

Children and youth's participation at home, school and community: differences between socioeconomic status

Participação das crianças e dos jovens em casa, na escola e na comunidade: diferenças entre a situação socioeconômica

DOI: 10.55905/rcssv12n4-023

Received on: August 11th, 2023

Accepted on: September 12th, 2023

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ABSTRACT

Background: Environmental factors such as family socioeconomic status (SES) can influence the participation of children and youth in different contexts. *Objective:*

Investigate the effect of SES on the participation of Brazilian children and adolescents in home, school and community activities. *Methods:* Parents/caregivers of 198 Brazilians aged 6-17 years from different SES answered the Participation and Environment Measure for Children and Youth and the Brazilian Criteria of Economic Classification. Unpaired Student t test or Mann-Whitney tests were used to compare two independent SES groups: middle-high/high (MHH) and middle-low/low (MLL). *Results:* The MLL presented greater involvement in all contexts. School provided greater participation equality for both groups. On the other hand, reduced participation by both groups was observed in community. *Conclusion:* Despite the financial disadvantage limiting/preventing access to different types of resources in lower-SES families. On contrary, it seems to have positive effects on the participation of children and youth in the MLL group.

Keywords: socioeconomic status, participation, engagement, children, youth.

RESUMO

Contexto: Fatores ambientais, como o estatuto socioeconômico familiar (NSE), podem influenciar a participação de crianças e jovens em diferentes contextos. *Objetivo:* Investigar o efeito do AEE na participação de crianças e adolescentes brasileiros em atividades domésticas, escolares e comunitárias. *Métodos:* Pais/cuidadores de 198 brasileiros de 6 a 17 anos de diferentes NSE responderam à Medida de Participação e Ambiente Infantojuvenil e ao Critério Brasileiro de Classificação Econômica. O teste t de Student não pareado ou o teste de Mann-Whitney foram utilizados para comparar dois grupos independentes de NSE: médio-alto/alto (MHH) e médio-baixo/baixo (MLL). *Resultados:* O MLL apresentou maior envolvimento em todos os contextos. A escola proporcionou maior igualdade de participação para ambos os grupos. Por outro lado, foi observada participação reduzida de ambos os grupos na comunidade. *Conclusão:* Apesar da desvantagem financeira limitar/impedir o acesso a diferentes tipos de recursos nas famílias com NSE mais baixo. Pelo contrário, parece ter efeitos positivos na participação de crianças e jovens no grupo MLL.

Palavras-chave: status socioeconômico, participação, engajamento, crianças, jovens.

1 INTRODUCTION

Participation in home, school and community activities is an important indicator of children and youth's health, because participating in different situations and contexts can improve their ability to learn new skills throughout life (World Health Organization [WHO], 2007; Law, 2002). Several studies addressing child rehabilitation have measured participation based on frequency and involvement, since frequency analyses alone are not sufficient to support an understanding of the complexity of participation (Law et al., 2013; Coster et al., 2013; Bedell et al., 2013; Anaby et al., 2014; Milicevic & Nedovic, 2018; Shi et al., 2022). Frequency refers to the presence of individuals in the activity and/or in a variety of activities in which they participate, whereas involvement concerns their experience during the performance of an activity, including motivational, social, affective

and persistence aspects, such as showing interest, initiative and attention (Imms et al., 2016; Martins & Sanches-Ferreira, 2014).

Personal factors such as age, sex/gender, and health condition can have an influence on participation, and have been extensively investigated (WHO, 2007; Drummond, Gomes, Coster & Mancini, 2015; Amaral, Drummond, Coster & Mancini, 2014; Jarus, Anaby, Bart, Engel-Yeger & Law, 2010). In addition to these factors, lack of availability or inadequacy of environmental factors have been highlighted by parents and professionals because of the impact they have had on the participation of children and youth with and without disabilities in different contexts (Anaby et al., 2014; Anaby, Law, Teplicky & Turner, 2015; Lim et al., 2016). Among the environmental factors, family socioeconomic aspects, such as family income and presence of housekeeper at home, has emerged in results of researchesresearch addressing participation and children and youth (Anaby et al., 2014; Law et al., 2013; Drummond et al., 2015).

