

A STUDY OF PRIMARY LEVEL PRINCIPALS' PRACTICES ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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Abstract

The general objective of the research is to study primary level principals' practices on parental involvement. The specific objectives are to examine primary level principals' practices on parental involvement and to reveal the variations of primary level principals' practices on parental involvement according to their demographic data. Mixed method was used in this study. The samples for quantitative study are 170 primary level principals from Eastern District, Yangon Region by using cluster sampling method. For qualitative study, 8 primary level principals were interviewed by using purposive sampling method. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for primary level principals' practices on parental involvement questionnaire was 0.84. Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples *t* Test, and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used. Primary level principals practised to a moderate extent in overall parental involvement. With respect to gender, there was a significant difference between male and female. With regard to age groups, primary level principals between the age groups of 27-37 years and 49-59 years were statistically significant different in 'Communicating', 'Learning at Home' and 'Decision Making'. Based on qualitative study, although primary level principals practised parental involvement, they had struggle conditions that make delay for implementing their practices. Since this study found that there were weakness in "Volunteering" practices, all stakeholders should support volunteer activities in order to involve parents as volunteers.

Keywords: Parental involvement & Primary level principals

Introduction

Parents take an active role for children's ability to succeed in school and their environment because they are first teacher of a child. Parents are one of the significant stakeholders of the school community. Parents' participation in their children educational process and experience can be called parental involvement (Jeynes, 2005). The importance of parental involvement was recognized and acknowledged by many countries for over 40 years. In the USA, the "No Child Left Behind" policy encouraged to establish for parent partnerships with schools. In the UK, the "Children's Plan" emphasized the key role of parents in children's education. Moreover, the "Schooling Strategy" was prescribed in New Zealand and highlighted for improving parent and family involvement in children's education along with improving the quality of teaching and increasing evidence based practice (Hornby, 2011).

In Myanmar, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was established and has been functioning parental involvement programmes in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Basic Education Department since 1952-1953. Curriculum was also modernized and students are more active and keen on new teaching and learning styles. Schools need more support from government, parents and community for the children to improve their academic engagement. Therefore, we should study principals' practices on parental involvement for effective implementing parental involvement practices in schools.

Significance of the Study

Parental involvement is an important indicator for students' success in schools. The more parental involvement in schools, the higher achievement, more positive attitude and behavior in

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students. Therefore, most of the countries were highlighting for improving parental involvement and encouraging to establish parent partnership in recent years.

In Myanmar, parental involvement were being implementing by PTA and Board of Trustee (BOT). Myanmar Education Report registered that there was a well-developed parental involvement in school. Nowadays, schools need to establish more powerful parental involvement. For building a culture of parental involvement, leadership is a foundation and then, principals become crucial roles.

For improving parental involvement in schools, principals must have an understanding of the various barriers to parental involvement thoroughly and a good knowledge of strategies and techniques. Although there could be some difficulties in implementing parental involvement in schools, principals should encourage parents, teachers and community to involve in school activities and make many practices for school improvement and holistic development of students. Therefore, this research is conducted for studying practices of primary level principals on parental involvement.

Research Objectives

General Objective

- To study primary level principals' practices on parental involvement

Specific Objectives

- To examine primary level principals' practices on parental involvement
- To reveal the variations of primary level principals' practices on parental involvement according to their demographic data

Research Questions

- What are the levels of primary level principals' practices on parental involvement?
- Are there any significant variations in primary level principals' practices on parental involvement according to their demographic data?

Limitations of the study

This study was geographically restricted to the primary level principals in Basic Education Primary Schools from Eastern District, Yangon Region due to time constraints. In this study, construct validity was not measured due to limited time and cost for a variety of participants.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

In this study, the theoretical framework is established based on the related literature. Parental involvement practices undergoes six areas. They are:

1. Parenting
2. Communicating
3. Volunteering
4. Learning at Home
5. Decision Making
6. Collaborating with Community (Epstein et al., 2002).

