Education and Parenting: An Introduction

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Introduction

In this chapter we present major theories and empirical findings that link parenting practices, such as behavioral control and monitoring, with adolescents' academic outcomes. This chapter also describes features of the Parenting Across Cultures Project (PAC) that apply to all of the country-specific chapters to follow. Namely, we describe features of the samples, procedures, and measures from the PAC longitudinal study of mothers, fathers, and children in China, Colombia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States. We also present data from all nine countries that participated in the PAC project at a time when the child was an early adolescent (about 13 years old). For comprehensive information about the project, please visit our website at http://parentingacrosscultures.org/.

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To advance understanding of parenting and child adjustment in diverse countries around the world, we developed the Parenting Across Cultures (PAC) project as an international collaboration among nine countries: China, Colombia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States (see Lansford & Bornstein, 2011 for overview). We assessed over 1400 families from 13 cultural groups annually through interviews with mothers, fathers, and children about the parent-child relationship, the child's adjustment, attitudes and beliefs, and cultural values. As the child approached adolescence, we assessed self-regulation, academic performance, relationships, adolescents' risk-taking, and social information processing. In the chapters to follow, information about school systems and research concerning parenting and academic achievement in the countries that are part of the PAC project will be presented.

This sample of countries was selected because they are diverse on several socio-demographic dimensions, including predominant race/ethnicity, predominant religion, economic indicators, and indices of child well-being, providing the opportunity to understand education and parenting in a more diverse set of contexts than has been characteristic of most of the literature. For example, on the Human Development Index, a composite indicator of a country's status with respect to health, education, and income, participating countries range from a rank of 4 to 147 out of countries with available data (Human Development Report, 2014). To provide a sense of what this range entails, the infant mortality rate in Kenya, for example, is 18 times higher than the infant mortality rate in Sweden (World Bank, 2016). In the Philippines, 23% of the population falls below the international poverty line of less than US$1.25 per day, whereas less than 1% of the population falls below this poverty line in Italy, Sweden, and the United States (UNICEF, 2010). The participating countries vary widely not only on socio-demographic indicators, but also on psychological constructs such as individualism versus collectivism. Using Hofstede's (2001) rankings, the participating countries range from the United States, with the highest individualism score in the world to China, Colombia, and Thailand, countries that are among the least individualist countries in the world. Ultimately, this diversity provides us with an opportunity to examine research questions in a sample that is more generalizable to a wider range of the world's populations than is typical in most research to date. Although, it was possible to select other countries that would also have been informative, we have not sampled all of the potentially relevant subgroups within a given country, and we do not claim that our samples are nationally representative of any of the participating countries. Nevertheless, we believe our selection process resulted in a diverse set of cultural groups that enabled us to examine a wide range of research questions. In addition, most of the cultural groups that are included in the Parenting Across Cultures Project are underrepresented in the parenting and child development literatures in particular and in the psychological literature in general. Expanding research on parenting and child development to include these groups is important to inform understanding of the extent to which parenting cognitions are community-specific versus generalizable across cultural groups (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Norenzayan & Heine, 2005).

Each chapter that follows focuses on a specific country that participated in the PAC project. The authors of each chapter are native to each of the countries so they bring an emic perspective to the topics at hand and will not be approaching parenting and education systems from deficit perspectives sometimes seen in etic approaches. However, cultural insiders can also have biases that prevent them from seeing unique features of their own cultural context. One of the advantages of our international approach is that we have both cultural insiders from each of the participating countries and also cultural outsiders' perspectives because the cultural insiders work collaboratively with colleagues from the eight other participating countries, who are cultural outsiders. Cultural outsiders can help identify unique features of different cultural groups and ask questions that may seem obvious from the perspective of a cultural insider. Each chapter presents literature on the school context in the specific country as well as parenting in light of the school system. Throughout, we adopt an ecological theoretical framework that situates adolescents' academic outcomes within proximal contexts of both school and family as well as more distal cultural contexts. Finally, in the last chapter, we draw conclusions and highlight similarities and differences in educational experiences and the interface of parenting and school systems in the nine countries included in this volume.

