



Evaluating 5th-grade students' opinions on parental involvement in the educational process

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Abstract

This study investigates primary school students' perspectives on parental involvement in the educational process, emphasizing communicative competence between students and parents. While parental engagement is widely acknowledged as critical to students' academic and social development, there remains a gap in understanding how students perceive their parents' roles and communication practices within the school context. Addressing this gap, the study aimed to assess students' communicative competence with parents and to explore teachers' insights on familial communication dynamics. Employing a mixed methods approach, data were gathered from 80 fifth-grade students and 4 classroom teachers across public and private schools. Quantitative data were collected using a validated communicative competence scale and analyzed with statistical software. Qualitative data were derived from semi-structured interviews with teachers and examined through descriptive analysis. Results indicated no significant differences in students' communicative competence levels based on gender or school type. However, qualitative findings revealed that while many students displayed effective communication skills, some experienced challenges stemming from parental disengagement. These findings highlight the importance of fostering consistent and supportive parental involvement and offer implications for educators seeking to enhance family-school communication strategies.

Keywords: Communication; education; mixed methods; parental involvement; primary students

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1. INTRODUCTION

Each individual is born with unique characteristics and potential. Each individual has the potential to learn and develop within themselves (Kovacs et al., 2021). The potential of an individual is their hidden talents. This potential within an individual waiting to be discovered can only be brought to light with environmental support and education. It can be inferred. For the individual to discover his/her potential, correct guidance should be provided, and opportunities should be provided to him/her. For this, planned activities should be carried out based on the individual's environment and experiences, that is, by taking into account the individual's culture and life (Gökalp, 2019). The first institution where these activities begin is the child's birth family.

Education is defined as the process of deliberately creating desired behavioral changes in an individual through his/her own life. Although the definition of education is made in a single sentence, education is very broad in terms of the meaning it contains (Türk and Sarı, 2017). When we look at the definition, we are talking about the individual's personal life. Life is the traces left by the individual's interaction with his/her environment. The individual's interaction with the environment continues throughout his/her life. This is proof that education is a lifelong process (Yapıcı, 2010).

The child comes to school with his/her unique characteristics and potential, and educational activities are planned by the teacher taking this into consideration (Alakurt et al., 2017). However, for this to be done correctly, it is necessary to know the child and his/her unique characteristics well. For this, the teacher needs to get help from the person who knows the child best, that is, the family. The family helps the teacher create an effective educational environment with the information they provide about their child's development (Elmira & Negmatzhan, 2022).

Considering the common goals pursued by the family, school and family should not be considered as two independent institutions (Ardiansyah et al., 2020). A strong partnership should be established between these two institutions, and they should shape the child's education together, and while doing this, both have certain duties (Vural, 2008; He et al., 2025). The child's first teachers are parents because the first education begins in the family. The child's first environment is also the family. The child's behavioral and physical activities foundations are laid in the family, in other words, the child's informal education begins in the family (Martin, 2025; Vogel et al., 2023). This informal education, in other words, the child's upbringing, also depends on the family's child-rearing attitude (Rose et al., 2024; Ashora & Behzadi, 2025). The family's child-rearing attitude is affected by factors such as the family's culture, the child's gender, and the parents' level of education (Sujarwo et al., 2021).

Families try to raise their children according to the values, norms, and expectations of the society they live in. For this reason, it is observed that gender perceptions and roles in society also affect the family's child-rearing attitude. In addition, the level of education of the mother and father also affects the decisions they make about their children and their approach to them. Families with higher levels of education pay less attention to social impositions and exhibit a more tolerant, caring, and democratic attitude towards their children (Özgan & Aydın, 2010).

The family's effective participation in the child's education requires effective communication and cooperation with the teacher. Effective communication between the teacher and the family allows the child to share their expectations in the education process and to progress with sure steps in this process. At this point, parents have various expectations from the teacher (Çakmak, 2010). Providing the child with desired skills, such as developing self-expression skills, the teacher's one-on-one attention to the child, finding solutions to the child's problems, and guiding the child in solving his/her problems are among the expectations of the parents from the teachers. In addition, parents request information from the teachers on how they can help their children at home (Girişken, 2010).

