

Secondary Socialization Approach in Greek Early Childhood Environments during Distance Learning. Parents'-teachers' perspectives

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Abstract

The importance of socialization for children, in terms of secondary socialization is demonstrated through teachers' and parents' perceptions of the changes they have noticed in their children as a result of following the transition to online schooling. Pretest and posttest data were collected through qualitative interviews with in-service teachers and online questionnaires to parents using the Big Five model framework at a time when the online training took place one week after the children returned to the physical classrooms. Although the parents noticed changes in their children's behavior identified as a result of the children's lack of physical contact with peers and teachers, they did not believe that this could create socialization problems for the children. Teachers pointed out that some of the main difficulties and obstacles associated with distance education that children faced were the lack of feedback and the inability to have interpersonal contact with interlocutors.

Keywords: early childhood; online learning; parents' perception; secondary socialization; teachers' perception

Introduction

There are many factors that influence the process of socialization of the individual, and their influence varies according to the frequency and type of contact the individual has with them. Thus, the family, the most significant factor of primary socialization, more than any other, influences the development of human personality, since it takes over the individual from the moment of birth and influences him throughout life, teaching values, patterns, and behaviors (Ivanova et al., 2020). Parsons (1959) divides socialization into primary and secondary socialization, suggesting that the first one takes place in the family, where we learn certain norms and values of our family and community, while in secondary socialization and especially through school (and other socialization factors such as the media) we learn universalistic values. He also claims that school as an important socialization factor provides cognitive learning, which refers to knowledge, and ethical learning, which is associated with learning values (i.e., responsibility, participation in the school community, respect for the teacher etc.) in a way that preserves the common culture of a society.

In a normal situation, school is one of the most important secondary agents of socialization as together with the family provide smooth socialization of young people and cultivate them morally (Blackledge & Hunt 2019). However, with the school closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic classes at all levels moved from traditional to distance education processes, which changed the learning and socializing environment (Misirli & Ergulec, 2021). This extraordinary situation arose unexpectedly and those involved in education made great efforts to organize the procedures necessary for the transition to emergency remote teaching (Misirli & Ergulec, 2021). Teachers updated their knowledge on the use of ICT, designed online courses and digitized a huge amount of teaching material.

In this regard, tutors faced both new challenges and new opportunities as professionals in the transition to emergency remote teaching (Hodges et al., 2020). First, they had to maintain their important role in children's secondary socialization, from which children still learn social interaction skills and are influenced by. They also had to keep alive peer interaction in the school context (Blackledge & Hunt 2019), through which children eliminate old behaviors and, in this process, individuals are subjected to many more changes than in primary socialization (Ivanova et al., 2020).

This linking of teachers to children's socialization and their role is also highlighted by Chernyshenko et al., (2018), who argue in their Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) study that children can be taught skills by teachers that are relevant - beyond parents - to the development of skills such as empathy/compassion, tolerance/cultural flexibility, cooperation, etc. Socialization is inextricably linked to children's social skills and social responsibility, i.e., the way children interact with others and develop respect for individual differences or functioning as contributing members of the communities in which they live, and thus educators address these facets together (Kostelnik et al., 2007).

In reviewing studies of educators' attitudes and beliefs about the use of technology in courses, it appears that their opinions are changing, and they now feel more confident than in the past about using technology for work (Hatzigianni & Kalaitzidis, 2018). However, this confidence differs significantly when it comes to integrating technology with very young children or in relation to the hours in which technology is used. Thus, studies show that teachers are key to the effective use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in the classroom and highlight the importance of providing effective professional learning and development programs so that teachers can use a broader range of pedagogical strategies to support children's use of ICT (Dong, 2018).

