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The New Crisis of The Modern World: New Generation Parenting and Changing Parental Roles

Research Article

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ABSTRACT

Global economic and social advancements have reshaped education, a pivotal component of the societal structure. The globalization-induced transformation of education into a market commodity has led to perceiving it as a buyable and sellable product, resulting in shifts in parental roles. The proliferation of private schools has sparked heightened expectations from parents toward their children and educational institutions. This surge in expectations has given rise to the overbearing and perfectionist approach, commonly referred to as 'helicopter parenting,' emerging as a new crisis in the modern world. This excessively intrusive parenting style, stemming from changes in the mindset and daily practices of the new middle class, has become a detrimental factor negatively impacting the social, psychological, and academic development of children. This study delves into the evolving parenting roles, exploring the phenomenon titled 'new generation parenting' as manifested in students' developmental processes. Its aim is to uncover the social causes of the overbearing parenting style and its effects on students. Following the phenomenology design, a qualitative research approach, this study selected 8 participants through criterion sampling. Examining the individual and social reasons behind the helicopter parenting approach, the focus of this research, holds significance in preventing situations that could hinder students' development and alter parental roles in a broader context.

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Keywords:
Parenting, New Generation Parenting, Helicopter Parenting, Parenting Roles, Education

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Introduction

As one of the new crises of the modern world, parents' over-involvement and over-interventionist approaches to their children have become one of the important issues of social life and the educational agenda. This new generation of parenting attitudes, which has emerged as a result of crowded preference lists, uncertainty and fierce competition in every field, has deeply affected parental roles. In addition, the changing and transforming social roles and behaviors due to the transformation of neoliberal discourse into a dominant character in the social sphere have transformed education into a consumption preference and a serious change has occurred in the new generation of parents' perspectives on school and education. Parents' preferences for their children's education are no longer based solely on a rational interest based on economic expectations, but also in terms of providing parents with considerable symbolic capital in the social sphere. As a result, it can be said that the state of educating and being educated, in which parental preferences are one of the most determining factors, has turned into a kind of self-investment outside of its natural course.

In this new era where success and gain have become the most fundamental norm, individuals are forced to constantly change and transform in order not to be left behind and performance triggered by concepts such as lifelong education becomes an obligation for everyone (Gorz, 2011). This environment, in which success is sanctified and those who fail are seen as useless for the market and are excluded, leads to an increase in the anxiety parents feel about their children's future. This increased anxiety has led to the emergence of helicopter parents who focus too much on their children and try to control their children's lives at every moment (Cutright, 2008). Among the prominent characteristics of helicopter parents, high expectations for children's academic success and the effort to control all behaviors of children by closely following their lives come to the fore (Odenweller, Booth-Butterfield & Weber, 2014). This new generation parenting attitude, also defined as 'Overparenting' or 'Tiger Parenting', can be seen as one of the factors that negatively affect children's social, psychological and academic development. Parents who gain a privileged position in the social sphere economically and spare no expense for their children to gain a good future almost exclusively as an economic measure, overlook the fact that a good future cannot be bought. As a result, the struggle of parents who send their children to school to compete and who plan and closely monitor their children's every moment constitutes a problematic behavioral field in terms of the relationship of motherhood and fatherhood with children.

There are many academic studies on changing parenting roles and new generation parenting as a result of the effects of post modernization and globalization. While some of these studies focus on parenting attitudes in the digital age by associating new generation parenting with technological developments (Ayhan & Öztürk, 2021; Kurtoğlu & Uslupehlivan , 2021), other studies focus on the effects of parenting attitudes, which have more say in educational processes with the rise of the urban new middle class, on the development of children (Avcı & Şatır, 2020; Coşkun & Katıtaş, 2021; Yılmaz, 2002). There are also studies focusing on the social reasons for changing parenting roles (Gökler & Atamtürk, 2021), but their number is limited. The aim of this study is to examine the reasons for the change in parenting roles that take all kinds of responsibilities of their children and start to harm their educational processes by focusing too much on their present with the concern of saving their future. The research is considered important in terms of investigating the reasons for the new generation parenting attitudes that lead to a transformation in traditional parenting roles on the basis of social change. With this study, it is aimed to reveal the social reasons for the over-controlling new generation parenting approach, which is described as helicopter parenting, based on the subjective experiences and meanings of parents.

This new generation parenting approach, which also transforms school-family relations, is an issue that needs to be addressed in light of the social and economic transformations taking place across society. If the

reasons that push parents to this approach are analyzed and the cause-effect relationship is established in a healthy way, it will be easier to determine how educators should guide parents.

The general aim of this study is to examine the social reasons for the over-controlling new generation parenting approaches, which are described as helicopter parenting, in line with the views of parents and to find an answer to the following questions;

- How do parents conceptualize the notion of new generation parenting?

- From the perspective of parents, what duties and responsibilities do they attribute to ensuring their children's academic success?

- According to parents' perspectives, what impact does family involvement in education have on children's academic achievements?

- From the standpoint of parents, what apprehensions do they harbor about the future of their children in the contemporary world?

Urban New Middle Class

In terms of social theories, after the 1990s, objective and subjective factors such as property, occupation, authority, education and prestige have been emphasized when classifying social classes (Wacquant, 1991). As a result of the social, cultural and economic changes at the global level affecting all societies, the social group formed due to the expansion in the upper occupational group began to be called the "new middle class" for social scientists in the context of class discussions (Crompton, 1996). The new middle class is characterized by a rise in income due to professional positions and a rising social status. This class is also called the petty bourgeoisie and consists of middle groups in post-industrial societies (Ross, 1978).

Veblen (2005) and Simmel (1950) evaluate leisure time and consumption habits in urban life in the context of people's newly emerging needs and desire to possess things. Changes in lifestyle due to consumption habits are a result of a decrease in belief in ideologies and an increase in disappointments (Breen & Rottman, 1995 & Holt, 1995). The rise of subjectivity and identity construction processes can be seen as the reason for the change in the social and economic needs of the urban new middle class. Veblen (2000) explains the efforts of these newly emerging groups to position themselves differently in society by imitating the old middle class with the concept of conspicuous consumption. Conspicuous consumption is a concept that defines how newly enriched individuals or upstarts instrumentalize consumption. The effort of people who have just made ends meet to imitate people who are in a higher economic position than them results in ostentatious consumption. Thus, the need for ostentation replaces the need for consumption. This group, which reads books, magazines or newspapers for ostentation, uses participation in cultural events for social status, and perceives going on vacation as a status indicator independent of the need for rest, in a sense defines their own lifestyles. For example, shopping malls, which blur the boundaries between consumption, entertainment and ostentation, are one of the spaces designed to satisfy the needs of the new middle class (Martin, 1993). As a result of this changing mentality, it can be said that being a citizen or social acceptance is not based on one's skills or professions, but only on consumer preferences (Bauman, 1999). Bourdieu (1984) analyzes the individual's effort to differentiate himself/herself from other social strata through tastes shaped by social, cultural and economic capitals. Accordingly, the brand of the car owned, the number of rooms in the house, vacation preferences or credit card usage are perceived as factors that determine lifestyle. Cultural activities and leisure time activities not only allow people to categorize their lifestyles but also their tastes and preferences.

In Turkey, the expansion of the economic capital stock of the new urban middle class has a sociological significance in terms of its social consequences and changes in individuals' leisure time and consumption

habits, even though it is perceived as a change at the economic level. In other words, the new middle class can be classified not only on the basis of income but also on the basis of social behavior and preferences. Thanks to the populist culture that has increased its dominance with the widespread use of mass media, the lives of the new middle class are becoming more and more similar to each other, and the tendency to act in accordance with trends in many different areas is increasing (Öncü, 2002).

Schools as the Stage for the New Middle Class: The Parenting Show

Neoliberal policies have accelerated privatization efforts in many sectors in Turkey. Reductions in the state budget allocated for education, regulations to exempt private schools from certain taxes, and incentive loans offered to parents can be seen as factors that accelerated the privatization of education (Gök, 2004). In addition, as the middle class became economically richer, their preference for private schools increased the pace of private schooling in Turkey. This privatization movement in the field of education has had important social consequences. Individuals who did not feel secure in terms of their social position started to change their orientation towards education and education started to be used as a means of reproducing social position for these classes. New middle class families began to feel responsible for planning and closely following their children's entire educational lives. Individuals experiencing economic concerns have started to prefer private schools in order to prevent their children from experiencing the same problems and thus try to achieve privileged social positions (Gök, 2004). In this kind of school context, where knowledge and education have become commodities and exams based on academic achievement are used as almost the only means of measurement, parents and students have become customers and teachers have become sellers or salesmen (Keskin, 2012). This change has of course transformed parental involvement in education into a much more intense and intrusive style compared to previous years. Thus, a new generation of parenting attitudes and behaviors has emerged.

The fact that neoliberal policies have turned education into one of the commodities such as bread, cars and televisions that are bought and sold in the world, which is essentially a huge supermarket, and turned it into a consumption preference is one of the factors that negatively affect the quality of education (Apple, 2000). In order to make the right decision for their children's future, parents, who are torn between dozens of different options, have developed preference fatigue. In some schools, public relations and marketing activities have overshadowed important issues related to education and parent demands have begun to be taken into consideration instead of scientific sources when creating educational programs. As the effects of neoliberalism are felt more prominently in schools, the effort to educate students in line with economic goals is transforming the basic aims of education.

