

III. ÉTUDES, RECHERCHES ET SYNTHÈSES

Parental Educational Level – Promoter in the Development of Social Competencies in Preadolescents

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Abstract. In this study we identified the interaction between the level of parental education and the level of development of social competences in preadolescents. For this purpose, the demographic questionnaire for parents was applied, which provided data on parental educational level, and the CASEL social-emotional competence questionnaire for preadolescents. The research sample consists of 219 urban preadolescents, with an average age of ± 14 years. The results revealed statistically significant differences in all dimensions of social competences of the CASEL questionnaire between preadolescents whose parents have a different parental educational level: with basic, medium education and those whose parents have higher education. The results highlight the role of parents as an essential model and guide in the development of children's social competences up to puberty.

Keywords: social competences, preadolescents, parental education level

Introduction

From an early age, families make efforts to teach their children to interact with others. With each interpersonal task encountered, people learn and improve, particularly through instructions, models and consequences, new social skills and social competence requirements. However, when the environment is not favorable, there can be deficits in these requirements and behaviors, which usually result in interpersonal difficulties, sometimes even requiring professional care. Social competence is a critical skill that enables individuals to effectively navigate various social situations. To achieve this the individual must be able to connect with others, show compassion and understanding in order to maintain constructive interactions. Many factors contribute to an individual's level of social skills, which in

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turn determines how well they can get along with others. In this context, it is essential to understand the different components of social skills and how they contribute to individual well-being.

As Pavlenko (2015) also observes, the concept of social competence is complex and multifaceted. In the research paper, it identifies three components of social competence: cognitive-affective, intentional and behavioral. The cognitive-affective component includes recognizing and understanding problematic situations and the emotions of others. The intentional component refers to an individual's tendencies and behaviors in certain situations, such as communicating in groups or choosing a strategy in conflict situations. The behavioral component comprises the actual behavior of an individual in a social situation. The article also discusses various theories and concepts related to social psychology, such as causal attribution theory and the conflict regulation strategies model. However, the author emphasizes the critical role that communication plays in social performance, and effective communication involves both verbal and non-verbal communication.

Constantinescu (2004) and Robu (2011) describe social competence from another perspective and identify assertiveness, gratification and support, non-verbal communication, verbal communication, empathy, problem solving and self-presentation as characteristic components. It defines assertiveness as the ability to influence others without resorting to aggression or passive behavior. Nonverbal communication is an important aspect of communication because it can convey information and emotions that cannot be expressed through words. The author highlights the different types of non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, body language and tone of voice and points out that these cues can have a strong impact on how a message is received and notes that it can be culture specific and important to be aware of these differences when communicating with people from different backgrounds. Effective communication involves the ability to speak and listen and requires elements such as structure, interest, feedback, clarity and coherence. Verbal communication can be regulated and supported by nonverbal communication, which can emphasize, complement, contradict, or substitute aspects of the verbal message. Empathy, cooperation, and consideration for others are also crucial in social interactions and refer to the individual's ability to empathize with the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others and understand their perspectives. Empathy is based on the psychological mechanism of introspection and projection, making it easier to share emotions with others and understand different points of view. Cooperation involves working together with others to achieve common goals, while consideration for others involves being attentive to others' needs, interests, and perspectives.

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of parental level of education on the social competence of preadolescents.

In the present research we have chosen to follow the social skills from the perspective proposed by CASEL (2008) (acronym for "Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning"), considering that it is an organization founded by Roger Weissberg and Daniel Goleman to name only a few of the specialists CASEL defines social competence as the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and behaviors, and to establish and maintain positive relationships with others. This definition emphasizes both intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. More precisely, CASEL identifies five components of social competence, more precisely:

- Self-awareness: the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions, thoughts and values.

- Self-management : the ability to regulate one's own emotions and behaviors and to set and work toward personal goals.
- Social awareness : the ability to understand and empathize with the perspectives and feelings of others.
- Relationship management : the ability to establish and maintain positive relationships, communicate effectively and work collaboratively with others.
- Responsible decision-making : the ability to make ethical and constructive choices based on social norms, safety concerns, and personal and social goals.

