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Original article

NEW RESULTS USING THE METHOD OF INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN SCHOOLS BASED ON THE QUESTIONNAIRES FOR MEASURING SATISFACTION OF THE PARENTS

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Abstract

Problem statement. Nowadays achieving an effective collaboration between school and family for education of children is a hot topic and parents can become real partners for teachers in education, if is established a beneficial interaction regarding students in order to form a harmonious personality, to understand and to accept the requirements and conditions involved in the educational process.

The aim of the research is to identify different ways to increase efficiency in educational process in the school units of Constanta County. Research objectives are: to identify the attitudes of parents towards school; to determine the level of satisfaction of the parents with various specific aspects of education; to compare the levels of satisfaction of the parents at the beginning and at the end of educational system of children;

Methods. The study appreciated aspects and to recommend these aspects to the managers for optimizing the educational process; to highlight the relationship between school and family from the perspective of the parents.

Results. Sample consisting of 38761 representative parents for the population of Constanta county was obtained randomized; we used a questionnaire for parents interpreted by practitioners and representatives County School Inspectorate of Constanta, in collaboration with a team of psychologists from County Center of Resources and Educational Assistance of Constanta, after its' application in schools, supported by managers, psychologists and teachers. Statistical data obtained revealed a high level of parental satisfaction about the educational process in schools (pre-primary cycle, primary, secondary and high school) especially about the educational offers and management, as well as the involvement of teachers and the directors of the school units and the importance of recommendations of the parents to streamline their activity. The partnership school - family can form effective team to initiate projects that invite parents to work together with teachers and to promote school activities in local community.

Conclusions. This important study identify the perception of beneficiaries of educational services in relation to all aspects monitored and may be an important step in development of a functional relationship student - family - school.

Key words: education, efficiency, partnership, school, family.

Introduction

Education is a complex good with many dimensions, and as parents evaluate schools they have to strike a balance between the different attributes of education that schools represent. The complexity of that task is compounded by the fact that the level of existing information they have about schools is often limited (Schneider et al., 2000). School choice is a complex and contentious issue. And much of the debate about choice often resembles a shouting match in which, scholars talk around and past each other (Schneider and Buckley, 2002). Despite the rapid expansion of school choice, many doubt the ability of parents to make good choices. The Carnegie Foundation (1992) concluded that "many parents base their school choice decision on factors that have nothing to do with the quality of education" including the availability of day care, convenience, social factors, and the range and quality of interscholastic sports. A Twentieth Century Fund report argued that parents are

not "natural 'consumers' of education" and that "few parents of any social class appear willing to acquire the information necessary to make active and informed educational choices" (Ascher et al., 1996).

Achieving effective collaboration between school and family, suitable for rearing and education of children is a hot topic. Parents can become real partners in the education of students in terms of awareness of their multiple roles. This can become a reality if parents and teachers establish a beneficial interaction with students regarding the formation of a harmonious personality, understanding and accepting the requirements and conditions partner involved in the educational process. Through this study developed by County School Inspectorate of Constanta aims to identify ways to increase efficiency of instructive - educational process in schools. The objectives of the study are: to identify the attitudes of parents towards school; to determine the level of satisfaction of the parents with various specific aspects of education; to compare the levels of

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satisfaction of the parents at the beginning and at the end of educational system of children; to study appreciated aspects and to recommend these aspects to the managers for optimizing the educational process; to highlight the relationship between school and family from the perspective of the parents.

Methods

Questionnaire for parents were approved and performed by representatives of County School Inspectorate of Constanta in collaboration with a team of teachers, psychologists of County Center of Resources and Educational Assistance of Constanta, then it was applied in all units school of Constanta County, with support of school managers, school psychologists and teachers in the school year 2012-2013. The sample includes 38761 parents is structured as follows: 6626 parents of preschool children, 8033 parents of primary school pupils, 15190 parents of middle school students, 8693 parents of students in high school and 219 parents of students with special educational needs integrated in educational process. The sample is representative for the population consists of parents of students in Constanta, both by reference to the number of parents of students at each level of education and for the total number of students and parents in the county.

Results

Parental responses to questionnaire items regarding their satisfaction with the educational results

of students were centralized to all study levels, then were analyzed and plotted. Statistical data obtained show that parents are satisfied to a large extent and to a great extent about the activity of units school as institutions of education and also to the teachers activity and management. From the point of view of the parents, the schools offer a good education and management, but are also a number of recommendations which must be considered and implemented to optimize these aspects.

The main reasons that generate the presence of parents in the kindergarten/schools indicates a major concern about knowledge of the evolution of behavior of children; improving parenting skills through partnership with teachers; knowledge of the frequency classes. We present in this study comparative data regarding to the reasons that lead parents of pupil and of high school students to participate in the different activities proposed by the school.

The main reason that causes parents to come to kindergarten indicate a principal concern for behavior of children (27.4%), the evolution of schooling prerequisites procurement plan (24.11%) and improving parenting skills through partnership with teachers (23.53%). This study showed us that the parents of high school students are concerned, in particular, whether the child's school (30.06%), also in behavior of students (23.26%), the frequency of students (18.88%) (Figure 1).

