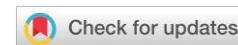




## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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# Parental educational role: Representations of High School Teachers

## Rol parental educativo: Representaciones de Profesores de Enseñanza Media

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### Abstract

This study aims to understand high school teachers' representations regarding the parental educational role. The research was conducted in a partially subsidized private educational institution in Chillán, Chile. It employs a qualitative methodology and a socio-phenomenological approach. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews with 11 high school teachers. Content analysis was used for data interpretation. The findings reveal the core nucleus of the representation and its peripheral elements. The core nucleus is identified as the belief that parental presence and participation in the educational process, beyond formal and obligatory instances, is highly beneficial in emotional, behavioural, and academic domains. Regarding peripheral elements, the study highlights the conviction that academic outcomes are influenced by the fulfilment of the parental role, particularly in the emotional domain. Another peripheral element is the teachers' expressed need to compensate for this role when it is inadequately fulfilled at home, generating concerns that involve emotional engagement by the teachers. Additionally, it leads to the development of strategies aimed at addressing the material and emotional needs students may exhibit.

**Keywords:** Social representations, family, school, teaching staff, parental educational role.

### Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo es comprender las representaciones que profesores de enseñanza media se forman respecto del rol parental educativo. El estudio se realiza en un establecimiento educacional particular subvencionado de la ciudad de Chillán, Chile. La investigación se desarrolla desde la metodología cualitativa y el método sociofenomenológico. La producción de datos se efectúa a través de entrevistas semiestructuradas a un total de 11 profesores de enseñanza media. Para el análisis de los datos se utiliza el análisis de contenido. Los resultados permiten, a modo de conclusión, reconocer el núcleo central de la representación y los elementos periféricos. Como núcleo central se reconoce la creencia de que la presencia y participación en el proceso educativo, más allá de las instancias formales y obligatorias, resulta altamente beneficiosa en el ámbito emocional, conductual y académico. Respecto de los elementos periféricos, se reconoce la convicción de que los resultados académicos son consecuencia del cumplimiento del rol, principalmente en lo referido al ámbito emocional. Otro elemento periférico es la necesidad que manifiestan los docentes, de suplir este rol cuando su cumplimiento no es adecuado en el hogar, generando una serie de preocupaciones que implican el involucramiento emocional por parte del profesorado, pero también la configuración de estrategias orientadas a cubrir necesidades materiales y emocionales que los estudiantes puedan manifestar.

**Palabras clave:** Representaciones sociales, familia, escuela, profesorado, rol parental educativo.

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## Introduction

The benefits of family participation during the teaching–learning process have been widely studied. However, despite identifying these benefits, there remains a persistent difficulty in establishing a meaningful connection between parents and the school (Razeto, 2018). The existing literature has addressed this issue from various perspectives, with particular emphasis on primary or elementary education, while studies considering what occurs at the middle or secondary level are scarce.

Depending on the context, factors such as family vulnerability may affect the social and emotional development of children and adolescents, who may experience difficulties in their educational process and social relationships (Acuña, 2016). To address these challenges, it is necessary to strengthen the relationship between the school and the community, promote family participation, and create meaningful spaces for interaction between the school and parents.

One of the areas where the greatest difficulties arise is communication. When attempting to establish a relationship between two institutions as important as the family and the school, communication plays a central role (Mínguez et al., 2019). Communication is conditioned, in part, by the role that families assume in relation to education, but at the same time, it is influenced by the role families believe they are fulfilling. When speaking about communication, various factors must be considered, such as schooling level, literacy, geographical location, among others (Hernández-Prados & Álvarez-Muñoz, 2023).

The educational parental role (EPR) and its implications in students' educational processes is a crucial element in establishing an appropriate relationship between families and the school, as it facilitates the creation of a suitable foundation for communication, increases participation in school-organized activities, and promotes family involvement with the school and education (Cárcamo-Vásquez & Méndez-Bustos, 2024; González et al., 2014; Razeto, 2018; Siede, 2017).

Another important area to consider is parental involvement. Parental involvement refers to families' willingness to participate or become engaged in activities related to their children's schooling processes. Such involvement is conditioned by the fulfillment of the EPR, as well as by the understanding of the EPR that teachers attribute to families—particularly in the case of families experiencing social vulnerability (Martínez-Vicente & Valiente-Barroso, 2020).

