

AN ANALYSIS OF THE BARRIERS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Lal Kumar Singh

Research Scholar, Department of Education
Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, Madhya Pradesh
Email: lalsinghdbg@gmail.com Mobile: +91 9128303134

Dr. Shikha Banerjee

Assistant professor, Department of Education
Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, Madhya Pradesh
Email: sbanerji14@gmail.com Mobile: +91 9893224881

ABSTRACT

Education is the process of all-round development of individual by which enhancing one's personality and making rational, capable, responsive and intellectually independent. Parents are one of the main stakeholders of education and have an important place in both formal and informal education of their children. Parental involvement and schools are inseparable that one cannot have meaningful without the other. Parental involvement is defined as having an awareness of and involvement in schoolwork, understanding of the interaction between parenting skills and student success in schooling, and a commitment to consistent communication with educators about student progress. Studies indicates that the Parental Involvement has an important in the educational success of their children, but involvement doesn't seem among all the pupils appropriately. There are many barriers exists in the way of parental involvement. The purpose of the study is to find out the barriers to the parental involvement among their children's education. The study analyzed based on secondary data by reviewing the existing literatures. The study identifies barriers in way of parents' involvement into two forms one is general and other is specific. Both the forms of obstacles influence parental involvement. The general barriers consist of Cultural barrier, Communication barrier, Scheduling barrier, Language barrier, Environmental barrier, Human nature barrier and Level of schooling whereas specific barriers consist of Residential mobility of parents, Lack of knowledge in advanced programs, Parents income and educational background, Insufficient time in teacher's schedule, Teachers' misperceptions of parents' abilities and Poor relationships between parents and teachers.

Key words: *Parental involvement, Educational success, General barriers, Specific barriers.*

INTRODUCTION:

Swami Vivekananda defines education as "the manifestation of the perfection already exists in man". In this way, the aim of education is to manifest in our lives the perfection, which is very

nature of our inner self. This perfection is the realization of the infinite power which resides in everything and everywhere existence. Generally, the bases of formal education are teachers, students and parents. Parents have an important role in both formal and informal education of their children. Parenting is, of course, a universal phenomenon and parents' upbringing children all over the world. So far, it is also a historically and socially placed in practice (Skeekanth, 2010). The parents' aspirations for their children, along with parenting ideals and practices, differ across different time periods, national contexts, cultures beliefs and local contexts (England et al. 2004). There are various types of parent involvement in education as- ranging from encouraging, volunteering in home-based learning activities and financing for invigorating links between schools and community. Parental participation in school decision-making may be strengthened by including parents in school site councils, parent-teacher associations, and other committees (Epstein, 2005). Students are likely to become aware of family representation in school decisions. Parental involvement is expected to develop opportunities for input feelings of ownership, an understanding of policies, and a sense of connection with other families for the well-being of their children. Teachers are also aware of the role of parents' perspectives in policy development and likely become increasing their involvement (Epstein, 2005).

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

Parental involvement is defined as having an awareness of and involvement in schoolwork, understanding of the interaction between parenting skills and student success in schooling, and a commitment to consistent communication with educators about student progress. Parental Involvement is important to the educational success of a young adolescent and yet generally declines when a child enters the middle grades (Epstein, 2005; Jackson & Andrews, 2004; Jackson & Davis, 2000). The term "parents" refers to biological parents, adoptive and stepparents, and primary caregivers (e.g., grandmother, aunt, brother). Parental Involvement may be defined as the degree to which the parents are committed to him or her role as a parent and in the fostering of the optimal child development (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental Involvement implies how the parents involve themselves in developing the personality of the child. Involvement reflects parent's devotion and positive attention to the child learning process and is also a way of facilitating both identification and internalization of social values (Grolnick & Ryan 1987; Ryan, 1992).

EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

In the general perception Parental involvement and schools are inseparable that one cannot have impotence without the other. Indeed, research indicates a strong relationship between Parental involvement and student achievement (Hester, 1989). Parental involvement in their children's education has extensively been seen for its effectiveness in the child's academic achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Jeynes, 2005; Pomerantz, Grolnick, & Price, 2005); Although the what extent to which involvement helps in their children's achievement is still debatable (Pomerantz, 2007). Parental Involvement in child's education appears to be related with a range of positive outcomes for elementary school children with few behavioral problems (Comer, 1994), less dropouts and more student achievement (Kolb, 1984; Muller, 1993; Reynolds 1992; Stevenson & Baker 1987). Virtually every study from the very informal to the highly sophisticated confirms that parent involvement is significantly important in the education of children of all ages, from pre-primary to high school age and beyond. The parents can make a huge difference in children's reading ability, in their attitudes toward learning, in the development of socially responsible behaviors and values.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Many parents encounter obstacles to in their children's education. Multiple barriers exist related to parent involvement in their children's education including school constraints (Leitch & Tangri, 1988), mistrust of schools (Edwards & Young, 1992); miscommunication between parents and schools, lack of knowledge about subjects that they are learning about in school (Brock & Beazley, 1995; Finders & Lewis, 1994); and lack of understanding of how to be involved. These barriers have been articulated parents related to their involvement in general education. National Education Service Survey (2002) revealed several barriers that prevent or deter parents from participating in their children's education. Six factors were found influence the contributions of parents to the school: Vision and commitment from school leaders, time and energy invested in building relationships, the clear expectation that partnership was in the child's best interests, a positive school culture including a commitment to inclusiveness of diversity, networking with community groups, and effective communication strategies. Vincent and Martin (2000) separate barriers into three categories namely- (i) Human nature factors: Which include parent and teacher fear of failure, fear of criticism or fear of each other's differences. (ii) Communication factors: An inability to communicate a real need for parent support.

(iii) External factors: Which include lack of time (on the part of both teachers and parents), personal problems, administrative policies, busy lifestyle. Stalker, Brunner, Maguire, and Mitchell (2009) conducted a study of parents with disabilities barriers and found positive actions by their children's schools to involve them in their children's education. Perceptions of disabled parents were found to be the greatest barrier to involvement in their children's education. Disabled parents involved in the study said they were often perceived as lacking parenting skills and often not consulted about policies or services, and that schools often did not see it as their duty to involve disabled parents. While physical accessibility was an issue for some parents, the overwhelming majority spoke of the perceptions of the school and its staff as being the biggest barrier. Epstein (2005) emphasized that parents can't to be the expertise of every subject therefore, not all parents are equally involved in their child's schooling, and these all reviews seek to clarify some of the barriers to parental involvement in their child's education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The purpose of this study is to analyze the general and specific barriers to parental involvement in their children's education. The specific objectives of the study are following-

- To identify the general barriers to parental involvement in their children's education by analyzing the related existing literatures.
- To find out specific barriers to parental involvement in their children's education by analyzing the related existing literatures.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study follows analytical methods based on secondary data by reviewing the previous literatures. The data has been collected from various Journals, Research Articles, Magazines, Books, Books sections, Reports, Newspapers, Thesis etc. on barriers to parental involvement in their children's education.

GENERAL BARRIERS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

As we know that, at present the importance of parent involvement in children's education has become widely recognized world over, much more attention has been focused on why parents are not more involved than they are. So, here is some general barriers to parental involvement to their children's education:

Cultural Barriers: Diversity in culture has a greater impact on the parent's perception of where they fit into their child's education or not. Some cultures believe it to be disrespectful and feeling inferiority towards communication with teachers. In addition to parental roles, parental efficacy can be severely impacted by the language and education barriers present in culturally diverse families. Cultural differences define how education is valued in their society. In some cultures, parents may believe that they have only school related responsibility and is simply ensuring their children go to school. These parents often have two or three jobs simply to make ends meet. Helping with homework or participating in activities supplementing the academic curriculum may not be a priority. Families that own their business may accept their children to grow into that career, therefore grades, and attendance and behavior issues may not be addressed in the family.

