

4-10-2023

## Management of Teachers-Parents Relationship to Improve Teacher Subjective Well-Being: A Literature Review

Yunita Sri Handayani

Soegijapranata Catholic University, yunita.handayani.victory@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/proust>



Part of the [Other Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Handayani, Yunita Sri (2023) "Management of Teachers-Parents Relationship to Improve Teacher Subjective Well-Being: A Literature Review," *Psychological Research on Urban Society*. Vol. 6: No. 1, Article 2.

DOI: 10.7454/proust.v6i1.1106

Available at: <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/proust/vol6/iss1/2>

This Review Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty of Psychology at UI Scholars Hub. It has been accepted for inclusion in Psychological Research on Urban Society by an authorized editor of UI Scholars Hub.

# Management of Teachers-Parents Relationship to Improve Teacher Subjective Well-Being: A Literature Review

Yunita Sri Handayani<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Katolik Soegijapranata

Psychological Research  
on Urban Society  
2023, Vol. 6 (1): 10-16  
© The Author(s) 2023  
DOI: [10.7454/proust.v6i1.1106](https://doi.org/10.7454/proust.v6i1.1106)  
[proust.ui.ac.id](http://proust.ui.ac.id)

*Received: August 11th, 2022*  
*Revision Accepted: February 6th, 2023*

## Abstract

The relationship between teachers and parents plays an important role not only in determining the success of student learning at school but also in influencing the subjective well-being of teachers. However, the ideal teacher-parent relationship is not always possible. Often there are conflicts between parents and teachers that make student learning outcomes at school not optimal. A poor relationship between teachers and parents will also reduce the subjective well-being of teachers. This paper will analyze the management of good teacher-parent relationship to improve the subjective well-being of teachers. This study uses a literature review method from 14 research journal articles to identify the problems that become barriers on parents teacher relationships. The study found that differences in perceptions of student abilities between teachers and parents caused the most conflicts in the teacher-parent relationship. Furthermore, the results of the study found that trust and communication skills are two important elements for managing teacher-parent partnerships which ultimately play a role in increasing teachers subjective well-being. The implications of the results of this study become a reference for school institutions to pay more attention to the subjective well-being of teachers by designing strategies to improve teacher-parent relationship

## Keywords

Teacher-parents Partnership, Parents-teachers Relationship, Teacher Subjective Well-being, Literature Review

International statistics show a staggering number of primary and secondary school teachers leaving the profession. In the U.S., 30%–40% of teachers resigned from their profession, in England almost 40%, in Canada 20%–40%, and in Australia nearly 40%, citing conditions of burnout, job stress, and mental health problems (Wang & Hall, 2021). This global phenomenon has inspired many researchers to examine why teachers quit their profession. Studies have shown that the main reasons for

teachers' intention to quit are burnout and stress. Parker et al. (2012), referring to a survey of 17,000 workers in the U.K., found that teachers experienced greater stress levels than other professions.

Research on the causes of teacher stress largely concerns external risk factors in the environment, namely, classroom conditions and school administration (Wang & Hall, 2021; Bottiani et al., 2019). In addition, Wang and Hall (2021) showed that structural failure in the teaching system leading to a lack of teacher autonomy can be a cause of teacher anxiety that triggers stress. MacIntyre (2020) pointed to a heavy workload as the main cause of teacher stress during the online learning period, in addition to worries about the health of their respective families. In a study of teachers in urban are-

---

## Corresponding Author:

Yunita Sri Handayani  
Universitas Katolik Soegijapranata  
Jl. Pawiyatan Luhur Sel. IV, Gajahmungkur, Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50234  
Email: [yunita.handayani.victory@gmail.com](mailto:yunita.handayani.victory@gmail.com)

as, Parker et al. (2012) found that the main external factors affecting low teacher well-being are problems with student motivation and behavior, role conflicts, timing and workload, an evaluative environment, and management of change.

Few studies specifically examine the relationship between parents and teachers as a predictor of teachers' level of subjective well-being. However, the partnership between parents and teachers is important to manage, and parents, students, and educators must work together to form sustainable family-school partnerships (Willemse et al., 2018). Perhaps in an ideal world, these partnerships could exist without conflict. However, as in any relationship, conflict is inevitable, and educators need information and resources to guide them in building and maintaining effective partnerships despite conflicts. Strong partnerships can ensure that conflicts are successfully managed and resolved (Lasater, 2016).