Parenting refers to helping all families establish home environments to support children as students. In parenting, information is provided to all families i.e. the families who attend the workshops or meetings at school, the families who do not attend or cannot attend and the families who really need the information by the schools. It is also important for schools to gather information from families for helping educators, to understand students and their families, such as their backgrounds, goals, strengths, and needs (Epstein, 2001). Activities should contain information for parents and from parents about their families (Epstein et al., 2002).

Communicating refers to designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programmes and student progress. There are multiple ways for communication between school and home by using conferences, PTA meetings, weekly or monthly folders of student work, handbooks, parent pick up of report cards, notes, emails, newsletters, phone calls, and websites to produce effective communication between the home and the school. But it is essential that communication must be clear and useful (Epstein et al., 2002). Schools need to consider the factors such as language barriers and literacy of families that could affect the understanding of the shared information (Epstein, 2001).

Volunteering refers to recruiting and organizing people to assist and support the school and the students (Epstein, 2001). Volunteering is not only being present at the school. It consists of supporting the goals of the school and the learning process in any way, in any place, and at any time. Volunteer activities include (1) recruiting and training volunteers; (2) arranging schedules, locations, and activities for volunteers; and (3) recognizing parents who serve as an audience for student events and performances (Epstein et al., 2002).

Learning at Home refers to providing ideas to families on ways to assist their children in learning activities at home including homework and other related activities to curriculum, decision making, and planning. Learning at home activities can be extremely beneficial to the learning experience of students but they can be difficult to design and implement. When learning at home activities are effectively designed and implemented, students' skills, abilities, and test scores can be expected to rise (Epstein et al., 2002).

Decision Making refers to including families in school decision making and developing parent leaders and representatives within the school. In decision making activities and programmes, it is important to include parents from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and other groups from within the school population. Schools should offer appropriate training for the parent leaders to assist for developing their leadership skills and to represent families (Epstein et al., 2002).

Collaborating with Community refers to coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school to support students' learning. The community comprises everyone influencing the educational experiences of students, not just those living in neighborhoods: near or around the school. The community can contribute to students, schools, and families by offering many services such as business partnerships, cultural organizations, health services, recreational centers, governmental agencies, and other groups (Epstein et al., 2002).

Definitions of Key Terms

Practice

Practice is defined as the basic unit of activity as bodily doings and sayings (Schatzki, 2002).

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is families and community taking an active role in designing a caring education environment for children (Epstein, 1995).

Operational Definition

Parental Involvement

In this study, parental involvement refers to parents' participation at home, school and in the community for both the academic achievement and all-round development of their children. Levels of practices on parental involvement were measured by mean values of parental involvement rated by primary level principals. It was found that the greater the mean value of their responses, the more practices of primary level principals in parental involvement.

Methodology

Sample

For quantitative study, 8 Townships were selected from Eastern District of Yangon Region by using cluster sampling. The number of samples were 170 primary level principals. The response rate is 89.47%. Among the primary level principals in selected townships, eight primary level principals were interviewed by using purposive sampling method.

Instrumentation

In quantitative study, a set of questionnaire was constructed based on Epstein's six areas of parental involvement which are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community (Epstein et al., 2002) and related literature in order to study primary level principals' practices on parental involvement. A set of questionnaires contains the demographic data such as gender, age and academic qualification and 36 items related to practices on parental involvement which used five-point Likert Scale. The levels of practices were accessed ranging from 'Do not practise at all', 'Practise to a rarely extent', 'Practise to some extent' and 'Practise to a moderate extent', 'Practise to a great extent'. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for a set of questionnaire related to primary level principals' practices on parental involvement was 0.84.

For qualitative study, a set of interview questionnaires was developed to obtain the required in-depth information. The interview form were reviewed by expert teacher educators from Department of Educational Theory and Management, Yangon University of Education.

Procedure

After having permission from Eastern District Education Office, the researcher handed the questionnaires to the selected Township Education Office during 25th – 27th September, 2021 and the responses were recollected after two weeks later.