It is a fact that throughout early childhood, both teachers and parents have a tremendous influence on what social behaviors children adopt (Kostelnik et al., 2007). In examining parents' views of students' experiences with distance learning during the pandemic, it was found that parents were more likely to be stressed when they experienced difficulties in supporting children's learning (Spinelli et al., 2020). While parents were provided with computers, tablets, and resources to support their children's online learning. They also had to support the project mentally, as they had to supervise, monitor, and even participate in the children's learning. As children's learning environment has moved home, parents are influencing their children's learning by equipping them with digital technologies and learning how to support them (Misirli & Ergulec, 2021). Many parents found to be very concerned about the new procedures of distance learning, because they saw themselves as teachers' substitutes (Putra et al., 2020). This new situation has made most parents become cautious about the educational outcomes of distance education. For example, when Dong et al., (2020) surveyed Chinese parents during the COVID -19 pandemic, he found that parents generally had negative beliefs and attitudes toward online learning in preschool centers.

Greek parents whose children have participated in online preschool classes seem to believe that their children's online participation may be harmful to preschool-aged children (Karavida & Tympa, 2021). They also believe that online learning does not provide sufficient or appropriate opportunities to socially engage young children who need more interaction and hands-on activities to focus and learn compared to adult learners. This conclusion is consistent with parents' reports of interaction with their children during quarantine (Karavida & Tympa, 2021). However, parents without online learning were dissatisfied and desired more interactive online learning to facilitate their children's learning during class suspension and desired better learning support from schools, flexible work arrangements, and government subsidies (Lau & Lee, 2021).

Overall, to analyze data on the differences in children's attitudes and social skills before and after school closure, we sought a framework that attempts to capture all aspects of their personality (López-Fernández, 2021), preferably through assessments by people who know the target person well. The Five Factor Personality Inventory "FFPI" assesses the Big Five factors of personality and can be used to assess scores to convey more specific information about a person's position in the five-factor space (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, autonomy) (Hendriks et al., 1999).

Methods

Several methods were used to determine the effects of distance learning on children's social behavior. Specifically, we used a pretest-posttest design to assess the direction and degree of changes on children's secondary socialization that occurred during the period of transition to distance education. The population of this study consists of parents who have children aged 2.6 – 4.6 years who enrolled in 22 public preschool centers in Greece during in and in-service teachers who provided online instruction to their children. A random sample with the previously mentioned criteria was used, ensuring that response procedures were clear, voluntary, and confidential.

In terms of measurement, this study used online questionnaires for parents and semi-structured interviews for teachers (conducted anonymously in the teachers' work environment at a time convenient to them) to explore their perceptions of the impact of the complexity of an online environment on children's social skills. The current study had two main aims. The first was to assess changes in rates of secondary socialization through teachers' and parents' perceptions evaluated by the Big Five model. The second objective was to examine participants' responses related to children's social behaviors and determine if teachers and parents form a causal judgment to explain their children's behavioral changes that portray distance learning as a threat to children's socialization

1.1. Research questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

Research Question 1: which is the difference in the children's social behavior after participating in distance learning that changed the structure of secondary socialization?

Research Question 2: Is the physical presence of teachers in the education of preschool children in line with significant influences on children's participation in their secondary socialization?

Research Question 3: Which is the impact of physical peer interaction in preschool education on children's involvement in their secondary socialization?

Research Question 4: Which is the impact of the use of technology in education on the quality of children's socialization in terms of peer and teacher interaction?

1.2. Participants

The participants in the study (N=326, female:285, male:41) were adults, with an average age between 35 and 44 years. 110 in-service teachers, eighty-one women (98%) and two men, working in 22 public preschool centers in Greece during the pandemic, and 216 parents, one hundred and seventy-seven women (58.7%) and thirty-nine men, whose children (aged 2.6 to 4.6 years) were enrolled in these public preschool centers in Ioannina and Thessaloniki were recruited. Most of the children covered by the study are four years old (42.1%, n=91), while 29.2% of the children are six years old (Table 1).

