Thalia Chloe Tom   Honors Thesis

STREET SMART: CROSSING THE INTERSECTIONS OF NEIGHBORHOOD

DISORDER, SCHOOL QUALITY, HOME QUALITY AND MOTHERS' ACADEMIC

INVOLVEMENT AND EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

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Street Smart: Crossing the Intersections of Neighborhood Disorder, School Quality, Home Quality and Mothers' Academic Involvement and Educational Expectations

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Despite rhetoric that promulgates notions of a meritocratic society, the United States frequently tops the list of industrialized nations on various indicators of social inequality. Education provides one mechanism that may promote social mobility, but some scholars argue that it is increasingly linked to SES. Previous studies have indicated that ecological contexts (e.g., school, neighborhood and home) can shape educational trajectories and that interventions may be the most efficacious in early childhood. Throughout the literature, social support has emerged as a potential moderator of relationships between ecological contexts and children's outcomes. Parent involvement and expectations may also influence educational trajectories. As such, the present study explored the influence of social support, in addition to the contributions of school quality, neighborhood disorder, and the home environment to parent involvement and expectations. Mothers (n = 314) reported on each of the ecological contexts, their academic involvement, and their educational expectations for their elementary school child in a national online survey. Consistent with hypotheses, high school quality and low neighborhood disorder predicted greater academic involvement and educational expectations. Home quality had no predictive effects. Social support only moderated the relationship between school quality and educational expectations among mothers who reported high social support.

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Introduction

Although the rhetoric of the "American Dream" frames the United States as a

meritocracy in which hard work is recompensed with prosperity and social mobility, persistent

and increasingly egregious levels of educational and economic inequality suggest that the

"Dream" is largely a myth. The U.S. regularly outranks most other industrialized nations in

income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient (OECD 2015) and, according to the U.S.

Census Bureau, the top 20% of workers earned approximately 50% of all private household

income in 2016. Economic inequality is also evident in trends of family wealth: using 2013 data,

the Congressional Budget Office reported that families in the top 10% of the wealth distribution

controlled more than 75% of all family wealth (CBO 2016). Despite a deeply-held American

belief that individuals have the capacity to transcend the circumstances of their birth to achieve

higher socioeconomic status (SES), a review of the literature on intergenerational mobility

indicates that the U.S. possesses higher levels of inequality and lower levels of mobility than

other industrialized nations (Torche 2015).

Education provides one pathway through which intergenerational mobility may be

promoted or hindered, and it is increasingly associated with SES. By some scholars' accounts,

economic inequality has surpassed racial inequality in contributing to educational achievement

gaps (Reardon 2013). Research on students from low-SES backgrounds illustrates their

cumulative educational disadvantage: they tend to enter school with lower levels of school

readiness (Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson 2005), are more likely to be diagnosed with learning

disorders (Blair and Scott 2002; Morgan et al. 2016), and are more likely to drop out of high

school than their more advantaged peers (National Center for Education Statistics 2008).

Coleman et al.'s seminal *Equality of Educational Opportunity* report (1966), which found that

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student achievement was shaped by both the SES of their family and their peers, laid the

foundation for contemporary studies of links between SES, the school environment, and

educational achievement. In a similar vein, the present study explores the contributions of the

school, neighborhood and home environments to mothers' academic involvement and

educational expectations for their children.

School Quality: Perceptions and Climate

As the primary site of instruction, schools play an instrumental role in shaping students'

educational outcomes. Previous work, which has found a positive relationship between social

support and learning outcomes, argues that the relationship is dependent upon environmental

factors within the school (Lee and Smith 1999). Research conducted with middle school and

high school students has suggested that school quality and school climate may assuage some of

the educational disadvantages conferred by poverty (Hopson and Lee 2011). A positive school

climate, which may be assessed on measures of safety, teaching and learning (including quality

of instruction), as well as relationships and environment (including cleanliness and order)

(Cohen et al. 2009), may promote student achievement while a negative school climate may

promote lower student engagement and achievement (Wang et al. 2014). While students'

perceptions of their school environment are undoubtedly important, parent perceptions also carry

significant weight in their potential impact on how students feel about school, levels of family-

school engagement, and decisions about school enrollment (Schueler et al. 2014). Parents'

academic involvement has also been linked to children's academic motivation and achievement

(Menheere and Hooge 2010). Therefore, studies that seek to explore the factors contributing to

educational outcomes would do well to solicit parents' perceptions of the schools that their

children attend; however, such studies must also consider the role of other key ecological

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contexts, such as the neighborhood and home environments. As such, this study examines

mothers' perceptions of school quality, neighborhood disorder, and home quality as predictors of

their academic involvement and expectations for their child's educational prospects.

Neighborhood Environment: Order and Disorder

Previous work has also highlighted the salience of the neighborhood as a contributor to

educational outcomes (Schueler et al. 2014). Classic urban sociological texts, such as Park and

Burgess's *The City* (1925), maintain that disorganization within a neighborhood, whether

physical (e.g., crumbling infrastructure) or social (e.g., lack of vitality in institutions such as

churches and schools), creates fertile grounds for crime and violence, with predictably poor

outcomes for residents. On the whole, contemporary research bears this out: whereas scholars

have consistently documented a positive effect of affluent neighbors on children's school

readiness, educational achievement and attainment (for a review, see Leventhal and Brooks-

Gunn 2000), living in an impoverished neighborhood has been linked to a suboptimal physical

home environment (Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn and Duncan 1994). Additionally, living in a violent

neighborhood has been associated with lower test scores (Greenman, Bodovski, and Reed 2011),

grade point averages (Schwartz and Gorman 2003), and likelihood of high school graduation

(Wodtke, Elwert, and Harding 2016).

Parents' academic involvement (e.g., attending school events or volunteering in the

classroom) may attenuate the effect of neighborhood disadvantage on children's educational

achievement (Greenman et al. 2011). However, that finding is tempered by data which suggest

that maternal perceptions of neighborhood disorder are negatively associated with both the

quality of home literacy environment and maternal responsiveness (Lin and Reich 2016).

Perceptions of the neighborhood environment are consequential: perceptions of neighborhood

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disorder may be more robust predictors of individual outcomes than more objective measures, such as Census data on neighborhood poverty (Lin and Reich 2016), while perceived social support may act as a protective factor against poor individual outcomes (Hurd, Stoddard, and Zimmerman 2012). Social support may also interact with neighborhood perceptions to influence parenting practices (Byrnes and Miller 2012). Such findings lend credence to the practice of considering multiple ecological contexts and the role of social support in empirical efforts to inform child well-being.

