International Academy of Family Psychology

Newsletter of the International Academy of Family Psychology

Contents

Editor: Sadie Teal

President's Message: IAFP Conference 2017

Happy New Year 2017! The big news is the International Couple and Family Psychology Conference to be held at the Hilton Hotel in Evanston, Illinois, scheduled from Thursday June 22nd through Saturday June 24th, 2017. The theme is *Crossroads in Family Psychology* with an emphasis on the intersection of family psychology and behavioral health in a global context. Guests of honor and two of the five plenary speakers at the conference will be our own Florence Kaslow, Ph.D. ABPP and Kenji Kameguchi Ph.D., two of the original founders of IAFP. The conference will feature some of the major figures in couple and family psychology, including Susan McDaniel, Nadine Kaslow, Ken Hardy, Susan Johnson, David Schnarch, Don Baucom, Florence Kaslow, Kenji Kameguchi, Robert Jay Green and more. Thursday afternoon the IAFP board will meet and elect a President for a new term of office, then Thursday early evening the conference will begin with an opening convocation followed by an International reception at the Hilton Hotel. Friday, Drs. McDaniel, Johnson and Schnarch will headline the day's activities followed by a Family Psychology reception at the Family Institute at Northwestern University. Saturday will be devoted to diversity and international family psychology with featured speakers including Drs Ken Hardy, Florence Kaslow, Kenji

Kameguchi, Gladys Mwiti, Keizo Hausegawa, Sabine Walper, Astrid van Damme, Kobun Wakashima, John Thoburn and Michiko Ikuta. This is going to be a historic conference with a slate of clinical and research experts in the field of couple and family psychology that we haven't seen together in one place since the year 2000. We hope that you will consider attending the conference. To find out more information on registration or if you are a student and would like to submit a Poster Proposal, please go to the conference website, http://www.family-institute.org/academics-alumni/international-family-conference.

John W. Thoburn, Ph.D. ABPP

Seattle Pacific University

IAFP Conference Information

Crossroads of Couple and Family Psychology:
A Foundation for Future Real World Practice

SAVE THE DATE — JUNE 22, 23 & 24, 2017, EVANSTON, IL

The globalization of mental health and the convergence of clinical psychology, family systems theory, and behavioral health have led to the development of this important International Conference on Couple and Family Psychology (CFP) praxis. By bringing together the most seminal figures in the world of CFP, this conference will provide an intellectual blueprint that will be used to shape the direction of our beloved field for decades to come. This historic conference seeks to further articulate our systemic identity, which will further cement our position as an integral player within a globally interdependent healthcare system. Moreover, this conference seeks to elegantly and seamlessly bridge science and practice while operationalizing our core systemic beliefs. Thus, attendees will walk away with concrete strategies to improve their clinical practice and/or new ideas for scholarly and research agendas.

For more information visit www.family-institute.org/crossroads or email us at cfpconference@family-institute.org.

THE SOCIETY FOR COUPLE & FAMILY PSYCHOLOGY DIVISION 43

International Academy of Family Psychology

tfi THE FAMILY INSTITUTE at Northwestern University

Membership Dues Time

It is that time again – to pay our membership dues. Your dues are vitally important for helping us promote the field of family psychology globally, so please pay promptly and with alacrity! You can go to the IAFP website www.iafponline.com, go to the **Membership** link and click the "**Buy**" button at the bottom of the page. You will be prompted to enter your credit card information. We thank you for your attention to this mundane, but important matter.

A Posthumous Tribute to Luciano L'Abate

Florence W. Kaslow, Ph.D., ABPP

In response to being asked to tell some personal reminiscences, I have chosen to focus on our involvement together in international family psychology. I have many fond personal and professional memories entwined with our relationship. Space limits dictate that I just highlight a few.

Whenever "Lu" had a new book due for publication he would write or call to tell me about it and what the total number of books published this would now bring his count to. He wanted to compare it to the number I had already had published – knowing he would always come out ahead as he was so prolific. He would also e-mail loads of his colleagues when an article he was particularly proud of appeared. He was an inquisitive, brilliant, assertive, ambitious and thoroughly charming person. He could also be disarming when he would smile and say something such as, "You know, I'm just a poor little boy from Italy" – which was his childhood identity.

