

Developing the Guidelines of Parents` Participation in School Management and Student Learning

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to investigate problems and needs of parents` participation in school management and student learning, 2) to develop guidelines of parents` participation in school management and student learning. The samples in this research were 222 students and 222 students` parents obtained through stratified random sampling at Nanhu School affiliated with Beijing Normal University. The 3 specialists participated the focus group discussion. The research instrument were questionnaires and a set of questions for the focus group discussion. The statistics were frequency, mean, and standard deviation. The research results indicated that 1) In the student opinions, the problems and needs of the parents` participation on school management and student learning were rated at the low level (Mean=2.33, 2.38 S.D.=0.98, 0.97 respectively). In the student`s parent opinions, the problems and needs of the parents` participation on school management and student learning were rated at the high level (Mean=3.46, 3.54 S.D.=0.86, 0.88 respectively). 2) The developed guidelines for the parents` participation on school management and student learning composed of 2.1) Understanding school management policies and relevant regulations, 2.2) Respect for the education profession and trust in educational philosophy and methods, 2.3) Active participation in school

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activities, 2.4) Establishment of effective communication channels between parents and teachers, and 2.5) Assisting children in establishing learning habits and understanding learning styles.

Keywords : Parents' Participation, School Management, Student Learning, Guidelines

Introduction

In the field of education, the active participation of parents in school management and student learning has an important and positive impact on student development. Parents' participation not only expands students' learning opportunities, but also strengthens their learning motivation, emotions, and social development. In the past, parents had little involvement in school management and the learning process of students, which had a negative impact on students, parents, and the school. The effective cooperation of parents directly determines the effectiveness of school education. In an annual survey conducted by the American City Life Insurance Company in 1992, most teachers believed that the lack of parental participation was a "serious threat" to school education. (Dalian Baisheng Senior High School, 2020) Parents often fail to communicate effectively and actively with the school, which undoubtedly leads to misunderstandings and distrust of the school. Some parents may even believe that simply paying tuition fees to the school and conveying benefits to the school's teachers can ensure that students' lives and studies are unobstructed. However, students are under pressure to study and live, Due to the lack of parental involvement, students may experience a decline in academic performance, and in severe cases, may even experience psychological problems.

In recent years, schools have paid more and more attention to the indispensable role and status of parents in school management. Parents have also become a very important part of students' learning. Regarding parents' participation in school management and student learning, the Chinese Ministry of Education has given guidance: "Family education guidance services are more professional; parents have basically established the concept of scientific parenting and fulfilling the main

responsibility of family education is more in place;" (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2022) Parental participation can help the school better understand the needs and expectations of students and families, to better meet the expectations of students and families. At the same time, parents' participation strengthens the connection between school and family. Schools should establish diverse communication channels to encourage parents to actively participate in their children's education. (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005 : 196-207) Parents' participation in school management and student learning can establish a close connection between school and family. This partnership helps to better understand student needs and concerns, making education more holistic and personalized. Overall, it is necessary for parents to participate in their children's learning, which to some extent helps them improve their academic performance and overall quality. (Li, 2019)

Although parents are more involved in school management and student learning than in the past, there are still many problems that cannot be ignored. First, the degree of parental participation is not enough. In many cases, it is formalism and does not promote students' academic development enough. Under such circumstances, parents need to understand the importance of participating in school management and student learning. Research shows that parental involvement not only improves students' academic performance but also enhances their confidence and social skills. (Fan & Chen, 2001 : 1-22) Atalad & Abbas (2023 : 11) determined the parent participation in school management. The results of the study were 1) the parents' level of participation in the management of their child/ren's school, in curriculum enhancement is low, 2) their levels of participation in school governance, community development, and student activities are average, 3) as a whole, their level of participation in school management is average, 4) there are no significant differences between the extents of parent participation in school management, if the data is grouped according to age and gender, and 5) there are significant differences between the extents of parent participation in school management, if the data is grouped according to highest educational attainment.

Parents, as the first teachers of students, actively participate in the development of students, which is very important for cultivating students' learning motivation, academic achievement and social emotion. At the same time, it emphasized that the cooperative relationship between school and family is very important for creating a positive learning environment and academic achievement. School and family cooperation play a very positive role in promoting student development, improving school management effectiveness and building community support. Therefore, increasing parental participation in school management and student learning is a problem that cannot be ignored.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the challenges and needs related to parental participation in school management and student learning.
2. To develop actionable guidelines for enhancing parental engagement in school management and student learning.