Table 1. Participant's demographic characteristics

Characteristics (N=326)	Male parents (n=39) No (%)	Female parents (n=177) No (%)	Male teachers (n=2) No (%)	Female teachers (n=108) No (%)
Age				
25-34	3(7.6)	36(20.3)	0(0)	21(19.4)
35-44	27(69.2)	123(69.4)	0(0)	39(36.1)
45-54	9(23)	18(10.1)	2 (100)	48(44.4)
Employment status				
Public Sector	8 (20.5)	42(23.7)	2(2.4)	81(97)
Private Sector	31(79.4)	135(76.2)	0(0)	27(100)

Online questionnaire

Participants who completed the Five-Factor Personality Inventory (FFPI), which assesses the Big Five factors of personality, indicated the response alternative that best matched their opinion. The questionnaire was structured in three stages with different response alternatives (Howitt & Cramer, 2011). The FFPI scale exhibits high internal consistencies, substantial stabilities, and construct validity. The item format, consisting of brief behavioral statements in the third person singular, makes the FFPI applicable to self- and other- assessments and to a wide range of educational levels. Parents first answered basic demographic questions such as gender, age, the preschool center in which the child is enrolled, etc (14 items). The second block included 22 items that collected data on parents' perceived attitudes about children's social behavior at home during the quarantine due to the pandemic in the fall of 2020 and after returning to physical classrooms. Based on the evidence provided in Chernyshenko et al., (2018) study for Social and emotional skills for student success and well-being, 18 social and emotional skills in terms of the Big Five model have been chosen for inclusion in this section comprising the factors of extraversion and agreeableness including referring to emotions of empathy, respect, co-operation etc. (Chernyshenko et al., 2018). The personality traits included in Big Five have been shown to be predictive of a variety of outcomes, including educational success and well-being (Chernyshenko et al., 2018). The final block contained 11 items related to parents' evaluation of the online learning environment and the impact of distance learning wherever it was used.

Semi structured interviews

In-service teachers from each school were interviewed and their perceptions regarding children's social behavior before and after the school closures were obtained. The interviews aimed to explore whether education's function of adapting people to society, fulfilled through the process of socialization differed between the experience of being a distance learner and the results of socialization in them when they attended school with physical presence. The questions were developed in accordance with two main themes: a) teachers' perceptions of children's social behavior during the pandemic and distance education; and b) their observations of children's social behavior after the schools opened and they returned to the school environment. Each participant answered the following three research questions:

1. In what ways, if any, do you believe the school environment has an impact on preschool children's socialization with their social universe outside the family (peers and adults other than his or her parents)?
2. To what extent, if at all, do you believe that the lack of interpersonal contact with peers influences them to develop healthy social competence?
3. To what extent do you believe the lack of interpersonal contact with teachers affects children's development of social ethical skills, such as respecting, accepting, cooperating, sharing, taking responsibility, helping, empathizing, caring, tolerating, befriending and conflict solutioning?

These qualitative sources provided data for the researchers to examine the in-service teachers' experiences with their social interactions with children during the pandemic, as well as their understandings and views related to their socialization process.

1.3. Procedure

The current research was conducted in September and October 2020 after all were quarantined during the national lockdown, and the study uses a pretest and posttest control group. The pretest was conducted from September 15-20, 2020 and parents were asked to complete the questionnaire confidentially and anonymously by sending an email invitation to 300 parents whose children were enrolled in early childhood education during the 2019-2020 school year. Since the researchers had no contact with the public, an introductory note was written and included with the questionnaire. We received 216 completed questionnaires (72% response rate). In addition, the researchers arranged Skype meetings with 110 in-service teachers who volunteered to be interviewed. Participating in-service teachers gave written consent for their online presence to be processed for the purposes of the study and in accordance with the data protection principle. Questions were also asked in writing to minimize response bias, such as verbal and nonverbal cues in a Skype meeting procedure that may elicit an unintended response.

1.4. Data analysis

Data sources are diverse and include questionnaires and interviews to confirm and converge evidence. For the first instrument, which was designed to measure parents' perceptions, an agree-disagree continuum with five scale points (agree strongly, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) and questions with four- response options were used. The software IBM SPSS 26.0 was chosen for the analysis, and an alpha level of 0.05 was used for each of the significance tests. Descriptive statistics were also calculated using Excel. The data collection also included information in the form of teacher interviews and so the qualitative data was analysed through charts and graphs which can show trends.

1.5. Ethical issues

Because parents may have been reluctant to share their children's behaviours, the researchers provided a cover letter briefly describing the true purpose of the study and ensuring confidentiality. All procedures were followed to ensure participants' rights during the research, such as having a clear understanding of what the research entailed, their right to withdraw at any time for any reason, and the details to reach the researcher with questions.