The interview was conducted in order to get in-depth information about principals' practices on parental involvement in primary schools. An interview period was ranged 15 minutes to 30 minutes for each participant. The researcher recorded the detailed notes and also used audio-taped for accurate information during interview after getting the permission of participant.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 26. Descriptive statistics, independent samples *t*-test, and One-Way ANOVA were used.

After interviewing, the information was analyzed thoroughly by precoding, open coding and axial coding (Khandkar, n.d). Finally, the in-depth information were emerged as research findings.

Findings

Investigating Parental Involvement Practices of Primary Level Principals

Table 1. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement for Parenting (N= 170)

No.	Parenting	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Conducting workshops to provide information to parents on primary children development.	3.66	0.74	Practise to a moderate extent
2.	Providing information to not only parents who attend workshop at school but also parents who are unable to attend.	3.24	0.83	Practise to some extent
3.	Encouraging parents to support the child's strengths, talent and innate abilities.	4.00	1.00	Practise to a moderate extent
4.	Providing parents with information on developing home conditions that support learning.	3.92	0.93	Practise to a moderate extent
5.	Respecting the different cultures in parents, teachers and students.	4.00	1.04	Practise to a moderate extent
6.	Home visiting on parenting of families.	2.97	0.85	Practise to some extent
	Grand Mean	3.63	0.60	Practise to a moderate extent

Scoring Direction: 1.00 – 1.80 = Do not practise at all 1.81 – 2.60 = Practise to a rarely extent
 2.61 – 3.40 = Practise to some extent 3.41 – 4.20 = Practise to a moderate extent
 4.21 – 5.00 = Practise to a great extent

According to the Table 1, it was found that primary level principals practised to a moderate extent in parenting because grand mean was 3.63.

Table 2. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement for Communicating (N= 170)

No.	Communicating	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Establishing two-way communication between parents and teachers.	4.07	1.02	Practise to a moderate extent
2.	Conducting a formal conference with parents.	3.83	0.85	Practise to a moderate extent
3.	Sending clear and accurate notifications and educational information to parents.	4.41	0.88	Practise to a great extent
4.	Informing school activities on school billboards to students and parents.	4.05	0.92	Practise to a moderate extent
5.	Sending students home-activity and homework to parents.	4.07	0.87	Practise to a moderate extent
6.	Using telephone, memo and invitation letter to communicate with parents.	3.73	0.93	Practise to a moderate extent
	Grand Mean	4.03	0.68	Practise to a moderate extent

Scoring Direction: 1.00 – 1.80 = Do not practise at all 1.81 – 2.60 = Practise to a rarely extent
 2.61 – 3.40 = Practise to some extent 3.41 – 4.20 = Practise to a moderate extent
 4.21 – 5.00 = Practise to a great extent

According to the Table 2, it was found that primary level principals practised to a moderate extent in communicating because grand mean was 4.03.

Table 3. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement for Volunteering (N=170)

No.	Volunteering	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Conducting an annual survey to identify interest, talents and volunteer activities to meet the school requirements.	3.08	0.82	Practise to some extent
2.	Encouraging parents to be human and financial resources for school improvement.	3.19	0.99	Practise to some extent
3.	Scheduling school meeting at different times for attending all families.	3.18	1.16	Practise to some extent
4.	Providing meals and snack for parents in conferences.	3.32	0.98	Practise to some extent
5.	Recognizing parents who perform as volunteers for their time and efforts.	3.85	1.13	Practise to a moderate extent
6.	Training parents who carry out volunteers so they use their time productively.	2.71	1.14	Practise to some extent
	Grand Mean	3.22	0.75	Practise to some extent

Scoring Direction: 1.00 – 1.80 = Do not practise at all 1.81 – 2.60 = Practise to a rarely extent
 2.61 – 3.40 = Practise to some extent 3.41 – 4.20 = Practise to a moderate extent
 4.21 – 5.00 = Practise to a great extent

According to the Table 3, it was found that primary level principals practised to some extent in volunteering because grand mean was 3.22.