His family and country of origin, among other factors, led to his deep interest in family psychology and the differences and similarities in clinical practice and its theoretical underpinning in different countries. It was one of the contributory mainstreams to his spearheading the formation of the International Academy of Family Psychology (IAFP) in 1990 at an ingathering of leaders from several countries. Since he and the others involved clearly differentiated between family therapists and family psychologists (focusing on the importance in psychology of the inclusion of careful assessment using standardized instruments before a diagnosis is made and of practice predicated on research findings), the founders decided that membership in the organization would be open to doctoral level psychologists only. Others from the U.S. who were invited to attend this meeting were David Olson and me. Leaders in family psychology from other countries who were in the group assembled included Dr. Tetsuo Okado, who became the first chair (1990-1994) and Dr. Kenji Kameguchi, who became chair well into the 2000s. Luciano was named Honorary Chair. The contingent from Italy included Dr. Mario Cusinato, who became chair-elect and then chair in 1994, when second quadrennial conference was held in Italy. Also included from Italy was Professor Eugenia Scabini. Drs. L'Abate and Cusinato were friends and colleagues for many decades and a book that they co-authored with several others (L'Abate, Cusinato, et al, 2010), cited in the article being addressed here, delineate some of the basic principles of Relational Competence Theory. Professor Klaus Schneewind, a Professor of family psychology in Munich, was also invited to the initial meeting and remained active for a number of years. Several other German family psychologists, added later, have since assumed active roles in IAFP.

During the 1990s Lu continued to journey often to Italy to guest lecture and visit. One trip was particularly memorable for us both

as he recommended to the host, in Bari that I also be invited to do a workshop at a family centered conference. This conference was well attended and the spirit was exuberant. At the overflowing, sumptuous buffet dinner, one of the most lavish I have ever attended, Lu was the celebrated native son returning home. As his colleagues, my husband (who accompanied me) and I were feted in similar fashion.

From 1998-2002 I served as third president. Lu and I helped Andy Horne of University of Georgia plan and run the third conference in Athens, Georgia in 1998. It was quite well attended and successful and a privilege for us to return the gracious hospitality to our colleagues from Japan and Italy.

Thus Dr. L'Abate's dream of IAFP was realized and the organization is again growing and should thrive under the chairmanship of John Thoburn, Ph.D., from Seattle, Washington. Dr. Thoburn has reinvigorated the plan I had instituted of having member representatives on the Board from as many countries as possible. The 2017 conference will be in Chicago in June and Dr. Kameguchi and I have been invited to give presentations and to honor Dr. L'Abate at a plenary session. His

legacy lives on in his writings, his teachings, his friendships, with his family members, and in IAFP – one of his professional families.

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Florence W. Kaslow, Ph.D., ABPP

International Family Psychology

John Thoburn, Ph.D. ABPP

International family psychology addresses the development and implementation of systems based theory, research, and practice with couples and families transnationally as well as global issues affecting every region of the world, such as human trafficking, disaster, the epidemic of mood disorders in the West, global warming, terrorism, the effects of globalization on the integrity of nation states and on relations between nations (Vlek, 2000; Lambo, 2000). All of these issues are of vital importance, not only to any one population of people, but to the world population at large. Family systems psychology observes the holistic and interactional nature of transnational issues such that "problems are rooted in a complex matrix of culture, economics, history, politics, psychology, and religion, and a comprehensive approach requires a multidisciplinary and transnational approach" (Jing, 2000, p. 570; Stanton & Welsh, 2012; Thoburn & Sexton, 2016).

Driven by the scientific method, the dominant perspective in the West has been the clinical pathology model reflecting a focus on individualism and personality, tending to lead to what Pupavec (2006) has called, "the psychologization of human experience" (p.17). However, Western psychology can be ethnocentric and its focus on causality and reductionism may lead to incomplete descriptions of psychological phenomena in the non-Western world. Furthermore, a Western sensibility, with its focus on individuals and emotion states is shared by relatively few people groups worldwide. Contrasting examples include Confucianism, which focuses on the values and morals that make for a harmonious society and the concept of Ubuntu which suggests that self emerges from community. Even as some developing non-Western countries outright adopt Western practices others are adapting Western ideas and fusing them in a process of synchronization, integrating Western individualistically oriented ideas with a stronger focus on families and communities (Church & Katigbak, 2002; Clay, 2002; Mpofu, 2001; Pettifor, 2004).

Research indicates that most non-Western people are communally oriented (Norris, 2005) and that the most influential communal support is the family. Family psychology provides a multi-modal approach to international psychology by using a systems psychology perspective as a contextual bridge between the intrapersonal clinical pathology model and an interpersonal community mental health model which emphasizes family and community resources (also see Volume 1, Chapter 1, Systems Unify Family Psychology). What emerges is an ecological approach that is greater than the sum of its parts; one that is able to bridge the divide between Western models of psychology and folk or indigenous models. When clinicians recognize the intertwined social ecologies of individual, family, and community subsystems, and when they embrace both a pathology model and models that emphasize family and

community resources, they become less dependent on traditional Western norms (Thoburn, Carlile, & Clark, 2014; Wessells, 2009).

The wider international family psychology community is served by *The International Academy of Family Psychology* (IAFP), a non-profit, worldwide scientific organization composed of academics and professionals engaged in the field of family psychology. The founding members launched IAFP in 1990 as a vehicle to promote the ideals of a systems psychology approach worldwide, aiming to improve basic and applied psychological research and promote training and further education in the area of family psychology and family interventions based on empirically validated research. Membership in IAFP reached its zenith in 2008, with approximately four hundred members. IAFP requires that its members either be doctoral level psychologists or graduate level licensed psychologists, thus membership is somewhat exclusive and limited.

