Lia Kurtsikidze   https://doi.org/10.26881/pwe.2025.60.08
ORCID: 0009-0005-6194-6574
Ilia State University, School of Education, Tbilisi, Georgia
lia.kurtsikidze.1@iliauni.edu.ge

Elizabeth Steed
ORCID: 0000-0002-6886-9066
University of Colorado Denver, Denver, Colorado, USA
ELIZABETH.STEED@ucdenver.edu

Khatuna Dolidze
Ilia State University, School of Education, Tbilisi, Georgia
khatuna.dolidze.1@iliauni.edu.ge

The Pyramid Effect: Reframing Parental Perceptions and Strategies for Children's Social and Emotional Development[1]

Summary

This research project delves into the transformative effects of parent training in the Pyramid Model on parental attitudes and strategies in nurturing children's social-emotional competencies. The study aimed to investigate potential changes in parents' perspectives towards child development and parenting practices that foster children's social-emotional growth. Interviews were conducted with 41 parents from four different kindergartens, before and after the implementation of the Pyramid Model parent training. The results reveal a noteworthy shift in parental perspectives regarding child development, characterized by an increased emotional awarenessand an increase in their use of strategies to support children to effectively manage their emotions. However, the research also showed that post-training, parents still used shouting and bribing as parenting strategies and did not understand how to support young children's problem-solving. The results underscore the need for targeted parent training and ongoing support to better align parental perspectives with their children's social emotional needs. The findings emphasized the potential utility of Pyramid Model parent training to support parents to foster optimal social and emotional development in young children.

Keywords: Pyramid Model, parental attitudes, social-emotional competencies, child development, emotional awareness

Słowa kluczowe: Model Piramidy, postawy rodzicielskie, kompetencje społeczno--emocjonalne, rozwój dziecka, świadomość emocjonalna

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Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model is a structured, evidence-based framework designed to foster the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young children. Rooted in public health principles, the model emphasizes a tiered approach, where each level of intervention is built upon the foundation of the preceding one. This hierarchy ensures that interventions are additive in value, providing children with layered support tailored to their individual needs (Fox et al. 2003; Hemmeter et al. 2006).

At the foundation of the Pyramid Model lies the first tier, emphasizing universal practices. These practices are designed to benefit every child, regardless of their individual needs. The primary goal at this level is to cultivate a nurturing and responsive environment. By fostering positive relationships between educators, caregivers, and children, the first tier sets the stage for emotional well-being and social competence. Consistent routines, clear expectations, and preventive teaching strategies are hallmarks of this tier. The essence is to proactively address potential challenges, equipping children with the skills and knowledge to navigate their social world effectively. By instilling these foundational practices, the first tier ensures that a majority of children receive the support they need to flourish (Shonkoff, Phillips 2000; National Research Council 2001).

The second tier emphasizes targeted support, recognizing that while universal practices cater to most children, some may require additional attention. Children exhibiting minor behavioral or emotional challenges, or those at risk of developing them, are the primary beneficiaries of this tier's interventions. These interventions often involve small group activities, allowing for more personalized instruction. Another specificity of the second tier is using data-driven approaches to monitor progress and adjust methods as needed. The second tier bridges the gap between general practices and intensive interventions, ensuring that children receive timely and appropriate support before challenges escalate (Denham et al. 2003; Strain, Joseph 2006).

At the pinnacle of the Pyramid Model is the third tier, dedicated to intensive interventions. This tier is reserved for children who face persistent challenges, even with the support of the first two tiers. The emphasis here is on individualized, intensive support, often involving one-on-one instruction. Given the unique needs of the children at this level, interventions are highly specialized. Frequent assessments guide the instructional approach, ensuring that strategies are effective and tailored to the child's needs. Collaborative efforts, involving educators, therapists, and families, become crucial. The collective goal is to provide the child with a robust support system, maximizing their potential and ensuring their well-being (Lucyshyn et al. 2002; Dunlap, Fox 2009).

