

The Effect of Parental Involvement in School Decision Making on Morale of Elementary School Teachers

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Abstract

Teachers are like pivot around which the whole process of education revolves. Definitely teacher, parents and student's triangle of cooperation brings the revolution and motivation in the whole process. The parental involvement in school decision making strengthens the education process in the school. They guide the teachers about the habits, psychology, capabilities and abilities of their children. They take interest to improve the whole. Teachers' morale fall in deep sea as they are being coached by nonprofessionals, strictly speaking teachers know how to teach and educate their pupils. Nevertheless, parent teacher contacts help in improving overall efficiency of the school system. They both make consensus for the betterment of the future generation. In a nutshell, positive suggestions and dramatic solutions should be implicated either they are from teachers or from parents.

Key Words: Parental involvement, child development, decision making, teacher morale, school system, educational process.

Introduction

Parent involvement in school systems is a relatively new occurrence in the Pakistan. Most successful institutions value parental involvement in decision-making by the very people who will be responsible for implementation of those decisions seems not only reasonable, but also responsible (Jones 1997; Weil, 1997). Involvement in this way can produce positive results. Patricia Brown Clark Hopkins University suggests that it is very important to keep the line of communication between teachers' and parents' open, so that the parents can interact with the teachers.

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One way to involve parents is to schedule school events and arranging classroom activities such as volunteering for libraries, acting as classroom aides or efficiently organizing lunch breaks. Every school is trying to promote partnerships that encourage parents to join School Management Committees that make decisions on curriculum policies, parent involvement activities, the school budget, and reform initiatives. Benefits of parent involvement for Schools like improves teacher morale, higher ratings of teachers by parents, more support from families, higher student achievement, and better reputations in the community. Population for this study was government girls' elementary schools of Shalimar town, Lahore. Sample was selected from a population. Random sampling was used as a sampling technique to select sample. Questionnaire was used as an instrument in this study. Questionnaire was prepared for teachers of government girl's elementary schools Shalimar town, Lahore. The questionnaire was designed to collect data in quantitative form.

Review of related Literature

According to "Padgett 2006" involvement of parents is every facet of children's education and development from birth to adulthood, recognize that parents have the primary influence in the children's lives. Decision making is the process by which decisions are not only arrived at but implemented until decision making is converted into action(Hoy & Miskel, pp:300). Building upon the six types of parent involvement identified by *Joyce L. Epstein*, of the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, National PTA created program standards of excellence.

1. Communicating

Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

2. Parenting

Parenting skills are promoted and supported

3. Student Learning

Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

4. Volunteering

Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.

5. School Decision Making and Advocacy

Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

6. Collaborating with Community

Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning (Epstein, 1995, pp: 701-702).

Types of Decisions

| Type of decision | Type of problem | Example | Procedure |
|------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| Programmed | Repetitive, routine | School/ college: Processing admission applications | Rules, standards, operating, procedure, policies |
| Non-programmed | Complex, novel | College/ school Constructing new class room facilities | Creative, problem solving |

* “Programmed and non-programmed decisions apply to different types of problems and therefore, require different procedure” (Bartol, 2001, pp: 190).

If we look at the organization of our school system will reveal its hierarchy structure from the classroom teacher up to through headmaster, supervisor, director, secretary higher officers and personnel is administration. This belief is mistaken. In the works of *Fisher* and *Thomas*, “It is more accurate to say that the decisions made at the higher levels of educational hierarchy have consequences broader in scope, the decision made by individuals, teachers or headmasters are bound to be very important.”

A. Decision Made By Teacher

In such decisions the teaching methodology, individual attention, and classroom activities will be included. The teacher decides how and when he should conduct the classroom activities how they should present the contexts of the curriculum, whom and how much he should pay attention.

B. Decision Made By Head Master

The local administer and supervisor is the headmaster. He has to decide where, when, and whom to recommend, how he should assign duties, and what from whom he should expect these and many other decisions are to be made by the headmaster.

C. Decision Made By Department

These levels of decisions include all kind of decision directing, controlling, operating, providing equipment policy etc.

D. Individual and Group Decisions

Some educational decisions are made by individual, educator or administrator, whatever position he occupies, makes his decisions while functioning within policies fashioned by group. "*Chester Barnard*" distinguishes between personal and organizational decisions can be delegated to others, whereas personal decisions are not for example the decisions on construction, scope and sequences of the curriculum, provision of equipment and preparation of text books are generally made by groups of educators.

E. Politicians and Educators

The main concern of the policies to education is the political background to the policy of the educational system. Any education organization can be viewed on the light of the policy by the authorities and the laws of the country. The efficiency of the educational administration is influenced by the policies of the political powers and the fact that politician tend to take decisions according to their own interpretation. The views of the politicians are influenced by pressure groups.

Raymond E. Layones_ "It is great problem in developing countries that the interests of the politicians and those of educationists do not coincide." We may therefore bear in mind that the extent to which both the politicians and educationists agree and show conformity in objectives, may be the level of healthy trends in educational decisions. (Nawaz, 1992, pp: 52, 53)

- a. Morale is related to the "extra expenditure of energy" required to accomplish institutional tasks. In this sense high morale can be thought of as the tendency to expend extra effort in the achievement of group goals. (Hoy & Miskel 1991).
- b. "The professional interest and enthusiasm that a person displays towards the achievement of individual and group goals in a given job situation" (Bentley & Rempel 1980).
- c. When a healthy school environment exists and teacher morale is high, "teachers feel good about each other and, at the same time, feel a sense of accomplishment from their jobs" (Hoy & Miskel 1987).

