

Thematic Article

Parental Assistance with Assignments – Types of Parental Involvement in Homework¹

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Abstract

The present study analyses – using qualitative methods – parental involvement in children’s homework, the forms of parental involvement and the types of parents in the studied area, emphasizing the decisive role of parents in the educational life of their children, using the sample of several rural settlements in Szeklerland. By focusing on the rural context, this research contributes to the existing literature by offering a more nuanced understanding of parental involvement, potentially uncovering challenges and strategies that are unique to rural communities. The literature lacks a parent typology based on qualitative research. The most common types of parents are: “aversive”, “ambitious”, “partner”, “accountable”, “networking”. The benefits of parental support for children’s learning at home have been widely emphasized by experts in recent research. Active parental involvement has a positive impact on student achievement and learning. It also gives parents a better insight into school life and enables them to develop a partnership with the teachers.

Keywords: parental involvement; parental role perception; homework; student achievement

Introduction

The cooperation between parents and teachers, and parental involvement in children’s homework have received a lot of attention in recent years among professionals in the field. Researchers (e.g., Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Lumpkin, 2010) have recognized relatively quickly that parental involvement, specifically assistance with homeschooling, has a positive impact on student achievement and character traits. Lácza and R. Fedor (2017), in their study among disadvantaged young people, highlight that a trusting relationship with a mother or father has a positive impact on the development of young people’s personality, but its absence can become a risk factor. Furthermore, it is important that parents have the opportunity to get a better insight into the children’s learning through their involvement in children’s homework, and that school and home are “connected” (Imre et al., 2021). In addition to the positive effects of the cooperation between the school and home, several authors (e.g. Bauch, 2001; Gibbs, 2005; Harmon & Schraft, 2009; Witte & Sheridan, 2011) have discussed the positive effects of a strong cooperation between the school and parents in the context of rural education.

It is important to investigate what parents in a rural community think about helping with homework at home. In this study, I examine what models of cooperation and types of parents can be distinguished and captured in the studied area in terms of parental involvement in the homework assignments given to students. The aim of this study is to emphasize the decisive role of parents in the educational progress of their children in a rural area by analyzing parental involvement. Parents’ attitudes towards their children’s homework, and the types of parents involved in homework, provide important information about the cooperation between schools and parents in the studied area.

After focusing on the main topic, the paper outlines the most important research in the literature, then defines the subject, methods, and sample of the research. Based on the interview narratives and field experiences,

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the analysis will present the types of parents in the studied area that can be categorized from our topic's perspective.

Research background

Family background clearly plays an important role in children's school life, behavior, and academic performance (Engler et al., 2021). Schools, homes, and communities are the main contexts in which children learn, and the cooperation of those involved in these environments benefits children's learning and development (Epstein, 1987, 2011; Sheldon, 2009, Dan et al., 2023). Students are more likely to achieve academic success when their home environment is supportive (Henderson & Berla, 1994; Eliason & Jankins, 2003; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009). This is explained by Coleman (1988) when he writes that social capital has a positive impact on academic achievement. The impact of time and attention given to children can be greater than the higher education or even socio-economic status of parents (Coleman, 1988).

Epstein (2001, 2009) argues that there are several reasons for developing and creating partnerships between school, family, and community. The reason (and purpose) for forming such partnerships is to help children succeed in school. Other reasons include improving the school climate and school programs, improving parenting skills and school leadership, helping families connect with others in the school and community, and helping teachers better do their jobs.

All these reasons and factors underline the importance of parents taking an active role in their children's education and maintaining strong and positive relationships with the schools. According to Lumpkin (2010), parental involvement not only improves and shapes a child's morale, attitudes, and academic achievement in all subject areas, but also promotes more acceptable behavior and social attitudes too. In all these ways, family involvement in education helps children to grow into productive and responsible members of society.

However, it is important to distinguish between involvement at home and involvement at school. There are researchers (ex. Borgonovi & Montt, 2012) who have divided home support into three more categories: assistance in learning at home, parent-child activities that are not closely related to school learning, and parents' attitude towards school (Borgonovi & Montt, 2012). Specifically, school-based involvement includes activities that take place at school (for example, school days and events, but also parent conferences and teacher consultations). Participation at home includes any influence from the parent on the child that contributes to the child's academic results but takes place outside the educational institution (for example, home conversation about school material or visiting a museum) (Csák, 2023).