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Regional Updates from IAFP Members
Family Psychology Around the World

Japan

My laboratory is advancing three projects at present. The first project is to apply Integration Information theory to the family system. We understand Integration Information theory to be a systems theory, recognizing that consciousness is partly the result of diversity and best understood from an integrative perspective. What comprises difference and diversity in the family system and what is the integrative nature of the family system? Throughout investigation we have a tool that distinguishes the differences between couples and their interactions.

The second project involves evaluating stress on an organization in the aftermath of an earthquake disaster. The six year long study involves evaluating from a systems perspective the experience of residents and staff of temporary housing and their needs post-earthquake. The results indicate the significant impact that community and family support have on the mental health of survivors.

The third project is integrating suicide prevention with the legal system. This study represents the first attempt to integrate the two disciplines in Japan. It makes sense to look at the relationship between psychology and the legal system because there is a high correlation between the divorce rate and the number of suicides in Japan. Our study confirmed the relationship and we have sought to implement couple and family therapy interventions to mitigate against suicide. We plan to expand this project across Japan in the future.

Kobun Wakashima, PhD
Tohoku University

Germany

During the past year, the discussion about shared parenting among separated parents has gained increasing significance in Germany. While shared legal custody is by now the rule, shared physical custody is rarely considered by German family law. Instead, it is still preferred to select one parent as the primary caretaker whom the child lives with (typically the mother) while the second parent is seen as visiting parent (typically the father). In response to the intensive discussion initiated by

separated fathers who seek to be more strongly involved in their children's lives, a large study has been initiated by the German Federal Ministry of Family, Seniors, Women and Youth to shed light at post-separation caretaking arrangements and children's well-being. The study is still underway, but my team took the chance to analyze several data sets to identify arrangements of shared parenting, analyze likely predictors (e.g. children's age, the distance between parents' households, parents' educational resources, and the quality of coparenting) and link the choice of shared parenting to children's well being. Evidence shows that shared parenting is still quite rare among separated families in Germany and that it is selectively chosen by more highly educated parents who live in close vicinity to each other and seem better able to coparent cooperatively (Walper, 2016). Despite these advantages, no differences in child outcomes could be found.

Further prospective analyses are currently carried out, and we hope to contribute to the discussion about necessary legal changes – particularly the heated discussion about financial implications of shared parenting. Any decisions about what can be considered a fair trade-off between high parental investments in child rearing and their financial responsibility in child support payments will be difficult and must be highly aware of children's needs. In particular, we must avoid a further rise of the highly elevated poverty risk among children in separated families.

One of the data sets used for these analyses is the German family panel pairfam (see www.pairfam.de/en), a large longitudinal study on three age cohorts who are annually interviewed in a multi-actor design including their partner, parents, and children. As one of the co-principle investigators, I am in charge of directing the assessment of parenting as reported by the target participants and their partners as well as the interview of their children. My team has used these data for investigating a number of issues, not only related to parental separation and re-partnering (Walper, Thönnissen, & Alt, 2015a), but also for investigating effects of economic deprivation (Walper & Fiedrich, in press), and looking at the effects of parental school involvement (Walper, Thönnissen, & Alt, 2015b). In June, we hosted the international pairfam conference in Munich which addressed the topic "Parenting, Co-Parenting, and Child Well-Being in Changing Families". Excellent keynotes were presented by our invited speakers Guy Bodenmann (University Zurich, Switzerland) Susan Branje (Utrecht University, The Netherlands), Kathryn Edin (Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, U.S.A.), and Ingrid Schoon (University of London, U.K.). We are currently preparing the 10th wave of assessment and look forward to many national and international users of this scientific use data set which provides excellent research options for family scholars from various disciplines – last not least for family psychologists.

A major theme in Germany is the large influx of refugees. Over 800.000 refugees came in this year to find shelter and a new home in Germany. The effort to host them was great, but so were the challenges encountered in practice. Many practitioners in various fields ranging from social work across the various domains of education to counseling and health care looked out for information about the needs of refugees,

particularly young unaccompanied minor refugees, and had to develop strategies and approaches to support these families and young people. Many organizations organized conferences to facilitate exchange about the issues involved. As president of the German League of the Child, a network of organizations working for children's rights and young children's well being, and as research director of the German Youth Institute, I was involved in two such conferences hosted by these organizations. The work in this domain will continue not only in the next year. Issues of integration and social cohesion will play a major role in the coming years.

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Sabine Walper, PhD

United States

The year has been a busy one for the Thoburn Interpersonal Research laboratory and for PsyCorps: Psychology Support International. In March of 2016 the PsyCorps team was invited to Immanuel University in Hyderabad, India to present a two-day workshop offering psychological support training using the PsyCorps Psychology Support Curriculum to 150 Indian pastors. The curriculum offers training to indigenous volunteers so that they can provide psychological first aid to friends and family in the aftermath of disaster or trauma. The training occurred over the course of two days and was highly successful. The team also provided leadership training to Immanuel University MBA students.

