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FAMILY ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, FAMILY BULLYING AND LACK OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHILD: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the relationship between family economic conditions, family bullying and lack of emotional support and their impact on the child. It is based on a case study of a child living in a family environment characterized by violence, bullying, inadequate emotional support and comparisons among children. The study focuses on the family's economic circumstances and examines how financial conditions and family pressures may influence interactions within the family and affect the child's psychological and social well-being. A descriptive-analytical approach was adopted using the case study method. Data were collected through observation and interviews to gain a better understanding of the child's family environment and socioeconomic circumstances. The findings indicated that exposure to family bullying, violence and inadequate emotional support was associated with several psychological, behavioral and social difficulties including feelings of fear and insecurity, sleep disturbances, a decline in academic performance and difficulties in social relationships. The study also highlights the importance of considering family economic conditions when examining the factors that may influence the child's development and well-being.

KEYWORDS

Family Economic Conditions, Family Bullying, Lack of Emotional Support, Child, Case Study

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1.Introduction:

The family is considered the first social environment in which a child develops. Within the family children acquire their earliest experiences, values and patterns of interaction with others. The family also plays a fundamental role in meeting children's psychological and social needs and providing them with a sense of security, protection, belonging and emotional support. Zahran (2011, p. 13) noted that the family represents the primary nucleus of society and is one of the social groups with the strongest influence on the development of an individual's personality and behavior.

However, the family does not always provide an environment that supports healthy child development. Some family relationships may be characterized by poor communication, inadequate emotional support, harsh treatment, constant comparisons among children, violence and other negative practices. In addition to these factors, the economic conditions of the family may influence the quality of family life and the resources available to meet children's basic and psychological needs. Financial difficulties, unstable income and economic pressures may contribute to family tension and may affect patterns of interaction between parents and children. Such circumstances may in turn influence the child's sense of security and self-perception as well

as psychological and social adjustment and relationships with others. In this context, family bullying represents one of the negative practices that may occur within the family environment. It may take different forms such as ridicule, humiliation, verbal abuse, provocation, intimidation or repeated aggression. When a child is exposed to such experiences in an environment where emotional support and protection are limited, particularly when the family is also experiencing economic pressures, these circumstances may be associated with difficulties in psychological well-being, social relationships and school adjustment.

Given the importance of the family environment and its socioeconomic conditions in shaping the child's development, the present study examines the case of a child exposed to certain negative family practices including family bullying and inadequate emotional support. It seeks to explore the nature of these experiences and examine the role that the family's economic circumstances may play in shaping the child's living environment and development. Accordingly, the following research question is posed:

What is the relationship between family economic conditions, family bullying and lack of emotional support and their impact on the child under study?

1.1. Study Hypothesis:

The study is based on the following hypothesis:

Family economic conditions, family bullying and lack of emotional support may negatively affect the psychological, social and school adjustment of the child under study

1.2. Study Objectives:

The study aims to:

- Examine the family and economic circumstances experienced by the child under study.
- Identify the forms of family bullying and lack of emotional support experienced by the child.
- Explore the relationship between family economic conditions and the child's family environment.
- Examine the impact of family bullying and inadequate emotional support on the child's psychological, social and school adjustment.
- Highlight the importance of preventive measures to strengthen family relationships and emotional support while reducing the negative effects of economic pressures on the family environment.

2. Definition of the Study Terms:

2.1. Lack of Family Emotional Support

Lack of family emotional support refers to insufficient emotional and psychological support received by an individual within the family as well as the absence of feelings of acceptance, understanding, attention and protection.

2.1.1. Operational Definition of Lack of Family Emotional Support

In this study, lack of family emotional support refers to the absence or inadequacy of emotional and psychological support and positive communication received by the child from family members which may affect the child's sense of security, belonging and acceptance.

2.2. Bullying

Bullying is defined as intentional and repeated aggressive behavior carried out by an individual or a group against another individual with the aim of causing harm or exercising control. It is generally characterized by an imbalance of power between the parties involved.

Al-Otaibi and colleagues (2015) consider bullying to be a concept that has received increasing attention in psychological and educational research as it represents a form of aggressive behavior characterized by repetition, intentionality and the infliction of harm on others.

2.2.1. Operational Definition of Bullying

In this study, bullying refers to any intentional and repeated aggressive behavior practiced by an individual or a group against another individual for the purpose of exercising control or causing psychological, verbal or physical harm.

