



Drivers of Multifaceted Parental Involvement: The Role of SES versus Child-Rearing Values

Gabriella Pusztai^a, Ágnes Dusa^b, & Katinka Bacskai^{*c}

* Corresponding author:

Email: katinka.bacskai@makovecz-campus.hu

a. University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary; Collegium Professorum Hungarorum (MCA), Piliscsaba, Hungary.

b. Kopp Mária Institute for Demography and Families (KINCS), Budapest, Hungary.

c. Collegium Professorum Hungarorum (MCA), Piliscsaba, Hungary.

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ABSTRACT

Parenting today is increasingly challenged by the pervasive digital content delivered through various devices and channels. Cross-national research has consistently demonstrated that cultural, religious, and socioeconomic factors influence parental values and preferences regarding child-rearing. However, much less is known about how these values are enacted in everyday parenting practices within families. This study examines the relationship between parenting value preferences, social status, and multifaceted home-based parenting practices. We hypothesized that parents with higher socioeconomic status and postmaterialist value preferences would engage in multifaceted home-based parenting activities. Moreover, we expected value preferences to be a stronger predictor than socioeconomic status. We analysed data from a large-scale Hungarian survey (KINCS Value-Creating Child-Rearing 2020, N=1156) using binomial logistic regression. Clusters of parental social status and factor-analysed dimensions of value preferences were included as covariates. Contrary to our hypothesis, parenting value preferences showed a stronger association with home-based parenting activities than socioeconomic indicators. Unexpectedly, traditional rather than postmaterialist values emerged as the strongest positive predictor of parenting diversity in the home.

KEYWORDS

Child-rearing values; parental involvement; SES; parental value preferences; home-based parenting practices; quantitative analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Parenting today unfolds in the context of increasing social inequalities and rapid cultural change. While it is well established that parents' socioeconomic status (SES) shapes their involvement in children's development, scholars also highlight the role of cultural orientations and child-rearing values in structuring parenting practices (Kohn, 1989; Lareau, 2002, 2018; Schwartz, 2006). The key theoretical question is whether structural resources or cultural preferences play the stronger role in enabling multifaceted, development-oriented parenting. Although international research highlights both socioeconomic resources and child-rearing values as potential drivers of multifaceted parental involvement, evidence remains limited and inconsistent. This gap is particularly relevant in Central and Eastern Europe, where post-socialist transformations have intensified both structural disparities and value conflicts, but little is known about how these forces jointly influence home-based parenting practices. Addressing this unresolved problem, the present study aims to determine whether socioeconomic status or parental value orientations play the stronger role in predicting diverse, development-oriented parenting activities.

Parenting practices are shaped by a complex interplay of structural and cultural determinants, yet empirical research remains inconclusive regarding the relative strength of these factors. Three major domains consistently emerge as central in understanding parental behavior: (1) the breadth of multifaceted parental involvement, (2) parents' socioeconomic status (SES), and (3) their child-rearing values. Previous international findings demonstrate that these domains are interrelated, but far less is known about how they jointly operate in post-socialist Central and Eastern European contexts.

Multifaceted parental involvement is commonly conceptualized as the range, frequency, and diversity of parent-child interactions that support children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Prior studies identify several core dimensions of this construct, including learning-related activities, enrichment practices, and socio-emotional engagement. These dimensions reflect the multidimensional nature of everyday educational parenting emphasized in Epstein's (2010, 2018) school-family-community framework and Lareau's (2002) concept of concerted cultivation. Together, they provide a theoretically grounded basis for capturing variation in development-oriented parenting practices.

Parents' socioeconomic status has been shown to strongly predict disparities in parental investments. Higher SES families typically provide a broader range of development-oriented activities, supported by greater cultural capital, time flexibility, and financial resources. Accordingly, SES is widely treated as a key structural determinant of multiplex parent-child relationships and is commonly represented through indicators such as parental education, occupational status, and material resources in multivariate analyses (Mampane, 2023).