The CASEL definition and components of social competence reflect a holistic approach to social and emotional education that emphasizes the importance of both personal and social factors in promoting the positive development and well-being of individuals. By promoting social competence in schools and other settings, CASEL aims to help individuals develop the skills and attitudes needed to succeed in life and contribute to their community.

The stages of social competence development span the developmental periods of preschool, middle childhood, and adolescence. During these developmental periods, prosocial, cooperative and friendship-forming skills, as well as self-control skills (anger management, negotiation skills, problem-solving skills) are key points of social competence. The ability to inhibit egocentric, impulsive or negative social behavior is also evidence of the young person's social skills (Savca & Gherciu, 2018). Emotional intelligence refers to the child's ability to understand the emotions of others, to perceive subtle social cues in complex social situations and is absolutely necessary for good relationships with others.

Parents are the main source of emotional support and social example in the first years of children's lives. With the passage of time, the social and influence environment widens, friends, schoolmates and teachers begin to play an increasingly significant role in the socio-emotional development of the young person. During preadolescence, interactions between peers are the point of development of communication skills and empathic understanding. Increasingly, social competence involves emotional availability and the ability to share thoughts and feelings with friends, especially among girls. During adolescence, friendships become especially important as a starting point for the formation of an authentic personal identity. At this stage, friends and romantic partners constantly compete with parents as primary sources of intimacy and social support. Young people will try to experiment with different social roles, and it is peers and teachers who will provide feedback as they transform into young adults. Many of the positive characteristics that promote popularity, such as cooperation with others, friendliness, and consideration, help children develop and maintain friendships.

Because the family is the primary setting for social development, there are a number of ways in which patterns of interaction can help or hinder children's development of social competence. Attachment studies have shown that babies whose parents are consistent and sensitive in their responses are less irritable, less anxious, and have better emotional self-regulation. Conversely, parents who are inconsistent with their children's signals are more likely to have anxious, irritable, difficult-to-calm children. These children may learn both to model their parents' insensitivity and to rely on intrusive and demanding behavior to get their attention. If these ineffective behaviors are brought into interactions with other children, they may exhibit a reaction of rejection and avoidance. When children generalize the aggressive and oppositional behavior they have learned at home to their interactions with peers, other children will reject them. In addition to family interaction

patterns and various aspects of the parent-child relationship, children's own thoughts, feelings, and attitudes can influence their social behavior. Research has revealed that many rejected children make impulsive, inaccurate, and incomplete judgments about how to behave in social situations and lack social problem-solving skills. For example, aggressive children are more likely to interpret an accidental hit as hostile intent and respond accordingly.

Children establish their first social relationships with parental figures, and the nature and quality of these parent-child relationships and the context in which they are supported can determine the social skills and social relationships the child will develop later in life. Preadolescents who have parents who engage in positive problem-solving discussion and reasoning and who describe their families as cohesive are more likely to report higher levels of insight when trying to empathize with and understand another person. Conversely, a negative family environment characterized by high levels of conflict, poor or negative communication, divided families with divorced parents and lack of parental support have a major negative effect on the development of social skills necessary for any individual (Savca & Patraşcu, 2019). These abilities include the ability to anticipate the negative consequences of his behaviors on the victim, demonstrating a low level of empathy. The family supports the development of empathy in adolescents by providing the training ground for the acquisition of empathic skills and by providing an example of an empathic response that the child can then use in the course of interactions with others (Lee & Song, 2012). The quality of relations with parents determines the subsequent reporting of children to authority figures and influences compliance with the norms established by these informal authorities. Negative child-parent relationships can lead to a sense of disappointment and disillusionment with the parent figure, and the effects will be felt in the teacher-student relationship. This perception of the lack of protection and guidance from parents and adults leads some adolescents to seek a social reputation based on non-conformity, aggression and rebellion as protective mechanisms in social interactions.

