

MANAGING CHANGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL: TEACHERS' AND PARENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON MANAGING CHANGES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Abstract

The topic of this research paper is the management of changes in primary schools, based on the "New Concept," and the results that have come from these changes.

The aim of this research is to explore how much these educational changes have actually achieved the expected results. To investigate the changes that have taken place within the school, focusing on teachers' work and cooperation with parents, several research tasks need to be carried out:

Analysis and review of literature that discusses the importance of accepting changes by teachers and parents; Conducting a survey with both teachers and parents; Interpretation of the results from the research. To achieve the research goal, we will use a survey as the method and a questionnaire as the instrument, which will provide data about what teachers and parents think regarding the changes in the school.

Hypotheses: Cooperation between the school, parents, and the community plays an important role in improving the school's work and involving them in decision-making related to children's school life and activities. Parents are satisfied with their children's success and achievements at school. Teachers cooperate with parents, sharing ideas and thoughts about students' performance, behavior, and other related matters.

The dependent variable in this research is the cooperation between the school and parents, while the independent variable is the opportunities that the school and its leadership provide to parents to be involved.

At the end of this study, we aim to reach realistic conclusions about the current situation and provide appropriate recommendations for better results in the future

Keywords: managing, primary education, teacher, parents

1. Introduction

"There are no difficult children. It is difficult to be a child, in this world of tired, busy, hurried and impatient people." HENNING KOHLER

In many countries around the world, discussions are taking place about changes in education. These changes are necessary in our country as well. We live in a technological era in which technology has transformed everything from our way of life to the pace of work. The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence has altered and accelerated every aspect of society. Traditional learning methods are no longer engaging for children; instead, they are tiring and unproductive (Zwiers, J, 2005, page 42). Managing changes in education is extremely important, but this must be achieved by carefully and promptly analyzing the methodology behind these changes. Since ancient times, teaching has primarily been oriented toward a teacher–student model, known as frontal teaching. In earlier periods, this method was considered successful or at least we believed it to be so but in reality, it often consisted merely of teachers finishing their

lectures and going home. As times have changed, so have our perspectives (Açıkgenç, A, page 19). A teacher should not be in the classroom by chance; they must have a clear purpose before entering the room. Every teacher should have a strong command of their subject and make their best effort to convey this knowledge to the students. At this point, I also want to highlight another important aspect that should exist in every subject: the freedom for students to express their thoughts. I believe that unless a teacher understands what a student already knows, they should not proceed with introducing new material.

2. Research methodology

2.1. Research subject

- Managing changes in primary school based on the “New Concept,” as well as the outcomes resulting from these changes. The perspectives of teachers and the attitudes of parents regarding their children’s performance, along with the impact of this cooperation on the quality and effectiveness of the teaching process.
- Education must adapt to the continuous technological changes and make extensive use of them in the learning process. The education system must respond to these changes rapidly, with internal quantitative and qualitative developments, in order to transmit systematic, coherent, and sustainable knowledge and skills to students.

2.1.1. Research purpose : Being convinced that cooperation between the school and parents influences the quality of education, our goal is to investigate the extent to which these educational changes have actually achieved the expected results, considering that the reforms began many years ago.

- To examine the issue of the changes implemented within the school based on the work of teachers and their cooperation with parents several research tasks must be carried out: analyzing and reviewing the literature that addresses the importance of accepting changes by teachers and parents,
- conducting surveys with teachers and parents,
- interpreting the findings from the research.

In order to achieve the aim of the study, we will use a survey as the main technique and a questionnaire as the primary instrument. This will provide data regarding teachers’ and parents’ perceptions of the changes occurring in the school.

2.1. Hypothesis

2.1.1. Main hypothesis: The management of changes in primary schools represents a highly complex educational process, influenced by an extended transition period and various external factors. Collaboration between the school and parents plays a crucial role in the lives and activities of children at school.

Teachers cooperate with parents, exchanging ideas and opinions about their children regarding academic achievement, behavior at school, and other related matters.

2.1.2. *Supporting hypotheses:*

- Describing the current situation in schools.
- Surveying teachers and parents regarding the management of changes in primary education.
- Evaluating a school institution is important for identifying both strengths and weaknesses. This helps in understanding the results achieved and in making better decisions for the future.

The dependent variable in this research is the cooperation between the school and parents, while the independent variable is the opportunities that the school and its leadership provide for parents to be involved how much teachers engage parents and take their needs and requests into consideration. At the end of this study, we will reach realistic conclusions about the current situation and provide appropriate recommendations for improved results.

3. **Management of changes in primary school**

3.1. *Theoretical aspect:* Today, all types of schools face major responsibilities to reform and respond to the challenges of the new century. Public education, through reforms, aims to improve primary and secondary education, reduce overload, modernize all school components such as classrooms, equipment, teaching and laboratory materials, create new curricula and textbooks, train staff, and integrate the education system into the European framework. In reality, this is very challenging in our country. Many changes that have been made were not implemented properly, which has caused serious problems. In some cases, these changes were short-term and failed, leaving students at a disadvantage due to unsuitable educational policies. The Ministry of Education and the Education Development Bureau must carefully analyze every change or plan, which should not be experimental from time to time or based on copying others. If something is successful elsewhere, it does not necessarily mean it will be successful in our country. Our mentality is different, our culture is different, and so are our working tools, living conditions, and overall context (Sulejmani, M, 2005).

