

Relatedness Between Children and Parents: Implications for Motivation

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Abstract

A significant goal in many countries around the world is promoting children's motivation so that ultimately they achieve at their full potential. There is much evidence supporting the idea that parents play a significant role in either facilitating or undermining children's motivation. The focus of this chapter is on how relatedness between children and their parents shapes the development of children's motivation as well as achievement. Three sets of ideas about how relatedness between children and their parents contributes to children's motivation are reviewed. An integration of the three is provided to highlight key themes as well as suggest key directions for future research.

Key Words: achievement, attachment, motivation, parent-child relations, parenting

Feeling related to others is fundamental to human functioning (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Deci & Ryan, 2000). For most humans, their first experience with relatedness takes place in the context of their relationships with their parents. Such relationships are unique in that they are often the first in children's lives, with children depending on their parents to provide them with important physical and psychological resources (Clutton-Brock, 1991; Thompson et al., 2005). It is thus not surprising that even as children enter into relationships with others such as their peers, their relationships with their parents retain substantial significance throughout adolescence, if not into adulthood as well (Collins & Steinberg, 2006; Offer & Offer, 1975). Indeed, children's relationships with their parents have been identified as key contexts for virtually all aspects of their psychological development (for reviews, see Cassidy & Shaver, 2008; Thompson, 2006). Although much of the attention in this vein has been directed toward the development of children's functioning in the social arena, the

development of children's functioning in the academic arena has also been of interest.

The central goal of this chapter is to integrate several lines of theory and research in which children's relationships with their parents serve as a context for the development of their motivation, with implications for their achievement (for recent reviews of other ways in which parents contribute to children's motivation, see Eccles, 2007; Grolnick, Friendly, & Bellas, 2009; Pomerantz & Moorman, 2010; Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). After briefly describing the major categories of motivation studied among children, we highlight the relevant postulates, as well as supportive research, of the two foremost theories linking relatedness between children and their parents to children's academic functioning: We review Bowlby's (1969, 1973, 1980) attachment theory and its extensions to the development of such functioning (e.g., Bretherton, 1985; van IJzendoorn, Dijkstra, & Bus, 1995); we then discuss Deci and Ryan's (1985, 2000) self-determination theory, with a focus on

its application to parents' socialization of children's motivation (e.g., Grolnick, Deci, & Ryan, 1997; Grolnick & Farkas, 2002). We next move beyond the focus of these theories on the quality of relationships between children and their parents to children's sense of responsibility to their parents. In the final section before concluding, we integrate the different ideas about the role of children's relatedness to their parents in their academic functioning, suggesting key questions to be answered in the future.

Major Categories of Children's Motivation

Theory and research concerned with children's academic functioning has generally focused on three major categories of motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998). First, a key category is that of how *capable* children feel they are in regard to accomplishing the learning tasks they encounter. This includes children's perceptions of competence, expectations for future performance, feelings of efficacy, and sense of control. Second, children's *investment* and *engagement* in learning tasks is of import, including not simply the value children assign to such tasks and the amount of time they spend on them but also their use of effective learning strategies, such as the planning and monitoring of their learning. A third category is the *reasons* behind children's investment and engagement. One of the most studied set of reasons is children's internal or autonomous (e.g., enjoyment and personal importance) versus external or controlled (e.g., avoidance of shame and attainment of rewards) reasons—what is known as intrinsic (versus extrinsic) motivation. Also receiving substantive attention is the extent to which children are concerned with developing (i.e., mastery motivation) rather than demonstrating (i.e., performance motivation) their competence. All three categories appear to play a role in children's achievement (for a review, see Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean, 2006). Thus, they have all received attention in the theory and research concerned with the role of parents in the development of children's academic functioning.

The Attachment Theory Perspective

The idea that children's relationships with their parents contribute to their motivation has received support in Bowlby's (1969, 1973, 1980) and Ainsworth's (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Caldwell & Ricituti, 1973) writings in the context of attachment theory (see also Bretherton, 1985). Focusing on the first 2 years of life, both Bowlby

and Ainsworth make the case that the quality of children's attachment to their primary caregivers, who are often their parents, shapes children's exploration (i.e., examining their environment so that they are ultimately knowledgeable about it). Among children who are securely attached, parents serve as a reliable base from which children can explore their world: Children are able to trust that their parents will be there for them if they are needed; their parents serve as a safe haven, thereby permitting effective concentration among children, which may be of particular import in the face of challenge. For these children, their attachment and exploration systems are balanced, which is unfortunately not the case for children who are insecurely attached to their parents. Such children experience anxiety over the possibility of losing their parents' attention, which interferes with their exploration.

Several studies find that when children are securely attached to their parents in the early years of life, they are better able to explore their environment at this time, often demonstrating enhanced competence (e.g., Belsky, Garduque, & Hrcir, 1984; Frodi, Bridges, & Grolnick, 1985). For example, Matas, Arend, and Sroufe (1978) observed that children securely (versus insecurely) attached to their mothers at 18 months were more effective in their problem solving 6 months later in that they spent more time working on problem-solving tasks, with heightened enthusiasm and dampened frustration. Perhaps because of their enhanced exploration, securely attached children are more cognitively competent (e.g., their language is more developed) than are insecurely attached children; notably, this is not accounted for by children's early IQ (e.g., O'Connor & McCartney, 2007; van IJzendoorn et al., 1995). Children with an ambivalent insecure attachment to their parents (i.e., children alternate between resistance and passivity toward their parents) appear to be at greater risk for a lack of exploration than are their counterparts with an avoidant insecure attachment (i.e., children physically and affectively avoid their parents; e.g., Belsky et al., 1984; Frodi et al., 1985). Frodi and colleagues (1985) speculate that although both types of insecurely attached children feel anxious over obtaining their parents' attention, avoidant children are more likely to displace their anxiety by engaging in activities that give the appearance of greater exploration compared to their ambivalent counterparts.