On the way home, the PsyCorps team stopped off in Dubai UAE to provide a

workshop on trauma to mental health professionals. Approximately 30 psychologists, marriage and family therapists and mental health counselors participated in the training.

In September, Dr. Thoburn and Dr. Susan McDaniel, current President of the American Psychological Association, were invited to be plenary speakers at the Association for Clinical Psychologists conference in Tokyo, Japan. Dr. McDaniel spoke on integrative behavioral health care systems and Dr. Thoburn spoke on developing human resources to promote collaboration among individuals, families, and communities.

In October, Dr. Thoburn was an invited plenary speaker at the International Psychology Conference in Dubai. Dr. Thoburn's plenary presentation was on

the art and science of narrative exposure therapy and he gave a second presentation, along with Chastity O'Connell, M.S. M.A. on psychological support training of

local volunteers using the PsyCorps Psychology Support curriculum.
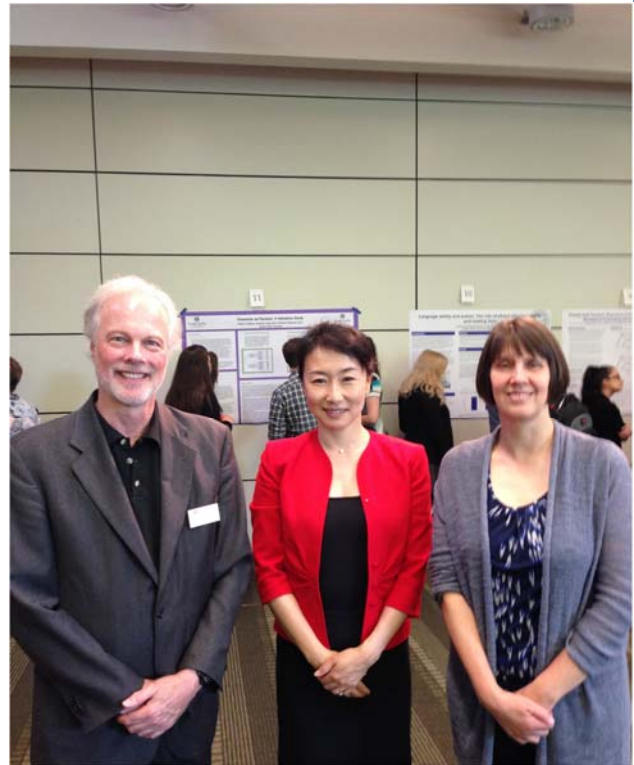
Parental Involvement in Ghana
Kingsley Nyarko, PhD

The involvement of parents in the education of their children has attracted a lot of attention over the last three decades, and this subject continues to be of interest to most researchers. Throughout the 1990s, a large number of studies (e.g., Bogenschneider, 1997; Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990; Epstein, 1991, 92; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, Muller, 1998; Schneider & Coleman, 1993; Smith, 1992; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemptill, 1991; Useem, 1992) have contributed to the parental involvement literature. Their findings have widely been used to device ways of helping children to be successful with their education.

Parental involvement studies have over the years ranged from focusing on the characteristics, actions, and/or behaviors of parents and schools to the analysis of specific programs, interventions, and policies. According to Singh and colleagues (1995) attempts at generalizing parental involvement across studies should be done with precaution since parental involvement is a multi-dimensional or multi-faceted construct and that findings of research differ in accordance to the different interpretations or meanings ascribed to the term.

As at now there has not been a universally accepted or agreed upon definition of the construct, parental involvement. As a matter of fact, this construct or term has been defined differently by various researchers. In practice, parental involvement has been defined to include diverse parental behaviors and practices which include among other things, parental expectations for their children's educational achievement and their transference of such expectations to their children (e.g., Bloom, 1990), the communication between parents and their children concerning the education of their children (e.g., Christenson, Round, & Gorney, 1992), the participation of parents in school activities and programs (e.g., Stevenson and Baker, 1987), the rules parents impose on their children in the home that are considered to be educationally related (Majoribanks, 1983), the communication between parents and teachers about the progress of their children in their studies (Epstein, 1991), and the commitment of parents and their positive attention to the child-rearing process (Grolnick & Ryan,1989).

Studies on parental involvement in Ghana are scanty, but there are a few studies that have focused on community participation in school activities (e.g., Addae-Boahene & Akorful, 2000; Boardman & Evans, 2000; Nkansah & Chapman, 2006). Even though, involving the community in school is a worthwhile activity due to its beneficial effects in improving the infrastructure base of the schools and also making resources available for the educational success of the students, the commitment of the individual parents and families is also very essential in ensuring that the community and school's objectives in

producing a functional student is achieved.