Home Environment: Literacy and Disorganization

Beyond the school and neighborhood environments, the home presents an immediate ecological context that may influence educational trajectories. The literacy environment fostered in the home, including the amount of time that parents spend reading to their children, is predictive of future literacy skills (Oliver, Dale, and Plomin 2005) integral to academic success and educational attainment (Gottfried et al. 2015). Additionally, chaotic home environments may impair children's cognitive skills (Hart et al. 2007) and responses to academic challenges (Brown and Low 2008). In particular, household disorganization in the first few years of life has been linked to differences in children's receptive and expressive vocabulary skills (Vernon-Feagans et al. 2012). Vernon-Feagans, Willoughby, and Garrett-Peters (2016) also found that household disorganization was an indirect predictor of kindergarteners' behavioral regulation, a contributor to school readiness and future academic success. And, unsurprisingly, high levels of parental involvement have been tied to more positive academic outcomes (Taylor, Clayton, and Rowley 2004)

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The Current Study

Taken together, the literature suggests that multiple contexts can shape an individual's educational outcomes: the neighborhood in which they live, the school that they attend, and the home environment in which they are reared can significantly influence their educational trajectories. Parents also play an influential role in the educational sphere through their childrearing practices and perceptions of these ecological contexts. While the individual contributions of school, neighborhood, and home environments to educational outcomes are well-documented, relatively few studies have simultaneously considered the unique contributions of each ecological context to explore which may be the strongest predictor of parental outcomes. This study solicited mothers' reports on each of the ecological contexts and treated each context as an independent variable in several regression models to predict mothers' academic involvement and educational expectations for their elementary school children

Parenting may influence educational outcomes through each of the ecological contexts, and, considering the monumental logistic challenges presented by comprehensive housing and education reform, may be the most amenable to interventions grounded in research. Considering that social support may play a role in students' learning and interact with neighborhood perceptions, it warrants analytical attention in the present study. This study seeks to reaffirm relationships between the school, neighborhood and home environments, to explore their individual relationships to maternal academic involvement and educational expectations, and to assess the contributions of social support to these outcomes and contextual predictors. To that end, associations between ecological contexts were anticipated (such that neighborhood disorder would be negatively related to home and school quality and that home and school quality would be positively related) and the following relationships were hypothesized:

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Hypothesis 1: Each of the ecological contexts will predict Maternal Academic Involvement.

H1a. School Quality will positively predict Academic Involvement. In keeping with prior

work that discusses links between parent perceptions of school and levels of family-school

engagement (Schueler et al. 2014), I expect that mothers who report that their child attends a

high quality school will also report high levels of academic involvement.

H1b. Neighborhood Disorder will negatively predict Academic Involvement. Consistent

with findings that maternal perceptions of neighborhood disorder are negatively related to both

the quality of the home literacy environment and maternal responsiveness (Lin and Reich 2016),

I anticipate that mothers who report greater neighborhood disorder will also report lower levels

of academic involvement.

H1c. Home Quality will positively predict Academic Involvement. In light of the fact that

home literacy practices, including parent-child reading, are salient in previous studies of the

home environment (Lin and Reich 2016), I predict that mothers who report a high quality home

environment will also report high levels of academic involvement.

Hypothesis 2: Each of the ecological contexts will predict Maternal Educational Expectations.

H2a. School Quality will positively predict Educational Expectations. Building upon

previous scholars' arguments that the school environment is consequential for students' learning

outcomes (Hopson and Lee 2011), I hypothesize that mothers who report that their child attends

a high quality school will also report higher educational expectations.

H2b. Neighborhood Disorder will negatively predict Educational Expectations.

Extending the line of inquiry of earlier studies that associate living in a violent neighborhood

with poorer educational outcomes (Greenman, Bodovski, and Reed 2011; Schwartz and Gorman

2003; Wodtke, Elwert, and Harding 2016), I expect that mothers who report greater

neighborhood disorder will also report lower educational expectations.

   H2c. Home Quality will positively predict Educational Expectations. Given that aspects

of the home environment in early childhood (e.g., literacy practices and disorganization) have

been linked to children's receptive and expressive vocabulary skills (Vernon-Feagans et al.

2012) and responses to academic challenges (Brown and Low 2008), I anticipate that mothers

who report a high quality home environment will report correspondingly high educational

expectations.

Hypothesis 3: Social support will moderate the relationship between ecological contexts and

maternal outcomes. As suggested in the literature review, social support may serve an important

role in the relationship between environments and individual outcomes (Hurd, Stoddard, and

Zimmerman 2012; Lee and Smith 1999). Within the scope of this study, I predict that social

support will moderate associations between each of the ecological contexts (e.g., school,

neighborhood and home) and each of the maternal outcomes (e.g., academic involvement and

educational expectations).

   Given that early school experiences lay the foundation for future educational

achievement and attainment (Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson, 2005), elementary school presents

an important window of opportunity for intervention. Indeed, some scholars argue that

intervention efforts that begin in adolescence may be too late to be efficacious (Greenman et al.

2011), creating the imperative for educational researchers to direct their efforts towards the early

school years. Although a number of studies have explored the relationship between the

neighborhood and adolescents' educational outcomes (Ainsworth 2002; Berg et al. 2013), few

studies have considered how the neighborhood may influence elementary school children's education.

Method

Participants

Participants were 314 female caregivers (*M* age = 36.15 years, *SD* = 6.46 years) who were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online crowdsourcing platform increasingly used in social and behavioral research that connects individual "Workers" with "Requesters" who post tasks (e.g., surveys) that eligible Workers can complete for compensation (Goodman, Cryder, and Cheema 2013; Paolacci and Chandler 2014; Cheung et al. 2017). Of the 314 respondents, 297 (94.6%) identified as biological mothers, 5 (1.6%) identified as adoptive mothers, 6 (1.9%) identified as stepmothers, and 6 (1.9%) identified as other guardians with full custody of the child (e.g., great aunt or grandmother). In recognition of the fact that the majority of the sample identified as mothers, participants will hereafter be referred to as mothers. Reported educational attainment ranged from a high school degree to a doctoral degree, with 35.4% of the sample reporting that a bachelor's degree was their highest degree. Reported gross annual household incomes ranged from under $5,000 to over $200,000, with a median range of $65,000 to $69,999. A total of 13 respondents (4.1%) indicated that MTurk was their primary source of income. Additionally, 20 respondents (6.4%) reported receiving some form of child support and 10 respondents (3.2%) reported receiving SNAP or food stamps. Although the sample included geographic diversity in that respondents hailed from 42 states, there was considerably less variation in how respondents classified their neighborhood: 164 (52.2%) reported that their neighborhood was suburban, 69 (22.0%) urban, and 81 (25.8%) rural.