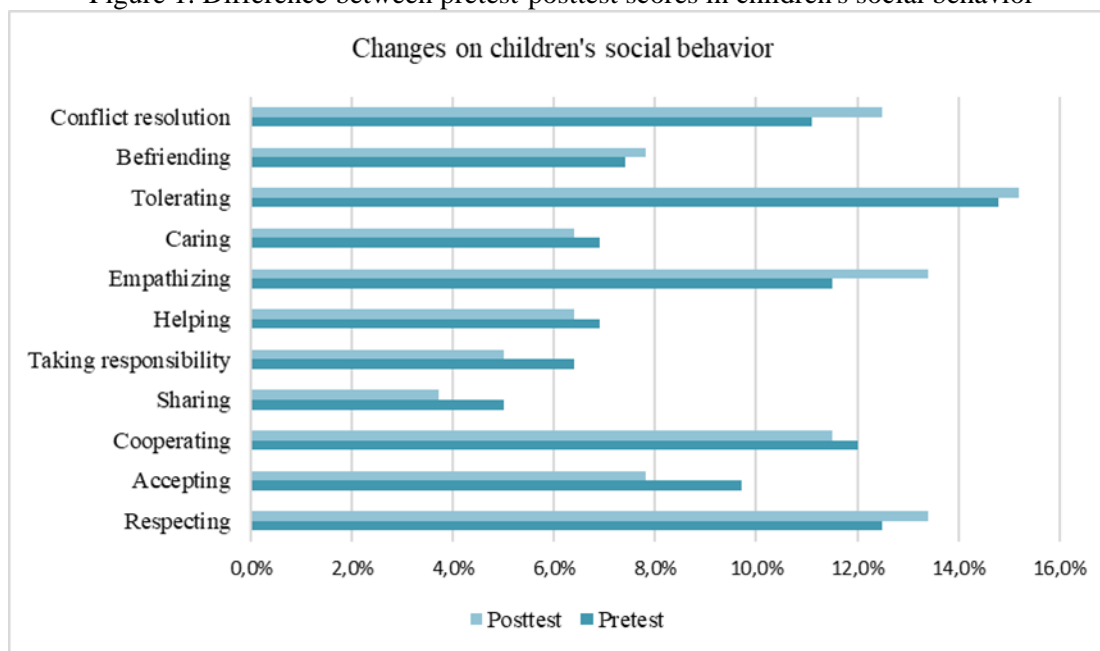
2. Results

Judging by the results of the post-test-pre-test scores of questionnaires, most participating parents seem to confirm that they noticed changes in their children's social behavior during and after the end of the quarantine. Figure 1 shows the themes identified by the parents, were mainly related to respect, acceptance, cooperation, empathy, tolerance, befriending and conflict resolution, which the children dealt with during the quarantine.

It seems that while learning at a distance and isolated from peers and teachers, detached from their role in the school microsystem in general, the children dropped the values that sun the appropriate behavior as members of the family or online class group. A great difference was found in the return of children to school and in tolerance (pre-test 14.8% - post-test 15.2%), cooperation (pre-test 12% - post-test 11.5%) as well as in conflict resolution (pre-test 11.1% - post-test 12.5%). This is probably since in the family the child feels very free to go beyond the given boundaries and test the limits of his caregivers.

However, in the physical classroom this is not tolerated as all children are treated equally and rules are set impersonally without considering the characteristics of each child and imposing on them various obligations such as behaving like others, leaving what is bid free and participating in joint activities with peers (pre-test 9.7 – post-test 7.8%). Finally, among these great differences was empathy (pre-test 11.5% - post-test 13.4%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Difference between pretest-posttest scores in children's social behavior



The children seemed to have changed sensitivity to other people's feelings during quarantine due to the lack of physical presence of teachers. It seems that in school, teachers extremely encourage this skill in children through many activities such as allowing children to speak aloud and name their feelings, using songs and rhymes, playing games, and reading storeys that introduce and reinforce feeling words, discussing acceptable ways to express strong feelings. What is very important here is that during the survey most parents make claims about external factors, i.e., they attribute the social behavior of their children to the conditions that prevailed during the pandemic and consider the environment as the cause rather than any possible internal one. Specifically, 32.4% of the participating parents considered the absence from the school environment as a very important factor, especially the lack of interpersonal and personal contact with the educational staff (31.4%), but also with classmates (38.4%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Parents' perceptions of the reasons for children's behavior change after the transition

