

# FAMILY PARTICULARITIES THAT INFLUENCE CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

## **Keywords**

*family dimensions, family climate, human development*

---

## **Abstract**

*The family is the most important environment for socialization and a source of influence for children's development. Parenting practices are the personal way in which parents express their values and conceptions about education. The degree of involvement of parents in their children's lives can vary depending on several factors: personal conceptions, values, aspirations, priorities, the presence of physical or psychological absence of parents in children's lives and activities, family type, family climate, parenting style, etc. Each child actively contributes to their learning and development by accumulating experiences and solving specific challenges, which ensure their growth, strength, and commitment at every stage of life.*

---

## 1. Introduction

The development of the human being must be seen under three essential aspects: biological, psychological, and social, between them being numerous and varied interferences. Psychological development refers to the processes of physical growth, internal transformations of the body, materialized in quantitative and qualitative changes of higher nervous activities. Psychic development considers the appearance and manifestation of processes, properties, states, and psychic structures. Social development is demonstrated by amplifying the possibilities of relationships (correlating one's behavior with different social requirements) (Crețu, 2004).

The family is an open system that depends on the environment for survival and the regulation of internal and external interactions to achieve a delimited state of balance. In a family system, every action and reaction cause a change in the system as a whole (Björnberg & Nicholson, 2007).

The development of the human being must be seen under three essential aspects: biological, psychological, and social, between them being numerous and varied interferences. Psychological development refers to the processes of physical growth and maturation, internal transformations of the body, materialized in quantitative and qualitative changes of higher nervous activities. Psychic development considers the appearance and manifestation of mental processes, properties, states, and structures. Social development is demonstrated by amplifying the possibilities of relationships (correlating one's behavior with different social requirements) (Cretu, 2004).

## 2. Human personality development

Effective communication between parents and child will help the child feel understood, protected, and have a sense of belonging. Siegel and Hartzell (2017) propose three stages of attachment development: alignment, balance, and coherence. They suggest that first of all it is necessary to tune/align the state of mind of the parents with the child's state as a result of which the child obtains a state of physical, emotional, and mental balance, which will help him feel integrated and connected so that the relationship to become coherent.

Psychologist Erik Erikson (1998) issued a theory that the individual goes through eight stages in his life, marked by existential crises, progress being possible only by resolving step by step the conflicts in each stage. Later, he added another to the eight stages. Thus, the first stage, called "hope", framed in the period from birth to about a year and a half, is characterized by the conflict between trust and mistrust. During this period, the child must establish his basic attitude towards the world around him. If during this period the child has satisfaction, care from others, and comfort, he will be able to have a more confident attitude towards life, otherwise, he will develop distrust that will generalize towards all individuals.

The second stage, called "will", between one and a half and three years is dominated by the conflict between autonomy and doubt/shame. The challenges facing the child are to take on the facts. If the child is encouraged, he will gain a sense of security and self-confidence, but if he is ridiculed for his childish decisions, he will become ashamed of his actions and lose confidence in his own decisions (Erikson, 1998).

The third stage, called "purpose", is based on the conflict between guilt and initiative and is between 3 and 6 years. During this period the child tests what the limits are, violating or

respecting the prohibitions, he will understand that not everything is possible or allowed. At this stage, an inappropriate, exaggerated educational intervention will develop the child's fear of punishment and the impression that any initiative is wrong. If instead, the parents support the child's initiatives, he will continue to explore, learn to take responsibility, and lead to the development of a sense of initiative (Erikson, 1998).

The fourth stage, between 6 and 12 years, called "competence", is characterized by the conflict between diligence and inferiority. The child's response to the challenges that arise during this period can be completely different: either he will develop a sense of competence, under the warm and encouraging guidance of those who represent the authority, or he will give up, deepening a sense of inferiority and inadequacy, if he is constantly subjected to comparisons with other children or other situations. This stage is decisive, from the perspective of Erikson (1998), for the adolescent crisis.

The fifth stage, "fidelity", is defined by the conflict between self-identity and role confusion and extends into adolescence, from 12 to 20 years. Now the teenager is overwhelmed by the multitude of social roles he has to take on and tries to find satisfactory answers to take on. Parents who, even at this age, sit behind the child and watch his every move do nothing but make him feel unable to make the right decision, he sometimes choosing what his parents want. Thus, the young person is confused, does not know what he wants, but gives in to parental pressure (Erikson, 1998).

