

## **Family Nexus in the Teaching-Learning Process: An Analysis of Parental Mediation in a School Context**

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### **Abstract:**

Este artigo, desenvolvido com recurso a uma metodologia essencialmente bibliográfica (revisão sistemática e análise crítica da literatura existente), investiga o Nexo Familiar no Processo de Ensino-Aprendizagem, com enfoque específico na Mediação Parental no Contexto Escolar. Tem como objetivo geral analisar como as práticas de mediação parental (apoio, acompanhamento, comunicação com a escola e envolvimento nas atividades escolares) influenciam e são influenciadas pelo processo de ensino-aprendizagem, considerando a dinâmica de interação entre família e escola. A justificação reside na reconhecida importância da parceria família-escola para o sucesso educativo, destacando a mediação parental como elemento central desta relação; contudo, persistem lacunas na compreensão sistemática dos mecanismos e impactos específicos desta mediação no contexto escolar contemporâneo, exigindo uma síntese crítica do conhecimento acumulado. Os resultados da análise bibliográfica indicam que: A mediação parental eficaz (caracterizada por comunicação bidirecional positiva com a escola, apoio consistente ao trabalho escolar adaptado à autonomia do aluno e valorização da educação) correlaciona-se fortemente com melhor desempenho académico, maior engajamento escolar, desenvolvimento de habilidades socioemocionais e atitudes positivas em relação à aprendizagem; Barreiras significativas (como disparidades socioeconômicas, baixa escolaridade dos pais, falta de tempo, modelos inadequados de comunicação escolar e diferenças culturais) podem dificultar ou limitar a implementação de práticas mediadoras eficazes; Estratégias bem-sucedidas para o fortalecimento do *nexo* família-escola incluem programas estruturados de acolhimento familiar, formação de professores para comunicação eficaz com as famílias e políticas escolares que promovam a participação parental de forma inclusiva e flexível. Conclui-se que a mediação parental é um componente vital e multidimensional do *nexo* familiar no processo de ensino-aprendizagem, cuja otimização requer ação coordenada e sensível tanto das famílias quanto das instituições escolares.

**Keywords:** Mediação Parental, Nexus Familiar-Escolar, Processo Ensino-Aprendizagem



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## Introduction

The relationship between family and school constitutes a fundamental axis for understanding the teaching-learning process, especially with regard to parental mediation as a structuring practice. Historically, the literature regulates that family involvement transcends support for school tasks, articulating itself with dimensions such as cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), power dynamics (Foucault, 1979) and institutional partnerships (Epstein, 2011). However, unresolved theoretical issues persist: on the one hand, approaches that praise the family as a transforming agent in education; on the other hand, critical perspectives that identify it as a mechanism for the reproduction of inequalities (Lahire, 2019). In this scenario, this article aims to analyze, in the light of the critical theoretical framework, the role of parental mediation as a central element in *the* family-educational nexus, elucidating its interfaces with cultural capital, such as microphysics of school power and strategies of co-responsibility.

The specific objectives unfold in four axes: (1) to map key concepts that link parental mediation and teaching-learning, anchored in theories of cultural mediation (Vygotsky, 2007), cultural capital and family-school partnerships; (2) critically analyze the theoretical contradictions about the role of the family, confronting antagonistic views (transformation vs. social reproduction); (3) to examine the power dynamics implicit in the family-school relationship, using the notion of "microphysics of power" (Foucault, 1979) to decipher how social strata permeate parental mediation; (4) to propose a theoretical model of co-responsibility, synthesizing contributions capable of overcoming the dichotomy between family blaming and educational outsourcing.

The relevance of the study lies in the urgency of overcoming reductionist views, integrating critical analyses on how structural inequalities (socioeconomic, cultural) influence parental mediation (Oliveira, 2021), and how public policies can foster inclusive practices (Silva; Gomes, 2023). The methodology, exclusively bibliographic and hermeneutic, is based on recent productions (2018-2024) that re-update the debate, as demonstrated by the following authors:

## **Theoretical Foundations of Parental-Educational Mediation**

Parental mediation is configured as a multidimensional construct, whose theoretical bases refer to Vygotsky's theory of cultural mediation, for whom "human learning presupposes a specific social nature" (Vygotsky, 2007, p. 101). In this sense, the family acts as a mediating agent between the child and knowledge, structuring proximal development zones through dialogical interactions. In addition, as Carvalho (2022) observes, this practice is not dissociated from Bourdieusian cultural capital, as family symbolic resources determine repertoires of mediation.

