Parental Participation at High School: Adaptation of Teachers’ and Parents’ Scales of Parental Participation

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Summary

Purpose

Family participation is a systematic approach which encompasses practices as diverse as supporting and training families, ensuring their participation in education, enhancing the educational and academic experiences of children, establishing and boosting communication between homes and educational centers, enriching educational programs through the participation and contributions of families, etc. Previous research shows that systematic and organized family participation practices increase the academic success of the adolescents as well as their motivation for learning, school attendance, classroom participation, and the likelihood of their advancement to higher education. In addition, it is reported that family participation has a positive effect on decreasing discipline and attendance problems as well as improving the attitude towards school during adolescence period. It is reported that participation practices help to foster the belief among parents that their efforts towards the education of their children receive support. This belief makes it possible for them to pay more attention to the education of their children and to provide better support to educators. Teachers, again through participation practices, acquire the opportunity to establish better communication with parents, to develop more positive attitudes towards family participation, and to provide better support to family participation in education. On the other hand, in order to create an environment of efficient collaboration, it is first necessary to understand what students, teachers, and parents think on the subject of collaboration. The literature review demonstrated no measurement tool which would enable the creation of a comprehensive and holistic perspective regarding family-school collaboration in high schools in Turkey. In this regard, the present study aimed at adapting the “High School and Family Partnerships: Teacher and Parent Scales” Epstein, Connors, and Salinas (1993) to Turkish.

Method

After taking necessary permits concerning scales, the first step in the adaptation of scales was the translation of the scales into Turkish by two experts. Next, the opinions of two pedagogical experts were taken. After corrections were made in the scales in accordance with expert opinions, the scales were translated back into their original language by two experts. After this step, it was ascertained whether the original scale items were equivalent in terms of language to the items drawn from the forms translated into Turkish. After this translational procedure, four experts (two with PhD degrees in educational programs and two with PhD degrees in educational psychology) evaluated the scale items in terms of meaning, phrase, experience, and concept. After these translational procedures, the Turkish scales were administered to 221 teachers and 252 student parents in high schools. Confirmatory factor analysis, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of internal consistency calculation, and some descriptive analyses were carried out upon the data obtained.

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Results

The teachers’ scale had 23 dimensions originally, but this was transformed to 8 dimensions in the Turkish version. Likewise, the parents’ scale was reduced from 24 dimensions to 7 dimensions. After this transformation, analyses showing the appropriateness of data for confirmatory factor analysis revealed the model-data fit. At the end of the confirmatory factor analysis, the following values were obtained for the teachers’ scale: χ²/sd rate = 1.71, RMSEA = 0.057, SRMR = 0.077, CFI = 0.85, GFI = 0.61, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient = 0.84. The following values were obtained for the parents’ scale: χ²/sd rate = 1.73, RMSEA = 0.054, SRMR = 0.079, CFI = 0.87, GFI = 0.64, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient = 0.89.

Conclusion

The GFI and CFI values obtained in this study were seen to be below the values stated. For this reason, some of the items in the scales were shifted to external dimensions or removed completely. As a result, however, there was a drop in χ²/sd rates as well as in RMSEA and SRMR values. In other words, reliability decreased, and error margin increased. Since there was a negative impact on reliability and the dimensions would not contain the requested number of items in the factors and also we wanted to preserve the confirmed structure, this procedure was not adopted. Even though CFI and GFI were low, the fact that the χ²/sd rate and the RMSEA / SRMR values were within acceptable limits and displayed good fit, it was ultimately decided (in light of the explanations that those indices would suffice) that each one of the scales had an appropriate structural validity. In a similar vein, the coefficients of internal consistence revealed that the scales were reliable.