2.3. Family

The family is the primary social unit in which individuals grow and acquire their earliest social and behavioral experiences. It is also the environment through which they learn how to communicate and interact with others.

According to Hamed Zahran, the family is the primary nucleus of society and one of the groups with the strongest influence on personality development and behavioral guidance. It is also considered one of the most important institutions of socialization (Zahran, 2011, p. 13).

2.3.1. Operational Definition of the Family

In this study, the family refers to a group of individuals connected through marriage, kinship or blood ties who live within a shared social framework and interact with one another through various family roles and relationships.

2.4. Family Bullying

Family bullying refers to repeated and intentional aggressive behaviors practiced by one family member against another within the family setting involving an imbalance of power or an unequal ability to defend oneself.

Family bullying may take various forms such as ridicule, humiliation, belittlement, threats, exclusion and constant comparison. In some cases, it may also involve physical or psychological harm.

2.4.1. Operational Definition of Family Bullying

In this study, family bullying refers to repeated and intentional behavior practiced by a family member against the child taking forms such as ridicule, verbal abuse, humiliation, provocation, threats or exclusion.

2.5. Family Economic Conditions

Family economic conditions refer to the material and financial circumstances in which a family lives and which influence its ability to meet the needs of its members. These conditions may include household income, employment stability, housing conditions and the family's ability to provide basic educational, health and social needs for children.

Economic conditions may influence family relationships and the overall family environment. Financial difficulties and economic pressures may increase family stress and affect communication and patterns of interaction between family members. However, economic difficulties should not be considered a direct cause of family bullying or inadequate emotional support since family practices are influenced by several psychological, social and relational factors.

2.5.1. Operational Definition of Family Economic Conditions

In this study, family economic conditions refer to the financial and material circumstances of the family under study as identified through information concerning the parents' employment situation, household income, housing conditions and ability to meet the child's basic educational, health and social needs.

2.6. Functions of the Family

The family performs several essential functions in the lives of children, the most important of which include:

2.6.1. The Protective and Guidance Function

Protecting and caring for children is one of the family's primary responsibilities. This includes physical, psychological and social protection. The family also plays an important role in guiding children, teaching them their rights and responsibilities and helping them learn appropriate ways of interacting with others. It also assists them in acquiring social values and norms.

2.6.2. The Educational Function

The family plays an important role in children's intellectual and educational development by supervising their learning, monitoring their progress and encouraging them to think and learn. It also contributes to the development of values, norms and behavioral patterns that help children adapt to society.

2.6.3. The Psychological Function

The family contributes to meeting children's psychological needs including the need for love, affection, care, protection, comfort and belonging. Meeting these needs plays an important role in promoting psychological well-being and healthy psychological development.

2.6.4. The Biological and Social Function

The family contributes to the continuity of society through reproduction and socialization. It also performs several functions related to care, education, upbringing, socialization and equipping children with the values and skills necessary for life.

2.6.5. Some Forms of Bullying within the Family

2.6.5.1. Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying involves the use of offensive language, insults, humiliation, derogatory nicknames, ridicule and repeated belittlement.

2.6.5.2. Psychological and Emotional Bullying

This may involve threats, intimidation, exclusion, deliberate neglect, belittling a family member or constant comparisons among children in a manner that negatively affects their self-esteem.

2.6.5.3. Physical Bullying

Physical bullying involves the intentional and repeated use of physical force to harm another person such as pushing, hitting or other aggressive physical practices.

2.6.5.4. Social Bullying

Social bullying may occur through excluding or isolating a family member, encouraging others to act against them or diminishing their value in front of others.

2.7. Family Bullying, Lack of Emotional Support, Family Economic Conditions and Their Impact on the Child

The nature of relationships within the family plays an important role in a child's psychological and social development. A family environment that provides care, emotional support, protection and positive communication can contribute to the child's sense of security and belonging. In contrast, a family environment characterized by inadequate emotional support, rejection or negative interactions may affect the child's emotional well-being and sense of security.

Family economic conditions may also form part of the broader environment in which family relationships develop. Economic stability can facilitate access to basic needs and educational and health resources while financial difficulties may create additional pressures within the family. Such pressures may affect family interactions and the availability of emotional and material support. However, the relationship between economic conditions and family practices is complex and should be examined within the specific circumstances of each family.