As we have seen, the quality of preadolescents' relation with its parents impacts their socio-emotional development. Considering this, it becomes clear how the parents' abilities and context of life would have a direct impact on the child's upbringing. Parents serve as primary role models for their children, and their level of education can influence the social behaviors and attitudes children observe and adopt. Research indicates that parents with higher levels of education often possess better communication skills, higher socio-economic status, and increased exposure to diverse social settings. These factors can create an environment conducive to positive social modeling, where children are more likely to acquire and imitate appropriate social skills (Eisenberg & Morris, 2002). Consequently, children of highly educated parents may develop superior social skills through observational learning, leading to enhanced social competence.

Parents with higher education levels often possess a greater understanding of the importance of social skills in personal and professional success. Consequently, they are more likely to actively engage in fostering their children's social development. For instance, they may provide a stimulating home environment, encourage participation in extracurricular activities, and facilitate opportunities for social interactions with peers. Such parental involvement positively affects children's social skills by providing them with a supportive environment and ample opportunities for practice and growth (Davis-Kean, 2005). Parental education level is often linked to a family's socio-economic status, which can impact the availability of educational opportunities for children. Higher educated parents may possess

greater financial resources and access to quality schools and educational programs, which can contribute to their children's overall social development. These resources may include access to extracurricular activities, educational materials, and socialization opportunities outside the home. The exposure to a more enriching educational environment can foster the development of advanced social skills in children (Haveman & Wolfe, 1995).

Method

The social competence was assessed with the help of Social Emotional Competency Questionnaire CASEL (Pratto & Stewart, 2012) and was applied to a sample of 219 urban preadolescents, with an average age of 14 years. The questionnaire covers five relevant dimensions of social competence and is rated on a scale from 1 to 6, with a higher value indicating that the respondent has a better grasp of that ability. The condition of parental education was identified from the answers of the parents, who filled out a socio-demographic questionnaire along with giving consent for the preadolescent to participate in the research. The level of education of the two parents was converted into a single variable conditioned by the highest level obtained, after which a recoding of five options was applied creating only three groups as follows :

Table 1. *Recoding the parental educational level in variable with three categories*

<i>N</i>	<i>Education 5 levels</i>	<i>Education 3 levels</i>	<i>N</i>
7	Primary	Basic	29
22	Secondary		
59	High School	Medium	120
61	Post-secondary		
70	University	Higher	70

Hypothesis

It is assumed that preadolescents whose parents have reached a higher educational level will show higher levels for all dimensions of social competence than those with parents with a basic educational level. The testing of the hypothesis was done with the help of ANOVA, considering that we want to compare the means of three groups (preadolescents with parents that obtained a basic level of education, a medium level and a higher education). For a correct multivariate analysis, the homogeneity of the variances of the three groups tested shall be taken into account. If this condition is not violated, the interpretation shall be made on the basis of the ANOVA F coefficient with the Tukey post-hoc analysis, and otherwise the Welch coefficient will be used with the post-hoc interpretation of the results offered by the Games-Howell test.

Results

Considering the volume of information resulting from the ANOVA and in order to facilitate the interpretation and understanding of the results we agreed upon the use of the following notation conventions :

M_B = mean of the group of preadolescents from families with a basic level of education

M_M = mean of preadolescents from families with an average level of education

M_H = mean of preadolescents from families with a higher level of education

ΔM_{H-B} = difference of means between the higher education group and the basic level

ΔM_{H-M} = difference in means between the higher education group and the middle level

ΔM_{M-B} = difference in means between the medium education group and the basic level

Table 2. *Descriptive statistics of the dimensions of social competence by parental educational level*

