**HOME-SCHOOLS RELATIONSHIPS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS-PARENTS’ PERSPECTIVES**

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This paper presents results from a case study examining home-school relationships in Cyprus. In phase one, teachers’ views, aspirations and expectations were examined through a survey of twelve primary schools and individual teacher interviews in six of them. Analysis indicated that home-school relationships were limited. Teachers had three main expectations of parents: to attend in regular meetings, to keep in communication with schools, and to supervise their children’s homework (Zaoura & Aubrey, 2010).

The current paper focused on sixteen parents interviews gathered in the same six schools. Coding and analysis involved both a priori and emergent categories, the latter requiring constant comparison of similarities and differences in experiences, views and events. Categories were then grouped under higher-order concepts or categories in order to make explicit embedded relationships, the conditions and consequences under which these occurred.

Analysis indicated that parents understood that home-school co-operation might benefit children’s attainments, emphasising the family’s role in education and in formation of character. Parents confirmed that current home-school relationships were limited to parents’ meetings and communication with teachers and appeared to accept their responsibility to check their children’s homework even though this was an unwritten responsibility. Many parents however emphasised that the nature of home-school relationships depended on the teachers’ approach and suggested that teachers should take more initiative in contacting them and increasing the frequency of meetings. Many parents appeared to be critical of other parents who were seen to create problems and not accept teachers’ views. This indicated that establishment of good relationships could vary from a parent to parent.

The relationship between culture of the school and orientation of the family to that culture is not straightforward and mediated implicitly through the child’s social behaviour and academic achievement. The current situation in Cyprus suggests that school teachers’ bring two key constructs to home-school relations: one relates to children’s conduct, character and manner; the other to learning, acquisition of knowledge and academic attainment. Where there are concerns about either of these two, teachers regard it as the parents’ responsibility to address them. Parents meanwhile acknowledge the dominant role of teachers in defining the home-school relationship and accept that the nature of the relationship depends upon the parent as well as the teacher. They would welcome more opportunity to renegotiate this role.
Results reveal the interplay between home and school though neither party is fully aware of the extent to which this factor contributes to the child’s academic achievement and social behaviour. Bourdieu’s theory and forms of capital is used to unpick some examples of inequality in home-school relationships.

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Home-school relationship, Parental involvement, Family, Cyprus, Case study.