

The Communication Barriers between Teachers and Parents in Primary Schools‡

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Abstract

Problem Statement: In educational institutions, the effectiveness of communication between teachers and parents, in terms of student achievement and attendance, has a great importance. Parent-teacher communication provides multi-faceted benefits to teachers, the school, and parents as well. However, various obstacles hinder the realization of effective parent-teacher communication in school settings.

Purpose of Study: The main purpose of this study is to determine the communication barriers between parents and teachers, based on the views of primary school teachers. This study is seen as important since it addresses the barriers in communication, which is seen as vital for achieving educational aims effectively. Effective communication provides achievement and improvement by providing support to parents, students, teachers, and schools and promoting appropriate environments.

Method: This research is a survey type descriptive study. Due to the stratified and random type sample formation, 850 teachers were considered to be taken into the research sample; however, 514 of the distributed questionnaires were found valid. The data collection tool used

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was a four-dimensional scale developed by the researchers themselves. In the analysis of the data, parametric and non-parametric tests were used.

Findings: The findings revealed that teachers experienced “individual” barriers at a “general” level, but other “socio-cultural,” “accessibility,” and “field and status” related barriers at were experienced at the “very rare” level without any significant differences considering the gender and branches of the teachers. However, novice teachers (5 years and less work experience) stated significantly the most individual barriers and the most barriers related to the other dimensions as well.

Results and Suggestions: The results obtained in this study show the same major communication preventive issues between teachers and parents documented in the literature. Thus, results such as physical distance, socio-cultural differences (language, dress, values), meeting with parents only when money is required, parents’ lack of trust in teachers and their unwillingness for cooperation, parents’ financial problems and lack of interest about informing parents of school-related issues, inappropriate schedule of school activities, teachers’ misbehaviors, parents’ education level, parents’ mistrust in teachers and managers, and the like also confirm the situation represented in previous research. It was recommended that school managers and teachers adopt an open-door policy for parents; and the schools should take the initiative of realizing collaborative efforts among the school staff, parents, and other relevant institutions in order to eliminate communication barriers. The training of the school administrators, teachers, and families about gaining effective communication skills that will contribute to student achievement should be emphasized.

Keywords: Schools, teachers, parents, effective communication, communication barriers.

Introduction

In fulfilling an efficient education in education organizations, communication not only among the school managers, teachers, and students, but also with students’ parents bears a great importance. Especially communication between teachers and parents regarding students’ performance in the class bears vital importance in better understanding students’ problems, increasing parents’ support in education, performing effective counselling and guidance, and ultimately increasing students’ motivation and success.

The existing parent-teacher communication studies generally approach the issue from two aspects. The first covers teacher-parent relations and contributions of parents to school communities and organizational activities, whereas the second one covers studies about parents’ support of students’ academic development (Rogers et al., 2009). Consequently, teacher-parent relations bear an increasing importance for

improving schools as learning communities and for students' growth through meeting their needs and expectations (Olcer & Kocer, 2015; Schussler, 2003). The US National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) reports numerous study results that have indicated the important roles of school-parent-environment cooperation in promoting school success and student growth (NSPRA, 2006).

However, healthy communication between teachers and parents is not always possible, and numerous barriers on various levels can negatively affect the communication process. These barriers can arise in connection with school resources, teachers' professional development levels, family, and environmental features. It is not always possible to mention regular and efficient communication between school management and structures, such as parent-teacher association and school protection association, that are formed with the purpose of improving school-parent cooperation (Aslan, 1984; Aytac, 2000; Gungor & Tasdan, 2016; Ozel, Bayindir & Ozel, 2014). School managements remain incapable of understanding the importance of communication between teachers-parents and school-parents and developing efficient strategies in improving this communication (NSPRA, 2006). On the other hand, most teachers cannot improve themselves without the knowledge and skills that are needed in establishing an efficient communication with parents (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2004).

The main purpose of this study is to determine the communication barriers between the parents and teachers based on the views of primary school teachers. This study is seen as important since it addresses the barriers in communication, which is seen as vital for achieving educational aims effectively. Effective communication provides achievement and improvement by providing support to parents, students, teachers, and schools and promoting appropriate environments.

Teacher-Parent Communication

The most common definition of communication is sharing emotions, thoughts, knowledge, news, and skills, or in other words, the process of creating common ground in the sense of emotions, thoughts, and manners among individuals (Karaca, 2016; Sever, 1998). Interpersonal communication is intentionally or unintentionally affecting others by transmitting and receiving messages (Korkut, 2000).