Scheduling Barriers: The realities of everyday life, such as work schedules, child care arrangements and home situations may prevent parent's from actively participating in their child's education. The parent's work scheduling creates a gap between their involvement in children' education related issues, so it is a reason for the absence or lack of responsiveness and develop ways to address the issue precluding Parental Involvement.

Language Barriers: The most common barrier to Parental involvement involves the most basic issue of communicating language. Most of the parents are fluent in local language in communicating. Parents for whom English or Hindi is not the primary language often miss opportunities to learn about important educational program because they do not understand the information shared through written communication, such as news, letters, or fliers.

Environmental Barriers: School environment is also barrier to Parental Involvement. The school environment is formal in nature and most of the parents don't know how to adjust in school's formal environment. So, it creates alienation among parents towards involvement. Whether the school's climate, warm inviting clean and secretaries are friendly and welcoming influences the parent's participation.

Human nature Barriers: Some of the parents are shy in nature and unable to talk with eye to eye contact with teachers. They feel inferior so, sometimes they faced communication gap which include parents and teachers to failure, fear of criticism or fear of each other's differences. If parents themselves had faced negative experience in their schooling life, they may already have formed a negative view of schools.

Communication Barriers: Parents have an inability to communicate in real need situation for parents 'support. Generally, parents believed that, teachers use to speak in English or typical language, which they can't do properly. They don't know appropriately the subject domain which is needed for engaging in school or home-based activities and don't have high expertise in their respective domains. So, parents are unable to express all related issues to them with free heart.

Level of schooling: It seems that there is more parent involvement at primary level but less at the upper primary, secondary and senior secondary school levels, as adolescents strive for greater autonomy and separation from their parents and parents think that their children have mature to think or work independently. Families often live further from the school their child attends and are less able to spend time there.

SPECIFIC BARRIERS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

Residential Mobility: Some urban areas have low rates of home ownership. Families that rent tend to move around a lot more, which makes it harder to build relationships between families and school staff.

Lack of Knowledge in Advanced Programs: It is estimated that 90 percent of school students have interested in advanced learning but, they do not have proper knowledge to operate it like, computer, internet, iPad etc. they need guidance for it, in this case the parents are unable to help their children, so that they become lacking in it.

Parents Income and Educational Background: According to census report 2011 there are total 118.7 million farmers in India. According to Department of Indian statistics survey that 54% of Indian population is involved in agriculture and they are almost illiterate, and their family incomes are also very low which comes under BPL category. This influence in involvement in their children's education.

Insufficient time in teacher's schedule: Teachers have already a constricted work schedule in school. Teachers often see working on family involvement as a task added to an already long list of responsibilities. So, teachers perceive the parental involvement as extra Borden work, which influences on the involvement.

Teachers' misperceptions of parents' abilities: Some teachers believe parents can't help their children because they have limited educational backgrounds themselves; however, many poorly educated families support learning by talking with their children about school, monitoring

homework, and making it clear that education is important and that they expect their children to do well in school.

Poor relationships between parents and teachers: Parent and teacher focus groups conducted around the country as part of the Parents as School Partners research project, identified common areas of conflict between parents and teachers. Parents felt that teachers waited too long before telling them about a problem and that they only heard from teachers when there was bad news. Most parents felt they didn't have easy or ongoing access to their children's teachers and that teachers blamed parents when children had problems in school.

CONCLUSION:

Mostly studies agreed that school-based parental involvement in children's education had a generally positive outcome for student's achievement. However, while most indicated that it was school policy that needed to change in order to involve more parents and school policy means nothing unless it is backed up by action on the school's part to include parents and make them feel that their contributions are worthwhile. If parents themselves had faced negative experience in their schooling life, they may already have formed a negative view of schools. This type of parents may view their children's school as hostile territory. The barriers in way of parents' involvement seems into two forms one is general and other is specific. Both the forms of obstacles influence parental involvement. It is the teacher and administrators who can play a lead role in helping parents overcoming these obstacles. By opening communication and developing an open-door policy, parents will feel more welcome participation as stakeholder. Teachers also need to overcome their own assumptions about parents and help to foster an alliance with parents.

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