Research Methods

1. **Population** : The population was divided into two groups, namely 500 students and 500 students' parents in Nanhу School affiliated to Beijing Normal University.

2. **Samples** : The sample groups consisted of 222 students and 222 students' parents participated. The samples were derived from Taro Yamane formula (Yamane, 1973 : 788) and were collected through the stratified random sampling technique. (Krejcie, R.V., & D.W. Morgan, 1970)

3. **Research Instruments** : The questionnaires were students set and students' parents set. The questionnaire consisted of 1) general information, 2) problems and needs of parent involvement in school management and student learning for students 24 questions, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient 0.878 and for students' parent 24 questions, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient 0.859. The questionnaires were evaluated for the Index of Item Congruence (IOC) by the three

specialists were 0.67 to 1.00. The focus group questions were evaluated by the three specialists. (Cronbach, L. J, 1951)

4. Data Collection : The researcher collected the data and information. The samples were informed of the purposes of data collection, made an appointment. The researcher submitted a letter of permission to the school's teacher in advance to ask permission to collect the data and information from the samples at Nanhу School affiliated to Beijing Normal University.

5. Data Analysis : For the investigation of problems and needs, the data and information collected were analyzed, interpreted and then presented in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation (S.D.). The Five Point Rating Scale were used to evaluate the level or degree of the respondents' needs and problems. For the rating reference of the five point rating scale were: mean range 4.51 – 5.00 were highest level, 3.51 – 4.50 were high level, 2.51 – 3.50 were moderate level, 1.51 – 2.50 were low level, and 1.00 – 1.50 were lowest level. (Srisa-ard, 2002 : 103) For the correctness and improvement of the guidelines, the ideas, suggestions and comments of the 3 specialists obtained from the focus group discussion meetings, were analyzed and then used to correct and improve the contents of the guidelines.

Research Results

1. Problems of parents' participation in school management and student learning.

The analysis of the survey data highlights several significant issues concerning parental involvement in school management and student learning. A critical challenge identified from the data is the low level of parental participation in school activities, with several questions indicating that parents feel disconnected from school events and volunteer opportunities. For example, the responses to the question, "Your parents usually participate in activities organized by the school" (Question 1), revealed a lower-than-expected score (2.29). This suggests that many parents do not have either the time, resources, or knowledge about how to engage

in school activities. The same issue emerges in relation to the question, “You think parents can arrange enough time to visit the classroom” (Question 4), which also yielded a relatively low score (2.34). This indicates that parents perceive barriers, whether logistical, time-related, or even institutional—that hinder their active participation in their children’s schooling.

A contributing factor to this issue of low participation is the perceived lack of resources and support from the school to encourage and facilitate parental engagement. This is particularly evident in responses to the question, “You think the school may lack sufficient resources and support, which makes it difficult for parents to actively participate in school activities” (Question 2). This question received the lowest score (2.22), signaling that many parents believe the school does not provide adequate infrastructure, resources, or organizational support to make their involvement easy and accessible. A lack of clarity about available opportunities, insufficient communication about how parents can engage with the school, and inadequate organizational structures may all contribute to this perception. Schools that fail to provide sufficient resources or fail to create an environment where parents feel supported and empowered are likely to face challenges in fostering meaningful and sustained parental engagement.

Moreover, the data reveals a disconnect between the school's educational policies and the parents' understanding of these policies, which undermines their ability to actively participate in shaping their children's education. For instance, responses to the question, “You think the school has provided enough feedback opportunities for parents to share their observations and suggestions” (Question 3) suggest that there is a deficiency in mechanisms for collecting and responding to parental feedback. This gap in communication not only leaves parents feeling undervalued but also inhibits their ability to contribute valuable insights or concerns that could benefit the educational environment. Similarly, responses to the question, “You think parents understand the school's educational standards and curriculum framework to ensure that their suggestions are consistent with educational goals”

(Question 11) reflect a significant misunderstanding or lack of knowledge regarding the educational objectives, teaching methods, and curricula followed by the school. The data points to a critical need for schools to better communicate the educational standards and frameworks that guide their teaching practices so that parents can align their support with the school's educational goals and actively participate in the learning process.