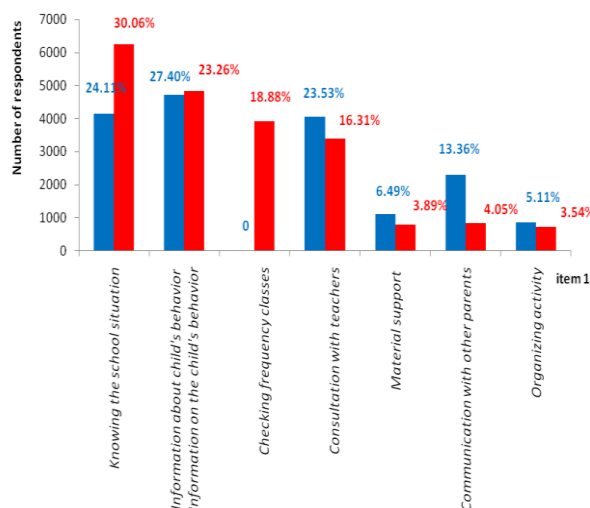


Figure 1. The reasons for the presence of parents in the kindergarten/schools of Constanta County (blue indicates pre-primary school; red indicates high school).

Frequent presence of parents in the kindergarten/school is conducive to effective partnership school - family, given the availability of parents to be present in the institution, whenever necessary! Given that approximately 30% of parents are present to a lesser extent the institution, is necessary to develop concrete strategies designed to attract family involvement in school life and thus in ensuring education of their child

(Parents School). Our obtained data showed that most parents (90.35%) are satisfied and very satisfied with all analyzed aspects, particularly by the level of training provided by the school. Generally, parents of high school students who participated in this study (65.95%) are satisfied and very satisfied with the aspects analyzed, particularly the level of training provided by the school.



Given that the pre-primary to high school level, the percentage of parents satisfied that highly satisfied with the training provided by the school attended by their children decreases, we believe that it could be improved by a constant concern for all educational factors in this regard.

Regarding the quality of school and extracurricular activities, the greatest degree of satisfaction with services is expressed by the pupils with special educational needs, all other parents expressing satisfaction level of 70%; this is generating the need for more involvement of the representatives of education Constanta.

Regarding safety climate, discipline and the atmosphere/climate of the group/class that teaches children existing in schools was identified at approximately 100% satisfaction in the kindergartens, that integrating schools, while primary and secondary schools, secondary respectively, the percentage decreases to about 70%, suggesting the need to improve this parameter, the level stated.

It was found that the majority of parents participating in this study are largely concerned and heavily satisfied with the teachers, as managers of group/class and in terms of quality activities with preschoolers/pupils, the highest percentage being recorded in the nursery. We recommend that it is necessary to maintain the same level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries to other levels of education. In this study, parents consider that the actual material basis of the school is good in general, but improving where is necessary, can increase the efficiency of the educational process. Percentages obtained, regardless of to which we refer, indicate the need to identify resources to ensure an adequate endowment of educational approaches made by good cooperation with parents, school managers and local community.

Given that parents are aware and highlights the need to better organize their work in terms of parents' committees is essential to stimulate parents in this regard.

While in the nursery or integrating schools, most parents are satisfied with the importance given their point of views by representatives of schools, revealing that there is generally effective communication in primary and secondary school, it is necessary optimizing communication between school and family. In the kindergartens and integrative schools, most parents are satisfied about the image of schools in the community, but significant percentages of specific sample need to ensure visibility and a greater promotion of its community.

Dominant way of communication is direct, achieving parents through meetings and discussions with teachers, but this parents concern decreased

significantly from pre-primary to secondary school level, generating the conclusion that concrete proposals are necessary to motivate parents constantly to collaborate with the school. The share of parents who are largely satisfied with the usefulness of the information taught in schools decreases, from kindergarten to high school, which indicates the importance of educational approaches aimed at developing life skills of students, regardless of the field and the level at which we report. The number of parents who appreciate the content of the curriculum as modern and adapted to the needs of their children significant decreases when making a comparison between kindergarten and school integration, on the one hand, and primary, secondary and high schools, on the other hand. A large number of parents consider in a very large extent and largely accuracy assessment system of students at this level, but changes can be made in order to optimize the evaluation of the students, given variations in results from one level to another.

Most parents of pre-primary children and children with special educational needs appreciate that teaching methods engage actively children in learning, being very efficient, but this satisfaction decreases towards primary and secondary schools, and high schools, respectively, although the percentages exceed half of sample (Figure 2).

Extra-curricular activities organized by the nursery/school are considered to be very interesting and useful, about three quarters of the parents surveyed, regardless of the level to which we refer. It was found that activities which involve most of the parents are dedicated to parents, this results indicates us the necessity of diversification the range of activities that can be more attractive to the school.

Identified factors that contribute to a large extent to children's success in life are these: teachers, educational projects, educational qualifications, training hours of counseling and guidance, the content of school curriculum and extracurricular activities. There are a number of other factors that contribute to children's success in life and mention them could be the subject of research on the personal opinions of parents.