Parental Involvement in Education

As noted by Eccles and Harold (1993), a number of variables could undermine parental school involvement from childhood to adolescence. We refer to parental involvement because this is the most frequently used terminology in the literature, but we acknowledge that the construct is also called parental engagement or other terms. We are as specific as possible when describing findings from particular studies to use language that characterizes which aspects of parenting were actually measured. During adolescence, parents may perceive their children's need for autonomy and consequently reduce their school involvement to satisfy adolescents' desire for independence. However, a meta-analysis of 75 studies revealed that parental involvement does not decrease when the child reaches adolescence but instead changes in nature (Boonk, Gijselaers, Ritzen, & Brand-Gruwel, 2018). Time spent on direct activities, such as doing homework, learning, or reading together are less frequent and also less effective. Instead, indirect activities like setting an academic context and high expectations are favorable, as long as they not are perceived by the young person as being controlling. Adolescents, compared to young children, benefit more from higher parental expectations in combination with academic encouragement and support. Furthermore, during the transition from elementary to junior high school, the change in parental school involvement may result from a decrease in parents' sense of competence in helping their children in more advanced homework and academic goals, which require greater autonomy and responsibility of the student. Therefore, the passage to secondary school represents a challenge for both adolescents and parents. Adolescents must cope with the changes described above, and parents must learn how to exercise their role in supporting their children in successfully managing the

new challenges and new academic goals (Bogenschneider, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001).

Many research reports have supported the notion of parents as playing crucial roles in their children's academic success and that parental involvement has a positive correlation with student academic performance (Boonk et al., 2018; El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2011; Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2003; Matejevic, Jovanovic, & Jovanovic, 2014; Westerman, 2012). For example, parental academic involvement fosters motivational orientation (Marchant, Paulson, & Rothlisberg, 2001; Wang & Cai, 2015), positive attitudes toward school (Topor, Keane, Shelton, & Calkins, 2010; Trusty, 1999; Westerman, 2012), and higher self-determination in adolescent students (i.e., by encouraging their aspirations and favoring their interests; Ricard & Pelletier, 2016), which in turn are associated with higher persistence during academic tasks and higher academic achievement (Grolnick et al., 2014). Although findings from research show the positive side of parental involvement in relation to adolescents' academic achievement, all results are not positive, and some interesting points should be noted.

First, differences in results may depend on how parental involvement is defined. For example, a meta-analysis found that parental involvement has a positive association with child academic performance when parental involvement is defined as parental expectations for children's academic achievement (Wilder, 2014). However, if parental involvement means only homework assistance, there is a weak correlation with children's academic achievement.

Second, parental involvement seems to benefit children's general academic performance such as grade point average (GPA) or homework completion rather than specific subjects like math or reading. Fan and Chen (2001) examined 25 studies of parental involvement and child academic performance and found an average moderate correlation between parent involvement and children's grades or GPA ($r = .33$), but correlations were lower for specific subjects like math and reading ($r = .18$). Similarly, a study by El Nokali et al. (2011) suggested that parental involvement is more globally beneficial for children's academic performance in school (e.g., average grades, homework completion) but does not specifically promote achievement in any particular domain.

Third, although review papers and meta-analyses demonstrate correlations between parental involvement and children's and adolescents' academic achievement, there are a few variables in parental involvement that should be addressed. Many studies have shown two common variables that mediate the association between parental involvement and students' academic achievement (Boonk et al., 2018; Shute, Hansen, Underwood, & Razzouk, 2011): parents' high expectations and aspirations for their children's academic performance and communication between parents and children about schooling. The correlation between parental involvement and students' academic achievement also may be influenced by additional variables, such as helping the child to develop the habit of reading at home, parental encouragement, and support for learning.

Fourth, both socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnicity have an impact on the relations between parental involvement and adolescent academic achievement. However, if parental involvement is measured as parental expectations, it is positively corre-

lated with achievement for all socioeconomic and ethnic groups that have been studied. However, home-based involvement and school-based involvement can either be positively or negatively related to academic achievement depending on cultural and other factors. For example, maternal education moderates the relation between parental involvement and adolescents' academic achievement, probably due to characteristics of the mother (Boonk et al., 2018).

Fifth, parental involvement may differ in importance for different children. For example, parental involvement may especially benefit less able children (Coleman & Karraker, 2003). This finding is consistent with other results demonstrating that children may benefit from different types of parental involvement depending on their background, experiences, and individual capacities.