	Parental educational level	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Self-awareness	Basic	3.979	0.955	2.20	5.60
	Medium	4.678	0.821	2.20	6.00
	Higher	5.054	0.637	2.80	6.00
	Total	4.706	0.850	2.20	6.00
Social awareness	Basic	4.159	0.871	2.60	5.60
	Medium	4.623	0.827	2.00	6.00
	Higher	4.703	0.690	2.80	5.80
	Total	4.587	0.807	2.00	6.00
Self-management	Basic	3.290	0.967	1.80	5.20
	Medium	4.082	1.269	1.00	6.00
	Higher	4.509	1.048	1.20	6.00
	Total	4.113	1.220	1.00	6.00
Relationship management	Basic	3.979	0.893	1.80	5.60
	Medium	4.627	0.929	1.40	5.80
	Higher	5.080	0.486	4.00	6.00
	Total	4.686	0.876	1.40	6.00
Responsible decision-making	Basic	3.117	1.004	1.20	4.80
	Medium	4.160	1.206	1.20	6.00
	Higher	4.586	0.876	2.40	6.00
	Total	4.158	1.170	1.20	6.00

We will analyze the differences in children's averages depending on the educational level reached by the parents, for the five dimensions of social competence : *Self-awareness*, *Social awareness*, *Self-management*, *Relationship management*, and *Responsible decision-making*. Tables 2 and 3 include the statistics resulting from the ANOVA analysis in summary form.

Table 3. Post-hoc results for multiple comparisons by parental educational level of preadolescents' social competence dimensions

Dependent variable	(I) Parental education	(J) Parental education	Difference (I-J)	Sig.	Confidence interval 95%	
					Min	Max
<i>Self-awareness</i> Post-hoc : Games-Howell	Basic	Medium	-0.699*	0.002	-1.168	-0.230
		Higher	-1.074*	0.000	-1.545	-0.605
	Medium	Basic	0.699*	0.002	0.230	1.168
		Higher	-.375*	0.002	-0.629	-0.123
	Higher	Basic	1.074*	0.000	0.605	1.545
		Medium	0.375*	0.002	0.123	0.629
<i>Social awareness</i> Post-hoc : Tukey HSD	Basic	Medium	-0.464*	0.033	-0.899	-0.031
		Higher	-0.544*	0.012	-0.985	-0.104
	Medium	Basic	0.464*	0.033	0.031	0.899
		Higher	-0.079	0.757	-0.344	0.185
	Higher	Basic	0.544*	0.012	0.104	0.985
		Medium	0.079	0.757	-0.185	0.344
<i>Self-management</i> Post-hoc : Games-Howell	Basic	Medium	-0.792*	0.001	-1.307	-0.277
		Higher	-1.218*	0.000	-1.746	-0.692
	Medium	Basic	0.792*	0.001	0.277	1.307
		Higher	-0.426*	0.035	-0.830	-0.023
	Higher	Basic	1.218*	0.000	0.692	1.746
		Medium	0.426*	0.035	0.023	0.830
<i>Relationship management</i> Post-hoc : Games-Howell	Basic	Medium	-0.647*	0.003	-1.099	-0.195
		Higher	-1.101*	0.000	-1.531	-0.671
	Medium	Basic	0.647*	0.003	0.195	1.099
		Higher	-0.453*	0.000	-0.696	-0.211
	Higher	Basic	1.101*	0.000	0.671	1.531
		Medium	0.453*	0.000	0.211	0.696
<i>Responsible decision-making</i> Post-hoc : Games-Howell	Basic	Medium	-1.042*	0.000	-1.566	-0.520
		Higher	-1.468*	0.000	-1.986	-0.951
	Medium	Basic	1.042*	0.000	0.520	1.566
		Higher	-0.425*	0.015	-0.785	-0.067
	Higher	Basic	1.468*	0.000	0.951	1.986
		Medium	0.425*	0.015	0.067	0.785

Self-awareness : The non-parametric Welch test of the differences in the averages of the *Self-awareness* variable between groups of preadolescents whose parents have different levels of education confirmed the existence of a statistically significant difference (Welch $F_{(2, 72.487)} = 17.42$, $p = 0.000$) between at least two of the three groups tested. The post-hoc Games-Howell analysis shows that the level of *Self-awareness* of the participants was significantly higher statistically for those from families with a higher level of education