According to Mestry and Grobler (2007), the impact of home and family environment on school performance has long been neglected. Most often, it is not a lack of interest that prevents parents from becoming involved in their children's education, but poverty, single parenthood, and the challenges of cultural and socio-economic isolation. However, there are factors that positively influence parental involvement, such as religiosity (Pusztai & Fényes, 2022). The Research Group of "MTA-DE-Parent-Teacher Cooperation Research" has recently been very much concerned with the role of parents in education. A recent study by the research team (Pusztai et al., 2023) examined the characteristics of school choice by comparing parental involvement in denominational and public schools. They found that it is not the type of school that determines parents' greater involvement at home and at school, but rather parental religiosity increases parental involvement both at home and at school (Pusztai et al., 2023). Kocsis and her co-authors (2022) wrote a review paper on the topic of parental involvement, focusing specifically on parental school volunteering. Based on the literature reviewed (29 publications were analysed using the systematic review methodology on parental involvement-volunteering), the authors found that parental volunteering enhances parents' self-efficacy, family engagement and parents/carers' trust in the school. Kovács et al. (2022) analysed parental participation in school sport and health programmes. The results show that very limited interventions of sufficient quality address the role of parental involvement in this context. Parental involvement takes many different forms, for example: giving flyers to parents, sports organisations "forced" by the pandemic, parent meetings, courses, school programmes. It is therefore difficult to measure their effectiveness and impact. It is unclear what influence parents have on children's health behaviours, particularly physical activity, and nutrition, as these are two of the most important factors in preventing obesity (Kovács et al., 2022). The aim of the study by Dan et al. (2023) is to explore the place of the parent-school relationship in the context of a special education institution in Romania. Involving special education, teachers analysed the school engagement of parents of students with special educational needs in Bihor County, Romania. The results highlighted the important elements of the parent-school relationship,

such as communication practices, active inclusion programmes, support services and adoption plans. The research suggests that parent-teacher teamwork can lead to more successful educational and health outcomes, as well as a more accepting social image in cognitive, emotional, and social development as stated by Dan et al. (2023).

As the central theme of my study is parental involvement in homework, I will go into a little more detail in the following pages. Epstein distinguishes six types of parental involvement that can influence a child's school life and studies. One form of involvement is parental assistance with their children's homework (Epstein et al., 2002). According to Engler et al. (2021), parental assistance with homework is one of the most important parts of parental involvement. Involvement, does however, take many other forms, from developing structures for doing the homework to teaching and developing students' learning strategies (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). According to Imre (2021), there has been a large body of research on the impact of parental involvement on children's school outcomes, especially regarding parents helping with homework (Bempechat, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Bailey et al., 2004; Walker et al., 2004; Patall et al., 2008; Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011; Van Voorhis, 2011). Bempechat (2004) emphasizes in his study that homework is vital, it helps children become mature learners, with parents playing an important role in this process. In another study, the authors (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001) found, based on several researches, that parents render aid in doing student homework because they believe that they should be involved and will have a positive impact on their child. According to Walker et al. (2004) homework can be a powerful tool that helps parents and other adults know what the child is learning, and/or a reason for discussing the goings-on at school. Homework creates opportunities for important interactions among schools, families, and students. Bailey and colleagues (2004) also recognized that a parent aiding their children in doing homework can help better children's performance, thus making the role of parents herein essential.

Most researchers emphasize that parental participation influences and shapes student outcomes by providing a model, reinforcement and learning support that helps the development of attitudes, knowledge and behaviors associated with successful school performance (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler 1995; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Parents' activities and collaboration in their children's homework provide children with a range of opportunities to observe and learn from their parents' models (attitudes, knowledge and skills related to learning), receive reinforcement and feedback on personal performance and abilities, and participate in learning-related educational interactions regarding the homework content and during learning processes (Chophel, 2021). However, there are cases where parental involvement and parent-school cooperation are particularly critical, such as the situation of children with special needs (Kovács et al., 2022; Hrabéczy et al., 2023).

According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997), parents participate in doing the homework for three main reasons: 1) they believe they should participate, 2) they believe their participation will make a positive difference, and 3) they understand the importance of getting involved (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). According to their theory, the parents who are more active in their children's schooling are those who think that this is part of their role as parents. However, in the literature there is a difference between maternal and paternal involvement. A new Hungarian study (Csák, 2023) explores the ways that Hungarian fathers are involved, at home and at school, in their children's development and achievement. The result show that fathers' school-based involvement can be increased by the supportive attitude of wives and schools (Csák, 2023).