Table 4. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement for Learning at Home (N= 170)

No.	Learning at Home	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Providing information to parents on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.	3.24	1.05	Practise to some extent
2.	Informing parents about the subjects that students need to be improve through teachers.	3.90	0.97	Practise to a moderate extent
3.	Giving advice to parents how to support their child's weakness.	3.88	0.97	Practise to a moderate extent
4.	Making parents aware of the importance of reading at home and listening to the child read.	3.96	0.89	Practise to a moderate extent
5.	Giving advice to parents to give their children the opportunity to make their own choices.	3.89	0.94	Practise to a moderate extent
6.	Giving advice to parents to set regular reading schedule for their children.	3.63	0.92	Practise to a moderate extent
	Grand Mean	3.75	0.75	Practise to a moderate extent

Scoring Direction: 1.00 – 1.80 = Do not practise at all 1.81 – 2.60 = Practise to a rarely extent
 2.61 – 3.40 = Practise to some extent 3.41 – 4.20 = Practise to a moderate extent
 4.21 – 5.00 = Practise to a great extent

According to the Table 4, it was found that primary level principals practised to a moderate extent in learning at home because grand mean was 3.75.

Table 5. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Primary Level Principals’ Practices on Parental Involvement for Decision Making (N= 170)

No.	Decision Making	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Having an active PTA or other parent organizations.	4.26	1.13	Practise to a great extent
2.	Consulting on student safety issues with parents.	4.27	0.94	Practise to a great extent
3.	Involving parents in students’ talent competitions as judges.	2.71	1.32	Practise to some extent
4.	Including parents from all racial, ethnic groups and different socioeconomic status in school organization.	3.99	1.15	Practise to a moderate extent
5.	Developing formal networks to link all parents with schools.	2.86	1.50	Practise to some extent
6.	Dealing with conflict openly and respectfully.	3.80	1.09	Practise to a moderate extent
	Grand Mean	3.65	0.85	Practise to a moderate extent

Scoring Direction: 1.00 – 1.80 = Do not practise at all 1.81 – 2.60 = Practise to a rarely extent
 2.61 – 3.40 = Practise to some extent 3.41 – 4.20 = Practise to a moderate extent
 4.21 – 5.00 = Practise to a great extent

According to the Table 5, it was found that primary level principals practised to a moderate extent in decision making because grand mean was 3.65.

Table 6. Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Primary Level Principals’ Practices on Parental Involvement for Collaborating with Community (N= 170)

No.	Collaborating with Community	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Providing as Community Resource Directory for parents and students.	3.21	1.04	Practise to some extent
2.	Working with local organization for the development of school clinic and school library.	3.84	1.02	Practise to a moderate extent
3.	Inviting community organization to attend the awards ceremony and the education fair.	3.84	1.01	Practise to a moderate extent
4.	Carrying out field work for all school-age children in the area with community organization.	3.86	1.05	Practise to a moderate extent
5.	Working with local business, community organization for school health and school improvement.	3.74	0.99	Practise to a moderate extent
6.	Solving school funding and stuff issues with school trustees and PTA.	3.45	1.37	Practise to a moderate extent
	Grand Mean	3.65	0.79	Practise to a moderate extent

Scoring Direction: 1.00 – 1.80 = Do not practise at all 1.81 – 2.60 = Practise to a rarely extent
 2.61 – 3.40 = Practise to some extent 3.41 – 4.20 = Practise to a moderate extent
 4.21 – 5.00 = Practise to a great extent

According to the Table 6, it was found that primary level principals practised to a moderate extent for collaborating with community because grand mean value was 3.65.

The mean values of primary level principals' practices were described in Figure 1.

