

DEFINITION, STRUCTURE, AND FORMATION OF PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS: LITERATURE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Parents, teachers, and students are important partners in education collaboration. Parent expectations are a prerequisite for a student to achieve the set academic goals, emphasizing the supportive role of home environment in education. The learning process does not end in school, but continues at home- spending time with parents, traveling, or attending cultural events.

In the field of education sciences, the question of expectations of educational partners and the factors that influence and promote students' learning achievements; as well as the factors that hinder them, has been extensively studied. Expectations of educational goals indicate the level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that the student should achieve; provided that the expectations are motivating and directed towards achieving educational goals.

The question of this study is – what is the definition, structure and formation of parental expectations for a child's basic education goals.

To explore the question of this study, the following methods are used: (1) Systematic analysis of literature and educational documents on parental expectations for a child's educational goals – 271 units; (2) Content analysis – analysis of content and the keywords.

The aim of this study is to determine whether the definition, structure and formation of expectations revealed in the literature analysis correspond to parents' views on the goals of education for their child.

Keywords: *cooperation in education, educational expectations, educational objectives, educational partners, parental expectations*

Methodology

Systematic literature analysis, SALSA method (Booth et al., 2016) – parental expectations, their formation and structure

- 1) research question formulation – what is the definition, structure and formation of parental expectations for a child's basic education goals;
 - a) locating studies using defined keywords – parental expectations
 - b) creating criteria (see Table 1)

Table 1 Criteria for systematic literature analysis

| Database | Taylor and Francis Online | Sage Journals | Scopus |
|------------------|---|--|--|
| Selected filters | Open Access, Reviewed Articles, Social Sciences | Open Access, Education, Research Article, Review Article | Open Access, Social Sciences, English, All open access |
| Keywords | Parental expectations for a child's educational goals | | |
| Articles | 82 | 138 | 51 |

- 2) Document analysis – Latvian educational documents which reveals parental responsibility and involvement in the learning process, OECD, UNESCO and other documents detecting the future of education and parental role in education.
- 3) Qualitative content analysis to answer the question of the study using defined keywords to determine the definition, structure and formation of parental expectations for a child's basic education goals (Fink, 2014).
- 4) Literature analysis with mapping review strategy (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006) as data analysis methods.

Introduction

Teachers, students, and their parents are the main collaboration partners or actors in the education system. Each actor in the education system may have similar, different, or completely opposite educational goals. Common educational goals are one of the basic elements of a successful learning process, however, the differences in actor expectations or the absence/lack of cooperation can hinder or impede student learning achievements (Bentsen et al., 2019; Bryan and Henry, 2012; Day and Dotterer, 2018; Hattie and Zierer, 2018; Grant and Ray, 2019). Educational goals are the basis on which the educational system is built – goals shape it, indicate developmental direction and reveal the quality of education (Law et al., 2017). In recent decades, scientists and education policy makers in the US and Europe have been giving increased attention to parental involvement in children's educational processes (Menheere and Hooge, 2010). Parent engagement/involvement in the education process positively affects a child's achievement (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Fantuzzo et al., 2000; McWayne et al., 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Jeynes, 2003; Mattingly et al., 2002).

Expectations for educational goals from the student's perspective are also evaluated in interactions with teacher expectations (Ferguson, 2003; Phillipson and Phillipson, 2007). A student's efforts to acquire education and the desire to broaden their horizons shape their learning goals – they indicate a level of formal education the student wants to achieve with purposeful action (Covington, 2000). Conversely, academic expectations from a parent or teacher's perspective indicate the level of knowledge, competence, and formal education that a student should achieve based on specific expectations and striving to achieve set learning goals (Jussim and Harber, 2005; Ferguson, 2003).

