



THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Arbona XHEMAJLI

Prof. Asst. Dr., Public University Kadri Zeka, Gjilan – Kosova

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4939-4499>

arbona.xhemajli@uni-gjilan.net

Miranda MULLALIU

Ma., AAB College, Prishtinë Kosova, Prishtina – Kosova

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8284-1932>

miranda_mullaliu@hotmail.com

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Abstract

To achieve the most satisfactory school results school must activate all its capacities and factors within its work system. An important factor in the results of school work is the parents. Parental involvement in school affairs is very significant in school outcomes. School and family constitute two important factors in the education and upbringing of the younger generation. The family has a significant role and potential in the effectiveness of educating children. Often parents are not aware that they are playing a fundamental role in their children's development through active involvement in school affairs. The purpose of the research is to reflect the real situation of parents' involvement in school affairs and to provide recommendations that help raise awareness of both parties about the importance of parent-school cooperation in the educational process. This study also aims to highlight the level of knowledge that parents have about their rights about organizing and participating in school affairs. The research was conducted through a quantitative approach with parents (N=60) through questionnaires and through a qualitative approach, interviewing school principals examining the challenges and needs for improving school-family partnership and the role and opportunities of both parties towards a cooperation more effective.

Keywords: School, parents, students, school-family partnership.

INTRODUCTION

The cooperation of the school with the parents starts in the first years of schooling and accompanies the student throughout his school experience. The need for cooperation of parents with the school is a constant request that is affirmed as a necessity by both the school and the parents. Building and developing the school-family partnership is one of the key factors for improving the quality of school service.

Attendance of parents in school affairs is quite significant in school outcomes. Recent scientific studies have proven that the involvement of parents is very important in the process of teaching children in their opinion about school and their aspirations. Theoretically, parental involvement is conceived in many ways. Some authors focus on the goal or outcome while others focus on the role of parents (Epstein, 1995).

Children are more successful learners if their parents are involved in school and encourage their children to learn at home, regardless of their educational or social level. Despite the positive developments, the level of parental involvement in school life and school-family-community cooperation is still very low. The importance of the involvement of parents in the process of children's learning, speaks of the scientific studies that have been done. Their involvement matters in their learning, in their thinking about school, and in their aspirations. Children are the most successful students throughout the school if their parents are involved in



the school and encourage learning at home, approximately by their educational or social level (Epstein, 2001). On the importance of school collaboration with parents Muller (2009) argues that this collaboration is resizing the boundaries and dimensions of education as an experience, creating conditions for children to be more effective in learning. The author Graham (2011) emphasizes that the involvement of parents and the participation of parents in the education of their children constitutes the notion of school-family cooperation. Therefore, parental involvement is a term applied as an essential term of home, school and community participation in activities that support child development, while parental involvement belongs to the context of parental involvement by reinforcing parental involvement in the decision-making role of programs managerial and administrative education. Fullan (2001) emphasizes that the closer parents stay to their child's schooling, the greater the impact on the child's development and school achievement. Further, this author emphasizes that parents and other community members are important resources and of great value (Fullan, 2001). The school-parent partnership improves school curricula and the school climate, provides services and support to families, enhances parents' skills and leadership role, creates a link between parents in the school and the community, and assists teachers in their work. Above all, such partnerships are created to help children succeed in school and in life (Grossman, 1999).

The importance of involving parents in school affairs

According to scientific research, cooperation programs and school-family-community partnerships and teacher practices regarding parental involvement have quite positive effects on parents' ability to help their children throughout the school years; in parents' assessment of teachers' skills and quality of teaching; in the opinion of teachers about the opportunities for parents to help their children with homework and in the opinion of students about the school (Becker & Epstein, 1982).

In the last three decades some research and scientific studies have been done regarding the cooperation of the school with the parent community. These researches and studies have proved that the involvement of parents is very important in the process of children's learning, in their opinion about school and in their aspirations. Children are the most successful students throughout school if their parents are involved in school and encourage learning at home, regardless of their educational or social level (Epstein, 2001).