Families in the Framework of Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model emphasizes the essential role families play in shaping and guiding a child's development. This model is built on two main interventions: a universal program for all children and specific strategies aimed at those with elevated risks or ongoing challenges. In both contexts, family involvement is crucial. By creating a supportive and responsive home environment, families play a central role in promoting positive behavior. When needed, families are well-placed to work alongside professionals to implement focused interventions (Fox et al. 2003). Incorporating families in this model demands a combined effort, which includes setting clear goals, closely tracking progress, and effectively applying tailored socio-emotional strategies at home. The model's principles underscore the family as a key influencer in a child's social learning, emphasizing that attentive parenting and strong family bonds are vital for the comprehensive social and emotional well-being of children (Stormont et al. 2005). Additionally, the Pyramid Model's success largely depends on the collaboration between families and early childhood experts. When these groups work in harmony, pooling their expertise and resources, the outcomes in terms of a child's social-emotional growth are significantly improved (Hemmeter et al. 2011).

There are Pyramid Model resources developed specifically for supporting families to use Pyramid Model strategies at home. One of these resources is *Positive Solutions for Families*, a seven-module parent training program that was developed in the U.S. for use with parents of young children under the age of six. There are currently no empirical studies on the use of *Positive Solutions for Families* or any other Pyramid Model parent training approaches in the U.S. or elsewhere.

Pyramid Model in Georgia

The existing curriculum for preschool education in Georgia emphasizes the need to cultivate children's social and emotional skills using the Pyramid Model. However, there has been a conspicuous dearth of data-based research evaluatingimplementation of the model in Georgia. One study conducted by Steed et al. (2023) delved into the perspectives and utilization of Pyramid Model practices among early childhood teachers in Georgia. The findings revealed a crucial need for a) qualified personnel; b) professional development opportunities, and c) social-emotional resources to facilitate a culturally responsive and sustainable implementation of the Pyramid Model. Although the study did not center on family members, Georgian preschool teachers indicated that they lacked effectiveteacher-parent communication around enhancing children's social-emotional competencies.

As an initial endeavor to address the lack of research on the use of the Pyramid Model in Georgia, a pilot study involving Pyramid Model intervention was conducted involving 41 family members who were parents of children in classrooms with Pyramid Model trained kindergarten teachers.

Purpose of this Study

Given the lack of empirical evidence on the impact of Pyramid Model parent training in Georgia and elsewhere, the primary objective of this research was to explore the efficacy of Pyramid Model parent training in reshaping parental attitudes and strategies towards fostering their children's social-emotional competencies. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

– How did parental perceptions shift concerning child development after being introduced to Pyramid Model parent training?

– What modifications did parents make to their parenting strategies to manage emotions and cultivate healthy social interactions after being introduced to the Pyramid Model parent training?

– Ascertain the potential of the Pyramid Model as a comprehensive tool for families aiming to create a nurturing environment that bolsters optimal social and emotional growth in children.

Methods

Participants

In the study, a cohort comprising 41 parents participated, representing four distinct kindergartens where the Pyramid Model was implemented with the lead teachers. Parents' recruitment process involved kindergarten educators disseminating information about the research to parents, and those who voluntarily expressed their willingness to participate were subsequently selected for inclusion in the study. The kindergartens were strategically chosen to encompass diverse geographical locations, demographic and social groups.

Data Collection

Interview Process. All interviews conducted in this study, both pre-intervention (November 2022) and post-intervention (June 2023), were carried out in a face-to-face format. Prior to the commencement of each interview session, participating parents were provided with a detailed explanation of the research's purpose and objectives. They were informed that the interviews would be recorded for accuracy and later analysis. Additionally, parents were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary, and they had the autonomy to withdraw from the study at any point without repercussions.

Interview Questions. The interview questions were designed to explore parental perspectives on their children's social and emotional development, with an emphasis on four key domains: Skills Development, Emotions and Their Expression, Challenges and Problem-Solving, and Building Peer Relationships. These specific domains were chosen

based on key cornerstone literature on Pyramid Model: 1) Unpacking the pyramid model: a practical guide for preschool teachers (Hemmeter et al. 2021); 2) Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) (Hemmeter et al. 2017; Johnston et al. 2021) and 3) How preschoolers' social-emotional learning predicts their early school success: Developing theory-promoting, competency-based assessments (Denham et al. 2014). Interview questions were developed with the intention of gathering in-depth insights into the parent-child relationship, the parent's perception of their child's emotional and social development and the strategies they employ to support their child's growth.

Data Analysis. The next crucial step was coding, which enabled the systematic organization and interpretation of the transcribed interview data. Coding was conducted in MAXQDA.

The first phase of data analysis involved open coding, a systematic process to identify, label, and categorize patterns, concepts, and themes within the dataset (Corbin, Strauss 2008). This exploratory approach allowed for an understanding of the raw data without imposing predetermined categories. The application of open codes to segments of the dataset facilitated the extraction of initial insights and emergent themes.