Teachers also have certain expectations of parents. These expectations can be listed as; the parent should communicate regularly with the teacher, the family should be a role model for the child by complying with the rules and regulations intended to be adopted by the students, they should follow their children's school work, they should provide the necessary tools and materials, namely financial support, and most importantly, they should provide the child with moral support and the necessary attention (Hatipoğlu & Kavas, 2016). The cooperation between the parent and the teacher creates positive effects on the students, and thanks to the cooperation, the students are supported consistently at home and at school. Students feel safe with this consistency and harmony. This is a factor that increases the students' self-confidence and success (Doğan, 2021).

1.1. Related research

According to the studies conducted by Brooks (2004), it was determined that families that cooperate are informed about their children's education, and with the help of this, they reinforce their children's education at home and ensure continuity of education. In their study, Fantuzzo et al. (2000) categorized family participation under 3 headings as "home-based family participation", "school-based family participation", and "school-family collaboration-based participation". In each heading, some duties were assigned to the parent. In the study, it was stated that the parents' fulfillment of their duties in the educational process had positive effects on the student's educational process.

Some research in the field shows that some parents' understanding of participation is only in the form of helping their children with their homework and attending parent meetings, or only in the form of creating financial opportunities, and they ignore important activities such as communicating with their children, taking care of them, and spending quality time with them (Çelenk, 2003; Kaçan et al., 2019; Kahramanoğlu & Artan, 2020).

Studies have found that several factors affect parental involvement. These factors are listed as follows: the family's level of education, the family's attitude towards the school and the teacher, the teacher's attitude towards the parent, the family's socio-economic level, the family's cultural structure, and other factors (Hatipoğlu & Kavas, 2016). In the research conducted by Ertarakçı and Akyol (2021) using the Parental Commitment Scale, the level of parental involvement and commitment to the school was examined. It was determined that the parents' commitment to the school varied according to their level of education and age.

In the research conducted by Argon and Kırıyıcı (2012), it was determined that low or no involvement of parents in the education process caused some problems for the student. These problems were expressed as; adaptation problem to school, behavioral disorders, reluctance towards school and lessons, indiscipline and failure.

In their studies conducted by Kohl et al., (2000) on the participation of parents of preschool and primary school children in the areas of "Parent-Teacher Communication, Parent Involvement at School, Quality of Parent-Teacher Relationship, Teacher's Perception of Parent, Parent Involvement at Home and Parent Supporting the School", it was emphasized that parent-teacher cooperation is of great importance in monitoring the progress of their children in school and in taking parallel approaches with the school, and the participation of parents in school activities is of great importance in making children understand the importance of school.

Özçınar (2004) examined the variability of the communication competence level of parents of primary school students in TRNC with their children according to age, education, profession, and income. According to the findings, it was determined that younger parents have higher communication skills, and parents with higher levels of education such as high school and university are more likely to have higher levels of communication skills than parents who are secondary and primary school graduates.

1.2. Purpose of study

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the perspectives of fifth-grade students enrolled in state and private primary schools in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus concerning parental involvement in the educational process. The following are the research questions:

1. What is the level of parental involvement in the educational process according to the opinions of 5th-grade students in state and private primary schools in the TRNC?
2. According to the opinions of 5th grade students in state and private primary schools in the TRNC, what is the adequacy rate of parent-centered communication, student-centered communication and parent-student collaboration areas in the education process?
3. According to the teachers working in state and private primary schools in TRNC, what is the status of parents' participation in the education process?
4. According to the opinions of teachers working in state and private primary schools in the TRNC, what should be done to increase the participation of parents in the education process?

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Information on the method preferred during the research process and the research steps to be created in accordance with the method are included in this section.

2.1. Research design

This study was structured in accordance with the mixed methods research design. Mixed methods research is employed to address research questions that cannot be sufficiently answered through a single methodological paradigm. As stated by Johnson et al. (2007), the fundamental premise of mixed methods research is that the integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches yields a more comprehensive understanding of research problems and questions than the use of either method independently. Accordingly, this study seeks to evaluate the perspectives of fifth-grade students in primary schools within the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus regarding parental involvement in the educational process. The research adopts a mixed methods approach by collecting data from students through quantitative techniques and from teachers through qualitative methods.

2.2. Participants

The study group of the research consisted of 80 5th grade students and 4 class teachers studying in a state primary school and a private primary school in Nicosia. 2 of the teachers participating in the research worked in a state school, and 2 worked in a private school, at the time of conducting this research.