De Cordova et al. (2019) found that teachers encountered violent behavior from both students and parents, in the form of either physical or verbal violence, and that this violent behavior led to low teacher subjective well-being. A qualitative study by Addi-Raccah and Grinshtain (2021) with both teachers and parents found that

teachers reported higher levels of conflict with parents. Richards (2012), reporting on a national survey of 1,201 kindergarten to high school teachers in the U.S., found that teachers with students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds admitted that it was more difficult to work with parents. In addition, Van Droogenbroeck et al. (2014), in their study of senior teacher burnout rates among 1,878 senior teachers aged over 45 years, found that interpersonal relationships, including with parents, were an important factor in increasing burnout rates.

As the findings above demonstrate, there is a gap in the research on teacher subjective well-being and external factors. Whereas other studies have found that poor relationships with parents are an important factor affecting teachers' subjective well-being, there is an urgent need to review studies showing how good management of parent-teacher relationships can improve the subjective well-being of teachers.

## Methods

This study employs a literature review, defined as a systematic method for collecting and synthesizing the results of previous research

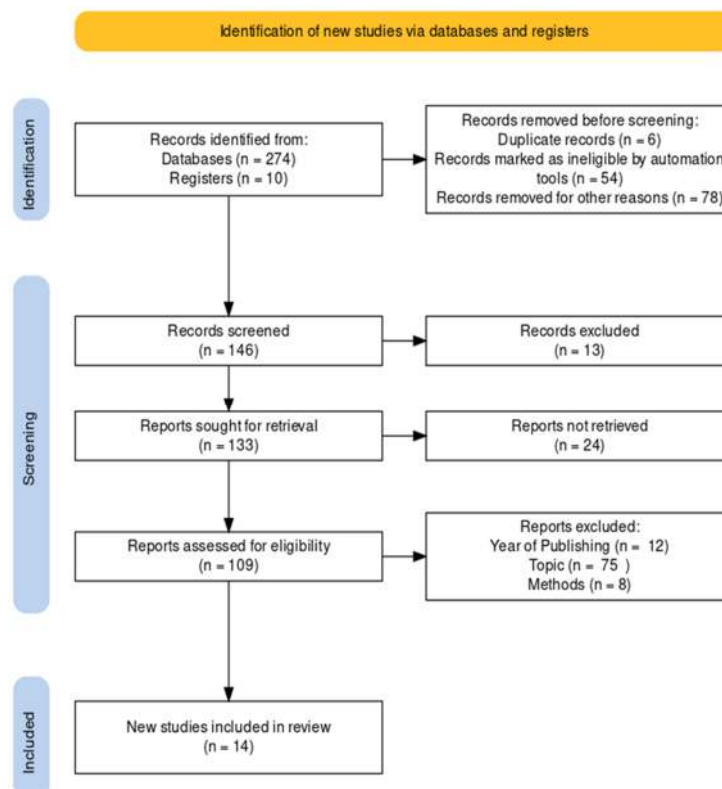


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the literature review process

**Table 1.** Findings of the reviewed sources

No.	Writer	Year of Publication	Method	Results
1	Addi-Raccach & Grinshtain	2021	Quantitative	When teachers show good influence, better work efficiency, and better responsibilities, the parent-teacher relationships are characterized by collaboration rather than conflict.
2	Bilton et al.	2018	Qualitative	In private schools where the number of students is key to the school's sustainability, teachers often take on a customer service role.
3	Cueto et al.	2017	Quantitative	Teachers sometimes have misperceptions about children's abilities at school related to psychomotor, social, and cognitive development.
4	Heffernan et al.	2019	Quantitative	Teachers feel they receive less appreciation from the community for their profession, including from parents.
5	Karila & Alaasutari	2012	Quantitative	Parent-teacher conflicts may arise when teachers are positioned as "experts" and parents are expected to just accept the teacher's suggestions.
6	Leenders et al.	2018	Quantitative	Conflicts that occur in parent-teacher relationships are mostly caused by differences in perception.
7	Major & Seabra-Santos	2015	Quantitative	Parents often assume their children do not have problems either academically or behaviorally and even tend to assume good achievements.
8	Minke et al.	2014	Quantitative	Teachers encounter many problems with children in terms of both behavior and academic achievement.
9	Mutton et al.	2018	Quantitative	New teachers in the U.K. do not feel well prepared to communicate with parents.
10	Santiago et al.	2016	Quantitative	The higher the level of trust in teachers, the higher their involvement is in children's education problems.
11	Sheridan et al.	2012	Quantitative	Conjoint Behavioral Consultation was effective in building parent-teacher partnerships.
12	Symeo et al.	2012	Quantitative	An in-service training program on parent-teacher communication built better confidence for teachers to communicate with parents.
13	Thijs & Eilbracht	2012	Quantitative	New teachers who are given proper training develop positive perceptions of the parent-teacher relationship.
14	Zulauf-McCurdy & Zinsser	2021	Quantitative	Teachers assume that they have given the best for the child, while parents may feel that teachers have performed poorly in teaching their child.

