



Possibilities of Promoting Cooperation between Educators and Parents in a Preschool Educational Institution

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Abstract

One of the most important tasks of a preschool educational institution is to develop a child's physical and mental health. The successful implementation of this work would not have been possible without the cooperation between parents and educators. Cooperation can promote a child's personality development and academic achievement. A questionnaire of parents and educators of 2 Latvian preschool educational institutions about promoting cooperation between pedagogues and parents was organized. 109 parents and 41 educators were surveyed. The results of the study showed that the majority of surveyed parents are satisfied with the relationship between the preschool educational institution pedagogues and their children, and also with the communication with the preschool educational institution pedagogues. The most typical ways in which parents communicate with the preschool educational institution educators are through individual discussions and using WhatsApp groups. The other ways of communication are by using the internet and Zoom meetings, phone, and parent meetings. Most of the surveyed parents believe that organizing informal events can improve cooperation between preschool educational institutions, pedagogues, and parents. The majority of surveyed pedagogues believe that most of the children's parents are actively willing to engage in cooperation or show some interest in improving cooperation opportunities. The surveyed pedagogues of the preschool educational institution have evaluated the positive and negative aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators. Most of the surveyed educators believe that the best ways to promote cooperation between educators and parents are individual consultations and the organization of celebrations, joint events, and entertainment.

Keywords: child; pedagogues; informal events; consultations; entertainment

1. Introduction

During the preschool period, the child gains his first life experience, acquires his first skills, and intense emotional development occurs, which is promoted in the family and in the preschool educational institution (kindergarten). A preschool educational institution plays a

major role in the development of a child. In the preschool educational institution, the child receives education, acquires the skills of interaction with other children and adults, and acquires the skills of organizing their behavior. A preschool educational institution is the basic environment in which the child develops self-confidence, learns to socialize, and manifests himself in society. If there is conflict and misunderstanding between a child and a teacher, it can affect the child's emotional state, provoke stressful situations, and promote negative emotions (Chen, 2018). Team-work is an important segment of quality educational work in modern preschool educational institutions. The team-works are conducted among educators and assistant educators of kindergartens (Hmelek et al, 2023).

In the early stages of attending preschool, a child may face adaptation problems. Adaptation problems can be recognized by emotional disorders, communication difficulties, and the child's personality development trends. Successful and positive adaptation in the early stages of attending preschool requires parental support, positive emotions, understanding, and responsiveness of teachers (Çökük & Kozikoğlu, 2020).

Educational work in a preschool educational institution is focused on the development of social and emotional competencies and the development of skills, abilities, and knowledge necessary for school. At preschool age, a child must build relationships with himself and with the people around him. At this age, significant changes occur in the child's mental development, and the child learns a wide range of activities. Also, during the preschool period, the child's emotional intelligence is of great importance, which develops an interest in other children. At preschool age, a child needs to play, which is an important criterion in forming a child's development. The child learns to socialize and manifest himself in the surrounding society (Toklu, 2020). Socially and emotionally competent children are characterized by a high level of behavioral adaptation in school settings. These children can cooperate with peers, interact positively with teachers, and solve social problems. Thus, these children are more involved in the learning process and learning environment (Rademacher et al., 2021). One of the tasks of pedagogues of preschool education institutions is to create a supportive environment and adapt educational materials to enhance bilingual children's verbal skills and help them adapt to the group (Buleshkaj & Kelmendi, 2025).

One of the main tasks of pedagogues is to find an approach for cooperation with the child's parents and to build partnerships with the family. Only with the participation of parents in the training process, the interaction will be positive, and a favorable environment for children's development will be ensured (Leenders et al., 2018). The findings reveal that there are benefits of parent involvement activities in preschool education institutions for the children. The family gains awareness about their child and improves itself in terms of the benefits for the family, and these activities provide ease of communication and problem-solving with families in terms of the benefits for the school and the teacher (Tutkun et al, 2023). The research emphasizes that effective collaboration between parents and teachers is especially important for consistent behavioral reinforcement, ensuring that reward systems contribute to holistic growth in children. Rewards are powerful tools for shaping behavior and enhancing engagement, and it is critical to support long-term development and intrinsic motivation in early childhood education (Sombero, 2025).