Based on the elements described above, the following research questions arise: What representations do secondary school teachers hold regarding the EPR? What elements constitute the EPR from the teachers' perspective? How do teachers recognize the fulfillment of the EPR? What meaning do they attribute to its fulfillment? It is worth noting that addressing the concept of the EPR makes it possible to provide a valuable theoretical contribution to this field of study, enriching the existing literature and identifying the representations associated with this concept (Azar et al., 2023; Lagos & Silva, 2021; López-Angulo et al., 2023). Although there is a significant amount of research on the relationship between families and schools, the concept of the EPR has been little explored. Furthermore, the studies reviewed tend to focus on primary or elementary education; research that examines what occurs in secondary or high school education is practically nonexistent. Consequently, this study contributes to the generation of knowledge about a largely unexplored group.

Social representations (SR) are ways of understanding the world. These representations allow individuals to collectively give meaning and significance to the world they inhabit. SRs are entities that circulate and are part of our universe through symbolic processes.

Most of what surrounds us is infused with representations, and while we know they correspond to symbolic substances, we also know they are shaped by practice. In this sense, we can understand SRs as tools that allow us to comprehend the subjectivity, intentionality, symbolism, and intangibility of social reality. SRs constitute an organized body of knowledge through which human beings make

physical and social reality intelligible and engage in everyday exchanges (Moscovici, 1979). In conclusion, SRs allow us to understand the world we live in collectively, giving meaning to our social interactions, our communication processes, and our community life. They are also a source of socially shared knowledge that enables us to understand various objects in order to interpret reality and make sense of the world.

Roles correspond to the typification of one's own actions and those of others. They are tasks assigned to specific actors (Berger et al., 1968). The typification of forms of action requires that these actions possess an objective meaning, since by performing roles, individuals actively participate in the social world. We may speak of roles when this typification appears within the context of a series of objectified events common to a collective of actors; roles are types of actors within that context (Berger et al., 1968).

Roles are inherent to social groups. They emerge as soon as the process of forming a particular group begins, in which behaviors are the product of social interaction (Berger, 1968). It is important to mention that all institutionalized behavior involves the fulfillment of a role. The school, being one of the most important agents of socialization in the lives of children and adolescents, is no exception. The educational process involves the interaction of various agents who participate in students' learning. These agents fulfill various roles throughout the process, which aims at the holistic development of children and adolescents during their schooling years. However, not all of these roles are performed at school, since much of the educational process occurs in the home. It is there that parents and guardians assume a new role in their children's educational process.

The EPR is understood as the set of actions and tasks that, according to teachers, families must carry out to support their children's formal education (Cárcamo-Vásquez & Rodríguez-Garcés, 2015). It primarily refers to the tasks that families carry out at home to contribute to the academic development of children and adolescents. The EPR is conceived as the set of behaviors and dispositions that parents and guardians enact during the schooling process.

## Methodology

This research is developed within the interpretive paradigm, since its purpose is to investigate the phenomenon from the perspective of the subjects involved (Beltrán, 2018). Specifically, the focus is on describing the representations that teachers form regarding the EPR. Consequently, the methodology is qualitative, as it allows access to participants' subjective perspectives. In accordance with the needs of the research objective, the method used corresponds to the socio-phenomenological approach (Toledo, 2014). This method facilitates access to the discourses that subjects—secondary school teachers—construct regarding the EPR. This approach is carried out based on axiological neutrality, aiming to limit value judgments on the part of the researcher.

The context of this research is a privately funded but state-subsidized school located in the municipality of Chillán, in the Ñuble region. The school has an enrollment of approximately 1,300 students, from early childhood education to the fourth year of secondary education. It is located in the eastern sector of Chillán, and its school vulnerability index is 96%.

Currently, the school has nearly 200 staff members, including the leadership team, early childhood educators, special education teachers, general elementary education teachers, and secondary education teachers. The organizational structure includes a coordinator for each educational level, thus encouraging collaborative work among all members of the school community.