Other studies describe student's educational expectations, their formation, and the correlation between student achievement (Liu et al., 2009), school experience, and achievements with support of other educational actors (Daly et al., 2009). The role of the parent as an educational actor is examined in studies on correlations between student academic achievement and successful cooperation among actors in promoting these achievements in school and at home (Xiaohua, 2022). Positive parent expectations being particularly valued. Positive and supportive parent expectations are based not only on parent-child interaction and support in the learning process, but also in collaboration with teachers and educational institutions, as well as parent involvement in school activities (Pleck, 2010).

Parents play an important role in raising children and promoting their well-being (Davis-Kean et al., 2019). It is the parent's task to search for, discover, identify, synthesize, and evaluate information that promotes the development of their expectations as a parent regarding the child's educational goals, thus promoting a positive interaction model with other educational actors (Davis-Kean et al., 2019). However, little research has been conducted in the field of educational sciences on the question of parental expectations for their child's educational goals, as well as the factors that influence parental expectations, how they are formed, what the nature of parental expectations are, and the principles that underlie the formation of parental expectations.

Definition of parental expectations

In psychology, the concept of *expectations* is defined as an emotional state based on strong belief. An emotion-based hunch, that a planned intention will be carried out and realized (APA, 2023; Wallace, 2015). In education, this concept characterizes the desires or demands of an educational actor (parent, student, teacher or educational policy maker) regarding a child's academic achievements, behavior, and attitudes (Lopez-Agudo et al., 2021). The origin of the concept of *expectations* is derived from the Latin word "expectare", meaning to see, search, predict, intend, and anticipate (Gavrillovs, 2012). High expectations characterize a parent's confidence and efforts to promote their child's educational goals, encourage academic achievements, behavior, and personal growth (Hattie and Zierer, 2018; Aleksejeva et al., 2019).

The definition of expectations is based on the expectation value theory (Vroom, 1964) which suggests that certain attitudes or actions are motivated by two factors: (1) predictability and possibility that the desired outcome (goal) will be achieved, and (2) the value of the desired outcome (goal) as a result. The latest research on the expectation value theory (Eccles, 1983; Eccles and Wigfield, 2002) indicates that choices (goals) related to academic achievements are formed by combining expectations for success and the value of a specific goal in a particular domain. According to the expectation value theory, the definition of expectations is formed by the following elements: (1) cultural environment (gender roles and cultural stereotypes); (2) parental (caregiver) expectations, attitudes, beliefs, and conviction; (3) the child's attitude towards education, beliefs about parental expectations, and previous academic achievement experiences; (4) the child's short-term and long-term goals; (5) the value of a specific educational goal; (6) actor expectations for success.

The nature of parental expectations regarding educational goals

Parental expectations refer to the parent's attitude towards their child's education, their hopes and their child's academic and social achievements (Bentsen et al., 2019). Expectations can promote a student's motivation and conscious action which can be hindered by various barriers and other factors (Raciti, 2019), as well as the student's personal characteristics and the influence of other actors (Verbree et al., 2021). Students whose parents have high academic expectations tend to achieve higher academic success and study for longer periods over students whose parents have low academic expectations (Davis-Kean, 2005; Pearce, 2006; Vartanian et al., 2007). Educated parents often promote their child's education through family trips and events, purchasing educational materials, and information technology devices (Yamamoto and Holloway, 2010).

The nature of expectations is shaped by student achievement, engagement, and well-being (Xiaohua, 2022) facilitated by planning and effective evaluation of the curriculum. Engagement from teachers and students when learning through scientifically-based teaching methods and parental involvement solidify these expectations. The basic principles for student achievement through expectations are a positive learning environment and attitude from parents and teachers, professional school leadership, parental involvement as an educational partner in the learning process, the involvement of the entire community in student education, as well as a common understanding of education, its goals, and values (Weiner, 2005).