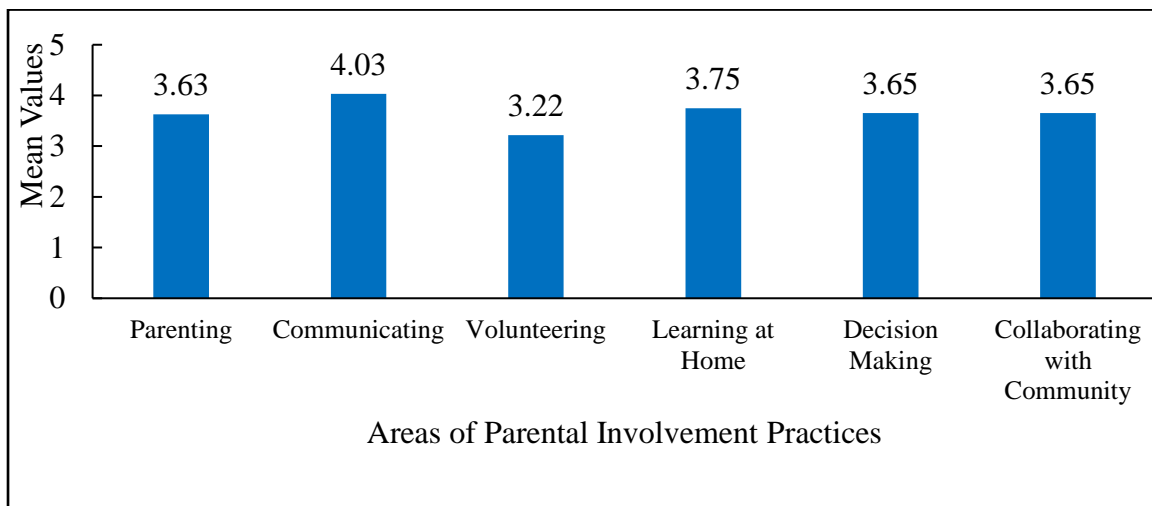


Figure 1. Mean Values Showing Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement

Revealing the Variations in Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement in terms of the demographic data: gender, age and academic qualification

Table 7. Independent Samples *t* Test Result Showing Mean Values of Parental Involvement Practices Grouped by Gender (N=170)

Parental Involvement Practices	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Parenting	Male	21	3.30	0.77	-2.158	22.982	.042*
	Female	149	3.68	0.55			
Communicating	Male	21	3.67	0.96	-2.630	168	.009**
	Female	149	4.08	0.62			
Volunteering	Male	21	2.79	0.84	-2.839	168	.005**
	Female	149	3.28	0.72			
Learning at Home	Male	21	3.13	0.86	-4.271	168	.000***
	Female	149	3.84	0.69			
Decision Making	Male	21	3.26	1.02	-2.272	168	.024*
	Female	149	3.70	0.81			
Collaborating with Community	Male	21	3.27	0.97	-2.411	168	.017*
	Female	149	3.71	0.75			
Overall	Male	21	3.24	0.80	-3.430	168	.001**
	Female	149	3.72	0.57			

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 7 described there were significant differences between male and female primary level principals in *Parenting* ($p < 0.05$, $d = 0.655$), *Communicating* ($p < 0.01$, $d = 0.609$), *Volunteering* ($p < 0.01$, $d = 0.666$), *Learning at Home* ($p < 0.001$, $d = 0.997$), *Decision Making* ($p < 0.05$, $d = 0.525$) and *Collaborating with Community* ($p < 0.05$, $d = 0.655$).

Table 8. One-Way ANOVA Results Showing Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement Grouped by Age (N=170)

Parental Involvement Practices		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Parenting	Between Groups	.794	2	.397	1.118	n.s
	Within Groups	59.311	167	.355		
	Total	60.105	169			
Communicating	Between Groups	4.258	2	2.129	4.765	.010*
	Within Groups	74.614	167	.447		
	Total	78.872	169			
Volunteering	Between Groups	1.364	2	.682	1.200	n.s
	Within Groups	94.911	167	.568		
	Total	96.275	169			
Learning at Home	Between Groups	3.952	2	1.976	3.626	.029*
	Within Groups	91.006	167	.545		
	Total	94.958	169			
Decision Making	Between Groups	4.373	2	2.187	3.129	.046*
	Within Groups	116.718	167	.699		
	Total	121.092	169			
Collaborating with Community	Between Groups	3.740	2	1.870	3.046	n.s
	Within Groups	102.514	167	.614		
	Total	106.254	169			
Overall	Between Groups	2.375	2	1.187	3.197	.043*
	Within Groups	62.032	167	.371		
	Total	64.407	169			

Note: * $p < 0.05$, n.s = no significance

As shown in Table 8, there were significant differences in three areas of parental involvement practices for “*Communicating*”, “*Learning at Home*” and “*Decision Making*” ($p < 0.05$) among three age groups of primary level principals.