Within the sample, 29 children were reported by their caregivers to be non-Hispanic African American/Black (9.2%), 1 (0.3%) was reported to be Hispanic African American/Black, 2 non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native (0.6%), 1 Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native (0.3%), 12 Asian/Asian American (3.8%), 1 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.3%), 218 non-Hispanic White (69.4%), 24 Hispanic White (7.6%), 15 non-Hispanic Biracial/Multiracial (4.8%), and 11 Hispanic Biracial/Multiracial (3.5%). Among the caregivers, 31 identified as non-Hispanic African American/Black (9.9%), 1 as Hispanic African American/Black (0.3%), 2 American Indian/Alaska Native (0.6%), 14 Asian/Asian American (4.5%), 1 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.3%), 239 non-Hispanic White (76.1%), 17 Hispanic White (5.4%), 6 non-Hispanic Biracial/Multiracial (1.9%) and 2 Hispanic Biracial/Multiracial (0.6%), with 1 (0.3%) identifying as another race or ethnicity.

Procedure

Mothers who indicated that they had a child currently attending public elementary school (including charter and magnet schools) in the United States were invited to complete the survey on MTurk. Though MTurk is a relatively novel data collection tool, it enables researchers to efficiently acquire national samples and has been widely cited for producing high-quality data evidenced through internal consistency and strong test-retest reliability (Arditte et al. 2016; Holden et al. 2013). Studies have lauded MTurk for granting access to samples more diverse than those found on college campuses (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011) and yielding data of quality comparable to those collected from more traditional subject pool participants (Hauser and Schwarz 2016 in Miller et al. 2017).

Eligible respondents were directed to a Qualtrics survey that asked them to provide demographic information and report on educational expectations for their children, chaos and

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literacy in the home environment, perceived neighborhood quality, perceived school quality, and parental involvement. Consistent with prior studies' methodological recommendations, I included two instructional manipulation checks (IMCs) that instructed mothers to select a specific response to demonstrate that they were exercising deliberation while completing the survey. The first IMC, an adaptation from Kees and colleagues (2017), read, "*Research shows that people, when answering questions, prefer not to pay attention and minimize their effort as much as possible. If you are reading this question, please select 'none of the above' on the next question.*" Immediately below this text, respondents were asked, "What is this study about?" and presented with the following responses: Parent-Child Relationships, Home Environment, Neighborhood Environment, School Environment, All of the above, and None of the above. At the end of the demographics portion of the questionnaire, an adaptation of the IMC used by Hauser and Schwarz (2016) read, "*The demographics portion of the survey is almost complete. For the next question, mark the first two response options to demonstrate attention.*" Response choices for the next question, "*Which political parties do you strongly affiliate with? Mark all that apply,*" were as follows: Citizens Party, Socialist Action Party, Constitution Party, Libertarian Party, Green Party, Democratic Party, Republican Party and Independent. Respondents who answered "Citizens Party" and "Socialist Action Party" for this question and selected "None of the above" on the first IMC were considered to be attentive and were permitted to complete the questionnaire. However, respondents who did not pass the IMCs were directed to the end of the survey and their partial data were excluded from analyses.

Participants were also screened out if their responses indicated that they did not meet other study criteria (e.g., if their child attended a private school or middle school). Although the MTurk task description and Qualtrics survey both emphasized the study criteria, a number of

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technical issues resulted in the collection of data from respondents who did not satisfy the initial

parameters of the study. In an effort to ensure high quality data, I initially limited survey access

to Workers who possessed both Amazon's "Masters Qualifications" (contingent upon the

previous provision of quality data based on Requester assessment) and satisfied the "Premium

Qualifications" of parenthood status and self-identified female. However, the first batch of

surveys did not yield enough quality responses to garner sufficient statistical power ($n = 6$), so

data collection was postponed after 2 days. The second batch of surveys, which included a

question about the respondents' state of residence, was published 1 day later. These surveys were

open to all Workers (regardless of Masters Qualifications) who identified as female caregivers

and had not participated in the first round of data collection. Unfortunately, due to a technical

malfunction, I did not have access to Amazon Worker IDs, so it was impossible to link data to

individual workers in order to determine which participants should be compensated.

Consequently, all workers ($n = 140$) who completed the second survey were compensated

irrespective of the quality of their data. After periodically testing the survey over the course of 13

days, I launched the third and final round of data collection ($n = 168$). Once data from all three

waves were examined, I determined that a number of participants either did not meet the study

criteria or failed the IMCs, so their data were excluded from analyses. However, in six cases,

data from another female caregiver (e.g., great aunt or grandmother) were permitted because the

respondent indicated that they were the primary caregiver of the child. Additionally, certain

elementary schools serve students from kindergarten through 6th grade, so 6th grade data was

accepted but data from the caregivers of two 7th graders and one 8th grader were excluded.

Consequently, the final analytical sample ($n = 314$) included five grandmothers, one great aunt,

and ten 6th graders.

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Each respondent was compensated $2.50 within 14 days of participation, after

verification of eligibility (e.g., meeting the study criteria and passing IMCs) and survey

completion. This study was granted approval and exemption by the UC Davis Institutional

Review Board and was generously funded through the UC Davis Provost's Undergraduate

Fellowship and Dr. Daniel Ewon Choe in the department of Human Ecology.

Measures

Mothers were asked to report information on themselves, their perception of the home,

neighborhood, and school environments that they share with their child, their expectations for the

child's educational attainment and achievement, and their parental involvement using a variety

of measures.

Maternal Demographics. Mothers reported basic demographic information (e.g., age,

date of birth, race or ethnicity, education level and gross annual income), as well as information

about their neighborhood type (e.g., rural, urban, suburban or other), current living situation

(e.g., homeowner, renter, etc.), and their relationship status with their child's other parent.

Occupation was reported as one of the 23 major groups from the Bureau of Labor Statistics'

2018 *Standard Occupation Classification System*, while education level was reported using the

Census Bureau's 2017 *Measures of Educational Attainment*. Per the 2017 Current Population

Survey, a collaboration between the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau, income

was reported in $5,000 increments ranging from under $5,000 to $200,000 and over.

Child Demographics. Mothers also provided basic demographic information on their

child (e.g., age, date of birth, race or ethnicity, gender and grade level), as well as information

about their child's birth (e.g., whether the birth was premature or had complications) and

whether or not the child had special needs or received special education services.

School Quality. For the purposes of this study, school quality was heavily informed by the Associated Press-National Opinion Research Center's 2013 and 2017 reports on parents' attitudes on the quality of education in the United States. In the present study, school quality was gauged by mothers' reports of how well the school prepared students (e.g., for the workforce, future civic engagement and college) and created an environment conducive to learning (e.g., respect for diversity, fostering a school community and student safety), as well as the magnitude of 18 common problems facing schools (e.g., funding, bullying, overcrowding, quality of curriculum, provision of instructional resources). After total school problems were reverse-scored, all three measures (school preparation, school environment and total school problems) were standardized and averaged to create an internally consistent measure of school quality (α = .92).