($M_H=5.054 \pm 0.636$ SD, $p=.000$, $\Delta M_{H-B}=1.074$ [0.604, 1.545]) and the medium level of parent education ($M=4.678 \pm 0.82$ SD, $p=.002$, $\Delta M_{M-B}=0.699$ [0.229, 1.168]) compared to preadolescents whose parents have a basic level of education ($M_B=3.979 \pm 0.955$ SD). Much smaller, but statistically significant, a difference was also identified ($\Delta M_{H-M}=0.375$, [0.123, 0.628], $p=0.002$) between preadolescents from higher-educated families and those from medium-educated families, the latter obtaining lower averages than the former for the *Self-awareness* social competence dimension.

Social awareness : For this dimension, the Lavene test confirmed the equivalence of the variances of the three groups tested : $F_{(2, 216)}=1.988$, $p=0.14$. Subsequently, a statistically significant difference between the groups was identified using the unidirectional ANOVA test ($F_{(2, 216)}=5.121$, $p=.007$). Tukey's post-hoc test results showed that participants' level of *Social awareness* was significantly higher statistically for those from families with a higher level of education ($M_H=4.702 \pm 0.69$ SD, $p=.006$, $\Delta M_{H-B}=0.544$ [0.131, 0.956]) and medium level of parent education ($M_M=4.623 \pm 0.826$ SD, $p=.014$, $\Delta M_{M-B}=0.464$ [0.078, 0.851]) compared to the preadolescents whose parents have a basic level of education ($M_B=4.158 \pm 0.87$ SD). However, no significant difference could be identified ($\Delta M_{H-M}=0.079$, $p=0.782$) between preadolescents from higher-educated and medium-educated families.

Self-management : The variances of the three groups tested for the *Self-management* subscale were not equal ($F(2, 216)=4,606$, $p=0.011$) and so the Welch test result for the average differences will be used. The existence of a statistically significant difference has been confirmed (Welch $F_{(2, 83.073)}=15,379$, $p=.000$) between at least two of the three parent education level groups tested. The post-hoc Games-Howell analysis shows that the level of *Self-management* of participants was significantly higher statistically for those from families with a higher level of education ($M_H=4.5086 \pm 1.048$ SD, $p=0.000$, $\Delta M_{H-B}=1.218$ [0.691, 1.746]) and the medium level of parent education ($M_M=4.081 \pm 1.268$ SD, $p=0.001$, $\Delta M_{M-B}=0.792$ [0.276, 1.307]) compared to preadolescents whose parents have a basic level of education ($M_B=3.289 \pm 0.967$ SD). Another difference, much smaller but statistically significant, has been identified ($\Delta M_{H-M}=0.426$, [0.023, 0.83], $p=.035$) between preadolescents from higher-educated families and those from medium-educated families, the latter obtaining lower averages than the first for the dimension of social competence *Self-management*.

Relationship management : The Welch non-parametric test of differences in averages of the variable *Relationship management*, between groups of preadolescents whose parents have different levels of education, confirmed the existence of a statistically significant difference (Welch $F_{(2, 72.837)}=24,831$, $p=0.000$). The post-hoc Games-Howell analysis shows that the level of *Relationship management* was significantly higher from a statistical point of view for those coming from families with a higher level of education ($M_H=5.08 \pm 0.485$ SD, $p=.000$, $\Delta M_{H-B}=1.1$ [0.67, 1.53]) and the medium level of parent education ($M_M=4.626 \pm 0.929$ SD, $p=.003$, $\Delta M_{M-B}=0.647$ [0.195, 1.099]) compared to preadolescents whose parents have a basic level of education ($M_B=3.979 \pm 0.893$ SD). Much smaller, but statistically significant, a difference was also identified between preadolescents from higher-educated families and those from medium-educated families, $\Delta M_{H-M}=0.453$, [0.21, 0.696], $p=.000$, the latter obtaining lower averages than the first for the dimension of social competences *Relationship management*.