A critical question is whether the early attachments children have to their parents make contributions to children's academic functioning over the

longer term as children develop. A key mechanism through which children develop their competence is through their relationships with their parents (Wolfgang, & Hofman, 1995). Bowlby (1980) argued that children who are securely attached to their parents develop internal working models of the self as worthy and of others as trustworthy. Such models facilitate the effective exploration of the environment described earlier among them. Seeing their parents as trustworthy lead to perceptions of the self as trustworthy, in conjunction with perceptions of others as trustworthy and thus as available and thus as able to provide support when needed, may lead to positive views of the self as competent and of others as supportive for children's effective exploration. In contrast, when children are insecurely attached to their parents, they perceive their parents as unavailable in which people, in general, are viewed in a negative light. This may lead to feelings of helplessness and to a sense of being unable to feel incapable, to a sense of being unable to invest and engage in learning tasks.

Consistent with the theory, studies of children's attachment to their parents manifest in their reports of their motivation and engagement, not only the children's reports (e.g., Granot & Maccoby, 2003; van IJzendoorn, 2003) but also to adulthood (e.g., Belsky, Volling, Bernier, & Tarabulsy, 2005; and St-Laurent (2005) found that children who were securely attached to their parents at age 7 were more effective in their problem solving with their mothers at age 10 than were insecurely attached children. Over 2 years later, securely attached children showed more mastery motivation in their problem solving. This may be responsive to their attachment—or at least to their perception of it—on their subsequent academic functioning (Hofman, 1997). No studies to date (Hofman, 1994) demonstrate that children who are securely (versus insecurely) attached to their parents at 7 years of age are more effective at this age, which are more likely to represent competence, over and over again.

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case that the quality of their primary caregivers, shapes children's exploratory environment so that (legible about it). Among attached, parents serve as children can explore their trust that their parents are needed; their parents thereby permitting effective children, which may be of challenge. For these and exploration systems (fortunately not the case securely attached to their experience anxiety over the parents' attention, which ration.

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is whether the early attachment to their parents make contributions to academic functioning over the

longer term as children progress through school. A key mechanism by which such attachments may do so is through the internal working models children develop of themselves and others (Jacobsen, Wolfgang, & Hofman, 1994; van IJzendoorn et al., 1995). Bowlby (1969, 1973) maintains that when children have secure attachments to their parents, they develop internal working models in which the self is seen as worthy of love and others are seen as trustable. Such models may not only contribute to the effective exploration of securely attached children described earlier but also generate confidence among them. Seeing oneself as worthy of love may lead to perceptions that one is competent; such perceptions, in conjunction with seeing others as trustable and thus as able to provide a safe haven when needed, may lead children to feel in control. These views of the self as capable may set the foundation for children's effective investment and engagement. In contrast, when children are insecurely attached to their parents, they possess internal working models in which people, including themselves, are viewed in a negative light. This may ultimately lead them to feel incapable, thereby undermining effective investment and engagement among children.

Consistent with this perspective, the quality of children's attachment to their parents, often as manifest in their representations of it, is predictive of their motivation as well as achievement during not only the childhood and adolescence years (e.g., Granot & Mayseless, 2001; Stams, Juffer, & van IJzendoorn, 2002) but also the transition to adulthood (e.g., Elliot & Reis, 2003; Larose, Bernier, & Tarabulsky, 2005). For example, Moss and St-Laurent (2001) found that children who were securely attached to their mothers at 6 years of age were more effectively engaged while working with their mothers on a problem-solving task at this age than were insecurely attached children; moreover, 2 years later, securely attached children were more mastery motivated in the academic arena. This may be responsible for the effects of children's attachment—or at least their representations of it—on their subsequent achievement (Jacobsen & Hofman, 1997). Notably, Jacobsen and colleagues (1994) demonstrated that when children hold secure (versus insecure) representations of attachment at 7 years of age, they appear more confident at this age, which accounts for the effect of their attachment representations on their later cognitive competence, over and above their earlier IQ.

It is unclear whether these effects reflect the influence of the quality of children's early attachment

to their parents. Some investigators have put forth what Fraley (2002) refers to as revisionist perspectives of attachment in which internal working models are constantly updated to incorporate ongoing attachment experiences so that such models may or may not map onto children's early attachment to their parents. However, Fraley's (2002) review indicates that the data are more in line with what Fraley refers to as prototype perspectives in which internal working models are updated but maintain core dimensions of children's early attachment to their parents. In line with the idea that the quality of children's attachment to their parents early in life matters for children's academic functioning later in life, studying children who were raised in their initial years on an Israeli kibbutz, Aviezer, Sagi, Resnik, and Gini (2002) observed that children's early (i.e., at 13 to 15 months) attachment to their mothers, but not fathers, was predictive of children's motivation (e.g., persistence and attention) and skills (e.g., writing and oral abilities), but not grades, in the academic arena during early adolescence over and above children's early IQ. When Stams and colleagues (2002) examined the link between adopted children's attachment to their biologically unrelated parents at 12 months and a composite of children's motivation, skills, and grades in the academic arena at 7 years of age, they found that the children with the most insecure attachments to their parents (i.e., disorganized) experienced problems in the academic arena; however, this effect was evident only among children who also had a difficult temperament early in life.

Building on the original tenets of attachment theory, contemporary investigators have speculated that several other mechanisms may also contribute to the role of children's attachment to their parents in their academic functioning (for additional mechanisms not discussed here, see Bergin & Bergin, 2009; van IJzendoorn et al., 1995). Such speculation is of import because constructs reflecting children's exploration (e.g., mastery motivation) and internal working models (e.g., self-confidence) do not fully account for the link between children's attachment to their parents and their achievement (e.g., Aviezer et al., 2002; Jacobsen & Hofman, 1997). For one, when children are securely attached to their parents, they may be both more able and willing to meet the learning demands of their parents, often adopting them as their own. In this vein, in what they term the attachment-teaching hypothesis, van IJzendoorn and colleagues (1995) make the case that when children are securely attached to their parents, they

may be better able than their insecurely attached counterparts to attend to their parents' learning practices (e.g., instruction) because they are not distracted by concerns about their relationships with their parents; instead they feel safe even when confronted with challenge—a common occurrence in the learning context. In addition, because they trust their parents, securely (versus insecurely) attached children may be more willing to take on the values conveyed by their parents' learning-related practices (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Kochanska, Aksan, Knaack, & Rhines, 2004). Thus, children's secure attachment to their parents may lead parents' learning-related practices to be particularly effective in enhancing children's motivation and ultimately achievement. Suggestive of this idea, the more mothers characterize their relationships with their kindergarten children as warm, the more positive the effects of their involvement in their children's learning for children's achievement at this phase of development (Simpkins, Weiss, McCartney, Kreider, & Dearing, 2006).