In contrast, child-rearing values represent cultural preferences and beliefs regarding desirable child qualities. Research frequently distinguishes between traditional, conservative, and postmaterialist value orientations, which serve as descriptors for parental goals such as

obedience, responsibility, independence, and creativity (Kohn 1989). These value dimensions capture motivational orientations that may encourage intensive parental involvement even in the presence of structural constraints (Acero-Ordoñez et al., 2026.)

While SES provides material and temporal resources, value orientations reflect parental goals and expectations, and the relationship between the two remains theoretically contested. Some models suggest that value-driven motivations can partially compensate for limited socioeconomic resources, whereas others argue that structural constraints ultimately delimit parental practices. Building on this debate, the present study examines the simultaneous effects of SES and child-rearing values on multifaceted parental involvement using multivariate regression techniques, allowing for an assessment of their relative and unique contributions before testing the study's three hypotheses.

International research shows that higher education, income, and occupational prestige are consistently linked to more frequent and diverse forms of parental investment (Craig et al., 2014; Passaretta et al., 2022). At the same time, cultural orientations—such as beliefs about the returns to early investments, religiosity, or value preferences emphasizing family and responsibility—may motivate parents to engage in intensive childrearing even under resource constraints (Kerry et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2012). Yet, empirical findings remain mixed as to whether values can outweigh material constraints.

Most existing studies have been conducted in Western Europe and North America, where both structural inequalities and cultural cleavages follow different historical trajectories (Craig et al., 2014; Gibson-Davis, 2008; Gordon, 2017; Jeynes, 2003; Smith, 2010). In Central and Eastern Europe, the post-socialist transformation has amplified socioeconomic stratification while simultaneously intensifying value conflicts (Halman & Voicu, 2010). Despite this unique setting, little empirical evidence is available on how SES and value orientations interact in shaping parenting practices in the region.

To address this gap, our study investigates how parental value preferences and socioeconomic background jointly influence multifaceted parental involvement in Hungary. Drawing on a nationally representative survey of 1,156 parents of fourth-grade children, we examine whether structural or cultural factors are stronger predictors of multifaceted parental involvement. Specifically, we test three hypotheses: (H1) higher SES predicts richer parenting; (H2) postmaterialist values predict richer parenting; and (H3) values are stronger predictors of multifaceted parental involvement than SES. By conducting hierarchical multiple regression, we first estimate the predictive strength of SES, followed by parental values, to test the incremental contribution of cultural over structural determinants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Parental involvement as a key factor in child development

Parental involvement has long been recognized as a central determinant of children's educational success. Numerous studies point to the importance of socioeconomic resources:

parents with higher education, income, and occupational prestige typically invest more time and energy in their children and provide a wider range of cognitive and social activities (Camarero-Figuerola et al., 2020; Craig et al., 2014; Lareau, 2002, 2018; Mikus et al., 2021). Recent studies confirm that inequalities in parental investments appear early and contribute significantly to later performance gaps (Gibson-Davis, 2008; Gordon, 2017; Ndwandwe, 2023; Passaretta et al., 2022). Even seasonal differences in parental investments—such as those during summer breaks—can increase socioeconomic disparities (Hastings & LaBriola, 2023).

At the same time, parenting today also unfolds in the context of a digitized childhood. Children are immersed in digital content across multiple devices and platforms, while parents often struggle with limited time, waning interest in shared activities, and a lack of meaningful alternatives (Matthes et al., 2021). This modern environment makes it even more pressing to understand how parental resources and values shape the multifaceted parental involvement of everyday interactions.

2. The concept of multifaceted parental involvement and breadth of home-based practices

Several theoretical approaches view the quantity and quality of parental engagement as a key factor in child-rearing. Coleman (1988) introduced the notion of *multiplex* relationships, in which a single tie connects individuals across several contexts, reinforcing norms and trust. In parent–child relationships, a “simplex” relationship refers to limited interactions (e.g., basic caregiving or supervision), whereas a multiplex relationship entails diverse activities (e.g., shared leisure, sports, cultural programs, household work, and learning) (Coleman, 1988).

