

How to Cite:

Vijimon, I., Dakshinamurthy, R., & Rajavel, N. (2022). Responsive parenting skills among the school teachers and the psychosocial wellbeing of school going students: A study conducted among the school going teachers of Tamilnadu. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S4), 7635–7644. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS4.10237>

Responsive parenting skills among the school teachers and the psychosocial wellbeing of school going students: A study conducted among the school going teachers of Tamilnadu

Vijimon I

Research Scholar, Center for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli

Dr. R. Dakshinamurthy

Professor & Director (Retd.) Center for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli

Dr. N Rajavel

Assistant professor, Department of Social Work, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli

Abstract---Authoritative parenting, the preferred style of parenting, satisfies the subjective needs of children that are scripty with the potential to nurture or challenge their psychosocial wellbeing according to the impacts imprinted due to the interventions of the parents or the figures who parent the children. Objective of the study is to measure the awareness of school going teachers about the influence of responsive parenting skills that the school teachers possess and practice to nurture the psychosocial wellbeing of the students under their care. This study used a structured questionnaire on the ways by which the parenting roles are defined according to the authoritative style of parenting. The responses of the teachers and their in-depth understanding about the responsiveness that would objectively contribute to the psychosocial wellbeing of the students were discussed through a focus group discussion. 160 teachers from the kindergarten classes to senior secondary level participated in the discussion and provided valuable data. Results obtained from the analysis show that the teaching community as parents as well as teachers need to be trained in the area of parenting to accommodate the emotional needs and address the mental health challenges propel while engaging with the school going children.

Keywords---parenting style, responsive parenting, school teachers, psycho social wellbeing, school students.

Introduction

Mental health of the school going children is the foremost concern of the parents and teachers as their interventions ought to make the life-scripts of the children either productive or malevolent. Exclusion in the primary education worldwide, estimates in millions according to UNESCO and the precipitating factors include poverty, ethnicity, language, and disabilities (UNESCO, 2015). A study by Ganig & Gulati states that India has the second biggest educational system in the world. (Ganig & Gulati, 2017) Therefore, it is imperative to look into the different aspects that contribute to the psychosocial wellbeing of the children who are part of the system. Parenting as a process that evolves a new-born from its birth to his/her adulthood. This is a remarkable period of time when a person is groomed to face the world with healthy physical, mental and social attributes.

The above said process is scripty and mostly recorded transactions which the parental figures who have taken care of them and others who had influences on the person from his/her babyhood. The parental inputs vary as the behavioural expressions of each parental figures at different situations would have the impact of the environment as well as the internal recordings of the learned transactions that set the ego states of the individual. Parents and teachers must stroke the children, play with them and make them feel attached securely as and when required (Ernst, Franklin H. 2008). Parents play the primary role in designing the life script of their children. The same is nurtured either constructively or destructively by the teachers as they are considered as the second parents of the school going students. The study here intentionally designed to unleash the awareness of the teacher parents who parent their own children and how the same practices reflected in their professional life as teachers.

Objective of the Study

Objective of the study is to unearth the responsive parenting skills of the school teachers and discuss its possible influence on the psychosocial wellbeing of the students whom they teach.

Research Methodology

The study quantitatively assessed the perspectives of the teacher parents through focus group discussion. The areas precisely incorporated for the discussions falls attuned with the responsive or authoritative parenting styles.

Research Design

The researcher described the areas with the help of a structured questionnaire and collected the data with the help of interviewing and recording by adopting descriptive research design.

Data Collection

Structured questionnaire focusing on the authoritative parenting styles was used to collect the data.

Sample Design

The study employed purposive sampling and conducted focus group discussion to collect qualitative data.

Sample Size

The researcher collected data from 160 teacher parents who were working in schools i.e., from the kindergarten classes to senior secondary classes.

Significance of the Study

The study invites the needed attention to the concerned services and service providers to understand that the contribution of teaching community as they are capable of implant or supplant the children with inputs to nurture or hamper the psychosocial wellbeing of the students. Though, India advances by paying its sincere attention to the field of education, the challenges we face are aplenty such as low school enrolment ratio, drop-out cases and non-availability of teachers (UNESCO, 2015). Moreover, if not rampant but in a countable sense, we still experience child labour, child marriages, discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, religion, unequal opportunities that lead to injustice (Azam & Kingdon, 2013). Along with the aforesaid issues, addressing the mental health blues is still a stigmatized field of concern for many corners of our country.