Private schools opened one after another in areas where the new urban middle class is densely populated have created new concepts every day in order to compete, focusing more on showcasing pedagogical science at almost the same pace as technology. In enrollment interviews, swimming pools, clubs and food menus were questioned more than the teaching staff, academic achievements and curricula. Parents' pleasure in being able to buy education with money, along with an "upstart" effect whose negative consequences would be seen much later, changed the structure of private schools. The fact that a private school operating in the Başakşehir district of Istanbul, with the same curriculum and staff structure, is not popular in the Kadıköy district reveals that there are also ideological influences in the new middle class's preference for private schools. In fact, the fact that some private schools affiliated to the same chain use different slogans in their advertising activities in different districts and create a promotional strategy according to the socio-cultural characteristics of the population in their location reveals the importance given to worldview in the criteria of the new urban middle class in school preference.

Helicopter Parenting

The concept of Helicopter Parenting was first used in 1969 by psychotherapist Haim Ginott. This concept, which emerged as a result of a child saying that his mother "spins around like a helicopter", was later included in the book "Parenting Teens with Love and Logic" written by Jim Fay and Foster Cline in 1992 (Peluchette, Kovanic & Partridge 2013). Helicopter parenting attitude defines a parenting approach that interferes too much in the lives of their children and keeps them under constant control (Duygulu, 2018). In this parenting attitude, which focuses exaggeratedly on their children's lives and academic achievements, the expectation of success is very high (Odenweller, Booth-Butterfield & Weber, 2014). This attitude, which is more common in educated parents with few children, has shortened the follow-up distance between children and parents and has led to the perception of normal behavior of parents who make decisions on behalf of their children (Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2014). Since children's preferences and wishes are not taken into account with this type of parenting, it can be said that it is relatively difficult for them to develop initiative. This attitude of parents who spend more effort than necessary to solve their children's problems, protect them against dangers and provide constant support may also harm children's development of self-identity and independence (Hirsch, Goldberger, 2010; as cited in Okray, 2016; Kwon, Yoo & Bingham, 2016). Research has also revealed that children of such parents experience depression and anxiety problems more frequently than their peers (Fischer, Forthun, Pidcock & Dowd 2007).

Helicopter parenting attitude begins to manifest itself when children are still young (Hong et al., 2015). The helicopter parenting process, which starts with the effort to manage the child's eating, drinking and playing habits, is triggered by concerns about academic success when the child starts school and is directed towards education. Behaviors such as finding the best school for the child, researching teachers in great detail, and providing disproportionate support for the child to do homework and projects in the most perfect way become evident at school age (Bristow, 2014). This parenting attitude is based on the intention to contribute positively to the child's school success and parents feel responsible when they do not provide this support. When they receive advice that an overly interventionist attitude will have a negative impact on the child's school life, they claim that they are doing this for their child to have a good future. This parenting attitude, which becomes firmly established at school age, continues in the following years. After high school, parents who have an interventionist attitude about which department their children will study, which university they prefer, and even whom they will marry are usually unaware of the negative effects of such a parenting approach on their children (Yoo et al., 2016).

Method

Research Design

This study was conducted in accordance with the phenomenology design, which is one of the qualitative research approaches. Phenomenology design focuses on phenomena that individuals are aware of but need to learn about the details by utilizing their unique perceptions and experiences (Creswell, 2013). In the phenomenology design, which seeks to understand the experiences of individuals regarding a phenomenon and the meanings they attribute to their perceptions, individual experiences are interpreted on a universal plane (Patton, 2014). Since phenomenology follows a descriptive approach, defining phenomena is more important than generalizing (Akturan & Esen, 2008). The phenomenon examined in this study is the helicopter parenting approach of new generation parents who focus too much on their children. In this context, it was tried to obtain in-depth information through parents' experiences related to child education and the subjective meanings they attribute to these experiences.

Participants of the Study

In phenomenological research, data sources are intended to be individuals or groups who have experience on the topic that the research focuses on and who can convey this experience. It is important to gain the trust of the participants in the interviews and to create a comfortable atmosphere where they can answer the questions sincerely (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In this study, the participants were determined by criterion sampling method, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. In this context, the criteria determined for the parents whose opinions will be taken were determined as having at least one school-age child attending private school and being closely involved with their children. Criterion sampling is the creation of the sample from people, events, objects or situations that have the qualities determined in relation to the problem. In criterion sampling, it is an important criterion that the situations to be selected are rich in terms of providing information (Marshall, 1996). Demographic information about the participants of the study is shown in the table below.

Table 1. Demographic Information on the Participants in the Study Group

Participants	Gender	Age	Education Level	Occupation	Number of Children
P1	Female	37	University	Accounting	1
P2	Male	42	High School	Businessman	2
P3	Female	46	High School	Homemaker	2
P4	Female	32	High School	Homemaker	1
P5	Male	41	University	Banker	3
P6	Male	44	High School	Businessman	3
P7	Female	33	High School	Homemaker	1
P8	Male	44	University	Engineer	2

The study group consisted of 8 participants, 4 men and 4 women. After the first interviews were completed, the data were analyzed and the interviews were terminated after it was determined that sufficient data were obtained for the purpose of the study. The common aspect of these parents with different professions and education levels is that they have at least one child and are private school parents. Focus group interviews were conducted with five of the participants. Participants who were parents at a private school operating in Istanbul were selected from among parents who were more closely involved with their children and spent more time at the school compared to other parents. In order to identify these parents, the school principal was first informed about the research topic and then asked for name suggestions. The online focus group interview lasted an average of two hours. The parents were first informed about the topic and purpose of the research and then asked the research questions in turn.

Face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with the other three participants out of five. The selection of the three participants, who were also parents at a private school in Istanbul, was determined after a meeting with the school principal. Since two of the proposed names did not agree to be interviewed, interviews were conducted with the remaining three participants. The interviews with the participants lasted an average of half an hour.

Data Collection

In qualitative research, observation and interviewing is one of the most systematic and effective methods to make sense of people's feelings and thoughts. For this reason, the data were collected through face-to-face and online application of the semi-structured interview technique. In semi-structured interviews, questions are prepared and planned in advance, but new questions can be added during the interview depending on the course of the interview. However, in a structured interview, the researcher does not ask any questions other than the previously determined questions. Therefore, the semi-structured interview provides

flexibility to the researcher and allows for a more in-depth exploration of the subject (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). In the data collection tool used in this study, there is a section that includes information on parents' gender, age, occupation and their children's age, grade and school. In the second part, there is a semi-structured interview form created to reveal the parents' parenting styles and new generation parenting approaches. The interview form consists of 5 open-ended questions that were approved by experts to be suitable for the purpose of the study. Expert help was obtained to ensure that the questions were understandable, clear, single purpose and without assumptions. Pilot interviews were conducted with two parents to measure the appropriateness and usability of the questions and some revisions were made to the questions.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interviews conducted within the scope of the research were analyzed by content analysis method. The purpose of this method is to bring together similar data by creating certain themes and categories and to organize all data to make them understandable (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Content analysis is a qualitative method applied to make written and visual data understandable. In order to analyze the data, the voice recordings of the participants were converted into text and the participants were coded as K1, K2. The transcribed interviews were sent to the participants and participant confirmation was obtained. After the interviews were read and analyzed, three themes and sub-themes and categories were created for each theme. In the findings section, these themes, sub-themes and categories are discussed in order and the participants' statements are presented together with the author's evaluations. In content analysis, within the framework of the model developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998), the steps of a) coding the data, b) finding themes, c) organizing the data according to codes and themes, d) interpreting the findings and e) reporting were used. Coding of qualitative data refers to a cyclical process rather than a linear one (Saldana, 2009). In this cyclical process, not only similarities but also differences, frequency, sequence (succession), relationships or reasons can be coded (Hatch, 2000).

Findings

In this section, the data obtained in relation to the question "What are the reasons for the change in parenting roles that take all kinds of responsibilities of children and start to harm their educational processes by focusing on them more than necessary?" and the 4 research problems that were sought to be answered in this context were analyzed. The data obtained as a result of qualitative research were analyzed by content analysis and themes, sub-themes and categories were determined. The themes were identified as "New Generation Parenting Concept," "Academic Achievement" and "Concerns".

The theme "New Generation Parenting Concept" was analyzed in two sub-themes: helicopter parenting and digital parenting. The helicopter parenting sub-theme was categorized as over-intrusive approach, family involvement in education and the effects of modern life; the Digital Parenting sub-theme was categorized as digital dangers, digital divide and cyber concerns.

The theme of "Academic Success" was analyzed in three sub-themes: expectations, being a private school parent and competition. The sub-theme of expectations was categorized as school expectations and parents' expectations; the sub-theme of being a private school parent was categorized as school hours and free time, buying success, and competitive system; and the sub-theme of competition was categorized as competition among students, competition among parents, and neoliberalism and education.