Epstein emphasized both school-related and home-based activities, such as assisting with homework, practicing skills, monitoring progress, and planning further education (Epstein, 2010, 2018). Goodall and Montgomery (2014) highlighted parental engagement beyond school demands, including conversations, storytelling, shared reading, discussing media, and visiting libraries, museums, or cultural events (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). Lareau’s (2002) *concerted cultivation* concept describes a structured, development-oriented system of activities, ranging from extracurriculars to family discussions that encourage children’s critical thinking and social participation.

Thus, multifaceted parental involvement encompasses both formal and informal learning support, access to enriching activities, and opportunities to develop socio-emotional skills (Epstein, 2018; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Sonnenschein et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2021). High-quality parenting involves a wide repertoire of activities, from helping with school tasks to cultural experiences and everyday conversations (Bryzek et al., 2024; Smith, 2010). Time investments can be measured by the frequency and variety of activities (LaRocque et al., 2011). Recent decades have seen increases in intensive, development-focused parenting (Craig et al., 2014), with reading standing out as one of the strongest long-term predictors of achievement (OECD, 2012). Everyday activities such as cooking or playing board games also promote social and emotional development (Albrecht & Khetani, 2017).

3. Structural determinants: Socioeconomic status and family resources

SES is one of the most reliable predictors of parenting practices and multifaceted parental involvement. Large-scale international studies show that higher national and individual SES levels are associated with parental strategies focusing on children's individual development (Xiao et al., 2024; Park & Lau, 2016). High-SES families can provide more frequent, diverse, and development-oriented activities, consistent with Lareau's (2018) model of concerted cultivation. The quantity and quality of involvement are also linked to the amount of time parents can dedicate to children: time-use studies indicate that highly educated parents increased their emotionally and cognitively enriching time between 1992 and 2006 (Craig et al., 2014).

Family structure is another important dimension. Married, two-parent households typically offer greater stability, more resources, and more emotional capacity than single-parent or blended families (Barrett & Turner, 2005; Garutsa & Owolabi, 2024; Gibson-Davis, 2008; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; Nguyen et al., 2018,); The number of children can also shape parental investments, as limited resources (time, finances) are divided across siblings.

4. Cultural determinants: Child-rearing values and orientations

In his work *Class and Conformity*, Kohn (1989) interprets child-rearing values specifically in the context of social class and job requirements. His empirical studies show that parents' preferred educational goals—such as emphasizing obedience or self-direction—directly reflect their workplace experiences. Members of the working-class work in jobs in which rule-following, discipline, and external control predominate, so they consider conformity desirable in their children. In contrast, the middle class works in jobs that require greater autonomy and freedom of choice, so self-direction, independence, curiosity, and creative problem-solving become priorities in child-rearing.

Morgan and Sørensen examine the effects of norm enforcing parental behavior based on closer relationships and more open, horizon expanding parental behavior on school performance. Behind these two behaviors lie the parents' values. Their study demonstrated that shared values are the key to the success of Catholic schools. Enforcing norms alone does not contribute to results, but when values are shared with school goals, they lead to effectiveness. Broadening horizons can go hand in hand with post-material values, which mean openness to the world (Morgan & Sørensen, 1999).

The role of cultural orientations is further nuanced by the South African study by Khathi et al. (2022), which points out that educators are often uncertain about how to interpret the concept of “values education,” which hinders its consistent integration into schools. According to the study, due to the moral decline observed in the social environment, the role of teachers and parents as role models is “inevitable” for maintaining norms and fostering the moral development of students. Current page. The study established that role modeling of learners by teachers and parents is inevitable to save society from mo....

Parental values shape how much time, attention, and resources are devoted to child development. These orientations vary across cultures and social classes: higher-SES parents tend to emphasize autonomy, creativity, and curiosity, while lower-SES groups prioritize conformity and obedience (Flouri, 2003; Park & Lau, 2016). However, certain traditional or religious orientations may counterbalance low SES and sustain high levels of parental involvement (Pusztai, 2020; Pusztai et al., 2024).