Demographic information regarding the quantitative study group of the research is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic information of students

School Type	F	%
Public School	40	50
Private School	40	50
Total	80	100
Gender	F	%
Girl	42	52.5
Male	38	47.5
Total	80	100

Table 1 shows the school type and gender distribution of the 5th grade students participating in the study. 50% of the students are studying in public schools and 50% in private schools. 52.5% of the students participating in the study are girls and 47.5% are boys.

2.3. Data collection tools

The study used a questionnaire based on "Students' Communicative Competence with Parents Scale" developed by Özçınar (2006). The scale consists of 35 items and has a structure with 3 factors (student-centered communication, parent-centered communication and parent-student collaboration). The answers given to each item used in the scale were graded in a three-point Likert type consisting of the options "Always", "Sometimes" and "Never". The answers given to the positive statements in the scale were scored by giving values from "3" to "1" from the option "Always" to "Never". In the negative statements, the scoring was the opposite, from "Never" to "Always" and from "1" to "3". Accordingly, the scores obtained in line with the answers given to the scales show the competence of parent participation.

2.4. Data collection procedure

The scale application to the students who constitute the study group of the research was carried out in the classroom environment in the schools where the students studied. During the application to the students, the researcher waited in the classroom and explained the points that the students did not understand. It took approximately 30-35 minutes for the students to answer all the items on the scale. Similarly, interviews with the teachers who participated in the research were conducted in the school environment and face-to-face. Interviews with the teachers lasted an average of 25-30 minutes. The process of collecting data from all teachers and students was approximately 4 weeks.

2.5. Data analysis technique

The quantitative data of the study were analyzed with the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program. Independent variables T-test was calculated according to the gender of the students and the type of school they attended. The data obtained from the interviews with the teachers were converted into findings with the descriptive analysis method. Descriptive analysis is generally used in processing data that does not require detailed separation on the qualitative data set. This type of analysis allows the establishment of a cause-and-effect relationship between the findings (Baltacı, 2019). The responses given by the teachers to the interview questions were converted into tables, and each teacher was coded as DiÖ 1 and DiÖ 2 for those working in public schools, and ÖiÖ 1 and ÖiÖ 2 for those working in private schools.

2.6. Ethical principles of research

Permission was obtained from the two schools where the research data were collected to conduct the study. Then, scale use permission was obtained, and the implementation phase began. Students and teachers participating in the study were given a declaration regarding the confidentiality of personal data and were asked to fill out a voluntary participation form. Teachers and students stated that they participated in the study voluntarily.

3. RESULTS

In this section; "Students' Communicative Competence Scale with Parents" The findings obtained from the 5th grade students and the opinions received from the relevant class teachers were presented in tables and interpreted. The findings and discussion were grouped under two main headings as "Student Opinions on Parents' Participation in the Education Process", and "Teachers' Opinions on Parents' Participation in the Education Process".

3.1. Student views on parents' participation in the education process

Table 2 shows the independent variables T-test results for the students participating in the study, according to the parent-centered communication and gender variables in the participation of parents in the educational process.

Table 2

Parent-centered communication and gender variable in the education process

Gender	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
Girl	42	2.49	0.21	0.795	78	0.795	0.346	p>0.05
Male	38	2.45	0.27					The difference is meaningless

In Table 2, it is seen that the mean of the female students (X=2.49, S=0.21) and male students (X=2.45, S=0.27) are close to each other in the independent variables T-test result of the students' perceptions of parent-centered communication according to the gender variable. The difference between the mean scores of the two groups in the parent-centered communication area is not significant (t (78) =0.795, p=0.429>0.05).

Table 3 shows the independent variables T-test results for the students participating in the study, according to student-centered communication and gender variables in the participation of parents in the educational process.

Table 3

Student-centered communication and gender variable in the education process

Gender	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
Girl	42	2.34	0.31	1,187	78	0.239	0.949	p>0.05
Male	38	2.27	0.26					The difference is meaningless

In Table 3, it is seen that the mean of the female students (X=2.34, S=0.31) and male students (X=2.27, S=0.26) are close to each other in the independent variables T-test result of the students' perceptions of their self-centered communication according to the gender variable. The difference between the mean scores of the two groups in the self-centered communication area is not significant (t (78) =1.187, p=0.239>0.05).

Table 4 shows the independent variables T-test results for the students participating in the study, according to student-centered communication and gender variables in the participation of parents in the educational process.

