The relationship between parent-teacher collaboration and the social-emotional development of young children in Physical Education rehabilitation: a systematic review
La relación entre la colaboración entre padres y maestros y el desarrollo socioemocional de niños pequeños en rehabilitación de Educación Física: una revisión sistemática

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Abstract

Introduction: Early childhood (0-6 years) is a foundational period for acquiring social-emotional competence. This systematic review synthesized findings from 15 peer-reviewed studies drawn from ERIC, PsycINFO, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar to examine how the quality of the parent-teacher relationship influences young children's social-emotional development.
Objectives: Study aims to find out diverse cultural and programmatic contexts, consistent evidence indicated that stronger, more collaborative relationships between parents and teachers are associated with higher levels of children's social-emotional competence.
Methodology: To ensure everything was clear and reproducible, the research followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines.
Discussion: Systematic reviews provide useful data, but they also have some drawbacks. One significant challenge is that most of the available studies come with differences in their methods and how useful they are for the current question.
Conclusion: healthy parent-teacher relationships are a critical factor in young children's social-emotional development. By integrating evidence across home and school contexts, this study shows that fostering strong, collaborative parent-teacher partnerships can yield practical benefits for children, while also charting a course for research to optimize these relational processes.

Keywords

Early childhood; social-emotional competence; parent-teachers relationship; and a systematic review.

Resumen

Introducción: La primera infancia (0-6 años) es un período fundamental para la adquisición de la competencia socioemocional. Esta revisión sistemática sintetiza los hallazgos de 15 estudios revisados por pares, provenientes de ERIC, PsycINFO, Scopus, Web of Science y Google Académico, para examinar cómo la calidad de las relaciones entre pares y docentes influye en el desarrollo socioemocional de los niños pequeños.
Objetivos: El estudio busca identificar, en diversos contextos culturales y programáticos, evidencia consistente que indica que las relaciones más sólidas y colaborativas entre padres y docentes se asocian con mayores niveles de competencia socioemocional en los niños.
Metodología: Para garantizar la claridad y reproducibilidad de la información, la investigación siguió las directrices PRISMA (Ítems de Informe Preferidos para Revisiones Sistemáticas y Metaanálisis).
Discusión: Las revisiones sistemáticas proporcionan datos útiles, pero también presentan algunas desventajas. Un desafío importante es que la mayoría de los estudios disponibles presentan diferencias en sus métodos y en su utilidad para la pregunta en cuestión. Conclusión: Las relaciones saludables entre padres, madres y maestros son un factor crucial en el desarrollo socioemocional de los niños pequeños. Al integrar la evidencia en los contextos familiar y escolar, este estudio demuestra que fomentar relaciones sólidas y colaborativas entre padres y maestros puede generar beneficios prácticos para los niños, a la vez que marca el rumbo de la investigación para optimizar estos procesos relacionales.

Palabras clave

Primera infancia; competencia socioemocional; relación padres-maestros; revisión sistemática.

Introduction

Social-emotional competence (SEC) in early childhood plays a critical role in children's academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, and overall well-being (Durlak et al., 2011). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020) identifies five core competencies that constitute SEC: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies are foundational for children's ability to understand and manage their emotions, establish positive relationships, and make responsible choices in both school and life.A growing body of research supports the significance of developing social-emotional competence in early education settings. Berg et al. (2021) found that enhancing students' SEC effectively helps children recognize and regulate their emotions, communicate better with both adults and peers, and build warm, healthy interpersonal relationships. Their study further showed that fostering SEC is associated with reductions in bullying and physical aggression among students. Similarly, Ros-Morente et al. (2021) demonstrated that SEC and self-esteem are closely related to academic performance. Their findings indicated that students with higher scores in emotional competence—or those who had received training in this areas—exhibited more effective emotional regulation and improved coping strategies in response to learning-related stress and anxiety. In the Chinese context, Lü (2020) emphasized that SEC is positively associated with students' motivation, academic performance, cooperative behavior, communication skills, and prosocial tendencies.