Neighborhood Disorder. The neighborhood disorder variable was composed of mothers' responses on the *Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Scale* (1999) and questions about crime and safety (Elo et al. 2009). The scale consists of a series of statements about various markers of physical order and disorder (e.g., "Vandalism is common in my neighborhood") and social order and disorder ("In my neighborhood, people watch out for each other"). Mothers indicated their level of agreement using a 4-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree." Select responses were reverse-coded so that when the items were summed, a higher score indicated greater neighborhood disorder.

The *Crime and Safety* measure asked respondents to report how often certain problems surfaced in their neighborhood (e.g., "drug dealers or users hanging around") and to rank their level of concern about the aforementioned problems on a scale from 1 ("Rarely/Not Worried") to 10 ("Frequently/Very Worried). Physical and social disorder on the *Ross-Mirowsky* scale were

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strongly correlated ($r = .77$, $p < .001$) and *Crime and Safety* total worry was related to both

physical ($r = .54$, $p < .001$) and social disorder ($r = .61$, $p < .001$), so they were all standardized

and averaged to create a single measure of neighborhood disorder ($\alpha = .94$).

   Home Quality. Home quality consisted of mothers' reports on the literacy environment

and chaos present in the home. The home literacy environment was assessed using questions

from Aikens and Barbarin's 2008 study, including the estimated number of books to which the

child had access, how often the child read or pretended to read outside of school (on a 4-point

scale from "not at all" to "every day"), how often the mother read with the child (on the same

scale), and a dichotomous question on whether the mother had accompanied her child to the

library within the last month.

   On the *Confusion, Hubbub, and Order Scale* (CHAOS; Matheny et al. 1995), mothers

reviewed 15 statements about the home environment (e.g., "The atmosphere in our home is

calm") and reported how well it described their home on a 4-point scale from "very much" to

"not at all." *CHAOS* and home literacy scores were negatively correlated ($r = -.17$, $p < .01$). In

order to construct a composite home quality variable in which a higher value simultaneously

reflected less chaos and a higher literacy score, select items from the *CHAOS* measure were

reverse-coded. Home literacy and *CHAOS* scores (αs $= .40$ and $.18$) were then standardized and

averaged to create the home quality variable.

   Social Support. Social support was measured with 5 dichotomous questions outlined in

the same publication that outlined questions about neighborhood crime and safety (Elo et al.

2009). Mothers were asked whether they knew someone who would (1) take them to the doctor;

(2) loan them $100, (3), help them with daily chores if they were sick, (4) they could talk to

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about problems, and (5) watch their children. Responses were summed to create a total social support variable ($\alpha = .80$).

Educational Expectations. Mothers' educational expectations for their children were measured with questions on the child's expected educational achievement and attainment used by Hill (2001). More specifically, mothers reported how high they expected their child's future grades to be on a 5-point scale from "mostly F's" to "mostly A's" and how far they expected their child to go in school. The range for expected child educational attainment was modified to encompass "from 1st to 4th grade" to "doctoral degree" in order to remain consistent with mothers' reports of their own levels of education. Expected achievement and attainment were standardized and averaged to create a composite educational expectations variable ($\alpha = .66$).

Academic Involvement. Academic involvement was assessed with six dichotomous questions used in Aikens and Barbarin (2008) that asked whether or not the mother or another adult household member had participated in various school events in the past year, such as attending a PTA meeting or volunteering at the school. Responses were summed to create a total academic involvement variable ($\alpha = .62$).

Plan of Analysis

All data were analyzed in IBM SPSS Statistics (version 25.0). The first hypothesis, that each of the ecological contexts would predict maternal academic involvement such that school and home quality would be positive predictors and neighborhood disorder would be a negative predictor, was tested through a hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. I ran another OLS regression in order to test the second hypothesis, that each of the ecological contexts would predict educational expectations such that school and home quality would be positive predictors and neighborhood disorder would be a negative predictor. Finally, the third

hypothesis, which posited that social support would moderate the relationship between ecological contexts and maternal outcomes, was assessed through a series of OLS regressions that included interaction terms between social support and each of the ecological contexts.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations among the variables of interest are displayed in Tables 1, 2 and 3. Although CHAOS total scores were initially related to neighborhood disorder ($r = .25$, $p < .01$), school quality ($r = -.15$, $p < .01$), maternal academic involvement ($r = -.12$, $p < .05$), maternal educational expectations ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$) and social support ($r = -.25$, $p < .01$), once CHAOS and home literacy scores were collapsed into a composite home quality variable, these relationships lost their significance. As depicted in Table 3, home quality was not significantly related to any of the other variables of interest. School quality, however, was positively related to maternal academic involvement ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) and negatively related to neighborhood disorder, such that maternal perceptions of greater neighborhood disorder were associated with reports of poorer school quality ($r = -.24$, $p < .01$). Neighborhood disorder was also negatively related to maternal academic involvement ($r = -.16$, $p < .01$), maternal educational expectations ($r = -.19$, $p < .01$), and social support ($r = -.34$, $p < .01$).

Main Analyses

The first hypothesis, that each of the contextual variables (e.g., school quality, neighborhood disorder and home quality) would predict maternal academic involvement was tested through a hierarchical OLS regression in which academic involvement was the criterion variable and school quality, neighborhood disorder, and home quality were individually entered as predictor variables in that order (Table 4). In the first step, maternal education, household

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income, and mother and child age were entered as covariates. School quality accounted for a

significant amount of overall variance in maternal academic involvement when entered in step 2,

$F(1, 308) = 5.47$, $p = .020$, $R^2 = .117$, and the regression coefficient relating school quality to

maternal academic involvement was also significant, $b = .297$, $SE = .127$, $\beta = .127$, $p = .020$. In

step 3, school quality and neighborhood disorder accounted for a significant amount of the

overall variance in maternal academic involvement, $F(6, 307) = 7.25$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .124$.

Neighborhood disorder did not account for a significant increase in explained variance, $F(1, 307)$

$= 2.47$, $p = .117$, $\Delta R^2 = .007$ and did not significantly predict maternal academic involvement, b

$= -.141$, $SE = .090$, $\beta = -.088$, $p = .117$. School quality, neighborhood disorder and home quality

accounted for a significant amount of overall variation in academic involvement in step 4, $F(7,$

$306) = 6.25$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .125$. Home quality did not account for a significant change in

explained variance, $F(1, 306) = .337$, $p = .562$, $\Delta R^2 = .001$, and the regression coefficients

relating home quality to academic involvement were not significant, $b = .057$, $SE = .098$, $\beta =$

$.031$, $p = .562$. Based on these analyses, high school quality and low neighborhood disorder both

predicted high levels of maternal academic involvement, while home quality had no such

predictive effect.