In a preschool educational institution, the relationship between a child and a teacher gives the child a sense of security and belonging to their location and society. Typical factors that hinder cooperation between schools and families are parents' lack of understanding of the educational process, the situation in the family environment - violence, substance abuse, alcoholism, parents' previous negative experiences in cooperation with the educational

institution, parents' denial of their children's academic problems, differences in cultural and social status, and others (Winthrop et al., 2021). Educators should not only be skilled in teaching but also improve their knowledge and skills in effective communication with parents.

Positive cooperation between teachers and parents is important in organizing children's education and successful attendance at a preschool educational institution. A preschool educational institution and a family are different environments, but they also have common goals and responsibilities in the development of a child. Therefore it is very important to take into account the relationship between parents and teachers. Positive cooperation between parents and teachers is mutually beneficial because parents who are actively involved in the education and upbringing of their child feel more secure, thus supporting their child in all their plans. This has a positive effect on interpersonal communication, the child effectively and quickly fits into the life of a preschool educational institution and easily adapts to the new environment (Elkornes & Bele, 2021). Collaboration between the preschool teacher and the family is an activity in which the interests of the child are at the center of attention. Collaboration between the teacher and the family refers to both the family's responsibilities and the school's role in monitoring parental participation in the child's upbringing. Positive and constructive school-family relationships act as mechanisms that can promote children's educational success (Deslandes, 2019).

Educators should strive to develop communication strategies and improve collaborative communication methods (Ozmen et al., 2016). To promote successful parent-teacher collaboration and parental involvement in children's personal development, parents can be allowed to observe classes at the preschool educational institution. This helps parents better understand what children do during preschool education classes and how children's development is promoted (Azad et al., 2018). Nowadays, communication and interaction between parents and educators often take place using electronic means of communication, thus providing parents with information about their child's daily successes in the preschool educational institution and the atmosphere in the children's group. This method of cooperation is particularly suitable for parents whose lack of time is an obstacle to collaboration (Alanko, 2018). Informal conversations and interactions with educators are also important practices for involving parents in the preschool education environment. Therefore, communication is a tool for building partnerships between educators and parents (Kuusimäki et al., 2019). Only positive interaction between parents and educators will ensure the effectiveness of upbringing and strengthen the atmosphere of friendship, trust, and mutual affection (Krajnc & Valenčič-Zuljan, 2015). The goal of modern preschool education institutions is to ensure a high quality of cooperation between parents and educators creating a learning environment of shared interests and a family atmosphere (Vasiljević-Prodanović et al., 2021). It is pointed out that there is insufficient publicity about the forms of interaction between teachers and parents, despite the developed models for working with families and children during the adaptation period from the family environment to kindergarten (Vlaseva, 2024).

The aim of the study was to investigate the characteristics of collaboration between parents and educators in a preschool educational institution in Latvia and to identify opportunities for enhancing cooperation.

The research hypothesis was: preschool educational institution educators appreciate the importance of cooperation between parents and educators, and identify positive aspects that promote cooperation and negative aspects that hinder it.

2. Materials and Methods

A questionnaire of parents and educators of 2 Latvian preschool educational institutions (kindergartens) about promoting cooperation between pedagogues and parents was organized. The surveys were conducted to determine the characteristics of cooperation and interaction between preschool educators and parents, and to determine the opinions of educators and parents on opportunities to improve cooperation. 109 parents and 41 educators were surveyed.

The survey questions for parents of children in preschool institutions were designed to find out the satisfaction of parents with the relationship between preschool educational institution pedagogues and their children, satisfaction of parents with the way of communication with preschool educational institution pedagogues, ways of communication of parents with preschool educational institution pedagogues, the interest of parents in being involved in the work of the preschool educational institution, how parents obtain information about the work at preschool education institutions, and the opinion of parents on ways of improving communication between preschool educational institutions and parents.

The survey questions for preschool educational institutions' pedagogues were designed to find out the opinion of pedagogues on the willingness of parents to cooperate with educators and parents of children, the opinion of pedagogues on the positive aspects and negative aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators, and the opinion of pedagogues on the best way to promote cooperation between educators and parents of children.

The survey design approach was aimed at evaluating and improving cooperation strategies between parents of preschool children and teachers of preschool educational institutions.