Parental expectations are essential for a child's development and well-being. These expectations can be high or low, justified or unjustified, and can either promote or hinder a child's development. The essence of parental expectations are related to parenting styles that value parental involvement, as well as parental demands for the child's educational goals (Baumrind, 1966; Maccoby and Martin, 1983). High or low, motivating or demanding, unreasonable parent expectations define the parenting style which is supplemented by the parent's involvement in the child's learning process. Parents should be cognizant of their expectations of these factors and take into account the child's temperament and collaboration with the teacher and other educational actors. Studies have evaluated children's temperament and demands toward parents and later teachers and schools, which are promoted by high and reasonable parent expectations. However, not all children can adapt to these expectations (Phillipson, 2013). An important issue is parent expectations in families that are separated or living in other countries, as well as families where another relative or person takes care of the child. Often each caregiver has their own expectations (Bæck, 2010; Danişman, 2017).

Evaluating parent expectations, more responsive parents have more permissive parenting styles, while more demanding parents have authoritarian parenting styles. There are differences between parenting styles and parental expectations (Baumrind, 1989) – (1) authoritative parents learning goals set in collaboration with the child, expectations are clear, justified and defined, learning expectations are reasonable, but high; (2) authoritarian parents expectations of their child's educational goals are often specific, unwarranted, and unrelated to the child's learning objectives or the educational

institution's goals and expectations; (3) permissive parents expectations regarding their child's education are low or nonexistent, but the parent expects the child to feel appreciated, satisfied and special during the learning process; (4) negligent parents expectations about the child's educational goals either do not exist or are not related to the child.

The latest research on parenting styles (Kuppens and Ceulemans, 2021) reveals parental characteristics that define each parenting style and describe the level of parental involvement and support in the education process, compared to high or low parental expectations. Analyzing the four described parenting styles and parental characteristics in these styles, it can be concluded that high parental expectations and involvement in the learning process, balanced with the child's learning goals, promote the child's personal development and are relevant and significant to the expectations of other actors. In contrast, low parental expectations, involvement, and support in the learning process create a resonance that hinders the child's personal development and academic achievements (Grant and Ray, 2019).

Determining parental expectations can be adapted through analysis that characterizes learning (Malik, 2021) – the formulation of expectations by exploring learning goals, using knowledge and intellect in practice, and collaborating with various educational actors. It is important that students develop an understanding of their learning goals, and parent/teacher expectations facilitate the achievement of these goals. Through collaboration and problem-solving activities, students are provided with the feedback and reflection that explain not only academic achievement, but also how it was achieved and how parental expectations have contributed to the child's motivation. However, in school practice, dissonance may arise between children and parent/teacher expectations for educational goals, which may hinder the child's development and academic achievement. Consonance established through collaboration is the most successful way to achieve a child's academic success and personal development (Phillipson and Phillipson, 2007).

Research contrasts the formation of expectations that characterize parental empathy for a student's academic achievements compared to expectations that a parent sets without empathetic involvement (Webb, 1997). By forming empathetic expectations, a parent must have a clear understanding of the child's abilities and desires. The parent must also serve as an intermediary and supportive element that promotes the child's development and motivation towards achievement. Such parental expectations consist of three elements: helping, setting goals (*fixing*), and support (*servicing as a companion*). The result of forming empathetic expectations is the transformative self-realization of the child's personality. This occurs through the process of learning and development, the child's growth and transformation, and increase of self-awareness.

Parental expectations that promote a child's development and cooperation with others also contribute to the child's learning (Göhlich and Zirfas, 2007). The child's changes are not only based on hereditary or biological resources, but on experiences that build as the child develops. Learning motivated by parental expectations promotes changes in the child's actions, behavior, interpretation of events, sense of taste, value system, and physical and mental well-being. Learning motivation by parental expectations leads to

changes in the child's behavior that are measured against developmental goals, parenting, and educational goals (Gröschke, 2005). The criteria for such expectations can be observed as persistent changes in the child's behavior. With increased parental support in the learning process, parental expectations can have a positive impact on the learning environment (Thornton and Brunton, 2015). Positive parental expectations also affect the learning environment by increasing parental support during the learning process (Thornton and Brunton, 2015). A learning environment that allows children to express themselves, explore and discover, reflect, participate in projects, strengthen their identity, and interact with others and communicate promotes their learning achievements and personal development.