Table 4

Parent-student cooperation in the education process and gender variable

Gender	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
Girl	42	2.50	0.24	-0.79	78	0.432	2,526	p>0.05
Male	38	2.54	0.26					The difference is meaningless

In Table 4, it is seen that the average of female students (X=2.50, S=0.24) and male students (X=2.54, S=0.26) are close to each other in the independent variables T-test result of the students' perceptions of their parents' cooperation with them according to the gender variable. The difference between the average scores of the two groups in the field of cooperation with their parents is not significant (t (78) =-0.79, p=0.432>0.05).

Table 5 shows the T-test results of the independent variables according to the general adequacy of parent-student communication during the education process and the gender variable of the students who participated in the study.

Table 5

General adequacy of parent-student communication in the education process and gender variable

Gender	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
Girl	42	2.44	0.20	0.626	78	0.533	0.266	p>0.05
Male	38	2.40	0.22					The difference is meaningless

In Table 5, it is seen that the average of female students ($X=2.44$, $S=0.20$) and male students ($X=2.40$, $S=0.22$) for the 3 competence factors evaluated in Tables 2, 3 and 4 above are close to each other. The difference between the general average scores of the two groups is not significant ($t(78)=0.626$, $p=0.533>0.05$). This finding can be interpreted as the gender of the students does not affect their relationships with their parents and parental involvement.

According to the findings obtained, the parental participation competencies of both female and male students are at a high level when examined in relation to the gender variable. However, the communication abilities of male students appear to be weaker and more introverted compared to those of female students. The study conducted by Tuzcuoğlu and Tarkoçin (2019) similarly identified gender-based differences in children's communication, indicating that male students experience greater communication difficulties than their female counterparts. This result aligns with the findings of the present research.

These differences in communication skills between male and female students may be attributed to variations in parental attitudes, cultural influences, and child-rearing strategies based on gender. The establishment of different expectations for children according to gender, whether consciously or unconsciously, can influence the development of communication skills, thereby contributing to gender-based disparities. Supporting this interpretation, the research conducted by Sumbas and Erdemir (2021) revealed that factors such as culture, environment, and familial context contribute to the assignment of specific gender roles. These roles impact emotional regulation, particularly the external expression of emotion, and, consequently, influence social relationships and communication. This evidence further substantiates the present finding that male students exhibit weaker communication skills in comparison to female students.

Table 6 shows the T-test results of independent variables according to the parent-centered communication and school variable in the education process of the students participating in the research.

Table 6

Parent-centered communication and school variable in the education process

School	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
State Primary School	40	2.52	0.25	1,598	78	0.114	0.346	p>0.05
Private Primary School	40	2.43	0.23					The difference is meaningless

Table 6 indicates that the mean score of students attending public primary schools ($X=2.52$, $S=0.25$) and the mean score of students attending private primary schools ($X=2.43$, $S=0.23$) are relatively close. This result is based on the independent samples t-test conducted to examine students' perceptions of parent-centered communication about the type of school attended. The difference between the mean scores of the two groups in the field of parent-centered communication is not significant ($t(78)=1.598$, $p=0.114>0.05$).

Table 7 shows the T-test results of independent variables according to the student-centered communication and school variables in the education process of the students participating in the research.

Table 7

Student-centered communication and school variables in the education process

School	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
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State Primary School	40	2.27	0.29					p>0.05
Private Primary School	40	2.34	0.29	-1,104	78	0.273	0.949	The difference is meaningless

In Table 7, in the T-test results of the students' perceptions of their self-centered communication according to the school variable, it is seen that the average of the students going to public primary school ($X=2.27$, $S=0.29$) and the average of the students going to private school ($X=2.34$, $S=0.29$) are close to each other. The difference between the average scores of the two groups in the self-centered communication area is not significant ($t(78)=-1.104$, $p=0.273>0.05$).

Table 8 shows the T-test results of the independent variables according to the parent-student cooperation and school variable during the education process of the students participating in the research.

Table 8

Parent-student collaboration in the education process and school variables

School	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
State Primary School	40	2.50	0.27					p>0.05
Private Primary School	40	2.55	0.22	-1,078	78	0.284	2,526	The difference is meaningless

In Table 8, in the independent variables T-test results of the students' perceptions of their parents' cooperation with them according to the school variable, it is seen that the average of the students going to public primary school ($X=2.50$, $S=0.27$) and the average of the students going to private school ($X=2.55$, $S=0.22$) are close to each other. The difference between the average scores of the two groups in the field of cooperation with their parents is not significant ($t(78)=-1.078$, $p=0.284>0.05$).

