

# The Lifeworld Of Teachers' Kids: A Transcendental Phenomenology

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the lived experiences of children aged 6 to 10 years old who are not only teachers' kids but also enrolled in classes taught by their teacher-parent. Through a qualitative transcendental phenomenological approach, this research seeks to unravel the intricate lived realities, perceptions, and challenges these young individuals face in the unique position of being both a student and the child of the teacher in the classroom setting. The study employs a purposive convenience sampling technique resulting in seven participants. Data were gathered using in-depth interviews, drawings, observations, and a profound exploration of their daily encounters. The generated themes include generous support, high expectations, security, self-made busyness, and extended school hours. The study recommends that for teacher's kids, embracing uniqueness, setting personal goals, maintaining open communication with parents, and prioritizing self-care while avoiding stereotypes are crucial. Teacher-parents need to separate their roles, foster open communication at home, support their child's interests, and maintain professionalism in both home and classroom environments. Moreover, future research may focus on the well-being and unique experiences of teachers' kids utilizing mixed-methods or quantitative approaches.

**Keywords:** *Teacher's kids, parent support, peer support, transcendental phenomenology*

## INTRODUCTION

Teachers' children have a distinct educational experience, as they have their parents as their classroom instructors. Having a teacher-parent with them throughout their schooling is often something that students like the most about being the child of an educator. However, often teachers' kids are stuck at school when their teacher-parents are occupied with work and academic responsibilities beyond the school hours (National Education Association, n.d.). Hence, they would opt for activities that would keep them busy while waiting for their teacher-parents.

Another unique experience of teachers' children pertains to relationships and high expectations at school. One of the most important aspects of the classroom is the relationship between the students and teachers, and with their classmates (Haldimann et al., 2023). Children's perceptions of their students' peer social experiences can shape their self-perceptions or self-worth, which can then influence children's social behaviors (Ogelman et al., 2019), and their levels of being liked by peers (Onder et al., 2019). This means that positive interactions with educators and with classmates and the

way educators oversee social interactions within the classroom impact kids' long-term and concurrent social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Moreover, teachers' kids at times feel uncomfortable with the high expectations and pressures at school (Swisher, 2022). Given the significant amount of time, teachers spend with their students, the relational dynamics between teachers and students and how they impact children's well-being and development have been a major focus in educational and developmental psychology (Ferreira et al., 2024; Yunus & Zakaria, 2019). Teachers and parents also need to be sensitive to the various emotions and difficulties their children may experience as learners, particularly when dealing with pressure and heightened expectations, and the need to navigate complex roles and perceptions in school.

With these discussed, the thrust of the study is to unveil teachers' kids lived experiences. The study explored the two research questions: RQ1: What are the lived experiences of teachers' kids? RQ2: What are the contexts of the lived experiences of teachers' kids?

## LITERATURE

This section discusses the related literature that supports the analysis of the lived experiences of teachers' kids. The concepts include teacher-parent-student relationships, high expectations, and peer support.

### Teacher-Parent-Student Relationships

Teacher-parents often have a strong understanding of education and the teaching-learning process. They can provide additional academic support to their child. Moreover, they can extend individualized attention to their child, tailoring instruction to their specific needs and learning styles (Shalaby & Agyapong, 2020). Thus, they may aid their children with their schoolwork, respond to inquiries, and explain ideas, assisting them with any problems they might run across. They have easy access to books, tools, and educational resources that can support their child's education.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that children who have supportive parents often do better in school. Jeon et al. (2020), Nofrizal et al. (2020), and Ramanlingam & Maniam (2020) relate the importance of establishing a positive relationship between teachers, parents, and students for children's academic and socioemotional development. The positive relationship contributes to better teacher-child relationships which promote closeness and dependency (Vatou, 2020); a sense of belongingness in school (Ang et al., 2022); and active classroom engagement (Ajayi et al., 2021). Hence, a child who is emotionally and socially secure achieves better academic performance.