Interaction between pedagogues and parents was organized using a mobile application. A WhatsApp group was created that brought together educators and parents of the children. The goal of creating such a group is to allow parents to realize themselves not only in the role of passive listeners and observers but also in the role of active subjects. Parents have the opportunity to become participants in group discussions, building relationships not only with the educator but also with other parents. The email addresses of parents and educators were identified. Surveys were sent to the email addresses of pedagogues and parents of the children. Responses from parents and pedagogues to the survey questions were received and analyzed.

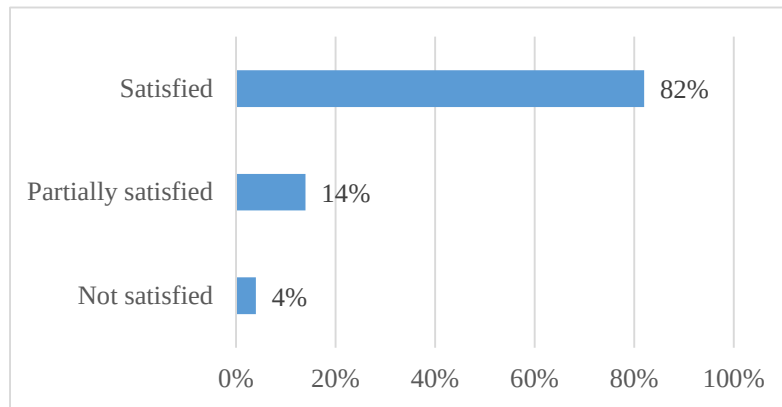
The obtained data in the research were processed using Microsoft Office Excel. Means of group results were calculated, and graphs and tables of the response results were created.

3. Results

3.1 The opinion of parents on the possibilities of improving cooperation with educators in a preschool educational institution

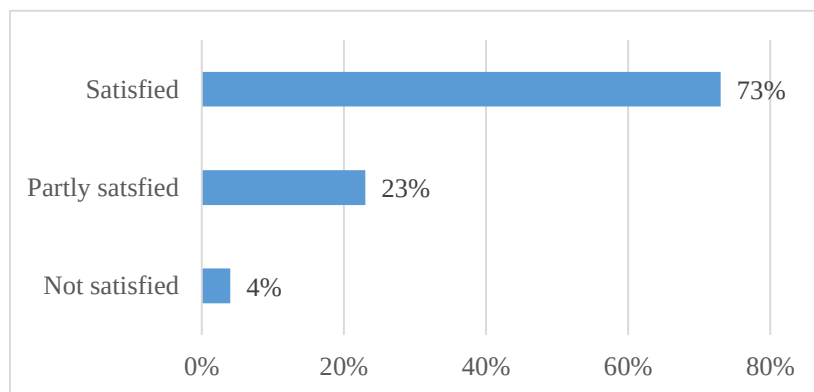
The results of the study showed that the majority of surveyed parents (82%) are satisfied with the relationship between the preschool educational institution's pedagogues and their children (see Figure 1). Some of the parents (14%) are partly satisfied with the relationships of their children. Only 4% of parents are not satisfied with their relations with their children.

Figure 1: Satisfaction of parents with the relationship between preschool educational institution pedagogues and their children (in % of the number of respondents)



