

Effectiveness of Home-School Relationship on Children's Learning (A case Study of Rufaa Primary Schools - Sudan)

فاعلية العلاقة بين الأهل والمدرسة في تعليم الأطفال (دراسة ميدانية في مدارس رفاعة الأساسية – السودان)

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Abstract:

This study aims to know how the relation between school and home affects positively on children's learning. The population of this study was the teachers of primary schools in Rufaa' town. The sample which was chosen randomly was (50) teachers. The researcher focused on the teachers because they care about the home-school relationship. The researcher has followed the descriptive analytical method in this study. For collecting the data, the researcher used a questionnaire. The main findings of this study are: the importance of the home-school relationship and communication in children's learning, there are many ways for communication between schools and parents. The study recommends that home-school connections should be considered and home language(s) should be respected. It is hoped that the study will come out with some proposed future studies.

Key words: Effectiveness; Home-school; Learning; Relationship; Students.

ملخص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة للتعرف على كيفية تأثير العلاقة بين المدرسة والأهل إيجاباً في تعليم الأطفال. تكون مجتمع الدراسة من مدرسي مدارس الأساس في مدينة رفاعة. عينة الدراسة التي اختيرت عشوائياً كانت (50) مدرساً. ركز الباحث على المدرسين لأنهم يهتمون بعلاقة المدرسة بالأهل. اتبع الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي في هذه الدراسة. لجمع البيانات استخدم الباحث الاستبانة. النتائج الرئيسية لهذه الدراسة هي: أهمية العلاقة والتواصل بين المدرسة والأهل في تعليم الأطفال، وأن هنالك عدة طرق للتواصل بين المدارس والأهل. توصي الدراسة بضرورة وضع التواصل بين الأهل والمدرسة في

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الاعتبار، واحترام لغة أو لغات أهل التلاميذ. من المؤمل أن تخرج الدراسة ببعض الدراسات المستقبلية المقترحة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفاعلية؛ المنزل؛ المدرسة؛ التعلم؛ العلاقة؛ الطلاب.

1. Introduction:

1.0 Background of the study

Young learner programs have grown exponentially in recent decades. According to Sylvia (2017, p.126), "Education begins at home. The responsibility to socialize and educate children is a shared obligation between parents and schools". Parents want their children to develop their skills. Parents in both the public and private sector have been behind the efforts to expand instruction into primary level classrooms. Teachers and parents both have the same objective, which is based on what is best for the children. It is the parents' job to advocate for their own sons and daughters. Unfortunately, there are some parents who do not remember that the teacher has up to 35 or 40 pupils in a classroom. There are parents, at the other end of the spectrum, who are much uninvolved and they may often prove to be more of a concern for teachers. As experienced primary school teachers know, true partnership can benefit the child when schools and homes collaborate on behalf of the child. When teachers and parents work together, they help children reach their potential. The opposite can also happen when both parties are at cross-purposes. Elizabeth (1998, p.4) argues that "families send children to school, where they hope their children will become learners with the tools they need to succeed in life. Schools take children from and send them back to their families, where they assume the families will provide the support that children need to grow and learn". According to Hughes (1994, p.3), "the role of parents in their children's education is an issue of critical importance". Bryan (2005, p.33), states that "children are likely to excel in academics when their parents' actively participate in their education".

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As it is observed there is a lack and sometimes absence of communication between homes and schools which lead to failure in the children's learning process.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate how the relationship between schools and homes impacts on children's learning positively, to determine a range of relationship that teachers make with homes and to show to what extent this relationship given consideration in the learning process.

1.3 Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that: the relationship between schools and homes impacts on children's learning positively, the relationship that teachers make with homes is given consideration in the learning process.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition

The connection between schools and parents is the relation between home and schools, which its main objective is to follow-up children's progress in learning. Elizabeth (1998), states that the connections are called by various names: parent involvement, partnerships, home-school relations. But they all represent a deeply held conviction that children will be better off if the adults in their two care settings communicate and collaborate. According to Epstein (1996, p.40), "Parent involvement has been defined and measured in multiple ways, including activities that parents engage in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents have towards their child's education, school, and teacher".

