institutional objectives on which the education of children necessarily depends. (Meza & Trimiño, 2020)

In Mexico, the work of Martínez, Torres, & Ríos stands out, who in their analysis of factors that make up the family context, in the scenario of their research determined the need for a friendly family environment to achieve positive learning outcomes. Although the type of family to which the students belonged was not determined to be influential in this case, an environment of trust, respect and support was to lay solid foundations for good student performance, so family emotional stability is a variant to consider. (2020)

These conclusions go hand in hand with those of Peralta, et al (2023) who, in their research in Ecuador, observed that the lack of parental accompaniment and support negatively influences student performance, since a student without family support generally has difficulties in fulfilling his or her school work. Another study in the same country, conducted by Alama & Obaco, confirms that those students who are academically and emotionally supported by their families have a positive academic performance; It also provides, among the conclusions, the need to promote the involvement of parents in the education of their children to improve their academic performance. (2024)

To this, we add the work in Colombia by Guerra & Parra, who from the scenario of their research also concluded on the definitive importance of family support as a key factor in school performance, even though a deficient level of participation of parents in the educational process of their children was revealed in the scenario investigated.(2020)

In this sense, the family is confirmed in its leading role in the integral formation of the student and, given this transcendence in personal and academic development, it is important to understand family dynamics and their relationship with academic processes in order to provide a clearer vision of the contextual reality and the importance of the family environment as a promoting agent of the advancement of all its members and in them of society (Pérez et al, 2023).

Given the reality described above, it is worth asking, to what extent can the family structure in its constitution contribute emotional instability, neglect of children or attention by people who are not their parents, negatively affecting the educational process of students?

Methodology

Under an observational view of the family in its constitutive structure, and with the ultimate intention of determining the level of relationship that it can have in student performance, an inquiry was undertaken from the general to identify the various family typologies that prevail today at the Latin American level in their constitutive structure and how this would affect their participation in the educational process of students. This procedure was carried out based on an extensive documentary review of the available literature both in the theoretical and research fields, considering criteria of relevance and topicality; In addition to the educational area, works in the social and psychological field were reviewed, with which it was possible to recognize the results of preliminary research that allowed to account for the state of the art in this area.

The family as the foundational nucleus of society

Historically and culturally, the family is considered the foundation of every society. An indispensable element for the achievement of the common good and the naturally necessary unity For a community, its emergence is prior to any other institution in relation to the other groupings of human beings. In view of its importance for the individual human being and for societies in general, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, within the framework of the UN General Assembly held in 1948, establishes in its article 16 the naturalness of the family and its fundamental importance for society, and must therefore be protected by the laws of the countries. (Méndez, 2018; Naranjo, 2021)

At the Latin American level, the American Convention on Human Rights, also known as the Pact of San José, in its article 17, which deals with family relations and ties, in numeral 1 ratified the provisions of the UN, reaffirming the importance that the American states give to the family as guarantors of its protection as an essential nucleus of society. In Colombia, the family is enshrined in article 42 of the Political Constitution of Colombia, and its character as the foundational nucleus of society is assumed, which enjoys freedom in its formation and the protection of the State and society.(1978)(1991)

This normative framework that still protects the family today has not prevented or regulated its formation, in terms of typologies or models that over the years and the evolution of cultures have emerged and are assumed as such. Currently, the family model represented by the father at the head and the mother in charge of the upbringing of their children has been displaced, as the rates of working mothers have risen in the last fifty years. (Méndez, 2018)

The understanding of the family and its role as a socializing agent necessarily requires assuming its complexity, which is given by the multidiversity of factors that intervene in its formation, which derive from the types of union other than heterosexual marriage and the vision of the father as head of the family. Hence, the relevance of reviewing family typologies, since their formation over time, as a result of economic, political, and sociocultural changes, could be affecting the educational scenario, especially the development of learning and its results in students. (Naranjo, 2021)(Sandoval, Riaño, & Barrera, 2019)