In relation to parental involvement in children's education, the parental role construct seems to define the range of activities that parents consider important, necessary, and permissible for their involvement in their children's education (e.g. Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Consistent with the role theory, several researchers have reported parents' beliefs that participation in children's education is a normal requirement and responsibility of parenting (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995; Okagaki et al., 1995; Stevenson et al., 1990).

A potential research gap could be the specific exploration of parental involvement in a rural community. While the literature review discusses parental involvement in general and mentions the positive effects of cooperation between schools and parents, it may not thoroughly address the unique challenges and dynamics of parental involvement in a rural setting. By focusing on the rural context, my research contributes to the existing literature by offering a more nuanced understanding of parental involvement, potentially uncovering challenges and strategies that are unique to rural communities. At the same time, there is little empirical research on this topic in Romania. Furthermore, the parental typology developed on the basis of own qualitative research is also missing from the literature.

Research objective, methods, and sample

The study is based on qualitative, interview-based research with parents in the Basin of Kászón in Szeklerland, conducted between 2020 and 2021. The aim of the research is to identify the types of parent involvement in homework. My research question was: What are the actual practices followed by parents in completing homework assignments given at school, based on their attitudes? Kászón is a commune of rural communities in Harghita County, Romania, with a population of around 3000 inhabitants, consisting of five villages. The commune has a total of four kindergartens and four schools. Administratively, all of them belong to a primary school in small villages. The five villages have a total of 499 children, of which 369 attend primary classes and 130 children attend kindergarten.

The current study examines parental involvement in the homework of their children, along with the models and types of parenting that emerge in the region. The empirical material for the study consists of thirty interviews with parents in the six areas of parental involvement identified by Epstein: child-rearing, communication, volunteering, homeschooling, decision-making and community cooperation (Epstein et al., 2002). This analysis is based on the observation method and my knowledge of the field. In all cases, the interviews were conducted with the mothers because they agreed to be interviewed when asked. This can also be attributed to the fact that the mother sees contact with the school as her own domain, so this prevents fathers from fulfilling this family role (Pleck, 2012).

The table below shows the basic data of the interviewees:

Table 1. Data of the interviewees

Interview number	Age	Occupation	Number of children	Children's age
1.	37	secretary	3	8-6-2
2.	38	medical assistant	3	17-17-10
3.	37	housewife	2	11-8
4.	33	housewife	2	9-5
5.	38	economist, accountant	2	7-5
6.	33	housewife	4	8-6-4-2
7.	37	housewife	2	8-7
8.	27	housewife	2	7-5
9.	34	teacher	3	9-5-3
10.	36	medical assistant	3	15-13-7
11.	35	accountant	1	7
12.	33	beauticien	3	7-5-5
13.	40	librarian	3	7-5-3
14.	39	kindergarten teacher	2	11-8
15.	38	saleswoman	3	15-7-2
16.	35	housewife	2	8-6
17.	36	housewife	3	11-8-5
18.	37	housewife	2	11-4
19.	42	chef	2	14-11
20.	42	housewife	2	12-7
21.	40	housewife	2	14-5
22.	43	saleswoman	2	16-11
23.	36	housewife	1	10
24.	38	teacher	2	15-11
25.	35	housewife	2	9-4
26.	37	secretary	2	13-10
27.	33	housewife	1	9
28.	36	housewife	2	14-8
29.	35	housewife	4	14-12-8-5
30.	40	secretary	11	16-11-11

A snowball method was used to approach the parents. The target group was parents of primary school children in lower primary school (pre-primary to fourth grade). It is important to note, however, that in several cases the parents also had experience in the upper grades, as the families also had older siblings. This provided an opportunity for the research to gain a greater insight into the differences in parental involvement in regards to the age of the children. In this study, the narrative parts of the interviews on parental assistance with homework were analyzed, as well as the interview parts in which parental involvement in homework is present, albeit indirectly.