Sampling will be intentional, ensuring the structural variability of the population (Jociles, 2018). Thus, the requirement for participation is to be a homeroom teacher in secondary education (from seventh grade to the final year of high school). Access to participants was obtained directly, with prior authorization from school administration. A total of 11 homeroom teachers were interviewed (Table 1). Coordination for the interviews was done through phone calls and WhatsApp. The interviews took place in an office provided by the school administration for this purpose.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the study participants.

|              | Sex    | Age | Profession                         | Experience |
|--------------|--------|-----|------------------------------------|------------|
| Informant 01 | Female | 37  | Teacher of Language and Literature | 10         |
| Informant 02 | Male   | 34  | Mathematics Teacher                | 10         |
| Informant 03 | Male   | 40  | English Teacher                    | 10         |
| Informant 04 | Male   | 33  | Physical Education Teacher         | 10         |
| Informant 05 | Female | 34  | Mathematics Teacher                | 6          |
| Informant 06 | Female | 32  | Teacher of Language and Literature | 8          |
| Informant 07 | Male   | 29  | Natural Sciences Teacher           | 4          |
| Informant 08 | Female | 33  | History and Geography Teacher      | 8          |
| Informant 09 | Female | 34  | History and Geography Teacher      | 10         |
| Informant 10 | Male   | 27  | Teacher of Language and Literature | 3          |
| Informant 11 | Female | 28  | Mathematics Teacher                | 4          |

Regarding the data production techniques, a semi-structured interview was used, as it is recognized as the most suitable technique for accessing the discursive field of the participants. The instrument was an interview script through which the deductive categories that make up the object of study were addressed. In this way, the concept of the Educational Parental Role (EPR) is explored, along with the value assigned to its fulfillment, indicators of such fulfillment, and the dimension of the EPR that is prioritized (academic, disciplinary, or emotional).

It should be noted that, for the validation of the instrument, an expert-judgment validation process was carried out. For this purpose, the instrument was reviewed by an academic expert on the topic and by an expert in qualitative methodologies. Once their observations were incorporated, it was adjusted and submitted to a second validation process by a subject-matter expert (Flick, 2015). The interviews were conducted in person. Depth and richness of the data were prioritized over statistical coverage.

Data analysis was carried out using the content analysis technique (Cáceres, 2008). For this purpose, the first step involved transcribing the material produced through the interviews conducted with the participants. Once transcribed, a review was

performed to ensure consistency between the spoken and written word, in order to guarantee the reliability of the analyzed data. Afterwards, a methodological reduction process was conducted, deriving from the coding process carried out based on the deductive categories and their respective dimensions, combining vertical and horizontal strategies (Baeza, 2002). The coded material was organized using a double-entry matrix at the individual level, in accordance with the vertical strategy, which facilitates the analysis of internal consistency for each interviewee, preserving their individuality. Then, an integrated matrix was created, which facilitates analysis through the horizontal strategy aimed at identifying discursive regularities and their nuances. Coding density was calculated using the formula  $X/Y - Z/Z'$ , where X corresponds to the number of times the specific code appears; Y to the total number of codifications in the entire discursive corpus; Z to the number of interviews in which the code appears; and Z' to the total number of interviews conducted (Table 2).

Regarding ethical considerations, the protocols required by the Directorate of Research and Artistic Creation of the Universidad del Bío-Bío will be followed. To contact the informants, an informed letter

of consent will be prepared following the standards recommended by the international scientific community (Flick, 2015). Finally, to protect the identity of the interviewees, the following nomenclature will be used: informant, consecutive number, sex, date of the interview.

**Table 2.** Coding density..

| Category                      | Dimension                                                               | Code (Coding density)   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Recognition of the EPR</b> | Definition of EPR                                                       | DEFRPE (16/141–11/11)   |
|                               | Definition of adequate fulfillment of the EPR                           | DEF CUM (14/141–8/11)   |
|                               | Importance attributed to the EPR                                        | IMPORROL (21/141–11/11) |
| <b>Fulfillment of the EPR</b> | Indicators of EPR fulfillment                                           | INDCUMP (23/141–11/11)  |
|                               | Importance assigned to the areas of action of the EPR (academic)        | IMPAMACA (1/141–1/11)   |
|                               | Importance assigned to the areas of action of the EPR (disciplinary)    | IMPAMDIS (0/141–0/11)   |
|                               | Importance assigned to the areas of action of the EPR (socio-affective) | IMPAMSA (10/141–10/11)  |
| <b>Meaning of the EPR</b>     | Importance of EPR fulfillment for the children                          | IMPHIJ (16/141–11/11)   |
|                               | Importance of EPR fulfillment for the teacher                           | IMPPROF (14/141–10/11)  |
|                               | Importance of EPR fulfillment for schooling                             | IMPESCOL (18/141–11/11) |