Due to the raised awareness of the importance of parent-school cooperation in achieving effective education, the number of studies encouraging parents to play more active roles in school activities is increasing. A school-parent association is deemed indispensable to school organizations for the realization of effective education that will foster student performance (Acikalin & Turan, 2015; Ozyurek, 1983; Sisman & Turan, 2004). By means of communication, mutual trust between the school and parents develops (Saritas, 2005), and mutual support towards encouraging student learning increases (Celik, 2005).

A trust-based communication that can be established between teachers and parents bears great importance from the aspect of determining problems, finding ways to deal with them, and providing students with help on their way to learning.

Particularly at pre-school, elementary, and secondary school levels, communication between teachers and parents assures the realization of issues such as informing, enlightening, and training parents with the purpose of increasing student success. Additionally, the efficiency of communication between teachers and parents contributes to the schools by improving school and district relations, utilizing environmental sources, and developing programs complying with environmental conditions by securing parents' integration into the school.

Schools that are organic parts of the society have a natural advantage in terms of interacting with parents. For example, schools are in a position to host or facilitate the organization of seminars for parents that range from child development to stress management. Moreover, schools can help form support groups in meeting the various needs of parents (Molland, 2004), can help parents to develop relationships with the needed institutions, can encourage the parents to participate in school projects, and can pioneer establishing a mechanism to promote counseling and guidance programs (Graham-Clay, 2005).

Barriers in Teacher-Parent Communication and Ways to Deal with Them

Establishing healthy communication that makes life meaningful and forms social life is not always possible due to "communication barriers." In our schools, there are numerous barriers that prevent the establishment of efficient communication between teachers and parents. These barriers can generally be categorized as physical, technical, psychological, or social and organizational (Sabuncuoglu & Gumus, 2008). Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2002) categorize communication barriers in schools as either school related and parent related. School-related obstacles are described as the inability to provide communication support, lack of system knowledge, and failure to develop alternative strategies. Parent-related ones are described as family status, pragmatic concerns (such as non-flexibility of parents' work hours, etc.), and psychological barriers (negative experiences about schools etc.). Bursalioglu (2008) states that numerous barriers within or outside of the organization can make the communication process harder, and sometimes it may even stop it. The study describes these barriers as psychological, semantic, status-related, protection-related, field-related, hierarchical, narcotizing, and restraining barriers. Tutar (2009) categorizes factors that prevent the effective communication as personal, language and expression difficulties, listening and perception inefficiencies, lack of knowledge, sexual and cultural differences, misconception, and psychological barriers.

Parents and school principals usually report lack of time as the most important communication barrier. However, studies reveal that lack of planning towards establishing cooperation and lack of developing a mutual understanding are the most important communication barriers. In addition to that, some sort of feelings related to previous negative experiences, religious and cultural differences, transportation problems, and the incompetency and inefficiency of school members may affect school-parent relations negatively (NSPRA, 2006).

Cultural differences can create communication barriers if the teachers reflect their own cultural perspectives while interacting with the parents from a different language and culture (Colombo, 2004). In order to deal with this potential miscommunication, teachers should begin a quest for knowledge to help them understand their students' parents' language and cultural differences (Lai & Ishiyama, 2004). Along with gaining knowledge of cultural features, trying to understand cultural differences and values seems to be important from the aspect of dealing with communication barriers (Karadeniz, 2015; Kasahara & Turnbull, 2005).

Negative school experiences of parents can also constitute a barrier in their communication with teachers. Schools should be able to provide guidance service to help parents to manage these kinds of psychological problems (Finders & Lewis, 1994; Hartman & Chesley, 1998). This guidance service should encourage the parents to seek help and get information related to the issues they worry about, to understand the improvement level of the class, to grasp the teachers' approach to education, and to learn how to behave under what conditions. Providing the parents with this kind of knowledge can create dual effects by decreasing parents' negative thoughts about school on one hand and increasing their interest in the school on the other (Graham-Clay, 2005).

Economy-related issues and time constraints are seen among the elements that hinder effective communication. It is reported that especially working parents do not have enough time to cooperate with school. Besides, since most of the school-parent meetings converted into money demanded places, most of the parents from poor economic conditions refrain from attending these meetings (Finders & Lewis, 1994; Seyfullahogullari, 2012; Terek et al., 2015). To cope with this, teachers can conduct surveys to determine the work schedules of the parents at the beginning of the school year; they can even inform parents about how and when they can communicate with teachers. A study should be conducted on how the communication hours can be made flexible to enable parents to attend the school or class meetings (Molland, 2004).