The interviews were processed using Grounded Theory (Glaser – Strauss, 1967). The analysis and interpretation of the data was performed continuously and systematically throughout the research. The study analysed the parts of the transcribed interviews that related to parental involvement in the children's tasks given to them at home. In the interviews, a specific question addressed the topic of homework, but there were also interviews where the issue of homework was a recurring theme, so that it appeared in relation to other questions. Thus, after reading through the full text of the interviews, the relevant parts of the topic were extracted (looking for key phrases, key expressions). In each passage, how parents were present, how, at home, they helped with the tasks their children were given, and sorted these into separate categories based on each characteristic. Pertaining to the quotes from the interviews and the characteristics that emerged from them, were created brief definitions of what characterises parents in relation to their children's homework. Based on these, were created five types of parenting behaviour (see Appendix 1).

This study is part of a larger research project, in which parental involvement was examined based on the Epsteinian (Epstein, 1987) parent-school partnership model. The study explored the changes in school practices and parental involvement and perceptions caused by the coronavirus.

Analysis

In the following analysis section, the models and types of parents are examined in the target group in terms of parental involvement in children's homework at home. It's important to point out that children in all grades are given homework based on what their parents say. Therefore, all the interviewees have experience in this topic. There are no after-school activities in the survey area. Based on the interview narratives and fieldwork experiences, the following five parent types appear prominently in the study area: the aversive, the ambitious, the partner, the accountable and the networking parent. Below the study will examine each type individually and present the main characteristics and features.

The aversive parent

The first type, outlined in the interview narratives, is the one who prefers to leave the teaching tasks to the school, essentially "withdrawing" from taking up an active role. This type of parent wants to relieve him/herself of the burden and responsibility. Typical of this type is the repeated mention of the teacher's tasks and responsibilities in the context of homework. So, the idea of the aversive type is that it is the teacher who has to assign and check the homework and tasks. It is the teacher's responsibility if a child does not complete the assignments. Presumably behind this attitude is lack of time, and lack of competence on the part of parents. This type of parents does not expect – and perhaps because of their abilities, cannot - expect more from their children than they have achieved at school.

"What is done in school is more effective. It is clear, that the child behaves completely different with the parent at home than in school. The parent is also softer with the child. The teacher is able to keep the discipline and the learning is better there, the homework should be done there."

"I wouldn't mind if there was no homework. It's often difficult for us parents. I think it would be most effective if they stayed after school and did their homework."

"Yes, definitely. We were at school a long time ago, we don't want to learn again."

"I think the students are very overwhelmed. The older ones, for example, are often in school from eight in the morning until three. I think there is no need for work even in the afternoons, except for those that are more practical subjects, like math, where you have to practice. But other than that, I don't see much point in putting extra effort and work on children. And the younger ones too, it is enough what they get at school."

This type of parent is unhappy with the amount of homework, the children's workload, the amount of materials learned, the importance of certain subjects and the homework they receive. They see the teacher as responsible for this matter and they actively criticize the teacher's performance as well.

The ambitious parent

The "ambitious" parent prioritizes the child's academic progress and is therefore able to take on more of the tasks that should be done by the child, or to give the child more tasks to do in addition to the homework. In this case, it is not possible to say how much this benefits the child in the long term, but in concrete terms it makes life easier for the school and the teacher.

Presumably, these parents were also very hard-working as students, and the model they adopted from their parents is to help their children as much as they can, including with homework. In many cases, the help with homework turns into solving the specific tasks instead of the child, which seems to be a good solution temporarily, as the child does not get bad marks in school, the problem is solved more quickly, etc., but the child does not learn much from it. Although parental involvement in the literal sense of the word does take place, it is not necessarily in a way that develops the child effectively in the long term.

"I don't think so. My child does not need it, I think. Well, there's also some that are stronger and some that are weaker, but I don't think he needs it because I do a lot of tasks for him at home, or I print out numbers or tracing lines. When he feels like it, he sits down and does it all the way through. I prepare him a bit more for things."

"Well, first of all, while they are little, only the parent can develop them until... If you see that they are weaker in this, you help them with that. Eventually they will catch up at school, I said, they have a workbook, and you saw the workbook online, you could look through it, see what he is weaker in, and if you want to you can help them a little."

"We need to help them. Actually, I don't think we should, that's the child's task, but well, sometimes we do. In the first grade you had to sit there and watch how and what he was doing. Or, as I said, in math, you have to help too, or in teaching Romanian. In the second grade you have to, but there they do more things on their own, you have to check their work. It's important for the parent to check if it's done, or how it's done, if it is done properly without mistakes."

