SEPARATION STRESS MANAGEMENT AND SMOOTH TRANSITION IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AND PARENTAL COUNSELING - THEORY AND RESEARCH

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Abstract:
Many children and their families experience the state of transition from their family's environment to the school which is the official institution of the organized state. Through the school, the wider socialization, child's education is taking place at a time characterized by special requirements and needs and with a profound effect on the psych emotional balance of family and child who is in the early stages of their development. Through this paper, an effort is made to record the concerns that family has during the period of the children's transition to school, the preparation made by the family for the transition to an organized educational framework, the expectations of teachers during the transition, the need for a counselling process between school and family and of course, proposals for improvement in managing children's transition from family to school.

Keywords: separation stress, transition, preschool children, parents counselling

1. Introduction

The transition states in which a person will find himself are many throughout his life. The first transition is his own birth, where as a fetus he leaves his mother's protected belly and breathes as a newborn. It will go through small or large transitions which will sometimes be small and insignificant and sometimes of great importance and decisive for its subsequent evolution.

A transition that children experience each year in their own special way is either in the institutions of preschool education, such as kindergartens, or in school as supported by Kyridis, Drossos and Dina (2005) "*the official and exclusively responsible*

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institution with the transmission, reproduction of knowledge, the only institution that has the right to certify the possession of knowledge, therefore the only one whose seal certifies the possession of knowledge in a society" (pp. 70-71).

The child is called, in most cases against his will, to leave the all-day care, love and unique treatment he receives from the "school of emotion", as the family is characterized. During this period, the child will experience the transition from the "I" to the wider "we", through the acceptance of social terms and cooperation with others and will be called to interact within a complex network of institutions and services, aimed at both care and education (Zambeta, 2008).

In this first transition, which is considered a critical period for the development of the child and the family, the school is called to stand by it and make the first opening in life and social interaction with others as traumatic as possible. To support a healthy start, the child family and teachers need to work together, creating a support helping the child to develop a positive self-image, learning and community.

The teacher, as a reference person and as a professional, is called to ensure for the child, those conditions that as an individual will grow up, as normal as possible. According to Matsagouras (2003), a successful transition process affects adaptability, the ability to successfully meet educational and social challenges and increases the child's positive attitude towards school, reducing the chances of dropping out prematurely.

In a study by Bronfenbrenner (1979) is described the child as part of interconnected systems. The family and the school belong to the microsystem that has a direct influence on the child. They have a specific role in its development and their cooperation is an important factor for the organization and successful outcome of the transition from one environment to another.

The transition process may be viewed positively or negatively. Positive treatment evokes pleasant emotions such as joy, confidence, satisfaction, pleasure, and motivation for further development. On the contrary, through the negative approach, feelings of anxiety, fear, anxiety, denial, annoyance, upset and uncertainty appear. Given that the period of transition may be characterized by the above emotions, the research question was posed with the main theme: "Management of separation anxiety and smooth transition in preschool children. Parental counseling".

Recognizing the role of the family environment in the smooth transition of the child to preschool education, the aim of the research was to record how parents experienced the process of transition of their children to the first organized institution of socialization, what were the problems and difficulties they had to face, what their expectations from the school and the teachers, what was the contribution of the teachers during the transition and how important they consider the cooperation between school and family and the counseling process in matters of transition from one environment to another.

The purpose of recording the parental views was to highlight the parameters that have a reinforcing or restrictive effect during the transition so that, through detailed data, methods can be promoted to improve the quality of education provided.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Concept of Attachment

The first years of a child's life are full of changes in various areas, such as physical development, physical skills, language, communication, social relationships, play and cognitive skills. These changes occur in all children, in all environments and in all societies and are key elements for the development of the child's personality and development.

As stressed by Mousse et al. (1979), "…*the evolution from crawling to walking, from walking to speech, from concrete thinking to the abstract, is called evolution. In any case, the stage that appears later is judged as a more satisfactory mode of operation than the previous one…*" (p.48).

Shaffer (1996) argues that these changes are caused by internal factors that are innate in children and are the result of their maturation, but also by external factors that have their roots in the child's environment and especially in his familiar environment. The influence of parents, especially in the first years of their lives, is very important and decisive in the development of the child.