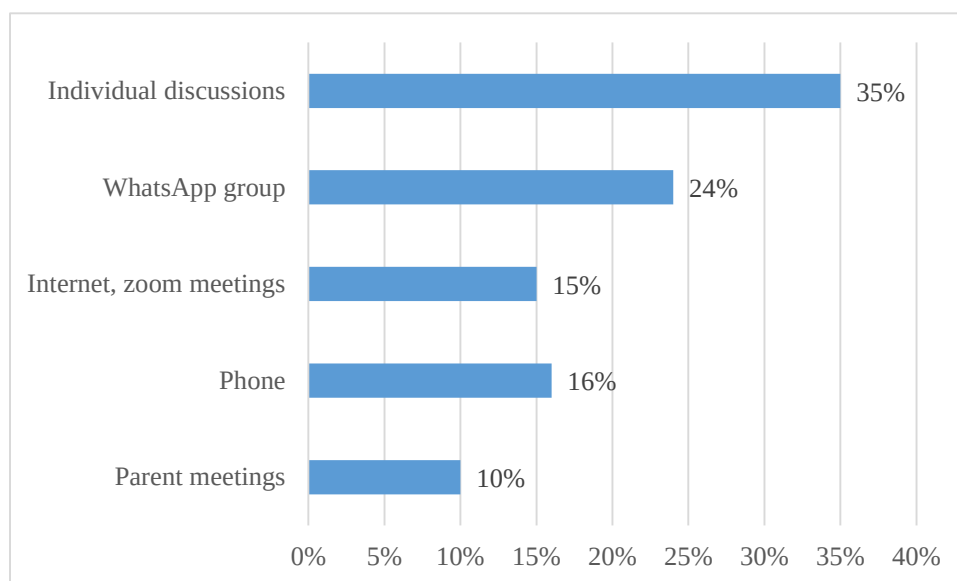
The majority of parents of the children (73%) are also satisfied with the way of communication with the preschool educational institution pedagogues (see Figure 2). 23% of parents are partly satisfied with the way of communication with the preschool educational institution pedagogues but 4% of pedagogues are not satisfied with the way of communication with the preschool educational institution pedagogues.

Figure 2: Satisfaction of parents with the way of communication with preschool educational institution pedagogues (in % of the number of respondents)



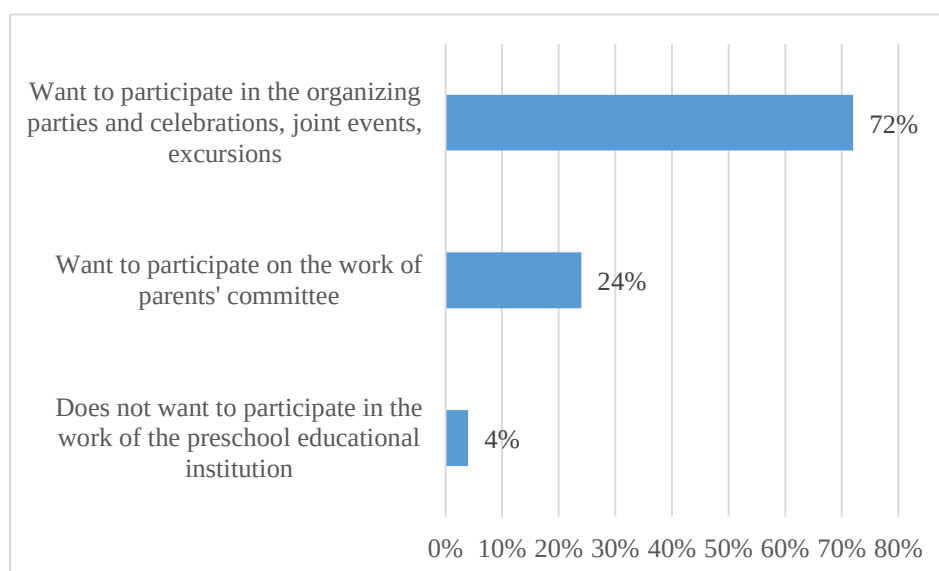
The most typical ways in which parents communicate with preschool educational institution pedagogues are individual discussions (35% of surveyed parents mentioned as the main way of communication) and using WhatsApp groups (24% of surveyed parents mentioned as the main way of communication) (see Figure 3). The other ways of communication are: using the internet and Zoom meetings (15% of surveyed parents mentioned as the main way of communication), phone (16% of surveyed parents mentioned as the main way of communication), and parent meetings (10% of surveyed parents mentioned as the main way of communication).

Figure 3: Ways of communication of parents with preschool educational institution pedagogues (in % of the number of respondents)



The majority of questionnaire parents want to participate in the organizing of parties, joint events, and excursions for children and educators (72% of respondents) (see Figure 4). Some parents (24% of respondents) also want to participate in the work of the parents' committee of the preschool educational institution. Only 4% of questionnaire parents do not want to participate in the work of a preschool educational institution. These results show that parents are interested in getting involved in the work of preschool educational institutions.