Family bullying represents one of the negative practices that may occur within the family environment. It may involve repeated behaviors such as ridicule, humiliation, verbal abuse, intimidation or other forms of aggression directed toward a family member. When a child is exposed to such behaviors particularly in the absence of adequate emotional support and protection these experiences may negatively affect the child's psychological and social adjustment.

It is important to distinguish between bullying, violence and other forms of maltreatment as these concepts although related are not identical. Bullying is generally characterized by intentionality, repetition and an imbalance of power between the individuals involved. From this perspective, family bullying and lack of emotional support may represent negative family circumstances that can affect the child's sense of security, emotional well-being and relationships with others. Family economic conditions may constitute an additional contextual factor that should be considered when examining the child's family environment.

3. Research Procedures:

3.1. Research Method:

Given the nature and objectives of the study, a descriptive-analytical approach was adopted using the case study method. This approach was considered appropriate for examining the family environment of the child under study and for understanding the relationship between family economic conditions, family bullying and lack of emotional support. The study also sought to identify the possible effects of these conditions on the child's psychological, social and school adjustment.

Data were collected through observation, interviews and a quantitative assessment of the family's economic conditions. The observation focused on the child's behavior and interactions within the family environment. The interview provided information about the family's social and economic circumstances, including employment conditions, household income, housing situation and the family's ability to meet the child's basic needs. A quantitative economic scale was also used to assess the level of economic stability and financial pressure within the family. The combination of qualitative and quantitative information allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the child's family environment.

3.2. Study Sample:

The study was conducted on a purposively selected case involving a six-year-old child attending primary school. The child lives with both parents and two siblings. The case was selected because of the presence of family circumstances that were considered relevant to the objectives of the study, particularly inadequate emotional support, repeated comparison with other children, ridicule, family bullying and forms of violence. In addition to information concerning family relationships and the child's psychological and social adjustment, information about the family's economic circumstances was collected. This included the employment situation of the parents, the stability of household income, housing conditions and the family's ability to meet the child's educational, health and other basic needs. These data were used to establish a quantitative assessment of the family's economic conditions.

3.3. Study Boundaries:

The study was conducted during april 2026 in the residential area where the child and his family live. Data collection focused on the child's family environment and the economic and social circumstances surrounding the case during the study period.

3.4 Study Instrument:

The case study constituted the main framework for collecting and analyzing information about the child and his family environment. Three complementary methods were used: observation, semi-structured interview and quantitative assessment of family economic conditions.

Observation was used to identify the child's behavior and interactions with parents and siblings and to examine manifestations of fear, insecurity, withdrawal and other behavioral responses. The semi-structured interview was conducted with the mother to obtain information about the family's circumstances, patterns of treatment, relationships between family members, the child's psychological and social adjustment and his school performance. The interview also addressed the family's economic circumstances, particularly the employment situation of the parents, household income, housing conditions, financial difficulties and the family's ability to meet the child's basic needs.

To provide a quantitative dimension to the economic aspect of the study, a Family Economic Conditions Scale was developed for the present case. The scale assesses income stability, employment stability, ability to meet basic needs, housing conditions and financial pressure. It consists of 13 items rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 to 5. The total score ranges from 13 to 65. Higher scores indicate more stable and favorable economic conditions, while lower scores indicate greater economic vulnerability and financial pressure. The quantitative score was interpreted alongside the qualitative information obtained through observation and interview. This procedure made it possible to examine the family's economic conditions in a measurable form while maintaining the case study approach used to understand the broader family environment.

4. Presentation and Discussion of the Study Results:

4.1. Presentation of the Study Results:

4.1.1.Presentation of the Family Under Study:

Table 1. Members of the Family of the Child Under Study

Name	Gender	Age	Educational Level/Occupation	Notes
Father, Mohamed (J.)	Male	55	Secondary education/Employee	—
Mother, Amal (B.)	Female	36	University education/Homemaker	—
Daughter, Kamelia (J.)	Female	9	Primary school student	—
Son, Imad (J.)	Male	6	Primary school student	Case under study
Daughter, Shams (J.)	Female	4	Preschool student	—

Table 1 presents the basic characteristics of the family members in terms of gender, age, educational level and occupation. The ages of the family members range from 4 to 55 years. The father is the oldest family member, whereas Shams is the youngest. The table also shows differences in the educational and occupational characteristics of the parents. The father is employed, while the mother is a homemaker. The case under study is Imad, a six-year-old child attending primary school, whose field data indicate exposure to several negative practices within the family environment.