The "Concerns" theme was analyzed in three sub-themes: school pressure, future anxiety and technology use. The sub-theme of school pressure was analyzed under the categories of education system and academic pressure; the sub-theme of future anxiety was analyzed under the categories of living conditions, national exams and responsibility and self-confidence; and the sub-theme of technology use was analyzed

under the categories of cyber bullying and electronic babysitter. In this section, the themes, sub-themes and categories are explained in detail.

Theme 1- The Concept of New Generation Parenting

The first theme was identified as "new generation parenting concept". The definition of parenting has also changed depending on the social changes from past to present. In line with the purpose of the study, the participants were first asked how they perceived the concept of parenting, and since the answers obtained focused on the concepts of helicopter parenting and digital parenting, these two concepts were determined as sub-themes.

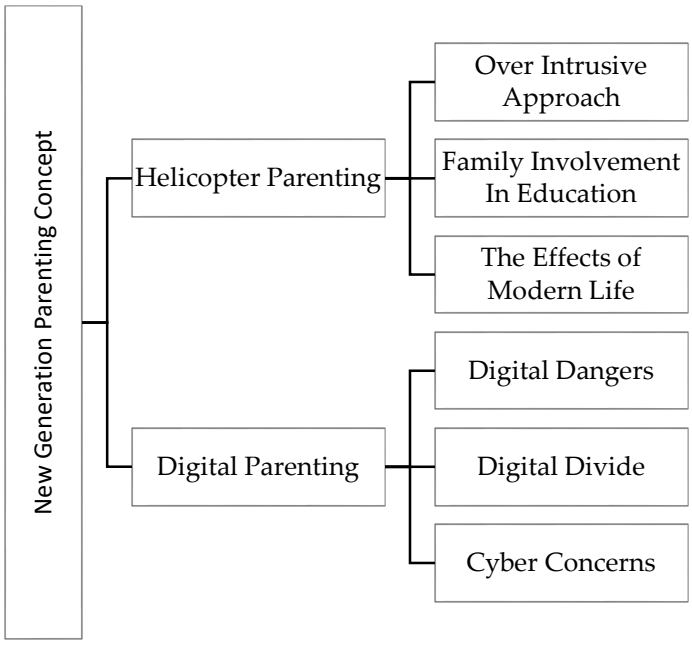

Figure 1: *New Generation Parenting Theme, Subthemes and Categories*

The Helicopter Parenting sub-theme is related to the behavior model and experiences of parents regarding their children and their children's educational life. This sub-theme is divided into three different categories. The first category is related to parents' methods of intervention with their children, and the participants described in detail how they developed a behavioral approach to their children due to the parental pressure they felt. Due to the intense anxiety they felt due to different factors, parents stated that they intervened a lot in their children's lives and that they were aware of this. One parent stated that their children work on command and described the situation as follows:

> K1: *While my mother was not particularly engaged in school matters, I personally took responsibility for my homework diligently, never missing an assignment. However, my daughter seems reluctant to initiate homework without a prompt. It seems we might have played a role in shaping this behavior. I find myself constantly instructing them – urging them to wash their hands, come to the table, complete their homework, or read a book. There is a concern about the extent of direction I provide, making me wonder what kind of life my child would lead if I didn't intervene. At times, I contemplate whether it would be better to let them navigate tasks independently, but the fear of potential risks restrains me. It feels like I'm directing a production at home, with a perpetual need for guidance. The dynamics and responsibilities have shifted significantly, reflecting a level of involvement that I did not experience in the past.*

Another parent explained that she was forced to engage in the behaviors defined as helicopter parenting because of the current system and private schools.

> P3: *We are accused of being helicopter parents, yet we did not choose this path voluntarily. The exam system was introduced, and those who do not perform well are marginalized. Then, advice is offered to parents to remain calm. How can we maintain*

composure in a system that places such high stakes on exams? Won't our children blame us in the future, questioning why we did not intervene? Enrolling them in a private school seems insufficient. In addition to private schools, parents invest in various study centers. Consequently, the term "private" loses its meaning as the financial burden extends beyond the school fees to include additional educational expenses.

Another participant said that she controls every moment of the children, but if she does not do this, the children cannot do things on their own and expressed this as follows.

P1: *Our daughter is in the midst of a full rebellion phase, frequently expressing, "Mom, leave me alone!" It appears she perceives interference, but in reality, she relies heavily on my guidance. Despite occasionally staying with her grandmother, she consistently calls me multiple times in the evening, seeking advice on what to do. When left alone, she turns to me for direction, asking, "Mom, what should I do now?" It's a paradoxical situation where she insists on not being interfered with, yet consistently seeks my input when faced with decisions. This contradictory behavior leaves me feeling overwhelmed. Ideally, if she were more self-sufficient, I would gladly give her space and let her navigate things independently.*

The second category of the helicopter parenting sub-theme consists of thoughts on family involvement in education. Parents stated that they had to be closely involved in their children's school success, and some parents said that they learned the subjects better than their children when doing homework with their children. In this section, parents again stated that they did not want to be so involved in education but were forced to do so due to circumstances. One participant explained that the definition of parenting has changed a lot in our time and that they are forced to adopt a very different approach from their own memories;

P4: *The concept of parenthood has undergone substantial changes over time. Reflecting on the past, my parents, juggling the responsibilities of raising five siblings, were less involved in our school activities. I rarely saw my father, and my mother, although more attentive to our education than my father, didn't engage as comprehensively as parents do today. During my own exam preparation, my mother would observe without a clear understanding of the subjects I was studying. In contrast, I find myself now possessing a better grasp of my child's curriculum and even learn alongside them during exam periods. The question arises: what would happen if I refrained from assisting and supporting my child? The concern stems from the fact that other students in the class receive substantial support from their families. If I were to withdraw my involvement in an attempt to foster my child's self-confidence and independence, I fear they might lag behind their peers. In the current educational landscape, families engage collectively in even the simplest homework assignments, and parents find themselves inadvertently participating in a race to support their children. Given this scenario, it seems only natural that I, as a parent, hesitate to let my child navigate this journey alone.*

Another participant emphasized that the advice given to parents at school contradicts the practices applied and stated that private school teachers and the education system in general cause helicopter parent behaviors as follows;

P3: *My high school-aged child has already determined her future profession, and even my younger one, still in primary school, confidently declares his ambition to become an architect. Contrary to my own experiences during primary school, where I had little awareness of professions and future careers, today's children seem much more conscious and decisive. Their level of intelligence surpasses ours, emphasizing the need for attentive parenting. At times, we are labeled as helicopter parents, a term that conveys excessive involvement. Recently, during a school seminar, the guidance counselor advised against pressuring our children. However, with the busy schedules we often impose on them, it becomes challenging to grant them autonomy. The constant competition, including weekly mock exams with publicized results, creates an environment where children falling below certain standards feel embarrassed. Paradoxically, while advising parents not to exert undue pressure, the educational system itself perpetuates a competitive culture. Perhaps, before expecting changes in parental behavior, there should be a reevaluation and reform of the existing educational system.*

Another participant explained that their children's grades affect their psychology a lot and that this situation affects the parents as well;

P5: *I am personally more invested in my job, whereas my wife becomes greatly distressed when our children face academic challenges. Exam results hold significant importance for her, to the extent that when they receive low grades, she suspends her own work to provide additional support. I am concerned that this approach negatively impacts our children by shifting*

the responsibility from their shoulders to ours. In the long run, this might hinder their ability to navigate challenges independently. It's crucial to recognize that success or failure is not confined to academic performance; it extends to various aspects of life, including future professional endeavors. If our children do not experience and overcome failures now, they may struggle to cope when faced with challenges in the workplace.

Another participant stated that she became obsessed with her child's academic achievement and that she had to follow the other children in the class in order to understand her child's academic level;

P1: *In the first grade, my primary concern revolved around my child's ability to learn reading and writing. I diligently reviewed her homework on a daily basis, even reaching a point where I became concerned about the quality of her handwriting. To address this worry, I would visit the school and compare her writing to other samples on the bulletin board, questioning whether her writing was exceptionally poor or a common issue. Nowadays, I find myself consoling friends who share similar anxieties, assuring them that every child can learn to read and write with time. However, I empathize with their concerns, as I underwent the same experience. Presently, our focus has shifted to mathematical challenges. Some of the questions in the new-generation curriculum pose difficulties that aren't easily surmountable. Consequently, I inquire with fellow mothers about their approach to these problems – whether they assist their children or let them solve it independently. Instances where mothers affirm their child's self-sufficiency in problem-solving tend to evoke a sense of despondency in me.*

The last category under the helicopter parenting sub-theme was identified as the effects of modern life. Emphasizing that the parenting relationship they have with their children is shaped by the conditions of modern life, parents again criticized the system. One participant stated that the purpose of education is to find a good job in the future;

P7: *Everyone knows the main goals of national education but the main purpose of education is to find a job right now. Does anyone send their children to school to be good people, to have good morals? I don't think so, because moral education is already given at home. At the moment, we send our children to school so that they can get a good university education and can get a good job. In other words, the money I give for my child today will pay off years later. This is not investing in people, but this is the conditions of modern life.*

A participant who emphasized that the modern world makes children asocial and that there are big differences between the life she lived in her childhood and today said the following;

P1: *I lost my father during my childhood, and my upbringing was undertaken by my mother, who devoted herself to protecting me. In turn, I find myself committed to safeguarding my own children. Despite the growing complexities of modern life, I exert my utmost effort in fulfilling this responsibility. During my own childhood, I recall playing on the street with friends and rushing home after the call to prayer. Contrarily, my child seems disinterested in outdoor activities. Despite residing in a secure housing complex and having friends, he prefers staying indoors. Although he possesses a social nature, he opts to watch TV or engage with his cell phone at home. It's intriguing to note the difference between my own upbringing, where going inside was undesirable, and my child's inclination to stay indoors. The dynamics are indeed interesting and highlight the evolving nature of parenting across generations.*

Another participant stated that she thinks about tomorrow rather than today and that that's why she worries a lot.