The sixth stage, 20-30 / 35 years old, "love", is characterized by the conflict between intimacy and isolation from others. During this period, the young adult seeks deep and lasting relationships, in which to express their intimacy, through the free fusion of identities. The emotional balance is quite fragile and if the feelings are not shared, the young person can reach extreme isolation, where he can no longer be reached or hurt by anyone. The most

acute feeling that is felt during this period is loneliness. Without proper counseling, depression, psychosomatic disorders, psychological or even suicide attempts can sometimes occur (Erikson, 1998).

The seventh stage, from 35 to 65 years, called "care" is characterized by the conflict between creation and stagnation. During this period, the adult wants to create, to be productive, to bring his contribution in one way or another, to orient himself towards the outside, reaching his maximum professional potential. It is the moment when the adult needs to share with someone his professional experience, to offer it as a legacy. On the other hand, there may be situations when the adult has no one to share the accumulation of knowledge or has not accumulated knowledge to share with others and stagnation occurs (Erikson, 1998).

The eighth stage, after 65 years, consists of the wisdom to resolve the conflict between integrity and despair/disgust in the face of the reality of life. The individual now looks back on life and tries to accept both successes and failures. If he fails to accept his failures and, especially, realizes that he no longer has the time or energy to repair certain aspects of the past, man becomes desperate, succumbs to disgust with life, and experiences a negative self-image that can no longer be corrected (Erikson, 1998).

The last stage, the ninth, identified after the age of 80, the beginning of the age of 90, is characterized by the fact that self-esteem and confidence weaken with the weakening of physical strength and vigor. Hope and confidence, which were once firm support, are no longer as solid pillars as they once were so that during this period man can do things contrary to his behavior and natural personality. The wisest way to resolve this conflict is to know how to face despair with confidence and humility. It is very important to remember that in all these stages conflicts or tensions

are the sources of growth, strength, and commitment (Erikson, 1998).

### **3. Family characteristics**

#### **Classifications**

Families can be classified from a sociological point of view into several categories, a first distinction being made between the family of origin and the family of procreation. The family of origin, also known as the orientation or biological family, is the family in which we are born, raised, is made up of mother, father, brothers, and sisters, and has a strong role in the protection and socialization of descendants. The procreation family also called own family or conjugal family is made up of husband and wife, as well as their sons and daughters and is the basis of the extended family, formed by the vertical union in time, of several nuclear families, forming successive generations (Voinea, 2005).

Another criterion for classifying families is housing, hence the residency families, made up of people who live in common homes and carry out joint household activities, and interaction families, in which there are mutually helpful relationships, exchanges, and mutual visits. (Voinea, 2005).

Depending on how authority is exercised within the family, family systems can be: a) matriarchal, in which authority is held by the oldest woman or wife; b) patriarchal, in which authority is held by the oldest man or husband; c) equality, in which power and authority are exercised equally by the husband and wife. From the point of view of the normality of family life, families can be: normal or deficient, disorganized, vulnerable (Voinea, 2005).

As a structure, the family can be viewed from the perspective of two criteria: quantitative (or numerical) and qualitative. From a quantitative point of view, the family can be: nuclear (consisting of three or four people, represented by their spouse and children) or

extended (which can reach 30-40 people, including the degrees of kinship between its members). The family can also be viewed from the perspective of generations, all its members sometimes living together, which can generate conflicts and difficulties in organization and leadership (Voinea, 2005).

Yip (1998) identifies two types of families: single-parent and two-parent. Single-parent families include families with divorced parents and families with a widowed parent. It is believed that single parents have difficulty maintaining boundaries for their children. Children from such families have reported behavioral problems and other dysfunctions in family and school life.

### **Family functions**

Family functions Patterson (2002) identifies four family functions: (a) belonging and training, (b) economic support, (c) feeding, education, and socialization, (d) protecting vulnerable members. Each of these functions has positive and negative implications for family members. The first function ensures the unity of the family, to which are added the children planned and wanted, but divorce can also occur. The second function ensures the necessary food and clothing, the safety of the home, but there is a risk of neglect of children. The third function ensures mutual support, love, marital satisfaction, but there may be episodes of domestic violence, child abuse. The fourth function is to ensure the care of children with special needs, but the impossibility of fulfilling it leads to sending family members with disabilities to foster care.

One of the most important functions of the family is to educate and train young people for their optimal integration into life and social activity. Here, within the family group, parents exert directly or indirectly, educational-formative influences on their children. The conjugal couple, through its entire system of behavioral acts, is a true social model which, being the first in the order of influences from existing social models, has a decisive

influence on children in forming their conception of life, behavior, and relationships concerning different social norms and values (Mitrofan, 1984, p. 144).