Table 9 shows the general adequacy of parent-student communication during the education process of the students participating in the study and the independent variables' T-test results according to the school variable.

Table 9

General adequacy of parent-student communication in the education process and the school variable

School	N	X	S	t	df	p	F	Explanation
State Primary School	40	2.41	0.23					p>0.05
Private Primary School	40	2.43	0.19	-0.498	78	0.626	2,624	The difference is meaningless

In Table 9, it is seen that the average of the students who go to state primary school ($X=2.41$, $S=0.23$) and the average of the students who go to private school ($X=2.43$, $S=0.19$) are close to each other for the 3 competence factors evaluated in Tables 6, 7 and 8 above. The difference between the general average scores of the two groups is not significant ($t(78)=-0.489$, $p=0.626>0.05$). This finding can be interpreted as the schools that the students go to do not affect their relationships with their parents and parental participation.

The results of the research indicate that the parental participation competencies of students attending both state and private primary schools are at a high level when evaluated according to the school variable. However, the communication skills of students in private schools with their parents were found to be slightly higher than those of students in state schools. Factors such as socio-economic status, educational background, and environmental influences play a significant role in shaping the parental profile in both school settings. These differences contribute to variations in parental attitudes toward child-rearing and consequently influence the nature of parent-child relationships. As a result, discrepancies emerge in the communication skills of students

attending state and private primary schools. The study conducted by Orman (2012) demonstrated that the parental profile significantly affects various aspects of individual development, including perspectives on life, communication abilities, and self-confidence. This finding supports the conclusion that children's communication skills are influenced by socio-economic conditions and structural characteristics within the family.

3.2. Teachers' views on parents' participation in the educational process

Table 10 presents the opinions of the teachers participating in the study regarding the means and frequency of communication with parents.

Table 10
Teachers' communication tools and frequency with parents

Theme	Teacher	Explanation
Tools and Frequency of Teachers' Communication with Parents	DIO 1	<i>I have parents that I talk to face-to-face and parents that I contact via WhatsApp. In addition, I also have parents who do not contact me. We communicate with parents several times a week.</i>
	DIO 2	<i>We communicate through face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and WhatsApp. We are in touch every day through the WhatsApp group.</i>
	ÖiÖ 1	<i>We mostly communicate via WhatsApp or phone calls. On special occasions, I call them to school and talk. We communicate every two or three days.</i>
	ÖiÖ 2	<i>We communicate with parents via phone calls, face-to-face meetings, and WhatsApp. I am in contact with parents every weekday.</i>

As presented in Table 10, data obtained from teachers working in public and private primary schools indicate similarities in the preferred communication tools used in both school types. Teachers and parents commonly utilize phone calls, WhatsApp, and face-to-face meetings to facilitate communication. Although the same tools are employed across both school settings, the frequency of communication with parents varies depending on individual teachers. One teacher from a state primary school and one teacher from a private primary school reported engaging in daily communication with parents, while another teacher from each respective school type stated that communication occurred several times per week. These findings suggest that the frequency of parent-teacher communication is largely influenced by personal preferences of individual teachers.

While no significant difference was identified between public and private primary schools in terms of communication methods, the findings emphasize the teacher's role in initiating and maintaining effective communication with parents. The research conducted by Sahim and Atbaşı (2020) highlights the responsibilities of teachers in organizing and initiating parent-teacher communication and collaboration. A key responsibility includes being accessible and establishing a consistent and robust communication network with parents. The findings of the current study align with those reported in previous research.

Table 11 presents the opinions of the teachers participating in the research regarding their communication with the parents of the students.

Table 11
Communication between students and their parents according to teachers' views

Theme	Teacher	Explanation
Communication Between	DIO 1	<i>It varies from student to student. Some students tell jokes in class, while others hide their homework and exams. Some students reflect on their problems on their families. Some students have parents who learn about their problems when I contact them.</i>
	DIO 2	<i>They generally convey what is said and give information about homework. There are those who convey their problems as well as those who do not.</i>

Students and Their Parents	ÖİÖ 1	<i>Students mostly tell their problems. They also usually talk about their homework and exams, but some students do not.</i>
	ÖİÖ 2	<i>It varies from student to student. But in general, they convey what I say. They convey their responsibilities to their families and fulfill them.</i>

Table 11 provides information on students' communication with their parents based on interviews with teachers. According to teachers' opinions on students' communication with their parents, it was found that most students conveyed their school experiences, homework, responsibilities, and problems to their parents. This shows that students are active in conveying information to their parents and sharing.