2.2. Importance of the connection between schools and parents

According to Elizabeth (1998), "Both parents and educators have a large stake in children's success and the linkages promoted to facilitate it. No one would dispute that. But conceptualizing and operationalizing the connections between home and school has been done in many ways by practitioners, policymakers, and researchers who have specific ideas about the rights, roles, and responsibilities of participants in education". The connection between schools and parents is important in different ways:

- a. It helps policy makers become aware of the types of systems and infrastructure which are utilised in schools to connect parents with educators. This awareness can lead to the development of policies, and strengthen connections between parents and schools as related to the ELT curriculum. Hopefully, when policy makers are developing and implementing ELT programs, they can consider the important role that parents play in their children's lives.

b. It makes parents and teachers work together and develop partnerships on behalf of young learners. It provides a number of school-wide techniques that can be used as communication channels between schools and homes.

c. It helps teachers learn how to critically consider and reflect on different forms of contact with parents of young learners in their English classes and how to use these contacts to facilitate communication with homes.

d. It helps textbook publishers develop content which is culturally responsive, useful and engaging to parents. Hopefully, textbook publishers will realise the need for two-way communication and alter their practices so that letters home and other pieces of correspondence are structured in such a way as to facilitate dialogue and conversation.

e. It is useful for organisations that develop high-stakes tests since such tests need to appeal to parents as well as educators. Knowing more about channels of communication between schools and homes can help test developers consider ways to share and discuss children's test results with parents.

f. It helps parents by improving the two-way channels and nature of communication that take place between homes and schools.

g. If school-home contacts are improved, undoubtedly children will benefit. Children can also be told that their parents and teachers are working together to help them in learning.

2.3 Challenges that Face Educators in Home-school Connection

Based on Cedric and Morrison (2010, p.253), "the complexity of the relationships between parents and teachers rests not only on the ambiguity of their shared interests but in the way in which official policies affect them". There are many challenges that face educators in home-school connection:

2.3.1. Communicating in families' home language

There are some teachers who can't speak in parents' home language so; they find it difficult to communicate easily in that language. Others communicate spontaneously with their language not with parents' home language.

2.3.2. Uninvolved parents

The first challenge for educators in all of the contexts is absent and invisible parents. Educators are very concerned about uninvolved parents, or parents who are difficult to contact.

2.3.3. Parents' concern about test preparation for their children

In some contexts children must take a high-stakes exam which includes an English language exam to enter select secondary schools or universities. When there are high-stakes exams involved, parents often place a great deal of pressure on teachers by articulating their concerns about their children's test performance.

2.3.4. Communicative versus test preparation curriculum

In several contexts there appeared to be mixed messages about the curriculum versus the high-stakes examinations that students must take. Parents are very concerned that their children be well-prepared and do well in high-stakes examinations. Unfortunately, this is not always in keeping with the stated curriculum, which often emphasised approaches focusing on communication and not on grammar.

2.3.5. Parents dissatisfied with children's marks

There are situations in which the parents do not feel satisfied with the grades or marks that the teachers have given to their children. Teachers expressed their concern about parents who will compare their children to other children in the class or will complain about the greater mark another child had received. Parents will explain that if a certain child received a good mark, they will wonder why their own child had not got a better mark. Parents appear to be more concerned about this issue in cultures where there are high-stakes ramifications for grades.

2.3.6. Making positive connection with parents

The challenge for teachers in both regular education and specialized English language teaching programs is how to make positive connections with parents.

2.4. Forms of Home-school Connections

There are some forms of contact in which teachers are extremely accessible to parents:

2.4.1. Phone calls

Phone calls are a common way for teachers to connect with parents. These regular telephone calls are considered an essential cornerstone in the parent

home connection. In addition, parents and teachers often communicate by phone when need. These conversations take place often when something has happened at school, such as a child being bullied or failing a test. One interesting facet about phone calls is the amount of privacy teachers maintained or relinquished. Some teachers feel adamant that they should only call parents on the official school phone, whereas others did not mind using their personal cell phone to make such phone calls. For the most part, teachers feel that parents did not abuse the privilege of having their cell phone numbers.

2.4.2. Text messages

In some contexts, the usage of text messages reflects how society at large uses this kind of digital communication. A number of teachers commented that they found text messages to be useful for conveying essential information. Some teachers see that text messages are a very convenient way to communicate with families because the central or core information can be transmitted very quickly.