### **Status and role**

Every person, a member of a family has a well-defined status and role. Status refers to the basic position of the person within the group and the desirable behaviors, and the role consists of all the normative behaviors associated with the statuses. The division of roles in the family is a very important component that involves a wide network of social relationships. The diversity and complexity of social relations ensure the unity and cohesion of the family (Voinea, 2005).

Throughout life, people experience different social roles. From birth, the family and the relationships within it shape the person physically and intellectually, creating the personality of each, preparing him for life in society. Often, the wrong influence of parents causes negative consequences difficult to eliminate. Each parent has a unique and irreplaceable role, so the child needs both parents for harmonious development. The importance of the family lies in the influence of parents on their children. The father's influence refers to protection, guidance, and support for the outside world; child discipline; supporting the initiative, independence, and freedom (Gežová, 2015).

### **Family values**

Arsene and Constantin (2013) identify the following family values: compassion and tolerance, courage, moral integrity, dignity, honesty, friendship, kindness, perseverance, self-discipline, responsibility, patience, promptness, cleanliness, religious faith (Arsene & Constantin, 2013, pp. 30 -35).



## **Family dimensions**

Björnberg and Nicholson (2007) identify family dimensions according to the balance between authority and attention in the relationship between parents and children; the relationship between emotional and cognitive unity between family members; the relationship between open communication and adaptability in relationships between family members. All these aspects determine the family climate.

Many families fail because of the conflict between parents and children. This failure is due to the inability to achieve a common vision over the generations, with personality differences playing a major role. Björnberg and Nicholson (2007) argue that the relationship between parental attention and authority over children determines four characteristics of the family: indulgent (high attention and low authority), authoritarian (high attention and high authority), dictatorial (low attention and high authority) ) and careless (low attention and low authority).

The family's ability to stay together despite the crises and difficulties they face is largely the product of an intellectual and emotional "glue." Cohesion can also be excessive if families are too introspective, look too much inwards, depriving themselves of diversity and openness to outward perspectives. If the emotional unity is high and the cognitive one is low, the cohesion of the family can be very varied, in contrast to the situation in which they have the same ideas, conceptions (low emotional unity and high cognitive unity). Other dimensions in contrast are fragmented cohesion (low emotional unity, low cognitive cohesion), compared to close cohesion when both emotional and cognitive unity is high (Björnberg and Nicholson, 2007).

Authority and cohesion are seen by Björnberg and Nicholson (2007) as "psychological style" and "family structure", respectively. These dimensions must be counterbalanced by methods and procedures for dealing with situations, in which people adapt,

communicate, make decisions, especially in unforeseen situations. Thus, two sub-dimensions of this process are identified: adaptability in solving problems and open communication between family members. Intersecting these dimensions, there are four ways in which families solve their problems: reactive (high adaptability, but open communication), adaptable (both adaptability and open communication have a high level), avoidant (low adaptability, but a high level of open communication) and rigid (both adaptability and open communication are low).

### **Family climate**

The family climate is a complex psychosocial formation, comprising the set of mental states, ways of interpersonal relationships, attitudes, level of satisfaction, which characterizes the family group for a longer period (Mitrofan & Mitrofan, 1991). The family climate is synonymous with the atmosphere or morale of the family group as a small social group. This climate, which can be positive or negative, is interposed as a filter between the educational influences exerted by parents and the psycho-behavioral acquisitions made at the level of children's personality. The path from educational influence to behavioral acquisition is not direct, but is influenced by the family climate: for example, the same educational influences will have a different effect depending on the family climate in which they are exercised.

The family climate can be analyzed according to several indicators, the most important being the following: a) the way of interpersonal reporting of parents (level of closeness and understanding, agreement or disagreement on various issues); b) the set of attitudes of the family members concerning different norms and social values; c) the degree of cohesion of the members of the family group; d) how the child is perceived and considered; e) the manner of manifestation of parental authority (unitary or differentiated); f) the degree of acceptance of various behaviors of

children; g) the level of satisfaction felt by the members of the family group; h) the dynamics of the appearance of some conflict and tension states; i) the manner of application of rewards and sanctions; j) the degree of openness and sincerity shown by the members of the family group (Mitrofan & Mitrofan, 1991).

According to some studies, the positive family climate favors the fulfillment of all the functions of the conjugal couple and the family group at high-efficiency levels. The family climate determines, on the one hand, the efficiency of educational influences, but, on the other hand, it has an important role in the growth and development of the child and adolescent (Mitrofan & Mitrofan, 1991).

### **Parental style**

The four parental styles: authoritarian, dictatorial, permissive, and careless, defined by Baumrind (1971) are still used by researchers to classify the type of interactions that exist between parents and children.