### High Expectations

A high expectation among teachers' kids is one of the reasons they may experience heightened pressure. Such expectations include academic excellence and positive behavior among others. Research shows that peer friendship and the frequency of interaction are negatively correlated with academic pressure (Li et al., 2019; Wu & Xiang, 2020). Socialization plays a vital role so teachers' kids can cope with the high expectations. Friendship (Filade et al., 2019) and peers' feedback (Vangie et al., 2019) prove to support the social and emotional well-being of students. Moreover, Gentrup et al. (2020) say that teachers' expectations can have a significant impact on students' educational path and academic achievement. With positive support from peers and parent-teachers, they can rise above the pressures and high expectations and are more likely resilient to face challenges. **Peer Support** Peer support primarily involves showing empathy, offering encouragement, and providing assistance within a mutual relationship with individuals who share similar characteristics or social backgrounds (Agyapong, 2020). It shapes their self-perceptions or self-worth which can then influence children's social behaviors (Ogelman et al., 2019) and their levels of being liked by peers (Önder et al., 2019). Teachers' kids' self-

view allows them to reflect on their competence and personality. Those who are well-liked have a positive social experience.

Conversely, students who have poor relationships or are actively rejected by their peers are more disengaged from school (Ladd et al, 2017). Peer rejection may have a big influence on teachers' kids' academic life and frequently results in increased levels of disengagement. Just like social isolation and loneliness, these are frequent experiences for students who are rejected by their peers. They might not have a social network on which to rely, which can result in a lack of interest in school activities and a sense of exclusion. Hence, teacher-parents need to uphold peer support and a school-engaging environment to satisfy students' need for a sense of community.

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

The study applied transcendental phenomenology because transcendental phenomenology as a foundational idea fit with the objectives of this study for several reasons. It is a branch of phenomenology, which is a philosophical approach that focuses on the study of conscious experiences, Dutta (2019). However, choosing a phenomenological research methodology requires the researcher to consider the research approach. In this manuscript, we emphasize a transcendental approach, Neubauer (2019)

### **Participants of the Study**

There were seven (7) participants in this study, Teachers' Kids aged six to ten, who had experienced attending the class of one or both of their parents, who were teachers (teachers-parents) and had the willingness to participate in the study with the permission of their teachers-parents. They came purposively from selected schools in Cavite

### **Research Instrumentation**

The researchers utilized Moustakas Transcendental Question Framework (1994) question framework where open-ended questions were used in the interview to facilitate collection of the data.

#### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:**

1. How do your classmates treat you when they know you are their teacher's child?
2. How do you feel about being a son/daughter of your teacher in your school? Why?
3. Do you enjoy having your mom/dad teach you in school together with your classmates? Why or why not?
4. What do you do after school? If you don't have class, what do you do for the rest of the day?
5. What do you like best when you are in school? Can you draw what school looks like to you?

### **Data Gathering Tools**

The researcher utilized the framework of Moustakas (1994). The data gathering tool was a guide to the researcher in conducting interviews. The researcher used the semi-structured format (See Appendix) to understand their lived experiences as Teachers' Kids

**In-depth interview.** In-depth interviews were conducted using an interview protocol composed of a set of questions that the researchers asked the participants. Semi-structured questions researcher prepared for the participants, with the teacher-parent to confirm the answers of their child. Additionally, the researchers utilized crafts like drawing to express their feelings through drawing.

**Observation.** Observation was employed to monitor the behavior, events, or performance of Teachers’ Kids inside the classroom. This observation helped the researcher ensure the reliability of true experiences of Teachers’ Kids based on the answers to the answer to the given research questions.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The research study utilized the following procedures to gather data, ERB, letter of intent, endorsement and audio recording.

#### Trustworthiness

The researcher utilized Lincoln and Guba (1985) trustworthiness framework to ensure the credibility and reliability of the study's findings. This includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

#### Ethical Considerations

The study based its ethical considerations on the framework proposed by Creswell (2013). Emphasis was placed on elements such as informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and the role of the researcher. These ethical considerations served as the foundation for ensuring the integrity and ethical conduct of the research endeavor.

#### Data Analysis

The Cresswell model for data analysis was used in this study. See the image below.