Recent studies suggest that parental care motives are associated with social conservatism, regardless of age (Kerry et al., 2022) while religiosity predicts closer parent–child relationships and better well-being globally (Rothwell & Davoodi, 2024). Conservative orientations emphasizing tradition and social stability support intensive, development-oriented practices (Bryzek et al., 2024; Gordon, 2017). Cross-national research also demonstrates that cultural orientations such as individualism, collectivism, and conformity shape parenting (Gorla et al., 2024).

Values affect the multifaceted parental involvement in multiple ways. Where family life is prioritized, parents devote more time to their children, which has a positive influence on school engagement (Taylor et al., 2012). High educational aspirations also drive parents to structure home learning environments (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill, 2015; Jeynes, 2003). Viewing child-rearing as a long-term investment correlates with more multifaceted parental involvement, especially in reducing inequalities for disadvantaged children (Halman & Voicu, 2010; OECD, 2025).

Yet discrepancies exist between declared values and actual practices. Psychology frames this as the *attitude–behavior gap* (Ajzen, 1991), while Bourdieu’s (2002) concept of habitus suggests that inherited social patterns often override professed values. Thus, parental practices may not always align with stated orientations (Bourdieu, 2002).

5. Central and Eastern European context

While the roles of SES and values have been widely studied in Western Europe and North America, much less is known about their effects in Central and Eastern Europe. This region has undergone profound social transformation since the fall of socialism, marked by rising inequalities, changing family structures, and deepening value cleavages (Halman & Voicu, 2010; Kalmijn, 2019; Ulferts, 2020). These contextual features may shape parental involvement differently than in Western societies.

Our study responds to this gap by examining how child-rearing values, socioeconomic status, and home-based parenting practices interrelate in Hungary, contributing to a broader understanding of the interplay between social structure (SES) and culture (values) in family socialization.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design; Participants; Data collection tools and data analysis techniques

The study followed a clearly defined research outline based on a cross-sectional survey design. The target population consisted of Hungarian parents of fourth-grade children, and data were collected in 2019/2020 using a paper-based, self-administered questionnaire. A nationally representative sample (N = 1,156) was obtained through a multi-stage cluster sampling strategy: schools were selected in the first stage, and classes in the second, with full-class surveys conducted in each selected class. This procedure ensured representativeness across regions, settlement types, and social compositions.

The social capital within the family questionnaire served as the main research instrument validated by Pusztai (Pusztai, 2009). Content validity was ensured through expert review and alignment with established theoretical constructs, while reliability was supported by the standardised administration procedure and the large, nationally representative sample.

The questionnaire measures a wide range of factors, including family background, child characteristics, parenting practices, family resources, and attitudes toward child-rearing. The value of the questionnaire lies in its structured, multidimensional examination of the family environment of fourth-grade children: from demographic data to parental involvement, the child's everyday activities and extracurricular participation, to the consistency of parenting principles. The scaled and categorical questions allow for quantitative comparison, while the open-ended questions reveal parents' suggestions and needs.

Regarding variables, the analysis used both independent and dependent variables derived from the questionnaire (see above).

We chose binomial logistic regression as our methodological approach for conducting the analysis. This method can show how much the addition of a new variable group improves the model fit and how the effects of the previous variables change. The method shows us odds ratios, i.e., it shows the probability of members of a given group being assigned to the group with rich parental care. To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, we applied several methodological safeguards throughout the analytical process. Construct validity was strengthened by grounding all variables in established theoretical concepts and previous empirical findings. Reliability was further supported by the standardised and uniform data collection procedure applied across all participating schools and classes. The multi-stage cluster sampling ensured that all respondents completed the same paper-based questionnaire under comparable conditions, reducing measurement error arising from interviewer effects or mode differences. The large sample size (N = 1,156) increased the statistical stability of the estimates. During the binomial logistic regression analysis, we built the models in a stepwise manner, which allowed us to examine how the inclusion of each new variable group improved model fit and whether the effects of previously entered predictors remained stable. This incremental modelling strategy enhanced internal validity by demonstrating the robustness of the associations.