Sorkhabi (2005) states that authoritarian parenting style, as opposed to dictatorial or permissive parenting, is closely associated with academic and psychosocial self-regulation in certain cultures because authoritarian parents are better able to coordinate and integrate multiple goals more effectively that include individual social requirements or group, characteristic of the respective culture. Another possible reason for the success of the authoritarian parenting style is that parents use effective means or ways to achieve goals by balancing practices, being more flexible and motivated.

The authoritarian parenting style is distinguished by reciprocity, tacit understanding, and flexibility, which allow the parent to be more effective in coordinating and balancing the child's needs with those of society. Dictatorial parents are inflexible, do not demonstrate reciprocity in relationships, and fail

to adapt social requirements and expectations to the needs, strengths, and weaknesses of the child. Permissive parents, on the other hand, focus on pursuing children's goals without sufficiently coordinating them with the needs and requirements of the parent or society. Therefore, when social requirements are ignored by parents or subordinated to personal, individual goals (permissive parents) or when individual concerns are ignored or subordinated to social requirements (dictating parents), such parents may experience less success in achieving a given goal (Sorkhabi, 2005).

#### **4. The parent-child relationship**

##### **The influence of family**

Parents have the greatest influence on children, determining their behavior and actions in different situations, so it is very important the model they offer children (Assefa & Sintayehu, 2018). Parents must be authentic, there must be a visible concordance between what they say and what they practice. Arsene and Constantin (2013) argue that parents must be honest with their children, to recognize their feelings and limits. The feeling of security, comfort, well-being develops in the child's positive attitudes towards life, towards those around him, so that he becomes more resistant to the factors that generate stress, can more easily manage his emotions, and will have a correct image with looking at oneself and others. Effective communication between parents and child will help the child feel understood, protected, and have a sense of belonging.

"Parents exert educational-modeling influences within the family and directly, based on a certain educational strategy using more or less systematically and organized certain educational methods and techniques" (Mitrofan, 1984, p. 144).

## **Parental involvement**

Parental involvement, as described by Epstein (2010), addresses the following issues: a) ensuring children's health and safety, developing parenting skills and parenting approaches that prepare children for school and maintain the child's healthy development in all grades and building positive home conditions that support school learning and behavior throughout the school year; b) regular discussion with school staff about programs, children's progress and other school-related issues; c) volunteering at school and participating in student shows, sporting events, and other activities; d) assisting students' learning by helping with homework and other curriculum-related activities at home; e) participation in school decision making.

Singh et al. (1995) identify four components of parental involvement in children's lives: parents' aspirations for children's education (parents' hopes and expectations for the child's continuing education), parent-child communication about school; the structure of the home (the degree of discipline exercised by the parents) and the participation of the parents in the activities related to the school.

Jeynes (2007) conducted a meta-analysis examining the relationship between parental involvement and the academic achievement of middle school students and concluded that parental involvement is defined as parental involvement in their children's educational processes and experiences. Also, the Jeynes study uses specific variables of parental involvement, such as: a) general parental involvement (includes the general measure of parental involvement); b) specific involvement of parents (includes a specific measure of parental involvement, differentiated from other measures of parental involvement used in the study); c) parents' expectations (the degree to which a student's parents maintain high expectations regarding the student's ability to reach high levels); d) attendance and participation (if and how often

parents participate and participate in school activities); e) communication (the extent to which parents and their children communicate about school activities and report a high level of communication in general); f) homework (the extent to which parents check their children's homework before it is taught to the teacher); g) parenting style (the extent to which a parent demonstrates a parental supportive and supportive approach).

In their review of the relationship between parental involvement and the academic outcomes of high school students, Shute (2007) and her colleagues made a comprehensive description of the parental involvement variable. They grouped the specific aspects related to the involvement of parents in two main categories: home activities and school activities. The first category includes: a) parent-child discussion about school (conversations between parents and their children about school activities, programs, school plans); b) parents' aspirations and expectations (the degree to which parents assume that their children will have good results at school); c) parenting style (a complex set of behaviors and/or attitudes by which parents demonstrate and communicate the values, behaviors, and standards that their children are expected to adopt); d) reading at home (parental modeling and supporting the child's reading activity); e) checking the child's homework by the parents, family rules and supervision. The second category includes specific variables, such as parent-teacher communication, parents' participation in school activities, parents' volunteering at school.

## **5. The evolution of the Romanian family and education throughout history**

Stănciulescu (1998) makes an extensive history on the evolution of the family and education in the Romanian society, starting with the 17th century until 1989, analyzing these themes

from a historical sociological perspective and bringing arguments from the literature of the time.