Much of the theory and research generated by Bowlby's attachment theory has focused on the implications of the quality of children's attachments to their parents for children's relationships with others—particularly, their peers and teachers (for a review, see Schneider, Atkinson, & Tardiff, 2001). The key idea is that the internal working models children develop in the context of their relationships with their parents are applied by children to their relationships with others (Bretherton, 1985; Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). These relationships, in turn, may promote children's motivational development in two key ways. First, children's relationships with their peers contribute to their academic functioning (for a review, see Ladd, 2003): The more positive children's relationships with their peers, the less they are at risk for motivational as well as achievement problems as they are not preoccupied with relational difficulties in the classroom. Van IJzendoorn and colleagues (1995) also make the case that children's relationships with their peers can be cognitively stimulating, but only if there is trust in the relationships which allows children to use their peers' resources optimally. Second, the quality of children's attachment to their parents may shape the quality of their relationships with their teachers; this may contribute to how children are treated by their teachers as well as children's responsiveness to their teachers' instruction, thereby influencing children's academic functioning (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Pianta, Nimetz, & Bennett, 1997).

Consistent with this idea, the effect of children's attachment to their parents on their subsequent cognitive competence is due in part to the quality of children's relationships with their teachers (O'Connor & McCartney, 2007).

Given that the quality of children's attachment to their parents appears to contribute to their motivation as well as achievement in the academic arena, the issue of how to foster secure attachments between children and their parents is of import. Bowlby (1969) postulates that the quality of children's attachment to their parents is dependent to a large extent on parents' sensitivity to children's needs and desires (see also Ainsworth et al., 1978), with much evidence to support this idea (for a review, see Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997). Of particular import to fostering children's academic functioning, there is some evidence that when parents are sensitive early in children's lives, such functioning among children is enhanced (e.g., Frodi et al., 1985; Stams et al., 2002). For example, Tamis-LeMonda, Bornstein, and Baumwell (2001) observed that mothers' heightened sensitivity during the first year of children's lives is predictive over time of children's advanced language development. Moreover, as delineated in the next section, starting in the preschool years, parents' emotional support, which is considered a core component of their sensitivity (Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997), is predictive of children's subsequent motivation as well as achievement (e.g., Estrada, Arsenio, Hess, & Holloway, 1987; Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap, & Hevey, 2000; Pomerantz, Wang, & Ng, 2005). However, research is necessary to determine whether children's attachment to their parents—rather than other mechanisms (e.g., children's feelings of autonomy)—underlies the effects of parents' sensitivity or other related dimensions of parenting, such as emotional support, on children's academic functioning.

Summary

In sum, from an attachment theory perspective, children's relationships with their parents serve as an important context for the development of their motivation, thereby contributing to their achievement. Multiple mechanisms have been posited to account for the role of the quality of children's attachment to their parents in their academic functioning. Early on, investigators focused on the idea of securely attached children using their parents as a trusted base from which to explore, with positive internal working models also being influential. However, as more attention was directed

to the issue, other examples, for example, the ensuing parents' instruction relationships with children, is some evidence that children have with their academic functioning further investigation

The Self-Determination

Investigators working from a self-determination theory perspective posit that critical to academic functioning is a sense of relatedness to their parents and teachers. This theory posits that critical to academic functioning is a sense of basic psychological needs, specifying "innate psychological needs" (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When these needs are not met, academic functioning suffers. The three central needs are autonomy and competence. Competence is fulfilled when children feel that their actions in the context of their relationships with others are meaningful and worthy of affection (Deci & Wellborn, 1990). When these needs are not met, children do not give the relation primary caretakers in their lives. Thus, relation points across the life span to fill relatedness needs, relationships with parents and teachers.

Deci and Ryan (2000) argue that although the early relationships between children and their parents contribute to their competence later in life, children's psychological resources are shaped by their environment. In this self-determination theory perspective, the relationships of children, Grolnick, Deci, et al., 1999, highlight the importance of their children's lives and their need for relatedness. Parents maintain that parents define as parents' dedication to their children, as manifest in such parents' efforts to provide warmth toward children, efforts to provide feelings of relatedness.

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to the issue, other mechanisms were posited—for example, the ensuing response of children to their parents' instruction as well as children's ensuing relationships with their peers and teachers. There is some evidence that the early attachments children have with their parents play a role in their later academic functioning, but it remains an area for further investigation.

The Self-Determination Theory Perspective

Investigators working from a self-determination theory perspective have also deemed children's relatedness to their parents of import in children's academic functioning. In the context of self-determination theory, Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000) posit that critical to motivation is the fulfillment of basic psychological needs; which they view as specifying "innate psychological nutrients" (p. 227, Deci & Ryan, 2000) without which psychological functioning suffers. Relatedness represents one of the three central needs, with the other two being autonomy and competence. The relatedness need is fulfilled when children have a sense of security in the context of their relationships with significant others as well as feel that such others consider them as worthy of affection and positive regard (Connell & Wellborn, 1990). Self-determination theory does not give the relationships children have with their primary caretakers in the early years the special status that such relationships are given in attachment theory. Thus, relationships with others at various points across the life span are viewed as able to fulfill relatedness needs, relatively independent of early relationships with primary caretakers.

Deci and Ryan (2000) make the case that although the early relationships between children and their parents contribute to feelings of relatedness later in life, critical to such feelings are the psychological resources provided in the proximal environment. In this vein, in her application of self-determination theory to parents' socialization of children, Grolnick and colleagues (e.g., Grolnick, Deci, et al., 1997; Grolnick & Farkas, 2002) highlight the import of parents' involvement in their children's lives in facilitating the satisfaction of children's need for relatedness. These investigators maintain that parents' involvement, which they define as parents' dedication of resources to children as manifest in such practices as spending time with children, efforts to learn about children's lives, and warmth toward children, fosters the development of feelings of relatedness among children. Similar to

the attachment theory perspective, the relatedness that ensues from parents' involvement is postulated to have a validating function in that it indicates that the central figures in children's lives care about them, allowing children to feel worthy. Ultimately, children may come to view themselves as capable, with such feelings leading to investment and engagement (Grolnick, Deci, et al., 1997; Grolnick & Farkas, 2002). In addition, children's relatedness to their parents is viewed as facilitating children's internalization of their parents' values (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). In a somewhat different vein, relatedness has been posited to have a direct energizing function that permits engagement with the world; when there is a lack of relatedness, disaffection occurs (Connell & Wellborn, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Furrer & Skinner, 2003).

