

The Importance of Communication between Family and School for Parents

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Abstract:

Communication between the family and the school plays a major role in the educational and pedagogical process. The school needs the support of the family, with whom the student spends most of his time under its care. Therefore, cooperation between the family and the school must take place through mutual participation, embodied in traditional contact with the school by parents, parents' participation in school activities, and the follow-up of schooled children at home and in the school environment. This reflects the extent to which parents perceive the importance of communication between the family and the school. This constitutes the problem of our study, whose results showed that despite the existence of communication between the family and the school, it remains only relative, that is, according to urgent need. Most parents do not contact the school except when there is a strict necessity, or at the request of the school, or upon the insistence of their children only. In addition, they do not participate in various school activities, and even their participation occurs only when their own child is directly concerned. Moreover, despite parents' interest in helping their children at home, they do not pay much attention to accompanying them to their schools. Therefore, unfortunately, a lack of parents' awareness of the importance of communication between the family and the school appears.

Keywords: family, school, communication, upbringing, education.

Introduction:

Educational institutions are the institutions responsible for raising the individual. Their fundamental role is to develop the person intellectually, cognitively, and behaviorally through a set of values received through them. Perhaps the most important of these institutions are the family and the school, as they play a major role in upbringing in general and in socialization and education in particular. They are the ones who teach the individual traditions, religion, language, moral values, and various skills, and everything that supports the building of a sound society.

It should be noted that this role is not easy; rather, it is central and critical, especially in our present time, as it is a role concerned with building the human being.

The family and the school are two institutions that undertake the role of socialization and upbringing. The relationship between these two institutions is complementary; one completes the other. Their integrative role is vital and necessary, and through it one can avoid the

individual—especially the child or pupil—living in contradiction between what he is raised upon within the family and what he learns at school.

Despite the necessity of integration between the family and the school for the success of the educational and pedagogical process, the participation of parents or the family in school activities faces a kind of neglect, if not lack of interest, in most Arab countries and particularly in Algerian society. In some families, it may even be absent, ignoring the importance of communication between them and the school, which negatively affects their children and their upbringing and education.

Hence, this research addressed the topic of parents' perception of the importance of communication between the family and the school.

1. Research Problem:

Parents must understand that when their children enroll in school, they should increase their attention to them rather than decrease it, because they move from the small family environment to a larger environment represented by the school, which is a small society in which pupils live. In it, they reconcile between themselves as individuals and the society in which they live. In this small society, they train in collective work, assuming responsibility, participation, obeying the law, and understanding the meaning of rights and duties, which differs from family treatment characterized by tolerance, leniency, and sacrifice. Therefore, the guardian must realize and be aware of the importance of communication between the family and the school to achieve the goals of both parties. The more successful and continuous the communication, the faster and better the achievement of goals.

Accordingly, the research problem was formulated as follows:

Is there a perception among parents of the importance of communication between the family and the school?

2. Importance of the Study:

The importance of this research stems from the importance of any scientific research, beginning with enriching the educational scientific content related to communication between the family and the school and the factors associated with it, and highlighting the importance of this process (communication) for both parties: the family represented by parents and the school represented by teachers and school staff, as well as clarifying the relationship between the family and the school and the means to strengthen and sustain this relationship.

This research may also contribute to assisting those responsible for the educational and pedagogical process in planning, programming, and developing appropriate strategies for the success of communication between the family and the school and achieving the desired goals. Finally, the importance of the current research lies in the possibility of benefiting from its results in certain practical aspects from which the family, the school, and society in general may benefit, by identifying the extent of parents' awareness and sense of the importance of communication between the family and the school, in addition to the recommendations that may enrich the communication process between them.