Partnership school-family-community can improve school curricula and the school climate, provide family services and support, enhance parenting skills and leadership, connect families with others at school and in the community, and assist teachers with their work. However, the main reason for creating such partnerships is to help all students succeed in school and later in life. When parents, teachers, students, and others see each other as partners in education, it forms a caring community around students and begins its work (Ariel & Vijayendran, 2010).

The partnership of the school with parents is very necessary, therefore in order to have mutual cooperation, the school is the one that should initiate the communication first and strengthen the communication with the family and the wider community. The partnership should be realized especially for school programs, the teaching-educational process as well as for all other aspects such as school regulations, educational reforms, etc. Home-school-community communication should be done in a diverse, clear and productive way. The lack of communication between these actors seriously hinders other aspects of the involvement of parents and the community in school life. To ensure the most effective communication with parents and the community, it is recommended to develop a communication plan or strategy (Walker & Hoover, 2008).

Through the cooperation of parents with the school, all parties benefit, such as children, parents as well as teachers. Student benefits:

- Improves school behavior
- Informs and understands school policies-rules regarding the way of behaving, attending classes;



- Increases the sense of responsibility for learning.

Benefits of parents:

- Improves skills to support student learning;
- Increases satisfaction with education in general;
- React more quickly to their children's problems at school;

Benefits of the school teacher:

- Improves teacher-parent relations;
- Strong sense of teacher effectiveness;
- Improves skills to support students' skills.

METHOD

For the realization of the research, the qualitative method approach was applied through the interview with the principal as well as the quantitative approach through the survey technique with the parents. Sample selection was done based on the approach from random samples by exploring and interpreting the experiences and perceptions of the research participants. In this case, the number of parents participating in the research is 60 parents in three centers, which means 20 parents in each center, while 6 principals of primary schools from these three centers were interviewed. Research instruments have served to conduct the research. In our study research instruments are: The questionnaire developed with parents, as well as the interview protocol that served as an instrument to conduct interviews with school principals.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Starting from the key dimension - "The importance of parental involvement in the organization of school activities" all questions address the participation of parents in the organization of school affairs.

From the answers of the principals we can conclude that the participation of parents in school affairs is the orientation to current policies and their implementation by the school institution.

The so-called activities, initiatives, collaborations undertaken by the school, according to the interviewed principals are satisfactory, against various challenges.

From the interview data, it is understood that the school for the well-being of students and their achievements takes several initiatives to promote parental participation. These promotion initiatives are done in two ways, direct and indirect. The school implements various forms of promotion for cooperation with students' parents and the community, both through direct communication with the public at events, and indirect forms which are realized on radio and social networks. While, the cooperation between students, teachers do through teamwork with competitions and free activities. Collaboration with parents is done by organizing various meetings in the community, seminars, anniversaries, etc.

In order for the school to provide for the participation of the parents in the affairs of the school, it notifies the parents through public documents about the legislation which defines their rights, while for the information of the school regulation they also inform the parents.

According to the interviewed principals, the presence of parents in school activities is an interest in the progress of the learning process, as well as the exchange of ideas for lesson plans between the school and parents.

Director also showed that parents are interested in their participation in school and are active in various activities undertaken by the school.



In the quantitative analysis, regarding the question that the active involvement of parents in school activities is necessary, most of the surveyed parents answered with full agreement 53.3%, a part of the surveyed parents answered 31.7% agree 31.7% and a part very small respond with disagree about 3.3%.

In general, 63.3% of parents surveyed fully agree that the mutual parent-school cooperation affects the highest success of the child in school. But there are parents who disagree 6.7% that mutual parent-school cooperation affects the child's success in school.

Whereas about the question whether schools offer opportunities for parents to participate in the development of new strategies, 31.7% partially agree also the same percentage answered 31.7 who disagree that the school offers opportunities.

Parents think that the organization of activities by the school to provide counseling services to parents, increase their participation in school affairs is different. Somewhere half of them agree that organizing activities to provide counseling services to parents increases their participation in school affairs, while 33.3% partially agree and 6.7% disagree.