Dependent Variable

Dependent variable (Y): Multifaceted Parental Involvement (MPI index)

Operationalised as an 8-item index measuring daily parent–child interactions (: talking with the child about school experiences; studying together with the child; reading stories, literature, or non-fiction texts to the child; discussing the child’s online experiences; talking with the child about life and the world; discussing spiritual matters or religion with the child; organizing shared leisure activities; and playing together with the child). Scores above the mean were coded as 1 = “rich parental involvement”, scores at or below the mean as 0.

The maximum score of the index was 8, with a mean value of 2.66.

To distinguish between groups of parents who strive to engage their children in a more diverse range of activities and those who participate in fewer, we dichotomized the variable. The split was based on the mean value of the index: parents scoring above the mean were classified as spending diverse and regular daily time with their fourth-grade children, whereas those with average or below-average scores were not included in this group.

Independent variables (X)

- a. Age was recorded in years as a continuous variable.
- b. Gender of the child was coded as 1 = boy and 2 = girl.
- c. Family structure was categorized as 1 = intact family and 0 = non-intact family.
- d. Number of children in the family was coded dichotomously: 0 = one or two children, and 1 = three or more children.
- e. Religiosity: Parental religiosity was measured using Tomka’s five-point self-identification scale, and couples were classified into three categories: non-religious homogamous, religious homogamous, and religiously heterogamous, following the literature on religious homogeneity and interfaith families.
- f. Factors of socialization values: We had a 21 item long set of questions: *What kind of adult would you like your child to become? Please rate on a scale of 1 to 4 how important the following are to you!* An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring with varimax rotation was conducted on items related to parental value preferences. The analysis yielded a three-factor solution based on eigenvalues > 1 and the scree plot. In our study, the three factors collectively explained 43.805% of the total variance. The KMO test revealed that the variables were sufficiently correlated to proceed with factor analysis, with a value of 0.943. The Bartlett test and the Goodness-of-fit Test were significant with a significance level of $p < 0.001$.

The first factor, labeled *Traditional Community-Oriented Values*, included items such as patience, following rules, thriftiness, and optimism. The second factor, *Conservative-Traditional Values*, included items such as honesty, politeness, good manners, sense of responsibility, patriotism, religious faith, and hard work. The third factor, *Postmaterialist Values*, captured preferences like environmental awareness, creativity, imagination, and acceptance of others.

- g. Socioeconomic background: To identify patterns of socioeconomic background, we conducted a cluster analysis based on parental education, employment status, income level,

family structure, and number of children. Six distinct social status clusters emerged: *Rural Stable Graduates* (approx. 20%): Families in small towns with stable two-parent households and highly educated parents who devote considerable attention to their children. *Urban Elite* (10%): Highly educated urban parents in the most advantaged position in terms of education, labor market participation, and income, though their family stability is slightly lower. *Urban Middle-Class* (12%): Skilled workers or entrepreneurs with secondary education living in larger cities. Although their income is comparable to that of rural graduates, they are more likely to live in non-traditional family structures and have fewer children. *Rural Low-Income Workers* (21%): Skilled workers in rural areas with low income and relatively high rates of single parenthood. *Small-Town Precarious Workers* (20%): Skilled workers in small towns in unstable employment situations, with low income and the lowest prevalence of two-parent households. *Rural Deprived Families* (10%): Parents with the lowest education levels and poorest labor market status, and income. These families often rely on childcare benefits, raise three or more children (frequently in blended families), and report low levels of verbal engagement and reading at home.

Multicollinearity was evaluated using variance inflation factors (VIFs) derived from an auxiliary OLS model, as logistic regression does not produce collinearity diagnostics. All VIFs were well below conventional cutoffs (1.01–1.10), well below conventional thresholds ($VIF < 5$), indicating no problematic multicollinearity (see Table 3 in the Appendix).