that can serve as a basis for knowledge development, help in the creation of guidelines for policy and practice, provide evidence of effects, and if done well, enable the capacity to generate new ideas and directions for specific fields (Snyder, 2019). Data collection on the results of previous studies was carried out using the key terms "parents-teacher partnership," "parent-teacher relationship," and "teacher's subjective well-being" for scientific journal articles published in the period 2012 to 2022. The search for journal articles was carried out on the DOAJ, JSTOR, MDPI, Springer, APA, Taylor & Francis, and IEEE portals.

The initial search using the key terms yielded 109 journal articles. These were reduced to 14

scientific journal articles based on the following inclusion criteria: year of publication, topic suitability, and quality of the research method. The procedure for data selection is shown in Figure 1, which is adapted from the PRISMA protocol (Page et al., 2021). Table 1 lists the scientific journal articles used in the literature review.

### Theoretical Overview

This section provides a theoretical description of the two main variables in this study, namely, the relationship between parents and teachers and teachers' subjective well-being.

### Parents-Teacher Relationship

The parent-teacher relationship differs from parent-teacher involvement even though the two are related (Minke et al., 2014). Minke explained that parent involvement consists of parents' behavior of supporting student learning activities at school such as attending parent-teacher conferences, volunteering at school, and attending parent meetings, including helping their children's learning at home. On the other hand, the parent-teacher relationship is the foundation of parental involvement that includes mutual trust and understanding (Leenders et al., 2018). If parents' involvement describes parents' behavior toward the school, then the parent-teacher relationship consists more of the attitudes between parents and teachers, which are influenced by each other's perceptions (Zulauf-McCurdy & Zinsser, 2021).

### *Teacher Subjective Well-Being*

Subjective well-being is associated with happiness, life satisfaction, and a positive impact on one's life (Diener, 2009). Specifically, Teacher Subjective Well-Being (TSWB) is a teacher's self-reported experience or assessment of the quality of their work life with a sense of achieving the goals and abilities they need to live a happy and fulfilling life as a teacher (Song et al., 2020). Renshaw et al. (2015) explained that the aspects of TSWB are teaching efficacy and school connectedness. These include the following indicators: teachers have a sense of belonging to the school, they feel successful, they can be themselves at school, they feel good about helping students learn new things, they feel that people at school care about them, they think they have accomplished a lot as a teacher, they feel treated with respect at school, and they believe their teaching is effective and helpful.

## **Results and Discussion**

This section identifies problems that often occur in the relationship between parents and teachers and discusses how to build healthy parent-teacher relationships.

### *Problems in Parent-Teacher Relationships*

Zulauf-McCurdy and Zinsser (2021) stated that the parent-teacher relationship is influenced by

the perceptions parents and teachers have of each other. Indeed, conflicts that occur in the relationship are mostly caused by differences in perception (Thisj & Eilbracht, 2012; Leenders et al., 2018). Below are some of the perceived differences that tend to occur, as identified in the literature.

**Differences in perceptions of children's achievements.** There are consistent results pointing to differences in the perceptions of teachers and parents regarding children's achievements. Parents often assume their children do not have problems either academically or behaviorally and even that they have good achievements (Major & Seabra-Santos, 2015). However, teachers encounter many problems in children both behaviorally and academically. When this happens, parents may blame the school for a lack of control and authority or lack of good assistance, which they see as causes of their child's behavioral issues or academic struggles in the classroom (Minke et al., 2014).

In addition, teachers sometimes have misperceptions about children's abilities related to their psychomotor, social, and cognitive development (Cueto et al., 2017). This may be due to their lack of knowledge of the latest scientific information concerning the stages of child development.

**Teachers' misperception of themselves as sole experts.** Communication about children's education accompanied by the mindset that teachers are "experts" and parents should only accept the teachers' suggestions has the potential to cause conflicts (Karila & Alasuutari, 2012). In this situation, parents may be more passive, and their willingness to participate in their children's education may decrease. They may also feel unappreciated because they have first-hand knowledge of their own child's development and behavior.

**Teachers' misperception of themselves in a customer service role.** At private schools where the number of students is the key to the school's sustainability, teachers often take on the role of customer service. They tend to promote the school and are less able to give objective descriptions according to the needs of the children when communicating with parents (Bilton et al.,

2018). Also, when teachers take on a customer service role, it encourages them not to be themselves. As Renshaw (2020) stated, the ability to be oneself is an indicator of TSWB.

