ENGAGING OF ALBANIAN PARENTS IN EDUCATION DURING THE PASSAGE OF STUDENTS FROM ONE CLASS TO ANOTHER

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is the identification of changes of parental involvement in school life through the years of schooling of their children. The study is based on analysis of the findings of a survey conducted with 300 parents of students in pre-university education in one of the districts of Albania. Through these findings is intended to highlight not only the performance of the engagement, but above all to highlight, the necessity of building programs of cooperation teacher-parent in order that school, in their work, to utilize an important resource for children's success: commitment of parents.

Keywords: Parental involvement, school success, cooperation programs, parent, teacher

Introduction

Parents have an important role in the school success and achievement improvement of acheivment of their children (Hartley, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes 2005; Hill & Tayson 2009; Avvisati, Besbas, & Guyon, 2010). These improvements include student academic achievement (Wright, Stegelin & Hartle, 2007; Hill & Tyson, 2009), intellectual development (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994), social and emotional development (Prior & Gerard, 2007) and improvement of behavior (Kratochwill , McDonald, Levin, Bear-Tiblets, & Dema'ray, 2004; Harris & Goodall, 2008). However,

this partnership changes over the years and involvement of parents in school life tends to be weak (Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Bouffard, 2008). The nature of parental involvement changes as children move through the years of schooling (Kreider et al., 2007).

Context of the study

Research shows that efect of family practices in the school success of students tends to change with increasing age and is stronger for children in primary schools (Singh et al . , 1995). While acknowledging the change of parental involvement, when a child moves from one grade to another , again numerous researchers conclude that parent involvement remains importance of student success during the years of compulsory education or even during high school (Aston & Mclanahan, 1991; Lee, 1994; Sui - Chu & Willms, 1996).

In all performed studies, noticed the fact, that they are mainly focused on the impact of parental involvement during the elementary school years , while there are far fewer studies on the impact in later years. Parents feel more secure about involvement in their children's education when they were younger. Parents say, that when children grow up they not want their involvement in school life. Studies show that children tend to be better in their first years of schooling if their parents participate in school activities, pay interest of their children progress and develop relationships with their teachers (Henderson & Berl, 1994).

To have an effect on learning outcomes in engaging strategies should appropriately reflect the trajectory of students' learning. Thus, while parental involvement in school can be useful for primary school children (Desforges & Abouchaar , 2003; Pomerantz , Moreman & Litwick 2007), high school students benefit from parental guidance at home. The level of parental involvement in activities such as homework during the years of schooling may vary according to the particular needs of students. If the relationship between teachers, schools and parents developed during elementary school, parents are willing to develop confidence about participation in school activities and have an ongoing role as partners in their children's learning. Trust to parents with appreciation for their role allows them to engage more in creating and maintaining a quality environment for learning at home (Emerson et al . , 2012).

The transition from primary school to high school display special challenges for students and families like knowledge and skills that require addressing and achieving curriculum school requirements and become more complex for students that are faced with important decisions about academic and career (Hill & Tyson, 2009). This progression through the years of schooling can be made easier if the parents continue to participate actively as

a motivator and can continue to be engaged in learning in a supportive capacity.

Engaging of parents across the high school years, however, should take into consideration the desires for independence and expand their cognitive skills. Assessment programs have shown that family engagement can have positive results for the success of youth education when there is a connection between their development needs, attitudes and practices of parents and school expectations for parental involvement (Clinton, Hattie & Dixon, 2007).

Albanian context of parental involvement

Parental involvement in school life in Albania has not a rich heritage. During communism, schools were closed for the parents and the community. Because the schools were seen as an important tool in the ideological function of the political class that govern the country, they only communicate with families to inform and only when it was required by the school itself. While parents by their side, because of the legacy and the self - confidence of their children's education considered as the only attribute of the school and the teachers. On the other hand, parents accept these difficulties : " Changes have not yet fully eradicated from their minds (parent– our notes) that children educates from school, the school 's performance makes a " strong director ". This opinion is still kept alive to the fact that the law still does not apply "(Elezi , 2010). In this context, it is important that communication and continuous negotiation and for clear situation about roles, responsibilities and opportunities of each side. Families assessed as an important resource for education and full development of their child by the researchers, what happens in the real world.