Socialization is the process by which the individual learns the ways of a society or a social whole in order to be able to function within that society or in the social whole. A path that leads us to develop behaviors when communicating with others, as reported by Elkin and Handel (1978). Recent research data on the development of the child, show that the first years of development are a critical period for the acquisition of social skills and that failure in this area may have negative consequences in the future on the development of the child, such as dropping out of school, delinquent behavior (Katz & McCellan, 1997).

The child's first relationships are of fundamental importance and emotional value because they shape the character of social relationships and are the background of children's growing perceptions and experiences of learning and teaching.

As Carey (1985) argues "…*the baby begins to communicate with the people around him relatively early. As early as the end of the 2nd month, the social smile of the baby towards the familiar faces appears. By the end of the 2nd year, the child begins to take into account the presence of another child (s) in the game, without, however, being involved in joint activities (parallel play)*" (p.82).

A great achievement in this area is the development of a strong emotional bond that develops between the child and the mother / caregiver, which is called attachment bond. Through a range of behaviors, such as eye contact, physical contact, smiling, "hooking" and / or crying, forms of behavior are achieved and maintained close to the person with whom he is attached. Characteristic points of attachment are moments when the baby either enjoys being close to a person, or is upset by his absence but shows his joy when he reappears, or is scared and protests in the presence of strangers in his environment.

In the beginning, the attachment is one-person and later (2nd year) it becomes multi-person, that is, siblings, grandparents, kindergarten teachers or other familiar

people from the social environment. As for the species, its quality, according to the research of M. Ainsworth (1967) the attachment is distinguished, in safe and in insecure. Attachment is said to be safe when the infant seeks to be close to his mother, he protests when she disappears from his field of vision and is satisfied and smiles (smiles, goes near her) when she reappears. On the contrary, the child with insecure attachment is not satisfied with the reappearance of the mother and either looks distant (type of avoidance) or sometimes denies contact and sometimes pursues it intensely (type of resistance / doubt).

The child chooses the object of attachment regardless of who is involved in their physical care or the time devoted to it. The quality and not the quantity of social interaction is the basis for shaping attachment. Mothers who do not have a consistent care plan for their children and develop limited interpersonal relationships with them are more likely to develop insecure attachments, with negative consequences for subsequent interpersonal relationships (Grossmann and Grossmann, 1990).

he emotional and cognitive dimensions of social relationships extend beyond attachment (Schaffer, 1996) and shape children 's sense of self in relation to others as this internal model generalizes, as do expectations for all subsequent relationships. Babies with secure attachment develop sociability, self-esteem, are less likely to have problem behaviors and are less likely to have difficulty adjusting to older ages, while also showing autonomy in play and are more confident about themselves. However, as Schaffer (1996) states, the child can become autonomous and insecure attachment is not fate.

Gradually, with the development of the child, the initial forms of communication develop, which begin to become more complex and coordinated with the reciprocity in communication appearing. Of course, negative emotional reactions also occur when infants claim the same object, something that requires special handling (Newcombe, 1996).

As the child grows and develops rapidly mentally and cognitively, language, which also develops rapidly and is a sign of symbolic behavior, makes communication more complex and complex. Now, the child should process social information he receives from his social environment, understand social information and based on this information be able to choose an appropriate social behavior, according to the model of processing social information (Dodge, 1986).

According to the model described by Dodge (1986), the processing of social information follows five stages with the initial stage of coding, which requires the attention of a signal (eg smile or caress) that will be the object of processing, which, however, will then be interpreted according to existing knowledge. Next, there will be the search for reactions, which is related to the invention of a variety of alternative reactions, after evaluating the consequences of each behavior in order to select the most appropriate and finally the action, during which the reaction of the behavior is adopted and realized. was chosen by the child as the most appropriate.

Relationships with peers that begin after infancy where the baby remains attached to its mother help the infant learn to interact and acquire social skills. Through play, as

reported by Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (1978), children acquire so-called social knowledge and the ability to interact with peers. The game, according to Piaget, can be an exercise game, a form that dominates the sensory-motor period of mental development, symbolic which can be more parallel and companion and dominates the pre-conceptual period of mental development and social, which is organized with a goal and rules of cooperation and occurs when the child no longer thinks egocentrically (Paraskevopoulos, 1985).