Importantly, the development of social-emotional competence is strongly influenced by the social environments surrounding children, especially at home and in school. Pan L. (2018) highlighted the role of supportive interpersonal relationships and quality school experiences in fostering SEC. Both parents and teachers serve as key socialization agents in children's lives, and the quality of their collaboration significantly shapes children's developmental trajectories (Sheridan et al., 2010). While some researchers have examined the home and school environments as separate systems, recent studies advocate for a more integrated perspective, recognizing the interconnection between these microsystems.

Scholars have conceptualized the parent-teacher relationship in two primary ways. One approach views it as a unique form of interpersonal relationship between adults in a child's life. For instance, Clarke (2010), Downer (2010), Lines (2012), and Zhang (2015) describe the parent-teacher relationship as a distinct interpersonal bond based on mutual trust and shared concern for the child. The other perspective emphasizes the processual nature of parent-teacher collaboration. This includes empowering parents, sharing responsibility, and maintaining two-way communication. Swick (2009) posited that positive relationships between teachers and parents facilitate mutual empowerment and support. Similarly, Epstein and Sheldon (2006) defined school-family partnerships as cooperative efforts in which parents, educators, and community members jointly share responsibility for students' learning and development. Swick (2009) further described the home–school relationship as a collaboration characterized by shared responsibility and coordinated action.In essence, the parent-teacher relationship is an interpersonal process built through social interaction, with the child at its core. Parents and teachers are the key participants, the child acts as a bridge, and their collaboration aims to construct an equitable and cooperative relationship to support the child's development. Theoretical models such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Epstein's model of overlapping spheres of influence emphasize that family and school are the two most influential microsystems in young children's development, and the quality of interaction between them critically shapes children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

Numerous quantitative studies confirm a positive association between parent-teacher relationships and children's development. Positive parent-teacher collaboration is linked to improvements in children's behavior (Smith et al., 2022), academic abilities (Hauser-Cram et al., 2003), and overall school performance (Adams et al., 2000; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2003). Xin Ma et al.(2016) conducted a meta-analysis examining the relationship between parental involvement and children's academic outcomes during early childhood and early elementary education, revealing a strong positive correlation. Lisa et al. (2018)reviewed 22 empirical studies and found that the majority reported positive associations between parental involvement and children's academic development. EI Nokali et al. (2010) further demonstrated that good parent-teacher relationships are positively associated with student motivation. Additionally, strong family engagement in schools is related to fewer behavioral issues among young

children (Sheridan et al., 2019). As Cohen and Anders (2020) noted, when parents and teachers collaborate, they help instill consistent values and behavioral expectations in children. Parents who frequently communicate with schools send a clear message to their children about the value they place on education and their willingness to support learning, which in turn fosters more autonomous and informed decision-making by the child.

However, despite the increasing emphasis on home–school collaboration, many children still experience inconsistent or underdeveloped relationships between their parents and teachers. Several barriers inhibit effective partnerships and open communication between families and educators (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2022). In socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, time constraints, educational gaps, and cultural differences may reduce parents' willingness or ability to participate actively in their child's education (Gomba et al., 2024). As a result, not all children benefit equally from joint developmental support. To address this disparity, it is essential to gain a deeper understanding of how these relational dynamics influence the development of social-emotional competence.

This study seeks to address this gap by examining how parent–teacher relationships contribute to preschool children's social-emotional competence. Specifically, it investigates whether the parent–teacher relationship serves as a mediating factor in the link between parenting style and children's social-emotional outcomes. By focusing on these dynamics within both Western and Chinese cultural contexts, the study aims to enrich our understanding of how families and educators can work together more effectively to support young children's social-emotional development.