This type of parent prepares extra homework assignments at home, buys all kinds of learning tools to help their child improve even more. In fact, they keep track of the child's entire learning process at school and at home, and they know everything that is related to school. There are also cases where mothers have quit their jobs or not returned to work from maternity leave in order to be able to teach their children. This is illustrated in the following interview extract:

"I am not working at the moment, I don't have a job. My last job was in dispatching. I am not working now because of my children, because one is in pre-school and one is in second grade. I am needed now, I am a housekeeper."

These parents do everything they can to support their children, sacrifice a lot - and they often do emphasize that - to be able to fully support their children. They are the ones who are totally subordinate to the school, to the teacher, who listen to every request and demand and try to meet it. They are often over-involved in the child's school life and tasks, constantly looking for the teacher if they don't understand something about the homework.

Within the ambitious parent type, we can also distinguish those parents who, on the grounds of "must", follow up on the child's tasks at home and fall into the overachiever category. These parents, although they argue that the situation requires parental assistance in the child's home education and that they therefore must sit to help them, are essentially the ones who want to sit beside the child and take on the role of the important one. They sit with the child throughout the afternoon learning process, helping, watching, disciplining, and encouraging.

"I think especially in lower primary, yes, you have to help..."

“I would only point out the writing, that he writes as he knows how, the teacher helps him, but if he doesn't practice at home and you don't stand by him and show to draw this letter here and there, it will never be good.”

“Yes, otherwise the child can't do it in the right way. You have to be there to help. And sometimes you have to push him to do it, do it, do it. He often gets bored and wants to leave it. I have to help. Some things are harder, and he doesn't want to do them either, but he has to.”

This type of parent is convinced that parental help is natural and that their child can only progress if they are constantly sitting next to them and monitoring the learning process.

The partner parent

The “partner” parent leaves the homework to the child but helps out when needed. They are present in their child's learning process but do not take an active role. He or she believes that the teacher is responsible for the child's education and only becomes more involved when the situation requires it or at the teacher's request.

“The way I see it, it was the same with the online one, where it was emphasized that the online lesson is not with the parents, because we don't sit next to them at school either, so they don't really get any tasks, they just get revision, drawing, things like that, now they're getting syllables for example. She really doesn't ask us, but in school what she requires they have to know, so she doesn't burden us and that's the way it should be, I think.”

“Yes, the Romanian language, but I don't feel there is a problem with that either. I see her teaching in a very rational way. This homework thing is also teacher dependent. If she serves it well, gets the child's attention, then everything goes smoothly. But if they tell me, I will help.”

“If something is needed, I'm here, or if the teacher says something that needs attention, I'll do it, but the child does his homework...”

The accountable parent

The „accountable” parent leaves the learning to the child, similar to the „helping when needed” parent, except that he or she also asks the child to take responsibility for the work done. This type of parent does not just leave it to the teacher to hold the student accountable but leaves the learning explicitly to the child. His/her own role consists of checking and reviewing the child's assignments and asking questions about the learned material.

“I think his role is to check, so that the child sees that I am accountable not only to the teacher, but also at home, it is important that I do all my homework. I don't mean that the parent takes on the role of a strict controller, so that the child has to be afraid that if I don't do my homework, I'll be afraid because my mother will beat me, but that the child should feel a kind of care. He needs to feel that he is important to me, that he matters.”

“I don't think you have to help, you just have to push him to do it and to learn, and then in the evening, when the child feels that he/she knows the material, the parent can ask a few questions to double check. Because I don't think you can leave it to a fifth-grader to say that you have just done your homework and you can go to school the next day. I think that even a fifth-grader should be checked to see whether he has done his homework and whether he has done his homework properly for the next day.”

“In any case, I think you have to keep an eye on what the child is doing. In our case, my son is in the fifth grade, I don't have to sit next to him, but sometimes he gets stuck... So to this day, I still keep track of the homework, I check it, I follow it up.”

This type also controls their child because of the parental role, trying to maintain a controlling, nurturing role. But it is also a general parenting role, independent of learning and schoolwork, that these types of parents apply to the tasks their child is given at home.

The networking parent

The “networking” parent is a distinct group, parents who cannot help, feel they are out of their depth in understanding their children’s learning, but know they cannot expect more from the teacher. For this reason, they involve external help, or consider it important and are able to afford it, depending on their financial situation.

“Well, I can now speak in general terms, that there are parents who, from the fifth grade onwards, can no longer help. So as much as they would like to, or as much as they really want... It’s over, there are requirements that they can’t help.”