3. Objectives of the Study:

Every scientific research has specific objectives it seeks to achieve through its two parts (theoretical and field). The objectives of this research are:

- To clarify the importance of communication between the family and the school that parents on the one hand and school staff on the other should undertake for the proper functioning of the educational and pedagogical process in general, and to reveal the nature of the relationship between the family and the school by uncovering the following aspects:
- Revealing the nature of the relationship between the family and the school.
- Identifying the extent of parents' awareness and perception of the importance of communication between the family and the school.
- Identifying the role that the family should play regarding communication with their children's schools.
- Knowing the role of family-school communication in the educational and pedagogical success of children in general.
- Raising parents' awareness of the real role played by communication between them and the school for the success of their children in studies and social life in general.
- Revealing the nature of communication between the family and the school, its forms, and its obstacles.
- Drawing the attention of educational and pedagogical specialists to actively participate in guiding parents' and teachers' attention toward the necessity of communication between the family and the school.

5. Basic Concepts of the Research:

1- Family (Linguistically): Derived from "asr," meaning restraint or strong binding, and also taken to mean a protective shield, or a group and clan; it is said that a person's family are his relatives from the father's side or his clan through which he gains strength.

Family (Terminologically): The family can be defined as the social institution arising from the union of a man and a woman through a contract aimed at establishing the basic unit that contributes to building society, and its main pillars are the husband, the wife, and the children. It is also defined as a social group whose members are bound by blood and marriage ties, living together in a shared life and interacting continuously to meet the economic and social requirements necessary for the survival of the family.

There are several definitions of the family, from which we conclude that it is the first institution with which the individual interacts in his life. It represents for him refuge, shelter, and support in the form of parents and siblings. What concerns us in our topic is that the family represents for children the school from which they learn behavior and standards that enable them to interact positively in their society at all stages.

Operational Definition of the Family:

A group of individuals consisting of a father, mother, and children who interact among themselves through division of roles and are linked by a participatory relationship, where the family contributes to building any society.

The intended family in this research refers to families who have children attending school.

Operational Definition of Parents:

By parents, we mean those responsible for pupils, whether the father, the mother, or others close to them who have a direct relationship with the student.

2- School (Linguistically):

The word school originally comes from the Greek word “schul,” meaning leisure time; that is, children had leisure time after dividing their time between play, eating, and sleeping, and this leisure time had to be occupied with what would benefit them in their future life. From this origin came the term school.

School (Terminologically):

Ferdinand Buisson defines the school as a necessary social institution aimed at ensuring the process of communication between the family and the state in order to prepare generations and integrate them into social life.

The school is also defined as one of the specialized institutions of political socialization, referring to scientific institutes of various levels and stages.

Definitions of the school differ from one scholar to another, but they agree that the school is one of the institutions of socialization after the family. The school shares with the family the upbringing of children and the transmission of values to them.

Operational Definition of the School:

The school is a social institution no less important than the family, as both share in the process of socialization through upbringing, education, and the transmission of cultural heritage and values to generations. The relationship between the family and the school is participatory and complementary, completed through communication between them.

3- Communication (Linguistically):

In *Lisan al-Arab* by Ibn Manzur, communication and connection refer to what is connected to something; anything connected to another between them is a link, that is, communication and means.

The word communication is derived from the Latin word *comminis*, which means in English “common” and in French “commun.” It is a process that takes place between two parties; it does not mean merely informing by the sender or merely listening by the receiver, but rather participation in the ideas and information intended to be conveyed, meaning unity in thought.

Communication (Terminologically):

It is a social phenomenon that usually occurs between two parties to achieve one or more goals for one or both of them, through the transfer of information, facts, or opinions personally or impersonally in opposing directions to achieve mutual understanding through a communicative process.

In our research case, communication is: “the process of transferring information related to pupils between the school—through its human components of teachers, principals, educational counselors—and the parents of pupils reciprocally, in order to achieve the optimal goals of the school in upbringing and education.”

Charles Morris defined it as: “any situation in which a number of individuals participate in a certain matter.”

Martin Anderson (1959) defined it as: “the process through which we understand others and they understand us.”

From the previous definitions, we conclude that communication is an interactive process through which information is exchanged. It consists of elements such as the sender, the message, the channel, and the receiver.

Operational Definition of Communication:

An interactive process in social relations through which information and ideas are transferred and exchanged within certain social contexts representing social and educational activity, such as the relationship between the family and the school.