Situational Attribution (n=216)	Unimportant	Slightly important	Quite important	Very important	Extremely important
School physical absence	8(3.7%)	33(15.3%)	66(30.5%)	70(32.4%)	39(18.1%)
Lack of contact with the teacher	8(3.7%)	29(13.4%)	71(32.8%)	68(31.4%)	40(18.5%)
Lack of frequent contact with schoolmates	8(3.7%)	32(16.2%)	43(19.98%)	83(38.4%)	50(23.1%)
Lack meeting friends outside the school	4(1.9%)	34(15.7%)	51(23.6%)	72(33.3%)	55(25.5%)

In evaluating online instruction, parents were asked to consider the child's lack of physical contact with peers. Specifically, they were asked to give their opinion on whether this was a serious factor that could potentially lead to socialization problems for the child at the end of the pandemic. In this case, as shown in Table 3, the sample was divided between those who were quite concerned about the imminent impact of the lack of interpersonal contact with peers on their child's socialization process (55.5%) and those who felt that it would cause few potential difficulties in the development of their children's socialization (48.1%). The results show that the children faced numerous problems during the quarantine that seemed to be overcome after their return to the physical classroom.

During the distancing educational process, parents recognized that their children were more disrespectful (pre-test 12.5% - post-test 13.4%) and distanced themselves from socializing with their friends (pre-test 7.4% - post-test 7.8%). The latter can be interpreted considering that the study concerned young children who cannot communicate with their friends either through social networks or by phone. However, the lack of contact with peers outside the school also received a high percentage, which proves that most parents consider the interaction with peers as a very important factor of socialization. However, behind the last high percentage could be the belief that the effectiveness of the peer group's influence on children's socialization depends on the frequency of contact ensured by the daily school routine.

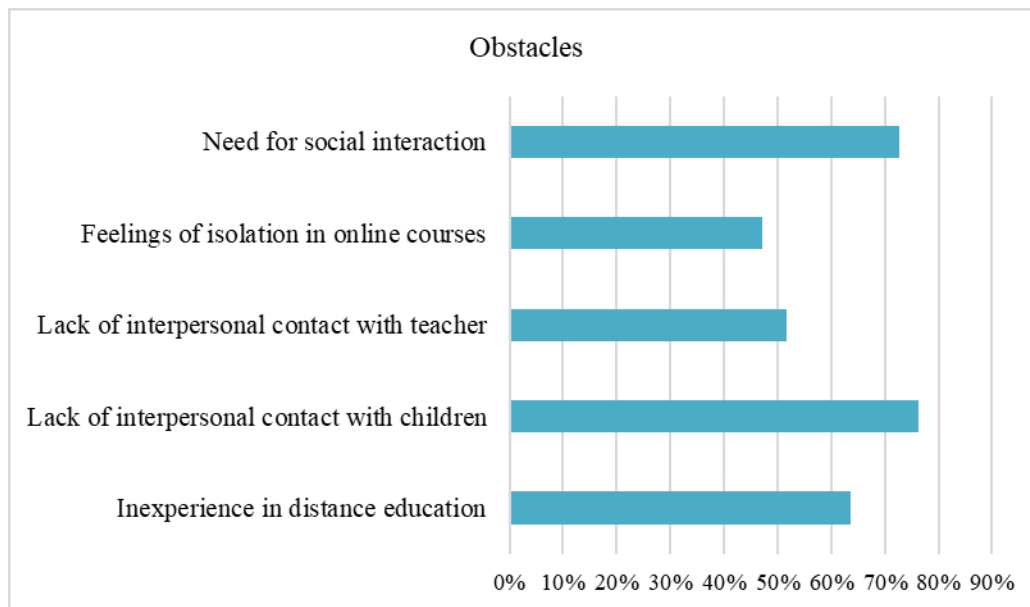
Finally, parents expressed their opinions about the school climate and distance education tools. Specifically, they were asked to answer whether the school climate that occurs in the physical classroom can be replaced by that of online instruction. Although the climate surrounding online education is rarely documented in a formal way, knowledge of informal indicators provides valuable insight into potential challenges in implementing an evaluation of online instruction. A 60.1% indicated that they disagreed with the possibility of replacement, while 25% took a neutral stance. The high percentage can perhaps be interpreted since the experience of socialization through school requires the child to be exposed to new situations that they would not face in the family. Thus, it is likely for parents to believe that the first submission to a new kind of power represented by someone outside the family snugness will lead to a new approach to relationships with others in which there is no family security and parental guidance (Table 3).