“You have to choose another solution, or call in some outside help, or I don’t know, ask how the neighbor’s child did his homework, but actually here the children really have to be more independent, but if not, then yes, outside help. Because many parents can’t really help their children anymore, unfortunately not even in fifth grade.

“In a more difficult subject, definitely. And if the parents can’t help, you have to ask for help a lot. Extra lessons, tutors, things like that. And it’s not because the parent doesn’t want to help, but because we simply can’t, it was a long time ago when we were learning, and the system was completely different then.”

Parents in lower financial situations also realize that they are needed in their children’s education, but cannot afford private lessons, after-school programmes and specialized courses. They look for a solution, asking neighbors, relatives, and friends for help, because they see the need.

In the region I have studied, the two most typical types are the “partner” (8 parents) and the “accountable” (9 parents) parent. These two types dominate, based on the interviews and my field experience. This is followed by the prevalence of the „ambitious” type (5 parents), and then the „aversive” type (5 parents). In the studied area, the „networking” type (3 parents) is the one that lags significantly behind the other types, probably due to the fact that fewer families can afford to pay for private lessons for their children in certain subjects. Furthermore, it is important to note that the studied community is relatively remote from cities, so parents have fewer opportunities to send their children to after-school activities. However, even within this (networking) type, parents who do not have the means to bring in external help but feel the need to do so because they themselves are not competent enough, are more common in the studied area.

Parental involvement and the school-educator-parent partnership make a big difference in terms of parent attitudes. There are parents who can and want to help their children with their homework, parents who can but do not want to help, who do not consider it important to sit with their children at home; parents who want to but cannot because they do not have the time or the competence; and parents who cannot and do not want to help. In fact, those parents who can and want to, or want to but cannot help, are much more likely to be partners than those who cannot and do not want to or could but do not want to.

As regards the involvement of children in their homework and parental support, I think it is important to mention the grade the student is in. My experience shows that when the child is younger, in first or second grade, the active involvement of the parent is much more intensive. Parents who do not consider themselves competent to help are also more active in helping. As the child grows, the form of parental involvement in homework also changes, or in many cases becomes absent. By the fifth or later ninth grade, parents tend to become more of the accountability type, or leave homework entirely to the child. The part of an interview below illustrates this:

“I have three children, so I help the little one who is in the first grade, I sit there because he needs it. He is still small, he needs this. I also help my seventh-grade son when he needs it, but I don’t have to sit next to him, he’s independent, he just needs to be checked on most of the time. My ninth-grade son is already doing his work. We talk about school, sometimes I look at his notebooks, but he doesn’t need as much monitoring as the little ones.”

The experiences show that while younger children tend to feel more in need of help with homework, older children entering adolescence have a substantially different need for parental involvement. Most parents are no longer able to help with the studied material, but talking about the child’s school life, discussing problems that arise, or listening to the child’s difficulties and finding solutions together can still be part of parental involvement. This was implicitly present in the narratives examined.

Discussion

In this study, the models and types of parenting were examined that emerged in a rural area of Szeklerland, in terms of parental involvement in the tasks children are given as homework. Since several authors (ex. Bempechat, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Bailey et al., 2004; Walker et al., 2004; Patall et al., 2008; Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011; Van Voorhis, 2011) emphasized the importance of parental involvement in homework, it was important to examine what is the opinion of the parents about their own role in homework. Considering James Coleman's 1988 article explaining the impact of social capital on scientific results. He has shown that parents' time and attention to their children has a greater impact than their high educational attainment and high socio-economic status. Based on this, when creating parent types, I considered it important how parents see their own role in contributing to homework.