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the main findings obtained through the analytical process. It is organized into the following subsections. First, we present the elements related to the concept of the Educational Parental Role (EPR). Second, we examine how teachers understand the adequate fulfillment of the EPR. Third, we present results related to the importance participants attribute to the performance of the EPR. Fourth, we describe the indicators teachers use to assess the fulfillment of the EPR. Fifth, we identify the importance attributed to the different dimensions that constitute the EPR. Sixth, we analyze the meaning participants assign to the EPR and its performance.

## The concept of the EPR

The teachers who participated in the study have a fairly unified understanding of the EPR. A first finding observable in their discourse is the belief that the essence of the EPR lies in the responsibility families hold in relation to children during their schooling years. One first approximation of the EPR appears in the following excerpt:

“Responsibility—what immediately comes to mind is the responsibility that parents and families must have toward their children.” (Informant 01, woman, October 2024)

The teachers' belief system allows them to understand the EPR as the active and responsible presence of parents and guardians in activities related to children's schooling. They affirm that this role depends on family presence and support throughout this process. It is also defined, repeatedly, as the responsibility families must assume with regard to school-related tasks at home, but also the concern that these tasks are carried out consistently at school:

“Well, for me, the parental role obviously—one of those responsibilities is the academic aspect. The parent is the one who must also take on the role of supporting their children's educational activities, supporting them however they can, from studying with them, setting study times, or even, I don't know, hiring someone to come help me...” (Informant 03, man, October 2024)

Although Moscovici (1961) does not directly address the concept of the EPR, his theory of social representations helps us understand stereotyped perceptions of the family and its influence on education constructed by different educational agents. It is important to recognize that belief systems expressed through social representations reflect only common-sense knowledge (Piña Osorio & Cuevas Cajiga, 2004).

## Definition of fulfillment of the EPR

Despite scientific and technological progress and advances in Information and Communication

Technologies, growing doubts can be observed regarding the development of the parental role (Chong González, 2017).

Beyond the definition teachers claim to have of the EPR, they hold a notion of what constitutes the adequate fulfillment of this role:

“Look, ideally, in this case, parents would be fully attentive to their children. I don’t know... for example, in parent-teacher meetings, that’s also a reflection. One understands that many parents work, but they also need to make time to attend to their children...” (Informant 02, man, September 2024)

Teachers often use terms such as “*ideally*” or “*utopically*.” The findings of this study suggest that in most cases, families fall short in fulfilling their role, as there is a tendency to imagine how things *would be* if the role were actually fulfilled:

“The family is the essential core, so I believe that considering both the parental and family role, it is obviously very important in the construction of learning...” (Informant 07, man, October 2024)

Despite the extensive resources available to families for accessing information that would enable them to resolve issues (printed material, phone calls, chats, social networks), there appears to be a deficit in family communication patterns, leading to conflicts or confrontations (Chong González et al., 2017).

Teachers, therefore, construct narratives describing how the role should be fulfilled. Informant 04 notes:

“Above all, being present, I think... supporting them. I think that regarding their tasks... mainly being there, supporting them, guiding them. Reminding them of things—how to do things—because as adolescents they’re mostly distracted, so being a bit on top of them...” (Informant 04, man, October 2024)

There are criteria for fulfillment that go beyond families’ physical presence; however, evidence shows a serious crisis in participation, especially among groups with high vulnerability (Acuña, 2016). For the interviewed teachers, the need for presence and support is clear, but they agree that physical presence alone is not enough:

“A participatory family, a family that is constantly interested in knowing how their child behaves and performs within the classroom or the school in general. A family that is aware of the student’s needs and can provide all the values required within a classroom...” (Informant 07, man, October 2024)

While teachers repeatedly highlight the importance of presence, support, and participation, they also emphasize students’ emotional and affective needs. This is a significant finding, considering that until recently, scientific evidence focused mainly on academic benefits of family participation (Santibáñez, 2018).