The quality of parental expectations and the expectations of other actors affects the child's cognitive, social competence, and relationships at various levels of education (Coleman, 2012).

When parents form their expectations for their child's education goals, there must be clear conditions regarding the nature of these expectations – what the education goals are, an understanding of the student's physical and emotional development stage, and respect for the student's emotions. In this way, parental expectations can be adjusted to the student (Brofenbrenner and Morris, 2006).

Parental expectations should be formed by evaluating socialization (Bandura, 1969, 1977, 2016), emphasizing the cognitive processes that occur in social context and the process of forming expectations using observation or direct instructions. Social context determines the foundation of the social and emotional development of a child. This includes positive relationships with peers, teachers and parents, which are influenced by parental expectations for educational goals. The characteristics that describe parental expectations in the social and emotional learning strategy include a child's relationships and social interaction with peers, teachers, family, understanding of social and emotional development, conflict and problem-solving skills, ability to regulate emotions, set educational goals, prioritize their actions, and take responsibility for their behavior. An integrated approach with significant parental support and involvement are important for all of these attributes, where parental expectations become an example for modeling positive behavior.

Formation of parental expectations

Parental ethno-theory defines parenting practices that encourage the child's socialization processes, inclusion in society and becoming a full fledged member of society (Greenfield, 2014), that forms a parent's assessment of a child's development, socialization and family interaction with other educational actors, precisely describes the formation of parental expectations. Considering that these evaluations and parent belief systems are indirect, it can be difficult for parents to formulate expectations (Super and Harkness, 2002). In contrast, the development of a child (*developmental niche*) and related parental expectations are characterized by the child's daily physical and social circumstances, parental care for the child, the parenting styles and the parent ethno-theory models

(Harkness et al., 2015). These models describe the the development of a child from three interconnected elements: the physical and social circumstances in which the child lives, the culture of child care and parenting, community- regulated practices, as well as parent's (caretaker's) psychology, including parent ethno-theory (Harkness et al., 2015).

In educational sciences, there are several theories about child development that describe student development and are related to academic achievements. In these theories parental involvement in the learning process and parental expectations are essential and child-friendly educational goals are set. These theories reveal a variety of views and interpretations of child development, the significance of behavior, and the role of parents in this development.

The Maturational theory reveals that heredity significantly influences a student's development. As the student's genetic abilities progress, their development is genetically predetermined. Education should follow these genetically predetermined traits (Gessel, 1949; Hall, 1904). The theory examines biological development as a progression, occurring in sequential stages (Hunt, 1961) and suggests that the student acquires knowledge and develops naturally and spontaneously. Also environmental factors are essential in a student's development and in achieving educational goals (Gesell, 1949).

Representatives of Constructivist theory suggest that individuals construct their own knowledge and experience. The student also constructs their own knowledge by using their experiences, which help interpret the student's perspective on knowledge in general (Elliott et al., 2000). The student uses physically and socially acquired knowledge as the main source of information and approaches, which must be considered when forming parental expectations (Piaget, 1953).

The Behaviorist theory describes the learning, behavior and development of a student. During learning, a student's behavior changes which arises as a result of obtaining reinforcement (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2021). The main idea of the theory reveals that learning is related to the transformation of behavior by strengthening and promoting the association between situational stimuli and a child's response. This is essential in forming parental expectations. A child's reaction with a transformation of behavior is formed by positive and rewarding results that arise as a result of continuous action (Thorndike, 1931).

The Psychoanalytic theory provides an understanding of how unconscious thoughts can influence a child's thoughts, feelings and behavior. Childhood experiences and the expectations of others can impact a child's entire life and shape their personality development, based on the fundamental mechanisms of social-emotional development that arise from a child's instincts (Erikson, 1959).

