Effect of Community Participation on School Community Relations

Hamdan Said, Iqbal Ahmad, Lokman Tahir, Roslee Ahmad and Zainudin Hassan

Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

Abstract: Schools are expected to prepare and educate the children for a changing and a dynamic world. To make the society a better place there should be a closer cooperation and collaboration between school and the community. However, now-e-days, it is noticed with great concern that most of the schools are run in isolation. Ironically, parents and community think that it is only the job of teachers to educate students and prepare them for life. This thinking has further created a distance between school and families. The purpose of this study was to fill this gap. For this purpose the study investigated the relationship between community participation and school community relation. Furthermore, the study examined the three important dimensions of school community relations, that is, parenting, communication and volunteering. The participants were 300 government secondary school teachers who completed teacher questionnaire surveys. The data were statistically computed to determine correlation between community participation and school community relation utilizing ANOVA and Linear Regression Analysis. Results of the study indicated a highly positive correlation between community participation and school community relations.

Key words: Effect - Community Participation - School community relations

INTRODUCTION

School community relationship is given a great deal of attention in the present day. Studies have indicated that positive interaction between school and community promotes a vibrant school environment [1]. In the developed countries this concept is known as “Family and School Together”, which focuses on building relationships within the families, across families, with schools and with communities [2]. Under this concept, school, family and community work together. The emerging family friendly schools where families and schools work together develop awareness and understanding regarding students’ academic needs and requirements [3-5].

Present day schools are expected to be alive to parents’ aspirations and students’ educational needs [6]. School curriculum should reflect community aspirations and ideals in life. Its method of work must be according to their wishes and standards. It should reflect all that is significant in the life of the community. Such school is termed as people school. It must serve the community in which it is situated. It should be regarded as the capital of the community [7]. School is not a place where the children come to get knowledge only; rather it is a process of community living. School is thus a small community within a larger community and it is the mirror of the feelings, attitudes, values and modes of behaviors of the community [8, 9]. School is charged by the society to properly perform this duty in the best interest of the community. Education is not an isolated activity. It is closely related to life and community. To make the society worth living schools and the communities should work together. They are naturally depended on each other. If this contact is removed, both the process and purpose of education would remain ineffective and meaningless [10].

Many benefits are associated with the practice of school community collaborations. For example community members can guide the children. This will inculcate a positive thinking in their children when they see their parents participating in the school matters. The children will own the school and work hard. Jointly schools and community can work for the welfare of the child by making the parent teacher associations really effective [11]. However, now-e-days, it is noticed with some disappointment most of the schools are run in isolation. Ironically, parents or community think that it is the job of
teachers only to educate students and prepare them for life. The reason is that community places much value on doing well in examination. This thinking has further served to keep parents away from the schooling process [12, 13]. Despite of this, many educators and parents still believe that developing relationship between school and community is the backbone of successful education. Hence, there should be a close interaction between these two groups, because effective development of the personality of the child depends on collaboration between the community and the school [5, 14].

Education is a social affair. Schools are expected by the society to train and properly bring up the youth to make them prepare for life. Education is not an isolated activity. It is related to life and the community. Schools are considered an idealized epitome of social life. They are also called as training homes for the children as well as the parents. On the other hand community is dynamic in nature [4, 15]. Schools are expected to prepare and educate the children for a changing and a dynamic environment. To make the society a better place there should be a closer cooperation and collaboration between the school and the community. Both closely depend on each other for their growth and development [16, 17].

School community relationship transforms schools into the miniature communities where the children learn through interactions. When schools and community are actively involved in the learning process of the child, the child will learn self-discipline, cooperation and leadership [18, 19]. Forging school community relations may provide opportunities to the children to come in contact with the immediate environment and the community life around them. For this aim, school curriculum can be organized in such a way that the children are able to link and relate the information and knowledge gained at schools to their daily life experiences [10, 20, 21].

The most successful schools are those which have close relations with the communities in aspects like joint formulation of aims, determination of goals and values, selection of teachers and sharing of responsibilities [22]. There are different ways of forging relationship between the schools and the community. One of such ways is parent teacher association. Successful parent teacher association can play a crucial role in promoting successful community school relationship. In this regard teachers and school administrators may develop strategies to encourage interaction with the community and the parents [13, 23]. School community relationship should start from the very beginning of the school session.

This can bring two benefits both for the teachers and the parents. First, when teacher-parent relationship is formed early, the teacher gets more time to understand the strength and weaknesses of the child and the parents get to know more about the teacher and the child has a better chance of being helped both by the teacher and the school [14, 24]. Based on literature review the following framework was developed for this study. The framework was designed based on the community participation model of Uemura [25]. He has discussed about different types of community participation in education process: parenting, volunteering and communicating. This study also measures community participation as a predictor that influences these three dimensions.

**Research Objectives:** The main objective of this research study was to investigate the relationship between community participation and school community relations. Specifically the objectives of the study were:

- To examine the relationship between community participation and parenting.
- To examine the relationship between community participation and communicating.
- To examine the relationship between community participation and volunteering.

**Research Questions:** The present research study attempted to answer the following research questions:

- Is there a relationship between community participation and school community relations?

