Investigating Parent Involvement in Children's Education

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Abstract

The phenomenon of parents' role and involvement in children's education is one of the prominent phenomenons in the world education sector today. Here, we are to look into how parents get involve their children's education and some other likely ensued issues. The qualitative and descriptive-analytic are the ways at which this research is being approached. Based on reasonable sampling and a 'snowball method', 9 families in Tabriz were chosen. As a result of data collection, a semi-structured interview was utilized. Content analysis of interviews context and the analysis of information are included in the analysis method. Through discoveries, we found parents play important roles in some of the challenges facing with their children's education, such as not paying teachers, anxiety to support, unseen learners, non-rigid educational system.

Keywords: parental involvement, education, semi-structured interview.

Introduction

To mention one among the few issues that cannot be boycott when talking about the curriculum studies is the involvement of parents in their children education which is very important. Particularly, in regards to one of the most trending and interesting discussions which have always been of interest to the scholars of a curriculum is the relationship between the educational institution curriculum and the family in order for some experts to be able to make known to us the importance of the relationship between two institutions. An advocate of learner-centered ideology has been working hard so as to establish school life and home. Rogoff, Turkanis, Bartlett, and Martinez-pons (2003) describe an integrated school, says: Children, as well as teachers, carry ideas and things that they have interest in their homes to think about them, just like they carry their favorite things and ideas from their home to school. The outcome is a more integrated one (Domina, 2005). Also, states that parent involvement activities like homework help and school volunteering predicted lower levels of future behavior problems for elementary school children, relative to parents who did not engage in these activities.

Other comments base on this relationship is provided by experts in other areas of the curriculum studies.

Ecological perspectives maintain that the interaction between home and school is critical for supporting positive child outcomes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Nzinga-Johnson, Baker, & Aupperlee, 2009).

Aside from the issue of theories making in the case with the curriculum studies domain, families are headed by parents in the world and they have always been showing concern when it comes to their children's education thereby showing valuable interest on how to get it improved. Nevertheless, the rate of this attention that has been earlier discussed varies and it depends on how dominating the philosophy of the society curriculum. That being said, it is unarguable that parents will surely spend less time as well as other family members with the children if the curriculum type is in such a way that the children must learn subject matters in school. In some
instances, some schools who operate under some other educational system different from the one mentioned above could have difficulty in getting enough time to train students, therefore, leaving behind some much burden to the family i.e. transferring their duty to the family.

It has been established that the level and type of parental involvement in one community can be different from the others. The questions that interest many researchers are outlined below:

Why do parents get involved in their children education at home too conventional?

Why the type of involvement in use?

What are the reasons for their involvement?

How is the experience of parents affecting children's education?

Why do parents get involved in their children education?

In the ancient time before the 18th century, children spend only 13 percent (13%) of their time in school, but recently an increment in these percentages surfaces, and children are concluded to be spending more time in school. There are rigid reasons for the claim that the role of parents in ensuring the academic success of their offspring is about 87% (Walberg, 1984). There is certainly profit in the involvement of parents in their children's education according to the literature of the parental involvement in children's life Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) debate that there is a relationship between parent’s involvement in education with compatibility and the progress of children in school. Several conclusions have been reached after the study of various researchers in this area, which includes the fact that the involvement of parents in the children's life is reduced by growing children. In accordance to Epstein (2010), parents who are involved in teaching their children are those who show good parenting skills, thus, they have a relationship with school staff, voluntarily spend their time at school, render help to their children at home, involved in decisions related to school and participate in school associations (Hara & Burke, 1998).

Michigan Department of Education through review of studies on the parent involvement in the education of children showcases three factors in this area:

Parents' belief was about what is essential to benefits their children.

The confidence of parents is about this subject that they could have a positive impact on children's education. The parents thought that their children and the school request them to be involved.

What is the parents' involvement in education?