Mean

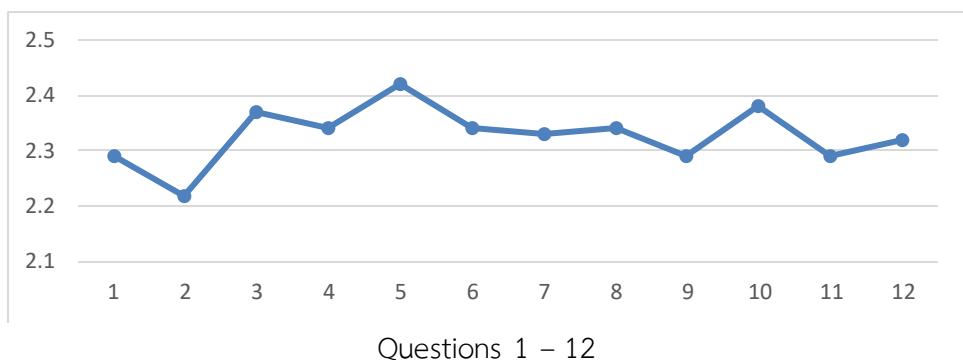


Figure 1 Mean score of problems of parents' participation in school management and student learning for students

Mean

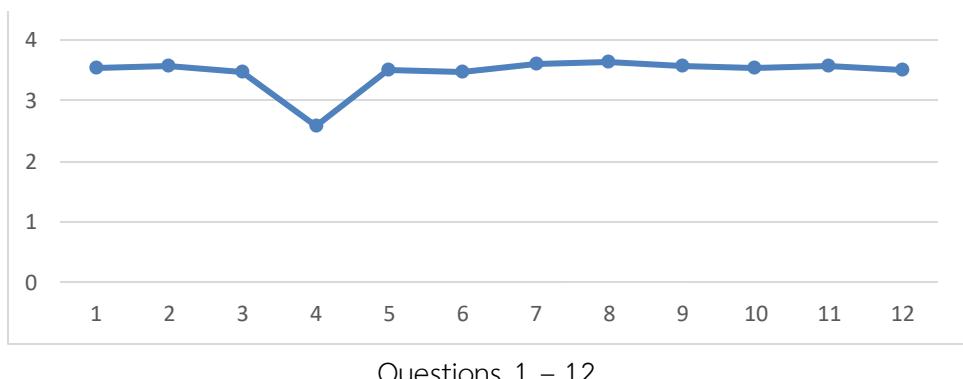


Figure 2 Mean score of problems of parents' participation in school management and student learning for students' parent

2. Needs of parents' participation in school management and student learning.

The findings from the survey data clearly highlight several key needs that must be addressed to enhance parental involvement in school management and student learning. The first critical need identified is that parents require a better understanding of the school's management policies and regulations. The survey revealed that many parents feel disconnected from the governance of the school and its operational procedures. Questions such as, "You think parents' opinions should be taken into account in formulating school policies" (Question 8) and "You think schools should encourage parents to participate in school decision-making committees" (Question 7) received relatively high scores, indicating that parents have a strong desire to be involved in school policy discussions and decision-making processes. They want to be consulted on important decisions affecting their child's education and the broader school community. However, for parents to be effectively involved in this way, they must first have a clear understanding of the school's policies and decision-making structures. Without this understanding, they are less likely to feel empowered to contribute meaningfully to discussions or provide feedback on matters such as school curriculum, disciplinary policies, and resource allocation.

The second key need highlighted by the survey is the importance of fostering parents' trust in the education profession and the school's educational methods. Many parents expressed a desire for a deeper understanding of the educational philosophy and methods employed by the school. Responses to the question, "You think parents understand the content of the curriculum their children are learning" (Question 6), suggest that parents often lack insight into the pedagogical approaches and curricula that guide their child's education. This lack of understanding can lead to skepticism or frustration, as parents may not fully appreciate the value of certain teaching methods or educational strategies. For instance, when parents do not understand the rationale behind project-based

learning, differentiated instruction, or other specialized teaching methods, they may feel disconnected from the learning process and less capable of supporting their child's academic success.

Another key need identified in the survey is the necessity for more accessible and inclusive opportunities for parents to participate in school activities. The data suggest that many parents feel they lack the time, information, or resources to engage in school events and volunteer opportunities. While the desire for involvement is high, the actual level of participation is low, as indicated by the responses to questions such as "You think parents can arrange enough time to visit the classroom" (Question 4) and "You think parents usually participate in activities organized by the school" (Question 1). To bridge this gap, schools must create more flexible, accessible opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's education. This could include offering evening or weekend events, providing childcare during meetings or volunteer activities, and ensuring that information about opportunities to engage is communicated in a timely and effective manner.