Table 9. Post Hoc Multiple Comparison of Primary Level Principals' Practices on Parental Involvement Grouped by Age (N=170)

Dependent Variable	(I) Age Group	(J) Age Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Communicating	27-37 years	49-59 years	-.510*	.007**
Learning at Home	27-37 years	49-59 years	-.491*	.021*
Decision Making	27-37 years	49-59 years	-.450*	.031*
Overall	27-37 years	49-59 years	-.374*	.037*

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table 9 indicated that the primary level principals from 27-37 years were significantly differed from 49-59 years primary level principals in “*Communicating*” ($p < 0.01$, $d = 0.759$), “*Learning at Home*” ($p < 0.05$, $d = 0.682$) and “*Decision Making*” ($p < 0.05$, $d = 0.532$). Moreover, the overall parental involvement practices of primary level principals between 27-37 years and 49-59 years were significantly different ($p < 0.05$, $d = 0.615$).

Table 10. Independent Samples *t* Test Result Showing Mean Values of Parental Involvement Practices Grouped by Academic Qualification (N=170)

Parental Involvement Practices	Academic Qualification	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Parenting	BA / BSc	157	3.65	0.59	.994	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.47	0.68			
Communicating	BA / BSc	157	4.04	0.69	.572	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.92	0.67			
Volunteering	BA / BSc	157	3.23	0.75	.468	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.13	0.88			
Learning at Home	BA / BSc	157	3.75	0.75	.288	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.69	0.76			
Decision Making	BA / BSc	157	3.65	0.85	.096	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.63	0.90			
Collaborating with Community	BA / BSc	157	3.67	0.80	.793	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.49	0.67			
Overall	BA / BSc	157	3.66	0.61	.611	168	n.s
	BEd	13	3.56	0.67			

Note: n.s = no significance

According to Table 10, there were no significant differences in all areas of parental involvement practices between primary level principals who got BA or BSc and those who got BEd academic qualification.

Qualitative Findings

For qualitative findings, 8 primary level principals were interviewed. In grouping the primary level principals, four principals who gained the highest mean values were assigned as Group A and those who had the lowest mean values were defined as Group B.

Ways of Implementing Parental Involvement Practices

With respect to **parenting** practices, principals from Group A responses during interview, 75% of principals (n=3) made parenting activities that were concerned with health; 25% of principals (n=1) held workshop for children’s nutrition and body daily-hygiene. Most principals in Group A said that, “*We always explain that parents are the most important persons who take care of the children’s health. School stands second. In order to be a healthy and outstanding students, both school and home should combine strongly.*”

But 100% of principals (n=4) from Group B explained “*In those days, it is difficult to advice parents how to culture and monitor the primary school children. Moreover, most parents does not want to join with the school because of pandemic.*”

With respect to **communicating** practices, principals from Group A and Group B presented during interview that they used two-way communication. They mostly connected parents with phone, viber group and formal meeting. But 50% of principals (n=2) from Group A said that

“We have telephone numbers of parents and viber groups with parents that can inform parents about the school activities and can also notify me of follow-up comments by message. We assign the level of interest of parents in school into grade A, B and C. The parents who are unable to engage with school for various reasons are motivated by the parents who are active in school routines and programmes. There is school meetings that can also attend parents every Monday.”

In Group B, 25% of principals (n=1) said, *“Some parents tell about the developments and problems of their children through their class teachers during sending their children to school. Teachers often discuss about students in school meeting.”*

With respect to **volunteering**, most principals from both Group A and B organized PTA and served mostly school improvement activities. Among them, most of principals from Group A described that

“There are nutrition programmes that leading parents in our school every month. Moreover, a grate number of building, road, fence and sun-shade were built under the management of PTA. Moreover, in primary school, school cleaning system has many difficulties. Because children are young and are not able to do some house-holding such as toilet washing and trash cleaning. Therefore, parents serve as general staff and take responsible for school environment cleaning.”