P4: *I came across a proverb that emphasized the significance of not merely having children but exercising control over them. The process of exerting control over our children differs significantly from managing material possessions. Unlike inanimate objects, children cannot be discarded when they age or face difficulties. The commitment to their well-being extends until the end of our lives; it is not a transient responsibility. Currently, our efforts involve providing financial support. However, potential challenges may arise in their future marriages, perpetuating ongoing concerns. Historically, individuals discontented with their family life would often remain at home. In contrast, contemporary instances witness those in conflict leaving their homes and seeking refuge with their mothers. This shift signifies an added layer of responsibility.*

Another participant, who stated that the economic crisis in the society and the general testing system put children and themselves under stress, expressed the reason why they emphasized school success a lot as follows;

P8: *My children are already under stress about the future. They watch the news, they see the unemployment figures, they are aware of the cost of living. Sometimes they ask, "Will you take care of us if we can't find a job in the future?" This is actually a social issue. However, in a country where job opportunities are scarce, and the university entrance examination appears to be the singular gateway for those struggling to meet basic needs, our options become limited. The primary investment we channel into securing a future for our children is education. It is widely recognized that academic failure often translates into unfavorable living conditions in the long term. Consequently, I am compelled to adopt a resilient stance.*

When we look at the parental thoughts under the sub-theme of helicopter parenting, it is seen that parents are aware that they intervene in children's lives more than necessary, but they have some reasons to justify these behaviors. Parents who mention factors such as the current education system or the pressure of private schools feel that they will be left behind if they do not follow their children closely and see this behavior as an ideal parenting approach. It is noticeable that parents who state that they do not want to be helicopter parents criticize the social realities that cause this situation rather than their own behavior. In these interviews, where economic problems and the education system were mentioned as the main reasons for the oppressive attitudes of the participants, it is concluded that parents who focus on school success more than normal do not see a problem in themselves.

The second sub-theme of the New Generation Parenting theme is digital parenting. When the participants talked about their children, they always referred to their relationship with technological devices and stated that the most important part of their parental responsibilities is the digital world. Some parents, who said that they fulfilled their traditional parenting roles fully and completely, emphasized that they did not have enough knowledge and experience to manage their children's close relationship with digital devices and that they had a lot of difficulty because of this. The first category of this sub-theme was identified as dangers. One participant expressed her concerns about her children's close relationship with digital devices in the following sentences;

P3: *As the mother of a daughter, I am deeply concerned about the potential dangers on the internet. I fear that my daughter might be exposed to inappropriate content or activities. Balancing between managing school responsibilities and monitoring internet activities leaves me with little time for anything else. Parenting two girls is a demanding task. In the past, families would often have larger numbers of children, yet they seemed to experience more peace of mind. This difference is attributed to the absence of the current challenges posed by the internet. Earlier generations grew up with less direct parental intervention, allowing children to navigate life more independently. However, in today's world, we feel compelled to be more involved in our children's lives, given the potential risks they may encounter online.*

Another participant stated that bad news in the press increased their anxiety a lot and expressed that they were more worried about the present than the future as follows:

P1: *I experience heightened anxiety when my child is using the tablet, prompting me to check the screen to ensure they aren't engaging with unknown individuals. The constant exposure to negative news in newspapers has contributed to this heightened sense of concern. The daily barrage of distressing information disrupts my emotional equilibrium. Additionally, contemplating what might happen to my child if I were to pass away exacerbates my anxiety, limiting my ability to think about the future extensively. Despite having optimism about my child's potential for success in the long run, my current anxiety levels overshadow this positive outlook.*

The second category of the Digital Parenting sub-theme was identified as the digital divide. While describing their children's relationship with technological devices, parents generally stated that there is a big difference between them and their children in terms of their mastery of technology. One of the participants, who stated that they had difficulty in following up because they did not have the necessary knowledge and equipment to be a digital parent, explained their thoughts as follows;

P1: *In the past, my parents effortlessly kept track of my friends, who were mostly from school and the neighborhood. They were familiar with the people I spent time with. However, the dynamic has shifted, and I find myself in the dark about my child's friendships, especially with those formed online. Despite my attempts to be a vigilant digital parent, I struggle due to my limited understanding of technology compared to my child's proficiency. My daughter dedicates a minimum of two hours daily to her phone, engaging in conversations and activities that remain unknown to me. I consistently inquire about her online contacts, cautioning her against communicating with strangers. Nevertheless, my ability to monitor her is constrained by the significant technological gap between us; my child possesses a level of knowledge that surpasses my understanding.*

Another participant stated that she had difficulty in keeping track of her child's digital life and that she was helpless because of this;

P8: *I want to avoid breaching my child's trust by checking his cell phone, but there are instances when I feel compelled to do so. This happened when I witnessed his friends using offensive language in a WhatsApp group, which deeply disturbed me. However, when my child became aware of my phone checks, he took measures on his own, such as restricting my access to previous internet pages and regularly deleting conversations in the WhatsApp group. Given his greater expertise in this area, I find myself in a position where I have no option but to foster a relationship based on trust, as I acknowledge that I am significantly less knowledgeable than my child in these matters.*

The last category of the digital parenting sub-theme was cyber concerns. In this category, the concerns reflected by the data obtained from the parents and how they developed solutions are presented. One participant explained that the experiences he did not have in his childhood turned into a test with his own children as follows;

P4: *Parenthood requires us to be more careful now. In the past, there was no internet in our world. I mean, my parents didn't have to keep track of who I was talking to or seeing on my cell phone. My child doesn't have a cell phone either but he can't stop using a tablet. He also connects to the internet. But sometimes I get lost. Sometimes he spends hours on the internet and when I ask him what he is doing, I don't get an answer. He says he is just surfing. I ask him to show me the sites he visits. He doesn't like it, but he shows me a few pages. There is nothing harmful on the pages he shows but does he show everything? This question worries me a lot. It is impossible to be with him at all times and to follow him!*

Another participant stated that her children were locked in the house due to technology addiction and that she had difficulty taking them out as follows.

P1: *We wouldn't want to go inside, and my child doesn't want to go out. I guess the phone has a lot of influence on this. There is a fun life on the screen. He talks to his friends from there. He does everything. He doesn't want to go out either. But the screen demoralizes children. When he's on the screen for an hour, I realize he gets depressed. But when he goes outside, he cheers up. I am aware of this but I can't do anything about it.*

Theme 2 - Academic Success

The second theme of the study was Academic Success. The participants explained the reasons for placing academic success at the center of their lives, and in line with the data obtained; expectations, being a private school parent and competition sub-themes were formed.

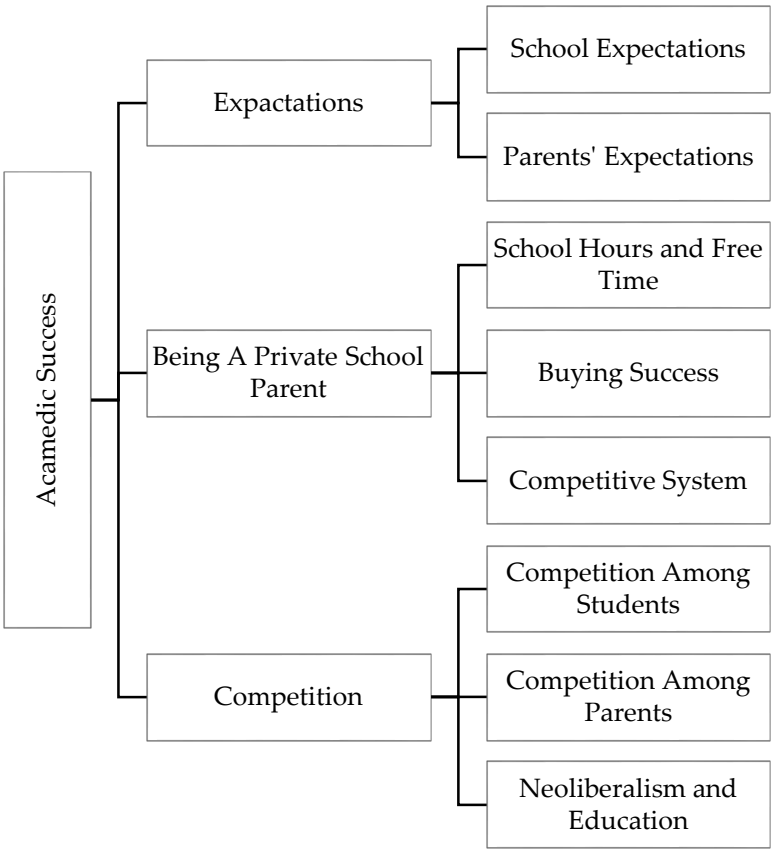

Figure 2. Academic success theme, sub-themes and categories

The sub-theme of expectations was divided into two categories: school expectations and parents' expectations. The participants stated that the expectations for academic achievement worried both themselves and their students and that they had to focus more on their children for this reason. In the first category, the expectations of the school, one participant stated that the school had an approach that focused only on academic achievement;