Mean

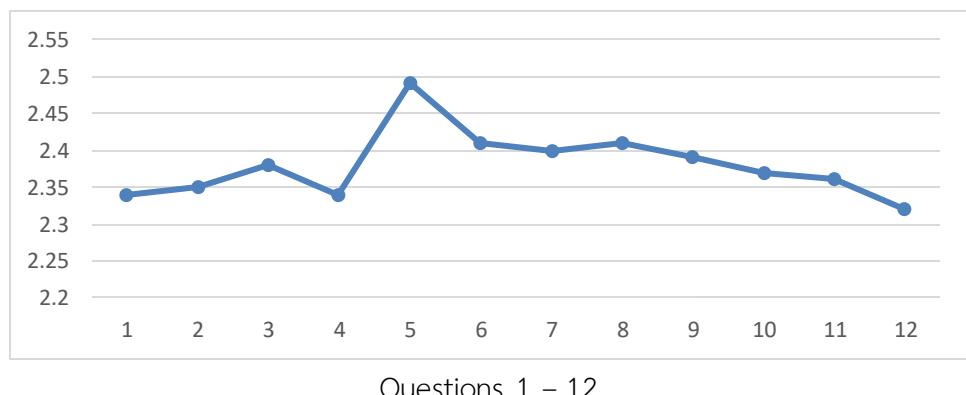


Figure 3 Mean score of needs of parents' participation in school management and student learning for students

Mean

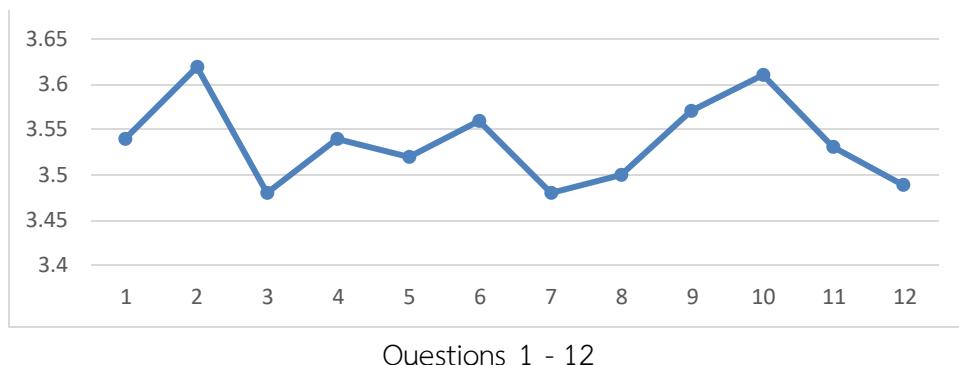


Figure 4 Mean score of needs of parents' participation in school management and student learning for students' parent

3. Guidelines for parents' participation in school management and student learning.

The guidelines for parents' participation in school management and student learning emphasize the pivotal role that parents play in shaping the educational experience and success of their children. These guidelines are structured into five key units, each focusing on a specific aspect of parental involvement. The overarching objective of these guidelines is to empower parents with the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to actively contribute to both the school's management processes and their children's learning journeys. These units, developed through expert evaluations and a comprehensive needs assessment involving both parents and students, provide a comprehensive framework that aligns the educational goals of the school with the engagement of parents in meaningful and effective ways.