By observing social interactions in groups of children, the child can either be left out, or play alone, independently, or be an observer of other children's activities, or play side by side with others. children, but not with them, either to participate in joint activities without, however, there is a separation of roles or, finally, to participate in organized games to achieve a goal with a clear division of labor and taking on roles (Parten, 1932). The toy, whatever its form, is considered the center of childhood and for the child every activity is a toy. Besides, the word game has its roots in the ancient Greek language, because as it is mentioned in Dimitrakos' dictionary, it is "*it is the comedy show made for fun*" and the object of children's entertainment (Dimitrakou, 1964).

However, in addition to peers, teachers and parents have an important role in the development of interpersonal relationships and long-term influence on the child's behavior, because, as Erikson (1963) states in the social theory of learning, the child in order to shape personality he goes through a succession of stages within the context of the society and the conditions in which he lives. At the age of preschool, the child lives in a stage of conflict between initiative and guilt, which is characterized by intense mobility and desire to plan, but also to destroy.

The child can and does learn new behaviors or modify the existing ones, simply by observing the behavior of others, while the teacher is a model for the child as Bandura states in sociocognitive theory (Bandura, 1986).

Maccoby (1980) considers that the course of socialization is not one-sided, but children are receptors of behavior, and these in turn influence adult behavior, while Kohleberg (1976) believes that children are socialized by learning the rules of social behavior of adults and the degree of understanding of the rules depends on the stage of their cognitive development.

In the school environment, the child learns to interact socially with peers, with adults and through this interaction, understands himself and improves his image, while gaining experiences of adaptation within society.

3. Concept of Transition and Separation Anxiety

Transition is defined as the process of moving or changing from one environment to another (Rous & Hallam, 2006) while in terms of transition in the educational process, "transition" is defined as the process of change they experience. children from one context or from one stage of education to another (Fabian & Dunlop, 2002).

The transition is a complex process, as it consists of many stages and types, it is continuous, because it covers the entire life of man, begins at birth and continues to evolve throughout his life until his death while being characterized as multifaceted, multilevel, multidimensional and timeless (Gioultsis, 2003).

Especially during the preschool and primary school years, the transitions from the family context to the kindergarten or to the kindergarten and then to the primary school are, first of all, part of the so-called early or first experiences of the child and are considered of major importance as they determine to a large extent the direction of a child's school progress and psychological development (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 1999). The first move from home to school or daycare is often described as the biggest "*culture shock*" a child experiences (Brooker, 2008).

So, in terms of the changes / requirements that mark the transition from the family to the school environment, the child has to face a series of challenges at all levels of his psychosocial and cognitive experiences. Trying to meet these demands on the part of the child tests his emotional and social abilities and creates a separation anxiety and fear of loss. The transition process may be viewed positively or negatively. Positive treatment evokes pleasant emotions such as joy, confidence, satisfaction, pleasure and motivation for further development. On the contrary, through the negative approach, feelings of anxiety, fear, anxiety, denial, annoyance, upset and uncertainty appear (Alevriadou, Vrynioti, Kyridis, Sivropoulou, Chrysafidis, 2008). The transition of the child is directly related to the diversity of the contexts involved, the connections that exist between the contexts, the dynamic nature of the relationships between the child, the family, the educators and the social environment.

This is a stressful event, even when it is expected and not sudden, that disrupts the child and the family. It marks intense changes, both in the child's personality and in the family and social environment, exposing the child to a wide variety of requirements (cognitive, emotional, and social) (Pappa, 2016).

M. Rollo (2010) states that Freud believed that stress is an innate tendency of man, as part of the instincts that are inherited. And that, "*the anxiety and fear of losing the mother, is the beginning of all fears in a person's life*" (pp. 155-156). According to Freud, the basis of all human emotions is based on love for his mother (Dimitriou-Hatzineofytou, 2001).

In recent years, research has been conducted on the context of the transition, due to the importance it attaches to the child's life, and especially in early childhood. These studies suggest that the way children experience these transitions from one context of socialization and education to another will not only make a difference in the beginning, but will also have long-term effects, affecting the rest of their lives (Fabian & Dunlop).

At the stage of trust, according to Erikson (1963) theory, is the explanation for the growing anxiety of the child, who leaves his mother in the first year, while during the second year the need for autonomy enters, so he ceases to be upset during short separations, as he is able to understand that his loved one will return.