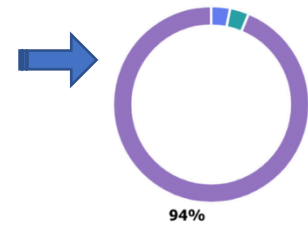
4. **Case study - THE STUDY PART**

4.1. *The perspective of teachers and parents on managing changes in primary education:* The study included several primary schools, most of which belong to the Municipality of Bogovina, while a smaller number were from the Municipality of Tetova. A survey was conducted with parents to understand how they view the school and to help strengthen the TEACHER–STUDENT–PARENT relationship. The aim of the survey was to gather parents’ perspectives on the new changes in primary education, as well as to collect their suggestions and remarks. The survey was completely anonymous. A survey was also conducted with teachers, who directly experience the changes happening in primary education.

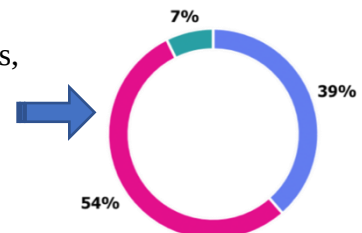
4.1.1. *Organization and implementation of the survey:* The survey was organized and carried out through Microsoft Teams/online. The number of parents who participated in the survey was 206. The number of teachers who participated in the survey was 96. Each survey contained ten questions. The parents’ survey focused on their perspective regarding these changes, while the teachers’ survey focused on their approach to the changes and the results achieved through them.

4.2. *Conclusions Drawn from the Teachers’ Survey*

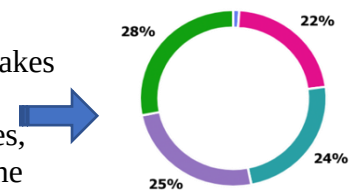
- Teachers declare that "They love the work they do and teaching is a sacred mission for them" 94%.
- On the other hand, there are teachers, although a small number, who declare that "they are not satisfied with the work they do, but they do it simply for the salary" 6%.



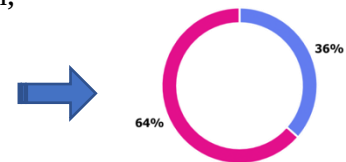
- ❖ Regarding changes in education:
 - 54% of respondents declare that they do not want the changes,
 - 7% of them do not want them at all,
 - while 39% of them accept these changes.



- Teachers state that working with the "New Concept," which includes curricula, new textbooks, and the electronic diary, sometimes makes their work easier, while in other cases it makes it more difficult, for example:
 - in some cases, they make the work easier, while in other cases, they make it more difficult, such as - Lack of training from the Education Development Bureau and the Ministry of Education, lack of books.



- ❖ Regarding the electronic diary:
 - 64% of teachers prefer the old Classic diary,
 - 36% prefer the new one.

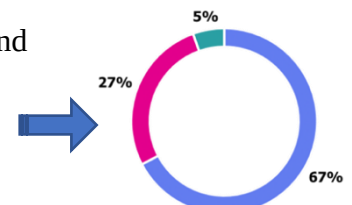


4.3. Conclusions Drawn from the Parents' Survey

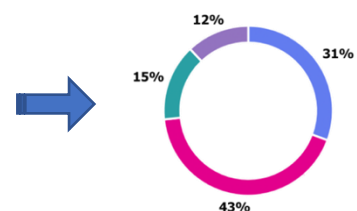
- ❖ Regarding the question: "Are you satisfied with the education and teaching your child receives at school?"

Their answers are:

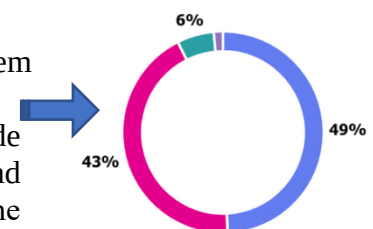
- 67% declare that they are very satisfied,
- 27% are somewhat satisfied, and
 - 5% are not satisfied at all.



- ❖ Parents' interest in their child's educational process is:
 - greatest from grades I to V, 43% and 31%,
 - and lowest from grades VI to IX, 15% and 12%.

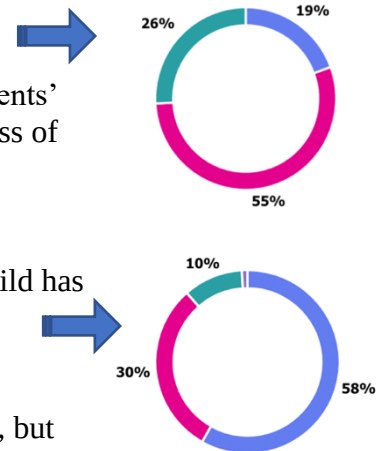


- ❖ According to parents:
 - 49% of them responded the old educational system was better,
 - while 43% of parents think the new educational system is better.