Also, lack of technology can limit communication opportunities. The new technologies that provide convenience, efficiency, and effectiveness in knowledge transfer have an important force in the development of parent-teacher communication (Zieger & Tan, 2012). However, teachers shouldn't think that all parents have access to such technology, and so, they should investigate whether they can benefit from the new technology. On the other hand, most teachers and parents are still unable to make use of technology efficiently, and they give weight to traditional paper-and-pencil-based communication (Graham-Clay, 2005).

Using technical terminology in communication with parents at the school level seems to pose a general communication barrier. Teachers should observe their own speech and make sure that they omit educational jargon from written communications. If it is a must to use technical terms, the meaning of them must be explained. Messages that are given to the parents in face-to-face communication

should not be above the parents' understanding capacity (Williams & Cartledge, 1997).

As a result, efficient communication is necessary for creating school-parent cooperation and increasing parent contribution. Teachers should not only be skilled in the art of teaching, but also should improve their knowledge and skills towards efficient communication with the parent community. There are numerous communication means that teachers can benefit from, such as internet technology, private interviews, conferences, group meetings, and the like. Teachers should strive to develop communication strategies, new cooperative communication methods should be established, and these efforts should reflect a planned approach (Graham-Clay, 2005).

Caspe (2003) argues that teacher training and professional development programs must actively support improvement of teachers' communication skills. Implicit in the wish for improving teacher-parent communication is the expectation that parent attendance will contribute to the improvement of student success and realization of an efficient education (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Virginia Department of Education, 2002). Studies about strengthening teacher-parent communication show that it can increase students' success in school and prevent the occurrence of disciplinary problems in the school as well (Aslanargun, 2007).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the communication barriers between parents and teachers based on the views of primary school teachers in terms of various variables.

Method

Research Model

The research is a survey type descriptive study. Descriptive studies aim to explain the interaction between situations by regarding their relation with previous events and conditions (Kaptan, 1998). In this context, it was tried in this study to describe the factors that prevent teacher-parent communication.

Research Sample

The space of the study consisted of 3,968 teachers who worked at 317 elementary schools within the boundaries of Elazig city during 2011-2012 academic year. The sample size was calculated as 350 with a reliability level of 95% based on Cochran's (1962) formula. A total of 15 schools were chosen randomly, with three schools from each of the five education districts in Elazig city center. In addition, a total of six schools—two randomly chosen schools from each randomly chosen three central towns—from the central town set were included in the sample. Thus, questionnaires were distributed to a total of 806 teachers from 21 elementary schools. 514 of the returned questionnaires that were filled properly were taken into consideration by the study (Table 1).

Table 1.*The Schools Included in the Sample and the Numbers of Returned Questionnaires*

	<i>Primary Schools</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>	<i>Number of Returned Questionnaires</i>
<i>School Districts</i>	Salim Hazardagli	64	25
	Bahcelievler Bahcelievler	65	42
	24 Kasim	10	11
	Vali Lutfullah Bilgin	48	30
	Firat Yahya Kemal Beyatli	36	23
	Gonul Ihsan Tangulu	45	39
	Murat	51	20
	Harput Dumlupinar	23	15
	Elazig	50	38
	Sair Hayri	45	19
	Hazar Selcuklular	28	15
	Yucel	45	41
	Dogukent	68	38
	Karsiyaka Kaya Karakaya	30	25
<i>Chosen Central Towns</i>	60. Yil	69	31
	Kovancilar Kovancilar	37	27
	Kovancilar Eti Holding	33	21
	Palu Palu YIBO	15	10
	Palu Yavuz Selim	17	14
	Karakocan Karakocan Nuri Özaltin	24	15
	Karakocan Cengiz Topel	23	15
Total	21	806	514

The distribution of the teachers according to their genders indicates that 42.2% of the sample are female teachers and 57.8% are male. Regarding the branch variables, 77.4% of the teachers are in social sciences, 14.8% are in physical sciences, and 7.8% are in arts/special talents. By work year variable, 56.8% of teachers have "5 or fewer years," 37% have "6-15 years," and 6.2% have "6 and more years" (Table 2).