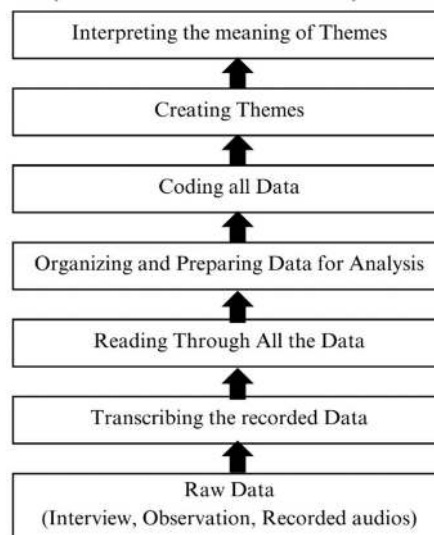
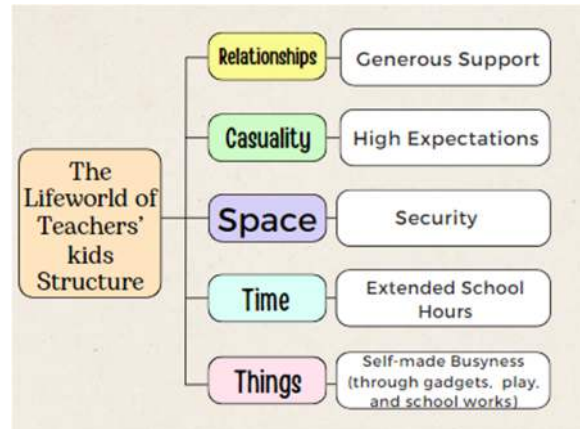


Figure 3. The qualitative data analysis of Cresswell Model

## RESULTS

The study explored the following questions: What is the lifeworld of the teachers’ kids?, What is the context of the lifeworld?, and How is the typical day of the teachers’ kids?. The result of the study was presented using Moustakas framework (1994) which is below.



## DISCUSSION

### Generous Support

Peer and parent support were crucial factors in fostering the academic and socio-emotional well-being of Teachers’ Kids. Positive support from peers and parents had contributed to their sense of belonging, self-esteem, and overall success in school.

Studies had suggested that parental and peer support played a significant role in children's academic motivation and engagement. These studies had indicated that teacher's children might have similarly benefited from supportive relationships with peers and parents. (Pomerantz et al. 2002)

### Peer Support

Participants shared that they experienced peer support from their classmates because they are known to be their Teachers’ Kids. In many events in their life as a student under their parent-teacher, they have received peer support from their classmates such as being elected as class president, with a lunch buddy, feeling protected, with a lot of friends and playmates. These are their responses during the interview.

*“They treat me well. Everything is good because I am the favorite of my classmates to sit in the middle, and they are around me, behind or next to me. During the election I voted almost all my classmates for them to become officers, then they returned my vote, they returned it to me, so I was the one who won”.* (Shy, grade 3)

*“My classmate and I usually play, it is fun because they’re not like others who bully me”* - (Sage, grade-1).

*“I am protected, if someone tease me, they will help me, they usually report it to the principal and to our teacher and in response, I thank them,”* -(Joy, grade 3).

Looking at the above responses, the teachers' kids were really favored with friendship and extra attention from their classmates. This implies that they have positive experiences from their classmates.

This result is in accordance with the idea Shalaby & Agyapong (2020) that peers support more in demonstrating empathy, encouraging, and support within a mutual relationship with a similar individual or people with whom they believe higher demographics or social qualities. In addition, peer relationships offer a special setting where kids can pick up a variety of vital social emotional skills, like empathy, cooperation, and problem-solving techniques Pepler & Bierman, (2018).

### **Teacher-Parent Support**

On the other hand, the same participants shared that they also receive special favor from their parent-teacher.

Four out of seven participants can easily access school-related support and guidance from their teacher-parent. This can include assistance with their homework, explanations of challenging concepts, and clarification of academic content. Also, they can access the needs in school immediately because of their teacher-parent.