The family income is often pointed out by parents as a support for their children's participation in different contexts, suggesting that it may have a greater effect on participation than personal factors (Anaby et al., 2014; Law et al., 2013). In context-specific studies, children and adolescents from high SES families participate less in family care tasks (Drummond et al., 2015), and in low-SES families, their permanence in the streets is feared because of the insecurity regarding their exposure to risk of crime and early use of alcohol and drugs (Drummond, Coster, Gomes, & Mancini, 2019). In addition, a study that addressed the role of environment across home, school and community, and compared the participation of children and youth with and without disabilities, reported that family income has a direct effect on participation. It demonstrates that the higher the family economic situation, the greater the participation of both groups in these contexts (Anaby et al., 2014).

The Socioeconomic Status (SES), involves household income, level of education, occupation of parents, housing conditions, among other factors that are considered a broad way to understand this subject in health, educational and social fields (Braveman et al., 2005; Szwarcwald, Leal, Gouveia, & Souza, 2005; Goodman et al., 2001; Rosenfeld, Kramer, Levin, Barrett, & Acevedo-Garcia., 2018). However, most studies regarding children and youth participation addresses socioeconomic aspects mostly to household income, and there is no knowledge about research that focus directly on measures` way of knowing SES including other contributing factors. It is commonly

noticed isolated socioeconomic characteristics appearing only in some parts of results' discussions or as descriptive characteristics of the samples. Furthermore, associations between socioeconomic factors and participation of children and adolescents in different contexts have been reported in studies involving individuals with some level of disability, addressing specific contexts, and with recruited samples, especially in North American and European countries. Therefore, other populations with different socioeconomic and cultural conditions may not have been represented (Braveman & Gottlieb, 2014; Law et al., 2013; Coster et al., 2013; Bedell et al., 2013; Anaby et al., 2014; Milicevic & Nedovic, 2018). Then, the necessity to address different populations, such as individuals with typical development, as well as to investigate the impact of social determinants of health on participation, have been pointed out (Rosenfeld et al., 2018; Anaby et al., 2014; Law, 2002).

Given that, the Brazilian scenario can contribute to identify the impact that environmental factors can have on the participation of children and youth, considering its sociodemographic characteristics of developing country with different health, education and income conditions (Fonseca, Sena, Santos, Dias & Costa, 2013; Atlas do Desenvolvimento Humano nas Regiões Metropolitanas Brasileiras, 2014; Drummond et al., 2015). Comparing findings from different socioeconomic and cultural countries may to better understand patterns in children and youth's participation according to their families' socioeconomic background.

The present study aimed to investigate whether family SES has any influence on the participation frequency and involvement of children and youth with typical development in home, school and community activities.

2 METHODS

2.1 STUDY DESIGN AND ETHICS

This cross-sectional, observational study was conducted with parents and/or caregivers of 198 children or adolescents in the city of Belo Horizonte and metropolitan region (MG, Brazil).

This study was conducted in accordance with the required ethical standards and practices, as well as approved by the Authors' Institutional Ethics Committee (CAAE: 52593915.5.0000.5149). Upon agreeing to voluntarily participate in the survey, all participants signed a Free and Informed Consent Form.

2.2 PARTICIPANTS

Sample size calculation was based on a study of Coster et al. (2011) that aimed to examine the psychometric properties of the Participation and Environment Measure - Children and Youth (PEM-CY) from its application to parents of children and adolescents with and without disabilities. Considering a significance level of 0.05 was considered, non-directional, statistical power of 0.80 and an expected effect between 0.51 and 1.86, according to each dimension addressed by the PEM-CY, we calculated a minimum of 180 participants to detect possible existing significant effects.