Ethical considerations: This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards for social science research. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. All responses were anonymized, and data were stored securely to ensure confidentiality. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the ethical committee of the University of Debrecen.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 1. The dependent variable, multifaceted parental involvement (MPI index), had a mean of 0.28 ($SD = 0.45$). The average age of respondents was 39.7 years ($SD = 5.8$). The sample was approximately balanced in terms of the child's gender, with boys and girls evenly represented ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.50$). Most respondents lived in intact families ($M = 0.77$, $SD = 0.42$), and 40% had three or more children. Religiosity was reported by 46% of the sample ($M = 0.46$, $SD = 0.50$). Regarding value orientations, respondents scored highest on Traditional Community-Oriented Values ($M = 0.44$, $SD = 0.83$), followed by Postmaterialist Values ($M = 0.02$, $SD = 0.81$), and lowest on Conservative-Traditional Values ($M = -0.12$, $SD = 0.84$).

Logistic Regression Predicting Multifaceted Parental Involvement

We performed a binary logistic regression analysis to examine which factors predict the likelihood of high-level, multifaceted parental involvement. The entire model was statistically significant, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents with high and low levels of multifaceted parental involvement. Table 2 shows that several explanatory variables were significant in the three-step model. As a first step, we included family characteristics. The respondent's age is significant in all models. $\text{Exp}(B) < 1$ (0.94–0.95), so age is inversely related to MPI value. The gender of the child also has a significant effect, with $\text{Exp}(B)$ ranging from 0.63 to 0.67, indicating that parents of boys are less likely to be in the group with above-average MPI values. Family structure is only significant in the third model, where values are also included, $\text{Exp}(B) = 1.693$, with intact families having a higher chance of being included in the group with high MPI values.

In the second step, we included social status factors. The reference category was the rural, low-status group. In comparison, the rural, disadvantaged group: $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.824^*$. In other words, parents in this group are more than two and a half times more likely to fall into the above-average category in the third model. In the case of urban, well-off, college-educated parents, $\text{Exp}(B) = 4.9^{**}$, showing a powerful positive effect. Small town, stable, graduate: also significant and positive ($\text{Exp}(B) = 3.9^{**}$). The impact of a small town, unstable worker and an urban, skilled, high school graduate is not significant, i.e., there is no proven difference compared to the reference.

In the third model, values were also included. The model's explanatory power improved continuously. It has a significant positive effect with the traditional-community factor ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.321^*$). The traditional conservative factor has a powerful, considerable effect ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.824^{***}$). This is the strongest predictor in terms of outcome.

Other predictors, including number of children, religiosity, and postmaterialistic values, were not statistically significant.

In summary, the regression results support H1, as higher-status groups showed substantially greater odds of multifaceted parental involvement (e.g., Urban Middle-Class: $\text{Exp}(B) = 4.904$, Rural Stable Graduates: $\text{Exp}(B) = 2.824$). H2 was not supported, since postmaterialist values were not significant ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.206$, ns.), whereas conservative-traditional values showed a strong positive effect ($\text{Exp}(B) = 1.824$). H3 was rejected because socioeconomic status exerted a much stronger influence than any value orientation, as evidenced by larger odds ratios (e.g., 4.904 vs. 1.824).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our study aimed to examine how parents' socioeconomic status and child-rearing values influence the quality of parental involvement at home in Hungary. We hypothesized that (H1) higher socioeconomic status and (H2) postmaterialistic value preferences are associated with greater parental involvement, and that (H3) parenting values have a greater influence on

parents' child-rearing activities than socioeconomic status. The results partially confirmed our hypotheses.

Regarding our first hypothesis, the results of the analysis clearly highlight the decisive role of socioeconomic background. Urban parents with high levels of education and stable financial situations (Urban Elite) are much more likely to engage in varied, everyday activities with their children. In contrast, rural families with lower levels of education are less diverse and less intense in their involvement. This finding is consistent with research showing that parents' socioeconomic resources (education, income, family stability) directly enable planned, coordinated parental activities at home that support their children's development (Lareau, 2003; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). In line with previous studies, our results also show that family structure is essential: intact families were more likely to engage in rich parenting, underscoring the role of relational and emotional stability alongside material resources. These results clearly support the first hypothesis.