Table 3. Parents' perceptions on distance learning and children's socialization process

Online environment as an obstacle to the socialization process ($n=216$)	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	SD
Peer interaction in distance learning can replace physical interaction	96 (44.4%)	76(35.1%)	29(13.4%)	10(4.6%)	5(2.3%)	2.81	1.33
School climate in physical classrooms can be replaced by distance learning environments	68(31.4%)	62(28.7%)	54(25%)	14(6.4%)	18(8.3%)	1.62	0.81
Distance education can replace education in the school environment	148(68.5%)	52(24.1%)	12(5.6%)	4(1.9%)	0(0%)	1.41	0.68

From the teachers' point of view, children's social behavior was affected by distance education. In the context of the child losing the opportunity to interact with the social environment of the school and being restricted in the family due to the online transition, they believe that losing contact with other children and with adults other than their own parents "froze" the process of their secondary socialization. The above key findings come from the interviews of the in-service teachers who pointed out the difficulties they had in dealing with children's emotions and disobedience during online teaching, facts they faced immediately after returning to the physical classrooms (Anastasiu, 2011) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Teachers' perceptions on children's social behavior changes



Teachers' views on the lack of interpersonal contact with peers and its influence on children's social behavior cannot be questioned. They stated that the construction of social interaction with a peer is different than with an adult and that children are prepared for life in society through interaction with peers (Smith & Hart, 2002), as this group of peers into which they seek to integrate is an important means of socialization. When children withdrew from peers due to distance learning, it led to -in this case - online difficulties in developing alternative behaviors with peers and the latter were perceived as unpleasant and avoided in terms of online interaction. However, after returning to physical classes and playing with other children, they began to engage in forms of play based on social activities. Through exploration and discovery, a learning environment emerged that contained enough social structure to provide the child with an easy starting point for acquiring knowledge about social roles and the structure of interactions (Sacks 1988). These are illustrated in the following comments by some of the teachers:

(Pretest) Teacher A: "...In my opinion, distance education has had detrimental effects on the process of socialization of children. During the lessons, the children did not recognize the educational processes and, above all, did not find a way to apply the rules of our team in the Internet interaction."

(Posttest) Teacher A: "...almost immediately the children returned to their preschool centers' routine and culture, applying most of the rules we established as a team from the first days we returned to physical classrooms..."

(Pretest) Teacher B: "... Children do not want to interact with their classmates online and often respond when one of the interlocutors speaks, interrupting them, challenging them, which they probably avoided in the physical classroom."

(Posttest) Teacher B: "...The children increasingly oriented themselves to their peers and showed themselves more willing to negotiate, more empathetic and more understanding than in the distance courses..."

Teachers C and D suggest that the peer group plays crucial role in socialization, just as Harris (1995) argued many years earlier. She presented her theory on group socialization of children in which the influence of the home environment on personality was consistently decreasing, and so children would be socialized in school through the peer group play.

(Pretest) Teacher C: "... I understand that kids get lonely ... I can kind of replace a lot of the things we did in the physical classroom (e.g., reading fairy tales aloud, discussion, presenting a topic of the week, etc.), but what I can't replace is peer play, which they have unfortunately lost with online transition..."

(Posttest) Teacher C: "...The influence of group games on children is very evident. It seems that they immediately regained the self-control they had lost during the online lessons, and so all the children very quickly became harmoniously coordinated in group activities..."

