IN-SERVICE TEACHERS’ VIEWS ABOUT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN GREECE.

Evangelia Boutskou, Aristoteles University, Greece

A growing body of research supports the importance of parental involvement in education in different contexts (Uludag, 2008; Vincent, 1996). Recognizing that teachers bring a lifetime of experience to their professional development, this article examines how in-service primary education teachers perceive “parental involvement” at different stages of their life; how teachers perceive the home-school relations as students, as parents and as professionals. One hundred in-service teachers aged 25-50 who registered at a University postgraduate program completed an open ended questionnaire the first week of their attendance. Teachers (66 female and 34 male) whose teaching experience varied between 5-25 years, came from rural and urban areas in Greece.

The results revealed the complexity of the way teachers perceived parental involvement from different angles over the time. When teachers were children, their parents’ involvement with school was described more as a communication initiated by the school in order to give information about progress. Teachers as parents usually described their relation with the school teachers of their own children as discrete, typical, mutual communication happening on a regular basis once a month. Teachers as professionals described parental involvement as a personal issue initiated both by teachers and parents. The majority of teachers held a romanticized view about home-school relations and reported negative incidents of parental involvement as limited examples. However, there was an unquestioned “professionally correct” assumption that satisfied parents and good home school relations gave credits to the good teacher. This article suggests a critical examination of the ways teacher responded to questions about parental involvement in the Greek context at this particular time.

Keywords:
Parental involvement, In service- teachers, Home-school relations.

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