6. Objectives and Importance of Communication between Family and School:

- Enabling parents to know what their children receive at school and how to assist and follow them up.
- The ability of parents and teachers to cooperate in solving pupils’ behavioral and educational problems.
- Parents’ participation in school activities and providing important additions and suggestions in programs, curricula, and teaching methods.
- Informing parents about difficulties that some pupils may face in subjects and other educational activities.
- Communication helps the school achieve its educational and pedagogical mission and the goals of society, as the school is one of the institutions of socialization.
- Assisting teachers and evaluating their work and role in improving school services.
- Opening opportunities for parents to cooperate among themselves in planning and organizing certain school activities and events.
- Parents’ understanding of the school’s internal regulations and objectives.

Forms of Communication between Family and School:

- Parents’ participation in school activities.
- Informing parents about their children’s work through correspondence such as reports.
- Communication through direct meetings or phone calls.
- Visits and attendance at celebrations, seminars, and school forums.
- Sending activities and programs to parents in the form of video recordings, for example.
- Using social media and modern communication technologies.

7. Methodological Procedures of the Study:

A- Field Study Limits:

- Human limits: families who have children studying in schools, specifically parents.
- Temporal limits: conducted during the 2020/2021 school year in October 2020.
- Spatial limits: conducted in the city of Ghardaïa, Algeria.

B- Method Used:

Since the aim of the research is to know the extent to which parents perceive the importance of communication between the family and the school, this requires the use of the descriptive

method, which aims either to monitor a phenomenon or a specific topic to understand its content, or to evaluate a particular situation for practical purposes.

C- Research Population:

The research population consists of families (parents) who have children studying in schools at all levels: primary, middle, secondary, or at least in two different stages, from the city of Ghardaïa, Algeria.

Research Sample:

The sample consisted of 30 parents selected intentionally, that is, a purposive sample of parents responsible for pupils in the three educational stages: primary, middle, secondary, or at least two different stages.

D- Data Collection Tools:

The questionnaire: a prepared list of questions developed according to methodological rules, written on papers and distributed to respondents to answer in writing or orally according to the circumstances and objectives of the research, for the purpose of collecting targeted information to analyze and discuss it to derive results.

The questionnaire axes were:

- First axis: personal data information.
- Second axis: data related to parents' communication with the school.
- Third axis: data related to parents' participation in school activities.
- Fourth axis: data related to parents' follow-up at home and in the school environment.

E- Statistical Method:

The results were distributed using percentages, by calculating the frequency of each statement within its axis and then calculating its percentage:

$$\text{Percentage} = (\text{frequency} / \text{sample size}) \times 100$$

Commentary on the First Axis Statements**Statement (1): Relationship of the guardian to the pupil**

Guardian	Frequency	Percentage
Father	12	40%
Mother	18	60%
Other	0	0%
Total	30	100%

It is clear that mothers represent the highest percentage at 60%, while fathers represent 40%. We conclude that mothers are more interested in children, which may be due to fathers' preoccupation with work or other circumstances such as illness, separation, or death.

Statement (2): Age of the guardian

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 40 years	3	10%
40–50 years	19	63%
Over 50 years	8	27%

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Total	30	100%

The highest percentage (63%) is for parents aged between 40 and 50 years, followed by those over 50 years (27%), and the lowest percentage is under 40 years (10%). This may be because the sample includes families with children in all three stages. The highest age group is characterized by maturity, responsibility, and experience in upbringing.

Statement (3): Occupation of the guardian

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Employee	16	53%
Self-employed	2	7%
Daily worker	8	27%
Retired	0	0%
Unemployed	4	13%
Total	30	100%

Employees represent the highest percentage (53%), followed by daily workers (27%), unemployed (13%), and self-employed (7%). The majority are working parents, which may increase the possibility of communication with the school, as the material level affects communication between the family and the school.

Statement (4): Educational level of the guardian

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
University	6	20%
Secondary	13	43%
Primary or Middle	8	27%
Below level	3	10%
Total	30	100%

Parents with a secondary level represent the highest percentage (43%), followed by primary or middle level (27%), university level (20%), and below level (10%). The majority are educated at various levels, which increases the possibility of communication with the school, as the educational and cultural level affects communication between the family and the school.