More Specific Sub-questions Were:

- Is there a relationship between community participation and parenting?
- Is there a relationship between community participation and communicating?
- Is there a relationship between community participation and volunteering?
**Hypotheses of the Study:** Based on the research objectives and questions the following hypotheses were formulated.

- There is a relationship between community participation and parenting.
- There is a relationship between community participation and communicating.
- There is a relationship between community participation and volunteering.

**Sampling Procedure:** The teachers were randomly sampled. Simple random sample according to Gulab [26] enables the researchers to collect data objectively as in this type of sampling every member of the population has the same chance of being selected which provides a wider opportunity for the researcher to reach out to a good representative number of subjects which indirectly enhances the reliability of the data.

**Analysis of Data:** The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of community participation on school community relations in government secondary schools. Analysis of the data is presented in the below tables followed by findings and conclusions.

**MATERIALS AND METHOD**

This research study was designed based on the following method and procedures.

**Design:** Using a correlation design, this study surveyed perceptions of 300 government secondary school teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Questionnaire was used for data collection from the respondents on Fiver Point Likert Scale staring from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Statistical software SPSS was used to analyze the data. To see the relationship between the variables, ANOVA was applied along with Linear Regression Analysis.

**Participants:** Participants for this study were 300 secondary school teachers in Malakand division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

**Correlation Analysis:** Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between independent variable (community participation) and the dependent variables (parenting, communicating and volunteering) as the three dimensions of school community relations.

Table 1 show that community participation is significantly positively correlated school community relations and significant at p value of 0.01. Community participation has also a significantly positive relationship with parenting, communicating and volunteering and Pearson correlation values and significant at p value of 0.01.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Community Participation</th>
<th>Parenting</th>
<th>Communicating</th>
<th>Volunteering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>0.783*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>0.67*</td>
<td>0.741*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>0.574*</td>
<td>0.69*</td>
<td>0.72*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Regression Analysis**

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Community Participation and Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>R square</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>289.0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Community Participation and Communicating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
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<th>t-value</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>0.661</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>274.1</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Community Participation and Volunteering

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>R square</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>16.31</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>277.0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regression Analysis: Regression analysis was measured by testing the research hypotheses. The results for each variable are discussed as under.

H$_1$: There is a positive relationship between community participation and parenting.

Table 2 show the value of coefficient beta is calculated as 0.62 which shows a significantly positive relationship between community participation and parenting. The value of R-square is calculated as 0.574 showing 57.4% variation in the dependent variable (parenting) is explained by independent variable (community participation). The model’s goodness of fit is shown by F-value that is 289.0. Hence, $H_1$ was accepted and it is confirmed that community participation is significantly positively correlated with parenting.

H$_2$: There is a Positive Relationship between Community Participation and Communicating

Table 3 show the value of coefficient beta is calculated as 0.78 which shows a significantly positive relationship between community participation and communicating. The value of R-square is calculated as 0.661 showing 66.1% variation in the dependent variable (communicating) is explained by independent variable (communicating). The model’s goodness of fit is shown by F-value that is 274.1. Therefore $H_2$ is accepted and it is confirmed that teacher training has significantly positive relationship with communication skills.

H$_3$: There is a Positive Relationship between Community Participation and Volunteering

The value of co-efficient beta is calculated as 0.78 which shows a significantly positive relationship between community participation and volunteering. The value of R-square is 0.772 showing 77.2% variation in the dependent variable (community participation) is explained by independent variable (volunteering). The model’s goodness of fit is shown by F-value that is 277.0. Therefore, $H_3$ is accepted and it is confirmed that community participation is significantly positively correlated with volunteering.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate correlation between community participation and teachers’ school community relations. The study further aimed to examine the effects of community participation parenting, communicating and volunteering as the dimensions of school community relations. Major findings of the study are as follows;

- The study found that there was a significantly positive correlation between community participation and parenting. It can be inferred from this finding that community participation in education improves parenting of parents. Parents come to know about the various aspects of their children schooling and the needs to collaborate with schools [19].

- The study found that there was a significantly positive correlation between community participation and communicating. It can be inferred from this finding that community participation in education also improves communication between schools and parents. This helps in removal of mistrust between school and the parents. It also helps the parents and schools in working together for the development of the students in collaboration [10].

- The study also found that there was a significantly positive correlation between community participation and volunteering. It can be inferred from this finding that community participation develops sense of ownership among parents and students. This helps in developing good relationship between home and school [11].

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of this research study it can be concluded that community relationship transforms schools into the miniature communities where the children learn through interactions. When schools and community are actively involved in the learning process of the child, the child will learn self-discipline, cooperation and leadership.

The study further concludes that forging school community relations provides wider opportunities to the children to come in contact with the immediate environment and the community life around them. Community participation in education inculcates a positive thinking in students when they see their parents participating in the school matters. The children will own the school and work hard. Jointly schools and community can work for the welfare of the child by making the parent teacher associations really effective.

The study also concludes that education is not an isolated activity. It is closely related to life and
community. To make the society worth living schools and the communities should work together. They are naturally depended on each other. If this contact is removed, both the process and purpose of education would remain ineffective and meaningless.

**Future Research:** This study was conducted based on cross-sectional design for which data were collected just once during the study from a specific geographical area with a small sample base. Hence, it cannot be generalized to other places safely. It recommended that future researchers should test the same design by using more sample in other geographical areas.

**REFERENCES**