Patrikakou and Anderson (2005) argue that parental involvement in children's education is a very important and effective force in children's learning and success in school and life. Findings relating to the area of family involvement enhance the fact that children whose family gets involved in their education usually have great opportunities in the development of health, information, and responsibility. When parents get involved in the child's life early enough, adolescence age and period before that, it is certain that there will be an academic success for such child and likewise, for children in the high school, it is strong predictor of their academic success. Fan and Chen (2001) believe that Parental involvement in education has been varied in levels and is not the same as the questions that parents ask their children about school at home. Patrikakou and Anderson (2005) believes that parental involvement refers to the participation of parents in finding ways for students to learn and includes the following items:

Parents have a very vital role to play in their children's learning progress.
Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children school educational activities. Parents are the full partner in the education of children. However, it has been noticed that there will be challenges that will be faced by parents in this involvement, therefore three (3) fundamental barriers that prevent parents from getting involved in their children education includes: Time in collaboration with the requirements of life. Restrictions on the knowledge that is expected and ways that they can help their children at home. There are various factors that ensued as a result of the school environment. Looking at the given material, we discovered that most of the researches so far on this case study lay much emphasis on the merits of parental involvement in children's education and more on the ideology of academic breakthrough. Nevertheless, both the family and the immediate parents respectively and their experience have been neglected. So here, we are going to focus this study on the experiences of parents and do the identification of roles that they also tend to take over their involvement in children's education. The authors of this case study during the search of resources that are related to the involvement of parents were noticed to find trusted sources that discussed this topic in such an interesting and reliable manner.

Material and Methods
As is mentioned earlier, the Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data because this is a qualitative research where the descriptive-analytic method was used. All families living in the city of Tabriz that is engaged in their children's education are accounted as the population. Nine (9) families were interviewed according to the research samples. Based on snowball method and purposive sampling, participants in the research were selected. This approach includes the primary school age children. The determination of the number of samples was gotten as a result of data saturation; the data of the researchers in this field went as far as the number of the interviews that were carried, until it no longer accommodates any information. With respect to the confirmation of this case study, four professors that are genuinely ordained in this field designed interview questions. All conversation during this interview was recorded on the recorder in form of audio file so as to save the interview which will later be listened to and written down for clarifications. After all, these have been done, the 'checking members' method was introduced in order to validate the interview. Afterward, the written file of the interview was sent to the participants for confirmation, i.e. to notice and declare any false data. At the end, content analysis of interviews was utilized to analyze the data.

Results
Unpaid teachers: the involvement of parents in their children's education can as well have an adverse effect on the progress of these children even as it has good effects. At this point in time, parents' bear much of the children's tasks themselves back at their respective homes; therefore, tend to assume the responsibility of the teachers. Then, we can refer to these parents as unpaid teachers. One of the instances of this case is a parent who took part in this research, who says: I do say to myself that because she is a little child and she does not understand some things and does not like her lesson then I should help her to learn (InterviewNo.1). In the other way round,
this parent sees their children's education as a priority and assumes responsibility. Another example to look into is another parent who said that it is natural that a mother is worried about her child's future so until the child grows, we should keep helping our child him (Interview No. 6). Another mother said that they are the one who owns these children and we should have duties toward them and so we can't afford to deny them of them and expect them to make progress in life. (Interview No. 5). They took their time to help their children grow educationally. Some other parent said that "Practice brings about the continuity of learning, therefore spend much time at home to read and review the lessons and solve the problems with the child (Interview No. 7). She claimed that because she saw progress due to the assist she had chosen to render, she was left with no other choice than to continue with it, and in place of teachers, she continue with the same official curriculum, "in our house we have the books that he reads, his sister is two years older and already read those books and she is able to solve their problems and I do teach Pienaar based on that books", she said (Interview No. 6). Another statement that she gave was that whenever the boy comes back from school, she will teach him again what he has been taught in school all from the beginning to the end. I discovered that most of the time he doesn't learn well new in school, so I will look into his books and teach him in my own way and he's been doing well from there. When we examine this case, we discover that the only difference between this parent and the teacher is that she doesn't get paid in form of wages.

Hidden learners: what this concept is all talking about is that the parents who teach their children at home must also study and learn the curriculum of their children. Nevertheless, none of these schools curricula was designed for the sake of the parents learning, but for the sake of the children. The objective of the curriculum is limited to the children but in most cases, the parents are encouraged to always take advantage of it because, without it, they may go out of context while helping their children. So parents in this instance are seen to be hidden learners. A parent said for instance: "before teaching my child a lesson, I will first study it well on my own if I get the concept, and if I did not know the contents I will learn from educational assistance books. Sometimes, I do feel like a student too (with a laugh)" (Interview No.1). Another mother also said that she tries to study and learn her son's lessons and teach him, but if she doesn't understand anything, she will redirect it to the child's teacher, or call another parent (mother) of his colleague in classroom or better still ask any member of their immediate family to help me out. One of the mothers in this same case says: "if I did not understand a lesson I have several ways in which I get to deal with it myself, of which one of them is friends and parents of other students. Also, I can get help from her teacher or study educational assistance books or if I could use the Internet" (Interview No. 7). Another one says: "before teaching him a new lesson, I study that lessons and get prepared to understand it and then I can now teach him too". (Interview No. 3).