Following open coding, a structured framework was applied to organize the identified codes (Miles 2014). This framework comprised three layers. The first layer encompassed basic descriptive codes, capturing surface-level information from the dataset. The second layer introduced interpretive codes, delving deeper into the underlying meaning of the data. The third layer comprised overarching conceptual codes that encapsulated broader themes and patterns. Based on this framework, relevant codebook was developed.

The subsequent phase involved thematic interpretation, where codes were synthesized and consolidated to identify overarching themes within the dataset (Braun, Clarke 2006). Codes sharing similarities or contributing to a common idea were merged to construct coherent and meaningful themes. This process allowed for a higher-level interpretation of the data, revealing connections and relationships between individual codes. Thematic interpretation was instrumental in deriving a holistic understanding of the dataset, providing valuable insights into the key patterns and trends that emerged from the open coding and structured coding processes. The merged themes formed the basis for drawing conclusions and implications from the analyzed data.

Intervention with Parents

Intervention 1. Sharing Resources about social and emotional development. As a part of the project, parents were provided with a collection of resources focusing on social and emotional development. This approach aimed to regularly equip parents with valuable knowledge and guidance to support their children's emotional growth and social competence. The resources included evidence-based strategies, posters and infographics tailored to meet the specific needs of parents in nurturing their children's emotional intelligence.

Intervention 2. Face-to-Face Workshop with Parents. The second intervention involved conducting face-to-face workshop with parents. This workshop served as a structured platform for direct interaction and engagement between parents and teachers. Through interactive discussions, seminars, and activities, parents received personalized guidance and evidence-based strategies on topics such as emotional regulation, behavior management, and effective communication with their children.

Intervention 3. Parents' Visits in the Pyramid Redesigned Classrooms and Explanation of New Features. The third pivotal intervention invited parents to visit the redesigned classrooms implementing the Pyramid Model. During these visits, educators explained the purpose and significance of each new feature in the classroom environment to demonstrate how the redesigned classroom effectively fosters emotional regulation, social interactions, and positive behavior in children. This collaborative approach aimed to involve parents in the child development process and create a deeper understanding of the intervention's impact.

Intervention 4. Sharing Progress Through Multimedia Updates. In this fourth intervention, teachers utilized social networks as a platform to regularly share videos and photos of children with their parents and to provide them with detailed descriptions of the specific social and emotional competencies that were being developed, emphasizing their significance. Providing parents with insights into their child's daily experiences further aimed at strengthening the bonds between families and institutions and stimulating meaningful discussions about the child's achievements and challenges.

Results

The findings that resulted from analyses of interview transcripts with parents revealed several themes around how parents' perspectives on their children's social emotional development shifted following their participation in the Pyramid Model parent training.

Shifting Parental Perspectives on Child Development

First, before the intervention was implemented, parents predominantly prioritized the development of relationship-building skills in their children, closely followed by politeness. For example, Parent 17 said,

> Politeness must be learned first of all (…) you have to make the child understand what is good and what is not, what is possible and what is not. You should pay attention to politeness, so that he does not object adults, does not behave badly, obeys you.

Parent 9 said,

> s/he should know what is right and wrong, how to behave, if you say that it is not possible, s/he should not oppose you. S/he should know how to manage crying.

Parents shifted in their perspective post-intervention. The prominence of play as a key developmental skill surged to the forefront, with friendship also registering a substantial increase.

Parent 17. Post-intervention interview:

> Child should learn how to behave, communicate with children, play, not to offend others, take care of them.

Parent 9 said,

> S/he should give up, but giving up is not always good. You cannot always give up what is yours, you must know how to protect something of yours.

The intervention also amplified the importance parents placed on the ability to express emotions, escalating from a solitary instance pre-intervention to six instances post-intervention. Post-intervention, Parent 25 said,

> At some point, he gets stuck in his himself, he doesn't even answer when you ask, and he has to fix it. He should learn to speak what worries him, what he experiences.

Parent 39 said,

> [S/he should have] the ability to correctly express emotions: kindness, love.

In addition, there was an appreciable elevation in the value placed on communication and kindness post-intervention. Post-intervention, Parent 41 said,

> I explain that no one should ever make fun of anyone, no one should oppress other, make them cry. If others need help, help them, not compete with other children, compete, and surpass only yourself, be happy for someone else's success and congratulate them. I teach that every child is an individual with their skills and abilities.