Their interview speaks:

*“Every exam, mom would teach me, I could ask further questions on how to do it”. And she added that, “I was taught at home sometimes when there was an exam and also Mom helps me when I’m having trouble with my assignment”. (Joy, Grade 3).*

*“When I’m absent, mom prints my worksheets and then I answer them after that I play”. “Yes, she provided me with the worksheet when I’m absent”. (Shy, Grade 3)*

*“I’m happy because he helps me with our assignments”. “I was happier because when I made a mistake, we just laughed. She is not very strict”. “Enjoy it because my mommy always calls me”. I’m proud because if I wasn’t a teacher’s kid, maybe I would do my assignments by myself, and I wouldn’t have anyone by my side”. (Sage, Grade 1).*

*“It’s okay, because if there are two reviews, and if I really don’t get it, my parent-teacher is there, so I’ll ask”. (Men, Grade 3)*

These results imply that the Teachers' Kids received special favor from their parent-teacher. Shalaby and Agyapong (2020) Parent-Teachers often have a strong understanding of education and can provide additional academic support with their child. They may help with homework, provide guidance on study techniques, and offer explanations for difficult concepts Teachers' Kids may have access to educational resources and materials that can enhance their learning. Teachers' Kids often have parents who are strong advocates for education. They may be more involved in school activities, parent-teacher associations, and educational decision-making, which can benefit the child's educational experience.

### **High Expectations**

High expectations of Teachers' Kids often served as motivators for academic success, but they could also have created significant pressure and stress for the child impacting their well-being and self-esteem as explained by the sub categories peer and parent-teacher expectations.

### **Peer Expectations**

Some studies have found that teacher's children may experience heightened academic expectations from teachers and peers. This can create pressure to excel academically and may impact their self-esteem and motivation as the participants shared:



“Hey, you must be smart, you’re the teacher’s kid, right?” It was observed that she felt sad and pressured while answering the question of what she experienced with her classmates. These are the experiences from their classmates:

“They thought that’s why I always pass because I’m a teacher’s kid. They always say that’s why I always pass because my mother is a teacher. It’s a bit sad, because they always tell me that I passed because I am a teacher’s son. I listen carefully so that I can be top and so that my classmates can see that I am doing my best and even though I am not dependent on my mother.” -(Sage, Grade 1)

“Hey, you must be smart like that.” “I don’t know, because I’m a teacher’s kid, so I must be smart because I’m a teacher’s kid. Then that’s sad because I’m a teacher’s kid.” “Yes, I’m under pressure. I’m really studying because when my father asked me in the class and then I made a mistake, in our group chat they will say that “hey, you’re the teacher’s kid, why did you make a mistake you must be smart. It’s like that.” -(Men, Grade 3)

These results imply that the teachers’ kids felt pressured because of the high expectations coming from their classmates. Studies have shown that peer friendship and the frequency of peer interaction are negatively correlated with academic pressure, Li et al., (2019); Wu & Xiang (2020). High expectations can serve as a source of motivation for the teacher’s child. On the other hand, high expectations can also lead to stress and anxiety. The child experiences unique social dynamics in the classroom. They feel like they must maintain a certain image because of their teacher-parent profession, which can affect their ability to form genuine friendships with their classmates.

### Teacher-Parent Expectations

Participants shared that their teacher-parent gave them a feeling of high expectation in the academics inside the classroom with their teacher-parent. They shared their experience

“I’m doing my best even because I’m a teacher’s son,”. “I’ve experienced being scolded because I made a mistake. That’s why I’m being disciplined” (Sage, Grade 1)

“My mom knows that sometimes I don’t listen to the lessons because I’m talking with my classmates during class. She will ask me to repeat the lesson in the office and there is a copy of the timetables there”. (Shy, Grade 3)

“Yes, I was teased about my assignments at home, I was embarrassed. He said, “It’s just an easy one, you’re already big but you don’t know yet” he added that, “I felt pressured and embarrassed, because I was always called”. “Yes, sometimes I get scolded especially if I don’t know the lesson”. “He is always looking at me if I am stubborn and when he is looking at me, I behave myself”. (Men, Grade 3)