In order to test the second hypothesis, that each of the developmental contexts would

predict maternal educational expectations, I ran another hierarchical OLS regression in which

school quality, neighborhood disorder, and home quality were individually entered as predictors

in that order and educational expectations were entered as the criterion variable (Table 5). As in

the previous regression, maternal education, household income, and mother and child age were

entered as covariates in the first step. When entered in step 2, school quality accounted for a

significant amount of overall variance in maternal educational expectations, $F(1, 308) = 1.50$,

$p < .001$, $R^2 = .076$, but the regression coefficient relating school quality to maternal educational expectations was not significant, $b = .099$, $SE = .080$, $\beta = .068$, $p = .221$. In step 3, school quality and neighborhood disorder accounted for a significant amount of overall variance in maternal educational expectations, $F(6, 307) = 6.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .110$. Neighborhood disorder accounted for a significant increase in explained variance, $F(1, 307) = 11.82$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .034$, and predicted educational expectations, $b = -.193$, $SE = .056$, $\beta = -.193$, $p < .001$. School quality, neighborhood disorder, and home quality accounted for a significant amount of overall variance in educational expectations when entered in step 4, $F(7, 306) = 5.91$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .119$. Home quality did not account for a significant change in explained variance, $F(1, 306) = 3.18$, $p > .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .009$, and the regression coefficients relating home quality to educational expectations were not significant, $b = .109$, $SE = .061$, $\beta = .096$, $p > .05$. Per this regression, both high school quality and low neighborhood disorder predicted high levels of maternal educational expectations, while home quality had no predictive effect.

The third hypothesis, that social support would moderate associations between ecological contexts and maternal outcomes (e.g., academic involvement and educational expectations) was tested through a series of OLS regressions in which the covariates (e.g., maternal education, household income, mother age and child age), independent variables, and moderator were all mean-centered to combat issues of multicollinearity. In the first set of regressions, no statistically significant interactions were found between social support and any of the ecological contexts to predict academic involvement (Tables 6, 7 and 8). Likewise, in the second set of regressions, neither neighborhood disorder nor home quality yielded significant interactions with social support to predict maternal academic involvement (Tables 10 and 11). However, as indicated in Table 9 and Figure 1, school quality significantly interacted with social support to predict

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academic involvement. Although school quality didn't affect educational expectations at mean levels of social support, $\beta = .12$, $t(314) = 1.56$, $p > .05$, subsequent simple slope analyses conducted at one standard deviation (SD) above and below the mean for social support revealed group differences. Among mothers who reported low levels of social support (e.g., one SD below the mean), school quality didn't significantly affect educational expectations, $\beta = -.10$, $t(314) = -1.06$, $p > .05$. However, among mothers who reported high levels of social support (e.g., one SD above the mean), school quality significantly affected educational expectations, $\beta = .35$, $t(314) = 3.13$, $p < 0.01$. Thus, probing of the school quality-social support interaction term uncovered the novel insight that social support only moderated the relationship between school quality and educational expectations among mothers who reported high levels of social support.

Discussion

The present study provided tentative evidence that maternal perceptions of ecological contexts can shape maternal academic involvement and educational expectations for their elementary school children, and that social support may moderate the relationship between school quality and educational expectations. Consistent with the first hypothesis that each of the ecological contexts would predict maternal academic involvement, high school quality and low neighborhood disorder both predicted high levels of academic involvement. However, home quality did not significantly predict academic involvement. In a similarly mixed fashion, the second hypothesis that each of the ecological contexts would predict maternal educational expectations was supported by the finding that high school quality and low neighborhood disorder predicted high levels of educational expectations, but was refuted in that home quality had no such predictive effect. While the salience of the school and neighborhood contexts

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highlighted in this study is echoed throughout the literature (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2000; Schueler et al. 2014; Wang et al. 2014), the absence of home quality's predictive power in this sample does not align with previous work (Hart et al. 2007; Lin and Reich 2016). Finally, although prior studies have emphasized the importance of social support as a moderator (Lee and Smith 1999; Byrnes and Miller 2012), the third hypothesis, that social support would moderate relationships between ecological contexts and maternal outcomes was only supported by one finding: that school quality significantly interacted with social support to predict educational expectations among mothers who reported high social support.

Although the study boasted a large sample and a relatively novel mode of data collection, a number of limitations should be noted. First, while maternal academic involvement and expectations may provide a basis for children's future educational outcomes, a cross-sectional design does not allow for claims of causality or directionality as a longitudinal design would. MTurk may allow for efficient data collection, but using an online platform that relies on data from workers that are not personally identifiable is not conducive to a longitudinal study. Second, given the poor internal consistency of the composite home quality variable, it is unsurprising that the variable yielded no direct or interactive effects on maternal academic involvement or educational expectations. Forthcoming studies that draw from this dataset will consider whether home literacy and chaos present two primary indicators of quality, or whether additional dimensions of the home environment should be included (e.g., collective family efficacy, marital conflict, etc.). Finally, although geographic diversity was evident in that respondents resided in 42 states, the sample was predominantly (69.4%) non-Hispanic White and more than half of participants (52.2%) reported living in a suburb. Such homogeneity limits the generalizability of these cross-sectional findings. Future studies that employ a longitudinal

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design with robust constructs of home quality and a nationally representative sample will offer additional insight into the nuanced relationship between ecological contexts, maternal involvement and expectations, and children's educational outcomes.

Despite its limitations, the present study contributes to the literature an empirical account of how unequal contexts may shape unequal outcomes, as well as evidence of how perceived social support can promote positive outcomes (e.g., higher educational expectations). The study's findings largely resonate with documented contextual underpinnings of educational inequality, that is, maternal perceptions of disorganized or dangerous neighborhoods and low-quality schools have the potential to give rise to lower academic involvement and educational expectations. Given that maternal academic involvement and educational expectations may comprise two core components of children's educational outcomes, the findings indicate that children who inhabit suboptimal ecological contexts may be more prone to experiencing suboptimal educational outcomes. Situated within the American rhetoric of purported meritocracy, this study augments a growing body of literature that refutes the narrative of the provision of equal opportunities to succeed. In doing so, it strengthens the call for interventions that disrupt pathways of cumulative disadvantage in early childhood. Within the context of the present study, maternal perceptions of ecological contexts and social support emerged as factors contributing to maternal academic involvement and educational expectations. Accordingly, interventions should simultaneously seek to interrupt the link between parent perceptions and parent engagement (e.g., involvement and expectations) such that inauspicious environments do not hinder a parent's belief in their child's academic potential, and to facilitate community networks of social support in order to promote a culture in which children from any school, neighborhood, or home environment are empowered to succeed--in school and beyond.