2.4.3. Letters and printed materials

Letters and printed materials did not seem to be considered important or paramount for establishing connections with families. Some teachers did not even know what the school sent home to the family. They are unaware of what type of content or information is being sent home from the office or the general administration.

2.4.4. Email and school websites

In several contexts, use of email and school websites is viewed as a very efficient way to communicate with families. However, there are a few caveats to this. First, there are different people who are designated to maintain the school website, with some not possessing any English language skills. Sometimes the teacher will have his/ her own classroom website, other times he/ she will not. Second, the teachers often did not have the language skills necessary to maintain or provide the information in the families' home language. In addition, they often did not have access to personnel who could provide the information in the families' home language. Third, there are also circumstances in which teachers did not have access to computers or the Internet. Finally, the technology that the school provided did not always correspond with what the parents or families are able to access. Parents and families generally have access to technology, but not necessarily to the computer. Frequently, families will have a smart phone, but no direct access to a computer-based internet or a computer. In some locations,

there are problems with the monitoring of websites and email communication, which made certain phone applications more favourable.

2.4.5. Dialogue notebooks

'Diaries', 'notebooks', 'homework books' are labels used to describe a notebook which travels back-and-forth between homes and schools in many countries. Teachers of very young learners, those under the age of eight, will write notes to parents in this notebook. Older learners, of eight and above, will copy things down from the board themselves. The exception to this will be when the teacher will have something specific that he/she will want to convey to the parents. The notebooks are in sharp contrast to the one-way-written communication which is found in many countries. Written notices and letters home are a common feature of UK and US schools as a means of disseminating information from the school to the home. The problem with this form of communication is that it is one directional, from the school to the home, whereas it will be much more logical and equitable to have some sort of vehicle by which families could communicate, going back-and-forth with the school. In the contexts where it is used, this dialogue notebook or travelling notebook has become an important vehicle for two-way communication between home and schools, with both parents and teachers able to initiate communication. The notebooks are used to share information from the school to the home, but also importantly from the home to the school. For example, a teacher might write or have a child write down a homework assignment, and point out that the parent is to help, or the parents might write directly into the notebook about the child being absent from school because of a family event or because of illness. The parents might also write to the teacher that the child is having trouble completing a difficult homework assignment.

2.4.6. Parent-teacher conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are mentioned in virtually every context. Frequency of these varies from once a year to three or four times a year. Regardless of the frequency, the aim is very similar in different contexts, with the purpose being that the parent wants to find out how their child is progressing. In many cases, possibly the majority, parent-teacher conferences gave teachers an opportunity to reassure parents that their children are progressing well. Parent-teacher conferences are also a place to resolve issues that may be occurring with the child. For instance, the child might be having trouble listening in English classes and understanding what is going on. The

teacher and parent could use the conference as a way of working together to resolve the problem.

2.4.7. Open classrooms

In a number of different contexts, schools hosted open classrooms for parents, who are invited to come and watch their children during a lesson. There are different objectives in this practice, and teachers have very different responses to it. A couple of teachers feel that it is nothing but a performance by the teacher rather than an actual instructional activity. Others believed that it is a good way for parents to actually see what is taking place in the classroom, including how their children are progressing. It is also an opportunity for parents to actually see their children interacting with their peers. Other teachers feel a bit of a dilemma in that if they use English in the class, the parents will not understand what is going on; however, if they use their home language, then it will not be a representative lesson. Teachers feel that open classes work more effectively when there is an opportunity to have a discussion with parents before or afterwards, so that they can discuss what they will see.

2.4.8. Special events

There is also a wide variety of special events hold at the schools in which parents are invited to participate. Most special events are designed to include children and adults, but some events are mainly for parents. The events for children often show the students' achievements or abilities. For example, there are sports days or field days when children are able to show off their athletic and/or social abilities and work as a team. There are also student performances such as plays or choir performances. In addition, in some countries there are awards ceremonies to which parents are invited and children receive awards for a variety of achievements, from perfect attendance to excellent performance in different academic areas. In some schools there are also awards for children who had other kinds of achievement such as sports, citizenship or social skills. Also, there are some ceremonies only for those parents whose children are to receive awards.