### **Importance attributed to the EPR**

It is easy to identify in the discourse of high-school homeroom teachers that they consistently assign a high level of importance to the fulfillment of the EPR:

“I think it is essential when it comes to achieving success—not only in terms of grades but also in how the student behaves in the classroom and within the school as a whole...” (Informant 07, man, October 2024)

The importance of the EPR is rooted in the achievement of goals that go beyond strictly academic ones. This contribution implies, on the one hand, the fulfillment of institutionally defined objectives within the bureaucratic structure of the school and, on the other, the shaping of the ideal subject through the incorporation of cultural and empirical value systems and behavioral norms (Cárcamo-Vásquez & Méndez-Bustos, 2024). Teachers believe that students internally acknowledge and appreciate the support and presence of parents and guardians during their schooling. The benefit most highlighted by teachers is

what successful fulfillment of the EPR would represent for students—not only in their academic performance but also in their overall development:

“It would be completely gratifying and comforting, because one works with the students, and if one rows and the parent does not, you don't move forward much. So, in the utopia where the parent did fulfill their role, where the family did fulfill their role, I think everything would be completely different, and working with adolescents would be completely different for me...” (Informant 10, man, November 2024)

There is also a belief that working collaboratively with families would lead to radical change—not only improving outcomes but also influencing students' attitudes. Bernad Caverio and Llevot Calvet (2016) argue that active family participation strengthens the family–school bond; therefore, it is not surprising that teachers attribute high value and importance to its proper fulfillment.

### Indicators of RPE Compliance

We understand the indicators of RPE compliance as the set of actions and tasks that, according to teachers, families must carry out to support the formal education of their children (Cárcamo-Vásquez & Rodríguez-Garcés, 2015). These indicators correspond both to how teachers observe family participation in the school context and to how students reflect the value-based formation received at home:

“A student who is, first of all, respectful; parents at home teach them that they must uphold that value at school—with their classmates, with their teachers, with inspectors, the cleaning staff, any member of the educational community.” (Informant 06, woman, October 2024)

These indicators cover transversal areas for teachers, including moral, attitudinal, and academic aspects; in fact, some indicators even include students' appearance and personal presentation.

“Well, a child who is careful about expressing themselves well, getting along

with peers, bringing snacks, bringing their materials, their clothes clean and ironed... I don't know if it counts too, but when guardians attend meetings or parent–teacher conferences...” (Informant 10, man, November 2024)

As we can see, it is not only moral values that matter: appearance, the care taken in how students present themselves at school, how they relate to peers, and the presence of parents and guardians in formal school instances are all important. These subtle cues are representative phenomena that individuals construct regarding the reality they inhabit (Jodelet, 1986). For teachers, they are highly meaningful signals—an essential first indication when getting to know a new group of students or taking on a new homeroom class. However, teachers also note that these subtle cues do not always reveal the true family situation.

### Importance Assigned to the RPE Action Domains

Evidence points to the existence of at least three areas in which RPE compliance is essential: academic, disciplinary, and emotional (Scott-Jones, 1995; Epstein & Sander, 2000; Vélez, 2009; Santana, 2010). Among participants in this study, responses were nearly unanimous when asked which area they considered most relevant for RPE compliance:

“The socio-emotional area, in my opinion, is the most important, because the others... Academic performance will be a consequence of it, clearly. A student who may have good economic stability but lacks emotional support will very likely not achieve good academic results despite having all their material needs met...” (Informant 08, woman, October 2024)

Ten out of eleven interviewees identified the socio-emotional domain as the most important, revealing a clear discursive regularity. Although their arguments were similar, some highlighted emotional well-being as the foundation for learning. The relevance of the emotional dimension gains special value insofar as it is attributed a fundamental role in achieving curricular objectives (Azar et al., 2023). Teachers clearly share

a representation that emotional well-being is the basis for any learning process in the classroom:

“The emotional area, because a child who has no emotional management or emotional intelligence will react to anything with emotions that may hinder their learning...” (Informant 04, man, October 2024)

The only informant who responded differently did so because she believed that providing academic tools is just as important as ensuring emotional well-being. She articulated a relationship between both areas and their mutual benefits:

“All of them. Well, I’m very demanding academically, because I feel that these kids don’t have other opportunities to pay for prep courses or private tutors, right? So I try to give everything and want them to feel that I go all out for them. But the emotional side goes hand in hand. What matters most to me is shaping good people—people who don’t lie, who are good classmates. I think that defines you better as a person, because academics also come with time...” (Informant 01, woman, October 2024)

Again, emotional stability or well-being appears as foundational for learning. The value-based, emotional, cultural, and academic formation of future citizens who respect and value the individuality of others is essential (MINEDUC, 2018). Although this teacher acknowledges prioritizing academic achievement, she also recognizes the importance of emotional grounding for attaining strong results.