Parent 29, also post-intervention said,

> You should not overload child with colors or numbers until school. Still, relationships are more important. To play with others, not to be excluded and not to exclude others.

Parent 36 said,

> We are people of different ages at home, I teach respect, distribution, concession. I want them to know from the beginning that it is not only theirs, they should also give it to others. I explain that I have 5 children and I when bring something [home], I say that we should share, and we should also share with grandma. (…) If we have a guest and he takes a toy, I explain that he has to share it. If he wants to do something himself, he has to ask for permission, I explain that too.

In contrast, the importance ascribed to independence retained a steady trend both pre- and post-intervention, affirming its continual recognition as a fundamental skill in child development. Parent 2 provided an example of this:

> [It is important] To do things on his own, he must do everything with his hands to develop more. I give him the right to do everything on his own and free will to develop better.

Similarly, the value of caring manifested a relative consistency, reaffirming its acknowledged importance, irrespective of the intervention. Pre-interview, Parent 40 said,

> [I teach]to be a carer, we are taking care of the animals, I ask, will you help me? We teach to help. We get involved in family affairs and she helps us. Sometimes she herself takes the initiative to do pancakes and I let her. She does what we do. If you don't give an example, you won't be able to understand it at this age.

Post-interview, Parent 3 said,

> I taught him to be caring through his relationship with his little sister, I don't forbid anything. I tell him, go, bring me a toy, then I thank him: thank you, mom, for bringing me a toy.

Also post-interview, Parent 5 said,

> She must be caring, we planted plants and looked after them together.

Shift in understanding friendship skills

Another important component of the findings was that parents were strongly focused, after the intervention, on promoting friendship skills among their children, recognizing them as a significant competence to acquire. They valued friendship skills not only in their immediate implications but also in their potential long-term impact on a child's social and emotional well-being.

However, it is noteworthy that the emphasis on friendship skills evolved over the course of our interviews. In the initial interviews, parents predominantly highlighted qualities such as politeness and concession. According to parents, these attributes were often viewed as fundamental for establishing initial rapport and fostering the early stages of social interactions.politeness sets the stage for courteous and respectful communication, while the ability to concede or compromise paves the way for harmonious relationships, even in the face of differences. For example, parent 9 shared during the pre-intervention interview that the "[Child] must be polite, must compromise, obey and do favors for adults." When asked about which skills development shouldbe highlighted in kindergarten, parent 18 shared: "That, which is needed in these years – washing hands, proper eating, using scissors, painting, poems."

In the post-interviews, the spotlight shifted towards more complex skills, such as agreement, sharing, and engaging in cooperative play. Friendship, in this context, signified the capacity to find common ground, resolve conflicts amicably, and navigate differences of opinion with empathy and understanding. Sharing, on the other hand, represented the ability to divide resources and experiences equitably, fostering a sense of fairness and reciprocity within peer interactions. Lastly, the emphasis on playing together underscored the importance of cooperative play in strengthening bonds and building a shared sense of joy and camaraderie among children. For instance, parent 9 explained in theirpost-intervention interview:

> Friendship is an agreement – that you play first, then I play (…) my child does not have a problem of sharing, understands [its importance].

Parent 18 also shared transformed opinions about the skills teachers should be focused on, saying

> I think children should [learn to] express themselves, their opinions. Learning a poem is not a big deal, I think that at this age more diverse skills should be developed.

During pre-intervention interview, parent 13 emphasized "distinguishing between good and bad, forming and expressing emotions" as central skills to focus on, whereas after the intervention, she suggested more extensive set of the skills, with strong emphasis on communication and friendship skills –

[Children should learn] relationships with other children and adults. To learn communication with children, to learn conflict resolution, friendship, expressing emotions and opinions, stating desire.

Enhanced Emotional Awareness

Another shift occurred for parents regarding their awareness of their children's emotional spectrum. Parents were not able to describe their children's emotions in detail during pre-intervention interviews. For instance, parent 41 said, "He is mostly cheerful or on ordinary mood, rarely has other emotions, now I don't remember it so distinctly."

In the post-intervention interviews, parents used more rich emotion vocabulary and described their children as able to express emotions such as guilt, compassion, heartbreak, protest, confusion, fear, disappointment, excitement, pity, which were not mentioned in the pre-intervention interviews.Parent 41 shared about their child that, "He has many emotions: joy, happiness, anger, fear, admiration, pity."