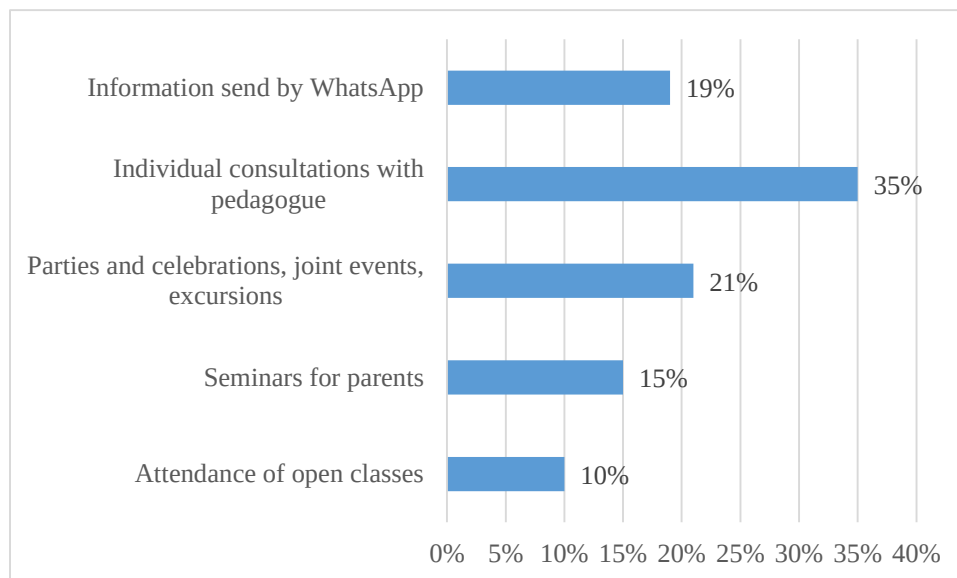
Figure 4: The interest of parents in being involved in the work of the preschool educational institution (in % of the number of respondents)



The survey results show that the most typical ways how parents obtain information about the work at preschool education institutions are individual consultations with pedagogues (35% of parents mentioned it as the main way of obtaining information), information during parties, celebrations joint events, and excursions (21% of parents mentioned it as the main way of obtaining information) and information send by WhatsApp (19% of parents mentioned it as the main way of obtaining information) (see Figure 5). Parents also get information on seminars

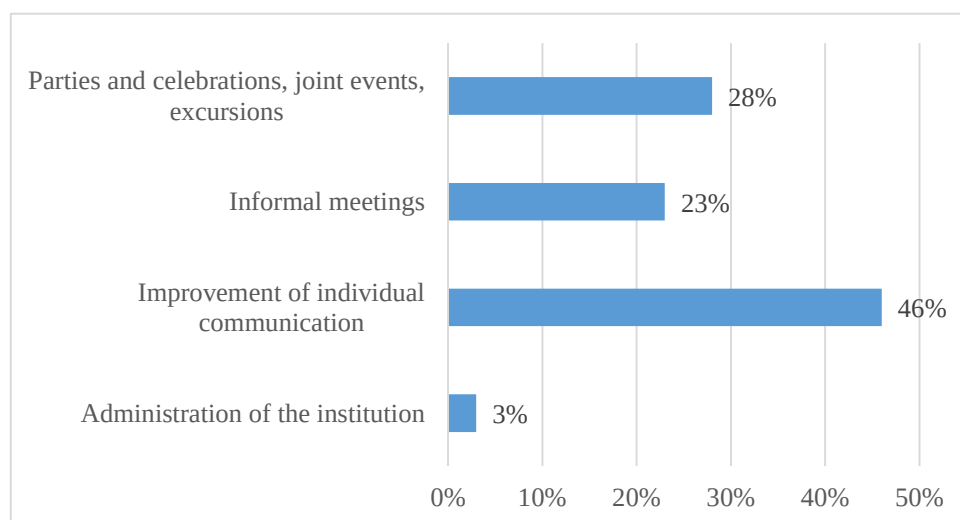
for parents (15% of parents mentioned it as the main way of obtaining information), and by attending open classes (10% of parents mentioned it as the main way of obtaining information).

Figure 5: The main ways in which parents obtain information about the work at preschool education institutions (in % of the number of respondents)



Many of the surveyed parents believe that organizing informal events can improve collaboration between preschool educational institutions, pedagogues and parents (see Figure 6). 28% of parents consider that parties, celebrations, joint events, and excursions are the best way how to improve communication between parents and educators but 23% of parents believe that informal meetings are the best way to improve communication. Many surveyed parents (46% of respondents) believe that improvement of individual communication is the best way to facilitate cooperation between educators and parents. Only 3% of surveyed parents see the involvement of the administration of preschool educational institutions as the best way to improve communication between parents and educators.