Parenting Practices and Students' Academic Achievement

Students' academic achievement also is influenced by parenting styles and practices. In her now classic approach, Baumrind (1966) classified parenting styles into three types: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative. Later Maccoby and Martin (1983) introduced a fourth parenting style: neglecting. All four types of parenting style include parental warmth and parental control, to various degrees. An authoritative style is high in both warmth and control, an authoritarian style is low in warmth and high in control, a permissive style is high in warmth and low in control, and a neglecting style is low in both warmth and control. Furthermore, control can be either autonomy-granting, including encouragement and a proper amount of guidance, or overcontrolling, including extensive involvement by parents in everyday situations as well as psychological control (Silk, Morris, Kanaya, & Steinberg, 2003). Many studies have found that the authoritative parenting style is associated with the best academic achievement (Aunola, Stattin, & Nurmi, 2000; Heaven & Ciarrochi, 2008; Majumder, 2016; Pinquart, 2016; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). For example, there is some evidence that parental involvement benefits adolescents in their success in school *only* when adolescents come from authoritative families (Steinberg et al., 1992). Likewise, adolescents from authoritative families apply the most adaptive achievement strategies (Aunola et al., 2000). According to a meta-analysis of 308 studies of parenting styles and academic achievement (GPA or academic achievement tests), in children and adolescents, parental responsiveness (warmth), behavioral control, autonomy granting, and an authoritative parenting style are associated with better academic performance both concurrently and in longitudinal studies, although these associations are small in a statistical sense (Pinquart, 2016).

The reason for the influence of authoritative parenting on children's academic performance may be due to the characteristics of this parenting style, which may enhance the development of non-academic self-concepts, such as the personal self, family self, moral and ethical self, physical self, and social self (Ishak, Low, & Lau, 2012). An authoritative parenting style also moderates the effect of academic self-concept on academic achievement. The impact of academic self-concept on aca-

demic achievement is greater when parents use an authoritative parenting style, which may be attributed to the fact that authoritative parents tend to accept an individual's uniqueness and to provide love, respect, and feelings of equality in the child. Authoritative parents also encourage children to correct mistakes and develop capabilities and guide them to find significance in their contribution. In this manner, authoritative parents can make children feel confident and have a positive self-concept, including their academic ability. Pinquart (2016) indicates that the parent-child relationship is bidirectional and that cross-lagged analyses show that student achievement promotes positive emotions of the parents toward the child. Furthermore, authoritative parenting includes proactive control rather than reactive or psychological control behaviors, which in turn leads to stronger autonomy granting. Boonk et al. (2018) show in their meta-analysis that parents' excessively controlling behavior in relation to homework, academic pressure, and academic work, has a negative effect on adolescents' academic achievement. Interestingly, parents' communication with school also has a negative influence. Perhaps this kind of parental behavior is perceived as control by the adolescent, or it might reflect a child effect in which students who are struggling in school induce parents to communicate with schools about the problems.

Furthermore, parental self-efficacy constitutes a pivotal feature of the parental belief system—parents' beliefs in their capability to promote their children's development. The construct of parental self-efficacy has been defined by Bandura (1997) as the beliefs that parents hold in their own caregiving capabilities as well as in managing familial demands. The role of parental self-efficacy is relevant during the transition to adolescence, when adolescents must manage pervasive changes in different spheres of their lives, and parents and children must renegotiate their relationship (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Compared to parents with low self-efficacy, parents with high self-efficacy beliefs are more inclined to use positive parenting strategies, such as reasoning and monitoring (Coleman & Karraker, 2003), to have more abilities to provide a stimulating environment for their children (Donovan & Leavitt, 1985; Donovan, Leavitt, & Walsh, 1997; Unger & Wandersman, 1985), and to encourage their children to initiate beneficial activities conducive to their adaptation (Gross, Fogg, & Tucker, 1995; Teti & Gelfand, 1991).

Illustrative Models of Parental Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement

Prominent theoretical models put social class and inequality at the forefront of understanding how parental involvement is related to adolescents' academic achievement. For example, Bourdieu's (1984) ideas regarding social capital and cultural capital emphasize how social networks tend to reproduce social categories and class membership from one generation to the next. Children in families with cultural capital have access to a network of relationships with individuals and social institutions that gives them an advantage in education by virtue of making them more respected and

of higher status in school and other settings. In addition, this network of relationships gives students access to resources and information that help them succeed in school.

Middle-class parents often engage in a style of parenting that has been characterized as concerted cultivation, which involves actively supporting the development of specific skills and hobbies by enrolling children in after-school activities and enriching programs (Lareau, 2011). Through concerted cultivation, middle-class children often come to have a sense of entitlement and believe themselves to be of an equal status with adults and, therefore, capable of having discussions with and questioning the opinions of adults. By contrast, working-class and poor parents are more likely to adhere to the strategy of letting children accomplish their natural growth, being less likely to enroll their children in organized leisure activities and instead leaving children more responsible for their own leisure by playing with peers or entertaining themselves at home or in the neighborhood. Working-class and poor parents also are more likely to enforce hierarchical boundaries between parents and children (Lareau, 2011). The middle-class strategy of concerted cultivation is more aligned with education systems, whereas the strategy of accomplishment of natural growth can leave children feeling less at ease in and more distrustful of organized institutions.