> P8: *There is a peculiar atmosphere in our school, as if the expectation is for everyone to become a doctor. There is a lack of recognition for diverse talents, with no distinction between verbal and numerical skills. Few take the initiative to explore their individual interests. For instance, my child is actively engaged in creating digital drawings and animations, and has even established a YouTube channel. Unfortunately, not a single teacher has acknowledged or congratulated him for these accomplishments. However, if there is a struggle in a math-related subject, we are immediately summoned to the school. We are questioned about the reasons behind the difficulties, although neither I nor the teachers have been successful in teaching him math. The school places high expectations on the students, but it feels like these expectations are unfairly imposed on us without acknowledging the diversity of talents and interests among the students.*

Another participant stated that her child was stressed due to the behaviors of the private school teachers as follows.

> P6: *Honestly, I regret choosing a private school for my children. Despite providing full support for all their homework, the teachers never seem satisfied. It might be a matter of the child's capacity, and I believe it's the responsibility of the teacher to recognize and understand this. The assigned homework is exceptionally challenging, and I assure you, the new generation questions are baffling for us parents. As individuals from older generations, we find it challenging to comprehend and solve these modern problems. What's perplexing is that the teacher addresses regular questions during class but assigns homework involving these new generation questions. Is it realistic to expect every student to excel in every field? The school seems to operate under such an assumption, and this constant pressure is causing significant stress for us.*

The second category of the expectations sub-theme was the expectations of parents. Participants stated that they had high expectations for their children independently of the school and that they were therefore very interested in their children's school success. One participant stated that he knew his child's report card grades by heart and that this situation was a bit strange when he compared it with his own childhood;

> P2: *As parents, we have burdened our children with numerous expectations, a situation unheard of in the past. In earlier times, children attended school, and upon graduation, parents would offer congratulations without necessarily delving into the details of their academic journey. Nowadays, we seem to know our children's report card grades almost by heart, closely monitoring every step they take. This level of involvement is challenging for both us and our children. The close scrutiny inevitably puts pressure on them, possibly hindering their success due to the fear of failure. While adults facing similar circumstances are often diagnosed with anxiety, we tend to view children's anxiety as normal. However, stress and anxiety at a young age can pose a threat to their future well-being. I believe our heightened expectations stem from the societal pressure we experience, as success in many aspects is intricately linked to academic achievements.*

Another participant, who stated that her biggest fear about her child is that she will be disappointed in the future and that this possibility has become stronger with the increase in expectations, stated the following;

> P3: *My greatest fear revolves around the possibility of my children experiencing disappointment in the future. We place numerous expectations on them, outlining specific paths to success. We constantly convey the message that they must achieve certain milestones and be successful. The children genuinely believe in these expectations. However, as they enter high school, I am uncertain about what will transpire. If they struggle to meet these extensive expectations, it could potentially shatter their self-confidence. I wish to shield them from this disappointment. Occasionally, I emphasize to them that school is not the sole measure of success, but I am unsure of its effectiveness given their awareness of our expectations.*

The second sub-theme of the Academic Success theme was determined as being a private school parent. In this section, the parents stated that being a private school parent affected their parenting approaches a lot and that the expectations of the school were the basis for overburdening their children. In line with the data obtained from the participants, this sub-theme was analyzed in three categories: school hours and free time, buying success, and the competitive system. Regarding the first category, school hours and free time, one participant stated the following;

> P6: *The parental responsibility is on the rise day by day. We enroll our children in private schools where the first-grader returns home at five, and the other, three days a week, after seven due to tennis practices and a study hall. Upon arriving home, they immediately delve into homework, leaving them with minimal free time. It's an unusual situation. While private schools are expected to consider not only the academic success but also the social development of children, the current programs seem inadequate for this purpose. As a parent investing in private education, I anticipate a comprehensive program from the school. If, for instance, the school were to extend class hours unexpectedly, I would likely be among the first to object because I expect the educational experience to justify the expenses. Consequently, the current system appears flawed. It's perplexing that both a first-grader and a twelfth-grader spend an equal amount of time in school. Is this considered normal? I find it highly abnormal, especially when compared to educational practices in other countries.*

Another participant explained that her child could not spend much time at home but she felt obliged to participate in the programs offered by the school;

> P2: *Fortunately, our children are diligent, and we try not to burden them with excessive warnings. However, I can't help but feel sorry for their situation. In my own upbringing, my parents were quite strict about studying. Interestingly, I now advise my child to ease up on studying because I empathize with them. There seems to be a notable difference. While I am hesitant about allowing my child to join clubs, they express a desire to do so due to their friends' involvement. I'm also against them dedicating too much time to studying, given that they already have nine hours of classes each day. I question the purpose of additional study sessions. Nevertheless, societal expectations compel us to enroll them in such activities to avoid being labeled as disinterested parents. It's worth noting that my children's dissatisfaction lies more with the school system than with us. Particularly, my first-grader shows reluctance towards homework. Occasionally, I overlook it, but the teacher contacts us to express concern about incomplete assignments. It appears that the system has led us to this predicament, and my children seem to grasp this reality. While they don't openly communicate their feelings to us, their*

constant complaints indicate their desire to engage in playful activities. After all, they are children. Isn't it only natural for them to want to play? If they don't enjoy these moments now, when will they?

The second category of the sub-theme of being a private school parent was defined as buying success. Participants stated that their expectations of success increased because they paid for private schools, but some of them also said that they realized through experience that success cannot be bought. One participant explained the effort he made to get value for the money he gave to the school as follows;

P4: *We send the child to a private school. We pay money and I pay more attention to get value for money. My child doesn't pay attention to the lessons if I don't pay attention. I even remind him of his homework every day, so I can say that the concept of parenting has changed a lot. In a sense, we are trying to make a profit from our investment. You can say that it is wrong to see education as a shopping object but this is the case.*

Another participant stated that he worked very hard to pay for the private school and that she burdened the child in order to get a return for this;

P5: *I am a father of three children and work tirelessly, allocating a significant portion of my income to their education. This is why I harbor concerns. Investing so much money into education, I expect it to be worthwhile. In contrast to my own childhood where my family wasn't particularly involved in school matters, now I find myself at school almost three days a week. It feels like something is amiss if we skip these engagements. There's a sense that, without exerting pressure on the teachers, we might not receive the education we believe our children deserve. It's a marked departure from the minimal involvement my family had in my schooling years, where they would only come to school if there was a serious issue, usually involving a fight, and even then, it was obligatory due to a call from the principal.*

Another participant explained that success is something that cannot be bought as follows;

P7: *Merely sending my child to a private school doesn't ensure their success. While it's possible to provide material possessions, a prosperous future cannot be bought. Possessing a house or a car doesn't guarantee a bright future; these don't define one's character. However, a good education is indispensable. Education, often associated with academic achievements, is equally crucial for nurturing one's character and values. Success and morality are not commodities that can be purchased; some aspects of life remain untouched by wealth. Therefore, as parents investing in private education, it's essential for us to be realistic. At times, we get carried away with the idea that financial investment alone guarantees a child's success. However, this notion is flawed; if it were true, the most groundbreaking inventions would have originated from the wealthiest families worldwide.*

The third category of this sub-theme is the competing system and the data obtained from the participants show that there is a system that forces students to compete with each other. A participant who said that his child had to take private lessons even though he went to a private school and that the system was built on competing children said the following;

P3: *My children are enrolled in a private school, yet neither of them is proficient in English. I am considering enrolling them in an English course in the future, perhaps on Sundays. Isn't it regrettable? It indeed is. However, the regret is not only for them but also for me. I feel like I am wasting both my money and energy. The system, which promotes intense competition, not only compels our children to compete but also places us in a continuous race against time and each other. This constant competition is exhausting. Sometimes, I find myself wishing I had been born a hundred years ago; life might have been more straightforward and comfortable.*

Another participant explained that teachers are in a race along with students as follows;

P7: *Everyone is exerting pressure on the children. Class teachers seem to be in a constant competition; I've even heard that they engage in arguments after exams, as shared by another parent. It's concerning when teachers behave this way and I'm unsure how to address it. I genuinely hope they find fulfillment in their lives. Additionally, technology poses another challenge. Although they claim to be studying, I'm uncertain about the accuracy of their statements. When I check, I find websites related to the lessons, but it's unclear whether they are genuinely focused on their studies. When I set time limits, they express frustration not just towards the restrictions but also towards me. They also seem to lack clear career aspirations*

for the future; they could be nurses or doctors, and it doesn't seem to matter much to them. However, I believe they should strive for something meaningful.