In the same dynamics, Parent 3, during pre-interview named anger as the most frequent emotion in her son without naming other emotions. During the post-interview, while anger was still the first emotion respondent recalled, she also described other emotions, characteristic in her son, saying,

> He expresses anger, he is quite emotional. [He also expresses] compassion, joy, happiness. If he saw you cry, he will sympathize with you, he may cry himself.

Parent 36, during pre-interview described her child in simple terms "In general, s/he is joyful, sometimes extensively positive," whereas during the post-interview, she listed the wide range of emotions "S/he expresses joy, astonishment, amazement, protest, sometimes [expresses] anger, weeps and laughs."

Shift in supporting children to manage their emotions

Another key theme in the findings was parents' reported increase competence to support their children to manage their emotions.

More communication: First, after the intervention, parents seem to have increased communication with their children, especially in terms of discussing their emotions. There is more encouragement for their children to express their feelings verbally, and parents appear to make more attempts to understand and address their children's emotional needs. As an example, Parent 31 described her child pre-intervention as

> Usually he's cheerful and when she is sulking, I just wait. S/he wraps arms around you and looks at you like seeking your attention, and when s/he realizes that it's pointless, annoyance goes.

This same parent shared post-intervention,

> Lately, I've been observing his emotions more (…) I used to discuss [emotions] less.

Better management of unpleasant emotions: The pre-intervention responses suggest that some parents struggled to manage their children's negative emotions. Some even admitted to shouting or ignoring their child's tantrums. Parent 19, pre-intervention said,

> If my son lies down, I don't pay attention, I wait, time will pass and then I tell him that you will break your mother's heart if you behave badly.

Post-intervention, some parents improved the management of their children's emotions. The same parent 19 says,

> when he is angry, I try to calm him down first, or distract his attention if there is a chance. Also I hug him – he calms down easily with a hug.

Also, parent 8 pre-intervention said,

> I always tell him to be cheerful. If he is sad or angry – I don't react at all. He corrects his mood. He has to fix his emotion on his own. He looks at his elders (cousins), tries to be in a good mood.

The same parent, post-intervention shared totally transfigured position, saying:

> [Children] should definitely express their emotions, they should not be locked in their heads. I like that he even expresses anger. Don't cry, don't cry – that's not what I'm saying. If he needs to cry, he should be emptied.

Less emphasis on punishment: In the pre-intervention responses, some parents suggested punishing or ignoring their children when they acted out. After the intervention, there is less mention of punishment, and more emphasis on understanding the underlying reasons for their child's behavior. Pre intervention, Parent 1 said,

> If he does something wrong, I will punish him and tell him that I will not buy anything to you. He must realize what he has done.

The same parent, post-intervention showed transformed attitude, saying,

> I calmly tell him to calm down and talk to me calmly.

While the post-intervention data paints a promising picture of improved parenting strategies concerning children's emotional management, it also illuminates areas that still need refinement. In spite of substantial progress made in understanding and managing their children's emotions, a subset of parents persisted in resorting to less constructive approaches like shouting or bribing – methods that often prove counterproductive in the long run. Parent 13 post-intervention said,

> Sometimes I have to buy something and maybe I don't have the money, I explain that I don't have it. Then he gets angry, then I explain why he should not get angry. I usually explain, but sometimes I even shout and raise my voice. I know I shouldn't shout, but (…) It is more my problem then child's. When he is angry, I also try to bribe him. I usually promise something.

Parental Understanding of Problem Solving

The area with the least visible impact between the pre- and post-interview data revolved around parental perspectives regarding their children's problem-solving abilities. At both time points, parents consistently exhibited a somewhat superficial understanding of their children's social challenges, underestimating the daily hurdles their children encounter. Further, in some cases parents habitually assumed the role of problem solvers themselves, offering immediate solutions to their children's problems rather than empowering their children to tackle challenges independently, even after the parent training. For example, Parent 19 during the pre-intervention interview said:

> [When child is not sharing toys] I will talk to him and explain not to be a bad and selfish boy. In such cases, I also promise something like "Go give [the toy] to your friend and I will give you something." Then he forgets what I promised.

The same parent's description of their approach to problem solving was not very changed in the post-intervention interview:

> […] If someone grabs a toy from him, I tell them to give back, if my child grabs, I tell him to give it back. I observe who had it first.