Since the primary environment of the student is the home and not the community, it stands to reason that the impact on school achievement exerted by the parents or family will far outweigh and exceed that from the community or school alone. This point supports the revelation by several researches about the tremendous impact of parental involvement on school success (Eccles, 1992, 1994, Grolnick et al., 1997; Hoover- Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkens, & Closson, 2005; Redding, 2006).

According to a study conducted by Pryor and Ampiah (2003a & 2003b) in a village community called Akurase in the Ashanti region of Ghana, most of the parents were apathetic to the schooling of their children. These parents lacked interest in education and for that matter did not bother to engage in the learning activities of their children. Some of the explanations proffered by the researchers were among others, (1) the parents' indifference to the progress of the children in their care, (2) the inability of the parents to afford the luxury of schooling as a result of their financial incapacity, and (3) the irrelevance of schooling to the children's future prospects as farmers. These attitudes of some of the parents did not, however, permeate throughout the community since a few of the parents who attended the school's management committee (SMC) and parent-teacher- association (PTA) meetings had great aspirations for their children to enroll in the secondary

school and later find good and respectable occupation on the labor market. This category of parents were literates, but admitted that most of the parents did not subscribe to their philosophy of ensuring the academic achievements of their children. These parents were impugned for sending their children to school since according to their critics, it was a waste of time and resources.

The study further suggested that the perceptions held by both teachers and some members of the community were that the rate of drop out was significantly high, and that there were a lot of children who were absent from school who should have been there, and that this was due to the fact that there was a widespread belief that schooling was not worthwhile, and was simply put on the back burner. This assertion has been corroborated by some of the studies (for example, Casley-Hayford, 2000) who reported in her study that within the communities in northern Ghana, there were in some instances growing objection to formal education. In certain parts of the country, especially in the farming communities, parents even intentionally requested from the teachers to allow them take their children home to take care of their younger siblings so that they could go to the farm. This information was revealed by Madam Agnes Agrobasa, a teacher of the Damango Presbyterian primary school during a community education program organized by the Konkomba and Basari tertiary students union at Damango (www.ghanaweb.com, 2007).

Although, this particular study and other evidence have insinuated a lack of interest and commitment among some Ghanaian

parents in the learning engagements of their children, it does not necessarily mean that parental involvement is virtually non-existent in Ghana. As a matter of fact, some parents, especially in the cities willingly partake in the educational career of their children by furnishing them with educational goods such as books and other learning aids, send them to private schools which are quite expensive for the average Ghanaian worker as a result of low wages in the country, and also enroll them in private classes or have special teachers to teach their children either in the home or outside of the home.

In fact, in his study conducted in the mid to late 90s which was supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Quansah (1997) indicated that of the students who performed creditably well in the criterion referenced test, were those students from private schools. Two of the reasons that were assigned to their success story were the interest of their parents in what they learned and also their attendance of "open days" which brought teachers, parents, and children together. In that study it was also revealed that students in the cities outperformed their counterparts from the rural areas. This could be due to differences between parents in the cities and those in the rural areas as regards their socioeconomic status. Based upon the growing evidence of the beneficial effects of parental involvement on children as enunciated above, this paper sought to find out how parental involvement (home and school) impact on the educational performance of adolescent students in Ghana. The following hypotheses were tested: 1) Parental home involvement (mothers and fathers) will correlate with

their children's academic achievement; 2) Parental school involvement (mothers and fathers) will correlate with their children's academic achievement.

Method

Sample

The sample for the present study was drawn from three senior secondary schools or high schools in the central region of Ghana. Only second year and third year (final year) students were used in the study. The schools are; University Practice Secondary School, Ghana National College-both located in Cape Coast, the capital city, and Assin Manso Secondary School-located at Assin Manso. Cape Coast, which is usually referred to as the citadel of education in the country is home to some of the best and finest schools in Ghana. It is situated 165 kilometers west of Accra-the capital of Ghana on the Gulf of Guinea. It has a population of 82,291 according to the 2000 census. In all, 206 adolescent students who were randomly selected from these three schools took part in the study. Out of this number 43.7% (90) were males and 56.3% (116) were females. The participants belonged to different family structures. 72.3% (149) of the students lived in nuclear families, 9.7% (20) lived with single mothers, 3.9% (8) resided with single fathers, 6.8% (14) lived with stepmothers, and 7.3% (15) resided with stepfathers.

Procedure

Data collection for the study began in January, 2007 immediately after the students were back from holidays. To commence the process, a written permission was sent to each of the headmasters of the three participating

Table 1 Sample Characteristics

	Percentage of Sample
Gender	
Male	43.7
Female	56.3
Grade	
Form 2	53.4
Form 3	46.6
Family Structure	
Nuclear families	72.3
Single mothers	9.7
Single fathers	3.9
Stepmother	6.8
Stepfather	7.3

schools requesting their schools to be used as the population of the study. After the headmasters had consented to the request, they communicated our mission to the teachers of their schools and some of them voluntarily agreed and undertook the study. After agreeing to partake in the study, the teachers informed the students of their respective schools about the study, and those who consented to be involved in it, were randomly selected to participate.