The second hypothesis of this study assumed that post-materialistic, child-centered values encourage multifaceted parental involvement. Contrary to our expectations, post-materialistic orientation was not associated with multifaceted parental involvement at home. Instead, conservative-traditional and, to a lesser extent, community-oriented values significantly increased the likelihood of multifaceted parental involvement. This suggests that traditional parenting values that focus on responsibility, rule-following, and family cohesion are more likely to encourage parents to invest in a variety of ways in their children's upbringing. These findings are consistent with recent cross-national findings, which also concluded that religiosity and conservatism are associated with stronger parental commitment (Pusztai, 2020; Kerry et al., 2022; Rothwell & Davoodi, 2024). Parents who are attached to traditional values are more likely to view parenting as a long-term investment, which increases multifactorial involvement (Halman & Voicu, 2010).

The two parental orientations described by Morgan and Sørensen (1999) (norm-enforcing and horizon-expanding) also reflect value-based differences. Norm-enforcing behavior is based on conformity to community norms, discipline, and respect for tradition, while horizon-expanding is more closely linked to openness, creativity, and post-material values. The present results show that conservative-traditional values (Kohn, 1989), are indeed associated with stronger parental involvement. This suggests that traditional values are reflected not only in expectations regarding children's behavior, but also in parental investment of time and resources. However, the finding that post-materialistic child-rearing values do not have a significant impact on parental activity at home contrasts with earlier findings consistent with theories of modernization and value change, which suggest that those who break with traditional thinking value personal fulfillment above all else, which often predicts that child-centered, creativity-oriented values promote intensive parental involvement. The findings also highlight the attitude–behavior gap between values and practices. Postmaterial values were not associated with actual parental activity. This is consistent with the psychological approach that

declared values do not always lead to behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and with Bourdieu's (2002) habitus theory, according to which social patterns often override stated orientations. Thus, the second hypothesis was only partially confirmed, because child-rearing values have a significant impact on parental activity, but the results confirmed the significant influence of conservative values.

Our third hypothesis was that the influence of parenting values is greater than that of socioeconomic status. However, a comparison of structural and cultural factors revealed that socioeconomic status had a more substantial effect on multifaceted parental involvement than any parenting value orientation. Although conservative orientations matter in their own right, their effect does not override that of parents' socioeconomic status. This result refutes the assumption that parenting values can fully compensate for the lack of resources resulting from low status. Consequently, we rejected our third hypothesis based on Xiao et al., 2000; Park & Lau, 2016. We propose that this is because, given their status, parents lack the financial means to provide their children with additional programs. Because of where they live, they lack access to the same opportunities as high-status urban parents.

Overall, our findings are significant in that they contribute to the theoretical debate analyzing the weight of structural and cultural explanations in the translation of child-rearing values into everyday parenting practices. Domestic data from 2020 show that diversity in child-rearing continues to depend more on socioeconomic differences, while the influence of values is secondary. This is consistent with Bourdieu's (1984) concept of habitus, according to which material conditions often limit the realization of professed values and result in an attitude-behavior gap (Ajzen, 1991). At the same time, the significance of conservative-traditional orientations warns us that the cultural dimension cannot be neglected. In specific environments, religious and community values can reinforce parental efforts.

In international comparison, these results show both similarities and differences with the processes observed in the Western world. The strong influence of socioeconomic status echoes patterns observed in the United States and Western Europe, while the limited role of postmaterialist orientations differs from the expectations of modernization theory. This is an interesting result because, in a country undergoing rapid modernization, Hungarian parents are just as exposed to the effects of strong individualization, in which self-interest prevails over caring for children. This results in Western societies in the postponement or abandonment of starting a family and a decline in the number of children, as parents prefer to invest in their own careers rather than in the time-consuming activities of caring for children. In Hungary, we observed in 2020 that conservative parenting values, regardless of social status, can support a high level of activity in everyday child-rearing tasks. However, as cultural changes have accelerated rapidly in this region as well, it is necessary to continuously monitor the relationship between educational value preferences and educational practices.