Current Study

This study reviews research exploring how the connection between parent and teacher influences the social-emotional development of young children. An analysis of data from peer-reviewed studies has revealed common topics, successful practices, and what is still unknown. The point is to show that supporting collaboration and open communication between parents and teachers supports the development of children. Factors such as culture, socioeconomic background, and types of education are also considered in these relationships. With a systematic process, various views and ways of studying can be combined to understand the current body of knowledge. This study also explains methods that can help educators, policymakers, and researchers improve family-school partnerships. Based on the aforementioned objectives, this paper explores the following key research questions:

Q1: How does the teacher-parent relationship influence the social-emotional development in young children?

Q2: What factors influence the association between parent-teacher relationships and young children's social-emotional development?

Q3: Which strategies can promote better parents-teachers relationship? Did this paper mentioned?

Methodology

Research Design

A systematic review was used in this study, making it easy to merge and analyze all the relevant studies. Conducting systematic reviews in education has proven useful because they limit bias and provide a wide view through the data gathered from different studies (Gough et al., 2012). To ensure everything was clear and reproducible, the research followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Moher et al., 2014).

Data Collection

A systematic search was conducted across four major academic databases (ERIC, PsycINFO, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar) using a predefined search strategy. The review targeted literature on early childhood education, parent-teacher relationships, home-school cooperation, and preschoolers'

social-emotional development, with a particular focus on studies examining how these constructs inter-relate. Boolean operators (AND, OR) and truncation symbols (e.g., *) were used to refine and broaden the search, ensuring comprehensive coverage of relevant literature. A representative search string combined key terms for social-emotional development, parent-teacher/home-school partnerships, relationship involvement, and children.i.e. ("social-emotional" OR "socioemotional" OR "emotional intelligence" OR "social") AND ("parent*teacher" OR "family*school" OR "home*school") AND ("relationship"OR "partnership" OR "cooperation" OR "involvement") AND ("children" OR "child") .This query was applied to titles and abstracts to maximize relevance of the results.The studies included in this review were required to satisfy all of the following criteria. First, they explicitly examined the parent-teacher relationship among children aged 0-6 years. Second, they evaluated the association between parent-teacher relationship quality and young children's social-emotional development. Third, they were empirical investigations published in peer-reviewed journals between 2010 and 2025. Fourth, they were peer-reviewed articles written in English.

Following the application of these criteria, the search initially yielded 905 records. After removing duplicates and screening against the inclusion/exclusion criteria, 15 articles were retained for final analysis (see Figure 1 for the PRISMA flow diagram of the selection process).

Figure 1. Flowchart of the search and screening
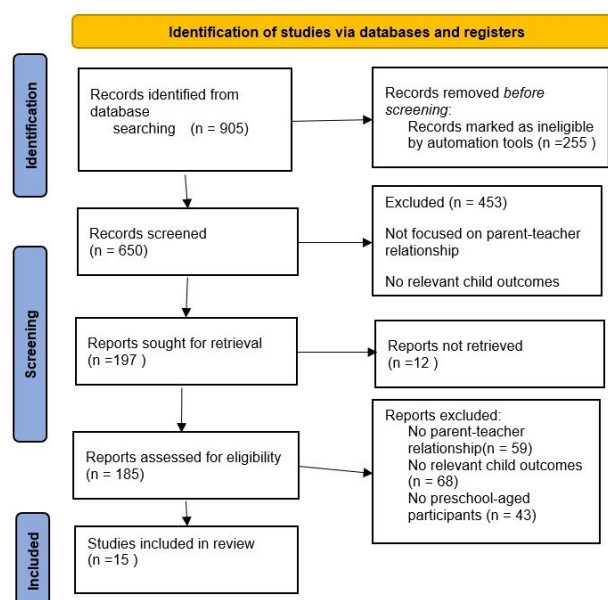
Findings

