

Teachers, Students, and Challenging Parent behavior

Middle and High School Teachers' Perceptions of Challenging Parent Behavior

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Literature Review

Demands most often reported in research on teacher stress:

- challenging student behavior
 - lack of administrative support
 - lack of parental support
 - lack of instructional resources
- (Lambert & McCarthy, 2006)

Literature Review

Markov and Martin (2005):

- 33.1% interactions with parents greatest challenge
- 22% sufficient resources most challenging
- 20% classroom management greatest challenge

Literature Review

Transactional Models of Stress
(Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)

Stress results from perceptions of inequality
between resources and demands

Appraisals of resources and demands mediate
the stress response

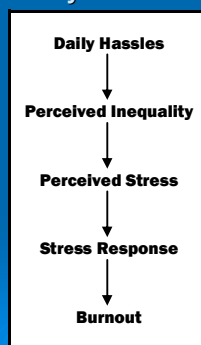
Stress response can lead to physiological,
behavioral, and psychological stress symptoms

Literature Review

Maslach (1982) describes burnout as a
specific type of stress and as a reaction to
chronic emotional strain

“Psychological syndrome of emotional
exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced
personal accomplishment”

Pathway to Burnout



Literature Review

Burnout can negatively impact quality of instructional activities (Hughes, 2001)

Student learning/ achievement (Krause, 2003)

“Self-reinforcing cycle” (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000).

Challenging Parent Behavior

Teachers, students, and parents conflicting attributions/ perspectives of student behavior (Miller, 1999)

Agreement between parents and teachers: home conditions important contributor to challenging student behavior (Miller, 1996)

Parents and students agree in viewing “unfair” teacher behaviors as important (Miller et al., 2002)

Challenging Parent Behavior cont'd

Seven types of challenging parent behavior (van der Wolf & Everaert, 2005)

- 121 Dutch elementary teachers, principal component analysis

Prakke, van Peet, & van der Wolf, 2008

- Multiple Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Challenging Parent Behavior cont'd

- | | |
|-------------------|-------|
| 1. Uncooperative | 33.7% |
| 2. Overprotective | 17.5% |
| 3. Uninvolved | 16.7% |
| 4. Perfectionist | 16.3% |
| 5. Unsatisfied | 15.9% |

US sample: found same 7 types of challenging parent behavior, but only 5 met cut-off point (not included neglectful/fighting)

Method

3059 participants from six countries (Netherlands, Italy, Hong Kong, Russia, India, and the US)

Survey of 292 teachers in 9 middle and high schools in a southeastern state in the US

Survey addressed relationship between teacher stress and parents with challenging behaviors in six countries

Instrumentation

5 scales from the Questionnaire for Teachers about Parents (QTP) (Prakke, 2007):

Challenging Parent Behavior (Seligman, 2000)

Effects on Work (Green, Abidin, & Kmetz, 1997)

Effectiveness in Dealing with Parents

Parent and Community Support (Keefe, 1992)

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ; Goldberg, 1978)

Instrumentation cont'd

1 scale from the Preventive Resources Inventory (PRI; McCarthy & Lambert, 2001): Self-Acceptance

Teacher Support (adapted from Program Management Inventory; PMI)

Administrative Support (adapted from Program Management Inventory; PMI)

Perceived Stress (based on Cohen, Kamrack, & Mermelstein, 1983)

Survey Participants

Average of 11.27 years teaching experience

73.9 % females

9 middle and secondary schools, southeastern state of the US

81.3% were secondary school teachers

63% of the challenging parents were parents of a first-born or single child

Teachers taught the class of this particular student on average 20.6 hours per week

Open-ended Questions

1. Describe the behavior of the most difficult parent you have to deal with in the current school year.
2. This behavior is the most difficult for me because ...
3. How, in general, do you handle this parent's difficult behavior?
4. What recommendations do you have for other teachers for handling this kind of behavior?

Data Analysis

AQUAD (software for the analysis of qualitative data)

Constant Comparative Method of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

Agreement on coding for themes was assured through constant comparison of codes between first and second author

Data Analysis cont'd

Open coding yielded a total of 1,415 coded responses (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

Code catalogs by grouping related codes according to the four research questions

Research team discussed coding procedures on an ongoing basis

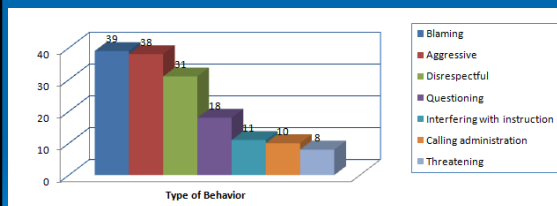
Findings

Participants	292	
No response	33	11.3%
No difficult parents	26	9.0%
Academic	67	23.0%
Behavior	66	22.6%
Racial Issues	7	2.4%
Parent Behavior	152	52.0%
Total of Coded Responses	354	