### **The XVII – XVIII centuries**

During the 17th - 18th centuries, the kinship network is clearly outlined as a group and as an institution in the upper classes of the time and the existence of conscience of the conjugal-parental family is quite clear. According to Stahl (1959, quoted by Stănculescu, 1998), the archaic Romanian village was organized according to a family principle, the state organization overlapping. The children were presented not as children, simply, but in an institutional quality: sons of Master, daughters of the Mistress, disciples in different stages of formation.

From the description given by Dimitrie Cantemir in "Descriptio Moldaviae", we find that Moldovans at that time did not like teaching, ordinary people considering that "teaching is the concern of priests" and too many spoils the mind. Parental indifference concerning children's education is associated with the absence of childhood feelings. In this context, Cantemir associates learning with everything that the individual can accumulate "from the outside". Any trait that the individual possesses, but which has not been acquired "from without," is part of his nature. Thus, "from the outside" refers to those characteristics that are not innate, but are due to the interactions and relationships of the individual with others (Stănculescu, 1998).

Dimitrie Cantemir makes no explicit reference to the educational role of parents, although it cannot be ignored that parents have a role in the process of self-construction. From "Descriptio Moldaviae" we can understand two aspects: a possible evolution towards the extension of the influence of parents belonging to higher categories in self-constitution and the reconstitution of possible cultural models that could have been subject to intergenerational transmission from parents to children.

The progressive prolongation of parental influence can be based on the transition from the practice of early institutionalization of children to the refusal of this practice (Stănciulescu, 1998).

During this period, no methods of social or family protection are identified, children's access to education being fragmented, non-unitary, accessible only to a small group, from the social elite.

### **The period between 1821 – 1918**

Among the intellectual elite as well as in the economically favored categories of this period, the “feeling” of the conjugal-parental family and childhood is present. The unity consisting of parents and children is delimited, the child having a special family significance for his parents, this representing an extension of the parents' life, as well as an expression of love between spouses. On the other hand, the child is seen during this period as an “object of pride” and as a means by which the financial condition of the family is highlighted (Stănciulescu, 1998).

The influence of the family seems unlimited in the first years of life and is exercised primarily in the form of primary acquisitions, which remain imprinted forever. At school age, the family is not excluded from the child's life, especially since the parents' option for the acquisition of a type of values is involved, depending on which child can attend a certain type of school. On the other hand, the family and the school are in a relationship of continuity and complementarity. The school specializes in instructional tasks, while the family is responsible for educating children from a behavioral, social point of view: developing a sense of goodness and beauty, strengthening the will, inspiring and educating piety (Stănciulescu, 1998).

Parents are a category with a great influence on children, because they assume a direct role, without resorting to nannies, nurses, or other intermediaries. Although both parents have the responsibility to educate their children, however, at that time it



was considered that the mother has a more important role than the father (Stănciulescu, 1998).

The "feeling" of family and childhood is manifested through a complex relationship between parents and children. For parents, the presence of children gives a normal position to the conjugal couple in society and can be a means of expressing social identity. On the other hand, children have an instrumental significance, in the sense that they can help in the supervision of younger siblings and the household or can bring economic benefits by exercising certain paid activities (Stănciulescu, 1998).

The school-age child, for the middle or lower social categories, represents most of the time apprentice or a servant, and for the richer categories a student at the boarding school. In both cases, the child, although he is materially dependent on his family, is somehow separated from the family, because he spends most of his time away from it. Going to school or apprenticeship generates the feeling of an emotional rupture for both children and parents (Stănciulescu, 1998).

As for the parents' educational styles, they are subordinated to a contextual, not normative, relational education: if the child behaves "normally", depending on current situations, the family does not exert any explicit reinforcing influence, but if the child's behavior is abnormal. In those situations, it is not explained to him which norm he violated, but the restoration of the previous order is sought (Stănciulescu, 1998).

In poor or economically middle-class families, parental love can be manifested through tender, caring forms, caresses, play, stories, or violent forms, such as beating. For wealthy families, however, the child represents continuity, he is the person to whom the family's wealth will be entrusted at some point. The love of these parents is manifested by placing the child in the center of the adult world and by careful concern for meeting his material needs, security, and education. A special category is the families that

aspire to the ascension of their children, who make enormous material sacrifices to send their children to schools, away from home (Stănciulescu, 1998).

And in this period, as in the previous one, school education is not accessible to all children, even if in 1864 Alexandru Ioan Cuza promulgated the Law of Instruction, which provided for the organization of education in a unitary way, by study groups, as follows: primary education, which it lasted four years and was free and compulsory, seven-year secondary education and three-year university education. This concern for educating children is a step forward in their intellectual development.