**New teachers' confidence in communication.** Mutton et al. (2018) analyzed data from the 2015 National College for Teaching and Leadership and found that new teachers in the U.K. do not feel well prepared or confident enough to communicate with parents. In addition, they do not feel supported in establishing relationships with parents. On the other hand, Thijs and Eilbracht (2012) found that new teachers who are given proper training develop positive perceptions of the parent-teacher relationship. Furthermore, a teacher-in-service training program on teacher-parent communication builds better confidence for teachers to communicate with parents (Symeou et al., 2012).

#### ***Building a Teacher-Parent Partnership that Supports TSWB***

Given the differences in perceptions that interfere with the parent-teacher relationship, several studies have found ways to overcome them.

**Trusting relationship.** Parents should develop a sense of trust in the school, including the teachers who work there. Santiago et al. (2016) stated that a higher level of parents' trust in teachers is associated with greater parental involvement in the children's education problems. In addition, a higher level of parental trust in the teacher corresponds to a higher prosocial level for the child.

Schools must also play a role in building parental trust in teachers by providing adequate preparation for teachers, especially young teachers. This training should include how to communicate with parents, how to show professional performance to parents, and how to behave as a teaching professional. Addi-Racah and Grinshtain (2021) found that when teachers show good influence, better work efficiency, and better responsibilities, the parent-teacher relationships have more collaboration than conflict.

**Equal relationship.** In building a relationship between teachers and parents, it is important to establish equality. Teachers should not see themselves as the sole education experts and

child experts but should try to explore the parents' knowledge and opinions about what is best for their children's education (Karila & Alasuutari, 2012). In addition, parents with higher levels of education or SES should also place themselves equally with teachers and develop respect for teachers. Sheridan et al. (2012), in their experimental research, found that Conjoint Behavioral Consultations were effective at building the parent-teacher relationship. In this program, parents and teachers join in the process of a student consultation guided by a consultant.

**Flexible relationship.** The relationship between teachers and parents should be a formal relationship in an academic context. However, it can also be flexible according to the character of the school and individual parents in order to make teachers and parents feel comfortable. Bilton et al. (2018) suggested that meetings with teachers be more frequent and informal. However, teachers and parents must understand how to know when to negotiate privately or in public. Moreover, they have to manage the boundaries between individual and family life (Karila & Alasuutari, 2012).

#### **Conclusions**

The purpose of this literature review was to identify problems in the relationship between parents and teachers. Differences in perception are the main obstacles in establishing parent-teacher relationships, and in response, efforts are needed to build flexible relationships that are based on trust and equality. Another important insight is the importance of communication skills training for teachers, especially new teachers. This training has been proven not only to change their negative perceptions of the parent-teacher relationship but also to increase their self-confidence in communication.

**Acknowledgments.** The author would like to acknowledge Dr. Alphonsus Rachmad Djati Winarno and Dr. Augustina Sulastri, S.Psi from Unika Soegijapranata who were involved in the initial discussion of the topic of this article.

**Conflict of Interest.** The authors declared no

potential conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and/or publication of this article.

