Summary of the article

The title for the article is "Teachers' Perceptions on Parental Involvement in Children's Schooling in Two Selected Primary Schools" and was written by Dr Che Noraini Hashim. This research article is available online at http://www.hijrahmedia.com/proto/iidl2/artikel/teacher.php .The purposes of this study were to investigate teachers' perception regarding parental involvement in school, to investigate the role of parents in schools and to determine the barriers that are faced by parents that prevent them from getting involved in their children's education. Consequently, based from the findings, some suggestions were made on how to involve parents in school activities. Four research questions governed this exploratory study, namely i) What are the perceptions of teachers regarding parental involvement in school? ii) What are the roles of parents in their children's schooling as perceived by teachers? iii) What are the problems faced by parents as they get involved in their children's schooling? iv) How to get parents be involved in school activities?

For this study, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methodology via questionnaire and face to face interview. The subjects for this study, were all of teachers who teach in the two selected primary schools in the district of Kuala Langat, namely SK Sijangkang (SKS) and SK Jalan Tanjung (SKJT). 15 male teachers and 42 female teachers participated from SKS and 9 male teachers and 28 female teachers from SKJT. The main instrument used in this study was the survey questionnaire. 94 questionnaires were distributed, and 74 questionnaires were completed and returned. The face to face interview was conducted with the Headmaster, Senior Assistant, and one teacher of each school. The central purpose of the interviews was for teachers to identify the feasible way to involve parents in school activities. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed by using SPSS which include means, standard deviation, frequency and percentage and the findings from the interview were analyzed and reported.

Data analysis revealed that a vast majority of the teachers believed that parents should get more involved in their children's education such as supervising their homework, reading together with the child, attending school meeting and getting involved in any activities organized by school. The teachers also suggested that the practical ways to involve parents in their children's education is through communication and collaboration between teachers and parents. In addition to the above, the teachers also perceived that lack of time on the part of the parents was the major

problem that prevents involvement in school activities. From the result, all the respondents believe that "parents should attend PTA meetings. They also suggested that there should be many school activities that involved students, parents and teachers such as reading enrichment programs, sport events and recognition ceremonies to honor students' achievement. The findings also revealed that teachers believed parents should be encouraged to work in school as volunteers. They believed that parents could provide some information or ideas in matters pertaining to the betterment of the school's administration and their children schooling process. The researcher indicated that the results of the study are fairly substantial.

The study also revealed that there are many reasons why parents should get involve in their children's schooling. Suggestions that parents should participate in the various activities organize by the school such as PTA meetings, sport day, canteen day, and recitation of 'Yassin' and 'Tahlil' would help to promote good teachers-parents relationship. However, the issue on the 'lack of time on the part of the parents' should not be taken lightly. Schools must find ways and work around the solution to overcome this problem. Perhaps, by distributing handouts, making time for calls to the students' home or using SMS and email to notify parents could be of help in order to minimize the barriers of parental involvement.

In conclusion, looking more closely at the research there are indeed a strong indications that the most effective forms of ensuring academic excellence among school children are those who engage parents in working directly with their children. The more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning, the more likely the children to get good results.

Review on the methodology used

This research adapted the mixed method where the researcher used qualitative and quantitative method. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), mixed methods research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. This study used survey research (quantitative) and interviewing technique (qualitative).Mixed-method is a good method to use while conducting a research because both quantitative and qualitative methods have its own strength and weaknesses. For example, the weaknesses for qualitative method are the results are more easily influenced by the researcher's

personal biases and idiosyncrasies and knowledge produced may not generalize to other people or other settings (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie,2004).Therefore, proponents believe that mixed research aids to improve the overall quality of research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Additionally, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2010), the use of qualitative and quantitative methods provide a better understanding of research problems than does the use of either method alone. I think when researchers use several methods in their research process, they can use the strength of every type of information collection and minimize the weak points of every method. A mixed-method approach of gathering and evaluation of data can increase the validity and accuracy of the information.

I had mentioned earlier the researcher used survey method which is a cross-sectional survey and the researcher used the questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. Part I identified respondents' demographic information Part II consisted of twelve items on parental involvement which were divided into 3 sections, Part III constructed to find out about the role of parents and Part IV was for respondents to indicate the extent to which they perceived barriers to the parental involvement. It is good questionnaire because it is well organized to answer each research question according to the section in the questionnaire (research question 1, 2, 3). It will be easier for the researcher to analyze the data collected and for the respondent to answer it.