In addition, the effectiveness of these practices is intrinsically related to the quality of family-school partnerships, as Epstein (2011) systematizes in his hexapartite model. For the author, "effective parental involvement transcends helping with tasks, requiring institutional cohesion" (Epstein, 2011, p. 28). However, Oliveira (2021) warns that such partnerships often reproduce social properties, since schools privilege hegemonic patterns of participation.

On the other hand, Gomes (2023) analyzes these relationships from the perspective of Foucault's microphysics of power, highlighting that "parental mediation is crossed by control devices that naturalize asymmetries" (Gomes, 2023, p. 15). This assertion explains why families with low education, according to Fonseca and Almeida (2021), often internalize a self-image of incapacity, limiting their mediating role.

Nevertheless, Silva and Gomes (2023) argue that family empowerment can subvert these dynamics, as long as it is supported by policies that value non-institutionalized knowledge. As they assert, "the decolonization of the school space requires consideration of marginalized family epistemologies" (Silva; Gomes, 2023, p. 7). From this perspective, Santos and Ribeiro (2022) identify in international experiences models of co-responsibility that replace vertical relationships with horizontal dialogues.

However, such advances hinder structural inequalities, since, as shown by Almeida et al. (2021), job insecurity significantly reduces the time availability for impaired mediation. Paradoxically, Ferreira and Costa (2023) point out that even

in vulnerable contexts, "creative parental monitoring strategies emerge as resilient counterpoints" (Ferreira; Costa, 2023, p. 22).

Finally, the articulation between these theories reveals the dialectic derived from mediation: as a mechanism of social reproduction, but also of transformation. As Martins (2020) summarizes, overcoming this dichotomy requires policies that convert family cultural capital into a tool of equity, not an instrument of segregation.

### **Parental Mediation and Educational Inequalities**

The relationship between parental mediation and educational inequalities reveals a structural contradiction: while critical theories emphasize the family as a mechanism for reproducing disparities (Bourdieu, 1986), emancipatory approaches defend its potential as a transforming agent (Oliveira, 2021, p. 12). This duality reflects, according to Carvalho (2022), a determining influence of family cultural capital, which can both perpetuate positions and foster social mobility through conscious strategies.

Furthermore, the analysis of school dynamics exposes how micro-practices of power (Foucault, 1979) naturalize exclusions. Gomes (2023) demonstrates that "institutional language and participation criteria act as silencing devices" (p. 18), marginalizing families with less education. Consequently, as Fonseca and Almeida (2021) observe, this symbolic violence generates parental self-exclusion, limiting mediating interventions in peripheral communities.

On the other hand, Ferreira and Costa (2023) identify daily resistance in these contexts, where mothers develop "informal tactics of pedagogical accompaniment, subverting exclusionary logics" (p. 34). Such practices, according to Almeida et al. (2021), challenge the notion of passivity, although they come up against material obstacles such as the precariousness of time, aggravated by strenuous working hours.

Nevertheless, comparative studies reveal that public policies often reinforce inequalities. Santos and Ribeiro (2022) analyze that "family-school partnership programs in peripheral countries privilege Eurocentric models, ignoring cultural diversities" (p. 55), reproducing epistemic asymmetries. This

ecological critique in Silva and Gomes (2023), for whom the unilateral blaming of families hides state responsibilities.

However, international experiences offer alternatives, such as projects based on dialogical co-responsibility. In Canada, according to Santos (2022), indigenous communities co-manage school curricula, integrating traditional knowledge. At the same time, Martins (2020) argues that such a model requires deconstructing positions of knowledge, registering non-academic parental competences.

However, the effectiveness of these initiatives depends on structural conditions. Data from Almeida et al. (2021) prove that "the absence of paid parental leave makes it impossible to mediate losses in working families" (p. 112), showing how socioeconomic inequalities permeate the educational environment.

Finally, overcoming this dichotomy requires, as described by Silva and Gomes (2023), policies that combine material redistribution and symbolic recognition, transforming parental mediation from a reproductive axis into a tool of equity.

### **Models of Family-School Co-responsibility**

Family-school co-responsibility emerges as a post-dichotomous paradigm, overcoming the polarization between family blaming and educational outsourcing. According to Silva (2023), this model requires "a democratic alliance based on the mutual recognition of competences" (p. 15), reconfiguring traditional positions. In this sense, Santos and Ribeiro (2022) identify in Canadian and Finnish policies co-participation in pedagogical decisions, where families co-elaborate political-pedagogical projects.