This discursive continuity allows us to identify as a significant finding the belief among teachers that emotional or socio-affective well-being is the foundational dimension for successful learning. Families must therefore direct their efforts toward meeting the needs children and adolescents have in this area.

### **Meaning Attributed to RPE**

Exploring the meaning teachers attribute to RPE compliance reveals three main representational

objects: children, the school, and the homeroom teacher.

Regarding the meaning attributed to RPE compliance for children, teachers stated that the main beneficiaries of proper RPE fulfillment are the students themselves. Their families’ conscious participation translates not only into good academic performance, which has already been repeatedly mentioned, but also into how students interact with their environment and even into the development of their self-esteem.

Children, then, are the central axis of educational processes, and it is essential to understand the benefits of proper RPE compliance in order to support their learning processes:

“It’s very important for them, even if you don’t believe it—very, very important. Just the fact that, for example, the guardian comes, takes the time to attend a meeting or speak with me... They really notice that a lot, honestly. It’s sad when they say, ‘Oh, my mom won’t come because she doesn’t care about what happens to me at school...’” (Informant 02, man, October 2024)

For students, family presence implies support and accompaniment. It is crucial that students feel important to their families and that families demonstrate this through fulfilling their responsibilities:

“I think the meaning of this role—the parental role—is that the student realizes the interest and appreciation the family has for their future. That is the meaning that I think even students themselves try to emphasize.” (Informant 07, man, October 2024)

The relevance of family involvement during schooling permeates all previously mentioned areas. Research has consistently shown the benefits of the family-school relationship (Cárcamo Vásquez & Garreta Bochaca, 2020; Epstein, 2013; Gubbins & Otero, 2016; Jafarov, 2015; Ule et al., 2015). The interviews conducted suggest that teachers perceive this

relationship as valuable in multiple dimensions, especially in students' value-based formation, human quality, and their broader societal role:

"Their formation and their human quality—in the end, I think it all comes down to that: good people, good citizens, people who empathize with others, who care about animals, pets, people who are vulnerable and have no one to defend them..." (Informant 08, woman, November 2024)

The main benefit, however, appears to be the comprehensive development and formation of students. Not only does RPE compliance support emotional well-being, but teachers also perceive it as a long-term benefit that shapes students' value-based and humanitarian foundations beyond the school years.

Regarding the meaning attributed to RPE compliance for the school, teachers identified several benefits (Cárcamo-Vásquez & Méndez-Bustos, 2024), ranging from student behavior to the prestige the school may gain:

"That's perhaps less emotional, more rational. On the one hand, the school gains prestige, because when you have solid, committed students, the school also has good results. Since everything we build should result in at least good academic results and standardized test scores, word gets around, and the school becomes not only academically respected but also a safe place..." (Informant 08, woman, November 2024)

Achieving students' emotional well-being as a basis for developing academic and social skills translates into academic prestige because standardized test performance strongly determines perceived school quality. Nevertheless, prestige may also be moral or emotional, benefiting the educational community by fostering safe environments for children and adolescents. Beyond prestige, the discourse repeatedly returns to the value-based formation of

students and the prevention of vulnerability stemming from RPE non-compliance.

Regarding the meaning attributed to RPE compliance for homeroom teachers, responses generally expressed the belief that non-compliance generates additional emotional and work burdens. Representations about RPE compliance touch on multiple dimensions; in some cases, teachers emphasized the need to compensate for family absence by covering all possible areas for students' benefit:

"In our workload... we can't ignore the emotional part because we end up taking responsibility for the emotional and moral sides of the students, and even if we try, we cannot disconnect from that..." (Informant 01, woman, October 2024)

Although extra workload was the most frequent theme, teachers also mentioned emotional strain when attempting to support students in this area. This discursive line highlights a perspective on the teaching role: "being a teacher entails responsibilities that should not fall within the job description" (Cárcamo-Vásquez & Méndez-Bustos, 2024).