(Pretest) Teacher D: "...I cannot help children interpret the intentions and behaviors of others through distance learning, nor can I guide them to show interest in what others have to say. I can only read them stories about friendship..."

(Posttest) Teacher D: "...We can now play games with them to learn values, praise children for their kind behavior, and most importantly, give them the opportunity to play with their peers and lead their own play. The children now respond fully to such practices."

In addition, we asked teachers to evaluate the impact of physical presence and interaction with teachers on children's social behavior. Most of them recognized the importance of physical interaction in the socialization process of their students. Although they were equally concerned about the consequences of the lack of contact with peers, they seem to have returned to the equilibrium they had before the closure of the school, creating a framework for social interaction through group collaboration - including teachers - to achieve the replacement of trust between them (Tobin et al., 2015).

(Pretest) Teacher E: "...Our interpersonal - face to face - contact with children is extremely important because it completely changes the background of the processes. In online classes we try to discipline them and keep them focused, whereas in online classes they are freer to express themselves and act..."

Teacher E recognized a basic fact that Kohn (1959) also discussed about parent-child relationships. He argued that some parents place more emphasis on conformity and obedience while others on self-direction and motivation:

(Posttest) Teacher E: "...Upon their return, the children immediately followed what they learned and now we try to lead them to more self-regulating behavior through motivation..."

Finally, most teachers find that the classroom is fluid and constantly changing. Their responses indicate that the room is divided into areas for activities, reading, etc., which, as expected, do not adapt to online courses. They believe that the safe school environment was what they were already familiar with, and that distance learning was an un-precedented experience for them that - in their opinion - affected both cognition and socialization. All this, combined with a lot of background noise and technical problems, led to discipline problems, according to the teachers. The children therefore did not have time to acclimatize to perform and act well, a condition seen by the teachers as a factor that suppressed their socialization.

Discussion

It is widely accepted that the function of education to adapt individuals to society is achieved through the process of socialization. Baldwin (1986) states that the most important influence on the development of the child's social self is usually exerted by the parents. However, from infancy to adolescence, the process of education invites the child to spend some of his or her time with peers outside the family context. Peers are the broader social context into which the child is expected to fit, and this integration is accompanied by gradual independence from the family environment, the child's own assumption of responsibility and autonomous decision-making. This stage, when the child becomes autonomous and his relationships with others are not shaped by emotions, is called secondary socialization, and thus, according to Durkheim, the child is formed according to the demands of society (Blackledge and Hunt 2019).

However, the current conceptualisation of education remains largely flexible in new forms and is increasingly being transformed by accelerating factors of technology. Distance education is now a fact of life, especially in the Covid-19 era, and academics understand the value of student interaction with the instructor, classmates, and parents in online courses (Wang et al., 2014). The goal of this study is more than just to obtain valid, reliable, and comparable information about parents' and teachers' beliefs on children's levels of social skills. Rather, it is to help teachers and parents identify stimulating factors and possible barriers that promote or hinder children's socio-emotional development (Chernyshenko et al., 2018).

Regarding the first research question, parents confirmed that students' behavior changed before and after distance learning. Of course, we sought to delve into their responses to understand whether they felt that the flow of their secondary socialization had changed -as a result of online learning. The main themes that parents focused on were behaviors which in the physical classroom are not tolerated, related to respect, acceptance, cooperation, empathy, tolerance, building friendships and resolving conflicts in the peers and family social environments.

Although we always talk about beliefs and not real measurements, it is commonly discussed that parents' perceptions can provide the information needed for better educational intervention, as they give information about children's behavior, temperament, reaction to changes in the environment, activity, regularity, intensity of response, etc. (Thomas et al., 1968; Buss & Plomin 1975; Rothbart, 1981; Chernyshenko et al., 2018).

Regarding the physical presence of teachers and physical peer interaction, the results suggest that parents and teachers do believe that students are affected by the lack of physical interaction with their tutors and peers. Firstly, through various socialization mechanisms, children's social behavior can be affected when they are exposed to a new experience, such as an online environment, and the lack of interpersonal contact with their teacher is an important indicator of their future behavior. By confronting their new school responsibilities, parents think that they have problems obeying authority, behaving like others, and participating in joint activities with peers.