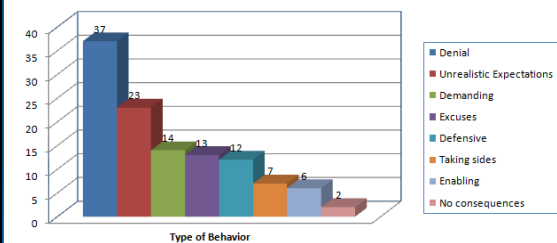
1. Most Challenging Parent Behaviors

Number of Coded Responses n = 354	Percentage	Behavior
155	43.8%	Hostile
114	32.2%	Overprotective
41	11.6%	Uncooperative
13	3.7%	Unsatisfied
13	3.7%	Perfectionist
7	2.0%	Neglectful
7	2.0%	Uninvolved
4	1.1%	Professional

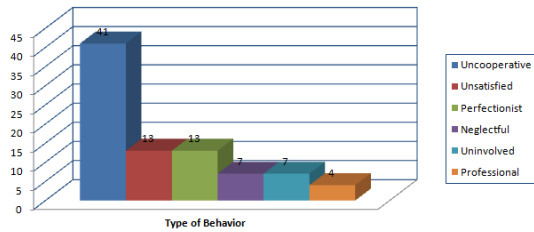
1.1 Hostile Behaviors



1.2 Overprotective Behaviors



1.3 Other Behaviors



2. Why Difficult?

Number of Responses n = 251	Percentage	Difficult because...
45	18.0%	No results
31	12.3%	Frustrating
28	9.6%	No support
26	8.8%	Time consuming
23	7.9%	I do my best
23	7.9%	Not listening
20	6.9%	Offensive
11	3.8%	Question myself
8	2.7%	Concerned about student
6	2.1%	Impacts personal life/ adds stress

3. How Handle?

Number of Responses n = 386	Percentage	Behavior
63	16.3%	Administrative/ professional support
63	16.3%	Listen/ stay calm
62	16.0%	Communicate/ suggest strategies
53	13.7%	Don't take it personal/ professional
47	12.1%	Explain/ suggest strategies
32	8.3%	Set boundaries/ ignore/ avoid
24	6.2%	Have documentation
19	5.0%	Persistent
13	3.4%	Always start with a positive
5	1.3%	Encourage involvement
3	0.8%	Home visits
2	0.5%	Pray about the situation

4. Advice for Other Teachers

Number of Responses n = 424	Percentage	Recommendation
64	18.2%	Listen/ stay calm
58	16.5%	Professional/ firm/ have clear purpose/ be assertive, persistent
44	12.5%	Explain/ suggest strategies/ set contracts
40	11.4%	Have documentation/ evidence/ research
36	10.3%	Administrative/ professional support
33	9.4%	Team of teachers for support (mediators)
20	5.7%	Show understanding/ have student's best interest in mind
19	5.4%	Don't take it personal
16	4.6%	Be positive, confident, honest, compassionate
15	4.3%	Set boundaries/ end conversation if attacked

Discussion

Teachers suggested preventive and proactive practices to avoid difficult interactions with parents

Focus was on efforts to increase mutual understanding, dialogue, and collaboration

They also describes skills and strategies to achieve these goals

Discussion

Reasons for hostile behavior unconscious rejection of child or family-related difficulties

True also for neglectful/ overprotective behavior

Uncooperative/ unsatisfied/ uninvolved behavior

Perfectionist / professional behavior

Parental concern may be legitimate

Limitations

Disadvantage to analyzing singularly responses to open-ended questions of a survey instrument

Answers to open-ended questions analyzed in this study may not accurately reflect teachers' real world handling of challenging parent behaviors

Future research should therefore employ narrative approaches as well as observational data

Future Research

A survey based on findings from an indepth qualitative study may potentially help to understand attributions as a way of making sense of challenging student behavior.

Emphasis in the existing research on perspectives of teachers

Need to explore parents' and students' perspectives on causal attributions for challenging student behavior and more specifically, on difficult teacher behavior.

Future Research

Differences across cultures

Do teacher perceptions vary?

Examining teacher perceptions of challenging parent behavior in kindergarten, middle school, high school, and SPED settings

Relationship between teacher behavior/ knowledge/beliefs, parent behavior, and student behavior and achievement

Implications for Practice

Assess teachers' beliefs about the function of challenging parent behavior, in pre-service and in-service personnel development

Need for professional support and in-service training, helping teachers to identify causes for difficult parent behavior, assisting them in choosing from a spectrum of strategies

Implications for Practice cont'd

Psychosocial approach as outlined by Miller (2003) useful in understanding complex processes and interrelationships of factors and behaviors