2.4.9. Drop-off and pick-up conversations

In some contexts parents and teachers engage in conversation when children are picked up or dropped off at school at either the entrance to the school or, in some cases, the classroom door. Often these conversations are very short and only last a few seconds with the core element frequently being smiles exchanged

between adults. In other cases, the exchange may be slightly longer and may be used to share essential information such as the bereavement of a grandparent or an upcoming family trip involving the child.

2.4.10. Home visits

Visits to children's homes are described in a number of different contexts. According to Linse, Vlack and Bladas (2014, p.13), in Japan, for example, it is customary for classroom teachers at primary school level to visit each of their pupil's homes once a year". These visits provide a window for the classroom teacher to see the child's world. However, there is pressure upon the parents to prepare, tidy up and clean the home before the prearranged time for the teacher's visit. For most teachers, time is a problem when considering home visits, since it is not something that is generally taken into account when scheduling visits to parents who work late. Some teachers are also concerned about how much it costs, including fuel, to go and visit pupils. Some teachers take a colleague with them and choose with whom they will like to visit the child's home.

2.4.11. Homework

Homework is viewed by some as a means to connect with families, whereas others had not considered the issue. The issue of the help need from parents to do the homework is also mentioned. Some teachers are aware that parents of very young children did not possess enough English to help their children with English language homework. It became clear that in many cases the parents will not be able to help the child and the child will need to work independently.

There are a variety of educators responsible for communicating with parents regarding their children's instructional progress.

2.4.12. The classroom teacher

The classroom teacher is often the person responsible for communicating with parents. In primary school ELT programs there are often three different types of classroom teachers. In English language immersion programs, all instruction is delivered through the medium of English. In other contexts, either in the public or the private sector, English teachers may have primary school children for one period a day or several periods a week. Finally, in other situations the regular classroom teacher may deliver instruction in the children's home language for most of the day, as well as some specialised English classes. Often these classroom teachers are the first point of contact between schools and homes.

2.4.13. Homeroom teachers

According to Linse, Vlack and Bladas (2014, p.9):

"Some countries such as Korea, have adopted the system of 'homeroom teachers', used in all public schools as well as some private schools and language institutes. The homeroom teacher system is found in both primary schools and secondary schools, including middle school (lower secondary school). Homeroom teachers serve as the in-school parent coordinator for individual and groups of children. This is a very important role and carries with it a great deal of responsibility".

Homeroom teachers take their role very seriously and view it as both a burden and an opportunity. If a child or group of children has more than one teacher, then the homeroom teacher serves as the key point of contact for the family within the school. It is common, for instance, for an English teacher to give marks to the homeroom teacher, who then shares them with the parents. More often than not, the homeroom teacher does not speak English. Also, the homeroom teacher usually teaches the child for one or more classes a day. There are also situations in which a child has three or four different classroom teachers and the non-homeroom teachers do not have direct contact with parents because all communication and correspondence is necessarily handled through the homeroom teacher. This is advantageous because parents are able to develop a relationship with one key contact on behalf of their child.

2.4.14. Guidance counsellor or social worker or psychologist

In a number of different contexts there is a system of extra support for children who are having numerous challenges in the classroom. The label or term used for the person to fill this role varies from 'guidance counsellor' to 'social worker' or 'psychologist'. English teachers find this role, regardless of what it is called, as very well-suited to the development of an extensive partnership with the family. Teachers feel that when the school-home partnership is lacking, the person filling this role is need to help the child improve and overcome obstacles.

2.5 Previous Studies

The researcher has found a number of previous studies in the same subject. The first study was conducted by Cole, Sylvia A. (2017) as Ph.D. dissertation in Northcentral University, under the title: *The Impact of Parental Involvement on Academic Achievement*. It aims to examine the impact of parental involvement

in academics and the extent of the parental participation in their child's education. The second study conducted by Delores C. Peña (2000) as an article in the Journal of Educational Research under the title: *Parent Involvement: Influencing Factors and Implications*. It aims at exploring influencing factors and implications of parent involvement in their children's education. The third study was conducted by M Hughes, Felicity Wikeley, T Nash (1994), as a book under the title: *Parents and Their Children's Schools*, in Oxford. It aims to make a major contribution to understanding of the fundamental relationship between parents and schools.