Parenting and teaching collaborate at a numerous front philosophically whereas, the praxis intervention at the same elevation seems alienating each other from the purpose. Students spend a considerable amount of time with their teachers. However, the quality time spend with the teachers is relative and minimal to count as the teachers tune themselves with the vision and mission of the organization mostly, they are engaged with. Nevertheless, an ideal teacher plays the role of a parent through his/her actions to unearth the scholastic, co-scholastic and psychosocial aspects of the students who are under the care of them. Teaching as a multidimensional process has to address the psychosocial needs of the students. Therefore, it is imperative as teachers to comprehend the bigger picture by which the students are defined i.e., the social, economic, cultural and other domains by which the students are being nurtured. A noticeable follow through here is that the behaviour outcomes as expected is more envisaged while the parental responsiveness of the teachers are at the maximum and which with, they correlate their teaching and learning practices and styles of parenting (Paulson et al., 1994). Teacher parents, authentically establish or embellish the outcomes of the teaching learning process by which the students do engage themselves appreciatively due to the proximity that the teachers can utilize to impact the lives of children than the parents at a distance (Wentzel, 2002).

Review of Research

A study by Gutman and Midgley, (2004) points out the importance of parents and teacher in the process that makes the success of students or the failure. Whatever may the outcome, that would not be an exclusive result of the attempts or efforts of the students. The teachers and parents decisively share their part as optimistic service providers or as pessimistic gaslighting naggers. Comer & Haynes, (2002) reiterates the vicious encirclement of the social and economic standards set by education that would prosper an individual provided with the characteristics that education uphold. Coleman, J (2006) explains that there are a number of variables that intricately woven with the achievements that the students make. The role of teachers and the parental inputs along with other associated realms of the education battle for the students to reach the zenith or vice versa if the conditions are unmet or unfriendly met.

J. Levin and F. J. Nolan (2010) categorically expresses that the behavioral outcomes explicitly observed among the students would have had an implicit connotation with the conscious or unconscious behaviour of the teachers. K. H. Wong and T. R. Wong. (2009) sates in their study that the teachers who are in command and proficient in delivering the concept flawlessly would necessitate the children to model or anchor the teacher intentionally. Quality in the throughput expresses in the form of behavioral outcomes that are expected due to the teaching interventions. Sullivan et al. (2014) in their study interpret the influence of the behaviour strategies and the reprimanding practices that the teachers adopt over the students are found to have more counts than the opposite, i.e., that of appreciable and reinforcing the positive behaviour. This is in reality not strength focused but tempt to reinforce negatively for negative outcomes.

Analysis and Evaluation

160 school teachers participated in the focus group discussion. Data collected primarily to understand the ways in which each participant respond to different situations that are linked closely with the emotions, needs, and interests through structured questions and interventions.

Table 1. Participants

Section & Age Group of Children	Number	Percentage
Kindergarten – 3 to 5 years (Female)	40	25%
Primary - 6 to 12 years (Female)	40	25%
Secondary & Senior Secondary – 13 to 18 (Male 40 and Female 40)	40	25%
	40	25%
Total	160	100%

Table 1 shows the details of the participants. Data collected equally from the teachers who handle the classes from kindergarten to senior secondary to augment the outcomes productively.

Table 2. Response of kindergarten Teacher Parents

Kindergarten	Number	Percentage	Difference
Setting high standards	28	70	30
Setting rules and boundaries	30	75	25
Address emotions positively	22	55	45
Express emotions appropriately	24	60	40
Sensitive to the signals of children	26	65	35

The details of the responses shared by the teachers of kindergarten is explained through table 2. 40 kindergarten female teachers were interviewed and elicited their responses regarding the areas mentioned in table 2. The age group of the teachers ranged from 23 to 42. 32 teachers were aged below 30. The young teacher parents found to have better awareness on the need of positive parenting. Specific focus on the areas mentioned in the table was missing among a good percentage of the teacher parents. 30 percent of the teacher parents do not set any particular standards for their children as they do not expect anything specifically from their children. 25 percent of them seem to be permissive and avoid firmness in their relationship with their children. 45 percent of the parents feel that all the emotions need not to be addressed positively.