Types of families according to their forms of organization and coexistence

Once the family is assumed to be the nucleus of society, its constitution may depend on numerous factors, although all of them will generally depend on parental ties, affectives or the interests of the people involved. According to Malpartida, today family typologies depend on the context in which they are located and can be determined as nuclear, extended, monogamous or polygamous marriage, patriarchal or authoritarian authority, homoparental family, single-parent, reconstituted family, among others. Likewise, the Observatory of the Family and

Children of Extremadura-Spain coincides with this list and adds foster, adoptive and extended families. (2020) (Grau & Fernández, 2015)(Canvis, 2024) In the case of Colombia, there is evidence of an increase in types of family other than the nuclear or traditional one, given the increase in national heterogeneity, where factors such as displacement and migration, both internal and external, are determining the conformation of the social fabric. (Sandoval, Riaño, & Barrera, 2019)

In order to understand how these family structures can influence the education of children, it was considered relevant to review the characteristics of each one, according to several authors. Starting with the so-called nuclear or traditional family, also called biparental (Sandoval et al, 2019), due to its consideration as a single nucleus, it is made up of father, mother and children of both. (Canvis, 2024; Hernández, 2018; Malpartida, 2020; Naranjo, 2021; Sandoval, Riaño, & Barrera, 2019)

In the case of the single-parent family, the presence of only the mother or father and the children is evident, this being one of the cases with the greatest presence in Latin America (Blanco & Umayahara, 2004; Government of Mexico, 2022); however, even when the figure of the absent father and the mother as the support of family life prevails, it is obligatorily incorporated into the labor market. This condition, also known as single-motherhood, is not necessarily the norm. The aforementioned authors indicate studies of students belonging to single-mother families, with single mothers from the beginning, who are not prone to poor school performance, since they presented good levels of self-esteem and very few behavioral problems, despite the fact that in many cases they are subject to bullying. (Naranjo, 2021)(Grau & Fernández, 2015)

A third type is the composite family, made up of several nuclear families; this can happen in the case of the children's own families who, although nuclear, still live together in the paternal family home and share the family space and rules. Another case is when the parents separate and form a new family; The children have step-siblings and can live with one of the parents and the new family they have created. In this case, the family of separated parents can be included, where the children live with one of the parents, since the breakdown of the marriage bond, however, under agreement they spend time with the other parent, such as weekends and vacation periods.

Another type of family is the adoptive family, where the guardianship of a minor who is not a direct child is shared and who is received from the fulfillment of the legal procedure to be considered his or her adoptive parents. In adoption, the adoptive parents often have a good purchasing power, given the costs that the process causes. In this typology, depending on the country, the child can keep his or her own surname or have the surname of the adoptive parents, in this case with full rights; The adoptive parents may or may not also have contact with the biological parents, all of which is done through the respective legal agreements. (Hernández, 2018)

A type of family that is currently becoming common in developed countries is the family without children, either because they do not yet have children or because they have not been able or wanted to have them, because they are mature or old. On many occasions, the couple's priority is their profession or work and they consider that their life is fine without children. This type of family could be contained in the typology of the so-called family of the elderly, where the children have already left home and the family is only made up of the elderly parents(Canvis, 2024; Sandoval, Riaño, & Barrera, 2019)

Since the changes in the sociocultural vision of the family, the presence of the homoparental family, made up of a homosexual couple, either male or female, is becoming more and more common. The legal framework of each country determines whether the presence of children is through adoption, surrogacy or artificial insemination processes, although it may also happen that the members of the couple already have children from previous ties and these are part of the new family structure.

For Hernández, the type of extended family is similar to the complex family, since different generations live together in the same family group, since in addition to parents and children, there is the presence of grandparents and uncles, among others, this being also a case of predominance in Latin America either due to the issue of few economic resources or because of family roots where value is given to large families. A typology that is being widely visualized today is the so-called foster or passing family, sometimes temporary, although not necessarily. They are families where a temporary home is offered to a child or adolescent in the process of adoption. However, given the characteristics of the term welcome, which refers to welcome, hospitality, and protection, Colombian society is seeing the emergence of a type of host family that serves as temporary support for people or other families who have been displaced, migrants, or refugees.(2018)(Canvis, 2024)

Finally, the reviewed authors agree on the affirmation of the existence, although it seems not very recognized as a family, of the single-person type, arising in the cases of people who become widows, or separate, or simply decide to live alone; Also included in this category are those adults who, for reasons of separation, migration or death of parents or other relatives, are left alone and are assumed to be the only members of the family structure.