Responsible decision making : The variances of the *Responsible decision making* dimension between the three groups tested were not equal ($F(2, 216)=4,932$, $p=0.008$), but the averages were confirmed to be statistically significantly different using the non-parametric Welch test (Welch $F_{(2, 79.342)}=23.526$, $p=0.000$) between at least two of the three groups

tested. The post-hoc Games-Howell analysis shows that the level of the participants was significantly higher statistically for those from families with a higher level of education ($M_H = 4.585 \pm 0.876$ SD, $p = .000$, $\Delta M_{H-B} = 1.468$ [0.951, 1.986]) and the medium level of parent education ($M_M = 4.16 \pm 1.205$ SD, $p = .000$, $\Delta M_{M-B} = 1.042$ [0.519, 1.565]) compared to preadolescents whose parents have a basic level of education ($M_B = 3.117 \pm 1.003$ SD). Much smaller, but statistically significant, a difference was also identified ($\Delta M_{H-M} = 0.425$, [0.066, 0.784], $p = .015$) between preadolescents from higher-educated families and those from a middle education attained by their families, the latter obtaining lower averages than the former for the *Responsible decision-making* social competence dimension.

The hypothesis proposed in this research was confirmed, being able to observe statistically significant differences in all dimensions of social competence between preadolescents whose parents have a basic educational level and those whose parents attained higher education.

When it comes to children's social competence, parents are crucial in ensuring development success. Most of the research aimed at the social adaptability of children has focused on educating parents to develop the sphere of social skills of the child. However, very few studies have reported differences in the levels of social competence of the child depending on the level of parental education.

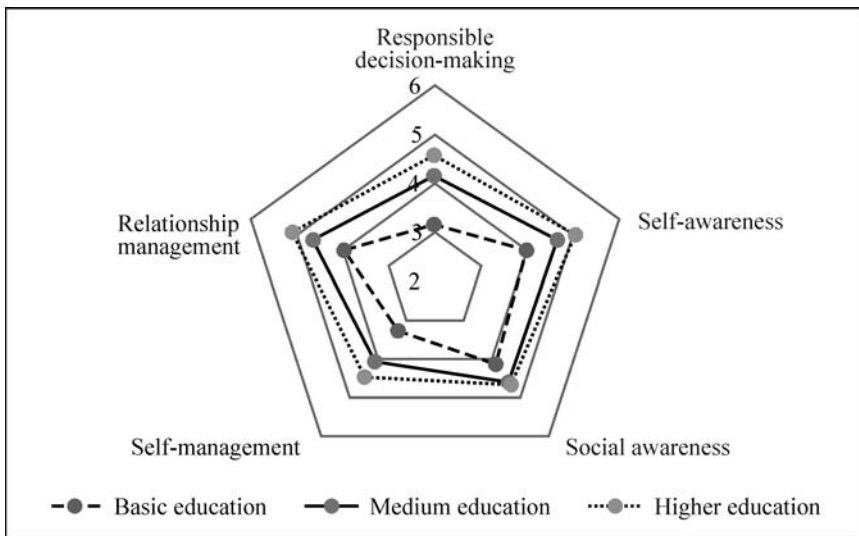


Figure 1. Representation of the differences in means for the dimensions of social competence depending on the parental educational level

These results improve the body of knowledge specific to the area of social competence, providing new perspectives on the impact of the parental educational level. For all dimensions of the social competences of the assessed children, we were able to observe significant positive differences in each education threshold reached by parents, as can be seen from Figure 1. The influence of parental education on the social competence of children extends to various aspects crucial to their overall development. Educated parents serve as role models, guiding their children in developing self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making abilities.

Indeed, the lowest levels have been achieved by children whose parents have only a basic level of education, however the differences also persist between those whose parents have a medium level and those with a university education, favoring those with the higher level of education of their parents. The role of parents in the education of their children and the acquisition of essential life skills should not be underestimated. It is reasonable to assume that the level of parental education affects the development of early childhood life skills, since parents with a higher level of education are more likely to encounter new information about the good development of the child and to have a more open mind about the importance of developing these skills in young children.