The study sample comprised parents and/or caregivers of children and youth aged 6 to 17 years, of both sexes/genders, from families of different SES, with typical development reported by the respondent. They were recruited in public and private regular schools according to our inclusion criteria.

The respondent should be living with the child/adolescent or be the primary caregiver of them. Participants with typical development were those who, according to the respondent's statements, presented no history of neurological, psychological, motor or language disorders.

Based on the socioeconomic classification proposed by the Brazilian Association of Research Companies (Associação Brasileira de Empresas de Pesquisa [ABEP], 2014), participants were allocated into two groups: medium-high/high SES (MHH) and medium-low/low SES (MLL), which will be further detailed. During the sample recruitment endeavor was made trying to guarantee equivalence between the groups regarding to children and adolescents' age, gender and SES.

2.3 PROCEDURES AND INSTRUMENTS

Face-to-face interviews, which were approximately 50 min long per participant, were conducted with one of the parents and/or caregivers of the children and youth. The interviews were conducted by the occupational therapist responsible for the study and two undergraduate Occupational Therapy students, who had been previously trained in the use of the instruments. Inter- and intra-rater reliability for the PEM-CY administration were tested by means of the Kappa concordance index. Inter-rater agreement varied between substantial and almost perfect, from 0.721 (CI 0.56-0.87) to 1.0 (CI 1.0-1.0), and intra-rater agreement was almost perfect, from 0.803 (CI 0.67-0.93) to 1.0 (CI 1.0-1.0). A 95% confidence interval (CI) was adopted, and all agreement indexes showed $p < 0.05$.

The Participation section of the PEM-CY instrument, translated into Portuguese, was used in this research (Martins & Sanches-Ferreira, 2014). This section measures the participation of children and youth in the home, school and community settings in 25 items (10 referring to home, 5 to school, and 10 to community). Participants respond to questions on the frequency (rating scale from 0=never to 7=daily) and involvement (rating scale from 1= minimally involved to 5=very involved) of their children in several activities in the three environments. Analysis of the psychometric properties of this instrument showed levels of internal consistency and test-retest reliability from moderate to good and good validity (Coster et al., 2011). The summary and interpretation of the participation scales and scores related to the PEM-CY outcomes were based on the study by Coster et al. (2011) (Chart 1).

Chart 1 - PEM-CY Participation Scales, Scores and Interpretation

Outcome^a	Scale	Calculation of scores	Interpretation
Frequency	8-point scale (0 = never to 7 = daily)	<p>Summary - sum of values divided by the number of items with frequency response different from zero in that setting.</p> <p>By category - sum of values in the category divided by the number of items in the same category.</p>	Provides the mean of participation frequency of an individual in a certain group of activities in that setting.
Involvement	5-point scale (1 = minimally involved to 5 = very involved)	<p>Summary - sum of values divided by the number of items responded in that setting.</p> <p>By category - sum of values in the category divided by the number of items in the same category.</p>	Provides the mean of participation involvement of an individual in a certain group of activities in that setting.
Never participates	Frequency 0 = never	Sum of items answered with frequency zero, divided by the number of ratings.	Provides an indication of the diversity of activities that an individual participates in that setting.

a All values were converted into percentage.
source: elaborated by the authors

Participation of children and youth in home, school and community activities was analyzed based on the categorization of items related to participation in each environment of the PEM-CY by grouping them according to nature and/or resources used/needed to carry out the activities. The *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process* (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2020) was used as a guideline to define these categories. For instance, in the home environment, activities using electronic resources were allocated to the ‘activities and interaction through electronic resources’ category, while home care activities were included in the ‘household chores’ category. In the school context, activities carried out in the classroom and in an external environment were allocated to the ‘classroom activities’ and ‘extra-class or extra-school activities’ categories, respectively. In the community setting, activities performed on a non-regular basis, such as walks in the neighborhood and physical activities or sporadic play outdoors, comprised the ‘informal, not regular activities’ category, whereas routine courses and sports classes were included in the ‘regular activities structured in the community’ category (Chart 2).