A few responses in this regard show that they neglect the emotional tantrums and expressions of children due to their ignorance, thinking that as common, the way they were treated by their parents and the emotional neglects they had as children. 40 percent of the parents shared that they do not have any specific ways to emotionally connect with their children every day. The intimate feelings are unexplained and not expressed appropriately to make the children feel secured. These parent teachers are consciously or unconsciously shaping their children's self-esteem and thereby self-concept. Children at this stage need specific attention in their own initiatives even if they seem to be negligible for the adults. The purposefulness they develop at this age will prompt them with better self-esteem on the contrary, would foster a guilt feeling and thereby developing inhibitions with long term repercussions. (Knight, Z.G. 2017).

Table 3. Response of primary School Teacher Parents

Primary Teachers Grade I - V	Number	Percentage	Difference
Setting high standards	33	82.5	17.5
Setting rules and boundaries	35	87.5	12.5
Address emotions positively	25	62.5	37.5
Express emotions appropriately	22	55	45
Sensitive to the signals of children	21	52.5	47.5

Table 3 elaborates the responses of the teachers' parents those who teach in the primary classes. Children at this stage are prompt in taking initiatives and industrious in doing tasks independently. (Knight, Z.G. 2017). Teachers at primary schooling contribute immensely to redesign the scripty behaviours of the children. The children model or anchor the behaviour of their children at the stage and place the words and actions of the teachers atop as compared to other

parental figures around them. It is important to notice that 82.5 percent of the teacher parents set high standards and expect their children to be successful in future. Besides, 87.5 percent of the teacher parents are firm or strict disciplinarians and they seem to be clear with what is not expected from the children. At the same time, it is contrasting with the ways by which they address the emotional needs of the children as well as expressing their emotions appropriately to the children. The findings here, contradict with the intentions or learnings of the teacher parents regarding the first two areas i.e., setting high standards and setting rules and boundaries. 47.5 percent of the teacher parents avoid noticing the signals that children use to communicate non-verbally to them at different circumstances. They prioritize the demands to be met as a teacher or are unaware of the emotional neglect one causes when disconnect with children without assessing the communications that the children make.

Table 4. Response of Secondary School Teacher Parents

Secondary Teachers Grade VII -X	Number	Percentage	Difference
Setting high standards	35	87.5	17.5
Setting rules and boundaries	35	87.5	17.5
Address emotions positively	20	50	50
Express emotions appropriately	18	45	55
Sensitive to the signals of children	15	37.5	63.5

Table 4 marks the ways by which the teacher parents at the secondary school define their behaviour and relationship with their own children. Parenting and teaching the adolescents is a task that should align well with their personality. Students at this stage would have an emotional tussle between their identity and role confusion if not specifically enriched them to own their identity. Repudiation and refusal are normal outcomes that one can expect from the adolescents who have role confusion or else they would enjoy fidelity, loyalty and faith appropriate to their environment.

(Knight, Z.G. 2017), Darling-Fisher CS. (2019). Teachers and parents responsibly understand the children and provide them with the necessary support. Results on the other hand, range from poor school performance, abuses of different kind, anxiety, depression, truancy etc. (Gururaj Ganapati Gouda. et al, 2019). 87.5 percent of teacher parents who are in the secondary section seem to establish clear rules, boundaries and high standards as per their personal interests. Here, during the focus group discussion, a notable number of teacher parents shared that they set the same standards as they could not achieve the desired results according to their wishes during their schooling or college education. Living vicariously through their children and set the expectations and rules to tame the children are not an expected outcome of the responsive parenting. 17.5 percent of the parents are unaware of the skills to be possessed as parents and the same percent of them have either permissive or uninvolved parenting styles which would not satisfy the socio-emotional needs of the students.

As the children grew into their adolescent stage there is a withdrawal witnessed from the part of the parents in case of addressing the crucial areas of adulthood. 50 percent of them avoid interacting with their children once they attain puberty.