In line with Grolnick and colleagues' application of self-determination theory to parents' socialization of children, parents' involvement in their children's lives is associated with enhanced feelings of capability among children (for recent reviews, see Grolnick et al., 2009; Pomerantz & Moorman, 2010). In both concurrent and longitudinal investigations focusing on the academic arena, the more parents are involved in their children's learning (e.g., attending school events or reading with children), the more positively children perceive their competence as well as feel in control in school (e.g., Dearing, McCartney, Weiss, Kreider, & Simpkins, 2004; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hong & Ho, 2005). Such involvement also foreshadows children's heightened investment and engagement in school (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011). The motivation developed by parents' involvement appears to pay off as parents' involvement consistently predicts children's heightened achievement (for reviews, see Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Tyson, 2009), even when children's earlier achievement (e.g., Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999) as well as socioeconomic status (e.g., Deslandes, Bouchard, & St-Amant, 1998; Jaynes, 2005; Senechal & LeFevre, 2002) is taken into account. Notably, children's beliefs about their capability in the academic arena account in large part for the association between parents' involvement and children's achievement (Dearing et al., 2004; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hong & Ho, 2005). However, research has not examined whether the effect of parents' involvement on children's academic functioning is due to children's relatedness to their parents.

As research by Pomerantz, Wang, and Ng (2005) reveals, parents' involvement as reflected in

their warmth is also of import: The more positive mothers' affect when interacting with their children on days children have homework, the less children's negative affect in this often frustrating context is detrimental to their subsequent perceptions of competence as well as intrinsic and mastery motivation (see also Hokoda & Fincham, 1995; Nolen-Hoeksema, Wolfson, Mumme, & Guskin, 1995). Although parents' warmth is clearly of import to the development of children's motivation, it needs to be unconditional in that it is not expressed only when children do as parents desire. When parents make their warmth conditional on children thinking, feeling, or acting as parents desire, they lead children to feel pressured by a fear of losing their parents' positive regard (Roth, Assor, Niemiec, Ryan, & Deci, 2009). Indeed, when parents' positive regard for their children is contingent on their children doing well in the academic arena, children are engaged for performance rather than mastery reasons (Roth et al., 2009).

Although relatedness is viewed as important for the development of motivation in self-determination theory, it is not viewed as the only influence on motivation—or even the most important. Indeed, Grolnick and colleagues (e.g., Grolnick, Deci, et al., 1997; Grolnick & Farkas, 2002) argue that once parents are involved in their children's lives, key to promoting children's intrinsic motivation is parents' autonomy support: When parents support children's autonomy instead of exerting control over them by allowing children to take initiative rather than dictating what children do, parents facilitate the development of children's feelings of autonomy, thereby allowing for the development of intrinsic motivation among children. This process appears to begin early in children's lives as evidenced by Frodi and colleagues' (1985) finding that when mothers are autonomy supportive during children's first 2 years, children display heightened persistence in problem solving during this phase of development. As children move into the school years, the more parents support children's autonomy rather than exert control over children, the more children are intrinsically motivated in the academic arena (e.g., d'Ailly, 2003; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991). Parents' autonomy support is also associated with children feeling more capable as well as being more invested and engaged, with heightened achievement (e.g., Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Hess & McDevitt, 1984; Ng, Kenney-Benson, & Pomerantz, 2004; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Wang, Pomerantz, & Chen, 2007).

Although both parents' involvement and autonomy support appear to lead children to experience themselves as capable, Grolnick and colleagues (e.g., Grolnick, Deci, et al., 1997; Grolnick & Farkas, 2002) maintain that particularly critical in this vein is parents' structure. Structure involves parents' provision of clear and consistent guidelines, expectations, and rules for children. Structuring parents also communicate predictable consequences for children's actions (e.g., what will happen if rules are violated). In addition, structure includes providing children with instruction that takes into account children's capacity. Such parenting can promote feelings of capability in that it assists children in not only identifying societally valued standards but also developing the skills to achieve them. Although parents' structure is not associated with children's intrinsic motivation (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989), it is associated with heightened feelings of capability, both in terms of perceptions of competence and a sense of control, among children (e.g., Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Skinner, Johnson, & Snyder, 2005). This is likely due in part to the effects of parents' structure on children's skills. Research conducted by Englund and colleagues (2004), for example, reveals that the more structured mothers' instruction when children are 3 years old, the higher children's cognitive competence at 5 years old, and the better their achievement in the first and third grades (see also Pianta et al., 1997).

Summary

Similar to the attachment theory perspective, the self-determination theory perspective regards children's relatedness to their parents as important in the development of children's motivation, thereby shaping their achievement. Also like the attachment theory perspective, the self-determination theory perspective posits that children's relatedness to their parents may serve a validating function that allows them to feel worthy, with implications for their feelings of capability. However, there is a focus not evident in attachment theory on the proximal forces that lead to children's relatedness; consequently, parents' involvement in their children's lives is seen as key to facilitating children's fulfillment of their relatedness needs, thereby playing a role in children's academic functioning. Moreover, according to self-determination theory, other needs and thus dimensions of parenting other than involvement are central in the development of children's motivation: Parents must not only be involved in their children's lives but also autonomy supportive and structuring

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Beyond Relation Sense of Respons

At the heart of self-determination theory is relatedness to their parents (i.e., the extent to which they feel secure or insecure) or positive relationships with their parents. Children's sense of significance to their parents is not the only factor that influences their motivation, we focus on children's motivation and their sense of responsibility to their parents (e.g., Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, & Chen, 2011). We focus on children's motivation and their sense of responsibility to their parents (e.g., Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, & Chen, 2011). We focus on children's motivation and their sense of responsibility to their parents (e.g., Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, & Chen, 2011).

