

Factors In Parent-Teacher Cooperation Of Senior Preschool Educators In Kindergartens

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Abstract

Parent-teacher cooperation indeed could enhance children's learning motivation and help children see the value of learning to involve more in learning. Good parent-teacher communication is important as school teachers and parents are adults with whom students most contact and important others influencing students the most. Modern school teachers therefore should present consultation, counseling, and cooperation abilities as well as precede leading, initiative, team building, and effectiveness evaluation to enhance changes in parent-teacher communication and remove obstacles to students' success.

Aiming at kindergarten senior preschool educators in China and parents as the questionnaire analysis objects, total 250 copies of questionnaire are distributed, and 206 valid copies are retrieved, with the retrieval rate 82 %. The research results show that 1. "teacher dimension" is the most emphasized dimension in Hierarchy 2, followed by "student dimension" and "parent

dimension", 2.top five most emphasized indicators, among 12, are ordered communication, learning attitudes, support & cooperation, educational philosophy, and social skills, and 3.kindergarten preschool educators encountering dilemmas in the process of parent-teacher cooperation have to keep positive attitudes and attempt various methods and strategies through reflection and adjustment. According to the conclusion to proposed suggestions, it is expected to build positive parent-teacher relationship and enhance children's growth and learning.

Keywords: kindergarten, senior preschool educator, parent-teacher cooperation, factor.

Introduction

Parent-teacher cooperation refers to the reciprocity process of mutual aid, communication, and cooperation between parents and school educators, with students as the body, collaboratively taking the responsibility, right, and obligation to educate students. Good parent-teacher communication is important as school teachers and parents are adults with whom students often contact and important others affecting students the most. Tutors and parents could provide daily observation of cases; counselors being able to cooperate with an intervention system could possibly enhance the quality of intervention counseling (Doğan et al., 2021). Good communication and cooperation of both would benefit students. Unfortunately, teacher counselors are currently ignored in the professional training process (Janssen et al., 2020). Teachers often insist on the communication principle of "no news is good news"; unless something happens, they would not actively contact parents. Such a communication principle shows two conditions. One means that parents account for the communication responsibility; that is, a teacher would actively contact when something happens; if not, parents have to ask actively. Parents with active communication are those familiar with school culture, e.g. middle class. Parents not familiar with school culture are generally immigrants or

socioeconomically disadvantaged groups with obstacles communicating school teachers. Besides, no news is good news revealing that communication merely appears on the occurrence of problems. When each communication shows bad news, it would form negative connection and aversive stimulus to thicken barrier to parent-teacher communication. To break the ice, the intervention system consisting of families and schools is the key in parent-teacher communication. The cooperation presents huge influence on parent-teacher communication.

Practical research indicated that parents' frequent participation in students' school affairs would enhance the academic performance and have them feel being emphasized to further enhance the mental health (Donker et al., 2021). Students might have different perception from parents. However, when students felt that parents positively participated in school affairs, parents' participation could enhance students' happiness to perform positive emotions, positive attitudes, good resilience, satisfactory interpersonal relationship, and positive school experiences, which could benefit students' career development at schools. Moreover, when focusing on specific actions in schools, e.g. encouraging parents to discuss school affairs with students, students would present better academic performance (Cooper et al., 2021). For this reason, modern school teachers should present consultation, counseling, and cooperation abilities as well as precede leading, initiative, team building, and effectiveness evaluation to enhance changes in parent-teacher communication and remove obstacles to students' success. Through contact between families and schools, school personnel build definite contact to have all people move towards the same goal and cooperate to make students' success. This study therefore discusses factors in parent-teacher cooperation of kindergarten senior preschool educators, expecting to build positive parent-teacher relationship and enhance children's growth and learning.