Also, Parent 4, pre-interview shared,

> What should be a problem for a 3-year-old child? I don't think a 3-year-old child thinks that there is a problem.

Post-interview, same parent shared,

> If he has any problem with children, he will avoid it and solve it by himself.

Discussion

Shifting Parental Perspectives on Child Development

The results of the intervention revealed a notable evolution in parental perspectives on child development, transitioning from an initial emphasis on specific behavioral skills to a more holistic approach that values emotional intelligence, social skills, and self-expression. Before the intervention, there was a predominant focus on proper behavior, obedience, and politeness as crucial developmental skills for children. However, post-intervention, a substantial shift occurred, with play and friendship emerging as key developmental priorities. This shift underscores a broader understanding of child development that extends beyond mere politeness and obedience. In contrast to the shifting priorities, certain fundamental skills maintained consistent importance both pre and post-intervention. Independence, as highlighted, retained its recognition as a foundational skill in child development. Similarly, the values of respect, caring, patience, and understanding were consistently acknowledged by parents, reaffirming their enduring significance. To put these findings in international perspective, we will see the certain similarities and alignment. While the research of impact of Pyramid model on parental perspectives is rare, longitudinal international research by World Values Survey (2023) compared parents' priorities between 1990 and 2022 from different countries. In relation to our research, its noteworthy that parents put "respect for other people" as the second most important skill both in 1990 and 2022 internationally. While obedience and independence were placed as the 5th most important skill by 42% of the parents in 1990, in 2023 independence is placed on the 3rd most important skills with 53% of parents highlighting it as the most important, whereas obedience dropped down from 42% to 12%. Although Georgia has not been the part of World Values Survey, Real-Time Monitoring Survey /

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (UNICEF Georgia online) shows that among Georgian parents, the use of violent parenting methods has seen a significant reduction compared to previous years. These parallel shifts underscore the fact that our findings not only capture the impact of our intervention, but also substantiate the overarching trend of increasing parental embrace of positive parenting approaches worldwide. Our intervention is seamlessly aligned with and contributes to bothlocal and global shift in parental perspectives on child development.

Enhanced Parental Awareness and Understanding of Social-Emotional Development

The Pyramid Model demonstrably enhanced parental awareness of children's emotional spectrum, as evidenced by an increased variety of emotions reported post-intervention. This noteworthy increase could be attributed to two primary factors. The first is potential increase in parents' awareness and understanding of emotional expressions in children,

while the second points to the possibility of children expressing and labeling a wider array of emotions.

As for the first factor, through the provision of resources and workshops, the interventions with parents were designed to boost their awareness and understanding of their children's social and emotional development. Equipped with this knowledge, parents likely began to recognize a broader range of emotional expressions in their children that they might have overlooked before. They would have also been better prepared to validate these emotions, encouraging their children to be more open in expressing their feelings. This finding is aligned with international literature showing that programs designed specifically for parents prove effective in advancing their understanding of child development and enhancing their social and emotional skills (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2016), recognition of children's complex emotions (Castro et al. 2015) and influencing their emotional development and overall well-being (Barros et al. 2015; Rutherford et al. 2015).

On the other hand, the implementation of the Pyramid Model in classrooms was designed to foster children's social-emotional skills. This model, with its focus on creating a supportive environment and promoting emotional literacy, likely encouraged children to express and label wider array of emotions. Experiencing an environment where their emotions were acknowledged and validated, children could feel more comfortable expressing complex feelings. Also, with the acquired vocabulary, they were more capable of labeling and communicating these emotions making it easier for parents to identify and understand them (Fox et al. 2010; Lam et al. 2017; Luo et al. 2017; Hemmeter et al. 2021).

Unchanged Domain

The journey towards the full-scale integration of Pyramid strategies encountered a series of obstacles that demanded careful navigation. Despite concerted efforts, deeply ingrained challenges persisted throughout the process. The emergence of enduring issues, such as verbal outbursts and attempts at manipulation through bribery, proved to be resilient hurdles in the pursuit of establishing an entirely nurturing environment. Although there was a noticeable reduction in these problematic behaviors, their lingering presence underscored the need for a more comprehensive approach. Shouting and bribery, while seemingly providing immediate solutions from the perspective of parents, harbored inherent risks. These quick-fix tactics carried the potential to instill negative emotional responses and undesirable behaviors in children, emphasizing the critical importance of addressing the root causes. This realization accentuates the imperative for ongoing education and support for parents, illuminating the adverse long-term implications associated with such strategies (Johnson et al. 2001; Sachs-Ericsson et al. 2006; Dutra et al. 2009; Matalon, Turliuc 2020).