From an economic perspective, the occupational situation of the parents represents one of the elements considered in assessing the family's economic circumstances. However, occupational status alone is insufficient to determine the family's economic level. Therefore, additional information concerning income stability, the ability to meet basic needs, housing conditions and financial pressures was assessed quantitatively using the Family Economic Conditions Scale developed for the present study.

4.1.2. Quantitative Assessment of the Family's Economic Conditions

To introduce a quantitative dimension to the economic aspect of the study, the researcher developed a Family Economic Conditions Scale (FECS) consisting of 13 items. The scale covers five dimensions: income stability, employment stability, ability to meet basic needs, housing conditions and financial pressure. Each item is scored on a five-point scale ranging from 1 to 5. Items related to financial pressure are reverse-scored. The total score ranges from 13 to 65, with higher scores indicating more favorable economic conditions.

Table 2. Quantitative Assessment of the Family's Economic Conditions

Dimensions	Number of Items	Obtained Score	Maximum Score
Income stability	3	**9**	15
Employment stability	2	**7**	10
Ability to meet basic needs	3	**11**	15
Housing conditions	2	**8**	10
Financial pressure	3	**8**	15
Total	13	**43**	65

The results show that the family obtained a total score of 43 out of 65, indicating a moderate level of economic conditions. The highest score was recorded for the ability to meet basic needs (11/15), followed by housing conditions (8/10) and income stability (9/15). The family also obtained 7/10 for employment stability and 8/15 for financial pressure. Overall, the findings indicate a relatively stable economic situation while also reflecting the presence of some financial pressures within the family.

Table 3. Interpretation of the Family Economic Conditions Scale Scores

Total Score	Interpretation
13–25	Very weak economic conditions
26–38	Weak economic conditions
39–51	Moderate economic conditions
52–65	Good economic conditions

The table presents the classification of the total scores obtained on the Family Economic Conditions Scale. The scores are divided into four levels, ranging from very weak to good economic conditions, with higher scores indicating more favorable family economic conditions.

4.1.3. Presentation and Description of the Case:

The case concerns Imad, a six-year-old child enrolled in primary school and belonging to a family consisting of a father, a mother and three children. The data collected indicate that the child is exposed to certain negative practices within his family, including violence from his parents and forms of ridicule and bullying from his siblings. The developmental stage through which Imad is passing is important for his psychological and social development. At this stage, the child needs security, protection and family support, as well as an environment that helps him develop a positive self-image, enhance his social and academic abilities and develop his personality in a healthy manner. The family economic assessment also provided a quantitative indicator of the material context in which the child lives. The family obtained a score of **43 out of 65** on the Family Economic Conditions Scale, corresponding to **66.15% of the maximum possible score**. According to the adopted classification, this score indicates a **moderate level of family economic conditions**. The score suggests that the family has some economic stability and is able to meet a substantial part of its basic needs, while also experiencing certain financial pressures. This economic context was considered as a contextual factor in the analysis of the child's family environment.

4.2.Case Analysis:

Based on the available data, the child appears to live in a family environment involving multiple sources of stress. Some are related to the parenting practices used by the parents, while others stem from negative behaviors experienced at the hands of his siblings, such as hitting, verbal abuse and ridicule. The repetition of such practices may affect the child's sense of security and the nature of his relationships with family members, particularly because parents represent a primary source of protection and support during this developmental stage. Furthermore, exposure to negative practices by siblings may increase the child's feelings of vulnerability or lack of acceptance within the family, particularly when such practices are repeated and when there is no appropriate intervention to protect the child or limit these behaviors.

Observations and collected data indicate certain difficulties in the child's adjustment within both the family and school environments. His relationships with classmates appear to have been affected, and a decline in his academic performance was reported during the interview with his mother. The data also indicated that the child's older sister engaged in certain hostile behaviors toward him and that these behaviors sometimes extended into the school environment by encouraging some classmates to act against him, which negatively affected his social relationships. Moreover, the findings showed that the child was subjected to constant comparisons with his older sister, particularly regarding academic performance, which contributed to his fear of academic failure. The data also point to a lack of emotional support within the family. The child reportedly experienced feelings of rejection and did not receive the same level of attention and support as some other family members. These circumstances were associated with the emergence of certain manifestations in the child, including fear, sleep disturbances, declining academic performance and a weakened sense of security.

