

## SOME ATTITUDES OF PARENTS IN FRONT OF SCHOOL.

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### **Abstract**

Parents, teachers and school are the most important collaborators in improving our children's future. These partners are the main stakeholders and assessors in their education. The parents, as the closest people to children, always want the best for them in different aspects in front of school as: the physical aspects of the school, the climate of school, the relationship teachers-school, the curriculum, the teachers and the staff, the school politics also about the politics of the educational system. The parents are a very important source for everyone who wants to know lots of things about school. They are the main stakeholders to give us information and their points of view about the situation and the problems they think the schools have. For these reasons we have chosen the parents to represent their attitudes toward not only the school and the curricula but also the abusive problems, their involvement in school, their evaluation about the school board, their own rights and their children's rights too, the teachers' role, the communication, the information from school etc. To highlight these attitudes and the conditions of our schools nowadays, we have done a questionnaire using the Likert's scale with 150 parents (94 females and 56 males) of primary and secondary school in Shkodra city during the period January-March 2013. This questionnaire will reflect the evaluation of conditions and beliefs, based on parents' involvement, educational aims of the school and children needs. The analysis of this questionnaire is done with SPSS. 20 Program and Microsoft Office Excel 2007.

**Key words:** *attitudes, children, parents, pupils, school*

## Introduction

Parents, teachers and school are the most important collaborators in improving the children's future. These partners are the main stakeholders and assessors in children's education. Parents, pupils and teachers work together to develop, to contribute for a school vision, which they share between them. When pupils as well as parents, educators and the community are directed to school, they begin to create their judgment about their own life and work experiences in school. (NCLC, 2007, pg 5.) Parents as the closest people to children always want the best for them in different aspects in front of school as: the physical aspects of the school, the school climate, the relationship teachers-school, the curriculum, the teachers and the staff, the school politics and also about the politics of the educational system. The parents being so connected directly or not to the school are not indifferent about what they know. They listen to be informed about and, furthermore, they are a very important source for everyone who wants to know lots of things about school. Their role and their influence are very important even though what happens inside school and the roles they have there. In one way or another they are part of the school, in what school and teachers organise together and this happens for different reasons:

- ❖ *Parents are legally responsible*- about their children's education and naturally they are people, who offer care to raise and educate them.
- ❖ *Parents are educators too*- except the teachers, especially during the first years of life, parents are primary and effective about the children's education, but also in the following years they have such role even though the teachers like it or not. This would help teachers to better fit the classroom work.

(Gjermani, 1998 fq.11-15)

Parents have their points of view about different topics of school and their relations. For this reason are chosen the parents to represent their attitudes toward school, not only about the school and its curricula, but also about the abusive problems such as: drugs, alcohol, smoking, their participation to school, their evaluation about the class or school board about their rights and their children's, too. It is known the fact that the children are the bridge which connects parents and school in different aspects. For this reason this study represents some attitudes of parents toward school, seen in the light of changes of school conditions for their children and for all the educational system.

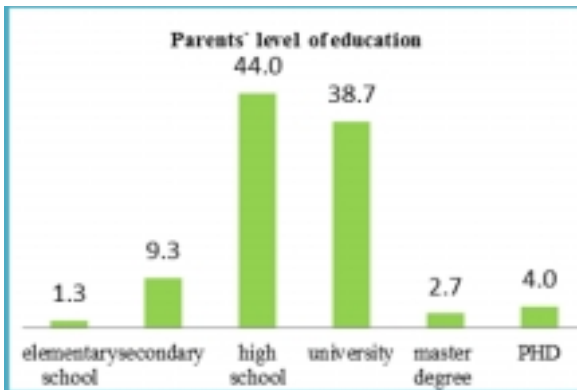
## Methodology

To collect the data for this study is used a standardized questionnaire (Guyette, 1983: 43, 44) based on Likert's scale. The questionnaire is adopted in the Albanian context based on the information and the problems we tended to collect through it. In our study are included 150 parents (56 males and 94 females), whose children are in public and nonpublic schools of Shkodra city. The aim of this study is to present some attitudes and opinions of parents about the problems faced, with the aim to improve and get some suggestions to build better educational politics for a better learning and teaching quality. The parents, participants on this study are