Characteristics of included sample

Figure 2 provides a complete overview of the characteristics of each study included in this study.Fifteen studies met the inclusion criteria, examining links between parent–teacher relationship factors and child outcomes. Nearly all studies (15/15) assessed children's social-emotional development outcomes (e.g. social skills, emotional regulation), with the majority also measuring behavioral adjustment (externalizing or self-regulation problems in 10 studies). Only two studies (13%) incorporated an academic or learning-related outcome alongside social-behavioral measures (one assessed language ability, another examined approaches to learning). Sample sizes ranged from a small qualitative case study of 8 children and their parents/teacherseight to 2966 participants. Participants were predominantly toddlers and preschoolers, with several investigations extending into kindergarten and early elementary grades. In terms of design, eight studies employed cross-sectional correlational methods, five were longitudinal, one used a qualitative case-study approach, and none involved randomized controlled trials.

Parent–teacher relationship quality was the central independent variable, most often measured by instruments such as the Parent–Teacher Relationship Scale. Specific relationship facets examined included communication frequency, trust, and home-based involvement. Child outcomes were assessed using established parent- and teacher-report measures, including the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, the Infant-Toddler Social-Emotional Assessment, and the Social Skills Improvement System. Across diverse samples and methodologies, stronger parent-teacher relationships—characterized by trust, effective communication, and collaboration—were consistently associated with better social-emotional adjustment in young children.

Figure 2. Overview of included studies

Authors (Year)	Sample size	Child grade	Study design	Key Variables	Measures	Relational influence on children's SED
Lang et al. (2020)	90 families;3 9 teachers	12–36 months (toddlers)	Cross-sectional	IV: Cocaring dimensions DV: Child social-emotional competence, dysregulation Mediator: Parent-child conflict	- Cocaring Relationship Questionnaire - Child-Parent Relationship Scale - Infant-Toddler Social Emotional Assessment	- Positive: Parental endorsement of teachers' competence positive predict social skills. - Negative: Parental perceptions of teacher undermining increased child dysregulation.
Jeon et al. (2020)	42 families; 41 teachers	18–40 months (toddlers)	Cross-sectional	IV: Parent-teacher relationship (parent/teacher reports) DV: Child Social-emotional competence/ externalizing Mediator: Teacher-child relationship	- Parent-Caregiver Relationship Scale - Student-Teacher Relationship Scale - Infant-Toddler Social Emotional Assessment	- Indirect: Teachers' positive perceptions of parent relationships indirectly enhanced child socio-emotional competence and reduced externalizing behavior via improved teacher-child relationships. - Mothers' perceptions of teachers did not directly affect outcomes.
Cai et al. (2024)	167 teachers; 1,019 children and their parents.	Ages 3–6	Cross-sectional	IV: Parental involvement DV: children's positive mental character Mediator: parent-teacher relationships	- Family Involvement Questionnaire-Short Form - Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale - Preschool Children's Positive Mental Character Questionnaire	- Parental involvement positively predicted children's positive mental character. - Teacher-reported parent-teacher relationships weakened the effect of home-based involvement on positive mental character.
Zulauf-McCurdy & Loomis (2023)	114 children; 21 preschool teachers	Ages 3–5	Longitudinal	IV: Parent-teacher relationships (parent- vs. teacher-reported)；Race/Ethnicity DV：Child self-regulation CV: Student-teacher conflict.	- Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Functioning-Preschool - Student-Teacher Relationship Scale - Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale	-Teacher-reported parent-teacher relationships predicted lower self-regulation problems for Black children, but not Latino children. - Parent-reported parent-teacher relationships correlated with fewer parent-reported self-regulation problems.

Figure 2 (Continuation). Overview of included studies.