Regarding the economic dimension, the quantitative assessment showed that the family obtained a total score of **43/65**, indicating a moderate level of economic conditions. This result suggests that the family does not appear to experience severe economic deprivation, but it may face certain financial pressures that form part of the broader circumstances in which family relationships occur. The economic situation may therefore constitute a contextual factor that contributes to the overall pressures experienced by the family, without being considered a direct cause of the bullying, violence or lack of emotional support reported in the case. The findings were therefore interpreted by considering the interaction between the family's economic circumstances and its relational environment. Although the family has a moderate level of economic conditions, the child continues to experience negative family practices and insufficient emotional support. This indicates

that economic conditions alone cannot explain the difficulties observed in the child and that family relationships, parenting practices and emotional support remain important factors in understanding his psychological, social and academic adjustment.

4.3. General Interpretation of the Case:

Based on the data and information collected, it can be stated that the case is situated within a family environment characterized by several stress-related factors, including harsh parenting practices, inadequate emotional support, comparisons among children and certain negative practices originating from siblings. From a descriptive-analytical perspective, a child's behavior cannot be examined in isolation from the environment in which the child lives. Psychological and social responses are influenced by the nature of the experiences the child undergoes and by the relationships established with family members. The case data indicate that inadequate emotional support and attention within the family environment may have affected the child's sense of security and his school and social adjustment. Exposure to repeated negative practices within the family also appears to have increased the pressures experienced by the child.

The quantitative assessment of the family's economic conditions provides an additional dimension to the interpretation of the case. The family obtained a score of 43 out of 65, corresponding to 66.15% of the maximum possible score, which indicates a moderate level of family economic conditions according to the adopted classification. This result suggests that the family has a certain degree of economic stability and is able to meet a substantial proportion of its basic needs, while experiencing some financial pressures. Therefore, the economic situation forms part of the broader context in which the child's family experiences occur. The moderate economic conditions observed in the case suggest that the child's difficulties cannot be attributed to severe economic deprivation alone. Rather, the findings point to the importance of considering several interacting factors, particularly the quality of family relationships, parenting practices, emotional support and patterns of interaction between siblings. Economic pressures may contribute to the general level of stress within the family, but they should not be considered a direct or exclusive cause of family bullying or inadequate emotional support. Accordingly, the family environment represents an important factor in understanding the behaviors and difficulties that may emerge in the child. Neglect, inadequate emotional support and treatment based on constant comparison or humiliation may constitute factors influencing the child's psychological development and social and academic adjustment. At the same time, the quantitative economic assessment demonstrates the relevance of considering family economic conditions as a contextual variable when examining the child's overall living environment. The integration of the economic indicator with the qualitative case data therefore provides a more comprehensive understanding of the circumstances surrounding the child and the factors associated with his psychological, social and academic adjustment.

5. Conclusion:

The family is the primary environment to which a child turns to satisfy psychological, social, and emotional needs and to obtain love, affection, care, and protection. Therefore, providing a family environment based on communication, respect, emotional support, and stability represents an essential element in promoting healthy psychological and social development. The case study highlights the importance of paying attention to certain family practices, such as neglect, inadequate emotional support, constant comparisons among children, ridicule, and humiliation, because of their potential negative effects on the child's sense of security, self-esteem, and relationships with others. The study also emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between violence, maltreatment, neglect, and bullying while recognizing the possible relationship and overlap among these phenomena in certain cases.

The findings also indicate the relevance of considering family economic conditions as part of the broader context surrounding the child. Economic stability may contribute to the family's ability to meet children's basic needs and provide adequate living conditions, whereas financial pressures may increase stress within the family environment. However, economic difficulties should not be considered a direct or exclusive cause of family bullying or inadequate emotional support, as these practices may result from the interaction of several psychological, social, and relational factors. Overall, the study highlights the need to strengthen the role of the family in providing children with care, psychological and emotional support, positive communication, and protection while reducing practices that may negatively affect their psychological and social development and adjustment. It also underlines the importance of considering both family relationships and economic circumstances when examining the conditions that shape children's well-being and development.

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