3.1. Goals and Transition Models

When a child feels strong, adequate and able to confidently manage new experiences and develop positive predispositions for learning, feel fit and capable of school and have a sense of belonging to a new environment, then this is considered a successful transition (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Blatchford, & Taggart, 2004)

According to Cleave, Jowett & Bate, (1982) *"…transplanting a sprout from one place to another can be a growth stimulus or a shock to the plant. The careful gardener is looking for a way to minimize the risk of shock, so that the plant can take root as easily as possible"* (p.195).

Programs have been developed on how to deal with transitions, the goals set and the expected results. The model of the "*overlapping spheres of influence*" of Epstein and Sheldom (2002) takes into account the interaction of the triptych family - school - community and accordingly, the actions of participation and cooperation between them are supported and encouraged to strengthen the educational process and creating a "care community" that will support the child and all those involved. It is emphasized that the way in which the school will treat the students, is reflected in the way in which their families are treated.

The model of "*family stress*" (Rice, 2012) emphasizes the strengths, weaknesses and difficulties that occur in the family and concerns the adjustment and regulation of the child. Questions such as how a family assesses situations, solves problems and utilizes children's skills, as well as the degree to which a family is able to adapt to change and manage a crisis, are questions that are explored through this model.

Cognitive readiness, language skills as well as personal characteristics, such as temperament, ethnicity, gender, etc. but at the same time the readiness of the family, at the specific moment of the transition are evaluated in the model of "*developmental readiness*". A successful transition is evaluated according to the age, the level of maturity at which the child is, and the skills and knowledge he has acquired during the previous phase of his life (Downer, Driscoll, and Pianta, 2006).

In contrast, the ecosystem-development model (Bronfenbrenner, 1986), treats the child holistically and describes a set of factors related to the child, family, school and community, which are interconnected and interdependent during the transition period, involving both the transition process the school as well as the family environment. The ecosystem-development model presumably recognizes that children's social and academic skills are constantly changing during these early years (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Pianta, Cox, 2002). This means that what the child knows and knows how to do today may not be the same tomorrow and what he knows how to do at home may not be the same as what he does in kindergarten (Pianta, Sayre, 2003).

It takes into account the stability and dynamics of the relationships between the systems (school, family and community) as the child moves from one environment to another. The aim is the smooth transition of the child to school education, with respect for his personality, by ensuring continuity through activities that bridge the gap between family and school. Also, the connection of the child's development with the social

institutions, the family support services and in general with the system of pre-school education.

Understanding the complexity of the transition of children with disabilities and their families has been developed in the "*conceptual model*" of transition (Rous & Hallam, 2006), and is essentially a combination of two theoretical frameworks of ecological and organizational theories of ecosystems. Recognize those factors that concern the smooth transition of the child and that the theories highlight and refer to the child, his family, the new school environment, school administration and educational policy.

4. Methodology

In the present research effort, quantitative research was applied because we considered the collection of quantitative data and consequently their analysis with statistical tools and methods more effective. Quantitative data have a numerical or proportional form and we can present them in diagrams and figures, which makes it easier for us to interpret the results of our research (Dimitropoulos, 2001). However, this quantification of data does not prevent, on the other hand, the qualitative summary of the results (Dimitropoulos, 2001). At the same time, in quantitative research it is possible: a) the production of numerical data that can lead us to a wider investigation of the subject (Cohen & Manion, 1994), b) the control of one or more hypotheses, c) the interpretation of cause and effect, and d) forecasts / estimates. Another positive element of quantitative research is that the researcher is unknown, and the participants are anonymous, so they answer the questions more honestly. Although quantitative research allows us to approach a large part of the sample by highlighting the general trends of the population, the present research effort is a pilot study to highlight the importance of the phenomenon of transition and the stress of separation of the child from one environment to another , a period characterized by special requirements and needs and with a profound effect on the psycho-emotional balance of both the family and the child, who is in the early stages of development.

The research material on which we relied comes from the completion of an electronic questionnaire divided into two parts (Part AD: Demographics and Part II: Recording of parents' views and suggestions for good transition practices) completed by 32 parents of two public kindergartens of Primary School Education DG Athens, the 8th Kindergarten of Agioi Anargiroi and the 4th Kindergarten of Agia Varvara.