Chart 2 - Items Categorization

Setting	Category	Items
Home	Activities and interaction through electronic resources	1) Computer and video games; 4) Watching TV, videos and DVDs; 6) Socializing using technology.
	Activities and interaction without the use of electronic resources	2) Indoor play and games; 3) Arts, crafts, music and hobbies; 5) Getting together with other people.
	Household chores	7) Household chores.
	Personal care management	8) Personal care management.
	School preparation	9) School preparation (not homework); 10) Homework.
School	Classroom activities	1) Classroom activities.
	Extra-class or extra-school activities	4) Getting together with peers outside of class; 2) Field trips and school events.
	Group and leadership activities and special roles at school.	3) School-sponsored teams, clubs and organizations; 5) Special roles at school.
Community	Regular activities structured in the community	3) Organized physical activities; 5) Classes and lessons (outside school); 6) Organizations, groups, clubs and volunteer or leadership activities; 7) Religious or spiritual gatherings and activities.
	Informal, not regular activities	1) Neighborhood outings; 2) Community events; 4) Unstructured physical activities; 8) Getting together with other children in the community.
	Working for pay	9) Working for pay.
	Overnight visits or trips	10) Overnight visits or trips.

Source: elaborated by the authors

The Brazilian Criteria of Economic Classification (CCEB) was used to stratify the family SES (ABEP, 2014). This semi-structured questionnaire is intended to classify the family SES based on questions about house comfort, water provision, type of street paving, and education level of the head of household. The family SES is downwardly stratified into A, B1, B2, C1, C2 and D-E. (ABEP, 2014). Based on that, the MHH group was composed of families included in the A, B1 and B2 levels and the MLL group comprised families belonging to the C1, C2 and D-E levels.

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics® version 20.0. Qualitative variables were expressed in absolute frequencies and percentages. We verified whether variables followed a gaussian distribution via the Shapiro Wilk test. Non-parametric variables were shown as median and interquartile ranges (1st quartile – 25th percentile and 3rd quartile – 75th percentile). Unpaired Student t test or Mann-Whitney tests were used to compare two independent SES groups (MHH and MLL), (depending on the variable distribution). Qualitative variables from both groups were compared by either the Pearson's chi-squared test or the Pearson Exact's asymptotic chi-squared test (according to variable distribution). A significance level of 5% ($\alpha=0.05$) was adopted for all statistical analyses, and the effect size was calculated by Cohen's D for independent samples.

3 RESULTS

A total of 198 children and adolescents with typical development were included in this study. 106 (53,5%) girls and 92 (46,5%) boys. 89, out of these 198 children/youth, were part of the MLL-group and 109 children//youth were part of MHH-group. There was no difference between the groups regarding sex/gender ($p=0.448$) and age ($p=0.909$). Table 1 shows the descriptive characteristics of the sample by SES group.

Table 1 - Sample Descriptive Characteristics

Characteristic	Groups		<i>p-value</i>
	MHH (<i>n</i> =109)	MLL (<i>n</i> =89)	
Child/youth gender ^a	Male	48 (44%)	0.448 ^c
	Female	61 (56%)	
Child/youth age (years)	Mean ^b	11.3 (3.37)	0.909 ^c
	A	31 (28.4%)	
Family SES ^a	B1-B2	78 (71.6%)	<0.0001 ^d
	C1-C2	0 (0%)	
	D-E	0 (0%)	