- ❖ Parents believe that the "New Concept" in education has made the teaching and learning process easier, but the textbooks and learning materials are not suitable for their children's age. The respondents included:

- 19% of respondents are very satisfied,
 - 55% moderately satisfied and
 - 26% partially satisfied.
- ❖ Regarding the use of technology in education, as well as parents' access to the electronic diary, whether it facilitates the process of learning or whether it makes it difficult, parents believe that technology has helped the learning process.
- 58% of them think that it has facilitated education, and the electronic diary allows them to see in real time what their child has learned at school, as well as their grades and absences.



4.4. Conclusions and recommendations

- For most teachers, their work is considered a sacred mission, but there are some who are teachers accidentally, as they do not love the work they do and only do it because they need the salary.
- Most teachers do not like changes, because for them change means “more activity and teaching.” This is especially noticeable among more experienced teachers, while younger teachers are generally more accepting of changes.
- The use of technology in the teaching and learning process is very useful, but it should be used wisely. The use of mobile phones by students at school should be prohibited because it disrupts the learning process.
- There should be frequent training sessions organized by the Education Development Bureau and the Ministry of Education, clearly explaining the required changes.
- Motivation at work is very important. This can be achieved by increasing the salaries of education employees, as well as by freeing schools from the influence of political parties, which seriously harm the freedom of work in these institutions that are vital for the country's development.
- ❖ Training should also be provided for parents to help them understand the changes in education, which would make the teaching and learning process in schools easier.
- ❖ Parents want the school to be like a "9-year nursery school," serving only for education and teaching, and to take care of everything else that the family cannot provide.
- ❖ There are often disagreements between the school and parents about who is to blame for the children's lack of success.
- ❖ Technology is very popular and accepted by students, but it is not easily understood by some teachers and many parents. The time in which children are growing up now is very different from the time when their teachers or parents grew up.
- ❖ Decision-making in school should involve everyone, so that we can best identify each other's mistakes, try to give advice, and improve together. The results will be promising.

5. Managing change in our country

5.2 *Conclusions and further steps:* The management of educational institutions plays a very important role in implementing changes and achieving success. The school manager or leader is practically the school principal, along with the leadership structures that is, all the employees. Michael Fullan and many other researchers say that the school principal is the person who must oversee and solve all the problems that others have not been able to resolve. The principal should

have knowledge, information, decision-making skills, and a clear vision for their work. Tensions, problems, and unpleasant situations are often encountered in educational institutions, especially recently, due to the fact that incompetent or unprofessional individuals are sometimes appointed as school managers (Zwiers, J, 2005, page112). The work of school leaders primarily involves improving the skills and knowledge of people in the school, creating a shared culture of expectations regarding the use of these skills and knowledge, keeping the different parts of the school connected in a productive relationship, and holding individuals accountable for their contribution to achieving collective results (Majkell, F, 2002, fpage 214).

5.3 Education in our country must be freed from ideological and political concepts: Educational work in schools is carried out in a complementary manner, through teaching and extracurricular activities. In teaching, the primary function is education, while in extracurricular activities the focus is on upbringing the character development. Under the influence of school literature, teaching staff, school management, etc., students change their attitudes, value system, worldview, etc. A motivated teacher demonstrates a willingness to dedicate more to their work, to make greater efforts, to be more engaged, and to approach their work in a creative and admirable way (Kocić, Lj, 1989, page 4).

The impact of the educational process on interethnic relations is particularly highlighted through social sciences, such as history, literature, sociology, etc. One of the projects that dealt with this study, “Interethnic Tensions and the Educational Process”, which was carried out at the Institute for Sociological and Political Legal Research in Skopje, evaluated, using the method of content analysis, precisely the contents of these social subjects. The analysis of history textbooks for all four grades of secondary school showed that the terminology in this subject has been taken from old ideological lessons. The content of the textbooks is based on an ethno-national dimension, lacking a balance between the past, the present, and the future, which creates a state of euphoria in students that begins with the expression of emotions and ends in frustration.

6. Conclusion

“Education is our passport to the future, because tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today”

Malcolm X.

Every change made in our country has been implemented at an inadequate level, which has caused very serious problems. In some cases, these changes have been short-term and have failed, resulting in students being disadvantaged due to inappropriate educational policies. The Ministry of Education and the Education Development Bureau must carefully analyze every change or plan, which cannot be experimental from time to time by trying to copy others. If something is successful elsewhere, it does not necessarily mean it will be successful in our country. Our mentality is different, our culture is different, as well as our working tools, living conditions, and so on. History shows us that schooling by itself does not educate people. Schooling is a path to professionalism, but it is not necessarily a path that leads a person to develop a sense and understanding of the values of life and values in general. There are no schools that could perhaps be called “schools of humanity.” To become a true human being, one cannot be “schooled,” but only educated, said Kerschensteiner in his time. The values of schooling, therefore, have a different meaning from the values of education.

The school will educate both young people and adults. This is the school's new mission, especially for its new complementary role in the Western Balkans (Jashari, H, 2005, page. 23).

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