The reasons elicited during the focus group discussion find the belief systems and the learning of the parents when they were in that stage along with the cultural blocks they learned through the customs or mores host them safely under its fold. Besides, the case of expressing the emotions to their wards or with the circumstances they come across, around 55 percent of them avoid expressing their emotions. This includes love, care, anger, appreciation, happiness etc. Also, 63.5 percent of them avoid paying attention to the signals that their wards express with an ulterior feeling to disclose consciously or unconsciously. The parents in this regard, found to have no knowledge about why we need to understand the physical and emotional expressions that their children would love to share with them.

Table 4. Response of Senior Secondary School Teacher Parents

Senior Secondary Teachers Grade X -XII	Number	Percentage	Difference
Setting high standards	36	90	10
Setting rules and boundaries	28	70	30
Address emotions positively	18	45	55
Express emotions appropriately	16	40	60
Sensitive to the signals of children	25	62.5	37.5

Table 4 discusses the status of the responses that contributed to the study by the teacher parents at the senior secondary level. This stage of students' life falls under the adolescents again as similar to the secondary stage. Students at this stage as mentioned above would have role confusion if not trained to be with a positive self-image that designs their identity (Knight, Z.G. 2017).

The records in table 4 alarm the concerned community stay focused as the polarized view of the teacher parents. Expectations of these parents are at its peak and the same is evident in terms of setting rules and boundaries i.e., 90 percent of them have high expectations and 70 percent of them are clear with the rules and boundaries. This is mostly the result of the standards the parents would like to have and as they attempt to match their wishes with the popular wishes observed in the society. The society that sets certain norms in this regard would not match exactly with the preferred intelligence, aptitude, interest etc, of the students. On the other side of the table, explains the way the parents address the emotional needs of their wards. 55 percent of them avoid addressing the emotions of the children at this stage. The views expressed here primarily states that the children do not listen to their parents or they are not interested to share their feelings with the parents. Another important area is 60 percent of the parents either avoid expressing their feelings appropriately or expressing it in an inappropriate negative manner. 62.5 percent of the parents are aware of the physical changes and signs expressed by the children. But, they too have only a partial understanding on the emotional signals their children demonstrate at different occasions.

Summary

Kindergarten Teacher Parents

The move inevitable is alarming and has to be in alliance with the psychosocial needs of the children at their benchmarking milestones. The kindergarten teachers, primarily will have to be equipped to diagnose the children through the behaviour, expressions, signs and language that the children demonstrate at varied occasions. A teacher parent, who has the positive parenting skills, will be able to locate the specific outcomes of the behaviour exhibited by the children. Keeping the teacher parents informed and educated on the different stages of life and the responsive parenting techniques would contribute to address the psychosocial wellbeing of the children. Children at this stage, according to Erikson's stages of life, (Knight, Z.G. 2017) will look for a purpose in life through initiatives. Discounted initiatives would lead to malevolence created through guilt and inhibition. Teacher parents are expected to substitute the shortfalls that the parents may thrust upon the children consciously or unconsciously.

Primary Teacher Parents

The stage at the children who are in the grades I to V would approximately fall in to the fourth stage of Erikson's classifications (Knight, Z.G. 2017). Here, the children will be industrious and their behaviour would have the impact of the industriousness they intrinsically carry with them. The manifestations of the same would invite appropriate reciprocation from the part of the parents, teachers and the guardians. Failing to respond to the behavioural expressions of the children, ought to bring incompetence and that may lead them to be passive in their thoughts and actions.

Secondary and Senior Secondary Teacher Parents

The students who are between 13 to 18 years were the group whom these teacher parents deal with. The adolescents who need responsive parenting that would positively heighten their possibilities to succeed in all the endeavours they undertake are the targeted population for studying the impact. The parenting skills expressed by the teacher parents at this level hold a more pro-societal view than practical and all-inclusive approach. Need at this stage is more on psychosocial support than the illogical, irrational expectations and legal bindings with the vicarious experience of the parents or the popular norms or expectations of the society. There were no serious and specific difference observed between the theoretical understanding of the parenting skills among the male and female teacher parents.