Discussion

Traditionally, parents have been considered as essential in the education of their children. The abilities of parents will serve as a model for how the child should address the challenges they face on a daily basis. Parents with a higher educational level will work harder to ensure that their children receive a quality education (Constantinescu, 2004 ; Pratto & Stewart, 2012 ; Tacu & Pâslaru, 2010). Of course, the educational experiences of parents vary, depending on a number of factors and the options presented by the national education system along with the socio-economic status in which they in turn grew up. Parents with higher education will have a different understanding of the value of education than those with primary or secondary education, and this understanding will differ from parent to parent. Parents with advanced degrees have a better understanding of the importance of education, good social behavior and upbringing in childhood. Parents with a higher level of education are more likely to encourage, support and educate their children well, allowing them to meet or exceed the standards of achievement for child development in all relevant growth areas.

Several studies have identified how this level of education of parents, and especially the mother's, influences individual outcomes of children, including academic performance (Véronneau et al., 2014), aggression and problem behaviors (Nocentini et al., 2010), social skills level (Adhe et al., 2020), and mental health (Sonego et al., 2013). It has also been observed that preadolescents from families with a higher educational level of parents are less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors such as aggression (Nocentini et al., 2010 ; Véronneau et al., 2014) and have better control over aggressive impulses (Cabello et al., 2017).

Parental education significantly affects a child's self-awareness, given that educated parents are more likely to possess a heightened sense of self-awareness themselves, which they then pass onto their children through their behaviors and interactions. By being reflective and conscious of their own thoughts, emotions, and actions, and expressing them in an explanatory manner parents with higher educational levels can model self-awareness in their children (Eisenberg & Morris, 2002). This, in turn, helps children develop an understanding of their own strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs, facilitating their ability to keep their composure and self-awareness while navigating social situations more effectively.

Parents who have received a higher level of education often exhibit better self-management skills. They tend to be more disciplined, organized, and goal-oriented in their daily lives. These qualities are transmitted to their children through consistent role modeling and expectations. Consequently, children of educated parents are more likely to develop effective self-management skills, including self-discipline, time management, and impulse control (Alexander et al., 1994). Such skills contribute to their social competence by enabling them to regulate their emotions, behaviors, and reactions in various social contexts.

Parental education can significantly influence a child's social awareness, which encompasses the ability to understand and empathize with others' perspectives, emotions, and needs. Educated parents tend to possess a broader knowledge base, exposure to diverse cultures, and critical thinking skills that enhance their social awareness. By actively engaging in discussions, encouraging empathy, and promoting exposure to different social contexts, educated parents foster their children's understanding of social dynamics, cultural diversity, and the importance of respecting others' feelings and experiences.

The level of education attained by parents also impacts the development of relationship skills in their children. Well-educated parents tend to possess effective communication skills, conflict resolution abilities, and the capacity to build and maintain positive relationships. By modeling healthy and respectful interactions within the family unit, children of educated parents observe and learn essential relationship skills (Davis-Kean, 2005). They gain exposure to constructive communication patterns, active listening, compromise, and cooperation, which are crucial for establishing and maintaining healthy relationships with peers, authority figures, and the broader community.

Parental education is closely linked to the development of responsible decision-making skills in children. Educated parents often possess critical thinking abilities, problem-solving skills, and a broader understanding of the consequences of actions. They tend to encourage autonomy and independence in their children while providing guidance and support. By involving children in decision-making processes, discussing potential outcomes, and encouraging thoughtful analysis, educated parents foster responsible decision making (Kallitsoglou, 2014). This skill equips children to assess risks, make informed choices, and consider the impact of their actions on themselves and others, thereby enhancing their social competence.