These two manifestations of relatedness to their parents are important in the development of children's motivation, thereby shaping their achievement. Also like the attachment theory perspective, the self-determination theory perspective posits that children's relatedness to their parents may serve a validating function that allows them to feel worthy, with implications for their feelings of capability. However, there is a focus not evident in attachment theory on the proximal forces that lead to children's relatedness; consequently, parents' involvement in their children's lives is seen as key to facilitating children's fulfillment of their relatedness needs, thereby playing a role in children's academic functioning. Moreover, according to self-determination theory, other needs and thus dimensions of parenting other than involvement are central in the development of children's motivation: Parents must not only be involved in their children's lives but also autonomy supportive and structuring

involvement and autonomy for children to experience and colleagues (e.g., Grolnick & Farkas, 2002) are critical in this vein. It involves parents' providing guidelines, expectations, and structuring parents' consequences for what will happen if rules are broken. It includes providing consequences that take into account what is motivating and promoting can assist children in meeting valued standards but not overburden them. Although related to children's feelings of capability, competence, and confidence (e.g., Grolnick & Ryan, 2005), the effects of parents' research conducted by Pomerantz et al. (2009), for example, reveals that parents' instruction when children are in third grades (see also

theory perspective, the perspective regards children's sense of responsibility as important in their motivation, thereby so like the attachment determination theory children's relatedness to their parents is a function that allows children to have a focus on their feelings of obligation to their family; there is a focus not evident in the proximal forces of relatedness; consequently, children's lives is seen as a function of their fulfillment of their obligations. Moreover, according to Pomerantz et al. (2009), other needs and thus more than involvement are related to children's motivation: children's involvement in their children's lives is more supportive and structuring

so that in addition to feeling related, children feel autonomous and competent.

Beyond Relationship Quality: Children's Sense of Responsibility to Their Parents

At the heart of both the attachment theory and self-determination theory perspectives is children's relatedness to their parents as reflected in the *quality* of their relationships with their parents—that is, the extent to which children have secure (versus insecure) or positive (versus negative) relationships with their parents. Although the quality of children's relationships with their parents is clearly of significance to children's academic functioning, it is not the only form that children's relatedness to their parents takes (Hardway & Fuligni, 2006; Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, & Chen, 2009). In this section, we focus on another form that is of import to children's motivation with their parents: *Children's sense of responsibility to their parents*—that is, the belief among children that it is important that they provide psychological or material assistance to their parents (e.g., by meeting their parents' expectations for their performance or helping with chores around the house). Children's sense of responsibility to their parents has been studied by Fuligni and colleagues (e.g., Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Fuligni & Zhang, 2004) as manifest in their feelings of obligation to their family. Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, and Chen (2011) make the case that children's sense of responsibility to their parents is also manifest in their motivation to please their parents—that is, children's pursuit of goals to obtain their parents' approval.

These two manifestations of children's sense of responsibility to their parents may enhance children's academic functioning by leading children to use their parents' values as guides as they attempt to fulfill their responsibilities to them (Fuligni & Flook, 2005). Fuligni and colleagues (Fuligni & Flook, 2005; Telzer & Fuligni, 2009) contend that children's feelings of obligation to their family along with the activities motivated by such feelings are beneficial in that they provide children with a sense of purpose, often evident in feelings of role fulfillment. Although some parents do not see children's learning in the academic arena as a priority, many parents place at least some value on this arena. Thus, children's sense of responsibility to their parents may often lead children to place value on the academic arena. As a consequence, children harboring a sense of responsibility to their parents may be more invested and engaged, albeit not necessarily

more confident in their capabilities or intrinsically motivated, in the academic arena, which may benefit their achievement.

Although this process may be driven by controlled motivation—for example, children's fear of losing their parents' positive regard, it may be effective in ensuring children are engaged in school, particularly during adolescence. Controlled motivation, which may be fostered by rewards or punishment, is useful when autonomous motivation does not already exist (for a review, see Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999), as is often the case for children in the academic context during adolescence (for a review, see Wigfield & Wagner, 2005). Indeed, controlled motivation may promote engagement and achievement—at least when deep processing is not necessary (Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Soenens, & Matos, 2005). It is also possible that children's sense of responsibility to their parents is in part a form of autonomous motivation because it grows out of a relationship of reciprocal give and take between children and their parents (Pomerantz, Qin, Wang, & Chen, 2011), so that children view their responsibilities to their parents as personally important. Indeed, children's sense of responsibility to their parents is associated not only with children's controlled, but also autonomous, motivation in the academic context (Pomerantz et al., 2011).

Growing evidence reveals that children's sense of responsibility to their parents contributes to their academic functioning. In both the United States and China, the more children feel obligated to their family during the high school years, the more they value school (Fuligni et al., 1999; Fuligni & Zhang, 2004; Pomerantz et al., 2011). Research conducted in the United States also indicates that children of European, Chinese, and Mexican heritage who feel obligated to their family during adolescence are particularly likely to devote time to their schoolwork (Fuligni, Yip, & Tseng, 2002; Hardway & Fuligni, 2006). However, children's feelings of obligation to their family are not associated with their enhanced achievement—perhaps because other obligations to the family (e.g., doing chores and taking care of siblings) interfere with the effectiveness of their academic efforts so that children are not optimally focused. Notably, children's sense of responsibility to their parents as manifest in their motivation in school to please them appears to foster their motivation as well as achievement. Studying children in the United States and China during early adolescence, Pomerantz and colleagues (2011) found that the more motivated children were to please

their parents, the greater their investment and engagement as well as grades in school 2 years later, even after taking into account children's earlier academic functioning.

The greater children's sense of responsibility to their parents (i.e., the more they feel obligated to their parents and the more motivated they are to please their parents), the better the quality of their relationships with their parents (e.g., Fuligni et al., 1999; Fuligni & Zhang, 2004; Pomerantz et al., 2011). Although the associations are not strong enough to suggest that children's sense of responsibility to their parents is simply a reflection of the quality of their relationships with them, they beg the question of whether the effects of children's sense of responsibility to their parents remain once the quality of their relationships with their parents is taken into account. Notably, when Pomerantz and colleagues (2011) statistically controlled for the quality of children's relationships with their parents, children's sense of responsibility to their parents continued to exert an effect over time on children's academic functioning. A key issue that has unfortunately not received attention is the extent to which children's adoption of their parents' values accounts for the effects of children's sense of responsibility to their parents on children's motivation. It is possible that other mechanisms may also be at work—for example, children's sense of responsibility to their parents may facilitate their spontaneous disclosure about their daily lives to their parents which has been argued to provide an important context for parents to gain knowledge about their children's lives (e.g., Kerr & Stattin, 2000). This may allow parents to provide support to children in the academic arena.