Analysis of the First Axis:

The results related to personal data show that parents are of mature ages, with 63% between 40 and 50 years. They have an acceptable educational level suggesting awareness of the educational and pedagogical process in general and awareness of the importance of communication between the family and the school, with the highest percentage (43%) having a secondary level.

Commentary on the Statements of the Second Axis:

Statement No. (5): Guardian's contact with the school (Do you contact the school?).

Table No. (5): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (5)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	30	100%
No	0	0%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that all guardians answered yes that they communicate with the school at a rate of 100%, regardless of the reasons, number of times, or methods of contact.

Statement No. (6): When does the guardian contact the school?

Table No. (6): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (6)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
At every opportunity	14	47%
When summoned	9	30%
When a problem occurs with my child	7	23%
Total	30	100%

It is observed from the table that guardians who contact the school at every opportunity available to them represent the highest percentage at 47%, followed by guardians who only contact the school when they are summoned at 30%. Guardians who contact the school only when a problem occurs with their children represent 23%. Although the largest percentage of guardians contact their children's schools at every opportunity, this percentage is considered low compared to the sample size and the number of guardians who visit the school only out of strict necessity.

Statement No. (7): The distance or proximity of the school to the home or specifically to the guardian.

Table No. (7): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (7)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Near	22	73%
Far	8	27%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that the percentage of guardians who answered that the schools their children attend are near to them is the highest at 73%, while the lower percentage is 27% for schools far from the home or guardians. This indicates the possibility of easily contacting the school.

Statement No. (8): Do you have an idea about the means and methods of communication available by the school other than direct contact?

Table No. (8): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (8)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
I know them and use them	2	7%

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
I know them but do not use them	13	43%
I know them but they are not always available	12	40%
I have no idea	3	10%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that the highest percentage is for guardians who know the means and methods of communication available by the school but do not use them at 43%, followed by guardians who know them but say they are not always available at 40%. Guardians who have no idea about the means and methods of communication available by the school represent 10%. The lowest percentage is represented by guardians who know and use the available means and methods at 7%. Thus, we conclude that despite guardians being informed about the available means and methods of communication provided by the school, they almost do not use them, which explains the lack of awareness, if not the lack of interest.

Analysis of the Second Axis:

From the presentation of results related to data concerning guardians' contact with the school, it is noted that despite their awareness of the available means of communication and the proximity of schools to them, they only contact the school out of strict necessity.

Commentary on the Statements of the Third Axis:

Statement No. (9): Guardian's membership in the Parents' Association.

Table No. (9): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (9)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	1	3%
No	29	97%
Total	30	100%

It is noted from the table that the highest percentage was guardians who answered no, meaning they are not members of the Parents' Association, at 97%. The percentage of those enrolled in the Parents' Association was 3%, represented by only one guardian from the sample. This suggests that guardians are not interested in the matter, which is reflected in the importance of contacting the school from their side.

Statement No. (10): Guardian's participation in school activities and programs (competitions, parties, sports tournaments, etc.).

Table No. (10): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (10)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	1	3%
No	29	97%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that the highest percentage was the answer no from guardians, meaning they do not participate in school activities and programs such as parties, competitions, sports

tournaments, and others, at 97%. The percentage of guardians who answered yes and participate in school activities and programs was 3%, represented by only one guardian from the sample. This proves the lack of guardians' interest in what the school does to bring them closer to it, which weakens the communication process between the school and the family.

Statement No. (11): Guardians' participation in voluntary campaigns such as preparation, cleaning, tree planting, and others at the school.

Table No. (11): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (11)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
I participate or participated	1	3%
I only pay donations when requested by my child	24	80%
I have never participated	5	17%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that the highest percentage was 80% of guardians who participate in voluntary campaigns only when their children ask them to pay donations. The percentage of guardians who have never participated in voluntary campaigns such as preparation, cleaning, tree planting, and others at the school was 17%. The lowest percentage was guardians who participate or have participated at 3%, represented by one guardian. This proves that guardians are only interested when their children request their participation, due to their lack of understanding that their participation brings them closer to their children's schools.

