

Family Involvement and Its Impact on Students' Achievement

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ABSTRACT

Family is a key factor in the education and training of a child and its role at the early school days is very important for the overall educational development of a child, therefore, the study aimed at the exploration of family's role in the education of children and its impact on the achievement of children at the primary level. Generally, it has been observed that families do not shoulder the responsibility of educating their young ones and expect too much from teachers and schools in this regard. Therefore, the researchers tried to find out the role of family involvement in educating, training and developing students abilities at the primary level. The population of the study was all the teachers and parents of the 1270 primary schools of District Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. A sample of 80 respondents i.e. 40 teachers and 40 parents was selected from 20 primary schools i.e. 10 public and 10 private sector schools through stratified random sampling technique. The data was collected through self administered questionnaires regarding all the aspect of the study. The study brought into light that family involvement in early life is the foundation of sound personality development and overall educational success of children in the future life and children with strong family support were able to have balanced development of their basic skills and potentialities at their primary level of education. Procedures for improving family involvement and areas for further research were identified.

KEY WORDS: Family, Involvement, impact, achievement,

1 INTRODUCTION

Family is an important factor in the educational achievement of a child at the primary level. The better involved and cooperative the family the high will be the achievement of children at the primary level. At the primary schools' level children are babies in the field of education and when they are fully supported, they show high level of success. According to Desimone (1999) higher family involvement at the early school's stages ensures high achievement for the children. Several studies have identified the relationship between positive family involvement and its impact on the students learning outcomes at the primary school level. The skills and abilities learnt at the early school days have an everlasting effect on the later educational career of children. (Hinderson&Mapp, 2002)

Many studies have highlighted that active relationship between family and schools raises the level of achievement of students at the primary school level. According to Eldridge (2001) identified that family and parents are the agents of educational success for the children of early school classes. They help them to attain their maximum potential development at this stage by keeping better communication with schools, supervising and encouraging children and provide emotional warmth. Voel and Anna (2000) reported that there are many families who face hurdles in the way of smooth relationship with school due to lack of time and resources because of their busy schedules. .

Studies have found that families guide their children to keep pace with the work at school and supervise their children in doing the home work assignments at their homes (Friemen&Bereley, 2002). Those schools where parents are actively engaged by the school authorities and teachers in the affairs of the students enjoy the cooperation and confidence of parents and families which positively affect the achievement of children at the school (Epstein& Dauber, 1991). Schools where there is better communication between the family and the authorities at the school are in a better position to solve the problems of students in time and may help students to overcome their difficulties effectively (Goldenberg, 1987).

Active involvement of parents and family members enhances the motivational level of the children and make them more efficient in school activities. Children with support from families were found better in their performance at the schools as compared to the students who do not enjoy the support of their families

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(Gorton, 1997). Familial support is more needed at the early school days than in the later stages of the schooling (Dauber, 1991). Several studies have also highlighted the relationship between family involvement and the dropout rates of children at the early school stages. According to Hinderson and Berla (1994) those families who do not provide positive support to their children for schooling in the early days often punish their children for the low achievement at the school, therefore, high ratio of dropout was found for the children of such families in the early school life. Active relationship between family and the school authorities ensures smooth schooling of the children and avoids the tendencies towards wastage in the early school days (Hillifield, 1994).

Schools where parents are encouraged to engage actively in the affairs of children education enjoy proper support of them and are in a better position to solve the problems and issues of the students in an effective manner (Scott, 1987). Good relationship between family and school coupled with the hard work of skilled teachers enhanced the achievement of the children at the primary school level (Dauber & Epstein, 1989). There are three factors in the familial involvement in children education at the early school days. First how family perceive its role in the education of the children, secondly their belief in their active role in the education of their children and thirdly the opportunity of involvement provided by the school and its authorities for the family (Stearn and Peterson, 1973).

According to Wolfendale and Bastiani (2000) Families are the key elements in the educational lives of the early school children who set standards for the educational progress of their children and help them in achieving maximum potential development at the later stages of life. Those students who enjoyed the active support of their families in their educational affairs usually performed better academically as compared to those who do not enjoy (Vermon, 1999). Those children who were helped by their parents in their assignments at home performed better in the school activities (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). Parents, school and skilled teachers are the prerequisite for the maximum educational development of children (Hinderson&Berla, 1994).

It is a well established factor that parents are the key factor for the educational advancement of their children in general and early childhood in particular, therefore the researchers felt the need to explore the impacts of family involvement on the education of children at the stage of primary school days recommend procedures for further enhancement of parental support for children' education at this level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To explore the impact of family involvement in educational achievement of children at the primary school level.
2. To find out the areas of family involvement in children education at the primary school level.
3. To recommend procedures for the enhancement of family involvement in the education of children at the primary school level.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population and Sampling: All the teachers and parents of children in 1270 primary schools of District Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan was the population of the study. A sample of 80 respondents i.e. 40 teachers and 40 parents was selected from 20 primary schools i.e. 10 public and 10 private sector schools of the area through stratified random sampling technique for the purpose of study.

3.2 Tool of Data collection: Two Likert type Questionnaires, one for teachers and one for parents were designed, pilot tested and validated through expert opinion for the collection of data.

3.3 Data collection and Analysis: The researcher collected the data through self administered questionnaire from the respondents. The collected data were organized and tabulated through percentage method. Findings, conclusion were drawn and recommendations were made.

3.3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Major findings of the research are the following.

