

IV Conclusions and Recommendations

School actions to engage parents in school life

School-parent communication

- The majority of school principals (72.6%) organize meetings with parents at least once a quarter, and 41.5% organize them at least once a month.
- Similar results are found also on the frequency of sending pupil's performance written evaluation to parents: the majority of school principals send them to parents at least once a quarter.
- Another aspect that school directors share with parents is information on school events and activities, which are sent to them at least once a quarter in 62% of the cases.
- However, other aspects such as information on curriculum, school newsletter, and information on school policies seem to be shared less frequently. Also, surveys and home visits are less frequently reported among school principals.
- In general, school principals express satisfaction on the meetings organized by teachers.
- The most common topic discussed at school meetings is discipline/conduct/behaviour (41.6% of cases) followed by grades/marks/success (38.2%).

Parental involvement

- Results show that teachers are not inclined to ask parents to participate in organizing activities more than once in a month. They tend to ask parents get involved generally once per quarter or once per semester.
- The activities where parents are required to contribute less frequently according to school principals are fundraising for school, helping other parents with their children's education and providing teaching assistance to teachers.

Support for parents

- In about 20% of the cases, schools organize sessions to help parents assist their children with homework at least once per month. Another 39% organizes such sessions at least once per semester, while 41.1% organize it once per year or not at all.
- Schools are less inclined to provide parents with materials to assist their children with homework (in 42.4% of cases this was not done), nor provide them materials to monitor their children's homework (49.5% never did this).
- About 39% of schools have organized issue-based support groups with parents.

Parental involvement in school governance

- According to school principals, the Parents' Committee generally influences a little or not at all in pedagogical methods used by teachers. They influence even less in the content of lessons that are conducted at school (82.8%).
- They are however more frequently involved in planning of extracurricular activities, helping pupils in valuing education, planning of school infrastructure development and facilitating increased involvement of parents.

School principals' attitudes on the engagement of parents in school life

Parental influence

- The first area where parents have influence to a great extent is decision taken at school level, followed by decisions taken at classroom level and social activity planning. However, this percentage is less than one fourth of all schools.
- However, 43.2% of school principals think that parents have some influence on decisions taken at classroom level, 40.3% think that they have influence in decisions taken at school level, 34% think that they influence school policies and regulations and about 31% of school principals think that parents have some influence in evaluating teachers' performance.

Benefits of parental engagement in school life

- School principals generally think that overall improved school climate is one of them (74.3%).
- Another one they think as a benefit to a large extent is more positive attitudes and behaviours of parents towards school (69%).
- Also they generally agree that more overall support of parents for school as well as improved pupil performance will be some of the benefits (Table 3.7).

Support for parents

- Organized sessions to help parents assist their children with homework are considered by 77% of school principals to be useful to a large extent.
- 64% of school principals think that parent issue-based support groups are also useful to a large extent, followed by provision of parents with information on how to create a home learning environment, with materials to assist and monitor children in their homework.

Barriers in enrooting school-parents partnership

- The barriers which according to school principals limit the school ability to support parents are insufficient school resources to develop and run the services (49.5%), followed by the fact that parents are too busy to be involved in school

based support services to them (33%), and lack of parents interest in getting engaged in such services (31%).

- Interestingly, lack of teachers' skills to offer such support services is not perceived as a barrier by school principals (less than 6% think that this is a barrier to a large extent).

The practice of participation

Instances of successful parental engagement

- Most school principals recall one instance of successful school-parent partnership.
- Organizing events, celebrations and extracurricular activities is the most frequently mentioned instance of partnership (26.3%), followed by organizing of educational workshops in 19.8% of cases, assistance in school renovation and financial help.

Level of parental engagement

- According to the majority of school principals (60.2%), the members of Parent's Council are entitled to participate at meetings where school level decisions are taken without restrictions. About 40% of school principals think that they are entitled to do so, only by invitation.
- About 58% of school principals think that parents' councils are entitled to participate in elaborating policies/strategies only by invitation.
- Generally, participation in modification or adoption of school policies and rules is done by invitation only.

Initiatives by Parents' Councils

- The most significant initiative by the Parents' Council mentioned by the school principals was renovations and improvements of school/school yard (31.7%).
- The next most frequently mentioned was additional work with pupils with poor marks/behavior (22.3% of cases).