Conclusion

Personal expectations as well as the professional outcomes conjuncture at some point of the practical execution of policies and programmes. The study here, checked the connotations found between the responsive parenting skills which the teacher parents possess and the ways in which the same may have an influential impact on the children whom they teach at different levels. To

conclude, the teacher parents do have limitations at various points of interactions with their own children as well as with the students whom they teach. The teachers are definitely a contributor not a destroyer as far as the performance of their students. At the same time, the study invites all the stakeholders to pay their sincere attention to the psychosocial needs and wellbeing of the school going students in its theoretical and practical fulcrum.

References

1. Accountability Initiative. (2013). Do schools get their money? PAISA 2012. New Delhi: Accountability Initiative.
2. Allugunti V.R (2022). A machine learning model for skin disease classification using convolution neural network. *International Journal of Computing, Programming and Database Management* 3(1), 141-147
3. Azam, M. & Kingdon, G.G. (2013). Are girls the fairer sex in India? Revisiting intrahousehold allocation of education expenditure. *World Development*, 42(5706), 143- 164. doi: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.09.003
4. Batara, R., Ardani, I. G. A. I., Wardani, I. A. K., Windiani, I. G. A. T., Adnyana, I. G. A. N. S., & Setiawati, Y. (2022). Psychogenic dysphagia in children, and the success of family-based treatment: Case report. *International Journal of Health & Medical Sciences*, 5(1), 163-168. <https://doi.org/10.21744/ijhms.v5n1.1894>
5. Coleman, J. (2006). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, Modified Version 94, S 95 - S120.
6. Comer, J. P. & Haynes, M. (2002). "Parent Involvement in Schools: An Ecological Approach" *Elementary School Journal*. 91 (3) : 271-277. [6]
7. Darling-Fisher CS. (2019). Application of the Modified Erikson Psychosocial Stage Inventory: 25 Years in Review. *West J Nurs Res*. Mar;41(3):431-458. [PubMed]
8. Ernst, Franklin H. (2008). *Handbook of Listening. Transactional Analysis of the Listening Activity*. 2nd ed. Vallejo, CA: Addresso'Set Publications.
9. Ganig, S. & Gulati, G. (2017). With 14cr children in primary schools why Indian education needs to be democratised. *SocialStory*. Retrieved from <https://yourstory.com/2017/08/india-education-democratisation/>
10. Gouda, Gururaj Ganapati, & D'Mello, Laveena. (2019). A Study on the Teacher-Student Relationship and its Impact on the Behaviour of High School Students. *International Journal of Case Studies in Business, IT, and Education (IJCSBE)*, 3(1), 28-34. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2589822>.
11. Gutman & Midgley (2004). The Role of Protective Factors in Supporting the Academic Achievement of Poor African American Students During the Middle School Transition. Volume 29, Issue 2, pp 223-249
12. J. Levin and F. J. Nolan. (2010). *Principles of Classroom Management*, Sixth edition, Boston, Pearson Education Inc.
13. K. H. Wong and T. R. Wong. (2009). "The first days of school, How to be an effective teacher," Mountain View California, Harry K. Wong Publications Inc.
14. Knight, Z.G. (2017). A proposed model of psychodynamic psychotherapy linked to Erik Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development. *Clin Psychol Psychother*. Sep;24(5):1047-1058. [PubMed]

15. Kumar, S. (2022). A quest for sustainium (sustainability Premium): review of sustainable bonds. *Academy of Accounting and Financial Studies Journal*, Vol. 26, no.2, pp. 1-18
16. Paulson, S.E., Marchant, G.J., & Rothlisberg, B.A. (1994). Constructs underlying students' perceptions of parents, teachers, and schools. Paper presented at the Midwestern Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL
17. Sullivan, A. M., Johnson, B., Owens, L., & Conway, R. (2014). Punish them or engage them? Teachers' views of unproductive student behaviours in the classroom. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(6), 4
18. Suryasa, I. W., Rodríguez-Gámez, M., & Koldoris, T. (2021). Health and treatment of diabetes mellitus. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 5(1), i-v. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n1.2864>
19. UNESCO. (2015). EFA global monitoring report 2015: education for all 2000-2015: achievements and challenges. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002322/232205e.pdf>.
20. Wentzel, K.R. (2002). Are effective teachers like good parents? Teaching styles and student adjustment in early adolescence. *Child Development*, 73(1), 287-301.