Cohen, F. & Anders, Y. (2019)	146 families; 46 preschool centres	Age 3	Quasi-experimental evaluation study cross-sectional at first wave	IV：Structural ECEC characteristics DV：Children's language and social-emotional skills	– Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales – Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	cooperation activities showed a positive association with children's prosocial skills and a negative association with problematic behaviour
Weisberger, I. & Ziv, Y. (2023)	95 child–mother–father triads; 42 kindergarten teachers	Mean age 5.9	Cross-sectional correlational study	IV：Quality of mother–child, father–child, and teacher–child relationships ；Parent–teacher relationship quality DV：Child outcomes: prosocial behaviour; approaches to learning	– Child-Parent Relationship Scale& Student-Teacher Relationship Scale – Quality & Trust in Parent-Teacher Relationship questionnaire – Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (prosocial scale) – Preschool Learning Behaviors Scale	Positive parent-teacher trust also related to better learning and social adjustment
Acar, I. H., Veziroğlu-Çelik, M., Çelebi, Ş., İngeç, D., & Kuzgun, S. (2019)	140 children; their mothers/fathers; 10 teachers	39–77 months	Cross-sectional correlational	IV：Parenting styles M: Parent-teacher relationship quality DV：Child emotion regulation CV: Child age, gender, SES	– Emotion Regulation: Teacher-report Emotion Regulation Checklist – Parenting Styles: Mother-report Child-Rearing Questionnaire – Parent–Teacher Relationship: Teacher-report Parent–Teacher Relationship Scale	High-quality parent-teacher relationships, in turn, predicted higher child emotion regulation, mediating the positive effect of inductive parenting on children's emotion regulation.
Kim et al. (2013)	206 children &parents &teachers	K–3rd grade	Cross-sectional, non-experimental	IV: Parent motivational beliefs (role construction & self-efficacy) M: Parent-teacher relationship quality DV: Child adaptive functioning (social/adaptive skills)	– Parent-report questionnaires – Teacher-report of relationship quality – Teacher-report behavioral rating scales	Parents with strong motivational beliefs formed higher-quality relationships with teachers, which predicted improved child social and adaptive skills and fewer externalizing problems. Parent–teacher relationship acted as a mediator transmitting the effect of parent beliefs to children's behavior.

Figure 2 (Continuation). Overview of included studies.

Serpell & Mashburn (2012)	N = 2,966 children in 704 public pre-K classrooms across 11 U.S. states	Pre-K (4-year-olds), followed into kindergarten	Longitudinal, non-experimental study (pre-K to K); multi-site (11 states)	IVs: parent–teacher relationship quality (in pre-K); frequency of parent-teacher contacts DVs: Teacher-child relationship quality; children's social development outcomes Moderator: Child's social/economic risk status	- Parent-Teacher Relationship Quality Scale (teacher-rated) - Parent-Teacher Contact Frequency Checklist - Teacher-Child Rating Scale - Teacher-Child Relationship Scale	High-quality parent-teacher relationships in pre-K were associated with better child social-emotional outcomes。 The link between a strong parent‐teacher relationship and reduced behavior problems was especially pronounced for at-risk children
Liu, Jin, Zheng, Wang, & Liu (2024)	N = 1,784 parents of preschoolers	Preschool (ages ~3–6; Chinese kindergarten setting)	Cross-sectional survey design;	IV: Parent-Teacher Relationship Quality DV: Child's Social Behavior Problems Mediators: Parents' Work–Family Conflict and Parenting Self-Efficacy	- Parent-Teacher Relationships Scale - Work and Family Conflict Scale - Tool to Measure Parenting Self-Efficacy - Social Competence and Behavior Evaluation Scale	Positive parent–teacher relationship can bolster parents' capacity and lower their stress, thereby improving children's social-emotional outcomes by diminishing problem behaviors.
Sheridan, Knoche, Boise, Witte, Koziol, Prokasky, Schumacher & Kerby (2021)	233 children& parents; 65 teachers; 116 kindergarten; 117 Grade 1 teachers	Preschool to Grade 1 (ages ≈5.3)	Longitudinal, cross-classified multilevel analysis of three waves	IVs: Student-teacher Closeness & Conflict; Parent-teacher Affective relationship quality DVs:Child Social Skills composite ;Child Problem Behaviors composite	• Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale (Joining) • Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Closeness & Conflict) • Social Skills Improvement System	Average teacher-reported parent–teacher quality across years predicted higher average social skills and lower problem behaviors

Figure 2 (Continuation). Overview of included studies.