Some factors influencing morale *within the workplace* include:

- a. Job security
- b. Management style
- c. Staff feeling that their contribution is valued by their employer
- d. Realistic opportunities for merit-based promotion
- e. The perceived social or economic value of the work being done by the organization as a whole
- f. The perceived status of the work being done by the organization as a whole
- g. Team composition
- h. The work *culture*
- i. Lack of parental involvement
- j. Little or no support from administrators
- k. Student discipline problem (Anthony and Kritsonis, 2006,)
- l. Poor status in the community;
- m. Poor salaries (relative to other professions);
- n. Poor student behavior;
- o. Excessive workload;
- p. Poor leadership;
- q. Poor working conditions; and
- r. Increasing government accountability measures.
- s. The changing roles of the teacher 'As societies become more complex, so do the challenges they face' (DEST, 2003, p.3).

Some ways to improve teacher morale related to working conditions (workload and reduced stress)

- a. Better pay / professional salaries / without a battle with employers
- b. Supportive leadership at all levels was the key to improving teacher morale
- c. Positive Media attention and recognition of groups and individuals
- d. Morale might be improved if teachers had access to what they deemed to be high quality professional development
- e. Relating to support for student welfare and discipline issues

- f. Allow good teachers to remain in their vocation
- g. A need to slow down the amount and the pace of change.

None of these suggestions is surprising or novel. The complexity of the issue and the diversity of teacher opinion are, however, reinforced by the number of suggestions. (Lumsden & Linda, 1998)

Parent involvement and teacher morale are dominant themes in the current debate over school restructuring. The key element in parental involvement is a sense of parent-school partnership. Parents can participate as decision makers, helpers, and co educators. Facilitating parental involvement means removing five barriers: distance between parents and teachers, lack of teacher training, race and class biases, limited views of parental involvement, and perceptions about schools.

This area of parent involvement is one of the most controversial. Surveys show that most parents would like to play a more active role in this type of involvement, whereas most school administrators and teachers exhibit great reluctance to encourage parents to become partners in governance. It is the responsibility of school administrative staff to lead the parental involvement program by setting the stage and expectations for faculty and staff members.

Parents should have opportunity to take part in decision making about school programs. This may include being a school board member, a participant on a parent advisory committee or a local school improvement council, or an active member of the PTA (Parent Teacher Association) or SMC (School Management Committee). Schools that work well with families show improved teacher morale, produce higher ratings of teachers by parents, and have better reputations in the community. (Henderson, 1994)

Procedure of the Study

The primary purpose of this study will be to find the effects of parental involvement in school decision making on morale of elementary school teachers.

Population

The population for this study will consist of all government girls' elementary schools' teachers of Shalimar town of Lahore.

Sample

A sample is the subset of population. The sample size for our study will comprise 10 government girls' elementary schools of Shalimar town, Lahore. First, we will identify 23 government girls' elementary schools of Shalimar town Lahore

district. Then we will use random sampling for the identification of our gained sample, which comprised of 10 Government girls' elementary schools. From each school 10 teachers will be select. Final sample will be 100 teachers from the identified schools.

Instrument

Questionnaire will use as an instrument in this study. Questionnaire will prepare for the teachers' of government girls' elementary schools Shalimar town, Lahore.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Data was collected through questionnaire. For this purpose, we used five point Likert scale. Questionnaire having five responses strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree have been prepared. The result of questionnaire have been analyzed and presented in form of table of Means and standard deviation and the SPSS user.

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Decision making and problem handling | 74 | 20 |
| School system and decision making | 64 | 19 |
| Interest in teachers and teaching problems | 65 | 26 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Teacher health | 66 | 29 |
| Teacher respect | 75 | 09 |
| Teacher attitude | 71 | 17 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Stress and strains | 34 | 44 |
| Mental disturbance | 46 | 38 |
| Personal satisfaction | 74 | 21 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Appreciate parental involvement | 77 | 11 |
| Cooperativeness of parents | 72 | 15 |
| Appreciation by parents | 80 | 07 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Curriculum development | 48 | 38 |
| Well balanced curriculum | 38 | 54 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Common, personal and professional objectives | 79 | 11 |
| Purpose and objectives of school | 67 | 26 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Adequate classroom and equipments | 46 | 45 |
| Audio-visual aids and projection equipments | 62 | 24 |
| Working environment more Pleasant and easier | 72 | 13 |

| Factors | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Teaching staff is congenial | 71 | 11 |
| Appointment of teachers | 30 | 53 |

Conclusions

On the basis of findings, following conclusions drawn:

The majority of the teachers said that:

- a. The parental involvement in school decisions positively effect on the teacher health.
- b. Teachers are strongly hopeful to achieve their personal and professional objectives by involvement of parents.
- c. Parental involvement effects their personal satisfaction.
- d. Parents do not involve in the design of school well balanced curriculum but parents' suggestions are considered.
- e. They are congenial to work with parents.
- f. Teachers are highly hopeful that parental involvement in school decision making helps them to do their work best as a teacher.
- g. Parents do not involve in ethical procedure for appointing of teachers.
- h. Parents do not engage in providing Audio-Visual aids and projection equipments, which affect their morale.
- i. Some teachers said that parents are involved in ethical procedure for their appointments contributed negatively so it should be changed.

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