Implication and limitation

The findings show that socioeconomic status remains the strongest driver of multifaceted parental involvement, indicating that policies aiming to reduce inequalities in children's home

learning environments must prioritize support for low-SES families. At the same time, the positive effect of conservative-traditional values suggests that cultural orientations can meaningfully reinforce parental engagement, highlighting the importance of value-sensitive parenting programs. Finally, the absence of an effect for postmaterialist values challenges assumptions of modernization theory and underscores the need for context-specific approaches when designing interventions to strengthen parental involvement.

Finally, some limitations must be acknowledged. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences, and unmeasured factors such as work schedules, peer influences, or school demands may mediate or moderate the observed relationships. Nevertheless, the large, nationally representative sample strengthens the reliability and generalizability of the findings. In summary, our study shows that parents' educational values, especially conservative-traditional values, have a significant influence on child-rearing practices, while higher parental status and family stability remain the most powerful drivers of diverse home-based educational activities. This suggests that programs that support parental preparedness and awareness have a role to play in promoting rich parental involvement.

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APPENDIX

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics

Variable	N	M	SD
MPI index	1014	0.28	0.45
Age	1073	39.7	5.8
Gender of the child (1=boy, 2=girl)	1114	0.50	0.50
Family structure (1=intact, 0=non-intact)	1047	0.77	0.42
Number of children (0=1–2, 1=3+)	1116	0.40	0.49
Religiosity	953	0.46	0.50
Traditional Community-Oriented Values	842	0.44	0.83
Conservative-Traditional Values	842	-0.12	0.84
Postmaterialist Values	842	0.02	0.81
Status group	1156	2.25	1.67

Table 2.*Results of logistic regression*

	1. step			2. step			3. step		
	SE	Wald	Exp(B)	SE	Wald	Exp(B)	SE	Wald	Exp(B)
Family characteristics									
Age of the respondent	0,018	6,63	0,949*	0,019	10,9	0,94**	0.020	6.854	0.949**
Gender of the child	0,178	5,01	0,671*	0,18	4,67	0,67*	0.189	5.820	0.634*
Family structure	0,231	1,37	1,31	0,24	3,4	1,55	0.254	4.300	1.693*
Number of the children	0,189	1,55	1,27	0,196	0,16	1,08	0.205	0.152	1.083
social status factors									
Rural Low-Income Workers (reference)					15,19			18,00	
Rural Stable Graduates				0,49	5,56	3,22*	0.512	4.112	2.824*
Urban Middle-Class				0,53	9,11	4,55*	0.548	8.414	4.904**
Small town, unstable skilled worker				0,51	2,58	2,26	0.526	1,081	1.728
Small-Town Precarious Workers				0,5	8,51	4,31*	0.521	6,811	3,9**
Urban Elite				0,54	2,81	2,49	0.564	1.345	1.924
Values									
Religiosity							0.197	0,065	0,951
Traditional Community-Oriented Values							0.126	4,892	1,321*

Conservative-Traditional Values							0.123	23,813	1.824***
Postmaterialist Values							0.122	2,374	1,206

Note:

In the first step, Nagelkerke $R^2=0.036$; Cox & Snell $R^2=0.025$; in the second step, Nagelkerke $R^2=0.072$; Cox & Snell $R^2=0.05$; in the third step, Nagelkerke $R^2=0.16$; Cox & Snell $R^2=0.11$; Enter method; values above Exp(B) odds ratio 1 indicate a higher probability of inclusion, while values below 1 indicate a lower probability. * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

The model is significant: $P \leq 0.000$.

Table 3.

Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) for Predictors Included in the Logistic Regression Models

Predictor	Tolerance	VIF
Religiosity	0.915	1.093
Gender of the child	0.956	1.046
Traditional Community-Oriented Values	0.941	1.063
Conservative-Traditional Values	0.906	1.104
Postmaterialist Values	0.946	1.057
Age	0.968	1.033
Number of children	0.987	1.014
Family structure	0.957	1.045
Status group	0.978	1.023

Note. All variance inflation factor (VIF) values are far below conventional thresholds ($VIF < 5$), indicating the absence of problematic multicollinearity.