Literature review

I. Definition of parent-teacher cooperation

Parent-teacher cooperation regards teachers and parents as “education partners”, providing parents with participation right to collaboratively take the education responsibility with teachers that parent-teacher interaction and communication would deeply and largely influence children’s learning and growth. Interacting with parents should be a part of teachers’ instruction to collaboratively concern about school education and guide children’s learning with parents (Raj & Bajaj, 2021). Badri et al. (2021) considered that parent-teacher cooperation stressed on the cooperation between teachers and parents who interacted in classrooms through communication and sharing and built learning environment suitable for students to enhance students’ learning effectiveness and promote students’ learning performance. Kranzler et al. (2020) mentioned that parents cooperated with teachers to do things helpful to children, parents cooperated with schools through various methods, and teachers with the specialties and parents with participation collaboratively take the education responsibility. Parent-teacher cooperation referred to the coordination and consensus of parents’ parenting attitudes and concepts and teachers’ parent-teacher cooperation philosophy and belief in the process to help children’s learning and growth. Besides, both parties preceded two-way interaction, through multiple parent-teacher communication models, to collaboratively create environment suitable for children’ learning and present the parent-teacher cooperation process (Wagner et al., 2021). Abdullah et al. (2020) regarded good parent-teacher relationship as building satisfactory and meaningful interaction between parents and teachers, with children as the core. Pizarro-Ruiz & Ordóñez-Cambor (2021) defined parent-teacher cooperation as kindergarten teachers, according to distinct parent characteristics and needs,

collaboratively finding out activities suitable for parents' participation, expecting to tighten the relationship between schools and families and parents to develop the specialties to achieve the adaptive cooperation. González-Valero et al. (2020) regarded parent-teacher cooperation as educators effectively extending curriculum-related activities at schools to families through parents' involvement in the school interaction; teachers, with the specialties, could help parents affect children's learning. In this case, parents were invited to participate in children's adventure activities for collaboratively enhancing children's social ability.

II. Factors in parent-teacher cooperation

Along with time changes, channels to communicate with parents are multiple that parent-teacher cooperation becomes extremely important for children's education (Yildiz & Yilmaz, 2021). Kurucz et al. (2020) mentioned that kindergarten teachers extremely paid attention to the relationship with parents. Devenney & O'Toole (2021) revealed parent-teacher cooperation as the basis of successful education. Maintaining good relationship between families and schools could promote education. Research discovered that good parent-teacher cooperation could enhance the opportunity of children's success that it was necessary to build parent-school partnership from their birth to senior high school stage. Tulachan & Paudya (2020) also proposed that teacher-parent cooperation could benefit children and the entire education system.

Ren & Fan (2021) viewed the importance of "parent-teacher cooperation" from dimensions of students, teachers, schools, and communities.

- (1) For students, parent-teacher cooperation could enhance students' better performance.
- (2) For teachers, parent-teacher cooperation allowed teachers acquiring assistance at work and increasing multiple teaching resources.
- (3) For schools, parent-teacher cooperation could enhance parents

and students' evaluation of schools.

(4) For communities, parent-teacher cooperation could integrate communities, schools, and families to share resources and enhance the development and advance of communities.

Meanwhile, researchers, according to the importance of parent-teacher cooperation in past studies, organized the dimensions of students, parents, and teachers covered in importance to describe the importance of parent-teacher cooperation.

(1) Student dimension

Teachers and parents building partnership could enhance children's security about new environment; and, children aware of the parents being emphasized and respected would relatively enhance the self-value (Park et al., 2021). Yngvesson & Garvis (2021) mentioned that parents and teachers collaboratively interfering in guidance could enhance children's progress in social capabilities. In the research on children at the elementary school stage, Niemiec (2020) discovered that the better parent-teacher cooperation would better influence students' social skills and learning attitudes. Loades et al. (2020), in the study on high school teachers, pointed out the direct effects of teachers and parents on children; teachers being able to apply methods to maintain good interaction with parents would set a positive example of interpersonal relationship for children enhancing the harmonious partnership with peers.

(2) Parent dimension

Yan et al. (2020) considered parents as the first teacher of children and family as the first place for learning; both environment and family members presented great effects on children. Family education is the basis of school education. Kindergartens currently stressed on curriculum integration; learning was originated from life that what was taught at schools should be combined with children's life experience. In this case, it was inadequate for children learning merely from schools, they would need experience and exploration

in the spare time. The curriculum practice in kindergartens required the support and cooperation of parents to better complete children's learning.