Table 2.*Demographic Qualifications of Teachers Who Participated in the Study*

<i>Demographic Qualifications</i>	<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Gender</i>	Female	217	42.2
	Male	297	57.8
	<i>Total</i>	514	100
<i>Branch</i>	Social sciences	398	77.4
	Physical Sciences	76	14.8
	Fine arts/Special talent	40	7.8
	<i>Total</i>	514	100
<i>Work Years in School</i>	5 years and less	292	56.8
	6-15 years	190	37.0
	16 years and more	32	6.2
	<i>Total</i>	514	100

Research Instrument and Procedure

With the purpose of determining the issues that prevent teacher-parent communication, the "Communication Barriers Assessment Scale" was developed by the researchers. In the development process, 27 items were initially generated, accompanied by a literature review and expert opinions. In order to assess the reliability and validity of the instrument, a pilot application was done, and the opinions of randomly selected 152 teachers were asked. An exploratory factor analysis was applied to the instrument. During the principal component analysis, six items were excluded since their factor loads were found to be below .40 or because they took place in two factors with close loads with a rate difference under .10. At the end of varimax rotated analyses, 21 items were gathered under four factors with an eigenvalue over 1.00. These factors were labeled "personal" (items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12), "socio-cultural" (items 4, 8, 9, 10), "accessibility" (items 12, 14, 15, 18, 19) and "field and status" barriers (items 13, 16, 17, 20, 21) according to the meanings of the items grouped under each factor. In this pilot study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the whole scale was calculated as .78. This is regarded as sufficient since .70 is considered the limit value to test reliability (Buyukozturk, 2012). Reliability coefficients for sub-dimensions were .82 for personal barriers, .71 for socio-cultural barriers, .74 for accessibility barriers, and .70 for field and status barriers.

The Likert type scale contains five options namely "always," "generally," "sometimes," "rarely," and "never," to be scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for the items that have

negative connotations, and the reverse scoring for the positive ones. On the basis of these dimensions, the responses of the subjects were computed regarding the mean ranks as $\bar{x} \geq 4.20$ always, $4.19 \geq \bar{x} \geq 3.40$ generally, $3.39 \geq \bar{x} \geq 2.60$ sometimes, $2.59 \geq \bar{x} \geq 1.80$ rarely, and $\bar{x} \leq 1.79$ never.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from research were first entered to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) package software, and the demographical features of the sample group were analyzed by means of this software. Pursuant to the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test for normal distribution, the Levene test for the homogeneity of the scale, independent t test for gender variable, ANOVA for branch variable, Kruskal-Wallis H test for work years of the subjects at schools, and the Least Significant Difference (LSD) test and Mann-Whitney U test for assessing the meaningful differences were computed.

Results

On the basis of the teachers' opinions and with the purpose of determining the preventive factors for the realization of efficient communication between teachers and parents, the obtained findings are interpreted below.

Results and Interpretations Related to Gender Variable

Pursuant to the independent sample's t test, there is no significant difference between female ($\bar{x}_A = 3.68$) and male teachers' ($\bar{x}_B = 3.62$) [$t_{(512)} = 1.29$, $p > .05$] views regarding "personal" barriers (parents' prejudices towards school, illiteracy of parents, concern about hearing negative comments about children, parents' problems with school management, and so on). This finding indicates that, although female teachers have encountered more personal barriers, male and female teachers are exposed to a similar number of personal obstacles at the "generally" level. Other "socio-cultural" barriers (parents' religious affinity, poor socio-economic conditions, low level of education, parents' tendency to find their children very successful); "accessibility" barriers (not stating the needs and opinions openly, not paying attention to the teacher, inaccessibility of parents when they are needed, insufficient amount of time devoted to the parents, not talking easily with the parents about their children at any time); and "field and status"-related barriers (distance of residential address of the parents, the lack of appropriate spaces in the school to talk with parents, social status differences between teachers and parents, working at the same school with some parents, and so on) have been experienced at the "rarely" level without any significant difference (Table 3).

Table 3.*Data Distribution According to Gender Variable on the Basis of Dimensions*

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Personal Barriers</i>	A) Female	217	3.68	.60	512	1.29	.20
	B) Male	297	3.62	.60			
	Total	514					
<i>Socio-Cultural Barriers</i>	A) Female	217	2.31	.63	512	-.77	.44
	B) Male	297	2.36	.67			
	Total	514					
<i>Accessibility Barriers</i>	A) Female	217	2.08	.56	512	-1.21	.22
	B) Male	297	2.13	.50			
	Total	514					
<i>Field and Status Barriers</i>	A) Female	217	2.43	.48	512	-.87	.38
	B) Male	297	2.47	.56			
	Total	514					