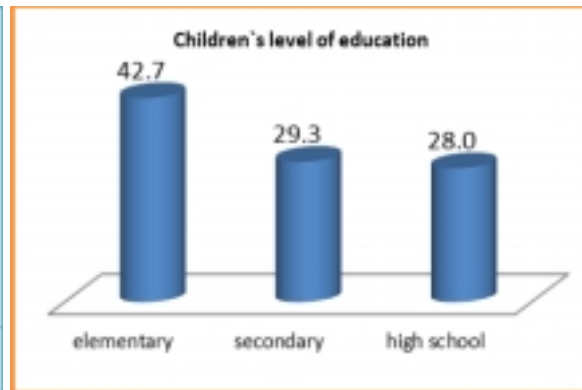
selected occasionally. The study is done during the period January- March 2013 in Shkodra city. The data is calculated with SPSS.20 and Microsoft Word Excel 2007.

## Results and discussions

We have presented graphically the results of the answers given by the parents of children who follow the public and non public schools in Shkodra city. The parents selected have different ages. The highest number of the participants is between 40-49 years old and mostly are females 63%, 37% are males.

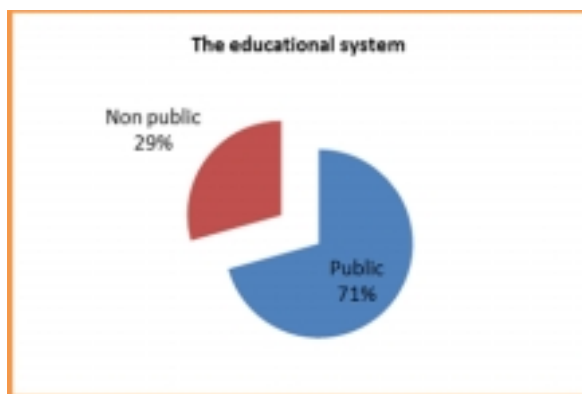


**Graf.1 Parents' level of education**

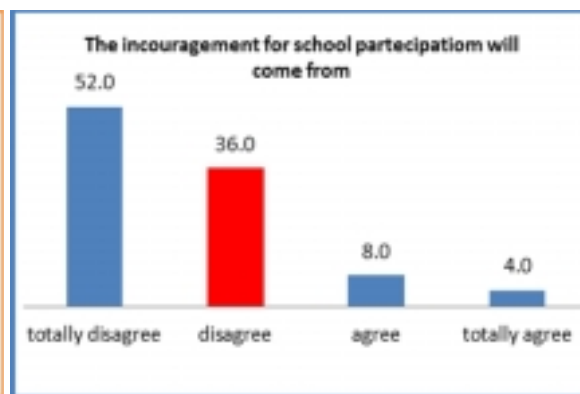


**Graf.2 Children's level of education**

The main percentage of the parents' participants in this study (96%) live in the city, only 4% of them live in the rural area. According to their level of education, the largest number have finished high school (44%), (38.7%) the university and the smallest number have finished the secondary school (9.3%), master degree (2.7%) and PHD (4%). (graf.1) According to the level of education of the children we have seen that their spread is almost the same, even though the largest number of children follow the elementary school, compared to secondary and high school education (graf.2). On the other hand we see that most of the children follow the public school (29% private school and 71% public school), based on the target group selected in our study.(graf.3)

