



**Biljana S. Bodroški Spariosu<sup>1</sup>** 

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade, Serbia

**Natasha V. Duhanaj**

Elementary School “Veselin Masleša”, Belgrade, Serbia

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## ***Parental involvement in children’s education: concept and models***

### **Extended summary**

The aim of the paper is to analyse the concept and model of parental involvement in researching the educational achievement of students. The concept of parental involvement arose in the field of educational policies of English-speaking countries and market-oriented education systems. Research has shown that different forms of parental involvement have significant effects on school learning outcomes. In this way, they become additional values that make a significant difference in educational achievements independent of the existing school resources and characteristics of the school system. The Coleman report in the USA and the “*educational parentocracy*” policy in the UK significantly stimulated research in this area. Educational policy makers are looking for an answer to the question of how to attract parents to take on a partnership role and actively support the goals of school education. At the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, the concept of parental involvement becomes a global agenda supported by almost all international organisations of importance for the research and reform of education systems.

By reviewing the relevant literature, it is possible to state that two very influential models of parental involvement in children’s education can be distinguished in modern educational research – *The Model of overlapping spheres of influence* authored by Joyce Epstein and the so-called DNA or *Dual navigation approach* by William Jeynes. The first model emphasises more the school aspects of parental involvement and structural characteristics. The second model

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1 [bbodrosk@f.bg.ac.rs](mailto:bbodrosk@f.bg.ac.rs);  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3683-5988>

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seeks greater balance by emphasising the activities of parents at home, as well as the relational aspects of this concept by identifying good patterns of communication and mutual respect among the participants.

The *Model of overlapping spheres of influence* is operationalised through six types of parental involvement: (1) supportive parenting for school learning, (2) communication, (3) volunteering at school, (4) learning at home, (5) making decisions of significance for the school and (6) cooperation between the school and the local community. *Parenting* refers to the types of activities that contribute to the establishment of a family environment that supports and encourages children's school learning. *Communication* involves the activities of designing and implementing effective forms of two-way communication in connection with school programs and children's progress in learning. *Volunteering* refers to the process of parents' voluntary participation in providing help and support for school activities. *Learning at home* is operationalised as providing information and ideas about how parents can help their children with homework and in all activities related to the implementation of the curriculum. *Decision-making* implies the participation of parents in school boards, councils, and other bodies that make decisions of importance for the work of the school. *Cooperation with the local community* refers to the use of the resources and services of the local community in order to strengthen and support the school education of children.

The *Dual Navigation Approach* or DNA model is based more on the results of the meta-analyses of empirical quantitative research on the effects of certain forms of parental involvement on the educational achievements of students. It is less focused on the school because the components of parents' engagement at home and the aspects of building a relationship of mutual respect between actors are more elaborated. The types of parental involvement, listed in order of the size of the effect on the educational achievement of students, are as follows: (1) high parental expectations; (2) parenting style; (3) supportive and informative communication in the family; (4) reading with children at home; (5) house rules; (6) partnership with the teacher; (7) communication between parents and teachers/school; (8) checking homework; (9) participation of parents in the work of the school and (10) connection with the local community.

The pedagogical implications of these models are very significant because they reveal the importance, complexity, and multidimensionality of the concept, as well as the effects of modeling parental involvement in the research that aims to contribute to the explanation and improvement of predictable and measurable outcomes of children's school learning. Guidelines for future research into the concept of parental involvement should be based on the insufficiently researched pedagogical aspects of mutual interactions of different types of involvement within the model, as well as on improving their sensitivity to non-instrumental existential values of education for children, family, and society as a whole. The problem of parental involvement implies a multidisciplinary approach, including political, psychological, economic, and sociological research. The missing link is an authentic pedagogical approach in the sense of reaffirming the immanent value of education (in school and family) without which there is no preservation and improvement of true humanity, which is necessary for every child to grow into a mature adult and for every generation that wants to preserve the hope that this world can become better. That is why it is important to reaffirm the pedagogical

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support of the school and parents through the modeling of joint involvement in the activities of preservation and evaluation of education as an ontologically necessary aspect of human survival and development.

**Keywords:** parental involvement in children's education, educational policy, model of overlapping spheres of influence, DNA model

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