The questions answered by the students were to find out how their parents are involved in their educational activities both at home and school and the impact of their involvement on their educational achievements. After the students had responded to the questions, the teachers were also asked to provide the academic grades of the students in the core subject areas-math, English, general science, and social studies. These scores were aggregated and the average score was used for the study.

Measures

Of interest in the current study are our measures of parental involvement (home and school), financial hardship, and the students' educational achievement.

Parental Home Involvement

This scale was developed by Nyarko (2008) to measure the extent of parental home school-related activities of the participants. It was used to measure mothers and fathers' home involvement in the education of their adolescent children. The scale was measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-almost never to 5-very often. The items on the scale are: "My parents discuss my school progress with me", "My parents go on outings with me", "When I need help about my homework, my parents help me", "My parents grant me certain privileges whenever I make a good grade.", "My parents make sure that I do my homework", "My parents motivate me to try harder when I make a poor grade", and "My parents offer to help me when I make a poor grade." In all, seven items were measured on this scale. The alpha coefficients are: Mother=0.82 (N=184) and father=0.80 (N=171).

Parental School Involvement

This scale was developed by Nyarko (2008) to measure the extent of parental school involvement activities of the participants. It was used to measure the involvement of mothers and fathers in the educational activities of their children at school. The scale was measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from 1-almost never to 5-very often. The items on the scale are: "My parents discuss my school progress with my teachers", "My parents visit me at school", "My parents attend organized functions of the school such as speech and prize giving days.", "My parents attend my school's Parent Teacher Association meetings", "When there is a sporting activity in my school, my parents attend", "My parents have arranged for private classes for me." A total of six items were measured on this scale. The alpha coefficients are: Mother=0.77 (N=184) and father=0.72 (N=171).

Financial Pressure Scale

This scale is a nine-item scale translated from the German version developed by Schwarz and colleagues (1997). The original scale came from Conger et al., (1994). The items on the scale are answered on a four point response format ranging from 1=not true to 4= exactly true. In this study it was used to measure the financial hardship of the adolescents and their families. The scale is divided into three distinct sub-components and each component has three items. The first, second, and third sub-components of the scale measure the perception of the children about their parents' financial situation, their own financial restrictions,

and how they see their financial resources in comparison with their peers respectively. Listed below are the items on the scale: "We have enough money for everything that we need"- this item was reversed coded, "My parents are often worried whether they can pay their bills or not", "We often run out of money", "When I need materials for school, we sometimes don't have the money for them", "I cannot do certain activities with my friends due to lack of money", "I often have to give up things because my family has to restrict its expenses", "My school mates have better clothes than I do", "My peers usually have more money for activities than I do", and "I cannot afford buying as many things as my peers." The scale has a reliability of 0.80.

Educational Achievement

The academic grades of the students for one academic year in four core subjects were aggregated and the average score was used to delineate their educational or academic achievement. These subjects are: English, math, general science, and social studies. Because the students were in the second and third (final) year of their education, we decided to use their second year test scores in those four subject areas in the study. Although, prior studies have shown that self-reported grades and actual grades taken from schools' official records are highly correlated (Donovan & Jessor, 1985; Dornbusch et al., 1987) we decided to use the actual school grades of the students which we judged to be more authentic and reliable.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

The data collected for the study was anatomized by using various statistical methods. Descriptive statistics was used to provide an insight into the distribution of the measured (demographic) variables.

Furthermore, associations between variables were analyzed according to the hypotheses. Correlational analyses were used to test for linear relationships among the variables. Students' ratings of parental home and school involvement and their relations to school grades were anatomized by using bivariate correlation.

Finally, partial correlation was used to ensure that the relationship that exists between the variables (parental involvement and academic achievement) was not influenced by a third variable.

Results

Association between Parental Home Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement

The results revealed a positive and significant relationship between mothers

and fathers' home involvement and their children's school grades (table 2). Mothers' home involvement was highly significantly linked to their children's school grades (r=0.409, p<0.01). Similarly, the correlation between fathers' home involvement and the students' school grades was significant (r=0.412, p<0.01).

Association between Parental school Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement

With regard to the link between parental school involvement and the school grades of the students, the results (table 3) showed that mothers' school involvement, but not fathers was positively and significantly related to the school grades of the students (r=0.318, p<0.01).

It was also revealed that the correlation coefficients of mothers and fathers' home and school involvement in relation to the school grades of the students were dissimilar. The correlation coefficients of their home involvement were bigger than their school involvement. Also, there was

Table 2 Relationship between Parental Home Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement

	Students' School Grades	Mothers' Home Involvement
Mothers' Home Involvement	,409**	
	n= 184	
Fathers' Home Involvement	,412**	,733**
	n= 171	149

**p< 0.01

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Table 3 Relationship between Parental School Involvement and Adolescents' Academic Achievement

	Students' School Grades	Mothers' School Involvement	Fathers' School Involvement
Mothers' School Involvement	,318**		
	n= 184		
Fathers' School Involvement	,116	,476**	
	n= 171	149	

**p<0.01

a high and positive correlation between mothers and fathers' home involvement activities (r=0.733, p<0.01). This high correlation tailed away sharply to 0.476 when it came to their school involvement. Although this correlation was still significant- p< 0.01, it suggests a reduction in parental involvement at the school level.