The third sub-theme of the academic achievement theme is competition, and this sub-theme is divided into three categories: competition among students, competition among parents, and neoliberalism and education. Stating that competition is at the center of the education system, the participants stated that in a system that pits students against each other, parents do not have the luxury of leaving children alone. In the category of competition between students, one participant said the following;

P5: *My husband hangs the test results of the children on the refrigerator every time. Sometimes the children are at the bottom, I feel sad, but my husband does this to motivate them. I am aware of this. Nevertheless, I doubt the future of a child who is always forced to compete with his peers in childhood. This child will always try to surpass others when he enters business life. Maybe the lists won't be posted but once it's ingrained in the subconscious mind, it's already there. This is the reason for the animosity in work environments. In the environment where I work, everyone is trying to outdo each other. Because they probably came here by competing at school.*

Another participant complained that her child was very calm, did not want to compete with anyone and therefore was not ambitious and argued that her child should be more aggressive in such a system;

P8: *My child has a calm disposition, indifferent to what others do. At times, I appreciate this quality. However, there are moments when I feel he should exhibit more ambition, as being too laid-back might put him at a disadvantage in the business world. In the past, this might have been acceptable, but nowadays, individuals who are not proactive or self-driven are often deemed as unsuccessful. The emphasis is on constant movement, competition, and staying ahead. If you remain in your own space, everyone else may surpass you. I attempt to convey this perspective to my child, but it seems to be ingrained in his character.*

The second category of the competition sub-theme, competition among parents, was treated as a kind of confession by the participants and they stated that although they were uncomfortable with the situation, the system forced them to do so. One participant stated that there was a comparison race at school and that they had to participate in this race with the following sentences;

P2: *I don't want my child to lag behind peers due to the constant comparisons prevalent in school. Even during parent-teacher conferences, teachers engage in comparing students, which I find highly inappropriate. There are moments when I yearn for a simpler life in a village, where my children could attend a local school. In such a setting, we wouldn't be compelled to conform to a rigid system. Unfortunately, the current environment robs our children of their childhood, as they are constantly pressured to meet societal expectations.*

Another participant emphasized that children's achievements are used to show off to the world and said the following;

P5: *What if our children don't pass the university entrance exam? It would be challenging! Primarily, we find ourselves answering to societal expectations, where everyone scrutinizes each other's achievements. People are constantly curious about what accolades someone's child has achieved or what field their daughter is studying. While not everyone admits to it, this is the reality. There's an unspoken desire for every child to excel, and some even use their children's success to boast. It's become a trend to say proudly, "Our child has become a doctor," without much consideration for the significance. Similarly, we harbor the wish for our children to attain a reputable degree in the future. Even though I have two children, one seems to have veered off the academic path. It's evident that he won't pursue university studies, or if he does, it may not be at a prestigious institution. What's the use of pushing him forcefully in this direction? It's futile. We acknowledge this, but he seems to be merely going through the motions. I believe every individual should be encouraged according to their potential. Pushing too hard when they are not capable serves no purpose.*

The last category of the competition sub-theme, neoliberalism and education, was formed by parents' statements criticizing social life. Parents stated that they follow their children's every moment in order to prepare them for the future, and that they push them today so that they will not have regrets when they enter

the workforce. One participant said the following about her child who is at the beginning of a race that will continue until death;

> P8: *If I refrain from guiding my child, I am certain he will resent me in the future. Graduating from school thrusts him into a highly competitive environment. The world has evolved to a point where pausing for even a moment can result in being surpassed by millions. Hence, it becomes imperative to nurture children who are well-prepared for this intense competition. In my home country, if I had a stable job, I might not feel the need to push my child so intensely. At most, he would compete with a few local shopkeepers. However, the current reality is different. I cannot ignore the fact that, in a highly populated and competitive environment, not taking exams means my child would be up against at least two or three million competitors at the university level. The relentless competition persists even after entering the workforce, extending throughout their entire lives.*

Another participant stated that a diploma is no longer worth money and that much more effort should be made to prepare for life.

> P6: *When I browse job listings, I become concerned about my child's future. Employers often seek a minimum of three years of experience and list various qualifications, including proficiency in foreign languages. It's evident that the journey doesn't conclude with a school diploma; its value seems to have diminished. Nowadays, children are gearing up for a lifelong competition, and as parents, we are anxious about their prospects. However, I don't personally face any issues myself.*

Theme 3 - Concerns

The third theme of the study was identified as Concerns and this theme was divided into the sub-themes of school pressure, future anxiety and technology use.

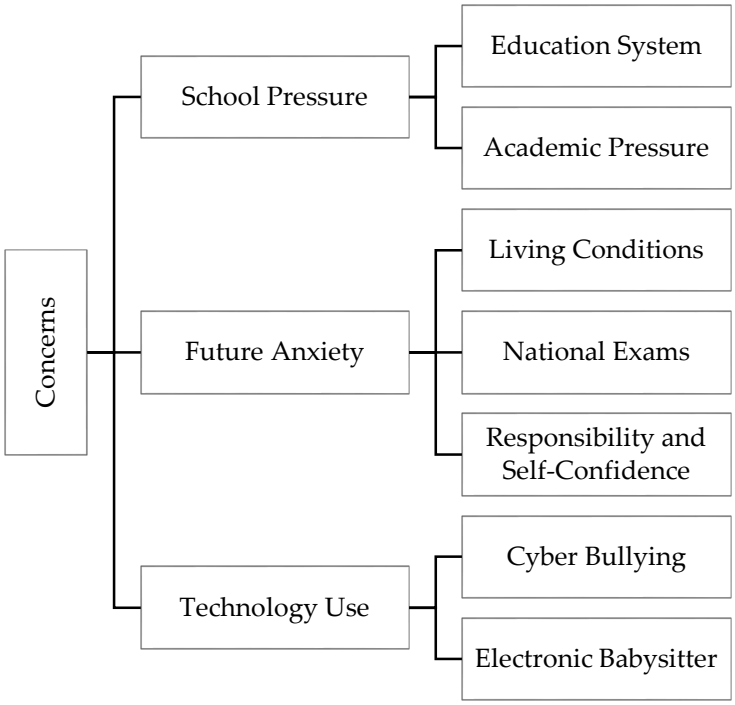

Figure 3. Concerns theme, sub-themes and categories

The first sub-theme, school pressure, was expressed as the most important cause of anxiety by the participants who sent their children to private schools. Participants were critical of the efforts to get value for money given to private schools, the responsibilities and expectations placed on students and parents at school. Although the participants were self-critical from time to time, they generally emphasized that they were forced to adopt helicopter parenting approaches due to social realities. The sub-theme of school pressure was divided into two categories: educational system and academic pressure. In the educational system category, one participant stated the following.

P3: *Mock exams are administered every week, and the school regularly contacts the families of struggling students to arrange meetings. There's a strong emphasis on not being lenient with the students. I believe the system is becoming overwhelming for the children. As parents, our involvement is primarily to stay informed about their progress. Without our guidance, there's a concern that the children might lose focus and motivation.*

Another participant explained that she was warned by her relatives to leave her children alone but she was forced to adopt this parenting approach because of the education system;

P3: *My relatives often advise me not to put pressure on my child. It's easy to give such advice from an external standpoint. I understand my child and I am aware of the consequences if I don't provide guidance. Despite the child's claims that excessive pressure leads to stress and hampers studying, I've noticed that without such stress, there is a lack of motivation to study. The discussions during the school's parent meetings shed light on the existing challenges. With daily homework assignments and the distribution of tracking charts by the class teacher, the pressure on my 11th-grade high schooler is intense, as if preparing for an exam in a month, even though there is still a year and a half before the actual exam. The stress is already taking a toll. In such a situation, one might argue for the abolition of exams, a reinforcement of vocational high schools, or sending the child to learn a trade. However, these alternatives are not readily available in our country. Despite my child's protests, I choose to continue applying pressure.*

The second category of this sub-theme, the academic pressure was formed within the framework of the data provided by the parents regarding the pressure they felt for their children to be academically successful. One participant argued that in an environment where there is such intense exam pressure, the reason for the academic pressure on children is not the parents but the school;

P4: *My child is currently in the third grade. Despite the information that there are no formal exams in this class, it seems like they have assessments every two weeks. I'm unsure whether these are considered assessment tests or exams. Could you clarify the distinction between the two? The teacher shares the results through WhatsApp, and I find myself feeling the need to ensure my child achieves good grades. He aspires to become a doctor but the school doesn't provide guidance on how to pursue that path, making it a challenging journey. While we typically tackle homework together, I believe this approach hinders the development of his sense of responsibility. In my absence, he waits for my guidance and even asks if we should start the homework, creating a dependency that doesn't promote independent learning.*

Another participant stated that the homework assigned by the school was too much and some of them were not easy at all, so she had to support the homework. She also explained that the academic pressure on the students is stronger on themselves as follows;