In the analysis, five parenting types were identified: aversive, ambitious, partner, accountable and networking. The main characteristic of the „aversive” parent type is that he/she prefers to leave the teaching tasks to the school, essentially „withdrawing” from the active role and not participating in his/her child's learning. Presumably, this type is the most difficult to be involved in school activities, because they do not see their own role in their child's school and academic life, there is a distance between them and the teacher. They always hold someone else responsible, expect help from someone else and often feel sorry for themselves, taking on the role of a victim. The “ambitious” parent gives priority to the child's academic progress and does everything possible, sometimes even becoming more involved in the child's tasks than necessary, even solving the child's tasks himself or herself in order to get a better grade. This can be very beneficial in terms of school engagement, but it may not necessarily be beneficial in terms of teaching the child to be independent and able to cope with tasks. The main characteristic of the “partner” parent is that she leaves the homework to the child but helps when needed and is always available to the child when he/she has questions or needs help. Maybe, this parent type is the easiest to partner with if the teacher takes the right steps to help them step out of their usual subordinate-superior relationship. This group of parents is happy to help and participate in the child's work if they are instructed to do so by the teacher or if the child asks them to. The “accountable” parent leaves the learning to the child, it is his job to check and review the child's assignments and to question the material learned. This form of involvement is not complete but is limited to discipline and accountability. The “networking” parents, who, although unable to help the children with their studies for certain reasons, bring in outside help to ensure that their children do not fall behind. Presumably, it is also possible to build partnerships with these parents precisely because they acknowledge that their help is needed. Even parents who do not see themselves as being able to help meaningfully with their children's schooling and life, who are somewhat more withdrawn and find it difficult to move out of the asymmetrical parent-teacher relationship, could presumably be involved at some level in the learning process and school life through the teacher's outreach and effective communication. Parents who are in a better financial situation and can afford to pay for private lessons and workshops for their children are more likely to be more approachable and willing to talk to the teacher and get involved in school life.

The two most common types of parents in the studied area are the „partner” and the „accountable” parent. The „partner” parent may be a good involvement parent, while the „accountable” parent is mainly involved in discipline and accountability, which may not always be effective in the long term in terms of parental involvement.

These results show that there is a small group of parents in the study area who may be suitable for involvement (the importance of which is emphasised in the literature). However, the typology shows that it is still common for parents not to be effectively and willingly involved in their child's homework, and not to see their own role in the process.

Parental involvement is particularly important because parents who can and want to-or want to but cannot-help with their child's homework are more likely to build a partnership than parents who can but do not want to-or cannot and do not want to be involved in their child's homework. According Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's (1997) theory, those parents are more involved in their children's schooling, who think that this is part of their role as parents. With the right pedagogical methods and tools, it is therefore possible to bring parents who are willing to cooperate closer to the school, to involve them in their child's learning at home and even in school life. In this way, children's academic progress can be expected to improve. The age of the child is very important in terms of parental involvement in homework. Based on my fieldwork shows that while parents of younger children tend to be more involved and active in their children's academic life, parents are accountable and control their children, or disappear completely from most areas of school involvement. The ideal and effective

solution might be that even if the older child no longer requires parental assistance with homework, the parent (perhaps with the help and support of the school and teacher) finds ways to be involved in the school life of their child.

The novelty of the research is that it comprehensively examines parenting types and their role in children's homework in a rural area. The categorization of the individual types and the characteristics assigned to them contribute to a diverse understanding of parental roles in the context of the examined rural area. The study emphasizes the challenges and benefits associated with different types of parental involvement.

The limitation of the research is that the location of the research, which is a traditional, rural environment, where the "environment" is more homogenizing, therefore the social and demographic differences are blurred and less graspable.

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Appendix

Anex 1. Parental attitudes towards homework and types of parents

CHARACTERISTICS	DESCRIPTION	PARENT TİPES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – prefers to leave the teaching tasks to the school, essentially „withdrawing” from an active role – wants to relieve himself of the burden and responsibility – is dissatisfied with the amount of homework, the children’s workload, the amount of material, the importance of certain subjects and the homework they receive – dissatisfied with the teacher’s work (Why do you leave homework for your child? Why not enough practice in school, or why no after-school tutoring at all? Why doesn’t the teacher stay at the school after school hours?) 	PASSING THE TASKS ON THE SCHOOL AND THE TEACHER	AVERSIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – prioritising the child’s academic progress – takes a greater role in solving tasks (even doing them for the child) – providing the child with additional, extra learning and practice tasks – monitors the child’s overall learning progress at school and at home – is interested in everything – sits with the child during the learning process – encourages the child 	THE OVERBUZZO	AMBITIOUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – is present, but not active – child/teacher helps on request – heartily participates in tasks when requested – does not necessarily see it as her job to teach the child, but helps if needed 	LEAVE IT TO THE CHILD, BUT WITH HELP IF NEEDED	PARTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – accounts for the tasks the child has completed – checks and reviews the child’s assignments, questions the material learned. – continuously disciplines 	CONTINUOUS SUPERVISOR	ACCOUNTABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can’t help – is aware that the teacher cannot do more – ask for help (if she can) 	INVOLVING EXTERNAL HELP	NETWORKING



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