The survey was conducted from 12 February to 22 February. The questionnaire was created on Google's online form at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSezeJ05qgdYTnuTZsl0avHxTwvSuyJ_nfrS dHqIGdi5TpAsdQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

4.1. Sample
For the selection of the sample we used the method of random sampling to compile the total sample and the sample of the research were parents whose children attend two

sections of public kindergartens of the Primary Education of Athens, the 8th Kindergarten of Agioi Anargyroi and the 4th Kindergarten of Agia Varvara.

At the 8th Kindergarten of Agioi Anargyroi, 22 children study in the department where the research was conducted, of which 14 are infants and 8 are pre-children. The kindergarten teachers have 25 years of experience in the same kindergarten, belong to the age group of about 50 years and have a university degree and carry out cultural, environmental and health education programs in the kindergarten. The 4th Kindergarten of Agia Varvara is attended by 20 children, of which 13 are infants and 7 preschoolers, while the teachers have 10 years of service in the same kindergarten and belong to the age group of 40 years with a university degree. Out of the 42 electronic questionnaires, 34 were answered and no difficulties were found, while it should be mentioned that the sample is men and women, of different ages, with different educational level and different experiences in education.

4.2. Material

The questionnaire as a research tool is a standard means of obtaining information. In our case, it was an indirect means of communication between the researcher and the respondents. As a tool it has several positive elements which among other things are time savings, low cost to negligible (as in the case of the electronic questionnaire), the simplicity of the process that does not tire and the reliability of the results from the collection of the representative sample (Lagoumintzis, Vlachopoulos, Koutsogiannis, 2015).

4.3 Reliability and Validity of Research Process and Measurements

Two of the necessary characteristics that a measuring tool should have are reliability and validity (Pappas, 2002). Reliability refers to the stability that the research tool displays in successive measurements. A measurement tool is considered reliable when in repeated measurements, in the same sample and at different times, it consistently displays the same results, provided that no significant change has occurred between the measurements (Ch. Ouzouni & K. Nakakis, 2011). On the other hand, validity shows whether the research tool and the measurements it gives us correctly measure what it is intended to measure (Paraskevopoulos, 1999).

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire we followed the following steps: 1) along with the questionnaire was sent a letter from the researcher to the respondents in order to understand the purpose of the survey, the content of the questionnaire and to feel protected by their anonymity to answer honestly, 2) its completion was voluntary, 3) it was sent electronically via the google docs form, and 4) all stages of a survey were followed. At the same time, each question of the questionnaire was evaluated for its suitability in terms of: 1) its content, 2) its verbal wording, 3) its order in the questionnaire, 4) its type (Paraskevopoulos, 1999). Finally, the closed-ended questions were given a wide range of suggested answers using a five-point Likert scale, and to increase validity we also included open-ended questions.

Of the total of thirty-two questionnaires (42) given, twenty-eight (28) were answered and it should be noted that the sample are men and women, of different ages, with different educational levels and different experiences in education. The electronic questionnaire for the construction of the Google forms of Google drive was chosen because it allows the data to be collected and recorded in spreadsheets to make their statistical processing easier and easier.

5. Results

From the research that was conducted, a total of 32 questionnaires were collected through the Google docs form and the statistical analysis was done with Excel, so it is univariate. In total, the electronic questionnaire consisted of 10 questions where Part A of the electronic questionnaire concerned demographic data, such as gender of respondents, age, level of education and region in which they live. Regarding the gender of the respondents, the overwhelming advantage is 71.9% who were women and 28.1% men (Figure 1).

Regarding the age of the sample, 71.9% are between 31-45, 15.4% are from 25 to 30, while only 9.4% are over 46 years old (Figure 2). Regarding the educational level of the respondents, 46.9% have completed Secondary education, while it is noteworthy that 43.8% have a university degree and 9.4% have a postgraduate degree (Figure 3). In the second part of the questionnaire the questions were closed-ended with answers on the five-point Likert scale starting from not at all, little, enough, much and very much while three of the questions were open-ended in answer to a short paragraph. To the closed-ended questions and specifically to the question concerning the preparation of the parents for the transition of their child from one environment to another, the percentage of answers shows that 46.9% had prepared a lot and 37.5% quite, the 9.4% answered that they had prepared their child too much for the transition while it is noteworthy that only 6.2% answered that they had prepared a little and 0% at all thus stating that they consider that the preparation of this transition is the responsibility and family responsibility (Figure 4). The next question asked for an open-ended answer and concerned the way parents prepared their children. Indicatively, we mention the ways that the parents mentioned:

- Discussion;
- Through conversation, fairy tales and contact with children who were already going to school;
- With activities;
- Because she had her brother in kindergarten, we went to school together to pick him up while she was in school;
- With interactive games;
- She has her sister who went to the next elementary school;
- By my example as a teacher emphasizing the positives of the space;
- He had a brother who had attended the same kindergarten;

- I read him a book about kindergarten;
- With frequent walks to school;
- With role-playing games and communication with children attending school
- With works and paintings;
- Daily lessons with remote teacher;

As to whether or not their children attended another structure, 62.5% answered in the negative and 37.5% in the negative, thus expressing the trust and confidence that parents have in the public kindergarten and in the fact that there is help. from the Greek family (grandparents) who contribute to the upbringing of children until they attend the two-year compulsory kindergarten for 4 years.

Regarding the concerns that parents had regarding the transition from one family environment to another, it is noteworthy that most of the answers concerned the adaptation of their child to the new environment and his socialization, which is of particular concern to parents, while there were and minimal answers as to whether he will eat and whether he will have autonomy in the toilet, which distinguishes the role that the kindergarten space has as a place of cultivation and integration of the student's personality and the role that the family has in terms of autonomy and preparing the child for school.

Parental involvement was very much to very high at 71.9% and quite high at 28.1% (Figure 5) thus declaring the central role they play in shaping the personality, emotions and behavior of their children, especially in infancy and preschool at which parents are undoubtedly the center of the children's world, their main point of reference and the most important role model. Besides, as Dimitropoulos and Kalouri characteristically state, (2003):

"In the past, the school did not pay much attention to its relations with the family. From this attitude came a strong criticism that the school is isolated, cut off from the society for the sake of which it operates… The criterion of success and effectiveness of the school is the degree of involvement of the parents…" (p.35)

The difficulties in the transition of the children were many and numerous according to 43.8% of the respondents, few to none for 53.2% while only 3.1% answered at all (Figure 6) but on the contrary the extremely large 81.3% consider the counseling of parents in matters of transition and not only (Figure 7) very important, stating that it is very important to have informative meetings on issues related to the development of children, with the management of difficult behaviors such as disobedience, stubbornness, refusal to take responsibility, jealousy of younger or older siblings, as well as the need to create parent schools with a counseling dimension. The last sentence was formulated by many respondents and is a group in which each person can present their views, listen to the respective views of other parents and of course the point of view of the coordinator. Through the parents' school, up-to-date information is given on the subject of each meeting and then follows a discussion in order to help the parent and to apply in his daily

life the techniques that In the same question, however, suggestions should be mentioned regarding actions that can be taken before the start of the school year, such as getting to know their students / teachers, a day to get to know the school and the parents together, creative activities with parents that can create conditions to encourage socialization and generally suggested practices are used, which have been implemented by the community of Reggio Emilia and are considered supportive (Doliopoulou, 1999).

When asked how much the teachers contribute to overcoming difficulties, the percentage of the respondents for the very, very great importance of the teachers' contribution reached 84.4% (Figure 8) pointing out the role of the teacher and the great importance and significance that gives the parent for the emotional security it provides, pedagogical love, trust and reassurance to meet the needs of their child and family were proposed. This answer completes the last question regarding the importance of school and family cooperation for the smooth integration of the child to which the respondents answered positively in their majority (Figure 9).

Parents have a unique and special knowledge of child issues that can be used to make a significant contribution to the transition (Smith & Hubbard, 1988). The teacher needs the cooperation of the parents, to make his own work more effective while the complete development of the child depends on the active participation and support of the parents.

Creating a good atmosphere helps parents understand from the beginning that the teacher is a partner, supports their work, shares their concerns and understands their concerns; that the school is a place that welcomes and accepts not only their child but also themselves.

6. Discussion

By integrating the kindergarten in the unified planning of education, the important role it plays in both the child and the society is recognized, and it is projected as a basic motivation for the child's interest and based on this, the educational program is shaped by promoting the interdisciplinary approach that allows and highlights the connections between different cognitive domains and accepts knowledge as a whole. After all, the kindergarten as a body of socialization of children, after the family, should ensure all the conditions for children to develop and socialize smoothly and comprehensively, within the broader objectives of primary education (DEPPS, 2002).