1. Acquiring parenting information

Madden et al. (2020) considered that supporting and encouraging children by participating in children's education process could enhance the parenting knowledge and competence and build parents' self-confidence.

2. Enhancing parents' positive behaviors

Ren & Fan (2021) indicated that parents should positively change the education concept and strategies on children and more positive attitudes would result in action and sustainability.

- (3) Teacher dimension

1. Enhancing parent-teacher communication and better understanding children

Devenney & O'Toole (2021) indicated that the function of parent-teacher cooperation might enhance the understanding between parents and teachers to have schools and families collaboratively take the teaching responsibility and better deliver teachers' educational philosophy to parents. Huang (2015) stated that teachers could better understand children through parents to more efficiently get along with each child, assist in instantly dealing with children's problems, and acquire parents' support. Azañedo et al. (2021) discovered in the research that parents and teachers could deliver the concepts through cooperation; the closer parent-teacher belief would receive higher support from parents to have more harmonious parent-teacher relationship. Graziosi et al. (2020) pointed out the process to explore parent-teacher cooperation in preschool special education being step by step, from teachers' dominance to partnership with parents; teachers in the process promoted personal specialties and built good classroom management, and parents better understood teachers' concepts to result in positive feedback in parent-teacher relationship.

3. Enriching teachers' instruction

Teachers' personal capabilities and resources were limited. Inviting the participation of parents could have teaching become multiple and enhance the effect. Panagouli et al. (2021) proposed that teachers could learn more social knowledge and experience from parents' participation to give more life to instruction with deep teaching contents.

Research design and method

I. Research method

Hosseini & Keshavarz (2017) indicated that critical success factors could be confirmed with (1) regression analysis, (2) factor analysis, (3) Delphi Method, and (4) Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP). Maria Garbuzova-Schlifter (2016) proposed the meaning of using Analytical Hierarchy Process as "collecting opinions of scholars, experts and participants through group discussion to simplify complicated problems into a hierarchical evaluation system with simple elements and, according to experts' brainstorming, calculating the contribution or priority of elements in various layers corresponding to the previous layers". Garbuzova-Schlifter & Madlener (2016) objectively interviewed department supervisors, confirmed target tasks according to management programs, proposed individual critical success factors according to personal practical experiences and needs, and, through analysis and selection, organized critical success factors in the target for ordering so that resources could be effectively distributed in critical factors. Finally, the practice effectiveness was built indicators.

Expert questionnaire survey is adopted in this study. In consideration of the problems of mean, decision attribute correlation, and group decision inaccuracy in traditional Delphi Method, Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM) and Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) are applied to analyze research data in this study to definitely select factors in the parent-teacher cooperation of kindergarten senior preschool educators.

- (1) Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM), first integrating Fuzzy theory into traditional Delphi Method by Murry et al. in 1985, uses human linguistic differences with the value of correspondent variables for expression. For instance, linguistic weight in human natural language could be the variable of a language, and the value could be classified into “extremely low”, “low”, “medium”, “high”, and “extremely high”; or, other words with distinct levels could be given different weights for estimation. Murry et al. proposed fuzzy linguistic variables for evaluation, aiming to solve fuzziness problem in traditional Delphi Method. However, more specific calculation was not proposed. Successive researchers therefore proposed solutions, like range, fuzzy integral, triangular fuzzy number, and dual triangular fuzzy number.
- (2) Analytical Hierarchy Process: After integrating experts’ opinions, the complicated decision-making system is constructed a hierarchical system, which is developed layer by layer to clarify problems. Pair comparison is then used for evaluating the importance of factor weights.

II. Establishment of indicator

The questionnaire for this study is emailed to experts in various fields. The first-time organization of experts’ feedback is calculated the considered items for kindergarten senior preschool educators’ parent-teacher cooperation. Such items with similar property are classified into a category and emailed back to experts for opinions. With several runs of inquiry through email, the major categories are finally achieved. An expert meeting is then called to set the factors in kindergarten senior preschool educators’ parent-teacher cooperation, including student dimension, parent dimension, and teacher dimension. Such factors are regarded as the AHP dimensions, and the corresponding items are applied to build the AHP questionnaire. The research principles for this study, through the modification of Delphi Method, are listed as below.