The results also underscored the need for targeted interventions and ongoing support to help parents bridge the gap between their perceptions and their children's actual needs in the realm of problem-solving. It suggests that a more focused effort may be required to empower parents with the skills and knowledge to foster their children's independence and

problem-solving abilities effectively. Interestingly, while parents in both datasets expressed their support for their children's independence, they tended to intervene when it came to solving problems independently. Addressing this particular aspect in future research and policy development is essential to ensure a more holistic and comprehensive approach to social-emotional learning and development.

In conclusion, while the Pyramid Model has shown significant promise in reshaping parental perceptions and strategies, there's a continual need for refining, expanding, and reinforcing the model, ensuring it addresses all challenges parents face in this critical aspect of child-rearing.

Limitations

Limited Gender Representation. One of the significant limitations of this study was the stark gender disparity among the participating parents. With 39 mothers and only 2 fathers involved, the study primarily reflects maternal perspectives and experiences. The limited representation of fathers might not capture the full range of parental approaches to child social-emotional learning and could potentially overlook unique challenges or strategies employed by fathers.

Geographical Bias. While the study incorporated kindergartens from different regions (capital, administrative center, and rural areas), the distribution may not be entirely representative of the broader population of parents of young children in Georgia. The experiences of parents in one rural area might differ from another, and the singular representation of the capital and administrative center may not capture the complete urban perspective.

Lack of Longitudinal Data. The study's interventions were implemented and assessed within a limited timeframe. Without longitudinal data, it's challenging to determine the sustainability of the observed changes in parental attitudes and practices over time or if changes found post-intervention represented developmental change in the children rather than changes in parenting perspectives or practices.

Reliance on Self-reporting. Data collected based on the self-reporting of parents can introduce subjective bias. Parents may sometimes report what they perceive as socially desirable behaviors or attitudes rather than their authentic practices.

Potential Cultural and Socioeconomic Factors. This study did not explicitly address cultural or socioeconomic differences among participants, which might influence parental attitudes and approaches to children's emotional and social development. Different cultural backgrounds and economic statuses can influence child-rearing beliefs and practices that the current study may not have captured.

Implications for Practice

The observed shifts in parental perspectives have implications for the design and implementation of parent training conducted in kindergartens. Parent training interventions that

emphasize play, social skills, emotional expression, and empathy may align more closely with parental priorities. Furthermore, recognizing the enduring importance of certain fundamental skills, such as independence and caring behaviors, is essential for tailoring interventions to meet the diverse needs and beliefs of parents.

The study also sheds light on the importance of integrating structured, evidence-based models like the Pyramid Model into other kindergartens and broader educational and parental frameworks in Georgia. Such incorporation not only facilitates enriched environments for children's early development but also sets a strong foundation for their future emotional and social endeavors.

Another noteworthy implication of this research is the potential ripple effect that parent training programs could have on the broader community. If parents are equipped with the right tools and knowledge, and if they are practicing effective strategies at home, it's conceivable that these behaviors could influence other parents in their social circles, leading to a larger community-wide shift in parents' understanding and approach to social-emotional learning.

Conclusion

The research contributes to the global understanding of parental perspectives on early childhood development, specifically focusing on the impact of Pyramid Model parent training in Georgia. The study illuminates a significant shift in parental priorities post-intervention, emphasizing a more holistic approach to child development. This shift underscores the effectiveness of the Pyramid Model in reshaping parental attitudes, aligning with the broader international trend towards positive parenting approaches. The transformation observed can be attributed not only to the tailored interventions designed to enhance parental awareness and understanding of social-emotional development but also to the Pyramid Model's implementation in classrooms, likely influencing children to express themselves in more diverse ways.

While the study demonstrates promising outcomes, it also brings attention to persistent challenges in specific parenting practices, emphasizing the continuous need for education and support for parents. The findings suggest that, despite the significant strides made by the Pyramid Model in reshaping parental perspectives, ongoing refinement and reinforcement are crucial to addressing the remaining challenges effectively. This ongoing process is vital to ensure a comprehensive approach to social-emotional learning and development, reflecting the dynamic nature of parenting and the evolving needs of both parents and children.

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