However, there are also opinions that there are students who do not have sufficient communication with their parents. Based on this, it is possible to say that some students have problems communicating with their parents. In the part of the research conducted by taking student opinions, the findings obtained regarding student-centered communication coincide with the findings obtained from teachers.

Table 12 presents the opinions of the teachers who participated in the research regarding the communication between parents and students.

Table 12

According to teachers' opinions communication between parents and students

Theme	Teacher	Explanation
Communication Between Parents and Students	DİÖ 1	<i>Some parents cannot prioritize their children and do not care about them because of financial difficulties and life worries. There are parents who cannot provide the necessary financial means for reward and motivation. There are also concerned families.</i>
	DİÖ 2	<i>Parents talk to students about school. Sometimes they get involved in school matters that they shouldn't. They support students and make sure that homework is done.</i>
	ÖİÖ 1	<i>Most parents show the necessary interest and concern. The majority support rewards and motivation, and there are even parents who go to extremes.</i>
	ÖİÖ 2	<i>It varies from parent to parent. In general, families have strong communication with their children and they are caring. Families are in contact with me about their children's lessons, friendships, problems and school situations.</i>

According to the statements of teacher ÖİÖ 2, parental engagement varies depending on the individual family. In general, families maintain strong communication with their children and demonstrate a caring approach. These families maintain contact with the teacher concerning their children's academic performance, peer relationships, personal issues, and overall school experience.

As shown in Table 12, teacher evaluations of parent-student communication indicate that parents generally show interest in their children. This observation aligns with the results obtained from the student questionnaire. However, analysis of interview responses reveals certain differences in parent-centered communication attitudes between parents of students attending state primary schools and those attending private primary schools.

Teacher DİÖ 1 noted that some parents face challenges in providing adequate attention, care, and financial support for their children due to economic hardship and life stressors. Parents' inability to spend sufficient time with their children, whether due to demanding work schedules or ineffective time management caused by fatigue, can hinder parent-centered communication. This may lead to a lack of shared experiences between parents and

children and contribute to children's sense of emotional neglect. Nevertheless, financial hardship cannot be considered a valid justification for neglect. The study by Yıldırım et al. (2011) identified financial concerns and work-related stress as significant barriers to parental participation, supporting the insights provided by teacher DİÖ 1.

Teacher DİÖ 2 emphasized that some parents are overly involved in certain aspects of their children's communication with the school. Examples include interference with the teacher's instructional methods, making critical remarks about the teacher or school in the presence of the child, and exerting undue influence over classroom decisions. Such behavior may negatively affect the teacher's motivation and hinder effective parent-teacher communication. When parents openly express negative opinions about the teacher or school to the child, it can diminish the child's motivation and academic engagement.

Teacher ÖİÖ 1 reported that some parents tend to excessively reward their children. In this context, excess is interpreted as providing high-value gifts such as tablets or other expensive items. This behavior suggests that some parents equate material rewards with attentive caregiving. Supporting this interpretation, research conducted by Canbulat and Yüce (2016) examined parents' perceptions of what it means to "take care of" their children and found that parents frequently cited meeting costly demands such as purchasing the latest technological devices. Providing substantial rewards at an early age may foster attitudes of entitlement and a lack of appreciation for such rewards. This concern was explicitly mentioned by the teacher. While teacher DİÖ 1 highlighted the struggles of families who are unable to support their children due to financial constraints, teacher ÖİÖ 1 pointed to families who provide expensive material rewards, illustrating the socio-economic differences in parental profiles between state and private primary schools.

Table 13 shows the teachers who participated in the study. Their opinions on parent participation activities in the schools where they work were given.