The Ecological systems theory of child development focuses on the role of the environment in the child's life and development, examining how environmental components influence the child's achievements in an integrated ecosystem model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Each new experience can change the child's level of development and affect their personality, promoting the development of their independence (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). Parents, as one of the actors involved in the learning process and responsible for the child, with their expectations, either promote or hinder the child's development and

achievement of learning goals. Parental experience and attitude towards school, learning process, and the student's achievements and skills also influence the formation of expectations. Therefore, parental expectations in education reflect the parent's belief and judgment about the student's future academic achievements and reflect the student's intelligence, belonging, environment, and the belonging to an educational institution. Parental expectations reflect aspects of the parent's attitude toward the student's future and educational level, which vary at different stages of the student's development. Parent and family support, engagement, and expectations are essential elements of the child's personality development, which promote academic achievements and intellectual growth.

Structure of parental expectations

In educational sciences, there are several elements that contribute to a successful learning process and academic achievement for students. Four basic elements related to high yet grounded parental expectations are student motivation, academic self-sufficiency, parental involvement in the learning process, and teacher expectations and evaluation. Unified learning goals for educational actors, the student's belief in the necessity of learning, motivation, self-directed learning, intensive and effective parental involvement in the learning process, and the teacher's optimistic and well-founded understanding of the student's abilities and expectations relate to the expectations of other educational actors (Yamamoto and Holloway, 2010).

The theories of child development and parental expectations from a system that characterizes the structure of these expectations. A person develops throughout their life and is influenced by various factors that affect the formation of parental expectations (Christenson, 2004). The parent's understanding of the learning process, their responsibilities, and collaboration with educational institutions are also significant (Pomerantz et al., 2005). Taking into account the diversity of theories, such as how the environment affects children's learning, promotes changes in their behavior.

It is essential to evaluate the components of the structure of parental expectations: (1) children as active educational actors, their desires and motivation associated with parental expectations and feedback provided by parents or teachers, (2) significance of communication at various levels – parent-child, parent-teacher, child-teacher, parent-educational institution, educational institution-teacher, and (3) a description of the child's knowledge, development, and personality that corresponds to the child's level of development (Sarancho, 2020).

Research has revealed a link between parental attitudes, beliefs, expectations (*Parental ABE – attitudes, beliefs, expectations*) and students' academic achievement. This can be positive or negative, depending on whether the learning goals are met. This link works effectively when there is a positive connection and collaboration between the parent and child. This promotes the parent's and child's attitudes, beliefs, and expectations, such as encouragement and family values that support the learning process, discussions at home, parental support in doing homework and projects. With these prerequisites, the student's academic achievement will be positive and successful. However, if the parent's attitude,

beliefs, and expectations influence the learning process with factors such as prohibiting entertainment, various negative learning control mechanisms, providing private tutoring instead of the parent's involvement in the learning process, denying self-directed learning by the student, academic achievement is often negative (Weerasinghe, 2016). Therefore, the combination of parental attitudes, beliefs, and expectations combined with the parent's positive or negative behavior is crucial for the child's academic achievement.

The elements that characterize the formation structure of parental expectations indicate that these expectations often arise from the parent's own experience (Dumont et al., 2012). However, parents should strive to evaluate their own experience and form expectations that are appropriate for their child's educational goals.

The 5-element (5E) model characterizes the structure of expectations and their formation. The model consists of five elements: *evaluation, engagement, exploration, explanation, and extension* (Bybee and Landes, 1990).

Two broad categories characterize the structure of parental expectations, which can be divided by their meaning – the significance of parenting and parental involvement. Thoughtfully formulated parental expectations reflect a child's needs and skills, with parents providing love, attention, understanding, acceptance, support, and time to not only be with their child but also to understand their learning goals, expectations, and tasks (Siegel, 2012). There are several benefits to children when parental expectations are thoughtfully established: (1) children feel confident, loved and heard in their learning goals, ideas and thoughts; (2) children trust that their learning goals and needs are understood by their parents; (3) children learn to solve complex or unpleasant situations and challenges in their studies, feeling supported and motivated by their parents; and (4) children are able to provide quality feedback on their academic work, assessment of others and feel empathy. These benefits shaped by parental expectations promote healthy relationships between parents and children, and increase a child's self-esteem (Vincent and Ball, 2006).