(1) Student dimension: security, social skills, learning attitudes, self-value.

(2) Parent dimension: relevant information, positive behaviors, support & cooperation, educational strategies.

(3) Teacher dimension: communication, educational philosophy, rich instruction, personal specialty.

III. Research object

Aiming at kindergarten senior preschool educators and parents as the questionnaire objects, total 250 copies of questionnaire are distributed, and 206 valid copies are retrieved, with the retrieval rate 82%.

Data analysis result

After completing all hierarchical weights, the relative importance is allocated to indicators in the hierarchies, to show the importance of the indicators in the entire evaluation system and to generate the overall weight of the factors in kindergarten senior preschool educators' parent-teacher cooperation, Table 1.

Table 1: Overall weights of factors in kindergarten senior preschool educators' parent-teacher cooperation

dimension	Hierarchy 2 weight	Hierarchy 2 order	indicator	overall weight	overall order
student dimension	0.337	2	security	0.072	8
			social skills	0.090	5
			learning attitudes	0.116	2
			self-value	0.054	11
parent dimension	0.301	3	relevant information	0.045	12
			positive behaviors	0.066	9
			support & cooperation	0.105	3
			educational strategies	0.083	6

teacher dimension	0.362	1	communication	0.128	1
			educational philosophy	0.101	4
			rich instruction	0.077	7
			personal specialty	0.063	10

Conclusion

The following conclusions are acquired according to the empirical result analysis.

Among the dimensions in Hierarchy 2, “teacher dimension”, weighted 0.362, is the most emphasized, about 36.2% of overall weight, followed by “student dimension” (weighted 0.337) and “parent dimension” (weighted 0.301). The result reveals teacher dimension as the most emphasized dimension in kindergarten senior preschool educators’ parent-teacher cooperation.

Among indicators in Hierarchy 3, the indicators are ordered as followings. 1. The indicators in student dimension are ordered learning attitudes, social skills, security, and self-value. 2. The indicators in parent dimension are ordered support & cooperation, educational strategies, positive behaviors, and relevant information.

3. The indicators in teacher dimension are ordered communication, educational philosophy, rich instruction, and personal specialty.

By organizing the questionnaire data about factors in kindergarten senior preschool educators’ parent-teacher cooperation, top five indicators, among 12, are ordered communication, learning attitudes, support & cooperation, educational philosophy, and social skills. Apparently, kindergarten preschool educators encountering dilemmas in the parent-teacher cooperation process have to keep positive attitudes as well as attempt different methods and strategies through reflection and adjustment to improve and solve dilemmas. Dilemmas induced by parents depend on parents’ attitudes. A preschool educator should be conscientious at school. A kindergarten could plan routine.

meetings for parent-teacher cooperation, e.g. monthly teaching meeting, to build the common goals for parent-teacher cooperation problems or methods to build the bridge between schools and families so that the promotion of parent-teacher cooperation in schools become more smoothly.

Suggestion

According to the conclusion, the following suggestions are proposed in this study, expecting to provide definite guide and directions for kindergarten senior preschool educators' parent-teacher cooperation.

Parent-teacher cooperation requires the participation and cooperation of parents. Parents and teachers' collaboration could enrich teachers' instruction, allow parents better understanding and being close to children, enhance children' learning motivation, and provide children with diverse learning. More importantly, parent-teacher cooperation could improve some problematic behaviors of children. Changing the relationship between parents and teachers into friends and partners shows the close relationship, and children are the major beneficiaries in the parent-teacher cooperation process. Consequently, teachers, through online courses or irregular speeches in various channels, like Early Childhood Educare, national teacher study, or private children education institutions, to promote the specialties. Besides, children preschool educators could visit featured parks, community culture institutions, children museums, exhibitions in art gallery, and parent-child restaurants to accumulate personal life experiences to enhance the common topics with parents. In the face-to-face communication during the practice of parent-teacher cooperation, children preschool educators could observe parents' responses and present sincere attitudes and adjust the voice and wording according to parents' responses so as to acquire parents' positive feedback about educational philosophy delivery, children problem

communication, and school affair information to further achieve parent-teacher cooperation.