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Tables

Table 1. Sample Ethnoracial Composition (N = 314)

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of Children	Percentage of Mothers
Non-Hispanic African American/Black	9.2	9.9
Hispanic African American/Black	0.3	0.3
Non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native	0.6	0.6
Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3	--
Asian/Asian American	3.8	4.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.3	0.3
Non-Hispanic White	69.4	76.1
Hispanic White	7.6	5.4
Non-Hispanic Biracial/Multiracial	4.8%	1.9
Hispanic Biracial/Multiracial	3.5%	0.6
Other	--	0.3

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Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Socio-demographic Covariates (N = 314)

Variable	M	SD	Range
Child Age	8.14	1.74	5.00
Maternal Age	36.15	6.46	37.00
Maternal Education[a]	10.95	2.47	9.00
Household Income[b]	14.10	6.97	41.00

[a]*Maternal Education: 0 = "None," 1 = "1st-4th grade," 2 = "5th-6th grade," 3 = "7th-8th grade," 4 = "9th grade," 5 = "10th grade," 6 =*

"11th grade," 7 = "High school graduate," 8 = "Some college, no degree," 9 = "Associate's degree, occupational," 10 =

"Associate's degree, academic," 11 = "Bachelor's degree," 12 = "Master's degree," 13 = "Professional degree," 14 = "Doctoral

Degree."

[b]*Household Income: $5,000 increments ranging from 1 = "Under $5,000" to 41 = "$200,000 and over."*

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Table 3. Bivariate Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 314)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. School Quality	-					
2. Neighborhood Disorder	-.24**	-				
3. Home Quality	.04	.03	-			
4. Maternal Academic Involvement	.17**	-.16**	.02	-		
5. Maternal Educational Expectations	.09	-.19**	.08	.08	-	
6. Social Support	.11	-.34*	-.02	.20**	.16**	-

 p < .05. **p* < .01. ***p* < .001.

Table 3, *continued*

	1	2	3	4	5	6
M	.00	-.01	.004	4.51	-.004	4.63
SD	.60	.87	.77	1.40	.87	.95
Range	3.66	4.43	3.89	6.00	5.35	5.00
α	.92	.94	.19	.80	.66	.62

Table 4. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Academic Involvement (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE(B)*	*β*
Education	.010	.643	.017	.009	.032	.016	.010	.032	.017	.011	.032	.019
Income	.053	.012	.263**	.049	.012	.245**	.047	.012	.235**	.047	.012	.237**
Maternal Age	.021	.012	.099	.022	.012	.101	.020	.012	.095	.021	.012	.095
Child Age	-.082	.045	-.103	-.075	.044	-.093	-.078	.044	-.098	-.077	.044	-.095
School Quality				.297	.127	.127*	.251	.130	.107	.247	.130	.106
Neighborhood Disorder							-.141	.090	-.088	-.143	.090	-.089
Home Quality										.057	.098	.031
R^2		.101			.117			.124			.125	
F for change in R^2		8.71**			5.47*			2.47			0.34	

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 5. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Educational Expectations (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE(B)*	*β*
Education	.072	.021	.204**	.071	.020	.203	.072	.020	.207	.075	.020	.213**
Income	.005	.007	.039	.004	.007	.029	.001	.007	.007	.001	.007	.011
Maternal Age	-.016	.008	-.121*	-.016	.008	-.120*	-.018	.008	-.133*	-.018	.008	-.131*
Child Age	-.037	.028	-.074	-.035	.028	-.070	-.039	.028	-.079	-.037	.028	-.074
School Quality				.099	.080	.068	.035	.081	.024	.028	.081	.019
Neighborhood Disorder							-.193	.056	-.193**	-.196	.056	-.196**
Home Quality										.109	.061	.096
R^2		.071			.076			.110			.119	
F for change in R^2		5.93**			1.50			11.82**			3.18	

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 6. Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Academic Involvement: School Quality and Social Support (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE(B)*	*β*
Education	.010	.033	.017	.009	.032	.016	.014	.032	.024	.014	.032	.025
Income	.053	.012	.263**	.049	.012	.245**	.043	.012	.216**	.043	.012	.216**
Maternal Age	.021	.012	.099	.022	.012	.101	.021	.012	.097	.021	.012	.097
Child Age	-.082	.045	-.103	-.075	.044	-.093	-.084	.044	-.104	-.084	.044	-.105
School Quality				.297	.127	.127*	.267	.126	.114*	.265	.128	.113*
Social Support							.207	.080	.141*	-.204	.082	.140*
School Quality x Social Support										-.014	.109	-.007
R²		.101			.117			.136			.136	
F for change in *R²*		8.71**			5.47*			6.68*			.017	

Note: All listed variables were centered at their means.

p < .05. **p* < .01.

Table 7. Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Academic Involvement: Neighborhood Disorder and Social Support (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE(B)*	*β*
Education	.010	.033	.017	.011	.032	.019	.015	.032	.026	.011	.032	.019
Income	.053	.012	.263**	.049	.012	.247**	.045	.012	.225**	.044	.012	.221**
Maternal Age	.021	.012	.099	.020	.012	.091	.020	.012	.091	.022	.012	.102
Child Age	-.082	.045	-.103	-.085	.044	-.106	-.091	.044	-.114*	-.093	.044	-.116*
Neighborhood Disorder				-.181	.088	-.112*	-.116	.092	-.072	-.145	.093	-.090
Social Support							.189	.084	.129*	.279	.099	.190**
Neighborhood Disorder x Social Support										-.127	.075	-.114
R^2		.101			.113			.128			.136	
F for change in R^2		8.71*			4.22*			5.02*			2.84	

Note: All listed variables were centered at their means.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 8. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Academic Involvement: Home Quality and Social Support (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE(B)	β
Education	.010	.033	.017	.011	.033	.020	.016	.032	.029	.016	.032	.028
Income	.053	.012	.263**	.053	.012	.265**	.046	.012	.232**	.046	.012	.231**
Maternal Age	.021	.012	.099	.021	.012	.099	.021	.012	.096	.021	.012	.096
Child Age	-.082	.045	-.103	-.081	.045	-.101	-.089	.044	-.111*	-.089	.044	-.110*
Home Quality				.063	.099	.034	.063	.098	.034	.065	.098	.036
Social Support							.222	.080	.152**	.220	.080	.151**
Home Quality x Social Support										-.050	.112	.-024
R^2		.101			.102			.124			.125	
F for change in R^2		8.71**			.401			7.67**			.196	

Note: All listed variables were centered at their means.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 9. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Educational Expectations: School Quality and Social Support (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	$SE\ B$	β	B	$SE\ B$	β	B	$SE\ B$	β	B	$SE(B)$	β
Education	.072	.021	.204**	.071	.020	.203**	.075	.020	.214**	.073	.020	.208**
Income	.005	.007	.039	.004	.007	.029	-.001	.007	-.006	.001	.007	.008
Maternal Age	-.016	.008	-.121*	-.016	.008	-.120*	-.017	.008	-.124*	-.016	.007	-.116*
Child Age	-.037	.028	-.074	-.035	.028	-.070	-.041	.028	-.083	-.039	.027	-.078
School Quality				.099	.080	.068	.076	.080	.053	.124	.080	.086
Social Support							.156	.050	.172**	.197	.051	.217**
School Quality x Social Support										.233	.068	.195**
R^2		.071			.076			.104			.137	
F for change in R^2		5.93**			1.50			9.56**			11.96**	