It is essential to strike a balance of expectations between (1) demanding, controlling, and disproportionate expectations that encourage a child's passive activity and subordination of their goals to parental expectations and (2) unclear expectations with unstable rules in which children do not feel safe in the learning process and do not become responsible for their learning goals (Green et al., 2007). A parent expresses expectations to a child by imposing rules, using strict discipline, and setting limits. However, even in this model, the child's development and formation of responsible behavior can be observed. For example, children feel stability and security characterized by rules, and learn to accept frustration and disappointment if the child's expectations do not match the parental expectations. Children become less egocentric, learning from their mistakes, becoming self-sufficient, independent, and creating their own intermediate rules based on their own values (Faber and Vohs, 2004). A relevant question is – how reasonable parental expectations are. If they are unsuitable for the child's abilities and development, they contribute to discipline problems, children do not learn to think and respond to their learning goals, and become passive followers of parental expectations. However, if parental expectations do not exist or are variable and their rules are unclear, children may feel confused and unprotected (Knollmann and Wild, 2007).

Thus, the structure of parental expectation is formed by the parent’s full involvement in the child’s learning process. Combining both learning at home and the setting of common expectations in educational institutions. In addition to these structural values, expectations have characteristics that differ for each educational actor. For parents they include monitoring, mentoring, and motivation. For the child – self-motivation, involvement, and responsibility; and for the educational institution – communication, transparency, and individualization (Edwards, 2016).

Parental expectations – mapping review

Mapping reviews for parental expectations is a transparent, rigorous, and systematic approach to identify parental expectations definition, structure and formation. Mapping review (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006) for parental expectations describes main elements of parental expectations definition, formation and structure (see Figure 1), that is parent and student connection to realize learning achievements and educational goals. Parental and student cross-link is related to the structure and formation of expectations that is evaluation, engagement, exploration, explanation and extension. Parental expectations have a strong impact on parent’s attitude towards their child’s education, their hopes and their child’s academic and social achievements, their own education and experience and student learning motivation. Parental expectations are influenced by parenting styles and different theories on the development and learning of a child.