- Among the respondents 20% of the parents agree that only results are important to judge their children's performance at school, while 72% of the parents viewed that the results as well as the parents teachers (PT) meetings are important to judge how their children are getting on in school. It identifies that PT meetings is a key element for judging the achievement of students at the primary level.

- In parents 32% feel successful about their efforts to help depends upon the results of the child as well as the comments from the teacher at the PT meeting. While 16% feel results only prove to be a good indicator of the child performance. Majority of families tried to have better communication with school.
- Similarly 30% parents believe that it is their responsibility to contact with school authorities while 24% do not consider it their obligation to contact with the school. Most parents viewed communication with school for better achievement of their children as their responsibility.
- As for assistance in home work is concerned 30% parents believe that it is their responsibility to help their child with homework, while 16% do not consider it their responsibility to help their child with homework. Majority of parents believed help in home work as their duty.
- In parental information about their children subject 34% parents have knowledge about their children's subjects while 10% have no knowledge about their children's subject. Majority of parents know about the subjects of their children.
- For communication with teachers 30% parents agree that they have enough time and energy to communicate with teachers. 20% of parents have not enough time and energy to communicate with teachers. Most of parents have time to contact with teachers.
- Encouragement of children for school work in view of 38% teachers, families encourage children in doing schoolwork, while in view of 12% teachers families do not encourage children in doing school work. Majority of families encourage their children for doing home work.
- Parents teaching of dealing with other students at school in view of 32% teachers parents teach how to get along with others, while 10% view that parents do not teach how to get along with others. Mostly parents guide their children for having better relations with school children.
- Parental guidance regarding following teachers instruction, according to 36% teachers, parents teach children how to follow teacher's direction, while 10% teachers view parents do not teach children, how to follow teacher's directions. Mostly parents teach their children about how to act upon the instructions of their teachers.
- In parental support 22% teachers are agree that they need parental help, however 18% teachers disagree that they do not need parental help. Majority of teachers feel the need of parental support.
- Encouraging children questions at home 28% teachers agree that their parents teach their children to ask question, while 14% teachers do not agree that parents teach their children to ask questions from teachers when they have any problem. Parents encourage children to ask questions from their teachers.
- About class room activities 28% teachers agree that parents teach children to talk with their teachers, while 15% disagree that their parents do not teach them to talk with their teachers when they have any problem. Majority of parents teach their children how to interact with their teachers.
- Family support in facing challenges at school 22% teachers agree that their families teach them to keep trying when they are stuck, however 24% disagree that their families do not teach them to keep trying when stuck with work. Mostly parents give advice for hard work.
- Family support for interest in studies 30% teachers agree that families encourage their children to develop interest in their schoolwork, while 14% disagree that their parents encourage them to develop interest in their schoolwork. Majority of families encourage children to show interest in their studies.
- Among teachers 61% agree that families encourage students to follow teachers' direction, while 32% disagree that students are not encouraged by their parents to follow teacher's direction. Majority of parents encourage children to follow the directions of their teachers.
- In parental role in student's achievement 24% teachers agree that parental help get students better grades while, 16% s do not agree that parental help get them better grades. Mostly teachers view the role of parents in children's educational achievement.

4. CONCLUSION

The study brought into light that their exist a close relationship between family support and children's performance at primary level. Conducive family environment and supportive attitude of family and parents pave the way for maximum development of children potentialities at primary level. Supportive family role, quality education and encouraging attitude of parents are the pre-requisites for optimum abilities

development of students at primary level. Family is a source for the development of personality traits and basic skills of primary school students and family support have a positive impact on the development of children achievement at the primary level.

This study revealed the presence of highly significant relationship between family involvement, family support, family encouragement and students' performance. Family involvement in basic education of a child acts as a prerequisite for the successful journey of children on the route to Secondary and Higher Education.

Conducive learning environment, skilled teachers and encouraging family attitude is the prerequisite for the better achievement of students at the early school days of children. With changes in the global scenario, parents in this regard also wants their children to be high achievers at the international level irrespective of the expenses that they have to make in their children education. The families are also engaging themselves in, by investing in their children's education for the long term purpose.

As any child learns how to read and write at the basic educational level, it is the basic concept that familial help enable the children to learn the skills and values at the early school days and they are better equipped for higher education.

The study will have important implications for the parents and teachers and they will try their level best to ensure better parental support for the greater achievement of students at the primary school level. The study reveals that there is a strong connection between the efforts generated by heads of the family that is father and mother and student performance. Because fathers and mothers are highly involved in their children education with respect to teaching and encouraging them in doing schools work and interacting with others. Similarly there is also a strong connection between the age of parents and students performance. The study reveals highest level of parental involvement is at the kindergarten stage. Parents appear to be moderately involved at the primary stage.

There appears to be a strong relationship between family involvement and the indicators with which parents judge their younger's performance. With the exception of very few parents, most parents rely on both results and comments from teachers at the PT meeting to judge how their child is doing in school.

4.1 Recommendations

- Family and home environment should be encouraging and co-operative to develop the confidence and self esteem of primary school students.
- The family should provide emotional, financial and moral support to improve their performance at primary level.
- The school should educate society in general and parents in particular through school based programs to know the rights of children and may fulfill their duties towards them.
- The parents should educate their children at primary level according to their aptitude and interest.
- The families and school should work in close collaboration to satisfy the needs and demands of primary students for the balanced development of students' potentialities.
- There should be proper communication between parents and school authorities for the speedy solution of the various problems of primary school children.
- The government should legislate to make parents responsible for the fulfillment of their primary school children rights.
- The school and family with collaboration should launch the guidance and counseling programs in the school for the balanced development of children.

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