P1: *We've been accustomed to working on homework together since the first grade. At times, I suffer from severe headaches, including migraines, and on such occasions, I suggest that she completes the homework independently. However, this proposal upsets her and I find myself obliged to sit down at the table with her. We're contemplating the idea of hiring a private tutor but that seems impractical considering the substantial amount we already pay for her school fees. The idea of additional expenses for private lessons raises concerns, especially when our financial resources are already strained. It's a challenging situation, and I'm uncertain about what the future holds.*

The second sub-theme of the anxiety theme was determined as future anxiety and this sub-theme was divided into three categories: living conditions, national exams, and responsibility and self-confidence in line with the data obtained from the participants. In the category of living conditions, a participant stated that the basis of her concerns about her child was the difficulties they would face in the future;

P5: *I am employed at a bank, and my primary goal is to provide a better life for my children. I firmly believe that academic success is key to achieving this goal. Without a strong educational foundation, life can become significantly more challenging for them, possibly leading to a future of residing in rented accommodations with financial difficulties. Although they may find their studies a bit tedious now, I am confident that as they grow older, they will appreciate the efforts we are putting in for their future. We are not only focused on their academic success but also on shaping them into good individuals by setting a positive example.*

A participant explained that she felt fear that she would be unemployed in the future and therefore put pressure on her child about school success as follows;

> P4: *I am also concerned about the possibility of my children facing unemployment in the future. The current job market is challenging, and salaries often fall short. Considering the uncertain economic outlook, I fear that their employment prospects may not improve anytime soon. My worries persist until they secure stable employment. This concern is heightened because, as a parent, I naturally want the best for my son, encompassing both strong moral values and financial stability. While good morals are paramount, I acknowledge that they alone may not be sufficient, especially when observing the prevalence of immorality in wealthier individuals. I am determined to guide my child towards earning a respectable income through lawful means, even if it means investing in their education and development.*

The second category of the future anxiety sub-theme was identified as national exams. Participants stated that their parenting approaches were very much affected by national exams and that the exam system forced them to certain behaviors. One participant explained the role of exams in positioning the school at the center of children's lives as follows;

> P2: *Everything revolves around school. Conversations are filled with discussions about how the school day went, what the teacher said, and upcoming events at school. While it's positive that my child enjoys school, there are moments of boredom. The thought of potential failure raises concerns. The immediate focus is on getting through high school successfully, with the anticipation of university looming in the near future. Currently covering school expenses, my aspiration is for my child to attend a reputable university. I am willing to invest in a good education, as not all schools are equal, and I aim for a valuable return on this investment. Success in high school is a crucial stepping stone, as their lives seem to hinge on achieving victories at each stage. The ultimate goal is for them to secure a promising career and financial stability in the future. While I wish a world without financial concerns, I acknowledge the reality that success requires effort and dedication. However, the uncertainty surrounding university entrance test results and their future adds an element of unpredictability to the journey ahead.*

Another participant explained that she attaches great importance to the moral development of her child, but sometimes this effort is overshadowed by the pressure of national exams;

> P4: *My immediate concern is fostering a strong connection within our family today. I am actively working to instill love and trust in our relationship, believing that a solid family bond will contribute to our collective well-being in the future. My worry intensifies at the thought of him growing distant from us, potentially seeking companionship elsewhere. Currently in primary school, my son has not yet encountered the challenges of more complex subjects like math and science. While his performance seems satisfactory, I remain skeptical about national exams in the future. It's common for parents, especially from private schools, to receive positive feedback about their children's achievements, but I am wary as I know that challenges often arise while preparing for the national exams. To ensure a solid educational foundation, my husband's cousin will be teaching him math during the upcoming summer. While many parents might resist the idea of their children studying during vacation, I can't shake the belief that every moment invested now will prevent regrets in the future. I am determined to provide my child with the tools and support necessary to face the challenges that lie ahead.*

Another participant explained that she was not sure what kind of a situation her child would be in if she did not get into university in the future and that she was worried about this;

> P3: *What matters most to me is that my child grows up to be a good person and achieves success. While success is important, it doesn't take precedence over qualities like honesty. I don't want my child to lie, even if they were to receive lower grades. This may seem contradictory, but the emphasis is on them being good individuals first. Of course, I do hope for their academic success but moral character holds a higher priority. Admittedly, I find myself deeply upset when they receive low grades and I tend to search for blame within myself. Despite my attempts to conceal these feelings, they often get sensed by my children, adding to my distress. My fear is that if they experience failure once, it may become a recurring pattern over the years. Unfortunately, there are numerous examples around us, including an acquaintance's daughter who was diligent until high school but later fell into the wrong company, started skipping classes, and failed to gain admission to university. This illustrates that a hardworking child is not guaranteed to maintain that work ethic throughout their life.*

The last category of the future anxiety sub-theme, responsibility and authenticity, includes parents' concerns about their children's loss of self-confidence. One participant explained that he did not feel responsible for intervening in every moment of his child's life and that he felt guilty for this;

> P5: *My main concern revolves around the notion of children growing up like nurtured garden plants. During my own primary school years, I used to visit the market independently, purchasing fruits and vegetables in bulk. Contrastingly, my child cannot currently navigate a simple trip to a grocery. When I instruct him to go and buy something, he seeks guidance on what to say. It makes me ponder: what if this child aspires to attend a prestigious university in the future? The best-case scenario might be securing a salaried position under someone with financial means. Consequently, children ought to familiarize themselves with a degree of struggle, yet, regrettably, we seem unable to facilitate that. Our primary concerns revolve around school and homework, while the children engage in disputes with friends and grapple with depression - a seemingly normal part of their lives. The mother intervenes at school and attempts to resolve issues; if unsuccessful, I step in. Hours are dedicated to comforting the child at home.*

The last sub-theme of the concerns theme was identified as the use of technology and this sub-theme was divided into the categories of cyberbullying and electronic caregivers. One participant expressed her concerns about cyberbullying in the following sentences;

> P2: *We cannot simply leave the child in front of a screen. Even a first-grader requests a phone from me, and not just any phone – a smartphone. Naturally, I resist the urge to purchase one. However, we did get one for the older child, and now prying it away from them is a challenge. The uncertainty of the websites they visit and whether they interact with questionable individuals leaves me with numerous concerns. I find myself navigating through a sea of question marks in my mind. Banning it seems impossible, and even if you don't permit it, that doesn't solve the issue. In a nutshell, it's a tough situation. Parenting is currently an arduous task, burdened with responsibilities that feel like a towering mountain.*

Another participant expressed her concerns about cyberbullying in the following sentences in line with her experiences;

> P7: *In our child's class, someone created an online account in a child's name and shared absurd photos. The situation led the child to the brink of leaving school. Although the family reported the incident to the police, no significant action was taken. I am genuinely fearful that a similar occurrence might happen to us, especially considering the occasional conflicts among children. The worry persists that one of his friends might choose such a vengeful path. Consequently, I make a concerted effort to closely monitor my child's technology usage and educate myself by reading books on the subject.*

Another participant said that there are great threats even in WhatsApp groups and shared her experiences as follows;

> P7: *Just as we, parents, have WhatsApp groups, children also have their own groups. Occasionally, they engage in conflicts within these groups, and unfortunately, this has repercussions for my child. Due to these issues, we sought guidance counseling at the school approximately ten times. We spent several days at the school when my child used inappropriate language towards another friend, and a similar incident occurred involving someone else targeting my child. They superimposed my child's face onto the body of an animal and shared it. Although it may seem innocent, my child found it distressing and couldn't put the phone down for days. He constantly checked to see if there were any new posts. There is a need for schools to take action on such matters.*

The second category of the sub-theme of technology use was identified as electronic caregivers. One participant stated that she used electronic devices as electronic caregivers and that she was aware of the negative effects of this on child development;

> P4: *Honestly, my child doesn't express any complaints. The only issue we face is around eating habits. He believes that I'm pressuring him, but the reality is he won't eat unless I apply some pressure. Left to his own choices, he would opt for hamburgers every day. However, the moment spinach is on the table, he claims his stomach hurts. Consequently, I find myself compelling him to eat. Most of the time, I resort to using a tablet in*

front of him. Despite the criticism that it's not the right approach, the fact remains that he refuses to eat spinach without some form of entertainment. Thus, I often end up playing random videos on YouTube for him. Admittedly, it's not an ideal solution, but I'm at a loss. What should I do?

Another participant said that they use the tablet as a silencer and explained that they know their behavior is wrong but they are forced to do so due to their living conditions;

P8: *At times, we resort to using the tablet as a means of quieting things down, especially when we are exhausted. The tablet or phone becomes a sort of savior in these moments, as the child engrossed in the device vanishes, providing us with a sense of relief. However, the true comfort derived from this situation remains uncertain. Deep down, there is an unsettling feeling within us. The guidance teacher suggested imposing time limits, so we agreed to no more than half an hour a day. Unfortunately, our attempts have been futile. The child consistently finds excuses to use the tablet, claiming homework or the need to review lessons on YouTube. Even before exams, he insists on revisiting lessons through channels like Tonguç. We never succeeded in adhering to the half-hour daily limit.*

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

One of the most important results of the interviews conducted with the participants throughout the research was that parents were aware that they were taking too much care of their children but they did not feel guilty about this situation in any way. The reason for this situation is that social changes and developments have changed the structure of the family (Bayer, 2013). An individual who acknowledges the wrongful nature of a behavior may not feel guilt if they rationalize and justify that behavior in their mind. This parallels the situation faced by parents, particularly those who justify an excessively intrusive parenting style, often referred to as helicopter parenting.