Pirchio, Passiatore, Tritrini & Taeschner (2013)	193 families of children (103 boys, 90 girls; 12–42 mo) and 51 educators	12 - 42 months	Prospective correlational survey, two waves	IVs: • Quality of parent–educator relationship DVs: • Child problem behaviours • Child wellbeing & adjustment in daycare	Parents: ‑ Child Behavior Checklist ‑ QREG-Parent ‑ QGN ‑ QUIT Educators: ‑ QREG-Educator ‑ QBN	Parents' assessments of the dyadic relationship were linked to lower internalizing problems, higher positive emotionality, and less resistance to change, as well as better overall day-care adjustment.
Bipath & Oosthuizen (2023)	8 parents, 8 teachers, 8 children	3–4 years	Qualitative case study	IV: Quality of parent–teacher relationship DV: Children's socio-emotional behaviours	• Semi-structured interviews • Direct observation of child behaviour at drop-off/pick-up and in class • Document analysis	Children whose parents and teachers closely collaborate show age-appropriate social skills (sharing, empathy, peer play) and greater emotional security
LaRosa, Ogg, Dedrick, Suldo, Rogers, Laffoon & Weaver (2025)	120 Parents; 156 Teachers	Kindergarten	Prospective longitudinal survey	IVs: • Home-based involvement • Parent-teacher trust • Home-school communication DVs: • Total social-emotional strengths	• SEARS-P • SEARS-T-SF • Parent Support for Learning Scale • PTIQ contact frequency subscale • Trust Scale • Parenting Practices Interview	Parents' reports of home-based involvement were a moderate to strong positive predictor of their child's social–emotional strengths over the kindergarten year
Sheridan et al. (2019)	117 intervention studies (592 effect sizes)	Preschool through 12th grade	Meta-analysis	IV: Participation in family-school partnership interventions; DV: Children's social-behavioral outcomes and mental health	Various measures across studies	small-to-moderate positive effects of engaging family–school relationships on children's social-behavioral competence; strong parent–teacher relationship were significantly associated with better child social-emotional outcome

The impact of Parent-teacher relationship on Social-emotional development

Among the 15 studies in our review, fully two-thirds (10/15; 67%) reported direct associations between parent-teacher relationship quality and young children's social-emotional competence or behavioral adjustment. In these investigations, higher ratings of parental trust in teachers, collaborative parent-teacher cooperation, or positive teacher perceptions of parents were consistently linked to stronger child outcomes—most notably enhanced social skills and prosocial behavior (Lang et al., Cohen & Anders, Weisberger & Ziv, Bipath & Oosthuizen), better self-regulation (Zulauf-McCurdy & Loomis; Liu et al.), and fewer externalizing or dysregulation problems (Pirchio et al.; Sheridan et al., 2019 meta-analysis). Conversely, 33% of studies (5/15) elucidated indirect or mediated pathways: Jeon et al. and Serpell & Mashburn found that positive parent-teacher relationships foster warmer teacher-child bonds, which in turn improved the child's social adjustment; Acar et al. and Kim et al. demonstrated that high quality parent-teacher relationships mediated the effects of inductive parenting styles or parental motivational beliefs on children's emotion regulation and adaptive behaviors; and Cai et al. showed that parent-teacher relationship quality moderated the impact of home-based involvement on children's positive mental character. Taken together, this body of work indicates that strong parent-teacher partnerships not only exert a direct, beneficial influence on young children's social-emotional development but also operate indirectly—by enhancing teacher-child interactions, supporting effective parenting practices, and coordinating home-school environments—to reinforce those gains across multiple domains.