*p<.05

Results and Interpretation Regarding Branch Variable

Pursuant to the "socio-cultural" barriers dimension, the analysis of the data indicated significant differences among the opinions of teachers from three different branches related to barriers in teacher-parent communication [$F_{(2-511)} = 3.25$, $p < 0.05$]. The Least Significant Difference test revealed the difference between social sciences and physical sciences and between physical science and fine arts/special talent branches. Accordingly, it is observed that teachers of fine arts/special talent branches ($\bar{x}_C = 2.56$) have encountered barriers based on socio-cultural reasons more when compared to teachers of social sciences ($\bar{x}_A = 2.33$) and physical sciences ($\bar{x}_B = 2.24$); however, it is understood that all sample groups have encountered barriers at the "rarely" level (Table 4).

In the dimensions of "personal," "accessibility," and "field and status" related barriers, no statistically significant difference is observed between teacher opinions ($p > .05$). Personal barriers have been experienced at the "generally" level; "accessibility" and "field and status" related barriers have been encountered at the "rarely" level (Table 4).

Table 4.*Data Distribution According to Branches Variable on the Basis of Dimensions*

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	SD	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Significant Difference (LSD)
<i>Personal Barriers</i>	A) Social Sciences	398	3.62	Between Groups	2.071	2	1.036	2.90	.06	
	B) Physical Sciences	76	3.67	Within Groups	182.794	511	.358			
	C) Fine Arts/Special Talent	40	3.85							
	Total	514	3.65							
<i>Socio-Cultural Barriers</i>	A) Social Sciences	398	2.33	Between Groups	2.754	2	1.377	3.25	.04*	A-C B-C
	B) Physical Sciences	76	2.24	Within Groups	216.288	511	.423			
	C) Fine Arts/Special Talent	40	2.56							
	Total	514	2.34							
<i>Accessibility Barriers</i>	A) Social Sciences	398	2.09	Between Groups	1.377	2	.689	2.51	.08	
	B) Physical Sciences	76	2.23	Within Groups	140.358	511	.275			
	C) Fine Arts/Special Talent	40	2.12							
	Total	514	2.11							
<i>Field and Status Barriers</i>	A) Social Sciences	398	2.45	Between Groups	.406	2	.203	.72	.49	
	B) Physical Sciences	76	2.45	Within Groups	143.454	511	.281			
	C) Fine Arts/Special Talent	40	2.55							
	Total	514	2.45							

* $p < .05$ *Results and Interpretation Regarding Work Year Variable*

The analysis of the data revealed that teachers' opinions relating to "personal" barriers differed significantly by their work years in school [$\chi^2_{(2)} = 19.318$, $p < 0.05$]. As a result of multiple comparisons that were performed through a Mann-Whitney U test, this difference seems to occur in groups that have "5 years and less" and "6-15

years" of work in the school. This finding shows that teachers' years of work in the school have an impact on the rate of their encountering personal barriers. When the mean rank of the groups is regarded, it is seen that the "5 years and less" work year group encounters the most barriers, and it is followed by "6-15 years" and "16 years and more" groups respectively.

It is understood that there is no significant difference related to other "socio-cultural," "accessibility," and "field and status" related barriers. However, it is seen that teachers with "5 years and less" work years have encountered socio-cultural barriers at the highest level; this is followed by teachers with "16 years and more" and "6-15 years" of work experience. Further, teachers with "16 years and more" of work experience have encountered accessibility barriers the most, and it is followed by teachers with "5 years and less" and "6-15 years" work year experience. Related to "field and status" barriers, it is seen that teachers with "5 years and less" work experience have encountered the most barriers, followed by teachers who have "6-15 years" and "16 years and more" work experience (Table 5).

Table 5.

Data Distribution According to Work Year Variable on the Basis of Dimensions

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Work Experience</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>sd</i>	χ^2	<i>P</i>	<i>Significant difference (Mann Whitney U)</i>
<i>Personal Barriers</i>	A) 5 years and less	292	282.14				A-B
	B) 6-15 years	190	221.97	2	19.318	.00*	
	C) 16 years and more	32	243.61				
	Total	514					
<i>Socio-Cultural Barriers</i>	A) 5 years and less	292	264.63				
	B) 6-15 years	190	241.61	2	4.162	.13	
	C) 16 years and more	32	286.80				
	Total	514					
<i>Accessibility Barriers</i>	A) 5 years and less	292	267.87				
	B) 6-15 years	190	239.38	2	4.555	.10	
	C) 16 years and more	32	270.45				
	Total	514					
<i>Field and Status Barriers</i>	A) 5 years and less	292	265.30				
	B) 6-15 years	190	247.25	2	1.894	.39	
	C) 16 years and more	32	247.17				
	Total	514					