In the context of the socialization and smooth integration of children in the new environment of the kindergarten, educational activities are proposed in the context of courses that facilitate the transition of children from family to kindergarten and the creation of these programs contain activities that bridge the gap between home, family and kindergarten. In the present study, the findings were particularly interesting as the respondents confirmed the importance and the need for very good cooperation between school and family and the need for counseling in processes of transition from family to school but also in matters related to development and socio-emotional balance of

children. Proposals were made for the activation of the institution of parent schools and counseling by expert scientists, so that the phenomenon of transition becomes more easily manageable and enjoyable.

As for the results of the research and these suggestions of the families, they are considered to be reliable and valuable data for future research, which will aim at creating quality programs for the management of the phenomenon in relation to all involved. Also, the proposals of the parents could be a reason for reflection and evaluation for the State, in order to respond to the modern status and to pay due attention during the transition period of the child from the close family environment to the wider social sector.

About the Author

Paraskevi Foti is a Coordinator of the Primary and Secondary Education at the 3rd Region of Attica (Greek Ministry of Education) and formerly Head of the 4th Kindergarten of Agia Varvara. She has studied piano and higher theory at the National Conservatory of Athens and has completed her master's degree in Intercultural Education and Management of Diversity. She completed her second degree in Psychology at Ethniko Kai Kapodistrian University of Athens with a specialization in Psychology and at the same department she completed her doctoral dissertation with the title: "The contribution of ancient Greek language to art and language of Aesop and the added value of ICT Technology". Her first book, entitled "Otherness, Prejudice and Stereotypes in the School Class. Teacher Management Methods" (2016, Athens: Grigoris) was selected as a university book at Harokopeio University of Athens and also, she has participated in a collective volume on Teaching Scripts through ICT. (2017, Athens: Grigoris). Her next book is called: "Understanding our language, ancient and modern Greek through Aesop" (2020, Athens : Grigoris ed.) and the next book is called : "S.T.(R).E.A.M. and Educational Robotics for children from 3 up to 8 years old" (2020, Athens: Grigoris ed.). She has published in international and national conference proceedings as well as in scientific journals and has a keen interest in Information and Communication Technologies and their contribution to the teaching process while being an eTwinning and Moodle trainer in support of open source software. She is a Researcher Associator in the Early Childhood Department of Education and Care at the University of West Attica teaching the courses in "Children's Literature" and "Pedagogy of Image" and in the Interdisciplinary Program of Pedagogy through New Technologies.