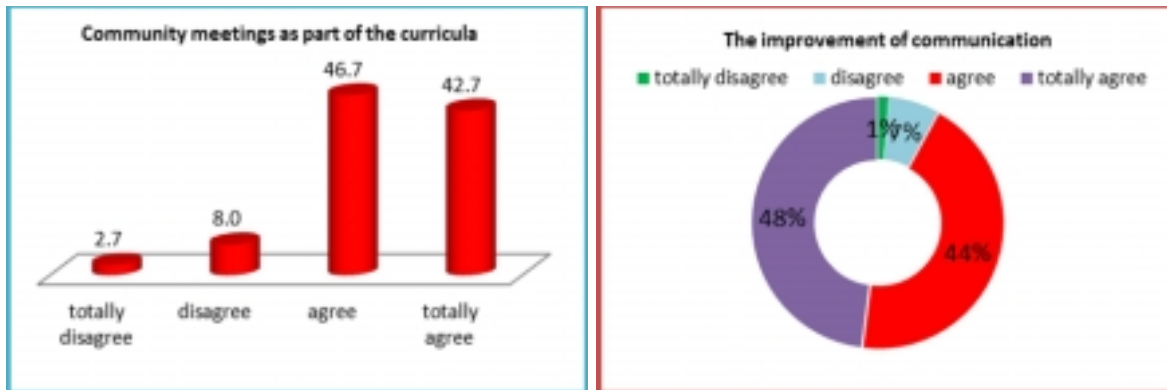


**Graf.3 The educational system**



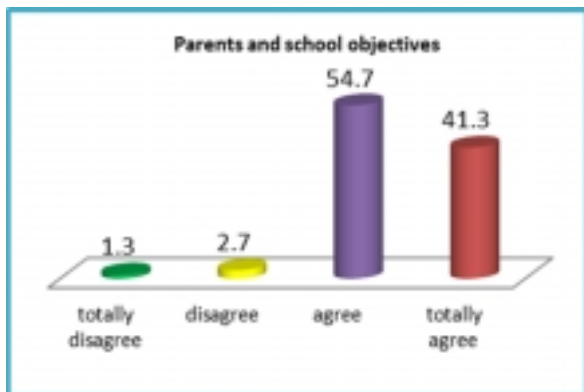
**Graf.4 The encouragement for school participation will come from school**

According to the fact that initiative have to come from school, (to include parents in different activities in and out of school, in making decisions etc.) the parents think mostly (52%) that they do not agree the fact that the initiative and the encouragement have to come from the school, on the other hand 36% disagree, followed by 8% which agree and only 4%, who totally agree. It is important to underline that there is a discrepancy between the opinion of our parents and the worldwide politics which highlight the fact that the initiatives have to come from school and school needs to be the main motivator for the parents' involvement in school (graf.4). In several contemporary books is seen that this idea is mostly applicable in developed countries as: Great Britain or The United States of America.

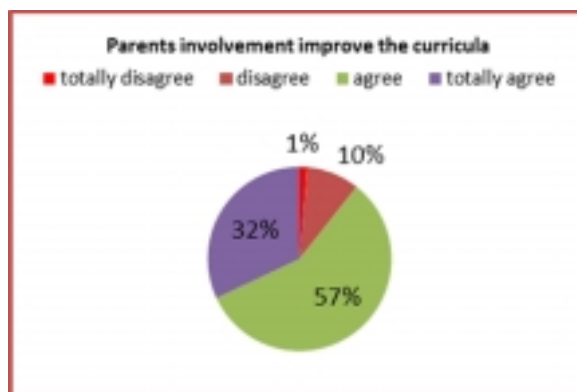


**Graf.5 Community meetings as part of the curricula Graf.6 The improvement of communication**

The community involvement as part of the curricula and the teaching classes aim to introduce the real life experience and the real life problems. It aims to raise the information over what the school books offer. For this reason, the parents in a big number of their answers strongly agree (42,7%) and (46,7%) agree, on the other hand, only a small number doesn't agree. This means that they are satisfied with the different forms used by the teachers and the school in communicating with parents (graf.5). The meetings with the parents offer to the pupils the opportunity to have knowledge and to understand different experiences. These meetings give the chance to understand the reality and to do better choices in the future. So, the education for the carrier or other social sciences offers more possibilities to this enterprise, which have to be motivated by the teachers of these subjects and by the school itself on the other hand. Meanwhile we see that the forms of communication leave much to be desired. The parents in a great number admit that these aspects need to be improved or need other more modern alternatives to be applied, so the parents can feel welcomed and on the other hand they will raise the possibility to contact school and parents together. (graf.6) Based on a previous study in Shkodra city on parents - teachers communication resulted that the forms of communication between them haven't change, compared this to the evolution of the process of teaching and learning and also with the different forms and ways of communication.(Gera, Hoti, 2012:44)