"I think it would make things much easier—much easier—not just in terms of fulfilling professional obligations but emotionally. That is the most important thing. I'd be able to dedicate myself solely to feeling affection, appreciation, respect, even admiration for my students, without spending the weekend worried about what might happen..." (Informant 08, woman, November 2024)

Other teachers concluded that the main benefit would simply be the ability to fulfill their teaching duties:

"Maybe I could do what I'm supposed to do: teach. Conflicts will always happen, sure, but there would be fewer. Maybe I'd have more attentive children—not that their lives would be fully solved, but they'd already have many answers in their heads..." (Informant 04, man, October 2024)

Teachers' ability to focus on teaching depends partly on proper fulfillment of RPE responsibilities (Lagos & Silva, 2021). However, not all teachers believed RPE compliance has a significant impact on homeroom teachers' well-being:

"I'm not sure there's a direct effect, because as a homeroom teacher... maybe in terms of coordination, but I don't know if it goes beyond that. Being a homeroom teacher is basically group work, but not all families participate, so I usually work with about ten families—the ones who are involved, who participate..."

Finally, although this teacher believes non-compliance does not significantly impact homeroom teachers, she recognizes that the work is effectively carried out with "present" families—those who do fulfill their RPE responsibilities.

## Conclusions

The findings of this study confirm the existence of a representation consistent with the bureaucratic nature of the school, in which the RPE (Rol Parental en la Educación / Parental Role in Education) is understood on the basis of the tasks that parents, guardians, and caregivers are expected to perform to ensure a positive schooling experience.

Regarding the elements that shape the RPE from the teachers' perspective, the following are identified: responsibility, presence, participation, and support. According to the interviewees, these elements are key to recognizing adequate fulfillment of the RPE.

As for the ways in which teachers identify whether the RPE is being fulfilled, several indicators emerge. Initially, teachers observe student-related aspects such as personal appearance, hygiene, attendance and punctuality, and the completion of academic duties and responsibilities. They also identify key indicators in the family's direct interaction with the school and its demands, such as attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in parent meetings, involvement in "extra-programmatic" activities (bingos, folkloric festivals, graduation ceremonies, school events, etc.), willingness to participate in such activities, interest and concern in

knowing their children's situation, and interest in communicating assertively with different educational agents.

In relation to the meaning teachers attribute to the fulfillment of the RPE, the participating group represents it as the responsibility that families, parents, and guardians have toward their children or students during their schooling. This responsibility involves participation, support, and emotional containment—factors considered essential for the holistic development of children and adolescents throughout their educational process.

Each of the elements identified by teachers has an impact on the educational process, both at home and within the school. This impact is reflected positively when the role is adequately fulfilled, and negatively when it is not. The main indicators include strong academic performance, appropriate classroom behavior, greater openness and willingness to learn, and healthy academic and personal self-esteem among school-aged students.

The findings also make it possible to identify the central element of these representations. The study determines that the core belief is that presence and participation throughout the educational process—not only in formal or mandatory settings but continuously—are highly beneficial across all dimensions examined. According to the teachers, the main benefits lie in the socioemotional dimension. Teachers strongly believe that family presence supports the development of this dimension, primarily because students feel loved by their families. According to the interviewees, when students feel loved, supported, contained, and valued by their family nucleus, their development across all other dimensions is also strengthened.

As peripheral elements, teachers express the conviction that academic results do not determine whether the role is being successfully fulfilled; rather, they are a consequence of fulfilling it. Another peripheral element is the perceived need for teachers to take on aspects of this role when it is not adequately fulfilled at home, generating additional concerns and even emotional burden. This belief—that teachers must compensate for what families do not provide—

involves emotional involvement as well as the creation of strategies to meet students' material and emotional needs.

Regarding the limitations of this research, the original intention was to include the perspectives of both teachers and parents regarding the RPE. However, when parents were consulted about their availability to participate, there was little willingness to do so, citing lack of time due to demanding work schedules. Another limitation concerns the study context; it would be worthwhile to compare these results with those from educational institutions in different settings.

Finally, in terms of future research, it would be of particular interest to investigate the representations families themselves hold about the RPE, as understanding their belief systems could shed light on the challenges in the school–family relationship. Another possible direction would be to compare the representations identified in this study with those found in educational institutions that operate in different social, cultural, and economic contexts.

## Author contributions

Original idea: HC. Literature review: KG. Project development, data production, and data analysis: both authors. Manuscript preparation: both authors

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