Note: All listed variables were centered at their means.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 10. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Educational Expectations: Neighborhood Disorder and Social Support (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE(B)*	*β*
Education	.072	.021	.204**	.073	.020	.207**	.075	.020	.214**	.075	.020	.213**
Income	.005	.007	.039	.001	.007	.010	-.001	.007	-.012	-.002	.007	-.013
Maternal Age	-.016	.008	-.121*	-.018	.008	-.134*	-.018	.007	-.134*	-.018	.008	-.131*
Child Age	-.037	.028	-.074	-.040	.028	-.081	-.044	.027	-.088	-.044	.028	-.089
Neighborhood Disorder				-.199	.055	-.198**	-.160	.081	-.159**	-.162	.058	-.162**
Social Support							.115	.052	.127*	.124	.062	.137*
Neighborhood Disorder x Social Support										-.013	.047	-.019
R^2		.071			.109			.123			.123	
F for change in R^2		5.93**			13.22**			4.82*			.075	

Note: All listed variables were centered at their means.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 11. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mothers' Educational Expectations: Home Quality and Social Support (N = 314)

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	$SE\ B$	β	B	$SE\ B$	β	B	$SE\ B$	β	B	$SE(B)$	β
Education	.072	.021	.204**	.074	.020	.210**	.077	.020	.220**	.077	.020	.219**
Income	.005	.007	.039	.005	.007	.043	.001	.007	.005	.0004	.007	.003
Maternal Age	-.016	.008	-.121*	-.016	.008	-.119*	-.016	.008	-.123*	-.016	.008	-.123*
Child Age	-.037	.028	-.074	-.035	.028	-.070	-.041	.028	-.082	-.040	.028	-.080
Home Quality				.106	.062	.094	.106	.061	.094	.109	.061	.096
Social Support							.161	.050	.177**	.158	.050	.174**
Home Quality x Social Support										-.069	.070	-.053
R^2		.071			.080			.110			.112	
F for change in R^2		5.93**			2.90			10.26**			.963	

Note: All listed variables were centered at their means.
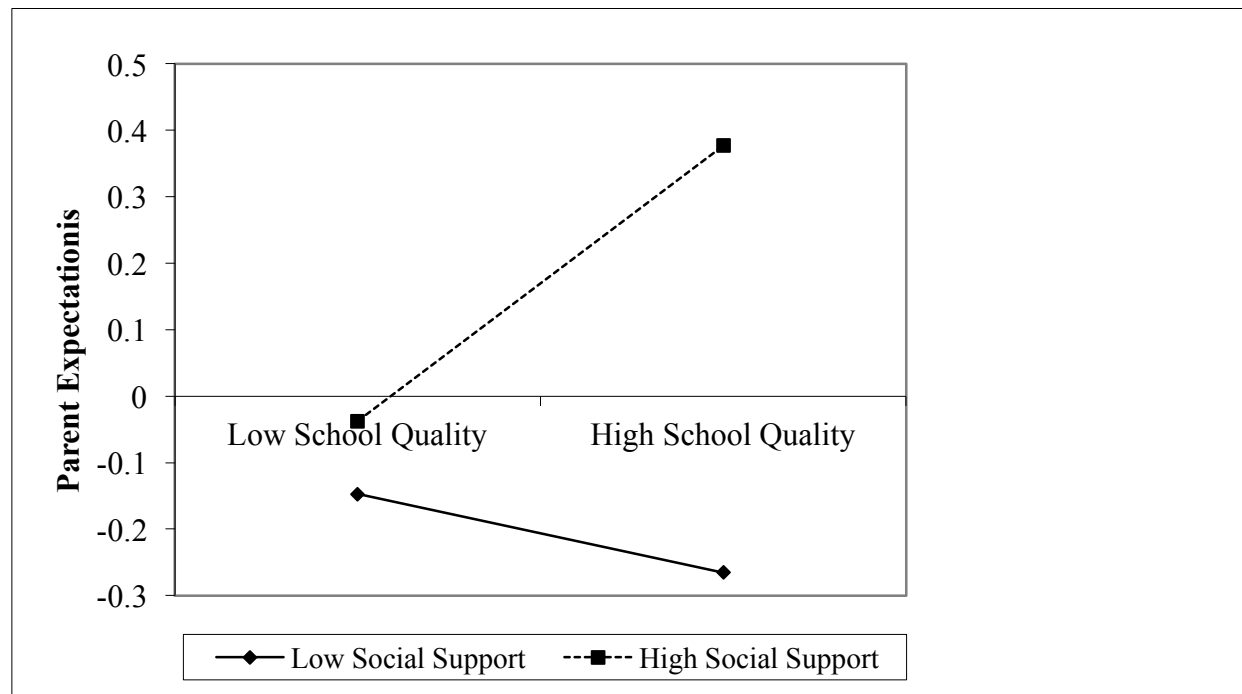
p < .05. **p* < .01.

Figure 1. Association between school quality and maternal educational expectations for mothers with higher vs. lower social support (e.g., 1 SD above and below the mean for social support). Findings indicate that social support only moderated the relationship between school quality and educational expectations among mothers who reported high levels of social support.

Selected Survey Questions

We invite you to participate in this research study if you are the mother of a 6-11 year old child who currently attends public elementary school (including charter and magnet schools) in the U.S. If you have multiple children who are between 6 and 11 years old, please complete the survey with the youngest child in mind.

Do not complete this survey **if your child is not a public elementary school student, because your survey data will be rejected and you will not be compensated.** Throughout the survey, you will see questions designed to check your attention. **If you do not satisfy the attention checks, your survey data will be rejected and you will not be compensated.**

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to complete a survey that explores the relationships among home, neighborhood, and school environments and the parent-child relationship. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you agree to complete the survey, you will be compensated $2.50 upon verification that the survey is complete and that you are eligible to participate. If you have any questions, please contact Thalia Tom at tctom@ucdavis.edu.

Parental Expectations (Hill 2001)
Knowing your child as you do, what grades do you expect him/her to receive in school?
- ❏ Mostly Fs
- ❏ Mostly Ds
- ❏ Mostly Cs
- ❏ Mostly Bs
- ❏ Mostly As

Knowing your child as you do, how far do you think he/she will go in school?
- ❏ Partial High School
- ❏ High School
- ❏ Vocational/Technical Certificate
- ❏ Associate's Degree
- ❏ Some College
- ❏ Bachelor's Degree
- ❏ Master's Degree
- ❏ Doctoral/Professional Degree
- ❏ Other *(please specify):* _____

Home Literacy Environment (Aikens and Barbarin 2008)

How many books or e-books does your child have? You can estimate if you are not sure:

_____

How often does your child read (or pretend to read) outside of school?
- ❏ Not at all
- ❏ Once or twice a week
- ❏ Three to six times a week
- ❏ Every day

How often do you read with your child?
- ❏ Not at all
- ❏ Once or twice a week
- ❏ Three to six times a week
- ❏ Every day

Have you gone to the library with your child in the past month?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Confusion, Hubbub, and Order Scale (CHAOS) (Matheny, Washs, Ludwig & Phillips 1995)
For each statement below, please indicate how much each statement describes your home environment.