Worried Supporters: this term is utilized to express the parents that due to their psychological reasoning. Some parents also made mention of this in some of their statements like a parent who said that even as much as the comprehensive assist that she has been rendering to her child at home and even in school, she feels concern about the child's future which is fast approaching. "I support my child because I am concerned about his future." One of the mothers participating in this study also added that it was because she is sensitive to the future of her children, then she is satisfied to help her son in his lesson. It would have been great if he could learn at school, but he
can't, and his future can be at risk and then I will take the whole blame if I can't help him now." (Interview No. 5). Also, another mother said: "I become so worried whenever I think about my children's future, I always love to see them having a very good and brighter one because when they grow up to the age of getting a job and getting married, they shouldn't be left behind among their peers." (Interview No. 2).

Educational system partners: many times, parents do have a similar answer when they are asked who to be held responsible for the education of children. Looking into some of their responses, like for instance, they believe that children's education is a mutual issue, i.e. it has to be on an agreement. For example, in the interview eight (8) is expressed: "when the child is in school, education tends to be the responsibility of the school and education system, but when he comes home parents and family should take responsibility for the education". Any parent who considers themselves as partners for the educational system has divided the task and assumes their responsibility. One of the mothers also stated: "as long as my son is in the school, the schools are expected to be responsible for whatever he's doing there, but as soon as he comes home to meet me, I also take charge from there and take responsibility for his learning." Another mother says: "both education at home and in school are perfect together, I can't say that this task is only for school or just for home." (Interview No. 10). One mother also added her own point saying: "Ours and school educating is a mutual issue. Both family and the educational system plays important role in children education but the role of the educational system is more significant and should be focused on the more." (Interview No. 8). Or this statement: "the task of education is more of the teacher and educational system but parents also must contribute fully to their children education." (Interview 3). In the curriculum for teaching, parents also have not abandoned their respect but consider some roles for themselves and they possibly complete these tasks alongside the educational system. Parents now see themselves as partners that should work hands in hands with other partners to do their work.

Amateur critics: truly, many parents are cooperating with the education system despite the fact that they still face challenges of spending more time with their children. Critics like the volume of courses to offer, number of students in the class, and most importantly, not getting enough time to play and handle children's favorite things. The certainty of this criticism has been made clear that all items are true and well identified by parents. Some that are not expert in this field and that does not have any academic background brought about amateur critics because of their allegations that are not rooted educationally. For instance, one of the parents talked about learning and practice, she said: "if we think ideally, she (her daughter) should not study at home but in school and even only a little homework should be given to her so that I can teach her myself." (Interview No. 5). With respect to this, another parent says: "if my son learns in school, he should also do his assignment at school; basically, this is the way it ought to be, so that learning will be in school and homework doing over the known lesson can be directed to the responsibility of the home." (Interview No. 2). Also one of the parents accounted that sometimes there are too many courses to offer at a time which most times entails unnecessary contents: "his lessons are really too much. I think some of the things I teach him are not necessary. This high volume of a lesson can frustrate someone." (Interview No. 2). Here is another parent's view on the issue with large number of courses and the time of the children eaten off by these works, he said: "if his lessons were not as much as it is now, he could participate in some other extra
curriculum activities such as sports and it likes that he had to do, but his academic activities has taken it all." (Interview No. 1). And another parent talked about the relationship between spending time and teaching methods by the teacher with respect to the children's competency, he says: "a teacher should teach well in school. You see, some teacher teaches lessons incompletely. For example, most of the so-called teachers just explain the lesson and then continue to solve a problem based on what he has explained. This means that he spent only a little time. Though some students are clever and smart and good enough get the knowledge so quick, some are slow learners and cannot assimilate as fast as the others, this kind of child needed more attention from the teacher." (Interview No. 6).

Conclusion
The study analyzed the experiences of parental involvement in children's education. Remember that we do not have this analysis in relation to parents' parental involvement in the education of children because the research goals are not outdated and beyond the scope of ongoing research. The purpose is to make discoveries and analyzes to express the experience of parental involvement. As had been mentioned earlier, parents' experiences include unpaid teachers, hidden learners, worried supporters, partners and amateur critics of the educational system. Now we will mention some of the most important ones that have not been talked about. The first question relates to the role of "unpaid teachers" in the education of children. For some reason, as stated in research findings, parents spend most of their time teaching and educating their children by themselves at home perhaps after school.