In conclusion, the hypotheses that parental involvement at home and school correlate with the academic achievement of the students showed that both mothers and fathers' home involvement activities positively and significantly correlated with the academic performance of the students whilst only mothers' school involvement was positively and significantly related to the academic achievement of the students.

Partial Correlation

In order to find out the genuine effects of mothers and fathers' home involvement, as well as mothers' school involvement on the academic achievement of the students, partial correlations were conducted. These analyses were precipitated due to the fact that I wanted to ascertain whether the above observed effects were not influenced in a way by a third variable. The following variables were controlled: parental education, parental occupation, financial hardship, family structure (mothers & fathers' marital status), and gender.

Partial Correlation- Mothers' Home Involvement

The results of the partial correlation conducted (table 4) showed that mothers' home involvement in connection with the students' school grades was still significant although with a tailed off correlation coefficient (r=0.366, p<0.01).

Partial Correlation- Mothers' School Involvement

The results of the partial correlation conducted revealed that after mothers' education level, mothers' occupation, mothers' marital status, financial hardship, and gender had been controlled, mothers' school involvement

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Table 4 Partial Correlations of Mothers' Home Involvement

Control Variables		Students' School Grades	Mothers' Home Involvement	Mothers' Education Level	Mothers' Occupation	Mothers' Marital Status	Financial Hardship
	Mothers' Home Involvement	,409**					
	Mothers' Education Level (a)	,042	,022				
	Mothers' Occupation (b)	,234*	,250*	,044			
	Mothers' Marital Status (c)	,055	,142	,122	,029		
	Financial Hardship	-,214*	-,178*	-,030	-,442**	-,162*	
	Gender (d)	,097	,018	-,022	,000	-,070	-,079
Mothers' Education Level & Mothers' Occupation & Mothers' Marital Status & Financial Hardship & Gender	Students' School Grades		,366**				

*p< .05   **p< .01

a) coded as university=3, secondary school=2, less than secondary school=1
b) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1
c) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1
c) coded as female=0, male=1

Table 5 Partial correlations of Mothers' School Involvement

Control Variables		Students' School Grades	Mothers' School Involvement	Mothers' Education Level	Mothers' Occupation	Mothers' Marital Status	Financial Hardship
	Mothers' School Involvement	,318**					
	Mothers' Education Level (a)	,042	,019				
	Mothers' Occupation (b)	,234*	,188*	,044			
	Mothers' Marital Status (c)	,055	,094	,122	,029		
	Financial Hardship	-,214*	-,075	-,030	,442**	,162*	
	Gender (d)	,097	,037	-,022	,000	-,070	-,079
Mothers' Education Level & Mothers' Occupation & Mothers' Marital Status & Financial Hardship & Gender	Students' School Grades		,287				

*p< .05   **p< .01
a) coded as university=3, secondary school=2, less than secondary school=1
b) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1
c) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1
c) coded as female=0, male=1

Table 6 Partial Correlations of Fathers' Home Involvement

Control Variables		Students' School Grades	Fathers' Home Involvement	Fathers' Education Level	Fathers' Occupation	Fathers' Marital Status	Financial Hardship
	Fathers' Home Involvement	,412**					
	Fathers' Education Level (a)	-,002	,058				
	Fathers' Occupation (b)	,162*	,174*	,152*			
	Fathers' Marital Status (c)	,177*	,023	,074	,003		
	Financial Hardship	-,290**	-,165*	,126	-,526**	-,090	
	Gender (d)	,114	,052	-,027	-,009	-,100	-,052
Fathers' Education Level & Fathers' Occupation & Fathers' Marital Status & Financial Hardship & Gender	Students' School Grades		,385**				

*p<.05   **p<.01

a) coded as university=3, secondary school=2, less than secondary school=1
b) coded as: upper class=3, middle class=2, working class=1
c) coded as: married=3, remarried=2, divorced=1
c) coded as female=0, male=1

was still statistically significant. Thus, in spite of the reduction of the correlation coefficient from 0.318 to 0.287, the correlation was still significant (r=0.287, p<0.01).

Partial Correlation- Fathers' Home Involvement

The results of the partial correlation conducted (table 6) revealed that fathers' home involvement in connection to the students' school grades was still significant although with a tailed away correlation coefficient (r= 0.385, p<0.01).

In conclusion, the results of the partial correlations revealed that both mothers and fathers' home involvement in relation to their children's academic performance still remained significant after the background variables had been controlled. Also, mothers' school involvement, after the partial correlation still remained statistically significant.