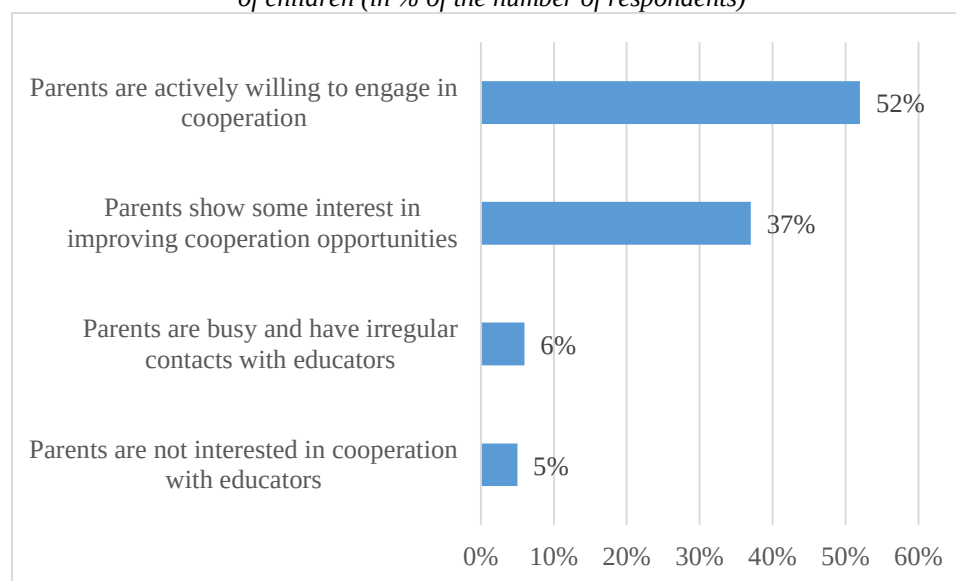
Figure 6: The opinion of parents on ways of improving communication between preschool educational institutions and parents (in % of the number of respondents)



3.2 The opinion of pedagogues on the possibilities of improving cooperation with children's parents in a preschool educational institution

The majority of surveyed pedagogues believe that most of the children's parents are actively willing to engage in cooperation (52% of respondents) or show some interest in improving cooperation opportunities (37% of respondents) (see Figure 7). At the same time, a part of the pedagogues mention that there are parents who are busy and have irregular contact with educators (6% of respondents) or parents who are not interested in cooperating with educators (5% of respondents).

Figure 7: The opinion of pedagogues on the willingness of parents to cooperate between educators and parents of children (in % of the number of respondents)



The surveyed pedagogues of the preschool educational institution have evaluated the positive and the negative aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators. The positive aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators are analyzed in Table 1. Most of all surveyed pedagogues (95% of respondents) as an important factor that affects cooperation between parents and educators have mentioned the interest of the parents in the cooperation. Only 5% of surveyed pedagogues consider that this factor rather affects cooperation. The majority of pedagogues (84% of respondents) also believe that trust between the educator and the parents is an important factor that affects cooperation between parents and pedagogues. Only 11% of surveyed pedagogues consider that this factor rather affects cooperation, and 5% of surveyed pedagogues consider that this factor rather does not affect cooperation. Most of the surveyed pedagogues, as important factors that affect cooperation between parents and educators, have also mentioned the communication skills of parents (74% of respondents), mutual respect (74% of respondents), and participation in the meetings of the group (72% of respondents), attendance of the open days (observing of the classes) (68% of respondents), the use of technological solutions (WhatsApp, Zoom) (64% of respondents), the cultural level of the parents (64% of respondents), and the positive attitude of parents to the pedagogues (63% of respondents). A relatively smaller number of educators, as important factors promoting cooperation, have noted participation in the general meetings of the institution (53% of respondents) and involvement in the council of the educational institution (45% of respondents).