*p<.05

Discussion and Conclusion

This study tried to determine the barriers to effective communication between teachers and parents on the basis of teacher opinions. The results considering the independent variables as gender, branch, and work years of teachers in the school can be summarized as follows:

Results obtained related to gender variable reveal that personal barriers are encountered at the “generally” level; socio-cultural, accessibility, and field and status related barriers are encountered at the “rarely” level. Compared to male teachers, female teachers seem to witness personal barriers more. Celik’s (2005) result that female teachers experience more problems in school-parent communication supports the results of this research. On the other hand, the research results of Cengil (2016), Cevis (2002), and Kenanoglu (2004) indicate no significant difference between teachers’ opinions by gender related to problems in school-parent relations.

As the branch variable is regarded, it is understood that teachers from all branches (social sciences, physical sciences, and fine arts/special talents) encounter personal barriers at the “generally” level and the other socio-cultural, accessibility, field and status related barriers at the “rarely” level. However, it is understood that teachers from fine arts/special talent branches encounter socio-cultural related barriers more significantly than the other branch teachers. In Celik’s (2005) study, it is concluded that teachers who graduated from other branches, but work as class teachers experience more problems than other teachers.

The results related to work years in the school indicate that teachers with “5 years and less” work experience encounter personal barriers the most, and the teachers who have “16 years and more” and “6-15 year” of work experience follow them. Likewise, teachers with “5 years and less” experience encounter socio-cultural and field and status based barriers more than the other branch teachers. However, teachers with “16 years and more” work year experience encounter accessibility related barriers the most. It is understood that the least experienced teachers encounter almost all kind of barriers – mainly personal barriers – more than the more experienced ones. This situation indicates that novice teachers are not able to develop sufficient knowledge and skills in communication. Research shows that the greatest problems that novice teachers face are related to communication with parents as well (NSPRA, 2006).

The results obtained in this study are the same major communication preventive issues between teachers and parents found in the literature. Thus, the results such as physical distance, socio cultural differences (language, dressing, values) (Sisman & Turan, 2004); meeting with parents only when money is required (Kocak, 1991); parents’ lack of trust in teachers and their unwillingness to cooperate (Celik, 2005); parents’ financial problems and lack of interest in informing parents of school-related issues (Ceylan & Akar, 2010); inappropriate schedule of school activities (Basaran & Koc, 2001); teachers’ misbehaviors (Ogan, 2000; Yılmaztekin, 2015); parents’ education level, parents’ mistrust in teachers and managers (Porsuk, 2010), and the like also confirm the findings of that research.

Recommendations

School managers and teachers should have knowledge about the socio-economic and cultural structure of parents' environments in order to increase communication with them. Besides, school managers and teachers should develop an open-door policy for parents and the parents should be encouraged to visit the school as much as possible. Thus, while parent support can be obtained more easily on one hand, the cooperation opportunities will be created on the other to improve the students in all aspects.

Schools should plan parents' meeting at the beginning of the instructional year, announce the meeting schedule and agenda to parents, and secure a suitable place, time, and environment for meetings.

In this study, personal barriers were mentioned at the "generally" level. In order to eliminate personal barriers, prejudices towards the school and teachers should be eliminated, and a relationship that is based on mutual trust and tolerance should be developed.

In establishing communication with parents who do not have the ability to speak Turkish well, the assistance of other school members should be obtained, in case the class teacher is incapable of understanding them. The meeting time with parents should be arranged pursuant to parents' availability and should be used efficiently.

In order to eliminate communication barriers that art/special talent branches teachers encounter, the importance of these branches for personal development should be explained well, and psychological consultancy and guidance should be obtained on this subject. The assistance of experienced teachers to the novice teachers should be ensured in establishing a good communication between parents and teachers. Besides traditional communication methods such as face-to-face and written communication, electronic communication (mobile phones, social network, and computer environment) should be utilized efficiently as well.

Under the leadership of the National Education Ministry and universities, various informative and educational programs with the goal of improving teacher-parent communication should be organized.

In order to perform teacher-parent communication efficiently and develop a sustainable cooperation, a schoolwide mechanism should be built where preventive factors to efficient communication are identified and ways to overcome them are sought systematically.