It should be noted that the study by Sandoval et al. showed that the family structure is being increasingly simplified, with a greater presence of single-person families or composite families, attributable in both cases to the

economic issue in agreement with Hernández. Likewise, the homoparental family is having a greater presence, and a decrease is observed in nuclear families, even though they are still the ones with the greatest presence. For some authors, this whole situation is leading to a worrying situation of crisis in the family issue, while others assume it as part of the necessary evolution, since there is a reconstruction of family structures and not a deconstruction. For these authors, family values remain, since they are independent of the type of family structure. (2019)(2018)(Grau & Fernández, 2015)

Family factors that influence the educational process

Human development goes through an educational process that should begin, generally, from the learning of feelings, values, principles, norms and knowledge that determine the essence of the family nucleus to which the person belongs, where spaces are built for the socialization of the child in his or her relationship with the immediate context. In this sense, the development of experiences, affections and emotions with people in the family environment also makes it possible to learn knowledge from early childhood curiosity that strengthens character and personality, while allowing the child to relate to himself and to others. Consequently, the family is the mediating vehicle between the individual and the social that the child faces in his or her early years, with the school being the space where his or her formal education should be expanded. (Mejía & Arroyo, 2022)

For the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the link between the family and education occurs through the assumption that the family environment must be an entity that offers protection, care and education to children, providing a positive influence in the search for a quality education that allows the integral development of children. as it is the ideal scenario for the support of formal education. (Blanco & Umayahara, 2004)

There are many and varied factors that influence this family-education link, since the family constitution, economic conditions, the parents' own education, their motivation towards their children's learning, their interest in participating in school activities, among others, necessarily affect student performance (Borja, et al, 2021; Martínez et al, 2020). Similarly, Criollo et al explain that student performance is influenced by factors such as (2020)general situation of the family, including the emotional stability of the couple, employment and economic resources, as well as a home environment where there is no violence, abuse, mistreatment or abandonment, where the basic needs of affection and communication are satisfied.

For these authors, the home should also offer children challenges that help them develop by learning from success or failure, from assuming mistakes or successes, a scenario where opportunities are given for play, culture and sports, access to educational resources such as books and other materials; All this, with the purpose of promoting curiosity, cognitive skills, cooperative work and the practice of values in the interaction with the world and people, taking into account the role of the family in the education of children. (Criollo, Moreno, Ramón, & Cango, 2020)

Discussion

In view of the above, families must take on great challenges for the education of their children for life. It is considered from the research that the family constitution can create scenarios of emotional instability, as is the case of families composed in scenarios of separation from the parents when many times the agreements force the children to live with another partner of their father or mother, thus generating insecurities or imbalances that can affect their school performance. because we reach scenarios of family violence with parents who fight to have their children. Additionally, authors such as Chavarria & López express that in the case of conflictive separations, there are school situations with the children that can range from low school performance, apathy to study, inconsistency in schoolwork, conflicts due to negative behavioral situations, absences and even dropout, which can also be associated with psycho-emotional consequences that affect the children of these couples. such as low self-esteem, demotivation and even aggressiveness.(2019)

However, as Mondéjar (2018) explains, the process of change from a separation could have a positive effect, since the instability ceases, with the negative coexistence of the parents being the factor that caused negative effects on learning. In the same typology in the case of an extended family, with the presence of two or more nuclear families living under the same roof, the coexistence of many people in the home could also cause instability, weaknesses in the care of the children and even due to lack of physical space to do homework comfortably.

In single-parent families, living with one of the parents, being in most cases with the mother, often leads to the older children having to assume certain responsibilities at home, such as caring for younger siblings or with some condition of physical or mental compromise and, in many cases, they must help in obtaining economic resources. generating a lack of time and conditions to study properly (Grau & Fernández, 2015; Mondéjar, 2018)(Criollo, Moreno, Ramón, & Cango, 2020).