Conclusion

In this comparative study we investigated the impact of parental level of education on the social competence of preadolescents, considering the cognitive-affective, intentional, and behavioral components of social competence. Our research was guided by the definition and components of social competence proposed by CASEL (2008), which emphasizes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. The findings revealed significant differences in the social competence of preadolescents based on the level of education attained by their parents as was stated by the study hypothesis. Children of highly educated parents demonstrated superior social competence, indicating the role of parental education in shaping children's social behaviors and attitudes.

The impact of parental level of education on children's social skills is significant, but it is crucial to consider the complex interplay of various factors involved in social development. Parents with higher education levels tend to provide positive role models, offer greater support and engagement, and provide enhanced educational opportunities for their children, all of which contribute to the development of superior social skills. Highly educated parents often possess better communication skills, higher socio-economic status, and increased exposure to diverse social settings. These factors create an environment conducive to positive social modeling, leading to enhanced social competence in children. Furthermore, educated parents are more likely to actively engage in fostering their children's social development, providing a supportive environment and ample opportunities for practice and growth. By imparting these important social competencies, parents create a foundation for their children

to thrive in interpersonal interactions, contribute positively to their communities, and lead fulfilling lives.

However, individual differences and environmental factors also play a role in shaping social competence. Children's temperament, genetic predispositions, and interactions with peers and other significant figures can influence their social development, sometimes independently of parental education. Additionally, various external factors, such as community resources, neighbourhood characteristics, and school programs, can shape preadolescents' social competence in combination with parental education. Understanding these dynamics can help inform interventions and policies aimed at promoting positive social development in children, irrespective of parental education levels.

The findings of this research contribute to the existing knowledge on social competence, shedding light on the impact of parental educational level. It underlines the crucial role parents play in the socio-emotional development of children and the acquisition of essential life skills. Parents with higher education levels serve as models and guides for their children, helping them develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making abilities. It is important to recognize that parental education is just one factor influencing children's social competence, and additional research is needed to explore the interplay between various factors. Nonetheless, the study highlights the significance of parental education in fostering positive social development in children. By understanding these dynamics, educators, policymakers, and parents can work together to create supportive environments that promote social competence and overall well-being of preadolescents.

Rezumat. În acest studiu am identificat interacțiunea dintre nivelul de educație parentală și nivelul de dezvoltare a competențelor sociale la preadolescenți. În acest scop a fost aplicat chestionarul demografic pentru părinți, care a furnizat date privind nivelul educațional parental și chestionarul de competență social-emoțională CASEL pentru preadolescenți. Eșantionul de cercetare este alcătuit din 219 preadolescenți urbani, cu o vârstă medie de ± 14 ani. Rezultatele au relevat diferențe semnificative statistic în toate dimensiunile competenței sociale a chestionarului CASEL între preadolescenții ai căror părinți au un nivel educațional parental diferit: cu studii de bază, medii și cei ai căror părinți au studii superioare. Rezultatele evidențiază rolul părinților ca model și ghid esențial în dezvoltarea competențelor sociale a copiilor până la vârsta pubertății.

Cuvinte-cheie: competențe sociale, preadolescent, nivel educațional parental

Résumé. Dans cette étude, nous avons identifié l'interaction entre le niveau d'éducation des parents et le niveau de développement des compétences sociales chez les préadolescents. À cette fin, le questionnaire démographique pour les parents a été appliqué, qui a fourni des données sur le niveau d'éducation des parents, et le questionnaire de compétences socio-émotionnelles CASEL pour les préadolescents. L'échantillon de recherche se compose de 219 préadolescents urbains, avec un âge moyen de ± 14 ans. Les résultats ont révélé des différences statistiquement significatives dans toutes les dimensions des compétences sociales du questionnaire CASEL entre les préadolescents dont les parents ont un niveau d'éducation parentale différent: avec l'éducation de base, secondaire et ceux dont les parents ont une éducation supérieure. Les résultats mettent en évidence le rôle des parents comme modèle et guide essentiel dans le développement des compétences sociales des enfants jusqu'à la puberté.

Mots-clés: compétences sociales, préadolescent, niveau d'instruction des parents

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