Table 1: The opinion of pedagogues on the positive aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators (in % of the number of respondents)

Positive aspects	Does not affect	Rather does not affect	Rather affects	Affects
The positive attitude of parents to the pedagogues	0	16	21	63
Involvement in the council of the educational institution	0	26	29	45
Communication skills of parents	0	10	16	74
Participation in the general meetings of the institution	4	16	27	53
Participation in the meetings of the group	0	7	21	72
Use of technological solutions (WhatsApp, Zoom)	0	5	31	64
Attendance of the open days (observing of the classes)	5	11	16	68
Trust between the educator and the parents	0	5	11	84
The cultural level of the parents	2	8	26	64
The interest of the parents in the cooperation	0	0	5	95
Mutual respect	0	5	21	74

The negative aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators are analyzed in Table 2. The majority of surveyed pedagogues as important negative factors that affect cooperation between parents and educators have mentioned family situations – violence, substance abuse, alcoholism, etc. (93% of surveyed pedagogues), conflicting parents (92% of respondents), and poor/negative communication skills of parents (79% of respondents). Many pedagogues as important negative factors affecting communication between parents and educators, also consider lack of competence in involving families in the educational process (74% of respondents), the unwillingness of parents to be involved in the educational process (72% of respondents), and parental denial of children's educational problems (65% of respondents). A relatively smaller number of educators, as important negative factors affecting cooperation, have noted poor skills in using technologies of parents (58% of respondents), previous negative experiences of parents in the communication (52% of respondents), time constraints (42% of respondents), differences in cultural and social status (48% of respondents), and decision-making without parental input (48% of respondents).

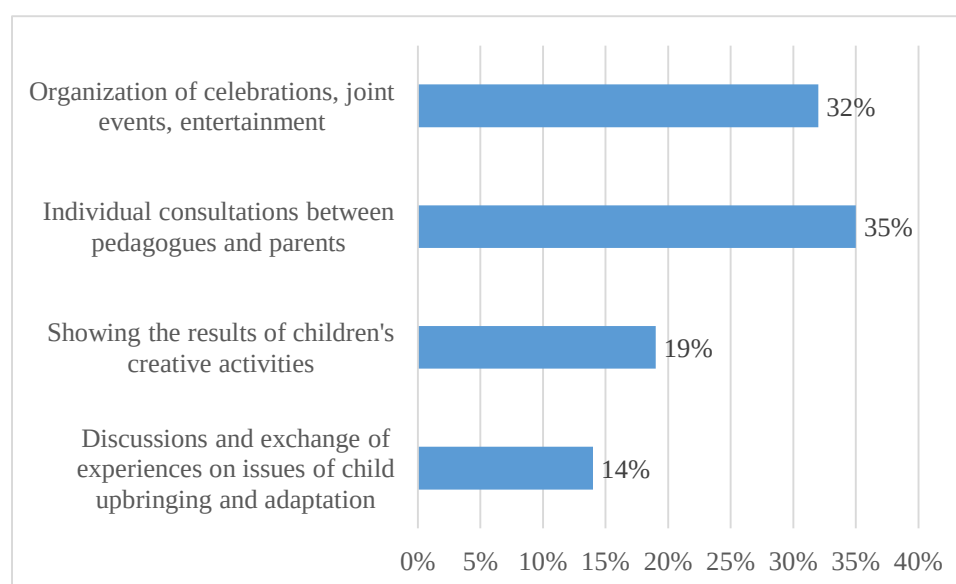
Table 2: The opinion of pedagogues on the negative aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators (in % of the number of respondents)

Negative aspects	Does not affect	Rather does not affect	Rather affects	Affects
Lack of understanding of the educational process of parents	0	11	27	62
Differences in cultural and social status	4	16	32	48
Decision-making without parental input	6	10	36	48

Parental denial of children's educational problems	2	6	27	65
Previous negative experiences of parents in the communication	0	22	26	52
Time constraints	10	16	32	42
Family situations – violence, substance abuse, alcoholism, etc.	0	0	7	93
Poor/negative communication skills of parents	0	5	16	79
Poor skills in using technologies of parents	5	16	21	58
Lack of competence for involving families in the educational process	0	5	21	74
The unwillingness of parents to be involved in the educational process	2	9	17	72
Conflicting parents	0	0	8	92

The majority of surveyed pedagogues believe that the best ways to promote cooperation between educators and parents are individual consultations between pedagogues and parents (35% of surveyed pedagogues consider it the best way of cooperation) and the organization of celebrations, joint events, and entertainment (32% of respondents) (see Figure 8). A part of surveyed pedagogues as the best ways of cooperation mention showing the results of children's creative activities (19% of respondents) and discussions and exchange of experience on issues of child upbringing and adaptation (14% of respondents).