### **The period between 1918 – 1944**

Stănciulescu (1998) states that, as in the previous period, the conception regarding education is axiological-normative. Education, which involves growth and schooling, is seen as a duty of parents to the child and society. The emphasis is on the political-reformist dimension, and the legal and school systems replace religious ideology as the main instruments of legitimation and action. Raising and educating children is seen as more of a legal than a moral duty. However, the religious values of the family are passed down from one generation to the next, insofar as they are practiced.

In all social categories is present the "feeling of childhood", which is expressed by fragility, helplessness, and the need for protection. And in this period the conception continues that the mother has a greater contribution to the child's education, the role of the father is limited to the education exclusively of boys (Stănciulescu, 1998).

Stănciulescu (1998) observes that during this period, actual families are identified, based on marriage, but the situations of celibacy or cohabitation are also mentioned. Regarding the situation of women in that period, it can be said that, even though

before marriage the woman was concerned with physical appearance and ways of seduction, the birth of a child completely changes her priorities, devoting much to her upbringing and education. It. The maternal sense takes the place of frivolity.

There is often confusion between care and education. It was considered that child care should begin just before birth, but education, much later after birth, when the child can understand, communicate, speak. For the consciousness of most people of that period, the meaning and content of education are largely social, and the practical-participatory forms are inseparable from the discursive-descriptive forms: the child listens/sees the demonstration made by the adult, after which, with verbal or physical support, execute in turn. For wealthier families, the schooling of children to acquire a superior social position is an expression of parental affection (Stănciulescu, 1998).

In 1924, the law on normal primary education was passed, which provides for the compulsory and free primary education of four years and creates the "super-primary" course for another three years, different from the four-year secondary school. The three-year course is a closed route, it does not offer children the opportunity to continue their studies with high school and later university, which the gymnasium can do (Stănciulescu, 1998).

### **The period between 1945 – 1989**

The family represents, in the conception of the time, according to the socialist ideology, the Code of the family and the Christian morality, a set of related persons between which there are a series of mutual rights and duties, is the group formed by the marriage of two persons of the opposite sex (Stănciulescu, 1998).

"The family must be the first school in which children learn, along with the rules of behavior in life and society, the appreciation of work, devotion to the fatherland and people, to the party and the cause of socialism" (Code of Principles and Norms of Labor and

Communist Life, of socialist ethics and equity, 1974, p. 23, quoted in Stănciulescu, 1998, p. 147).

A major role in the education of children is attributed to mothers: As mothers and educators, women play an essential role in the formation and education of young offspring in the homeland. Always, even in times of hardship, the woman fulfilled the noble mission of transmitting to the new generations the high virtues of our people, their advanced traditions, the ardent love for the country, the feeling of dignity, justice and truth" (Ceaușescu, 1966, in Ceaușescu, 1988, p. 33).

The role of the mother is placed in the foreground, while the role of the father merges with the idea of family. The phrase "mother and child" is frequently encountered and the legislation that supports it is developed: the birth policy. Thus, the mother becomes the main author of the child's education from birth and throughout life, dealing with all aspects: from physical care of the child to education, supervision, schooling and vocational training (Stănciulescu, 1998, p. 148).

In the society of that time, the family was seen only as a target of social intervention, the education of children being not only a particular problem of the family but a social obligation. There is no phrase "family education", but "education in the family", "domestic education", "education for family" (Stănciulescu, 1998).

The family is still seen as a strong link between the community and the inexperienced individual. Values such as positive attitude towards work, perseverance, honesty, solidarity and help, respect for the elderly, politeness, patriotism, obviously all placed under the umbrella of the new "scientific conception of the world" are frequently evoked. The Family Code adopted in 1954 creates a change regarding the family, in the sense that family law detaches itself from Civil Law and becomes an independent

branch, bringing with it new phrases: "parental protection" and "interest of the child".

### **Family and education after 1989**

"Educating means having great confidence in people, it means courage and confidence in the future" (Alexandrescu, 2009, p. 496). Education begins in the family and continues and completes in school. Article 258 of the Civil Code (2009) states that: (1) The family shall be based on the freely consented marriage between the spouses, on their equality, as well as on the right and duty of the parents to ensure the upbringing and education of their children; (2) The family has the right to protection from society and the state; (3) The state is obliged to support, through economic and social measures, the conclusion of the marriage, as well as the development and consolidation of the family; (4) According to this Code, spouses shall mean a man and a woman united by marriage.

