IN SEARCH OF A GOLDEN MEAN: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

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Parental attitudes and behaviors, such as parental involvement in, and expectations of, a child’s education, have been shown to be instrumental factors for increasing the academic achievement of students. Contrary to popular beliefs and misperceptions, parental influences continue to play an important role on the academic performance of students even during adolescence. However, the nature of the relationship between parental influences and academic achievement has not been extensively examined, especially for adolescents. The present study investigates the relationship between parental factors, student perceptions, attributes, practices, and academic achievement and assesses whether an optimum level of involvement or expectations exists, which if surpassed, will reduce academic achievement instead of increasing it. Data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS), a comprehensive U.S. of Education study to collect information on nationally representative samples of adolescents, who were followed since eighth grade, are analyzed to test regression models with and without the assumption of curvilinearity. Findings of this study did not support the existence of a “golden mean” for the various forms of parent involvement investigated, implying that the more parents are involved and the higher the expectations they hold for their adolescents, the higher the academic achievement of the students.

Keywords: Parent involvement, Parent expectations, Academic Achievement, Adolescents, Adolescence.