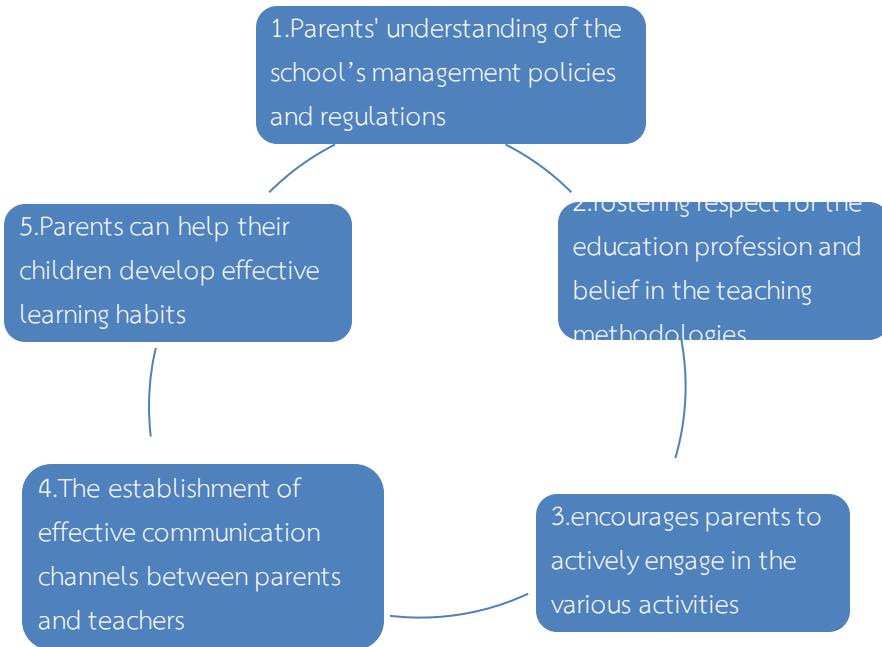


Figure 5 Guidelines for parents' participation in school management and student learning

The first unit: Teaching management in educational institutions, parents' understanding of the school's management policies and regulations. It recognizes that parents, as active stakeholders in their child's education, need to align their support with the goals and policies set by the school. An understanding of these policies ensures that parents can engage in school-related processes in a way that is both supportive and proactive. Parents should be informed about critical school procedures such as attendance, discipline, and communication with staff.

The second unit: Development of the learning process, fostering respect for the education profession and belief in the teaching methods used by schools. Parents' attitudes toward educators significantly influence the overall school climate and, by extension, the educational experience of their children. When parents demonstrate respect for the work that teachers do and trust in their professional

expertise, they contribute to an environment where students can thrive academically and socially.

The third unit: Educational institution curriculum development, encourages parents to actively engage in the various activities organized by the school. The role of parents in school events—ranging from parent-teacher meetings to extracurricular activities—cannot be overstated. Active participation not only strengthens the connection between home and school but also enriches the school community. This involvement can be action-oriented, structured, and based on clear objectives.

The fourth unit : Development of internal quality assurance systems and educational standards, the establishment of effective communication channels between parents and teachers. Good communication is foundational to a productive home-school partnership. The unit advocates for the development of communication strategies that are tailored to the needs of both parties. These strategies should be designed to foster open, honest, and continuous dialogue between parents and teachers, ensuring that both sides are informed about the child's academic progress, behavioral developments, and any areas of concern.

The final unit: Development and use of educational technology media, how parents can help their children develop effective learning habits and better understand their individual learning styles. This unit recognizes that learning is a lifelong process and that the habits and strategies children develop early on have a lasting impact on their academic success. Parents can play a pivotal role by fostering a conducive learning environment at home, one that is tailored to the child's unique learning style. Whether children learn best through visual, auditory, or kinesthetic means, parents are encouraged to create spaces and routines that optimize their children's learning experiences.

Integration of Units: A Holistic Approach to Parental Engagement, these five units provide a holistic approach to parental involvement in school management and student learning. Each unit complements the others, creating a comprehensive framework for parents to engage with both the school environment and their

children's education in meaningful and supportive ways. From understanding school policies and regulations to fostering communication with teachers, from respecting the teaching profession to helping children establish effective learning habits, parents are encouraged to take an active, informed, and collaborative role in their child's educational journey.

Research Discussion

1. Parents` participation in school management and student learning

A survey conducted on parental participation in school management and student learning revealed that parents generally perceive this topic with moderate interest and importance, indicating the necessity to strengthen parental engagement and support. Similar to Li (2019) research, this survey found a strong correlation between parental involvement in school management and the emphasis on student learning with students' academic performance. Active parental participation can enhance the transparency and efficiency of school management while also boosting students' motivation and academic achievement.

According to Durisic & Bunijevac (2017 : 149-150) concluded that parental involvement provides an important opportunity for schools to enrich current school programmes by bringing parents into the educational process. Increased parental involvement has been shown to result in increased student success, enhanced parent and teacher satisfaction, and improved school climate. To ensure effective parental involvement, schools may have partnership programmes in place that continually develop, implement, evaluate, and improve plans and practices encouraging family and community involvement. Schools can encourage involvement in several of areas including parenting, learning at home, communication, volunteering, decision-making, and community collaboration. Effective parental involvement programmes are built upon a careful consideration of the unique needs of the community. In order to build trust, effective approaches to

parent involvement rely upon a strength based approach, emphasizing positive interactions.