From the perspective of preschool centre teachers, they have positive attitudes only when it comes to cooperation between them and parents. At this point, it is important to note that numerous studies have been conducted on teachers and students, highlighting the strong influence of teachers' expectations and perceptions on students' experiences (Bouderbane 2020). Specifically, within a system, teachers form relatively stable perceptions of their role, views of student character, and ideas about the knowledge they impart (Blackledge & Hunt 2019). However, teachers' stereotypical knowledge about students is thought to combine with teachers' perceptions of themselves to create the rules, structure, and content of the classroom. In other words, teachers create the conditions of the classroom for students.

While Woods (2011) argues that "socialization" is a survival strategy for teachers because acceptance of their role leads students to obey and respect them, teachers do not acknowledge their role. They point out that the biggest obstacle to children's socialization is lack of contact with their peers. They believe that school is the place for children's socialization, the place to prepare each student's integration into society, the place to develop citizenship (Chernyshenko et al., 2018) and that socialization through families remains at least incomplete due to various problems and different barriers, issues that could be held by the school.

Children's ability to deal with disputes in a democratic way, such as recognizing and considering differences in each other's point of view, compromising, negotiating, or proposing solutions to problems, is highly related to peer relationships. Thus, due to the lack of peer interaction and social interaction through group collaboration, parents and teachers believe that children failed to understand and manage their emotions, set, and achieve goals (Cooper & Farran, 1988; McClelland & Morrison, 2003), feel empathy for others, and maintain positive relationships (Tobin et al., 2015).

Lastly, teachers, and especially parents were anxious about the implications of applying distance learning technologies in preschool- aged children. Parents struggled with difficulties with technology and many students didn't use appropriately the digital tools at home. They didn't appreciate the value of digital devices and felt uncomfortable with young children's use at home. Thus, their negative attitudes towards young children's computer use weren't helping children to socialize online. Overall, parents believed that online education could offer young children knowledge but no opportunities to socialize, as they were worried about the impact of computer and screen use on children's social development.

Limitations

The researcher tried to take down everything the interviewee said unfiltered. However, since the interviews were not recorded, there may have been some omissions that could possibly lead to further conclusions. In terms of measurements, these children were not measured in the first place to see if their sociability was average and because any disability was not recorded in the survey - as in retrospect it is clear that it should have been. Therefore, it could not be weighted. Because the sample was remote, the researchers did not have physical access to conduct basic social assessment tests and apply behavioural checklists that relate to social skills and socialization in children whose parents completed the questionnaire. The researchers could only make assumptions about the children's level of socialization from what they heard in the teacher interviews because no one reported it. It is therefore impossible to ensure that all the children who were the subject of the study did not have a disorder unless they were referred to a specialist for diagnosis or the parents provided the diagnosis to the researchers. If this were the case, it would have an impact on the results because the children in this study were reported for their sociability on average as being.

Future research

To address these issues in early education, further research and engagement in this area are essential. One area future researcher can productively focus on is the extension to which observing more types of instructional evidence may inhibit children's socialization.

One suspects that there is a limit beyond which more data points merely reinforce patterns already observed rather than adding meaningful information to the evaluation process. In addition, other instruments can be used to measure children's social behavior, such as the Achenbach - Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), completed by parent figures for 1½- to 5-year-olds and for 6- to 18-year-olds (Achenbach 2011), or the Caregiver-Teacher Report Form (C- TRF) for 1½-5-year-olds, completed by day care workers and educators (Achenbach 1997). These instruments are suggested because they can be completed by both educators and parents, allowing more information to be gathered about children's social behavior in many contexts. In particular, they help in the initial detection of psychopathological forms such as dysthymia, anxiety disorder, phobia, separation anxiety, generalized and specific learning difficulties, attention deficit disorder, assess adaptive and maladaptive functionality and the possible success of non-therapeutic or educational interventions. Finally, perhaps a study of teachers' and parents' perceptions in an attributional - dispositional and Situational Attribution theory (Heider, 1958) approach could provide further information on how we might promote children's social skills.

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