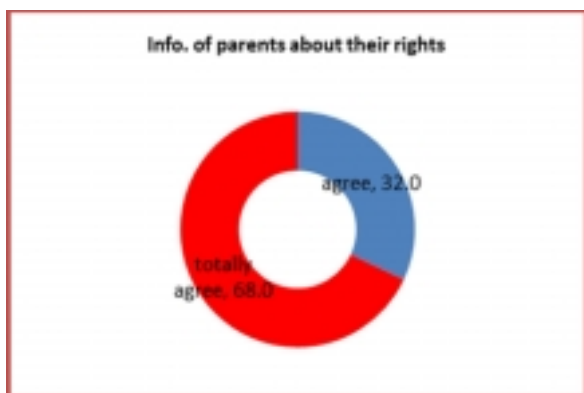


**Graf.7 Parents and school objectives**

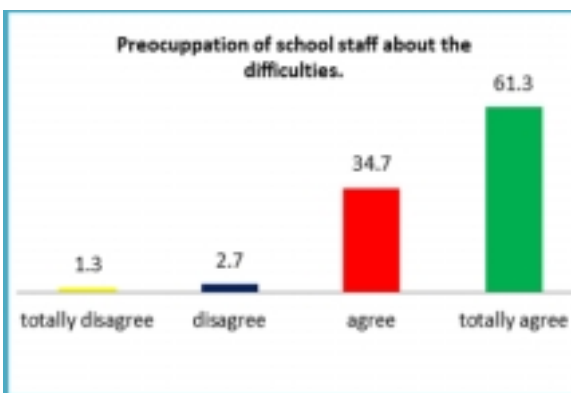


**Graf.8 Parents involvement improve the curricula**

The parents are positive about the idea that they want to know and to be known, the educative objectives of the school. (graf.7). About 96% of them are interested to be informed about what school offers through its politics, meanwhile only 4% of them disagree or do not agree at all about this point of view offered by school for their children. Based on the Law of Education and on the Normative Dispositions this is one of the main tasks of school. School has to make known to the parents and to the pupils too what school offers for them, a public or a non public school. In graphic 8 is represented the reflection of the parents about the influence their involvement would have on the improvement of the curricula. They are positive about that. In 57% of cases they agree and in 32 % they totally agree, but on the other hand in 10 % of the cases they don't agree and only 1 % do not agree at all. That means that the parents in many cases are not familiar to some terms related to school and we think that the reason of this gap in information is because of the absence of a good and regular communication between school and parents, but also because of the absence of presentation of the changes that happens continuously in the educational system and the new terminology used because of the changes in education too.



**Graf.9 Info. of parents about their rights**



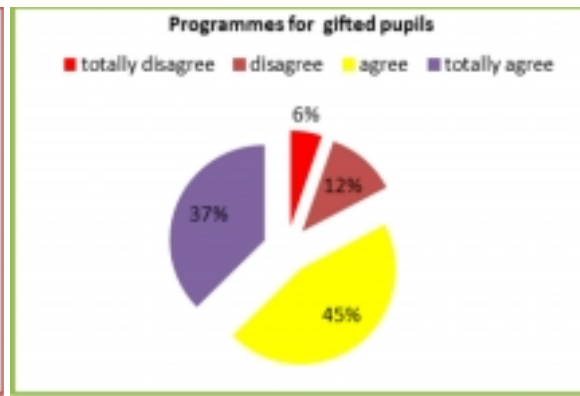
**Graf.10 Preoccupation of school staff about the difficulties.**

The information of parents and pupils' rights in front of school (graf.9) is one of the main important elements according to parents' interest. They admit in 68% that they totally agree and in 32% of them they agree. On the other hand in graphic 13 are presented the attitudes of parents toward the teachers. They think in 61, 3% of answers that they admit the fact that the teachers

have to be troubled and to know and support the pupils' difficulties they face in school. In 34,7% agree, 2,7% do not agree and only 1,3% admits that the teachers do not need to be preoccupied for their children's difficulties. Through this statement can be understood that in most cases the parents are the new partners to support and take care about school problems they and their children face everyday toward school.