Enhancing parental involvement and support is crucial for both student learning and effective school management. Parents should be regarded as significant stakeholders in school management, with their opinions and suggestions given due consideration. Close collaboration between parents and school management teams is essential to foster students' holistic development and ensure the smooth operation of schools. Only through close cooperation among parents, schools, and educational institutions can the optimal outcomes of educational goals be achieved, laying a solid foundation for students' future endeavors.

Sakamoto (2021 : 115) concluded that parent participation in school management has been promoted as a strategy for holding schools accountable for education quality and outcomes. However, the evidence has proven inconclusive and limited in explaining mechanisms to affect student achievement. By using public school student data derived from the Programme for International Student Assessment 2015, depending on the country, a negative association is derived from either individual-level or school-level parent participation. The associations are not moderated by parents' socioeconomic status but by school's openness to parental engagement in some of the countries, indicating that the importance of understanding mechanisms and conditions in which parent participation affects student learning in context to design effective participatory school governance.

2. Guidelines of parents' participation in school management and student learning.

The content of each guideline focuses on the teaching of the course, which is mainly reflected in the aspects of promoting parents' participation in school management and enhancing student learning outcomes. In the work process-oriented learning context, efforts are made to improve the teaching content by elucidating the relevance of parental involvement in school management to practical teaching scenarios. A teaching management guideline for promoting parents' participation in

school management and enhancing student learning is formulated, with sections transformed into self-study materials for guided teaching. A teaching practice education platform is established to ensure students' regular engagement in learning and practical experiences related to parental involvement in school affairs. Additionally, a diversified teaching evaluation system and feedback mechanism are implemented to enable instructors to adjust teaching strategies promptly and enhance their practical skills. Several suggestions are put forward to enhance the effectiveness of teaching in this domain: Adapt teaching content to local contexts and the specific needs of the school community, emphasizing practical aspects to enrich the learning experience. Establish comprehensive teaching practice platforms, including both on-campus and off-campus opportunities, to provide students with diverse experiences and enhance their practical skills. Develop a multi-faceted evaluation system to assess students' understanding and application of parental involvement in school management, facilitating continuous improvement in teaching methods and student learning outcomes. In revising the teaching plan, particular emphasis is placed on aligning course objectives with the skills and knowledge required for effective parental involvement in school management. Teaching methods incorporate a combination of modular instruction and practical applications to facilitate experiential learning. Teaching materials are curated not only based on official guidelines but also through feedback from parents and insights from past graduates, ensuring relevance and effectiveness. Furthermore, the curriculum emphasizes the development of students' innovative thinking and lifelong learning skills alongside their professional competencies, fostering a holistic approach to education.

Byejwe & Mwila (2025 : 596) concluded that the role of parental participation in school meetings in enhancing student learning in secondary schools, to assess the level of parental involvement in school meetings, examine the impact of such participation on students' learning, and identify strategies to improve engagement for better academic outcomes. The findings revealed that parental

participation in school meetings varied across schools, with some schools showing higher engagement due to effective communication strategies. Increased participation was linked to improved academic performance and greater collaboration between parents and teachers. Barriers to participation, such as time constraints and lack of awareness, were identified. The study recommends improving communication with parents, offering flexible meeting times, and implementing policies to encourage greater involvement.

Research Suggestions

Suggestions for implementation

1. The integration of guidelines for parental participation into school management and student learning is essential for fostering a collaborative educational environment. Schools should prioritize establishing clear frameworks that encourage active parental involvement, which can enhance students' academic performance and well-being. By recognizing the role of parents as key stakeholders in education, schools can cultivate a supportive community that values the input and engagement of families.
2. Regular workshops and training sessions should be conducted to equip parents with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively contribute to school governance and support their children's learning.
3. Moreover, schools should invest in creating an inclusive atmosphere that celebrates diversity and encourages participation from all families, thereby enriching the educational experience for students.
4. This approach not only aligns with educational standards but also fosters a sense of belonging and community among students and their families.

Suggestions for further study

1. Consider expanding on the role of digital tools for remote parental engagement and exploring innovative strategies to enhance parental involvement in school management.

2. Suggest longitudinal research to track the long-term impact of guideline implementation and promoting more personalized approaches that consider the unique strengths and needs of each family.
3. How to develop tailored engagement plans that cater to individual family dynamics and cultural backgrounds, ensuring that all parents feel empowered to participate actively.
4. Propose comparative studies across schools or regions for generalizability and examine the effectiveness of digital platforms and tools that facilitate communication and collaboration between parents and schools.

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