Table 13

Parent participation activities in schools where teachers work

Theme	Teacher	Explanation
Parent Participation Events	DİÖ 1	<i>Apart from the school parent-teacher association parent meetings held once a year, no other events are organized.</i>
	DİÖ 2	<i>Our school usually holds a parent meeting once a year.</i>
	ÖİÖ 1	<i>Our school organizes parent training and 3 parent meetings. In addition, various events such as English Day with family participation, Environmental Festival and Olympics are organized.</i>
	ÖİÖ 2	<i>There are three parent meetings a year at school. Parent training programs called ADES are organized. The guidance unit meets with families regularly.</i>

As presented in Table 13, teacher responses indicate that parent participation activities in the schools where they work are generally limited to annual parent meetings. In contrast, private primary schools conduct a broader range of activities, including parent training sessions, parent meetings held three times per year, and educational events involving family participation. These findings suggest that private schools offer more frequent and diverse parent engagement opportunities compared to state primary schools. One possible explanation for this difference is that private schools are more capable of organizing various activities due to their greater access to financial resources.

The higher frequency of parent meetings in private schools serves as a significant advantage in reinforcing and improving collaboration between teachers and parents. Moreover, educational activities that involve parent participation provide parents with direct exposure to the classroom environment and their child's learning process. Such experiences foster a closer connection to the educational journey. Activities in which parents and students participate together in the presence of the teacher also contribute to the development of stronger communication between parents and children.

A notable distinction between parent participation practices in private and state primary schools is the implementation of parent training programs in private schools. These programs aim to guide and inform parents appropriately throughout the educational process. However, the absence of similar initiatives in state schools cannot be attributed solely to financial limitations. With support from sponsors or through voluntary efforts, school administrators and teachers can organize parent training sessions. Additionally, educational activities that require minimal financial input can still be conducted within the scope of available school resources. Therefore, the attitude and commitment of school administrators and teachers are critical determinants in the implementation of parent participation activities.

Supporting this conclusion, the research conducted by Binicioğlu (2012) revealed that teachers defined family involvement as parental support for the child's education, assistance to both teacher and student, the sharing of relevant information, consistent parental interest in all aspects of the child's development, and reinforcement of school learning at home.

Table 14 shows the teachers who participated in the study. Opinions on what can be done to increase parents' participation in the education process are given.

Table 14

Things that can be done to increase parents' participation in the education process

Theme	Teacher	Explanation
What Can Be Done to Increase Parents' Participation in the Education Process	DIO 1	<i>First of all, arrangements should be made to ease the stress of families' lives. What teachers need to do is to be accessible, to build a bridge between students and parents, and to constantly inform families about what they can do and guide them.</i>
	DIO 2	<i>Most of today's parents are not very cooperative because they resort to full-time work and other children as excuses. If we show the success and progress rates of students in activities, they can see that their participation will be more beneficial. Parent-participated activities can be increased. In this way, parents are forced to spend quality time with their children. They also observe their children in the educational environment.</i>
	ÖİÖ 1	<i>In order to ensure cooperation between students and parents, the teacher must give them responsibilities and be in constant communication.</i>
	ÖİÖ 2	<i>Parent meetings should be held frequently at school. Family trainings should be organized and families should be informed about all kinds of issues and problems related to their children. Teachers should be open to communication with parents.</i>

Table 14 presents the opinions of teachers working in public schools, offering suggestions to enhance parental involvement in the educational process. Teachers reported challenges such as parents being uncooperative, often citing financial difficulties as a barrier to participation. No similar issues were identified by teachers in private schools. Binicioğlu (2012) observed that teacher-initiated communication with families typically focuses on topics such as children's negative behaviors, academic performance, specific problems, educational needs, and strategies for supporting learning at home.

Additionally, the frequent financial requests made by schools and teachers were identified as factors discouraging parental participation. This observation aligns with findings from SSI 1.2, where no issues related to financial hardship were reported. The absence of such findings may be attributed to the generally high socio-

economic status of families in the sample and the fact that school fees paid at the beginning of the academic year are sufficient to meet institutional needs without requiring further contributions from parents.

Teachers DİÖ 1, DİÖ 2, ÖİÖ 1, and ÖİÖ 2 emphasized that educators should be accessible, communicative, and supportive, while also taking an active role in informing and guiding families regarding all aspects of the student's education and development. Teachers are expected to act as a bridge between students and parents, assign responsibilities that promote student-parent interaction, and facilitate parental involvement through activities such as meetings and training sessions within the school environment.

These findings highlight the central role of the teacher in fostering parental engagement in the educational process. Consistent with this conclusion, research conducted by Çalışkan and Ayık (2015) identified multiple elements that contribute to increased parental involvement in schools. The findings provided by the teachers consulted in the current study support and align with the conclusions drawn from that earlier research.