Parents' involvement in education, in addition to these parents and many educational benefits of the educational system in terms of academic achievement, seems to have disadvantages. As regards the first question, they are children with shortcomings in these benefits like those children whose parents do not have enough education background and do not show interest in teaching their children. There are many reasons that can include this challenge, such as economic, social and cultural issues. It is sensible to claim that the discrimination that children face in this situation is inevitable. This discrimination is not only effective in the present but also in the future of the children, and will have an important role to play in their lives. In addition, in this sense, parents can act as teachers and complementary teachers in order to hide educational deficiencies. To further explain the content related to this topic, you should present the following questions: If you stop parenting to get involved in their children education, won't there be a deficiency in the academic progress of these children as leaving the pass results and charts and changing their academic progress? Does the education system achieve its goals without parental involvement or not? The main questions are: Does it consist in the educational system consciously with the help of parents and consider their plans and training as the first step in the curriculum or design to consider the results obtained through their activities?

Another issue that requires more discussion is the role of "hidden students" for parents. The curriculum designed for children and their parents will not be considered. The curriculum for parents is not designed; however parents make use of this curriculum, the reason being that they won't be able to teach the students effectively. Here, parents are seen in the shoe of who is forced to learn his curriculum by force because they will have to learn their children work by force.
Parents will have to refer to resources for help, like educational books, internet, books, textbooks, etc.

As noted in the section of the discovery, parents for important reasons help the children in their education curriculum and it is simply because they are concerned about the impact in their life. They are concerned about the future and academic achievement of their children. These parents have noted that because they believe that children do not really concentrate and get the concept that is being taught in school at school, they should get help from someone who is better than their parents. Many parents believe that children need to do better in school so as to meet up to the standard and not lag behind their colleague in school. This question is related to the future of the child. Parents who participate in education even say that because of these issues, they tend to show more concern for these children and leave most things to focus more on these children's educational life. In this situation, they play the role of "worried supporters". Here are the questions that arise is where the parents should be sacrificed for something that is the task of the educational system, does the education system need to go to the level that children and their parents and even other family members are fixed or occupied? How far would life be for the privileged ones among these kids? It seems to be that because of this relationship, the educational system has denied the family some of its fun because it has made them engaged more and more on the issues of these children's education, so there may be a limitation in the fun that a child experience at home with his family. Among other things is the importance of getting to know the role of "educational system partner" which was mentioned. Parents have indicated that without them being there to support their children, and then these children education is not good enough. In addition to parental participation and parental involvement, parents have cited that without them being involved in their children education, schools cannot afford to offer as much as they require for the children. Some parents take into account the respect for education systems and the fact that they make up for the entire education of children since they noted the weaknesses of the school themselves, which increases the educational system's interaction in children's education and their influence on children. In this regard, parents see themselves as helpers to the school for some of the roles they carry out for them as per regarding their children. Many of them were not pleased with this action, because of this task. The diverse task is solely because of the need for the education system and the common goal. This common goal is merely desirable learning for children's curriculum. Another study for parents is the role of "amateur critics". Choosing this title is based on parents without academic education and curriculum, each one that is important and is reflected in it. The said critics are:

- The high number of students to teachers: parents observed that each teacher takes the responsibility of too many children's education and this idea makes him unable to handle the children well.
- Voluminous courses: parents also said that the courses that teachers take sometimes are too much to be assigned to just one teacher, and this brings about incomplete academic discharge by teachers to students thereby making the teacher look like being incompetent to handle such children.
- Unnecessary offered courses: some parents made mention of this problem as being common too, that a lot of time many irrelevant courses are given to these children to study, which is a waste of time and effort.
• Taking assignment at school after learning how to do it, and just revising at home: many of these parents believe that these children are meant to be taught well in the school to know very well all their courses, and just come home for some revision based on the home works given to them which they can do themselves.

• The relationship between time spent by a teacher to teach and how much well the children understand the course: here, parents are emphasizing on the fact that some students are slow learners and require more time than some who are smarter, so teachers should always endeavor to help such students.

As mentioned at the beginning of the discussion, according to the findings of other studies, the involvement of parents in the education of children is not only the academic achievement of children but has also influenced the higher education of people. But, in addition to this positive impact, the impact of curriculum performance and family relationships should be well tested. On the other hand, determining the extent to which female parents can work and work on time. The results of these studies have shown that parents have participation, although they affect issues such as feminine and family relationships and draw attention to the families that children have in school.

References