Based on these results, we find that in the hierarchy of factors that contribute to children's success in life, determined by the majority of parents of preschool children/students ranks first contribution of teachers (about 90 % regardless of level) which valorizes them, but it also empowers the educators. Almost all parents appreciate that preschoolers/pupils are satisfied about the educational activity in schools.

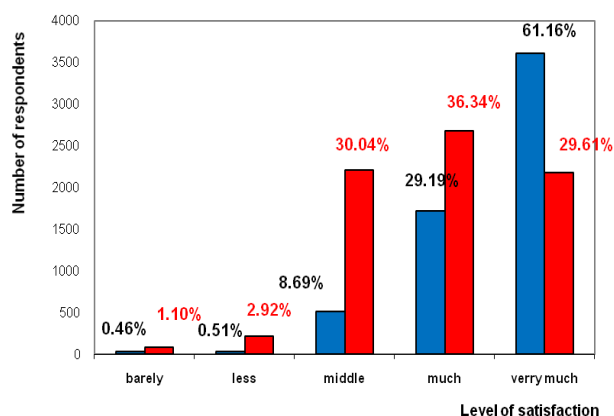


Figure 2. The level of education provided by students in school units of Constanta County ((blue indicates pre-primary school; red indicates high school).

Parents appreciate the educational provision to be folded on the school community needs and considers balanced and well chosen extracurricular educational activities held in school. Also, the parents think that the working atmosphere in school is relaxed, stimulating competition and enable each student to state.

Discussions

Our results showed that parents appreciate as positive the following aspects of children's education: teaching methods and strategies; varied educational offer; implementation of partnerships, projects, extracurricular activities; effective communication between parents, teachers and school managers. Also, parents appreciate that schools receive adequate physical endowment. Parents of high school students consider very important diversification through specialization, qualifications offered by educational institutions in Constanta schools network and the type of ECDL certification/CISCO.

Recommendations of the parents on educational offer of school units are aimed at: improving educational space (more spacious classrooms, gym, modern playground); improving facilities (furniture, audio-video); school psychologist with the permanent program in school unit, given the importance of psychological counseling; development of more physical activity outdoors and more educational projects themed area of life skills development; active involvement of parents committees; after-school programs in schools; involving a larger number of students in projects; wearing school uniform; studying a foreign language from the preparatory class; stimulating methods of student creativity; fewer holiday themes; extension of programs/projects to facilitate international cooperation in schools abroad; investment in upgrading classes and laboratories with European funds and others, except parents sponsorships; involvement of parents both in school and in the extracurricular activity; permanent access in

each class at IT resources; improve discipline and safety issues of students in schools.

Regarding managerial activity at pre-primary, primary and secondary schools, parents identified assessments, such as open and efficient communication between teachers, parents and of school manager; ensuring an optimal climate for motivating teachers, professional development, promoting the competitiveness of loyal employees; concern for attracting funding; involvement in extracurricular activities.

Parents surveyed offered a number of suggestions about the optimization of following aspects: encouraging excellence and pride of belonging to a school community, like introduction of school uniform; conducting projects involved both student (volunteer projects) and their parents; development of various emergency simulations for the formation of specific skills; finding financial sources, other than sponsoring their parents to sustain school activity; directing 2% of the tax to school; organization of competitions that stimulate creativity and skills development; sports suit the needs of students; improve the material in all schools; organizing discipline circles; organizing special classes (mathematics, foreign languages); organizing after-school programs and several activities like "school parents" type; improving discipline breaks by providing the school; harsher punishment for students for disciplinary offenses; a number of suggestions are aimed at ensuring discipline by hiring security companies; ensure continuity in the classroom of the teacher; ensuring preparedness overtime final years; promoting school and specific information technology tools (website, Facebook page).

Parents of high school students have also offered suggestions for optimizing the management activity, such as: diversification of education (vocational school return, a higher share of practical training curriculum, inclusion of pedagogical counseling hours in the curriculum, to study of the German language; several circles - modern languages, geography, history, mathematics, Romanian;



diversification of optional courses, creation of bilingual classes); increasing the share of extracurricular activities; measures in reducing absenteeism; better involvement in ensuring discipline in the school; student's safety in school areas (access based on the student card, video surveillance cameras in the hallways and in class); better communication between teachers and students; better involvement in the relationship with parents; improve the efficiency of teachers; investment in material base; increase transparency in managerial act; promoting school and specific information technology tools or other administrative measures (program students not to exceed hour 19.30; additional staff care in all schools).

Conclusions

Analyzing the results and developing actions to ensure a higher quality of the entire educational system in Constanta County school units, we can obtain new results oriented towards success in terms of linking the school with the family more powerful.

The partnership school - family can be developed through activities that engage students and their families, this way forming an effective team through projects that invite parents to work with teachers approaches that promote school activities in community image.

This study identified perception of beneficiaries of school educational services in relation to all aspects monitored and may be an important step in the development of a functional relationship student - family - school.

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