Although principals from Group B practiced volunteering with PTA, one of principals from Group B said, *“It is awkward in these days to collaborate with parents in school activities. But some parents support for safety and security of students.”*

With respect to **learning at home**, 75% of principals (n=3) said, *“We introduced parents to their children’s class teacher, dean and tell which lessons are taught in which period in the beginning of school year. We often tell parents about the new curriculum how to teach, how to monitor and how to help the children reading, writing and in their homework.”*

In Group A, 25% of principals (n=1) explained that *“I sometimes explain parents that helping the children in their studying will encourage their social, intellectual, emotional and physical development. It is more essential in Kindergarten and Grade-1 than other Grades.”*

The principals from Group B said as follow:

“We explained parent about the new curriculum and ways how to teach their children at home in the beginning of the school year. We sometimes inform parents for letting their children attend the school regularly. I always sometimes request parent to help their children in home-activities and student’s homework.”

With respect to **decision making**, all principals from Group A explained *“We always pre-consult with teachers on what to do during the academic year before associating with parents. Then, tell parents about the school procedure in parent-teacher meeting and parents give suggestion for some school activities and events and also support as much as they can. Parent-Teacher meetings are celebrate at least once a year. Our school has PTA and BOT in which there are at least 9 members from class teachers and students’ parents. Most of the school buildings and school events were supported by these organizations. In addition, we also invited parents in art and dance or talent competition of students. In some competitions, voting system is also applied in which parents, teachers and students can vote.”*

In Group B, 75% of principals (n=3) said, *“They had PTA established with 9 members from teachers, parents and the person near by the school who is interested in school improvement. But one*

principal answered, *“We can’t make PTA because of a few parents who interest in school activities and inadequate number of teachers.”*

With respect to **collaborating with community**, all principals from Group A said *“We collaborate with parents and community for cleaning and greening school-environment, for student safety, spraying mosquito repellent under the instructions of superior department especially Township Education Office, with donation groups for school library, student playground and having clean and hygienic toilet. Moreover, in every academic year, we have awarded outstanding students who are specialized in academic, one subjects, social, physical and innate talent. In this ceremony, we always invites parents, township administrators, quarter administrators and other donation associations.”*

In Group B, most principals explained, *“In those day, security of students is essential. Therefore, the headmaster, the school teachers, some parents and members of township administers collaborate to serve for safety environment for children. We do not allow to pass a motorcycle during come to and come down school periods.”*

In interviewing **difficulties for parental involvement**, most principals from Group A said parents’ socioeconomic status, education level, self-efficacy, their work-hour and parents’ unawareness of importance of parental involvement resist the practices of parental involvement. Principals from Group B answered reorganizing PTA and BOT with new and unexperienced members, parents’ low socioeconomic status, inadequate number of teachers, parents’ unawareness delays theirs parental involvement activities.

In discussing about **crucial role of parental involvement** in primary school, two groups of primary level principals agreed the importance of parental involvement in primary schools. Principals from Group A said,

“There are some conditions that are impossible to accomplish with only parents or teachers. Those are well finished with the strength of parent-teachers communication. There is no perfect school for primary children. Although there might not be perfect, we will try to implement a good school by collaborating teachers and parents.”