Associations between parental involvement and adolescents' academic achievement are indirect in the sense that parents' communication of beliefs and expectations influences adolescents' cognitive abilities that in turn affect academic achievement. In line with these empirical data, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Hoover-Dempsey, Green, & Whitaker, 2010) have suggested the *parental involvement process model*, where students are seen as active agents in their own academic achievements and parents as contributors to the development of their children's learning attributes. These learning attributes, such as self-efficacy, motivation to learn, self-regulation strategies, and prosocial behavior toward teachers, are then used by the student when authoring their academic success. Another model by Phillipson and Phillipson (2012), the *cognitive-affective model of achievement,* similar to the one above, stated that academic achievement depends on the student's self-evaluation of his or her cognitive ability, a form of subjective cognitive ability. The students' self-evaluation depends in part on parents' feedback and communication of belief of their children's ability.

These theoretical models indicate that parents' interactions with their children contribute to a capacity in the child that can be used for increasing (or decreasing) academic achievement. The parent-child-interaction, closely related to parenting style, will most likely be affected by characteristics of the child and of the parent as well as contextual and socioeconomic factors such as cultural resources, attitudes, and values. In the next section we will describe an international project, and in the following chapters each country and studies from that specific country will be presented to examine parenting practices and young people's academic achievement.

Parenting Across Cultures Study Design

Originally, mothers and fathers of 7–10-year-old children were recruited to participate from schools that serve socioeconomically diverse populations in each participating country. Approximately 100 children and their mothers and fathers from each of nine countries participated: China (Jinan and Shanghai), Colombia (Medellín), Italy (Rome and Naples), Jordan (Zarqa), Kenya (Kisumu), the Philippines (Manila), Sweden (Trollhättan/Vänersborg), Thailand (Chiang Mai), and the United States (European Americans, Latino Americans, and African Americans from Durham, North Carolina). Girls and boys were represented in approximately equal numbers in each country sample. Data have been collected annually for ten years, with data collection still ongoing. Retention rates have been high. The sample is currently 19 years old, on average.

A procedure of forward- and back-translation is used to ensure the linguistic and conceptual equivalence of measures across languages (Maxwell, 1996). Translators are fluent in English and the target language and are asked to (1) note places in the research instruments that did not translate well, were inappropriate for the different groups, or were culturally insensitive; (2) identify words that elicited several meanings in particular contexts; (3) suggest improvements of instruments if they identified problems; and (4) indicate reasons for altering the translated versions if discrepancies were identified and alterations were deemed necessary. Site coordinators and translators review identified discrepancies and unclear items and modify items appropriately. A cross-site meeting of all investigators is held annually to discuss any ambiguities or difficulties with the measures on an item-by-item basis. These substantial efforts are implemented to ensure that the measures are valid in all sites by focusing on linguistic equivalence as well as the cultural meanings that are imparted by the measures (Erkut, 2010; Peña, 2007). Measures are administered in the following languages: Mandarin Chinese (China), Spanish (Colombia and the United States), Italian (Italy), Arabic (Jordan), Dholuo (Kenya), Filipino (the Philippines), Swedish (Sweden), Thai (Thailand), and American English (the United States and the Philippines).

Interviews are conducted in participants' homes, schools, or at another location chosen by the participants. Procedures are approved by local institutional review boards at universities in each participating country, and parents sign statements of informed consent. Each year, the entire interview lasts 1.5–2 h. Interviewers began by administering measures orally, recording participants' responses. In subsequent years, mothers and fathers then were given the option of continuing orally or completing written questionnaires. Rating scales are provided in the form of visual aids to help participants remember response options as they answer questions. Depending on the site, parents are given modest financial compensation for their participation, families are entered into drawings for prizes, or modest financial contributions are made to participating children's schools. The amounts vary across countries so that the compensation is appropriately motivating without being coercive.

Adolescents' Academic Achievement

In the PAC countries, when adolescents were ages 12, 13, and 14, mothers and fathers were asked to rate how their adolescent performs in five subjects in school (i.e., reading, writing, math, social studies, and science), using a 4-point scale (1 = failing, 2 = below average, 3 = average, 4 = above average; items from the performance in academic subjects section of the Child Behavior Checklist, Achenbach, 1991). Ratings of adolescents' performance in the five subjects were averaged to create a composite score reflecting academic achievement at each age as perceived by mothers and fathers. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement at age 14, separately by country.

   Mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement at ages 12 and 13 were highly correlated with their reports of achievement at age 14 (.61 and .67 from age 12 to 14 and from age 13 to 14, respectively, for mothers; .63 and .65 from age 12 to 14 and from age 13 to 14, respectively, for fathers). Thus, parents' perceptions of their adolescents' academic achievement were stable over time. In addition, mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement were highly correlated with one another. In our sample the correlations between mothers' and fathers' reports at ages 12, 13, and 14 were .68, .68, and .70, respectively. Furthermore, as shown in Table 1, mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement were highly correlated in all nine countries, ranging from a low of .48 in Italy to a high of .90 in Jordan.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations between mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement at age 14

Country	Mother M (SD)	Father M (SD)	Correlation between mother and father report (all $p < .001$)
China	3.19 (.41)	3.23 (.50)	.82
Colombia	3.05 (.55)	3.19 (.51)	.57
Italy	3.13 (.44)	3.17 (.40)	.48
Jordan	3.66 (.53)	3.66 (.55)	.90
Kenya	3.27 (.52)	3.25 (.52)	.66
Philippines	3.29 (.50)	3.29 (.46)	.59
Sweden	3.37 (.52)	3.36 (.50)	.73
Thailand	3.16 (.49)	3.10 (.50)	.60
United States	3.36 (.58)	3.46 (.50)	.66

Academic Achievement and Parenting

Parents' ratings of their adolescents' academic achievement were also related to several aspects of parenting. When adolescents were age 12, they completed the Parental Acceptance-Rejection/Control Questionnaire-Short Form (Rohner, 2005). Items were averaged to create scales reflecting adolescents' perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' warmth (e.g., "My mother/father makes me feel wanted and needed," with 8 items about each parent) and control (e.g., "My mother/father is always telling me how I should behave," with 5 items about each parent). When adolescents were 12, their mothers and fathers also completed a measure of efficacy that reflected how much mothers and fathers believed they could affect their adolescents' behavior, including performance in school (e.g., "How much can you do to help your children to work hard at their school work," with 6 items completed by each parent; Caprara, Regalia, Scabini, Barbaranelli, & Bandura, 2004). Table 2 shows bivariate correlations between these aspects of parenting and mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement at ages 12, 13, and 14. As shown, adolescents

Table 2 Correlations between parenting at age 12 and mothers' and fathers' reports of adolescents' academic achievement at ages 12–14

Parenting variable at age 12	Academic achievement age 12		Academic achievement age 13		Academic achievement age 14	
	Mother report	Father report	Mother report	Father report	Mother report	Father report
Mother warmth: child report	.16	.16	.15	.16	.16	.16
Mother control: child report	−.14	−.11	−.12	−.10	−.16	−.10
Father warmth: child report	.17	.14	.16	.18	.12	.17
Father control: child report	−.08	−.11	−.08	−0.07 ns	−.13	−.10
Efficacy: mother report	.17	.13	.18	.16	.16	.16
Efficacy: father report	.09	.14	.13	.20	.08	.16

who perceived their mothers and fathers as being warmer and less controlling and parents who perceived themselves as being more able to affect their adolescents' performance in school had adolescents who were rated by their parents as having higher academic achievement.

Thus, findings from the PAC study suggest that mothers' and fathers' perceptions of adolescents' academic performance are stable over time and highly correlated with each other. In addition, adolescents who perceive their mothers and fathers as being warmer and less controlling have parents who perceive their adolescents as performing better in school. The findings presented here take the full PAC sample as a whole without considering how the relations may differ for each country. In the chapters that follow, literature from each separate country is reviewed to provide a deeper perspective on how relations between parenting and academic performance may differ in specific cultural contexts.

Future Directions

Parents' insight, oversight, and regulation of adolescents' academic activities have been considered from different perspectives in the research literature. Although parental involvement in adolescents' school-related activities takes a more indirect form than at younger ages, parental guidance also has to be balanced with adolescents' need for greater autonomy and an independent sense of self, especially in certain cultural contexts. Previous research has highlighted that understanding *how* parents with *different backgrounds*, such as SES and ethnicity, become involved in academic work for children at different *ages* is vital. In the meta-analysis by Boonk et al. (2018) nearly 90% of the 75 studies were carried out in the United States. The need is pressing for studies concerning parental involvement, parenting practices, and academic achievement with samples that are diverse with respect to age of the child, SES, ethnicity, and country of residence.

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