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Appendix: Figures and Tables
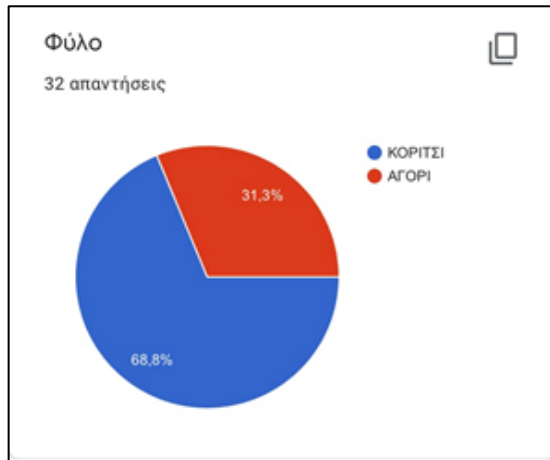
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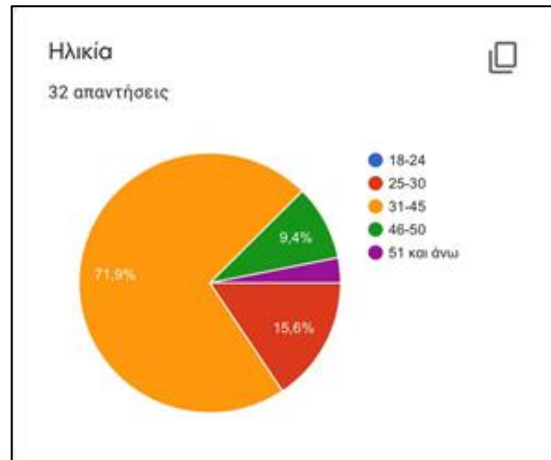
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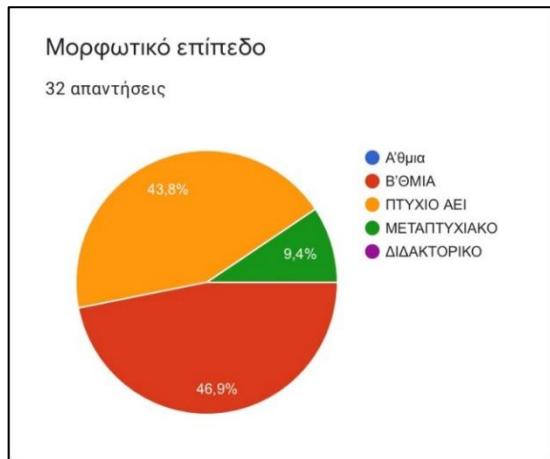
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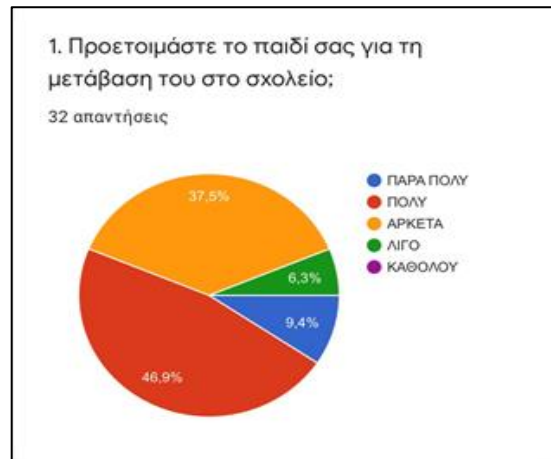
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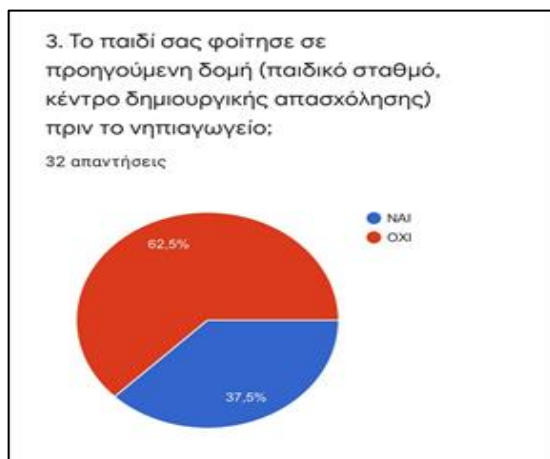
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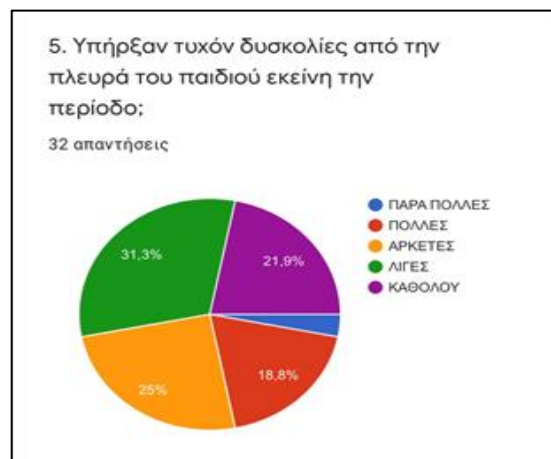
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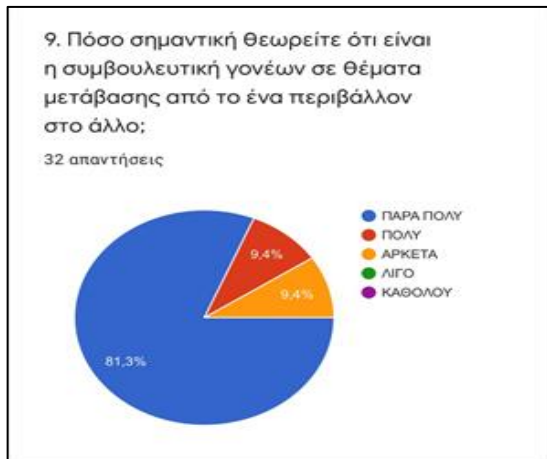
Figure 7:

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