Respondent education ^a	Elementary school or less	6 (5.5%)	42 (47.1%)	<0.0001 ^d
	High school or less	34 (31.2%)	38(42.7%)	0.0754 ^d
Respondent relationship to child/youth ^a	Higher education or less	69 (63.3%)	9 (10.1%)	<0.0001 ^d
	Mother	42 (38.5%)	62 (69.7%)	0.0105 ^d
	Father	31 (28.4%)	13 (14.6%)	0.0403 ^d
	Sibling	10 (9.2%)	5 (5.6%)	0.2871 ^d
	Grandmother	4 (3.7%)	7 (7.9%)	0.1232 ^d
	Other ^e	22 (20.2%)	2 (2.2%)	<0.0001 ^d

a Frequency and (%). b Mean and (SD). c Chi-square test of Pearson or asymptotic chi-square test of Pearson Exact was used for comparisons. d Mann-Whitney test was used for median comparisons. eIncludes other degrees of kinship/relationship with child/youth: uncle/aunt, cousin, maid/caregiver, stepfather and godmother, and these people live and/or spend time daily with the child/youth. SES = socioeconomic status.

Source: elaborated by the authors

Table 2 - Participation Frequency and Involvement in Home, School and Community Activities

Setting / activity category	Frequency				Involvement			
	MHH ⁽¹⁾	MLL ⁽¹⁾	p(ES) ⁽²⁾	K ⁽³⁾	MHH ⁽¹⁾	MLL ⁽¹⁾	p(ES) ⁽²⁾	K ⁽³⁾
Home								
General (summary of scores)	91.05 (5.31)	92.96 (4.38)	0.007 (0.39)	0.77	83.16 (8.61)	87.63 (8.36)	0.001 (0.53)	0.96
Activities and interaction through electronic resources	88.07 (12.16)	79.98 (21.45)	0.002 (0.48)	0.92	87.09 (12.75)	88.08 (15.34)	0.619 (0.07)	0.08
Activities and interaction without the use of electronic resources	80.42 (15.54)	79.45 (19.66)	0.704 (0.06)	0.07	85.96 (13.73)	89.13 (13.45)	0.104 (0.24)	0.37
Household chores	74.57 (30.38)	74.47 (32.90)	0.983 (0.01)	0.05	63.40 (21.28)	71.53 (29.80)	0.043 (0.32)	0.61
Personal care management	98.95 (4.64)	99.35 (4.25)	0.526 (0.09)	0.1	88.25 (18.89)	93.93 (14.89)	0.019 (0.33)	0.64
School preparation	94.29 (15.08)	92.69 (15.52)	0.464 (0.11)	0.11	79.90 (17.74)	86.47 (17.22)	0.01 (0.38)	0.75
School								
General (summary of scores)	78.75 (14.17)	81.05 (12.99)	0.204 (0.17)	0.22	89.33 (14.05)	93.19 (10.61)	0.034 (0.31)	0.57
Classroom activities	96.59 (12.27)	96.62 (14.28)	0.984 (0.01)	0.05	86.85 (17.96)	89.54 (18.18)	0.3 (0.15)	0.18
Extra-class or extra-school activities	70.90 (18.35)	62.60 (16.26)	0.001 (0.48)	0.91	92.01 (14.83)	94.83 (13.06)	0.163 (0.20)	0.29
Group and leadership activities and special roles at school	34.53 (27.99)	27.84 (24.74)	0.08 (0.25)	0.42	90.59 (15.70)	96.30 (11.80)	0.012 (0.41)	0.69
Community								
General (summary of scores)	66.74 (12.90)	64.80 (12.33)	0.283 (0.154)	0.19	87.56 (11.50)	92.23 (9.72)	0.003 (0.44)	0.86
Regular structured activities	34.99 (17.74)	23.15 (15.04)	0.001 (0.72)	0.99	87.56 (11.50)	89.35 (15.51)	0.243 (0.18)	0.22
Informal, not regular activities	55.20 (17.44)	44.74 (20.48)	0.001 (0.56)	0.97	86.63 (15.55)	92.04 (14.36)	0.03 (0.31)	0.59
Working for pay	6.15 (21.15)	14.92 (31.71)	0.027 (0.33)	0.64	75.55 (29.62)	94.44 (11.49)	0.097 (1.02)	0.67
Overnight visits or trips	36.69 (22.45)	21.34 (25.12)	0.001 (0.65)	0.99	87.50 (16.47)	96.17 (8.98)	0.001 (0.60)	0.92

(1) mean in percentage and (SD); (2) significance level and (effect size); (3) statistical power.