3. Methodology

This part is assigned for the discussion of the population, sample, tools for data collection, procedures followed in conducting the study and analysis will be covered in details. The descriptive analytical method was followed to conduct this study. The population of this study was the English teachers in Rufaa' town, primary and secondary schools. The sample (which was chosen randomly) consisted of (50) teachers. The researcher focused on teachers because they care about the home–school relationship. A questionnaire was used for collecting the data from the (50) teachers. The questionnaire consisted of (15) items focusing on the effectiveness of the relationship between home and school on children's learning. It was distributed by hand with the help of some teachers. For processing and analyzing the data statistically, (SPSS) program was used.

4. Discussion and analysis of results

The results of the questionnaire are summarized in the following tables; each table is entitled according to the statement in the questionnaire.

Table (4.1) Home-school connection playing an important role in children's learning

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	50	100%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.1)

According to the table (4.1), all the teachers (100%) agreed that home-school connection plays an important role in children's learning. *Accordingly, home-school connection is very important in children's learning.*

Table (4.2) Home-school connection making parents and teachers working together in developing young learners

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	50	100%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.2)

Based on the table (4.2), all the teachers (100%) agreed that home-school connection makes parents and teachers work together in developing young learners. *This obviously illustrates that home-school connection develops young learners' learning.*

Table (4.3) Channels of communication contributing and creating a climate of collaboration.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	49	98%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	1	2%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.3)

The table (4.3), shows that (98%) of the teachers believed that channels of communication can contribute and create a climate of collaboration. *This shows clearly, different channels of communication must be followed to achieve children's learning developing.*

Table (4.4) Home-school connection helping textbook publishers developing content

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	45	90%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.4)

According to the table (4.4), (90%) of the teachers agreed that home-school connection helps textbook publishers develop content, while (10%) were neutral. *This result illustrates that home-school connection helps textbook publishers develop content.*

Table (4.5) Communication between schools and homes helping test developers

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	47	94%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.5)

The table (4.5), explains that (94%) of the teachers believed that communication between schools and homes can help test developers. While (6%) of the teachers were neutral. *This shows most of the teachers see that communication between schools and homes can help test developers.*

Table (4.6) There being a connection between the teachers and children's parents

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	22	44%
Disagree	28	56%
Neutral	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.6)

According to the table (4.6), (44%) of the teachers agreed that they have a connection with children's parents, while (56%) of the teachers explained that they haven't any connection with children's parents. *This means that more than half of the teachers where the study was conducted haven't any connection with children's parents.*

Table (4.7) There being absent and invisible parents

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	38	76%
Disagree	7	14%
Neutral	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.7)

Based on the table (4.7), (76%) of the teachers agreed that there are absent and invisible parents, (14%) were disagree, while (10%) were neutral. *This obviously means that three quarters of the teachers where the study was conducted, illustrate that parents do not make connections with the schools.*

Table (4.8) Parents' concern about test preparation for their children

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	28	56%
Disagree	5	10%
Neutral	17	34%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.8)

The table (4.8) explains that (56%) of the teachers saw that parents concern about test preparation for their children, (10%) disagreed with them, while (34%) were neutral. *Accordingly, more than half of teachers state that there is parents' concern about test preparation for their children.*

Table (4.9) Parents dissatisfying with children's marks

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	40	80%
Disagree	5	10%
Neutral	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.9)

Depend on the table (4.9), (80%) of the teachers believed that parents dissatisfied with children's marks, (10%) saw parents satisfied with children's marks, while (10%) were neutral. *Based on the result, most of the parents where the study was conducted, dissatisfied with children's marks.*

Table (4.10) Most educational institutions have some formal home-school group

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	48	96%
Disagree	2	4%
Neutral	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.10)

According to the table (4.10), (96%) of the teachers saw that most educational institutions have some formal home-school group, while (4%) were disagree. *This means most of the teachers see that most educational institutions have some formal home-school group.*

Table (4.11) Both parents and educators have a large stake in children's success

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	50	100%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.11)

table (4.11) shows that all the teachers agreed that parents and educators have a large stake in children's success. *This explains that children's success depends on parents and educators.*

Table (4.12) Every school promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	43	86%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	7	14%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.12)

Based on the table (4.12), (86%) of the teachers explained that school promotes the social, emotional, and academic growth of children, while (14%), were neutral. *This means that most of the teachers believe that school promotes the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.*

Table (4.13) Preferring oral communication with parents (face to face or phone)

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	48	96%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.13)