In each of the periods presented above, education had its peculiarities. Until 2012, compulsory and free education in Romania comprised 12 years, grouped in stages of 4 years each: primary, secondary, and high school education. Currently, the educational cycles have the following structure (Art. 23 - National Education Law, 2011, amended in 2019):

1. The national pre-university education system shall comprise the following levels:

a) early education (0 - 6 years), consisting of pre-school level (0 - 3 years) and preschool education (3 - 6 years)

b) primary education, which includes the preparatory class and grades I - IV;

c) secondary education, which includes:

(i) lower secondary or secondary education, comprising grades V to VIII;

(ii) upper secondary education which may be:

- high school education, which includes high school classes IX-XII / XIII, with the following fields: theoretical, vocational, and technological;

- vocational education lasting at least 3 years;

d) non-university tertiary education, which includes post-secondary education.

(2) The high school education is organized in two successive cycles: the lower cycle of the high school, consisting of grades IX - X, and the upper cycle of the high school, consisting of grades XI - XII / XIII.

According to Alexandrescu (2009), parents in contemporary society try their best to provide their children with the best conditions, making their lives as easy as possible, giving them plenty of toys, computers, and other electronic devices, without realizing that in fact, this abundance blocks their childhood. This artificial world, made up of excesses, deprives children of simple joys, of the natural activities they could have carried out: reading, studying, discovering nature, science, and culture. These can be a cause of the blockages felt by children in assimilating the knowledge that leads to the refusal to learn, the realization of superficial, insufficient learning, or the accumulation of illogical, misunderstood knowledge, which becomes practically useless. The relevance of learning is undermined. The inefficient assimilation of knowledge, the lack of understanding of the meaning lead to the birth of a bad phenomenon: functional illiteracy.

Functional illiteracy refers to those people who can read but do not understand what they have read, who can reproduce a text verbally or in writing, but do not understand its meaning and cannot use the information contained in the text read. They recognize letters as graphic signs, associate them with syllables and words, but do not understand their meaning or understand it only partially. Science illiteracy refers to the inability to use scientific knowledge, identify questions, and draw conclusions based on

data, to understand and support decisions about nature and changes made by human activities (PISA, 2018).

In our country, informative, formative activities are carried out, to guide parents and family relations, therapies, and social support that meet the socio-educational needs of families with children (Vrăsmaș, 2008). The information activities cover, among others, education in general, children's school activity, knowledge and self-knowledge techniques, school, professional, and labor market orientation. Training activities can be achieved by educating parents on the development of parental attitudes and practices, self-knowledge, parental responsibility, effective communication, negotiation of solutions, decision making, and creative resolution of intergenerational conflicts.

The most well-known and effective forms of education for the family and the child in difficult situations are the Information and Counseling Centers, the Day Centers, and the Resource Centers for parents. The information and counseling centers also aim to inform and educate parents, support them in solving concrete problems related to children's education, developing parenting practices, organizing and promoting the educational partnership in the community, in favor of the child. Their main activity focuses on preventing institutionalization and resolving critical situations (Vrăsmaș, 2008).

Along with the educators, parents need to ask for help in understanding how to become partners in interacting with their children. In Romania, various programs were carried out to support parents and educators. Thus, in the period 1992-1998, with the support of UNICEF, an early education program PETAS (Early Education Program on Stimulation Areas) was initiated, which also included a component of parental education and in which they were established. Parent Resource Centers (CRPs). The program has been expanded nationally through the County School

Inspectorates and with the financial help of local councils (Preda, 2016).

## **6. Conclusions**

Children depend on their parents from birth until quite late, when they can manage on their own. The strong bond between the mother and her child develops in the form of an attachment that can last a lifetime. The feeling of security, comfort, well-being develops in the child's positive attitudes towards life, towards those around him, so that he becomes more resistant to the factors that generate stress, can more easily manage his emotions, and will have a correct image with looking at oneself and others.

Although most parents love their children, there are still times when they behave inappropriately, because the parent-child relationship can be triggered by unresolved traumas from the parents' childhood. In these situations, parents may be dominated by anger, fear, sadness, or frustration, and their response to the child's behavior will be inappropriate. Parental frustration can lead to disorientation, insecurity, and frustration in the child. These behaviors will lead to unhappiness and exhaustion on both sides, and the relationship will become increasingly difficult. Trauma and unresolved issues are often passed down from one generation to the next. The only solution, proposed by Siegel and Hartzell (2017) is to accept, understand, and solve past problems. Only in this way, the relationship between parents and children will be a healthy one and will produce positive results in each one's life.