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İlköğretim Okullarında Öğretmen-Veli İletişiminde Karşılaşılan Engeller

Atıf:

- Ozmen, F., Akuzum, C., Zincirli, M., & Selcuk, G. (2016). The communication barriers between teachers and parents in primary schools. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 66, 27-46
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Özet

Problem Durumu: Eğitim kurumlarında etkili eğitimin gerçekleştirilmesinde okullardaki yönetici, öğretmen ve öğrenciler yanında öğrenci velileriyle kurulan iletişim büyük önem taşır. Özellikle sınıf içindeki öğrenci performansına ilişkin öğretmen ve veliler arasında kurulan iletişim öğrenci sorunlarının daha iyi anlaşılması, velilerin eğitime olan desteklerinin artırılması, etkili yönlendirme ve rehberlik yapılması ve nihayet öğrenci güdülenmesinin ve başarısının artırılmasında yaşamsal önem taşır. Etkili iletişim, güçlü okul-aile işbirliğini yaratmak ve veli katılımını artırmak için gereklidir. Öğretmen sadece öğretme sanatında beceri sahibi olmamalı, aynı zamanda kendi veli topluluğuyla etkili iletişime yönelik bilgi ve becerisini de geliştirmelidir. Öğretmenlerin yararlanabileceği internet teknolojisi, velilerle özel görüşmeler/konferanslar ve okul ile ev iletişimine yönelik birçok iletişim olanağı vardır. Öğretmenler, velilerle iletişim kurmak için, iletişim stratejilerini ve işbirlikli yeni iletişim yöntemlerini kullanma konusunda çaba sarfetmeli ve bu çabalar planlı bir yaklaşımı yansıtmalıdır.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, ilköğretim okullarında öğretmen ve veli arasında etkili iletişime engel oluşturan unsurları öğretmen görüşlerinden yola çıkarak belirlemeye çalışmaktır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Araştırma tarama türünde betimsel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmanın evrenini, 2011-2012 eğitim-öğretim yılında, Elazığ ili sınırları içinde bulunan 317 ilköğretim okulunda görev yapan 3,968 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Elazığ il merkezindeki beş eğitim bölgesinin her birinden tesadüfi örnekleme yöntemiyle 3'er okul olmak üzere, toplam 15 okul seçilmiştir. Merkez ilçeler kümesinden rastgele seçilen üç ilçenin her birinden 2'şer okul olmak üzere 6 okul ayrıca araştırma kapsamına dâhil edilmiştir. Böylece, toplam 21 ilköğretim okulu ve bu okullarda görev yapan toplam 806 öğretmene ölçek dağıtılmış, bu ölçeklerden uygun şekilde doldurularak dönenlerin sayısı 514 olarak tespit edilmiştir. Öğretmen-veli iletişimine engel olan unsurları saptamak amacıyla araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen "İletişim Engellerini Belirleme Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Ölçek geliştirilirken literatür ve uzman görüşleri eşliğinde, önce 27 adet madde geliştirilmiştir. Geçerlik ve güvenilirliği tespit etmek amacıyla ölçek bir pilot uygulamaya tabi tutulmuş ve yansız olarak seçilen 152 öğretmenin görüşleri alınmıştır. Yapılan faktör analizinde 6 maddenin faktör yükü düşük çıktığından bu maddeler ölçeğe dahil edilmemiştir. Faktör analizi sonucunda, dört faktör altında toplanan 21 madde, maddelerin taşıdığı anlamlar dikkate alınarak, "kişisel" (1-2-3-5-6-7-12 no'lu maddeler), "sosyo-kültürel" (4-8-9-10 no'lu maddeler), "ulaşılabilirlik" (13-16-17-20-21 no'lu maddeler), "alan ve statü" (14-18-19-22-23 no'lu maddeler) engelleri şeklinde isimlendirilmiştir. Ölçeğin tamamı için Cronbach Alfa güvenilirlik katsayısı .78 olarak bulunmuştur. Çalışmadan elde edilen veriler SPSS paket programı aracılığı ile analiz edilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde kullanılacak istatistiksel yöntemleri belirlemek amacıyla normal dağılıma uygunluk analizinde Kolmogrov-Smirnov Z sınaması, verilerin homojenlik durumunu tespit etmek için de Levene sınaması kullanılmıştır. Bu sınamaların sonuçlarına göre, cinsiyet değişkeninde Independent Sample t test; branş değişkeninde Varyans Analizi (ANOVA); ve görev yapılan okuldaki çalışma süresi değişkenine yönelik Kruskal-Wallis test ve anlamlı farklılığın hangi denek grupları arasında gerçekleştiğini belirleyebilmek için Least Significant Difference (LSD) test ve Mann-Whitney U sınaması ile çoklu karşılaştırmalar yapılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Cinsiyet değişkenine ilişkin olarak ulaşılan bulgular, kişisel engellerle "genellikle" düzeyinde; sosyo-kültürel, ulaşılabilirlik, alan ve statüden kaynaklanan engellerle ise "çok nadir" düzeyinde karşılaşıldığını göstermektedir. Kadın öğretmenler, kişisel engellere daha çok tanık olurken, erkek öğretmenler sosyo-kültürel, ulaşılabilirlik, alan ve statüden kaynaklanan engellerle daha çok karşılaşmaktadırlar. Branş değişkeni dikkate alındığında, tüm branşlardaki (sosyal bilimler, fen bilimleri ve güzel sanatlar/özel yetenek) öğretmenlerin, kişisel engellerle "genellikle" düzeyinde; sosyo-kültürel, ulaşılabilirlik, alan ve statüden kaynaklı engellerle ise "çok nadir" düzeyinde karşılaştığı anlaşılmaktadır. Öğretmenlerin görev yaptıkları okuldaki çalışma süreleri değişkenine ilişkin ulaşılan bulgular, kişisel engellerle en yüksek düzeyde "5 yıl ve daha az" çalışma süresine sahip öğretmenlerin karşılaştığını, bunu "16 yıl ve üzeri" ve "6-15 yıl" çalışma