There is very little commotion in our home.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

We can usually find things when we need them.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

We almost always seem to be rushed.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

We are usually able to stay on top of things.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

No matter how hard we try, we always seem to be running late.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

It's a real zoo in our home.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

At home we can talk to each other without being interrupted.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

There is often a fuss going on at our home.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

No matter what our family plans, it usually doesn't seem to work out.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

You can't hear yourself think in our home.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home
- ❏ Not at all like your own home

I often get drawn into other people's arguments at home.
- ❏ Very much like your own home
- ❏ Somewhat like your own home
- ❏ A little bit like your own home

❏ Not at all like your own home

Our home is a good place to relax.
❏ Very much like your own home
❏ Somewhat like your own home
❏ A little bit like your own home
❏ Not at all like your own home

The telephone takes up a lot of our time at home.
❏ Very much like your own home
❏ Somewhat like your own home
❏ A little bit like your own home
❏ Not at all like your own home

The atmosphere in our home is calm.
❏ Very much like your own home
❏ Somewhat like your own home
❏ A little bit like your own home
❏ Not at all like your own home

First thing in the day, we have a regular routine at home.
❏ Very much like your own home
❏ Somewhat like your own home
❏ A little bit like your own home
❏ Not at all like your own home

Neighborhood Information
How long have you resided in your current neighborhood?
❏ Less than a year
❏ 1-3 years
❏ 4-7 years
❏ 8-10 years
❏ Over 10 years

Do you consider the neighborhood in which you live to be rural, urban, or suburban?
❏ Rural
❏ Urban
❏ Suburban
❏ Other *(please specify):*

Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Scale (Ross and Mirowsky 1999)
Physical Disorder and Order
For each of the following statements, select the response that best fits your neighborhood.

There is a lot of graffiti in my neighborhood.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

My neighborhood is noisy.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

Vandalism is common in my neighborhood.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

There are lot of abandoned buildings in my neighborhood.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

My neighborhood is clean.
- ❏ Strongly agree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Strongly disagree

People in my neighborhood take good care of their houses and apartments.
- ❏ Strongly agree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Strongly disagree

Social Disorder and Order
For each of the following statements, select the response that best fits your neighborhood.

There are too many people hanging around on the streets near my home.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

There is a lot of crime in my neighborhood.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

There is too much drug use in my neighborhood.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

There is too much alcohol use in my neighborhood.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

I'm always having trouble with my neighbors.
- ❏ Strongly disagree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Strongly agree

In my neighborhood, people watch out for each other.
- ❏ Strongly agree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Strongly disagree

My neighborhood is safe.
- ❏ Strongly agree
- ❏ Agree
- ❏ Disagree
- ❏ Strongly disagree

Crime and Safety (Elo, Mykyta, Margolis & Culhane 2009)
How often are these things a problem or are found in your neighborhood?

	1: Rarely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10: Frequently
Drug Dealers or users hanging around										
Having property stolen										
Walking alone during the day										
Letting children go outside during the day										
Letting children go outside during the night										

How worried are you about the following things in your neighborhood?

	1: Not Worried	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10: Very Worried
Drug Dealers or users hanging around										
Having property stolen										
Walking alone during the day										
Letting children go outside during the day										
Letting children go outside during the night										
Being robbed										
Being murdered										

Social Support (Elo et al. 2009)
Do you know someone who…

Would take you to the doctor?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Would loan you $100?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Would help you with daily chores if you were sick?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

You could talk to about problems?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Would watch your children?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

School Quality (Tompson, Benz and Agiesta 2013; AP-NORC 2017)
How good a job do your local public schools do in…

Preparing students for the workforce?
- ❏ Very poor
- ❏ Poor
- ❏ Fair
- ❏ Good
- ❏ Excellent

Preparing students to be good citizens?
- ❏ Very poor
- ❏ Poor
- ❏ Fair
- ❏ Good
- ❏ Excellent

Preparing students for college?
- ❏ Very poor
- ❏ Poor
- ❏ Fair
- ❏ Good
- ❏ Excellent

How would you rate the quality of your child's school with regards to…

Respect for diversity?
- ❏ Very poor
- ❏ Poor
- ❏ Fair
- ❏ Good
- ❏ Excellent

Fostering a school community?
- ❏ Very poor
- ❏ Poor
- ❏ Fair
- ❏ Good
- ❏ Excellent

Student safety?
- ❏ Very poor
- ❏ Poor
- ❏ Fair
- ❏ Good
- ❏ Excellent

Now I'm going to ask you about several of the problems facing schools today. For each one, please tell me whether it is an extremely serious, very serious, moderately serious, not too serious, or not at all serious problem at your child's school.

Low expectations for student achievement
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious

❏ Extremely serious

Inequality in funding among school districts
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Getting and keeping good teachers
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Lack of parental involvement
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Lack of student discipline
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

The quality of instruction by teachers
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Bullying
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious

❏ Moderately serious
❏ Very serious
❏ Extremely serious

Low test scores
❏ Not at all serious
❏ Not too serious
❏ Moderately serious
❏ Very serious
❏ Extremely serious

The quality of the curriculum
❏ Not at all serious
❏ Not too serious
❏ Moderately serious
❏ Very serious
❏ Extremely serious

Not enough opportunities for artistic and musical pursuits
❏ Not at all serious
❏ Not too serious
❏ Moderately serious
❏ Very serious
❏ Extremely serious

Overcrowding
❏ Not at all serious
❏ Not too serious
❏ Moderately serious
❏ Very serious
❏ Extremely serious

Placing emphasis on the wrong subjects
❏ Not at all serious
❏ Not too serious
❏ Moderately serious
❏ Very serious
❏ Extremely serious

Fighting, violence and gangs
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Students not spending enough time in school
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Not enough opportunities for physical activities and sports
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Lack of computers and technology
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

Outdated textbooks
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious
- ❏ Extremely serious

The condition of school buildings
- ❏ Not at all serious
- ❏ Not too serious
- ❏ Moderately serious
- ❏ Very serious

❏ Extremely serious

Academic Involvement
In the past school year, have you or another adult household member…

Attended a parent-teacher conference?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Attended a parent-teacher association (PTA) meeting?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Attended an open house?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Volunteered at the school?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Participated in a school fundraiser?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

Attended a school event?
- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No

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