The above is assumed by results in studies where it was observed that students Belonging to two-parent families perform better than those who are part of a single-parent family and even more so than students who live with the lack of both parents, as is the case of children who live with one or two grandparents, for example, very common in cases of migration, where the responsibility for educational accompaniment in the home is transferred to those

relatives or caregivers, with the consequence that the children do not study or have a high percentage of absences from classes because they go when they can. (Cervini, Dari, & Quiroz, 2014)

It is estimated that, in the cases of same-sex families, the lack of the physical figure of the father or mother could cause negative emotional scenarios in the children or even rejection at school, even due to the presence of teachers with prejudices in this regard. In adoptive families, there may be spaces of negative reaction in the adopted child, negatively impacting their school adaptation and therefore their performance; Hence, these families are the ones who seem mostly concerned about the child's school performance, because they come from dysfunctional contexts, this leads to generating fears or doubts regarding psychoemotional development.(Huaiquivil, Yévenes, & Zicavo, 2019)(Grau & Fernández, 2015)(Grau & Fernández, 2015)

All this is necessary for teachers to know, in order to be able to offer pedagogical aids to students and work with families to improve together the educational process of those students whose low performance is determined by the family structure in their constitution, providing spaces consonant with learning needs. Given their formative work, teachers' understanding of possible situations arising from the students' family structure must prevail, serving as channels to enable their positive encounter with the educational process. Even though the nuclear family continues to prevail in the general context, and in the particular context of schools, they must aim to be inclusive schools, not only of people in their individuality, but also in the collective represented by new family structures.(Grau & Fernández, 2015)

It is assumed that the quality of intra-family relationships determines the relationship of children with their environment, this being of greater relevance for integral development than the type of family to which they belong. However, the importance of the positive presence of the parents or one of them in the environment, which makes the child feel cared for, loved and valued as a member of a family, cannot be denied. Sometimes, despite the fact that the child is well received at first, as in the cases of adoption families, he may not feel the support of the parents because in principle they do not know each other. Likewise, in single-parent families, either because one of the parents, after separation, has formed a separate family, or because of abandonment often by one or both parents, with which the child feels relegated and worthless, negatively influencing his or her integral development. (Grau & Fernández, 2015)

Conclusions

The review of the literature allowed us to reaffirm that the particular characteristics of families have a positive or negative impact on the integral development of people. Family structures have been evolving in terms of their constitution, being increasingly adapted to the changes resulting from the social, economic and cultural realities of the communities. The type of two-parent, nuclear or traditional family as it is also known, is not the only one or the most visible, since particularities have been emerging that come from the breadth with which the concept of family is seen.

However, whatever the family typology, none of them can or should avoid the responsibilities that derive from their own constitution as the primary educator of their children, since on many occasions this responsibility is transferred to the school and it is not understood that it is a shared function. The family must ensure the education of the children, therefore, it must offer an adequate scenario to serve as a promoter of quality learning for good academic performance.

The family structure, as long as it offers a climate of harmony, protection and emotional stability, should not represent a negative factor for learning; this is not the case when this structure causes a family imbalance, due to the absence of the father, the mother or both, being assumed responsibility for the children by other people, which may or may not negatively affect the educational process. In this case, single-parent families are the most affected because in the absence of the father, most of the times the economic responsibility is shared by the mother together with the older brother who can see his school education affected.

It was also evidenced in the literature reviewed that extended composite families, increasingly frequent due to the economic factor, being made up of a good number of people congregated in nuclear families that share the same space, do not offer students a scenario with minimum conditions to study, which often leads to demotivation. absences and, therefore, poor school performance. It is important to maintain a constant inquiry in this regard in the family particularities in the need to be able to contribute, from the research scenario, strategies that favor students from families with constitutive structures that could be causing negative dynamics for their learning.

The review allowed us to generate reflections on the necessary search for strategies that could be applied from the school for family integration to the educational process, working from the consideration of the family structure, not in a questioning or interventionist way, but rather in an educational way for the training not only of students but also of teachers and authorities who, Many times, they do not show understanding of the new forms of family grouping that today seek space in society. The school cannot look the other way when talking about family diversity and the complexities that it entails, and for this it must focus on making the necessary adjustments and changes that allow for the generation of new inclusive views of current family structures.

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