süresine sahip öğretmenlerin izlediğini göstermektedir. Sosyo-kültürel kaynaklı engeller ile alan ve statüden kaynaklanan engellerle çalışma süresi "5 yıl ve daha az" olan grup daha çok karşılaşırken, ulaşılabilirlikle ilişkili engellerle çalışma süresi "16 yıl ve üzeri" grubun daha çok karşılaştığı anlaşılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Sonuç ve Önerileri: Öğretmen-veli iletişimini etkili şekilde gerçekleştirmek ve sürdürülebilir bir işbirliğini geliştirmek için, etkili iletişime engel olan unsurları tanımlayacak ve sistematik olarak irdelenecek okul çapında bir mekanizmanın oluşturulması gerekir. Öğretmen-veli iletişimde karşılaşılan engeller, öğretmen-veli arasındaki anlayışın geliştirilmesi ve işbirliğine yönelik alternatiflerin oluşturulması için bir fırsat olarak ele alınmalıdır. Öğretmen-veli iletişiminin etkili şekilde gerçekleştirilmesi isteğinin temelinde, veli katılımının çocuğun başarısının artmasına ve etkili eğitimin gerçekleştirilmesine yapacağı katkı beklentisi vardır. Bu çalışmada da, öğretmen ve veli arasında etkili iletişime engel oluşturan unsurlar öğretmen görüşlerinden yola çıkarak belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Araştırmada belirlenen boyutlar temelinde ulaşılan sonuçlar, alan yazın çalışmalarında da öğretmen ve veli arasındaki etkili iletişimi engelleyen temel unsurlar olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Nitekim, fiziksel uzaklık, sosyo-kültürel farklılıklar (dil, giyim, değer); velilerle sadece para söz konusu olduğunda görüşülmesi; velilerde öğretmenlere karşı güven eksikliğinin olması ve velilerin işbirliğine açık olmaması; velilerin ekonomik sorunları ve velilerin okul işleyişi konusunda yeterli düzeyde bilgilendirilmemesi; okuldaki etkinliklerin zamanı; öğretmenlerin olumsuz tavırları ve velinin kendi öğrenciliğini anımsamak istememesi; velilerin eğitim düzeyi, velilerin öğretmen ve yöneticilere karşı güven duymamaları gibi sonuçlar bu durumu teyit etmektedir. Elde edilen bu sonuçlardan yola çıkarak şu önerilere yer verilebilir: Okul yönetimi ve öğretmenler, ailelerle iletişimi artırabilmek için, ailelerin yaşadığı çevrenin sosyo-ekonomik ve kültürel yapısı hakkında bilgi sahibi olmalıdır. Okul yönetimi ve öğretmenler, velilere karşı açık kapı politikası oluşturmalı, velilerin okula gelmeleri cesaretlendirilmelidir. Böylelikle, bir yandan veli desteği daha kolay elde edilirken, diğer yandan öğrencilerin her yönden gelişmesi yönünde işbirliği fırsatları yaratılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul, öğretmen, veli, etkili iletişim, iletişim engelleri.