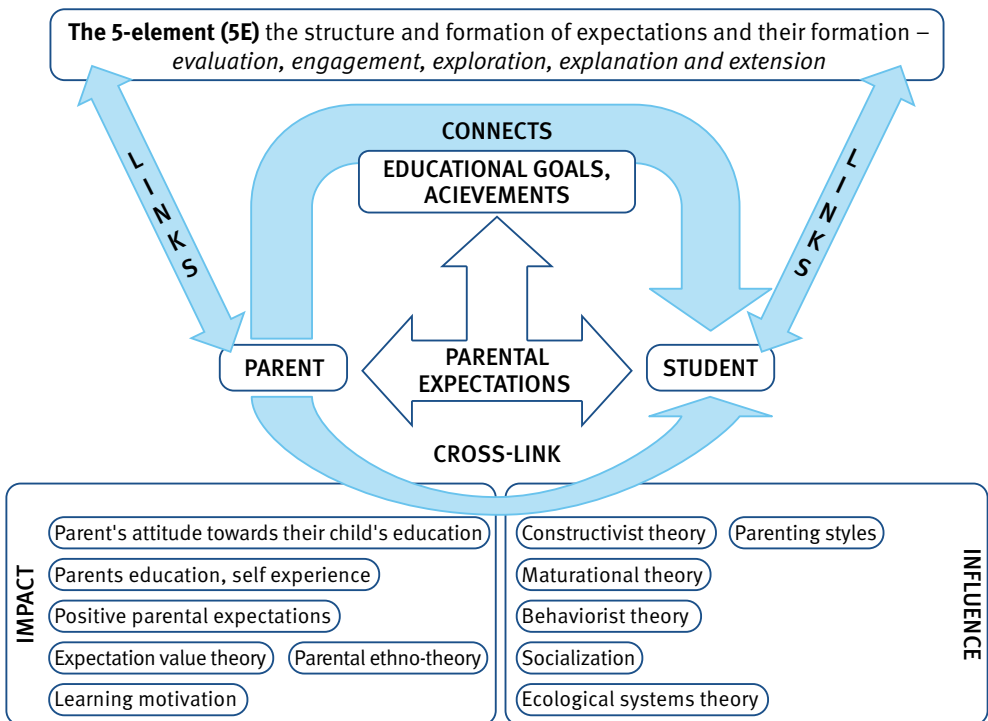


Figure 2 Parental expectations mapping review

Conclusions

Parental expectations are defined as an emotional state based on strong belief, in education, parental expectations characterizes the desires or demands of the parent regarding a child's academic achievements, behavior, and attitudes. Parental expectations do not correspond to the appropriate stage of the child's development. As parents are important educational actors, their expectations are described as reasonable beliefs or decisions that parents have about their children's successful future, the highest possible level of education and well-being.

Expectations are characterized by certain qualities – for parents, it is monitoring, mentoring, and motivating expectations; for the child, it is self-motivation, engagement, and responsibility; for educational institutions, it is communication, transparency, and individualization.

The structure of parental expectations is formed by the full involvement of the parent in the child's learning process, which combines both learning at home and setting unified expectations in educational institutions.

The formation of parental expectations does not significantly differ based on the child's age (elementary or primary school) and gender.

In the education process, parents understand their role as an educational actor with their own expectations, but their involvement as an educational actor in the learning process does not always happen, and collaboration is often complex or nonexistent.

When evaluating the definition, essence, formation, and structure of expectations, 5 elements (student, parent, learning environment, school, and collaboration) have been identified that characterize such parent expectations that promote student learning achievements, skills, development, emotional state, and overall well-being (see Figure 1 that is formed as a result of research by study author).

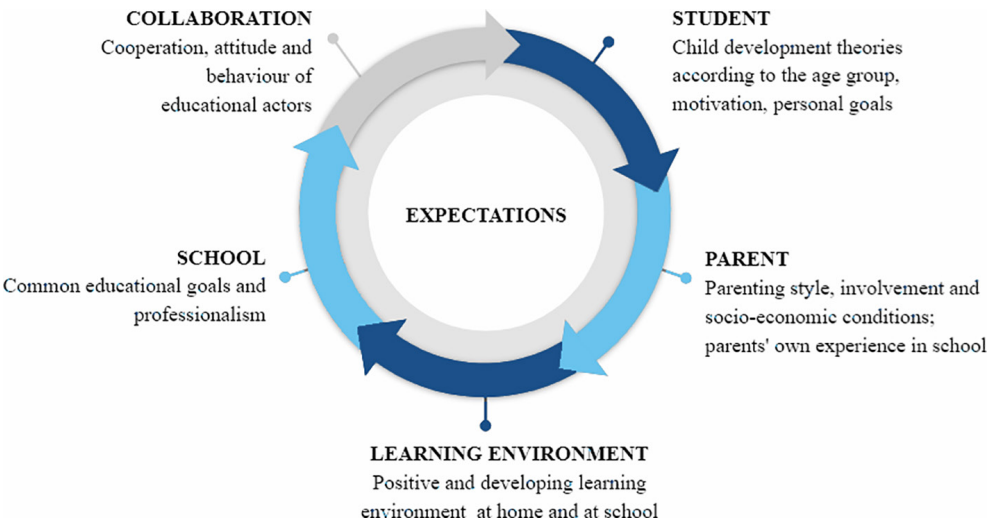


Figure 2 Elements characterizing the structure of expectations

These elements, interacting with each other, can correspond to the education goals set by the school and also promote student motivation, supporting their existing learning achievements and skills with expectations.

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