Statement No. (12): Guardians' participation in school councils (guidance councils, disciplinary councils, beginning of the year, end of the year, etc.).

Table No. (12): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (12)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
I participate or participated	1	3%
I participate only when my child is concerned	29	97%
I have never participated	0	0%
Total	30	100%

It is noted from the table that the highest percentage was 97% of guardians who participate in school councils only when their child is concerned with that council. The lowest percentage was guardians who participate or have participated at 3%, represented by one guardian. This shows that guardians are only concerned when the council relates specifically to their children, although their participation in other councils would make them more connected to the school and more informed about what happens in it and about their children.

Summary of the Third Axis:

From the presentation of results related to guardians' participation in school activities, it is observed that few of them participate in various school activities, and even their participation occurs only when requested by their children or in cases specifically concerning their children.

Commentary on the Statements of the Fourth Axis:

Statement No. (13): The most important educational stage for communication from the guardians' perspective.

Table No. (13): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (13)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Primary	22	73%
Middle	6	20%
Secondary	2	7%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that the highest percentage was 73% of guardians who consider the most important educational stage for communication with the school to be the primary stage. They are followed by guardians who see the middle stage as the most important at 20%. The lowest percentage was guardians who consider the secondary stage the most important. This proves that guardians are not aware that communication with the school is important at all stages.

Statement No. (14): Guardians' supervision of their children's education and assistance with homework at home.

Table No. (14): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (14)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Always	18	60%
Sometimes	9	30%
No	3	10%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the table that the highest percentage was 60% of guardians who always supervise their children's education and help them with homework. They are followed by guardians who sometimes supervise and help at 30%. The lowest percentage was guardians who do not help their children with studies and homework at 10%, but this percentage is considered large relative to the studied sample. This proves that guardians do not understand that homework constitutes a link between them and the school.

Statement No. (15): Guardians informing the school about any difficulties or problems their children face outside school.

Table No. (15): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (15)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Always	21	70%
Sometimes	9	30%
No	0	0%
Total	30	100%

It is noted from the table that the highest percentage is 70% of guardians who always inform the school about any difficulties or problems their children face outside school. They are

followed by guardians who sometimes inform the school at 30%. This helps the school know how to deal with their children.

Statement No. (16): Guardians accompanying their children to school.

Table No. (16): Frequencies and percentages of Statement No. (16)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage %
Always	11	37%
Sometimes	9	30%
No	10	33%
Total	30	100%

It is noted from the table that the highest percentage is 37% of guardians who always accompany their children to school, but this remains a small percentage considering the total sample size. They are followed by guardians who do not accompany their children at 33%, which is considered a large percentage relative to the total sample. The lowest percentage is 30% of guardians who sometimes accompany their children. This indicates that most guardians do not allocate time to accompany their children to school regardless of their circumstances.

Summary of the Fourth Axis:

From the results related to guardians' follow-up at home and in the school environment, it is clear that despite guardians' interest in helping their children at home, they do not pay much attention to accompanying them to their schools.

Conclusion:

In this research, we attempted to identify the extent to which guardians perceive the importance of communication between the family and the school. In light of the research literature and the results of the field study, it was found that there is no real perception of the importance of communication between the family and the school among guardians, despite the existence of routine communication that depends only on circumstances. That is, guardians contact the school only when the matter relates to an emergency concerning their children, or when they are requested to attend. Despite schools providing all means and methods to facilitate communication, including modern technological techniques such as the internet, social media platforms, and the telephone, in addition to traditional direct communication methods by allocating specific times to receive guardians, most guardians are not aware of this, justifying it by circumstances such as time, work, and life's concerns, forgetting that their greatest concern in life is their children for whom they strive. Therefore, guardians must understand the necessity of communication and integration with the school and the importance of this for their children's educational and pedagogical success. Among the recommendations we propose is the organization of meetings, seminars, conferences, and even television and radio programs under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and guided by specialists such as counselors and educational advisors, through which families and guardians are made aware of the importance of communication between the family and the school.

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