It is argued that various factors contribute to the emergence of these concerns, attributing them to issues such as socioeconomic crises, the impacts of neoliberalism, competition within private schools, and the overarching worry of securing a prosperous future for their children. Some parents defend their approach by attributing it to the prevailing circumstances, even if they already possess an overbearing parenting style. Nonetheless, the term "parent" is ascribed to individuals responsible for not only ensuring a child's biological and physical development but also fostering their emotional, social, and moral growth while providing a conducive environment for such development (Yaman et al., 2013). Despite this comprehensive definition of parenthood, it is observed that the perception of parenting often revolves around the realms of academic success and school-related matters.

Participants stated that private schools had a great influence on their focus on children's school success. They said that even if they wanted to leave their children free, they had to closely monitor and control them due to the strict system and expectations of private school teachers and administrators. This situation was found to support the view expressed in a study conducted by Nacak et al. (2011) that "The socio-demographic characteristics of the family, their attitudes and behaviors towards the child greatly affect the behaviors desired to be seen in the child. In addition, it is revealed that the obstacle in front of raising children aware of their own responsibilities and with high self-confidence is the pressure applied by private schools for academic success. However, the point that should be emphasized and overlooked here is that parents prefer private schools because they already aim for academic success. In other words, the reason why parents send their children to private schools instead of public schools is the strict monitoring of their children's academic performance.

At this point, the participants' criticism of the attitudes of private schools can be considered as a kind of paradox. Although it is the parents who pay the money in the education sector, the main customer in school is not the parents but the students. In other words, the needs of the students should be at the center when creating curricula and it should be realized that the demands of parents who see private schools only as a

center for "securing their children's future and gaining a good status" will not be sufficient to create a quality educational environment and will even harm them.

Another noteworthy aspect arising from the findings of this study is the correlation between parental monitoring and control and children's academic achievement. A parent who meticulously oversees every aspect of the child's life, collaborates on homework, stays abreast of the child's school lessons, and memorizes their grades may perceive this involvement as a success, assuming that such behavior positively influences the child's academic performance. However, students subject to strict parental monitoring often experience a diminishing sense of responsibility over time, rendering them incapable of taking initiative without parental pressure. Considering the importance of responsibility and intrinsic motivation factors for sustainable academic success, helicopter parenting approach cannot be considered as a positive contribution to the process. Parents with this attitude expect their children to realize the situations that they cannot achieve themselves (Yamanoğlu, 2009). In this sense, although the oppressive attitude of parents towards children provides temporary success, it does not have a long-term effect and children's psycho-social development is negatively affected.

Oppressive parenting attitude prevents intrinsic motivation and students are motivated only to please their parents or to get high grades in exams. This type of motivation ends with a change in parental attitudes or the end of exams. Students who are persuaded by temporary methods may face different problems when they start their professional life. When there is no family member to support them when they face a problem, they may not be able to solve problems on their own. Considering that one of the most important 21st century skills is the ability to solve problems, it can be said that the helicopter parenting approach will have negative consequences for the future of children.

The modern lifestyle and the impacts of neoliberalism have been assessed as factors contributing to heightened parental anxiety. Amidst this, families, already devalued in terms of wages due to neoliberal policies, find themselves compelled to compete for privatized education, hoping to secure a quality education for their children (Gök, 2004). To some extent, parents arguing that their intervention in their children's lives is geared toward ensuring a successful profession and future financial stability can be considered justified. Neoliberalism, emphasizing the concept of lifelong learning, places a burden on individuals to continue working until retirement, perpetually striving for self-improvement. The early introduction of concepts like entrepreneurship or leadership to students, even at the primary school level, positions them as essential human resources for the business world, shaping educational systems accordingly. Consequently, parents tend to excessively focus on their children's present to safeguard their future. However, there is a disregard for the possibility that a student lacking developed critical thinking skills, solely concentrating on exams, may struggle in the professional realm. Children heavily dependent on parental support for even minor school problems, incapable of completing homework independently, and achieving high grades without learning to stand on their own feet pose a significant challenge for the future of society.

To comprehend the evolution of the private education system, one must grasp the social processes and conditions contributing to its emergence, such as urban densification, the autonomization of institutional practices, and the resultant division of labor, along with the establishment of a market for symbolic products (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2015, p. 87). Armed with this understanding, private school administrators, attuned to social conditions, can adopt more sensitive attitudes towards parents. Mitigating the negative impacts of parental interventions on children, teachers, administrators, and, to a lesser extent, the education system, particularly those paying for private schooling, hinges on private school administrators taking a firm stance on the matter. Education, being a specialized field, requires processes to be meticulously planned and executed by experts in the domain. Parents excessively involved in their children's school lives, either with the aim of cultivating "project children" or by over-interfering, pose significant obstacles to the broader goals of the

education system. It becomes the responsibility of school administrators and teachers to raise awareness among parents who believe they are acting in their children's best interest but inadvertently cause harm with each step.

School principals aspiring to foster a healthy school climate can restructure their approach to parents by examining their expectations from private schools through various lenses. Strengthening communication between school principals and private school parents, along with guiding them as needed, helps prevent any adverse effects on school management processes. This, in turn, facilitates teachers' work and enables field experts to conduct teaching activities more effectively, free from external influences, and focused solely on the students' wishes, demands, and needs.

Based on the research data, the following suggestions are presented for parents.

- While it's natural for parents to aspire to their children's success, those who assume all responsibility and transfer it onto themselves cannot achieve success in parenting. Consequently, the primary task of parents should be instilling a sense of responsibility in their children. This can only be accomplished through a proper and measured parenting approach. To guide parents in adopting appropriate behavior models, private school guidance units should organize seminars and conduct awareness-raising studies, incorporating case studies.

- Parents who employ a helicopter parenting approach often justify it by claiming to secure a bright future for their children. However, the overlooked risk lies in sacrificing children's present for a promising future. Therefore, it's crucial to consider children's developmental characteristics and prevent them from shouldering burdens beyond their capacity. In this context, collaboration between families and schools is imperative, as both parties should share responsibility, and academic studies need to be structured with a keen awareness of children's potential.

- Parents, who are influenced by neoliberal policies and have the perception that success and happiness can be bought, should be given guidance to raise awareness on this issue. Without intrinsic motivation, a child cannot achieve long-term success even if they attend the best school in the world. Therefore, children should not be put under pressure to get value for the money paid to private schools, but should be guided to achieve the best in line with their own capacities.

- According to the results of the research, the approaches of some private school parents have changed from family participation in education to family intervention. In order for children to stand on their own feet at school, the balance of parental involvement should be well balanced. If children get used to seeing their parents in the school lobby after every problem they have at school, they will not develop problem solving skills. Removing all obstacles in front of the child will result in the child becoming a weak and unable to struggle in the future.

- Parents who place their children's academic success at the forefront unintentionally neglect other crucial aspects of life. Inquiring, "How was school today?" instead of asking "How are you?" when a child returns home may inadvertently make the child feel undervalued. While academic success is undoubtedly significant, students with compromised social and psychological development are bound to face challenges in school adjustment. Hence, parents should prioritize their children's overall well-being before emphasizing academic achievements, recognizing that psychological well-being is a prerequisite for academic success.

- Family support for homework is considered very important and parents have a great responsibility in this regard. However, the responsibility of parents is not to do the homework, but to provide support. According to the data obtained from the research, some parents overestimate the importance of helping their children with homework so that they do not fall behind other children, and this is a situation that damages

the child's self-confidence. Therefore, homework should be the child's responsibility and parents should only step in when the child is struggling.

- The more anxious parents are about their children's school success, the more likely it is for their children to experience anxiety. Therefore, parents should initially reassure their children by emphasizing trust in their abilities and conveying that the grades achieved after studying do not determine their worth. When parents have expectations that surpass their children's capacities, it can elevate the child's anxiety levels, becoming a detrimental factor affecting academic success negatively.

- Being a positive role model is one of the significant responsibilities of parents. When children spend time at home with family members they can look up to, they tend to internalize valuable qualities. Attempting to instill specific behaviors solely through words or pressure may yield short-term success but lacks lasting impact. An ideal parenting approach necessitates fostering a democratic climate at home.

- School administrators must stay attuned to societal changes, address parental concerns, and adapt their management approaches accordingly. Imposing excessive responsibilities on parents and pressuring students for absolute success negatively impacts parental roles. School administrators should guide parents in discovering their students' potential and refrain from pushing any child beyond their capabilities.

- Schools need to establish clear guidelines regarding family involvement in education. Parents should be discouraged from interfering in educational processes, and all educational activities within schools should be transparently shared with parents.

- Guidance units in schools should organize educational programs for parents and collaborate with them to alleviate children's academic anxiety. Families with high expectations for their children should receive transparent reports on their academic development, and guidance should be provided to help families strike a balance in their expectations.

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