Summary

Although the quality of children's relationships with their parents is of import to children's academic functioning as postulated in the attachment theory and self-determination theory perspectives, other forms of children's relatedness to their parents appear to be instrumental as well. Here, we have focused on children's sense of responsibility to their parents, which appears to facilitate children's academic functioning during the adolescent years. Children's sense of responsibility to their parents may be particularly functional during this phase of development given children's declining interest in school. Notably, the effects of children's sense of responsibility to their parents on children's motivation as well as achievement are distinct from the

effects of the quality of their relationships with their parents. Future research is needed to identify the mechanisms by which children's sense of responsibility to their parents enhances their academic functioning.

Integrating the Different Ideas About Relatedness

The three sets of ideas we have reviewed share an emphasis on children's relatedness to their parents as a significant force in the development of their motivation, with implications for their achievement. Although there is convergence among the three along some lines (e.g., children's relatedness to their parents is viewed as leading children to take on their parents' values), there is also divergence (e.g., the form of relatedness deemed of import varies). In this section, we offer an integration of the three sets of ideas. Such integration is a fruitful step toward fully elucidating how children's relatedness to their parents contributes to their academic functioning across different phases of their development in different cultural contexts. We outline three key themes that evolve from considering the different perspectives together. In doing so, we highlight critical questions that may serve to guide future research and theory.

Theme 1: Early Relatedness Matters, But Is Not Deterministic

Consistent with the attachment theory perspective, children's early relatedness to their parents may set an important foundation for children's later academic functioning. Indeed, as reviewed earlier, there is much evidence that the security of children's attachment to their parents during the first few years of their life contributes to their motivation as well as achievement during these years. Moreover, it appears that such relatedness is of import for children as they enter the school system where they may be confronted with new challenges. The extent to which children's early attachment to their parents continues to exert an influence over their academic functioning in the later years of children's development, however, is unclear. Indeed, research on the longer term effects is sparse. Although the one study in this vein of which we are aware provides evidence for such effects into adolescence, the effects are quite small, evident among mothers but not fathers, and do not reach significance when it comes to children's grades (Aviezer et al., 2002).

These findings along with the ideas put forth by investigators working from the self-determination

theory perspective although their environment plays a role in children's early academic functioning are not be determined at least in part—by their parents' lives such as their involvement in the cost of their relationships may undo the cost of their involvement in the cost of their relationships (for a review see Pomerantz & Cheung, 2011). Over the course of changing parents' income, a family's income may lead to better learning along physical as well as psychological (Dearing & Taylor, 2008). Hence changes in the environment may lead to changes in children's lives (e.g., Galambos, Grolnick, Benjet, & Sheldon, 2002).

The proposal that relatedness to their parents is not deterministic is supported to some extent by children's lives. Children's lives are fostered in part by their parents' lives. Parents' lives are fostered in part by their children's lives. This begs empirical examination. First, to what extent does early attachment to their parents predict later involvement in school? On the other hand, to what extent are the two entirely overlapping? Second, to what extent may contribution over the course of development? Continued involvement in school attachment, thereby changing children's lives. On the other hand, parents' involvement in their physical and psychological lives thereby changing children's lives stemming from their lives.

Second, if parent involvement is a significant independent effect, to what extent does it impact on children's lives? A key tenet of the self-determination theory is that parents' lives which in part is related to children's academic functioning.

relationships with their parents are needed to identify the children's sense of responsiveness and their academic

Ideas About

We have reviewed share an understanding of their parents' involvement in the development of their children's academic functioning for their achievement and convergence among the children's relatedness to their academic functioning. There is also divergence in the literature deemed of importance for an integration of the two. Children's relatedness to their academic functioning is a fruitful step toward children's academic functioning. We outline three key considerations of their development. We highlight the different ways of doing so, we highlight the ways that may serve to guide future

Business Matters, Academic

Attachment theory perspective on children's relatedness to their parents may be needed, as reviewed earlier, that the security of children's attachment to their parents during the first few years of their lives contributes to their motivation and academic functioning during these years. Moreover, the importance of attachment to their parents is of importance for children's academic functioning in school system where they may face challenges. The extent to which attachment to their parents influences over their academic functioning in the early years of children's development. Indeed, research on the importance of attachment to their parents is aware provides evidence that attachment to their parents in adolescence, the effects are stronger for mothers but not fathers (Bowlby, 2002). The importance of attachment to their parents with the ideas put forth by the self-determination

theory perspective suggest that as children develop, although their early relatedness to their parents plays a role in their motivation, children's later environments are influential as well. Ultimately, children's early attachment to their parents may not be deterministic as it may be overridden—at least in part—by the subsequent environment created by their parents or other significant figures in their lives such as their peers or teachers. Parents may undo the costs or benefits of their early attachment relationships with their children through their involvement in their children's lives, which is influenced in part by parents' physical and psychological resources (for a review, see Pomerantz, Moorman, & Cheung, 2011). Such resources may change over the course of children's development, thereby changing parents' involvement. For example, when a family's income increases over time, parents create better learning environments for their children along physical as well as psychological lines (e.g., Dearing & Taylor, 2007). Parents may also experience changes in their social support over time that may lead to changes in their involvement in children's lives (e.g., Gavidia-Payne & Stoneman, 1997; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Sheldon, 2002).

The proposal that the effects of children's early relatedness to their parents are superseded to some extent by children's later relatedness to their parents fostered in part by their parents' involvement begs empirical examination of two key questions. First, to what extent are the effects of children's early attachment to their parents and their parents' later involvement in their lives independent of one another? On the one hand, it is possible that the two are entirely overlapping. Parents' early involvement may contribute to an early secure attachment; over the course of children's development, parents' continued involvement may maintain such an attachment, thereby fostering children's motivation. On the other hand, it is possible that although parents' involvement may contribute to early attachment, parents' involvement changes over time as their physical and psychological resources change, thereby changing children's motivational trajectory stemming from their early attachment.