In term of validity of the instrument, I think the instrument are valid because according to Hittleman and Simon (1992), validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. In this research the data from the questionnaires managed to answer the research questions of this research. The researcher also informed in her research article that her question design was adapted and modified based on research carried out by others researcher related to her topic of study. This showed that the questionnaire was well constructed because she made research first before come out with the questionnaire. According to Hittleman and Simon (1992), one way to know one instrument is valid or not is by determining whether that instrument has been developed according to a supportable educational, sociological, or psychological study. Furthermore, the questionnaire gave ease to the respondents to answer it. It is easy for the respondents to respond because the questionnaire is just simply required by

checking, rating and circling the best one that suit them. A good questionnaire should not make the respondents feel the burden to answer it especially for the type of questionnaire that need the respondents to answer open-ended questions.

In term of sampling, the researcher used cluster random sampling which I think is the best way to get the respondents for this research. The researcher picked two schools throughout Malaysia to be her sample. According to Gay and Airasian (1992), cluster sampling is most useful when the population is very large and spread out over a wide geographical area and sometimes it is the only feasible way to select a sample because it is not always possible to obtain a list of all members of the population. Though, I think it is better if the researcher clearly choose one school from urban and one school from rural to represent the two types of school that exist in Malaysia because I think demographic factor also play an important factor in a research.

However, in term of data collecting, I think the researcher should be more organize because out of 94 set of questionnaires, only 74 questionnaires were completed and returned back which is 78%. I think if the researcher planned well in term of distributing and collecting the questionnaires the percentage of completed questionnaires that being return will be much higher and thus, it will make the data more reliable and valid.

In term of data analysis, the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences) SPSS. According to Holmes et al (2005), when doing a quantitative research it is recommended that the researcher using the SPSS programme to analysis the data. The descriptive data were used to analyze the research questions number 1, 2, and 3. I think this is the most practical way to assess and analyze statistical data.

The researcher also conducted face to face interviews with the Headmaster, Senior Assistant, and one teacher (cum secretary of PTA) of each school as for the qualitative method. These interviews were intended to answer research questions number 4. I think this is good because after finding the level of parental involvement in their children education and possible barrier that hinder the parents from doing so, the researcher also try to come out with ways that parents can do to get involve in their children's education. However, I think it is better if the researcher also make interviews with some of the teachers about the research questions number 1,2 and 3 so that it can support and further understand the quantitative data provided by the

questionnaire.

According to Gay and Airasian (1992), there are three common mixed-method approaches: (1) qualitative data are collected first and are more heavily weighted than quantitative; (2) quantitative data are collected first and are more heavily weighted than qualitative; and (3) qualitative and quantitative data are equally weighted and are collected concurrently. The researcher used the QUAN-Qual Model where she used quantitative method first and follow by the qualitative method. However, the two methods are not interrelated where normally this type of method the qualitative analysis and interpretation can help explain or elaborate on the quantitative result. However, in this research the qualitative data obtained used to answer only one research question which is question number 4. It is better if the researcher use the QUAN-QUAL Model. The quantitative studies are good at establishing what, but qualitative studies help us to understand how it work or do not work. Thus, both methods can benefits from collaboration.

The method of presenting the data of this research is efficient because the readers can easily follow and understand it. It is well organized according to the research questions stated in the first chapter. Therefore, the research can follow the flow of this research and comprehend it easily. The researcher clearly explains the instrument that she used for the research which is the questionnaire. He explained the question for every section and how the respondent can respond to it such as ticking 'Yes' or 'No', rated on a four likert scale, and circling. However, I think it is better if the researcher include the transcription of the interviews that she did.

Conclusion

In conclusion, in my opinion this research applied a good and suitable methodology in order to gather and analyze the data. I think this a useful research especially in term of improving our education because in Malaysia, parental involvement in children's education is still at the minimum level. A lot of parents place the responsibility to teach their children and ensure their children's education upon the teachers. There is a need to study the level of parental involvement in children's schooling so that it may provide insights in relation to the current situation regarding the involvement of parents in their children education. The findings of the research might also help in improving the awareness of the public about the importance of parental

involvement. Therefore, in my opinion this is a good education research because according to Yate (2004), a good research education must be directed to 'improvement of learning' and it must be directed to effectiveness or employability or developing every child's potential.

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