4. DISCUSSION

In the analysis of parent-centered communication competence in the educational process, based on student opinions, no statistically significant difference was identified with respect to gender or school type. Parent-centered communication competence was found to be at a generally good level for both variables. According to teacher feedback in this domain, most parents were found to maintain communication with their children and demonstrate interest in their education. However, in public schools, some parents were reported to lack adequate involvement, a situation attributed to socio-economic factors such as heavy workloads and financial concerns. In contrast, in private schools, it was observed that some parents equated interest and communication with the act of giving expensive rewards to their children.

Regarding student-centered communication, which reflects the communication between children and their families, no significant difference emerged based on gender. Nonetheless, female students exhibited a good level of communication competence, while male students demonstrated only moderate competence. These findings suggest that female students possess stronger communication skills than their male counterparts. This discrepancy is attributed to gender-based child-rearing practices shaped by prevailing societal roles, where male children are often encouraged to display less emotional expression and exhibit more introverted behaviors.

When student-centered communication competence was examined in relation to the school variable, no significant difference was observed. However, students in private primary schools exhibited better communication skills compared to those in state schools. This disparity is believed to be influenced by differences in family structure, particularly factors such as parental education level, socio-economic status, and overall family perspective on child-rearing. According to teacher evaluations, while many students displayed strong communication skills, some faced difficulties due to lack of sufficient parental involvement.

In terms of student perceptions of cooperation between parents and students, the overall level of cooperation was found to be good, with no significant difference according to gender or school type. From the teachers' perspectives, most parents make efforts to cooperate with both students and teachers, using platforms such as WhatsApp, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings. The frequency of communication varies depending on individual teachers, indicating that the teacher plays a crucial role in initiating and sustaining parent-teacher communication.

With regard to parent participation activities, teachers reported that such activities are more frequent and varied in private schools. Parent meetings are held more regularly, and private schools also organize training sessions for parents and joint educational activities involving parents and children. This highlights a shortfall in the extent and diversity of parent participation activities in public schools.

5. CONCLUSION

The teachers made some suggestions to increase parent participation. The most important of these suggestions is that the teacher should establish healthy and continuous communication with the parents and inform and guide them. In addition, it has been suggested that the teacher should act as a bridge between the parent and the student, and that parent meetings and parent trainings should be organized. Among the suggestions is the organization of educational activities in which parents and students will take responsibility together, which will include parents in the learning moments of the children and increase the motivation of the parents to cooperate. Another suggestion is to organize events in which parents who are not included in the education process due to excuses such as work and financial difficulties can be included in the process without requiring financial support.

As a result of the research, the following recommendations were presented to parents, teachers, the TRNC Ministry of National Education and future research:

It is recommended that parents create opportunities to do productive activities with their children, listen to them and spend quality time with them. Parents should be open to cooperation and communication during the education process of their children and should take into account the opinions and suggestions of the teacher. Parents should discuss their expectations regarding their children and teachers with the teacher in a constructive manner and reach a common conclusion. Parents should be informed about the education process and should understand that meeting personal needs such as love, compassion, trust, is a part of education and that the individual should be supported in every way. Parents should follow the education process of their children by participating in parent meetings organized in the school and educational activities with parent participation and should be in communication with the teachers.

Teachers should prevent prejudices that may or may not be formed in parents, and should be open to communication with parents, have a constructive attitude, and be accessible. Teachers should listen to the opinions and expectations of parents and also express their expectations to parents. Teachers should identify students and parents who cannot communicate healthily, build a bridge between students and parents and help them communicate. Teachers should know students and families well and ensure cooperation. They should be a mediator in organizing activities that increase parent participation, such as parent meetings and educational activities with parent participation, by communicating with the school administration. They should help parents who do not know how to guide their children by organizing face-to-face meetings or voluntary education seminars. Teachers should participate in training to improve their skills to keep up with the changing age.

Free parent training courses can be organized to help parents become more informed so that they can better support their children. It is recommended that guidance services be supported, especially in state primary schools, to help reduce the burden on the class teacher who will guide both parents and children correctly.

This research was conducted with a study group consisting of 80 5th-grade students and 4 related class teachers. It is recommended that the study group be expanded and more comprehensive studies be conducted with different findings by consulting the opinions of the parents. In addition, the study can be conducted with students from different classes and compared. It is recommended that more detailed qualitative studies be conducted with more teachers.

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