Source: elaborated by the authors

4 DISCUSSION

Four points are highlighted with respect to the effects of family SES on the participation of children and youth in home, school and community activities: (1) more differences between the groups were found regarding participation frequency in activities that require greater financial resources; (2) there was greater participation involvement of the MLL group in all settings investigated; (3) participation frequency and involvement were not necessarily associated; (4) greater equality of participation frequency in the school environment was observed between the groups.

Regarding the first point, some results were already expected, since the literature has commonly associated low family income negatively with health and participation aspects (Rosenfeld et al., 2018; Anaby et al., 2014; Drummond et al., 2015; Lim et al., 2016). Participation frequency in the MLL group was lower in activities that, in the Brazilian scenario, generally require greater financial expenditure for the acquisition of resources or access to specific locations. In addition, some activities demand greater support from parents so that they can be carried out by their children and are sometimes rendered unfeasible because parents cannot afford to spend time and provide assistance. Examples of these categories include: 'activities and interaction through electronic resources', 'extra-class and/or extra-school activities', 'regular structured activities', 'informal, not regular activities' and 'overnight visits or trips'. Despite the difference observed between the MHH and MLL groups for 'activities and interaction through electronic resources' carried out in the home environment, the indices of participation frequency and involvement in this category for both groups were considered high (>79%) compared with those of other activity categories in the same setting. The use of electronic devices by children and adolescents has grown in different societies, and they have been introduced increasingly early in the everyday life of these individuals. Quite often, without any type of family control, young people spend a large part of their day doing different activities on the Internet, such as games and conversations with friends, and they consider advantageous to be able to interact and have fun without leaving home (Spizzirri, Wagner, Mosmann & Armani, 2012; Balbani & Krawczyk, 2011; Oliveira, 2017).

In contrast, participation frequency of both groups in community activities was relatively low (<56%) compared with those in other settings. Brazilian parents have prioritized the participation of their children in non-community contexts, since public spaces in large cities have been considered inadequate for child participation because of

heavy traffic and violence (Cotrim & Bichara, 2013; Spizzirri et al., 2012). In the case of low-SES families, parents prefer that their children stay home watching television, playing games, or spending time on cell phones to being exposed to crime and early drug use in the streets (Drummond et al., 2019). This suggests that carrying out home-based activities using electronic resources can interfere with participation in other contexts, such as in the community, and vice versa. Moreover, participation frequency in the MLL group was significantly higher in the 'working for pay' category, portraying the exploitation of child labor in Brazil, which is still recurrent in socially vulnerable families (Aguiar Junior & Vasconcellos, 2020).

The second point shows the relevance of involvement to investigate the participation of children and adolescents. Contrary to the several results obtained regarding participation frequency, the MLL group was more comprehensively involved than the MHH group in the three settings. At home, a greater participation involvement of this group occurred in routine activity categories, such as 'household chores', 'personal care management', and 'school preparation'. This finding reinforces the need and/or habituation of these children and youth to take responsibility or support their families in the organization of their domestic routines. Mothers in low-SES families reconcile paid work with domestic tasks, encouraging or demanding the participation of their children in this context (Bruschini & Ricoldi, 2009; Simionato-Tozo & Biasoli-Alves, 1998). The lack of opportunities and socially vulnerable families also can contribute to this finds (Aguiar Junior & Vasconcellos, 2020; Shi et al., 2022).

On the other hand, greater participation involvement of children and youth in the MLL group in the school and community settings occurred in the 'group and leadership activities and special roles at school', 'informal, not regular activities' and 'overnight visits or trips' categories. These activities involve aspects of collective nature and interaction. Studies carried out with low-SES Brazilian families have shown that children tend to engage in collective and informal activities in the community, such as 'neighborhood outings' and 'getting together with other children in the community' (Amazonas, Damasceno, Terto & Silva, 2003). This is a way of extending their home experiences, as in low-income communities collaboration between families is usually used to manage the care of children and households so that parents can work (Freire, Silva, Pontes, Borges & Moura, 2013).