In addition, the effectiveness of these experiences is associated with epistemic decolonization, as studies on indigenous communities have shown. Pereira (2021) observes that "the inclusion of ancestral knowledge in school curricula breaks with monocultures of knowledge" (p. 34), promoting cognitive justice. At the same time, Martins (2020) argues that such practices deactivate critical teacher training, capable of mediating cultural conflicts without assimilationism.

However, Almeida et al. (2021) warn of the risk of institutional co-optation, when schools instrumentalize family participation to legitimize unilateral agendas. As they analyze, "pseudo-participation masks asymmetrical relations under inclusive rhetoric" (Almeida et al., 2021, p. 112). Consequently, Mendes (2024) advocates citizen audit mechanisms that ensure transparency in decision-making processes.

Nevertheless, technology emerges as an ambivalent tool: if on the one hand it expands accessibility, on the other it can disclose digital exclusions. According to Ribeiro (2023), "digital mediation platforms reproduce inequalities when they disregard heterogeneous technological literacies" (Ribeiro, 2023, p. 28). This assertion underpins Gomes' (2023) proposal for hybrid models, combining face-to-face and virtual interactions with technical support.

Entretanto, a sustentabilidade da corresponsabilização depende de estruturas de apoio social. Oliveira e Costa (2022) comprovam que "políticas de conciliação família-trabalho são pré-condição para participação equitativa" (p. 47), citando exemplos europeus de licenças parentais remuneradas. Complementarmente, Carvalho (2022) enfatiza a necessidade de redes territoriais, integrando equipamentos públicos como bibliotecas comunitárias.

Finalmente, a síntese propositiva de Silva (2023) defende um triângulo virtuoso: reconhecimento (simbólico), redistribuição (material) e representação (política), constituindo a corresponsabilização como direito relacional.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study is characterized as a qualitative bibliographic research, using exclusively secondary data collected in the SciELO and Google Scholar databases. As outlined by Almeida et al., the selection prioritized scientific productions between 2018-2024 on parental mediation in the school context. Using criteria of thematic relevance, 42 studies composed the analytical *corpus*, including empirical and theoretical articles.

To organize the material, we were classified by thematic axes: family-school partnership models (Epstein), structural inequalities (Fonseca & Almeida) and dialogical strategies (Silva & Gomes). Concomitantly, Carvalho and Martins

subsidized the initial categorization through cultural capital constructs. The entire process followed document traceability protocols.

The analyses were developed through content analysis according to Bardin, involving three interrelated phases: pre-analysis, categorical exploration and critical inference. Ribeiro and Gomes guided the identification of contradictory nuclei on digital mediation, while Ferreira and Costa based interpretations on resistance in vulnerable contexts. Analytical records were systematically validated by interpretative triangulation.

As for the limitations, the absence of primary sources is recognized, a condition that Mendes points out as a challenge to investigate undocumented institutional practices. Nevertheless, the range of international perspectives (Santos & Ribeiro) and decolonial critiques (Pereira) gave theoretical density to the inferences about the *family-educational* nexus.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Parental mediation is configured as a structuring axis of the teaching-learning process, whose effectiveness depends on material and symbolic conditions that have historically been overcome. As demonstrated, the cultural capital operation as a decisive mediator in this process, influencing both family accompaniment strategies and the institutional recognition of different forms of knowledge. Asymmetries in this field perpetuate cycles of educational advantages and disadvantages, evidencing the need for multidimensional interventions.

Theoretical contradictions about the role of families reveal a structural tension: while reproducivist perspectives emphasize the intergenerational transmission of inequalities, emancipatory approaches highlight the transformative potential of parenting practices. This duality requires overcoming through recognition of family agency, but without obscuring structural conditions that limit its performance. The challenge lies precisely in balancing individual and collective responsibilities.

Power dynamics in the school space manifest themselves through subtle mechanisms that hierarchize knowledge and legitimize exclusions. The microphysics of power acts in parental mediation when institutional norms



disregard diverse cultural repertoires, naturalizing processes of silencing. Such dynamics reinforce the need to deconstruct dominant epistemologies, opening space for genuinely intercultural dialogues in the family-school relationship.

In addition to the dichotomy between family blaming and educational outsourcing, a model of co-responsibility based on three interdependent pillars is proposed: redistribution of material resources, recognition of plural parental competences and democratic representation in pedagogical decisions. Successful international experiences demonstrate that co-created curricula and work-family balance policies are specific bases for effective partnerships.

It is concluded that the family-educational nexus will only be strengthened by breaking with individualistic paradigms, updating them through institutional arrangements that convert parental mediation into an intersectoral public policy. The future path requires simultaneous transformation of school structures and the social conditions of families, articulating cognitive justice with social justice at the heart of the educational project.

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