In the question, does it improve the quality of school decision-making at the level of cooperation with parents', 38 parents or 63.3% stated that they fully agree and 11 parents are or 18.3% stated that they agree. It is worth noting that a small number of parents have stated that they do not agree that decision-making at the school level in cooperation with parents improves the quality of school

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on research findings, it has been managed to identify dias conclusions divided into specifics treated, according to the purpose of the research. In the pedagogical aspect, the pedagogical role of parents is addressed and in this context the importance of creating a culture of family-school cooperation.

From our research we find that the considerable majority of parents and principals think that the involvement of parents in school affairs is important for the learning process of children in school.

The results showed that the challenges of involving parents in school affairs are evident and steps need to be taken to overcome them.

However, precisely the non-involvement of parents in school activities not only complicates the realization of educational objectives but also leaves traces of lack in the development of the child.

An important role in this research has been given by school principals and from their answers we have also noticed that they also attach great importance to the involvement of parents in the educational process. They have a very clear picture that the involvement of parents in school affairs is important for the learning process of children in school and for the success of children in general.

Therefore finally we found that:

- Almost all participants as parents as well directors, think that they have genuine cooperation with each other and give sufficient contribution regarding their approach in this regard.
- Parents have little information about the possibilities of their involvement in school affairs.
- However, parental involvement should be based more on 'invitations' from the school than on the parents' own initiative.
- From the results of this survey, school principals do not have a strategy for involving parents in school affairs.
- Respondents said that it is necessary to consult with the parents' council, but expressed reservations about the quality of meetings with parents organized by the school principal and teachers.



- This speaks for the need to set some norms of communication with parents, as well as to train staff to establish effective communication that is in function of improving teaching and learning.
- Parents also think that their involvement in school activities brings higher achievements in the child's success in school.
- While, the fact that school principals have a very positive attitude towards the idea of providing opportunities for parents to elaborate on school policies is gratifying.
- The awareness of parents to get involved in the school life of their children makes them more active and become part of the decisions made.
- To be more accessible in school life, parents should also apply different forms of cooperation.
- The so-called activities, initiatives, collaborations undertaken by the school, according to the principals interviewed satisfactorily, against various challenges.
- From the interview data, it is understood that the school for the well-being of students and its achievements, takes several initiatives to promote parental participation.

From the research results we can recommend that:

- Should organized special trainings on forms of partnership, their importance and their planning and implementation. Parents have very little knowledge of contemporary literature on the subject.
- Implement various forms of parental involvement despite the opinion that meetings with parents are organized by the school in a systematic way.
- The school should develop an organizational policy such that parents are given special importance in making decisions and their voice is heard.
- In information meetings with parents the information is given generalized and this is not enough for parents need more detailed data about their child.
- Director must develop procedures for meetings with parents that determine the dynamics, preparation and flow of such meetings.
- Must to practice both group meetings and individual meetings with parents.
- Teachers should be trained to manage meetings of different features and put them in the function of advancing teaching and learning in school.
- Schools should be engaged in informing parents about their role in the school, as well as in enabling them to exercise such a role.
- Parents need more support from the school to be able to help their children improve their learning outcomes.
- Parents should be given materials that guide them in this regard, while in certain situations information sessions or training for parents should be organized.
- To be applied by the information school and the call for cooperation through media, internet, telephone, letters, leaflets and other informative materials.
- To set the agenda of school-parent cooperation at the beginning of the school year and to publish this on the school bulletin board, local media, local magazines, etc.
- Parents should visit the MASHT websites and get acquainted with the educational legislation which regulates their participation in school activities.
- Parents should express interest in school matters even if they do not receive any invitation in advance from the school, as this helps the quality of learning and well-being of their children.
- Parents' participation in school activities should be included in current education policies and implemented by school institutions.



Ethics and Conflict of Interest

We declare and confirm that we have acted in accordance with ethical rules throughout the entire research and that there is no conflict of interest between authors.

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