Figure 8: The opinion of pedagogues on the best way to promote cooperation between educators and parents of children (in % of the number of respondents)



4. Discussion

Many authors have demonstrated the important role of cooperation between preschool institution teachers and parents in the education of children. The authors have assessed the following important cooperation measures: the inclusion of parents in preschool activities and participation of parents in the executive bodies of preschool institutions (Adamović- Milošević, 2022), providing regular feedback among educators and parents on the child's achievements and performance (Paula & Valaine-Rohnana, 2021), providing information and knowledge to parents how to help children at home with improving academic skills and preparing different tasks (Sonnenschein et al., 2021), promoting the encouragement of children in families (Liu & Leighton, 2021) informing parents about specific learning or behavioral disorders of children (Zivoder et al., 2017) and improvement of adaptation of child in a preschool educational institution (Lorencová, 2023). Cooperation with parents involves diverse, traditional, and non-traditional forms and methods of communication. In the daily work of a preschool educational institution, the teachers use their pedagogical experience and an individual approach to each parent, involving them in the life of the preschool educational institution. Each family is unique, with its traditions, beliefs, and opinions, and only through mutual interaction between the two parties will cooperation be positive and productive. A child's emotions and mood depend on the contact between parents and teachers (Sheridan et al., 2019). Parents and educators can come together to create dialogues and share opinions. Teachers can help parents and educate parents about the possibilities of the child's personality development (Guerra & Luciano, 2010). Positive and productive cooperation with parents makes it possible to increase the quality of preschool education work, as well as to promote the adaptation process of children and provide conditions for increasing the level of psychological and pedagogical culture of parents.

It is outlined that creating a long-term partnership between parents and teachers is a process that takes a long time, and preschool education institution teachers must have the necessary skills for the development of cooperation (Boit, 2020). It is found that the competences of communication with parents and the ability to involve them in the different activities of the preschool educational institution are very important for pedagogues (Koviene, 2020). The results of our investigation reveal that the majority of parents (73%) are satisfied with the way of communication with the preschool educational institution pedagogues which shows that educators possess the following skills.

Studies show that characteristic ways in which parents can engage in cooperation with preschool educators are communication with the school, volunteering at school, supporting children's learning at home, and involvement in decisions regarding the education of children (Chan et al., 2021). In our research, preschool education institution teachers have analyzed the positive and negative aspects that affect cooperation between parents and educators. As important factors that promote cooperation, educators have recognized the communication skills of parents, participation in the meetings of the group, trust between the educator and the parents, and the interest of the parents in the cooperation. Literature data shows that important factors that promote cooperation between preschool teachers and parents are the ability of parents to learn from preschool teachers, the possibility to work together with preschool teachers, and joint training with preschool education institution teachers (Spasojevic et al., 2017). It is emphasized that very important skills for cooperation are critical thinking and creative problem-solving (Yildirim, 2025). As the main negative factors that hinder cooperation in our study, teachers indicated family situations – violence, substance abuse, alcoholism, etc., conflicting parents, poor/negative communication skills of parents, lack of competence for involving families in the educational process and the unwillingness of parents to be involved in the educational process. Literature data shows that teachers' negative

experiences in working with parents and negative beliefs about parents hinder successful cooperation with parents (Dimitrijevic, & Starcevic, 2024). Research results show that insufficient education and experience of preschool teachers is one of the most important factors that make it difficult for the successful cooperation of educators with parents (Viskovic, & Jevtic, 2017).

5. Conclusion

Successful cooperation between parents and educators of preschool educational institutions is highly valued by both parents and educators. To promote collaboration, educators need to find the best ways to involve parents in cooperation. There are different positive aspects that promote cooperation between preschool education institutions' pedagogues and parents of the children, and negative aspects that hinder it. The experience and knowledge of educators are critically important in organizing successful collaboration between parents and educators.

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