“Sometimes I get scolded because when he teaches, I play”. She added that, “mom is teaching, and she got angry and said I should go back to my chair, so that she won’t scold me anymore”. (Joy, Grade 3)

Looking at the responses above, they experienced pressure and were embarrassed with their classmates because of the high expectation feeling with their teacher-parent. The relationship between teachers and students has a substantial impact on students’ learning outcomes, Zhang, et. al., (2019). It means that high expectations can also lead to pressure and stress. The child may feel immense pressure to perform at a very high level, which can result in anxiety, perfectionism, or fear of failure.

### Security

Participants shared that they feel secure with their teacher-parent. As a student under their parent-teachers, they feel safe and secure, happy, and they are comfortable in school. These are their responses during the interview.

“I’m happy because I always see mom in class and I’m always comfortable when I see her and I’m no longer nervous in class”. (Bree, Grade 2).

“Sometimes I go with mommy when those who bully me watch me at the gate”. (Sage, Grade 1) answered confidently.

“I’m always with them. I’m not afraid when I’m at school with them. Then when I was in grade 1 up to 2, mom was still there in elementary school”. (Men, Grade 3).

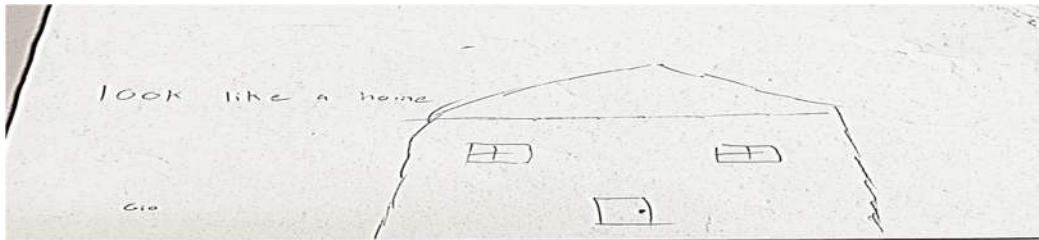
“I’m happy when mom and I are in the room”. (Joy, Grade 3)

Looking at the above responses, Teachers’ Kids felt safe and secure when they were with their parent-teacher. This implies that they have positive experiences with their parent-teacher. This result is somewhat like the study conducted/ the thought that “Individuals who have a strong sense of security might acquire more support, care, and acceptance.

### Typical School Day of Teachers’ Kids

While Teacher-Parents attend to professional responsibilities, Teachers’ Kids participate in extracurricular activities or supervised programs, interacting with peers and educators. After school hours, they independently navigate classroom tasks, playing with friends or completing assignments with peers. Teachers’ Kids often experience early mornings, as they accompany their parents to school before the official start time. This exposure to the school environment involves informal interactions with teachers and peers, assisting with classroom tasks, or participating in extracurricular activities.

### Extended School Hours



In one of the illustrations, Men drew his experience: “Schools looks like home” – (Men, Grade 3). When asked to elaborate more about his illustration, he added “Seems like our house where I was raised, where I go home too. Even on vacation, every day we go to school. Yes, even on weekends we are in fact in school because we don’t have someone to watch over us at home, therefore they don’t leave us there. I think I have grown up here (at school).

Teachers’ Kids spent much more time in the school than with their parents. He added that “I’m waiting for dad when he’s in his room working. Whenever I beg my father to go home, he usually responds that he still has work to do. Sometimes when he had a meeting, we ended up staying here (school) from 6pm to 7pm. And sometimes when they hold seminars, we go home in the afternoon or evening”.