Second, if parents' later involvement has an independent effect, to what extent does it do so through its impact on children's relatedness to their parents? A key tenet of the self-determination theory perspective is that parents' involvement fosters relatedness, which in part is responsible for its role in children's academic functioning. As highlighted earlier,

however, this important issue has not received empirical attention. Such attention is needed given other viable alternatives: Parents' involvement—at least in children's learning—may directly enhance children's skills (Senechal & LeFevre, 2002) or indirectly do so by leading teachers to give children more attention in the classroom (Epstein & Becker, 1982), both of which may enhance children's motivation as well as achievement.

The security of children's early attachment to their parents may also work synergistically with parents' later involvement to shape children's academic functioning. On the one hand, children's attachment may serve an amplifying function such that a secure (versus insecure) attachment sets a foundation among children allowing them to reap greater benefits from their parents' later involvement in their learning (e.g., van IJzendoorn et al., 1995). On the other hand, children's attachment may serve a compensatory function: A secure (versus insecure) attachment early in children's lives may make up for dampened involvement among parents in their children's learning later in children's lives. That is, when parents do not have the desire or resources to be involved in their children's learning, children may still make motivational gains if their secure attachment to their parents provides them with a trustable base from which to explore as well as other resources such as positive internal working models.

Distinguishing between the amplifying and compensating functions of children's early attachment to their parents requires research examining whether such relatedness moderates the effect of parents' subsequent involvement in their children's learning on children's academic functioning. Simpkins and colleagues' (2006) research showing that children who have warm relationships with their mothers as well as highly involved mothers have higher achievement than other children is a step in this direction. However, the focus of this research, which is suggestive of the amplifying function, was not on children's early attachment to their parents; thus, it is unclear what kind of foundation such relatedness provides for the success of subsequent parenting in promoting children's academic functioning. Moreover, an endeavor of this sort should look at the mechanisms underlying the synergy of children's early attachment to their parents and their parents' later involvement. Also in need of attention is the possibility that children's early attachment changes how parents are involved, with secure attachment driving more positive, effective involvement on parents' part (van IJzendoorn et al., 1995).

Indeed, there is some evidence supportive of this possibility (O'Connor & McCartney, 2007).

Theme 2: There Are Contextual Variations in the Role of Relatedness

For quite some time the attachment theory and self-determination theory perspectives have served to guide research on how relatedness between children and their parents contributes to children's academic functioning; this has led to a focus on the quality of relationships between children and their parents. However, more recent theory and research on the adolescent years has highlighted the significance of another form of children's relatedness to their parents—children's sense of responsibility to them—that while related to the quality of children's relationships with their parents, is distinct from it with unique effects on children's academic functioning. Children's sense of responsibility to their parents may be of particular import in two key contexts: (1) during phases of children's development when their interest in learning declines and (2) in cultures, such as that characteristic of East Asian countries, in which children may not have particularly positive relationships with their parents, but learning may be particularly important.

Although it is likely that children's sense of responsibility to their parents develops prior to adolescence, playing a role in their academic functioning during these earlier years, its role may be of most significance during adolescence. It is well documented that as children move into adolescence their investment and engagement in school declines, with a parallel decline in their achievement (for a review, see Wigfield et al., 2006). Eccles and colleagues (1993) have argued that such decrements are due in part to a poor fit between children's concerns as they move into adolescence (e.g., with establishing independence and avoiding negative evaluation) and the environment provided by the middle schools that they transition into from elementary school (e.g., teachers' heightened control and evaluative feedback). During adolescence, the quality of children's relationships with their parents is predictive of their academic functioning (e.g., Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994), but alone it may not be enough to sustain children during this phase of development. Optimal motivation may require additional forces that are instrumental in moving children toward adopting the values of their parents, which are less likely to deviate from those endorsed by society than are the values of children's peers who often attain heightened

significance in children's lives during adolescence (e.g., Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Larson, Richards, Moneta, Holmbeck, & Duckett, 1996).

Direct empirical examination of this developmental hypothesis is necessary. The contribution of children's sense of responsibility to their parents, along with the quality (e.g., security or positivity) of children's relationships with their parents, should be identified from the earliest to the latest school years. The effect of children's sense of responsibility to their parents on their motivation may become larger over time as children move into adolescence, whereas that of the quality of children's relationships with their parents may be maintained. In this context, attention needs to be given to the possibility that children's sense of responsibility to their parents grows out of a positive relationship with them, thereby acting as a mechanism through which the quality of children's relationships with their parents enhances their motivation.

Also worthy of consideration is that children's sense of responsibility to their parents may be most beneficial when parents remain involved in their children's academic lives during adolescence—a time when the norm is often for parents to become less involved in this arena of children's lives (e.g., Cheung & Pomerantz, 2011; Cooper, Lindsay, & Nye, 2000). By being involved in their children's learning, parents may convey to children that they value school, leading children to view doing well in school as their responsibility. Indeed, during early adolescence, the more parents are involved in children's learning, the more children are motivated in school to please their parents, which is predictive of children's subsequent engagement and ultimately achievement (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2009). Through their involvement in children's academic lives, parents may also support children as they attempt to fulfill their academic responsibilities. For example, by being involved parents may provide children with encouragement when children experience difficulty as may often be the case during adolescence. In addition, through their involvement, parents may provide instruction that allows children to develop the abilities necessary to meet their responsibilities in the academic arena.

Children's sense of responsibility to their parents may be of particular import not only during adolescence but also in cultures where much emphasis is placed on learning as well as filial piety, as is the case in East Asian countries, such as China. In fact, considering children's sense of responsibility to their parents may be key to understanding the apparent

paradox that despite relationships with their Pomerantz et al., 20 motivated, with hei to American childre ment (e.g., Stevens & Pomerantz, 200 intriguing given th: tionships with their contributions to ch. China and the Uni & Dong, 2010). Th pensates for the poc children and their j United States) in there are a variety o: parenting practices) ity to their parents i

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paradox that despite reporting poorer quality relationships with their parents during adolescence (e.g., Pomerantz et al., 2009), East Asian children are more motivated, with heightened achievement, compared to American children during this phase of development (e.g., Stevenson, Chen, & Lee, 1993; Wang & Pomerantz, 2009). This paradox is particularly intriguing given that the quality of children's relationships with their parents appears to make equal contributions to children's academic functioning in China and the United States (Cheung, Pomerantz, & Dong, 2010). Thus, a key question is what compensates for the poorer quality relationships among children and their parents in East Asia (versus the United States) in motivating children. Although there are a variety of possibilities (e.g., teaching and parenting practices), children's sense of responsibility to their parents is likely to be influential.