Factors influence the link between PTR and SEC

Across the fifteen studies reviewed, the association between strong parent-teacher relationships (PTR) and young children's social-emotional development is consistently positive, yet its magnitude and mechanisms vary according to several key factors. First, child characteristics moderate this association: socioeconomically or behaviorally at-risk children derive especially large reductions in conduct problems from a strong home-school alliance, and benefits to self-regulation differ by race, with some groups (e.g., Black preschoolers) showing greater gains than others. Moreover, extremely high partnership quality can interact with parental involvement such that, in certain contexts, very positive parent-teacher bonds attenuate the incremental effects of additional home-based involvement. Second, the PTR

exerts its influence through multiple mediating pathways. A supportive bond fosters warmer, more responsive teacher-child interactions, which in turn enhance children's social competence and reduce behavioral difficulties. Conversely, negative relationship aspects, such as parental perceptions of teacher undermining, heighten parent-child conflict and increase child emotional dysregulation. Additionally, when parents feel trusted and respected by teachers, their stress declines and their parenting efficacy rises, indirectly leading to fewer child behavior problems at home. Collaborative partnerships also transmit the benefits of positive parenting beliefs and inductive parenting practices to children, with high parental motivation predicting improved social skills and adaptive behaviors via enhanced cooperation with teachers. Finally, contextual conditions shape these dynamics: the positive impact of parent-teacher partnerships has been demonstrated across diverse cultural and socioeconomic settings, and these effects remain robust even after controlling for general parenting quality and demographic factors. Collectively, these findings indicate that high-quality PTR not only directly foster young children's social-emotional development but also reinforce those gains through improved teacher-child relationships, more effective parenting practices, and coordinated support between home and school.

Strategies to improve PTR

Researchers across the fifteen reviewed studies converge on a multifaceted approach to strengthening PTR, emphasizing three complementary strategy clusters. First, consistent and intentional communication practices are foundational: regular two-way exchanges—ranging from informal "doorstep"conversations at drop-off times(Weisberger & Ziv, 2023) to structured parent-teacher conferences (Serpell & Mashburn, 2012)—foster mutual understanding and ensure parents stay informed about their child's progress. Training teachers in family engagement also enhances these communication channels by equipping educators with the skills to initiate and sustain meaningful dialogue(Cohen & Anders, 2019). Second, deliberate trust-building mechanisms solidify partnerships by cultivating mutual respect and shared caregiving goals. When parents endorse teachers' competence and teachers actively validate parents' contributions—sometimes described as a "co-caring" alliance—a climate of reciprocal support emerges, which research links directly to improvements in children's social skills and emotional adjustment (Lang et al., 2020; Cai et al., 2024). Conversely, relationships marked by mistrust or perceptions of undermining correlate with increased parent-child conflict and child dysregulation(Lang et al., 2020), highlighting the need for culturally responsive practices and targeted efforts to engage families from diverse or high-risk backgrounds (Serpell & Mashburn, 2012). Finally, structural supports and joint involvement activities provide the scaffolding that sustains effective partnerships. Examples include organized family-school programs, home visits, parent workshops (Pirchio et al., 2013; Cohen & Anders, 2019), coordinated behavior support plans(Acar et al., 2019), and opportunities for volunteer participation and shared decision-making. These institutionalized supports not only reinforce interpersonal bonds but also promote continuity across educational transitions—such as from preschool to kindergarten—thereby preserving relationship quality and maximizing positive outcomes for children (Weisberger & Ziv, 2023;Sheridan et al., 2021).

Discussion

Summary and Interpretation of Findings

This review represents comprehensive synthesis to date of how the parent-teacher dyadic relationship shapes young children's social-emotional development.