“My class ends at 1 in the afternoon, and we go home at 5pm until 7pm or 6pm because mommy has a meeting”. (Shy, Grade 3)

“Nothing. Sometimes in the classroom or outside. I just watch my mom while waiting for her. I didn’t play anything, and my cousin was with me”. (Bree, Grade 3)

“Sometimes when dad was late from his work, Mom and I stayed at school until evening.” (Joy, Grade 3)

“At school, I simply remained in the corner. I’m not talking. Since the teachers are conversing with one another (when we asked the Teacher-Parent what the child indicated she said that they were having a faculty meeting).” (Sage, Grade 1)

When a child attends the same school where their parents teach, they may perceive the school as an extension of their home due to their familiarity with the environment and the presence of their parents. Teachers’ Kids often spends extended hours in the school due to their parent’s work



schedule. This might be because the teacher needs to prepare lessons, grade assignments, attend meetings, or participate in school-related activities outside regular school hours.

### Self-made Busyness

Participants answered that they make themselves busy while waiting for their teacher-parent in school. Some of the Teachers' Kids consider it a benefit for them because while waiting they used their cell phone or technology of what they have.

“I just looked at her phone. And sometimes after the dismissal, my classmates and I will just stay in the classroom watching television because mom's laptop is connected to it.” (Shy, Grade 3)

Ang School ay para sa aking ayi, Masaya Dahil Maramin: kaibigan.



“I borrowed mom's phone and watched short videos. Sometimes we open mom's desktop, and we watch in there.” (Babe, Grade 1)

“Sometimes when I have no classmates to watch with me, I go outside after dismissal because my friend Cray is a gymnast, so I join him sometimes until evening.” She added, “I played with friends sometimes inside or outside the classroom.” (Shy, Grade 3).

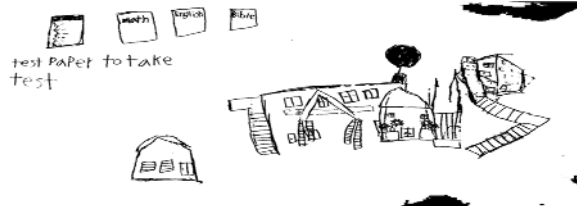
“Nothing, just playing.” (Bree, Grade 2)

“And when my assignments are done and then we still have time. I play soccer, luksong baka, and during P.E. we do basketball.” (Meg, Grade 1)

“I just play with my classmates.” (Men, Grade 11)

“Sometimes, we play bato lata, luksong tinik, and patintero.” (Joy, Grade 3)

“Sometimes I read in the library, studying and reviewing for my quiz the next day.” (Men, Grade 3, p. 38)

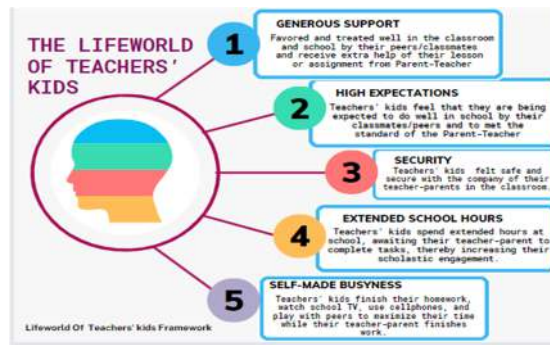


“When my classmates also go home late, we do our assignment here in school, just like in Math, Bible, English, and Filipino.” (Babe, Grade 1, p. 42)

Teachers' Kids often spends extended hours in the school due to their parent's work schedule. This might be because the teacher needs to prepare lessons, grade assignments, attend meetings, or participate in school-related activities outside regular school hours. The child might use this time to do homework, engage in extracurricular activities, or simply spend time with their parents. However, it's essential to ensure the child has a balanced routine and doesn't feel overwhelmed by the extended hours in school.

## CONCLUSION

Teachers’ Kids experienced negative and positive effects of being a “teacher’s kid”. Thinking that mitigating the potential negative effects that the teacher’s kid might face due to their unique experiences requires a holistic approach involving the family, educators, peers, and the educational system. This framework sums up the results and implications of the study.



Teachers’ Kids can sometimes feel a higher level of academic or behavioral expectation placed on them, both by their parents and the community. The pressure to excel in school or uphold a certain behavior standard can be significant. Some Teachers’ Kids may struggle with their parent’s busy schedules due to teaching commitments. Balancing their parent’s dedication to their students with their own need for attention and time can be challenging.

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