## **References**

Alexandrescu, P. (2009). Starea actuală a educației și a învățământului în România. *Revista Română de Sociologie*,



serie nouă, anul XX, 5-6, 495-510. București.  
<https://www.revistadesociologie.ro/pdf-uri/nr.5-6-2009/07-PAlexandrescu.pdf>

Arsene, S. & Constantin, F. (2013). *Educă prin iubire, cu înțelepciune*. Înger Drag.

Assefa, A. & Sintayehu, B. (2019). Relationship between Parental Involvement and Students' Academic Achievement in Model Primary and Secondary School of Haramaya University, East Hararghe Zone, Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia, *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies*, 7(2), 46-56.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.7n.2p.46>

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology Monographs*, 4, 1-103.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/h0030372>

Björnberg, Å. & Nicholson, N. (2007). The Family Climate Scales - Development of a New Measure for Use in Family Business Research, *Family Business Review*, 20(3), 229-246.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-6248.2007.00098.x>

Ceașescu, N. (Din gândirea social-politică a președintelui României Nicolae Ceașescu) (1988). *Rolul familiei în societatea românească*. Editura Politică.

Codul Civil. (2009).  
<https://lege5.ro/Gratuit/gi2tsmbqhe/casatoria-codul-civil?dp=gu3dmnxbxge4tg>

Crețu, T. (2004). *Psihologia educației*. Credis.

Epstein, J. L. (2010). School/Family/Community Partnerships: Caring for the Children We Share. *Kappan Classic, Kappan Digital Edition Exclusive*, 92(3), 81-96.  
<https://jreadingclass.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/school-family-community-partnerships.pdf> retipărit din Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/Family/Community Partnerships: Caring

- for the Children We Share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(9), 701-712.
- Erikson, E. H. & Erikson, J. M. (1998). *The Life Cycle Completed (Extended Version)*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Gežová, K. C. (2015). Father's and Mother's Roles and Their Particularities in Raising Children. *Acta Technologica Dubnicae*, 5(1), 45-50. <https://doi.org/10.1515/atd-2015-0032>
- Jeynes, W. H. (2007). The relationship between parental involvement and urban secondary school student academic achievement: A Meta-Analysis. *Urban Education*, 42 (1), 82-110. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0042085906293818>
- Legea Educației Naționale. (2019). <https://edu.ro/sites/default/files/fi%C8%99iere/Legislatie/2019/Legea%20nr%201%20Educatiei%20Nationale%20actualizata%202019.pdf>
- Manea, R. (2018, 13 ianuarie). *Drumul greu al României către educație: de la analfabetizare la performanță*. <https://editiadedimineata.ro/cum-s-a-schimbata-rata-de-analfabetizare-din-romania-in-ultimii-100-de-ani/>
- Mitrofan, N. (1984). Dragostea și căsătoria. Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.
- Mitrofan, N. & Mitrofan, I. (1991). *Familia de la A la Z*. Editura Științifică.
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and development. (2019). *PISA 2018 Results (Volume I): What Students Know and Can Do*. PISA, OECD Publishing, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5f07c754-en>. <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/pisa-2018-results-volume-i-5f07c754-en.htm>
- Patterson, J. M. (2002). Integrating Family Resilience and Family Stress Theory, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 349-360. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2002.00349.x>

- Preda, V. (2016). *Studiu de cercetare cu privire la educația parentală și nevoia de servicii de sprijin pentru părinți. Programul de cooperare elvețiano-român*. UNICEF.
- Shute, V. J., Hansen, E. G. & Underwood, J. S. (2007). A review of the relationship between parental involvement and secondary school students' academic achievement. *Education Research International*, 2011, 1-10. <http://doi:10.1155/2011/915326>
- Siegel, D. J. & Hartzell, M. (2017). *Parentaj sensibil și inteligent*. Herald.
- Singh, K., Bickley, P.G., Keith, T.Z., Keith, P.B., Trivette, P., & Anderson, E. (1995). The effects of four components of parental involvement on eighth-grade student achievement: Structural analysis of NELS-88 data. *School Psychology Review*, 24(2), 299- 317. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.1995.12085769>
- Sorkhabi, N. (2005). Applicability of Baumrind's parent typology to collective cultures: Analysis of cultural explanations of parent socialization effects. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 29(6), 552-563. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01650250500172640>
- Stănciulescu, E. (1998). *Sociologia educației familiale. Volumul II: Familie și educație în societatea românească*. Polirom.
- Voinea, M. (2005). *Familia contemporană: Mică enciclopedie*. Focus.
- Vrăsmaș, E. (2008). *Intervenția socioeducațională ca sprijin pentru părinți*. Aramis.
- Yip, L. C. (1998). *Perceived family and school climate and their relations to differentiation level and academic performance among college students*. <http://hub.hku.hk/handle/10722/39215>