Most principals from Group B discussed, *“It is the best having PTA and BOT because every school has many responsibilities and tasks. Parents help school in some school programmes and activities while teachers are trying to make their children knowledgeable and clever. It is a good the mutualistic relationships.”*

Conclusion and Discussion

For examining primary level principals’ practices on parental involvement, it was found that primary level principals were practised to **a moderate extent** in “Parenting” but there was a little home visiting on parenting families due to time constrains. They practised to **a moderate extent** in “Communicating” and found that they used more informal ways for two-way communication between school and home than formal ways. They practised to **some extent** in “Volunteering” and found that they motivated parents to be volunteer for school activities, and for having healthy and safety school environment. But training for volunteers parents was uncommon because of a great number of tasks of principals and teachers. They practised to **a moderate extent** in “Learning at home” and it was found that they told parents about the new primary curriculum and advice and support parents for the children’s home-study based on

interview. They practised to a **moderate extent** in “Decision Making” but they needed more invitation to parents as judges and there could be weakness in establishing PTA and BOT due to parents’ working hours and low socioeconomic status. Finally, they practised to a **moderate extent** in “Collaborating with Community”. It was found that they collaborated with some parents and community more especially for children’s health because of Covid-19 pandemic but they sometime provide as Community Resource Directory for parents and students.

To sum up, primary level principals practised to a moderate extent in overall areas of parental involvement and it could be interpreted that the findings of current study support Epstein’s overlapping sphere theory because primary level principals tried to coordinate with school, home and community for students’ successful learning, growth and development. Based on results of interview, it was realized that most primary level principals had difficulties in implementing parental involvement practices because of parents’ low self-efficacy, unawareness, lot of task and role for their students’ education which were consistent with Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Parental Involvement Model (1997) in which parent role construction and parental self-efficacy; invitations and parents’ life context are the critical points that support a higher level of parental involvement.

For revealing the variations of primary level principals’ practices on parental involvement according to their demographic data, it was found that there were significant differences between female and male. The mean value of female was higher than that of male. It could be interpreted that female principals could encourage parents, explain the importance of parents in children’s education and implement parental involvement practices as much as they could be possible within challenges based on interview. With regard to age, there were significant differences between 27-37 years and 49-59 years in “Communicating”, “Learning at Home” and “Decision Making”. It could be interpreted that the elders were more experienced and had a lot of tricks to encourage parents. With regard to academic qualification, there was no significant difference. But mean value of principals who got BA or BSc had slightly higher than those who got BEd. This could be the fact that primary level principals who got BEd might encourage and collaborate with parents who have more difficulties such as working hours, low socioeconomic status and low self-efficacy, etc. to involve and support in school activities.

Suggestions

The findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice. Based on the quantitative and qualitative research findings, the following suggestions were suggested.

- Since primary level principals had a few home visit programmes, they should study parenting style in order to give advice and help parents by collaborating with teachers and other PTA members.
- Since primary children are not old enough to deliver detail information to parents, primary level principals should apply formal invitations such as memo and invitation letter for home-school communication rather than through students in order to inform more accurate and clear information.
- Since volunteering practices were less than other practices areas, primary level principals should invite and actively encourage parents to be volunteers in their children’s school-activities and occasional school events and for school improvement.

- Primary level principals should provide more information to parents how to monitor and discuss school work at home because parents play key roles for their children success in school.
- Primary level principals should invite and encourage parents from different ethnic groups, socioeconomic status, etc. to participate in students' academic achievement and school improvement procedure.
- Primary level principals should launch programmes such as establishing libraries and formation of Red-Cross, etc. and encourage parents to be energetic representatives in the community based organizations with the aims of school-community collaboration running smoothly.
- Since elder primary level principals had practised parental involvement than younger primary level principals, there should be primary level principals' initial training programmes for parental involvement that were conducted under the guidelines of Township Education Office.
- Effective home-school communication make parents interested and more involved in school activities. Therefore, primary level principals should communicate with home and community by using various communicating channels such as memo, newsletter, telephone, etc. for school improvement and students' holistic development.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Kay Thwe Hlaing, (Rector, Yangon University of Education {YUOE}); Dr. May Myat Thu, Dr. Khin Khin Oo and Dr. Nyo Nyo Lwin, (Pro-Rectors, YUOE). Secondly respectful thanks go to Dr. Khin Mar Ni (Professor and Head, Department of Educational Theory and Management, YUOE) and Dr. Daw Mya Kywe (Retired Professor and Head, Department of Educational Theory, YUOE) for their valuable advice. We would like to present our sincere thanks to all teachers and friends for their sharing knowledge and valuable suggestions.

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