Discussion

The hypothesis which dealt with the relationship between parental home involvement and the academic performance of the students was supported in the case of both mothers and fathers even after the background variables were accounted for. Similarly, the association that was expected to be between parental school involvement and the academic performance of the students was supported only in the case of the mothers even after controlling for the background variables, but not in the case of the fathers. The positive and significant correlation that was found between mothers and fathers' home involvement and the educational achievement of the

students was expected. It proves the importance of parental involvement in the educational achievement of students. This finding provides support for earlier studies conducted by researchers such as (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Graue, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1983; Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995; Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Trusty, 1999; Walberg, Schiller, & Hartel, 1979). With this positive association between mothers and fathers' home involvement and the educational achievement of their children, it would be a step in the right direction if parents are challenged to be out and about in the education of their children at home. Thus, I suggest that educational authorities in the country provide parents with the necessary information required to support adolescents' educational trajectories. When parents are provided with the information needed to promote their children's educational progress and learning opportunities, their children stand a greater chance of succeeding with their academics. Teachers should provide parents with information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the students and measures to be taken to overcome the weaknesses and solidify the strengths. The school authorities can also institute a program that will bring parents together to exchange ideas about how to enhance their children's educational success. By creating a platform for parents to develop relationships with school staff and other parents, either via the planning, development, and implementation of school policies or programs or attendance at out of school time programs, schools and community

organizations can create avenues or platforms for families, students, and teachers to be acquainted with each other and also share ideas about the value of education.

Furthermore, with regard to the hypothesis that dealt with parental school involvement, the results showed that mothers' school involvement was positively and significantly correlated with the academic performance of the students, whilst fathers' school involvement in association with the students' academic performance was found not to be significant. This means that when it comes to parental school involvement, mothers stand out. The positive and significant association that was found between mothers' school involvement and the academic performance of the students corroborates with the findings of Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) who found that mothers were more involved than fathers on each of the three aspects of parental involvement in children's schooling: behavior, cognitive-intellectual, and personal. These mothers might hold the idea that the education of their children is their responsibility and thus have to sacrifice their resources-money, material, time, etc. to ensure that their children succeed in school. In Ghana, it is not uncommon to see parents, especially mothers selling their personal property or even borrowing from the banks or friends in order to promote the educational success of their children. The non-significant correlation between fathers' school involvement and the academic performance of the students was not expected. In fact, it

was expected that their school involvement would also positively impact on the academic performance of the students. Nord (1998) indicated that fathers can be a positive force in their children's education, and that when they get involved, children have a better chance to succeed in school. The author also revealed that although children living in father-only households perform less well as juxtaposed with their counterparts living in two-parent families; those living in father-only households do better in school, are more likely to participate in extra curricular activities, enjoy school more, and are less likely to have been suspended or dismissed if their fathers are involved in school as compared with those whose fathers are not involved in their school activities. But the reason why fathers might not be so much involved in their children's education at the school could be due to the fact that fathers in the country are considered to be the head of the family and thus have to cater for the needs of the family. Considering the fact that about 44.8% of the population lives under one dollar a day, it is expected that most of the fathers have to work extra harder in order to even provide one square meal for their families. This scenario makes fathers in most cases ask the mothers to represent them at school meetings and other events in the school. Due to the tremendous impact fathers' school involvement have on the educational accomplishments of their adolescent children (Nord, 1998), I would suggest that school authorities design and implement programs that would encourage fathers to be active in the educational activities of their children in their schools. Teachers could develop a program that would bring fathers together

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to key out ways that would enable them to actively participate in the educational activities of their children in the school. Through this program they could form some social networks which could serve as a platform for exchanging information which could be beneficial in helping their children succeed in school.

Finally, a critical examination of the correlation coefficients between mothers and fathers' home involvement and their school involvement insinuate that they involved themselves more in their children's home activities than their school activities. This finding supports previous studies which have indicated that what parents do at home in connection with their children's education remains significant and more essential and crucial to their educational achievement than what they do within the school environment (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Hickman et al., 1995; Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999; Trusty, 1999).

In wrapping up, the finding that both mothers and fathers' home involvement and mothers' school involvement enhanced the educational achievement of the students and thus supported the hypotheses, prove the potency and efficacy of parental involvement as a tool in promoting the educational success of students in the country. Thus, parental involvement could be a missing link in adolescents' school achievement.

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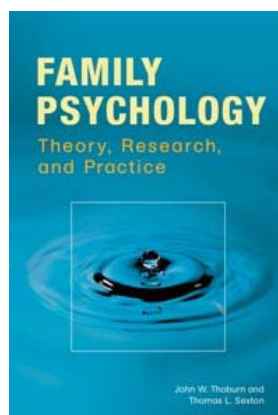
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• Supplies a comprehensive treatise on the value of family psychology to the field of psychology as a whole

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• Examines the relationship between research and practice, cure and care, and the science and art of family psychology

• Documents how family psychology strives to view persons in context of their situation and the relationships within the family

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