According to the table (4.13), (96%) of the teachers agreed that they prefer oral communication with parents (face to face or phone), while (4%) were neutral. *This obviously shows the majority of the teachers prefer oral communication with parents (face to face or phone).*

Table (4.14) Home-school connections having positive psychological effect on children

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	45	90%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.14)

The table (4.14) illustrates that (90%) of the teachers saw that home-school connections have positive psychological effect on children, while (10%) were neutral. *According to this result the majority of the teachers believe that home-school connections affect positively on children's psychology.*

Table (4.15) Preferring writing communication with parents (notebook or social media)

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	10	20%
Disagree	35	70%
Neutral	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table (4.15)

Acc

ording to the table (4.15), (20%) agreed that they prefer writing communication with parents (notebook or social media), (70%) saw that they do not prefer writing communication with parents, while (10%) were neutral. *Based on the result three quarters of the teachers where the study was conducted, do not prefer writing communication with parents.*

4.2. Testing the hypotheses in relation to the results

According to the first hypothesis which says; *the relationship between schools and homes impacts on children's learning positively*, going through the results of the questionnaire, table (4.1) revealed that all the teachers (100%) agreed that home-school connection plays an important role in children's learning. Table (4.2) explicated that all the teachers (100%) saw that home-school connection makes parents and teachers work together in developing young learners. Table (4.14) illustrated that all the teachers (100%) agreed that home-school connections have positive psychological effect on children. According to the result of the tables (4.4) and (4.5) the majority of the teachers (90%) agreed that home-school connection helps textbook publishers develop content, communication between schools and homes can help test developers. Thus, the second hypothesis of the study is proved.

Most of the participant teachers in the questionnaire returned children's success in their schools to the effectiveness of the strong home-school relationship.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

According to the study objectives the relationship between schools and homes is very important for children's learning. The actual practices varied and are both dependent upon and embedded in the specific local contexts. Nevertheless, there are three elements present in most descriptions of what teachers feel in successful contacts between schools and homes; The first element is the need for

channels or modes of communication that are accessible to parents and manageable for teachers. The second element is the need for two-way dialogue or communication. The third element concerned respect for parents' home language(s). The first element referred to the means, mode or channel for communication which is established between the school and the family or parents. The vehicles used for communication are often based on traditions that have been in place for decades or more. Some communication is primarily oral and face-to-face, or by telephone, whereas other communication is primarily in written form. The second element focused on the importance of conversation or dialogue with parents. Teachers are more concerned about parents who do not engage in dialogue than those who are labelled as 'pushy.' The school needs to work collaboratively with parents on behalf of the child. There are a variety of descriptions of conversations between parents and educators: from quick chats taking place in a minute or two at the classroom door, to conversations occurring in the form of formal parent teacher conferences. There are also dialogues which occur via other means of communication, such as phone calls or conversations through the diary. Whatever the mode of communication is, however, educators feel that they need a space to dialogue with parents about the child. The third element concerned the home language or languages. In most cases there is respect for the home language or languages of the parents and there are accommodations and considerations for local or indigenous languages. There are, however, a few instances where local or indigenous languages are not respected or even considered. This revealed communication problems that need to be remedied. This may expose, unintentionally, a perspective of linguistic imperialism whereby one language is judged as more valuable than another.

Teachers and other educators can use the findings from this paper to examine and potentially improve the connections made between school and home. In order to facilitate this process, implementation tools have been created. They consist of questions which can be posed as part of an organic process to both examine and improve modes of communication. In conclusion, the study demonstrates how valuable educators see their collaboration with parents in order to succeed in their role with young learners. Most educators underline that the importance of maintaining fluent communication with families, even though some parents are not always visibly involved or engaged with schools. Also, despite the variety of cultural, economic and social contexts where the study is carried out, educators tended to regard parents as partners rather than a burden or an obstacle to overcome. Most educators also feel that fluent two-way

communication with parents have a positive effect on the children's learning process and see fruitful collaboration with parents as an incentive to improve their own work. The researcher hopes that the findings will help encourage future studies on this area and above all will help develop good practices in communication with families.

5.2. Recommendations

1. Teachers and parents should communicate together to enhance children's learning.
2. There should be home and school visits between parents and teachers.
3. Home language(s) should be respected from the teachers.
4. Parents should follow-up their children progress in learning.

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