**Funding.** This study is not supported by any funding organization.

## References

- Addi-Racah, A., & Grinshtain, Y. (2021). Teachers' professionalism and relations with parents: Teachers' and parents' views. *Research Papers in Education*, 00(00), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2021.1931949>
- Bilton, R., Jackson, A., & Hymer, B. (2018). Cooperation, conflict and control: Parent-teacher relationships in an English secondary school. *Educational Review*, 70(4), 510-526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1410107>
- Bottiani, J. H., Duran, C. A. K., Pas, E. T., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2019). Teacher stress and burn-out in urban middle schools: Associations with job demands, resources, and effective classroom practices. *Journal of School Psychology*, 77(September), 36-51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2019.10.002>
- Cueto, S., Prieto, J. A., Nistal, P., Abelairas-Gómez, C., Barcala-Furelos, R., & López, S. (2017). Teachers' perceptions of preschool children's psychomotor development in Spain. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 124(4), 725-739. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0031512517705534>
- De Cordova, F., Berlanda, S., Pedrazza, M., & Fraizzoli, M. (2019). Violence at school and the well-being of teachers. The importance of positive relationships. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10(AUG), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01807>
- Heffernan, A., Longmuir, F., Bright, D., & Kim, M. (2019). *Perceptions of teachers and teaching in Australia*. November, 1-21. <https://www.monash.edu/perceptions-of-teaching/docs/Perceptions-of-Teachers-and-Teaching-in-Australia-report-Nov-2019.pdf>
- Karila, K., & Alasuutari, M. (2012). Drawing partnership on paper: How do the forms for individual educational plans frame parent-teacher relationship? *International Journal about Parents in Education Copyright European Research Network about Parents in Education*, 6(1), 14-26.
- Lasater, K. (2016). *Parent-teacher conflict related to student abilities : The impact on students and the family – School Partnership*. 26(2), 237-262. <http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx%0A237>
- Leenders, H., Haelermans, C., de Jong, J., & Monfrance, M. (2018). Parents' perceptions of parent-teacher relationship practices in Dutch primary schools—an exploratory pilot study. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 24(6), 719-743. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2018.1456420>
- Major, S. O., Seabra-Santos, M. J., & Martin, R. P. (2015). Are we talking about the same child? Parent-teacher ratings of preschoolers' social-emotional behaviors. *Psychology in the Schools*, 52(8), 789-799. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21855>
- MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T., & Mercer, S. (2020). Language teachers' coping strategies during the Covid-19 conversion to online teaching: Correlations with stress, wellbeing and negative emotions. *System*, 94, 102352. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102352>
- Minke, K. M., Sheridan, S. M., Kim, E. M., Ryoo, J. H., & Koziol, N. A. (2014). Congruence in parent-teacher relationships: The role of shared perceptions. *Elementary School Journal*, 114(4), 527-546. <https://doi.org/10.1086/675637>
- Mutton, T., Burn, K., & Thompson, I. (2018). Preparation for family-school partnerships within initial teacher education programmes in England. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 44(3), 278-295. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2018.1465624>
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J. M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., ... Moher, D. (2021). The prisma 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *Medicina Fluminensis*, 57(4), 444-465. [https://doi.org/10.21860/medflum2021\\_264903](https://doi.org/10.21860/medflum2021_264903)
- Parker, P. D., Martin, A. J., Colmar, S., & Liem, G. A. (2012). Teachers' workplace well-being: Exploring a process model of goal orientation, coping behavior, engagement, and burnout. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(4), 503-513. <https://doi.org/10.1016/>

[j.tate.2012.01.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.01.001)

- Renshaw, T. L., Long, A. C. J., & Cook, C. R. (2015). Assessing adolescents' positive psychological functioning at school: Development and validation of the student subjective wellbeing questionnaire. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 30(4), 534-552. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000088>
- Renshaw Tyler L. (2020). *Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ): Measure and User Guide*. 3-5. <https://smhlab.org/resources>
- Richards, J. (2012). Teacher stress and coping strategies: A national snapshot. *Educational Forum*, 76(3), 299-316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2012.682837>
- Santiago, R. T., Garbacz, S. A., Beattie, T., & Moore, C. L. (2016). Parent-teacher relationships in elementary school: An examination of parent-teacher trust. *Psychology in the Schools*, 53(10), 1003-1017. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21971>
- Sheridan, S. M., Bovaird, J. A., Glover, T. A., Andrew Garbacz, S., Witte, A., & Kwon, K. (2012). A randomized trial examining the effects of conjoint behavioral consultation and the mediating role of the parent-teacher relationship. *School Psychology Review*, 41(1), 23-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2012.12087374>
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104(August), 333-339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>
- Song, H., Gu, Q., & Zhang, Z. (2020). An exploratory study of teachers' subjective wellbeing: understanding the links between teachers' income satisfaction, altruism, self-efficacy and work satisfaction. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 26(1), 3-31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2020.1719059>
- Symeou, L., Roussounidou, E., & Michaelides, M. (2012). "I Feel Much More Confident Now to Talk With Parents": An evaluation of in-service training on teacher-parent communication. *School Community Journal*, 22(1), 65-88.
- Thijs, J., & Eilbracht, L. (2012). Teachers' perceptions of parent-teacher alliance and student-teacher relational conflict: Examining the role of ethnic differences and "disruptive" behavior. *Psychology in the Schools*, 49(8), 794-808. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21635>
- Van Droogenbroeck, F., Spruyt, B., & Vanroelen, C. (2014). Burnout among senior teachers: Investigating the role of workload and interpersonal relationships at work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 43, 99-109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.07.005>
- Wang, H., & Hall, N. C. (2021). Exploring relations between teacher emotions, coping strategies, and intentions to quit: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of School Psychology*, 86 (April), 64-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2021.03.005>
- Willemse, T. M., Thompson, I., Vanderlinde, R., & Mutton, T. (2018). Family-school partnerships: A challenge for teacher education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 44(3), 252-257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2018.1465545>
- Zulauf-McCurdy, C. A., & Zinsser, K. M. (2021). How teachers' perceptions of the parent-teacher relationship affect children's risk for early childhood expulsion. *Psychology in the Schools*, 58(1), 69-88. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22440>