The focus on children's sense of responsibility to their parents emerged largely in the context of efforts to understand children from cultural backgrounds in which the family looms larger than it does in European American culture (e.g., Fuligni et al., 1999). For example, in East Asian countries where Confucian philosophy is central, children's sense of responsibility to their parents may grow out of the notion of filial piety, which involves, among other things, children repaying their family for their efforts in raising them, bringing honor to their family, making sacrifices for their family, and psychologically and materially supporting their family (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Ho, 1996). Doing well in school may be a central way for children to fulfill their responsibilities to their parents in East Asian countries given the import of learning in Confucian philosophy (Ho, 1994; Yu, 1996) as well as professional and financial success (Tang, Luk, & Chiu, 2000).

In line with such reasoning, soon after entering adolescence, children of Chinese heritage—both residing in China and the United States—feel more obligated to their parents and more motivated in school to please them than do children of European heritage residing in the United States (e.g., Fuligni et al., 1999; Hardway & Fuligni, 2006; Pomerantz et al., 2011). Chinese (versus American) children's greater sense of responsibility to their parents may compensate for the poorer quality relationships they have with their parents during adolescence. Indeed, focusing on ethnic differences in the United States in the value children place on school during adolescence, Fuligni (2001) reports that the heightened feelings of obligation to their families of children of Chinese

and Latin heritage accounts for the heightened value they place on school compared to their American counterparts of other ethnic heritage. Further examination of the issue between countries is needed to ensure that the effects are not due to immigrant or minority status. In this context, other dimensions of children's motivation besides value should be examined, as should children's achievement.

Theme 3: Relatedness Is Not All That Matters

Most reviews focusing on the role of parents in children's academic functioning highlight the *practices* that parents employ that facilitate or undermine such functioning (e.g., Eccles, 2007; Grolnick et al., 2009; Pomerantz & Moorman, 2010; Pomerantz et al., 2007). Indeed, there is a sizeable body of research indicating that multiple dimensions of parenting contribute to children's motivation as well as achievement. Our goal in this chapter was to go beyond these prior reviews to emphasize the import of relatedness between children and their parents—whether it be established in the earliest years of children's lives or the later years, and whether it be the quality of the relationships between children and their parents or children's sense of responsibility to their parents. However, as is emphasized in self-determination theory, although relatedness is of import to children's motivational development, it is certainly not the only force.

If parents create an environment, often through their involvement, in which children feel related to them, this on its own may not necessarily translate into motivation among children that optimizes their achievement. Although parents' involvement in children's lives is a critical first step toward promoting children's motivation, such involvement likely needs to be accompanied by autonomy support and structure (Grolnick et al., 2009; Pomerantz, Grolnick, & Price, 2005; Pomerantz et al., 2007). Autonomy-supportive and structuring practices may afford key resources to children that no degree of relatedness may afford. For example, even if children have established a positive relationship with their parents, if their parents do not employ structuring practices, the feelings of capability fostered by children's relatedness with their parents may be undermined as children do not develop necessary skills.

In the two earlier themes we delineated, we highlighted how children's relatedness to their parents may work synergistically with their parents' involvement in shaping their academic functioning. Children's relatedness to their parents, as well as the involvement assumed to foster it, may also work

synergistically with parents' autonomy support and structure. On the one hand, children's relatedness may serve an amplifying function. For example, the reduced anxiety produced by children's secure attachment to their parents may allow them to capitalize on their parents' autonomy support in that they are able to take full advantage of autonomy opportunities, such as making choices or solving problems on their own. Children's sense of responsibility to their parents may also lead children to use autonomy opportunities to pursue societally valued goals held by their parents. On the other hand, children's relatedness to their parents may play a compensatory function by providing them with resources to buffer the undermining effects of parenting that is not autonomy supportive or structuring. For example, children residing in a home without structure may have a trustable base from which to find structure outside of their home, such as that supplied by teachers, coaches, and friends' parents.

Empirical tests of the ideas outlined here are needed. Perhaps most notably, investigation of the synergies is an important direction for future research. Suggestive of such interactions are findings yielded by research conducted by Kochanska and colleagues (2004): Consistent with the idea of an amplifying function, parents' responsiveness (which involves some autonomy support) and gentle discipline (which is an aspect of structure) during the early years of children's lives mattered most for children in terms of their subsequent conscience when children were securely (versus insecurely) attached to their parents during the early years. However, there is no evidence to date as to whether children's relatedness moderates the effects of parents' learning-related practices on their academic functioning in such a manner. Examination of the moderating role of children's relatedness to their parents as manifest both in the quality of their relationships with their parents as well as their sense of responsibility to them is of much import.

Conclusions

Children's relatedness to their parents appears to play a fundamental role in the development of their motivation, ultimately having implications for their achievement. Such relatedness, whether reflected in the quality of children's relationships with their parents or their sense of responsibility to their parents, is predictive of children's subsequent academic functioning across multiple phases of the life span, taking into account children's earlier functioning in

the academic context. However, there are still key issues to be resolved in understanding the role of children's relatedness to their parents. We highlighted three themes that emerge from an integration of the three different sets of ideas we reviewed on the role of relatedness between children and their parents in children's academic functioning: (1) Both the early attachment between children and their parents and the later environment created by parents are of import to children's academic functioning; (2) there is contextual variation in the effects of children's relatedness to their parents, particularly in regard to children's sense of responsibility to their parents; and (3) although children's relatedness to their parents is instrumental in their academic functioning, it alone may not be sufficient in optimizing it. A comprehensive understanding of the role of relatedness between parents and children in children's motivation as well as achievement requires empirical tests of these themes.

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ever, there are still key understanding the role of their parents. We highlight from an integration of ideas we reviewed between children and their academic functioning: (1) Both between children and their environment created by parents' academic functioning, variation in the effects of their parents, particularly in their responsibility to their children's relatedness to their academic functioning, can be sufficient in optimizing understanding of the role of parents and children in child academic achievement requires more.

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