 Previous studies have demonstrated that both home-based and school-based supports positively influence children's social-emotional skills (Jeong et al., 2021; Cosso et al., 2022; Barger et al., 2019). However, many of these studies typically address the home and school systems separately. Zhang H. (2015) distinguished the parent-teacher relationship as a more specific, personalized form of interaction school involvement, which distinct from the broader, organized exchanges that occur between institutions. In contrast, our review focuses specifically on this dyadic parent-teacher link in early childhood. It considers children from infant through kindergarten and synthesizes both correlational and intervention evidence to address how this dyadic relationship influences children's social-emotional development. This cross-system perspective extends the literature by examining relational quality itself, rather than only programmatic involvement.

The studies also explored how and when parent-teacher relationships relate to child outcomes. One consistent finding is that parental well-being and confidence help explain this linkage. Results suggest that high-quality parent-teacher interaction reduces family stress and boosts parents' capacity to support their child, which ultimately benefit the child's social functioning.

Only a few studies have explicitly tested strategies to improve parent–teacher relationships, and those have yielded mixed or limited results. Nevertheless, some evidence points toward promising practices. Meta-analytic work on FSP interventions suggests that specific program components (ie. two-way communication, genuine collaboration, and involving families at home) are effective elements of such programs. Collectively, the evidence indicates that integrating clear communication protocols, trust-building initiatives, and systematic involvement structures constitutes best practice for fostering robust PTR and, by extension, enhancing young children's social-emotional development. However, it should be emphasized that empirical support for specific strategies is still sparse. Unlike well-studied SEL curricula or parenting programs, there is not yet a clear, replicated "program model" for parent-teacher relational enhancement.

Implications for Educators and Schools

The information gathered here is useful for educators who strive to improve collaborate with parents. Good teamwork depends on remaining communicative, respectful of other cultures and respectful to each other. Building trust and rapport can be achieved by educators through home visits and parent workshops (Sheridan et al., 2019). Developing social skills and being inclusive benefits teachers when dealing with families of different backgrounds (Elicker et al., 2016). Making parents involvement a part of the school's practices. For instance, interventions that target teacher preparation curricula to include family partnership skills could help practitioners meet children's social-emotional needs more holistically.

Policy Recommendation

Establishing frameworks that encourage family involvement in schools can link activities at home and those in school. The U.S. Department of Education, for example, has designed the Dual Capacity-Building Framework to guide the establishment of lasting partnerships (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). Flexible ways to connect, budget for activities with families and training for teachers in family collaboration should be part of the policies.Policymakers might encourage or fund initiatives like co-designed classroom projects or culturally responsive home-school liaisons. Because our review highlights parents' work-family stress as a mediator, practitioners should also consider supports (such as flexible meeting times or resource referrals) that alleviate family burdens and thus strengthen the relationship.

It is also necessary for policymakers to deal with inequality that prevents many families from becoming involved, such as low income, unreliable transportation, and lacking educational materials. Inclusive policies must ensure that every family feels they can actively be a part of their kids' school life. This helps children receive the same level of support at home and school.

Limitations and Future Directions

Systematic reviews provide useful data, but they also have some drawbacks. One significant challenge is that most of the available studies come with differences in their methods and how useful they are for the current question. Since only English-language publications were considered, it is possible that culturally specific knowledge from outside of the West was overlooked. It was also hard to compare results directly since different studies used different measurement tools. Researchers should work toward consistent definitions of "parent-teacher relationship" and develop validated instruments suitable for young children's contexts. Moreover, the samples were geographically and demographically limited, so future studies should examine diverse cultural settings and include higher-risk families to test generalizability. Finally, longitudinal and bidirectional effects warrant further attention; for example, do children's own social skills influence the parent-teacher relationship ? Addressing these gaps will deepen our understanding and guide targeted programs.

Conclusion

Referring to studies, it is clear that healthy parent-teacher relationships are a critical factor in young children's social-emotional development. By integrating evidence across home and school contexts, this study show that fostering strong, collaborative parent-teacher partnerships can yield practical benefits for children, while also charting a course for research to optimize these relational processes.

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