Survey Methodology
- In the study are included 300 parents of students in pre-university schools in one district of Albania (city and the countryside). They answered questions from a questionnaire about their appreciation for the commitment to school and changing this commitment over the years of schooling
- Distribution of parents who filled out the report form was 194 mothers and 105 fathers, among respondents had only one parent as the child's guardian.
- Among the characteristics of the sample of parents, we mention parental education, from where distribution is as follows: 76 (~25%); people with primary or 8-year-Education; 125 (~ 41%) with secondary education and 99 (~ 33%) with higher education.

- Hosting of parents and students was in favor of the city, with 65% (194) in the city and 35% (106) in the village. About 57% (171) of parents said they were employed, while 42% were declare unemployed.

Research question

The main research question of this study:

How does the commitment of parents change over the years of their child's education?

Research hypothesis

During the transition from one class to another, engagement of parents in their children's education changes. To observe the relationship between parental involvement with the child 's school progress arose alternative hypothesis that there is a dependency between variables. As much as the child advance in school system (P1), less including parent with school teachers (P5). Null hypothesis is that there is no dependence between the level of parents inclusion and pupils at the school level. As we see from the cross table (Table 1) has a negative association between educational level and extent of the student 's parent. Statistical correlation coefficient is Pearson R with the result r (277) = - 0,182 , p < .05 . r2 = 0.033. Correlation statistical test shows that the more advanced, the child is at school level, the less involved parents in school. The alternative hypothesis stands.

Table 1: Relationship between the degree of involvement and education of students

Grade of the child	Count/ within	The involvement in communication with teachers				Total
		Not at all involved	Involved on occasion	Involved	Highly involved	
K 1	Count	0	0	3	8	11
	% within	0.0%	0.0%	27.3%	72.7%	100.0%
K 2	Count	1	1	4	8	14
	% within	7.1%	7.1%	28.6%	57.1%	100.0%
K 3	Count	0	0	3	9	12
	% within	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
K 4	Count	2	8	30	18	58
	% within	3.4%	13.8%	51.7%	31.0%	100.0%
K 5	Count	0	4	15	11	30

	% within	0.0%	13.3%	50.0%	36.7%	100.0%
K 6	Count	1	2	20	6	29
	% within	3.4%	6.9%	69.0%	20.7%	100.0%
K 7	Count	1	7	25	13	46
	% within	2.2%	15.2%	54.3%	28.3%	100.0%
K 8	Count	1	2	13	8	24
	% within	4.2%	8.3%	54.2%	33.3%	100.0%
K 9	Count	0	5	15	5	25
	% within	0.0%	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	100.0%
K 10	Count	0	1	5	0	6
	% within	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%	0.0%	100.0%
K 11	Count	0	1	4	3	8
	% within	0.0%	12.5%	50.0%	37.5%	100.0%
K 12	Count	0	3	7	2	12
	% within	0.0%	25.0%	58.3%	16.7%	100.0%
K 1 - K 12	Count	6	34	144	91	275
	% within	**2.2%**	**12.4%**	**52.4%**	**33.1%**	**100.0%**

Conclusion and recommendations

From the study of literature, but also and from reached conclusions, by the study conducted with parents , it is clear that the involvement of parents in school years varies. As the child progresses through more classes, more parental involvement decreases in school life and in their child's education. From other side should be noted that the interest of the parents on the progress of their children's education does not decrease at all, quite the contrary. Over children in higher classes , parents feel difficulties to found near their children and perhaps for seeking the support of the school and especially the teachers who have the necessary expertise , why not the resources to do such a thing.

Schools from their side need to build long-term/mid-term programs and partnership to enable parental involvement in school life and especially in supporting that parents can and should give to their children over the years of schooling, at school and in home. School staff should be aware for the necessity of parental involvement in sequence and not only when they

face difficulties. This can be done only when the teachers are prepared to work with parents . Reality shows that this does not work everywhere and training is necessary not only for parents but also for how teachers should communicate with parents and build comprehensive engagement programs.

Training programs are almost nonexistent for parents, so it is urgent that institutions to pay attention and realize ongoing training with them in mass or individual forms, based on the needs of parents and school conditions or the community. Only thus could be an inclusion of parents in a timely efforts, to support their children and school success and will be able to harness the power of parental involvement as an important resource in the way of this success.

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