Still addressing participation involvement, and already discussing the third highlighted point, the literature points out that involvement is also associated with the opportunity to perform activities - the more often a particular activity is carried out, the greater the tendency to be involved in it (Imms et al., 2016). However, the present study indicates that participation frequency and involvement do not necessarily have a direct association. The fact that an individual performs an activity more often may not result in greater involvement in it, suggesting that factors such as financial expenditure to perform certain activities may interfere with this relationship. The greater involvement of individuals in the MLL group in the community environment occurred in activities where this group presented lower participation frequency, which, in the Brazilian context, tend to require greater financial investment to be carried out. Nevertheless, it is believed that this can also favor the participation involvement of children and youth belonging to these families; because they have fewer opportunities to carry out these activities, they tend to demonstrate greater engagement, interest, initiative and attention to enjoy them.

From a different perspective, authors have reported that participation involvement is not necessarily related to positive feelings or fun; therefore, a child can perform an unwanted or compulsory task, but be involved in it (Imms et al., 2016; Rosenber, Pade, Reizis, & Bar, 2019; Russo, 2023). In this sense, results showed that the MLL group was more involved in routine activities that represented support and accountability in home care, such as 'household chores', 'personal care management', and 'school preparation'. However, no differences between groups were observed regarding participation frequency in these categories, which reveals that frequency and involvement are not directly associated. In view of this, it is clear that having fewer access opportunities to certain activities, as well as having a greater need to take responsibility for routine tasks, can encourage greater involvement of lower income young people in some activities.

Finally, the fourth point concerned greater equality of participation frequency in the school environment between the groups, since difference in frequency was found only in one activity category: 'extra-class and/or extra-school activities'. The Brazilian educational legislation establishes that all students comply with a mandatory minimum content of classroom activities and extra-class or extra-school activities, guaranteeing their presence in school, and that minimum infrastructure for their reception and development must be provided (Governo Federal do Brasil, 1996). The absence of difference in school participation frequency between the MLL and MHH groups may be

associated with these political requirements, which aim to provide greater equality of access to school activities. In the school environment, performance of activities is equitable, but when different activities are proposed, as usually occurs in the 'extra-class and/or extra-school activities' category, lower SES families do not have the necessary resources to carry them out. Thus, fewer children participate in these activities, or the schools themselves offer fewer activities of this nature.

This study also has limitations. First, cultural factors might interfere in participation. Multicentric or translational approaches would be necessary to understand how different socioeconomic conditions affect participation outcomes. In our study, however, we controlled for the main confounding factors (such as age, sex and SES) reported have an influence on participation. This should minimize the risk for confounding factors, considering that, they all have access to similar education, diet, and living conditions. Second, there is possible that some socio-geographical areas have more opportunity to participation. We do not assess environmental factors per se. On the other hand, through the PEM-CY, it was possible to verify the desire for change in each area of participation, which can minimize this point.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates the different impacts that family SES can have on specific activities, and how investigating the participation involvement of children and youth in different contexts increases the understanding of this phenomenon. The social, cultural and economic characteristics of the Brazilian reality have a unique influence on the everyday life of children and adolescents in the home, school and community environments. The association of socioeconomic factors with the participation frequency and involvement of these individuals may contribute to developing and improving services related to health and education. Furthermore, investigations conducted with children and youth with typical development offer important parameters for further research addressing people with health dysfunction.

It is worth noting that Brazil is a very large country that presents significant social inequality between its regions and between urban and rural areas. The level of social inequality is still significant, and cultural differences have an impact on parents' expectations regarding the participation involvement of their children in activities in different contexts. Studies on this theme, conducted in rural and or less industrialized and

urbanized areas, and exploration of the relationship between different participation environments may expand the understanding of this phenomenon.

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