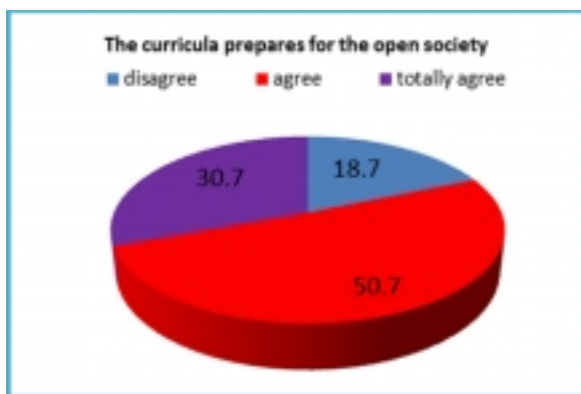


**Graf.11 Annually needs evaluation**

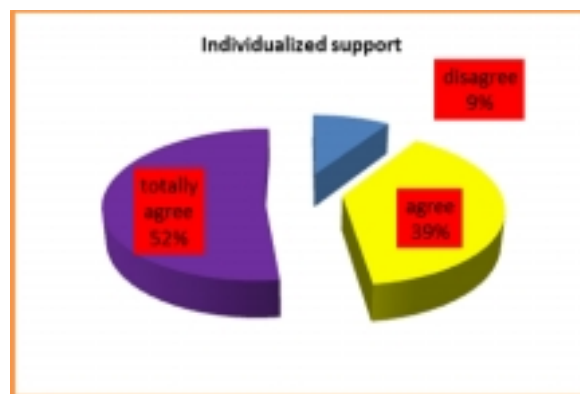


**Graf.12 Programmes for gifted pupils**

As we can see on the graphic 11 about the annual evaluation of the educational needs of the pupils about 90% of parents are expressed positively and agree about this fact, meanwhile a small number (9.3%) totally disagree to have this kind of evaluation, which really is a push up to positive changes in different aspects of school. This is a very important fact that makes us realize that parents and pupils represent different needs and requests in different classes, schools or systems of educations. That shows us the requests in progress of parents toward school, independently the continuity of changes in our educational system. On the other hand, about the presence of new programmes for gifty children, the parents in general agree (45%) and totally agree (37%) to develop such programmes, but on the other hand there are about 43% which think that these kinds of programmes are not necessary to be part of our schools. (graf. 12). The mondial experience brings different alternatives depending on the needs these target groups want the school offers special programmes not only for the gifted pupils, but also for the pupils with special learning needs.



**Graf.13 The curricula prepares for the open society**



**Graf.14 Individualized support**

About the question if the curricula prepares the pupils for the open society (graf.13), we notice that in the highest number they agree ( 30.7% totally agree and 50.7% agree), and only 18.7% do not agree. As we can see, the parents see the curricula as a good possibility that prepares their children for the future. In graphic 14 about the need of having a personalized support to the children about the lessons, the parents in general agree and they feel the need of such a support. Only a small number (9%) do not agree about this fact. The parents accept the fact that their children need an individualized support during the learning process. They also express their need the school support and also they trust on school and its support and the opportunities it offers for the future of their children. So we can highlight a very important fact, the parents know the text books and the subjects, but they do not know the curricula and the curricular framework and their rights toward school. So they have a gap on their way of thinking that they don't accept the fact that the initiative of their involvement to school comes by the school. Based on their answers we have a contradiction between their need for a school support and the information they have about their rights and obligations toward school. Through this we can understand that parents want to be part and partner of the school but they don't know how they can.



**Graf.15 Worries about abuses**



**Graf.16 Creating programmes against abuses**

The parents' opinion on teachers' lack of interest about different abuses in school ( smoking, alcohol, drugs) is almost divided in two groups, 21.3% of them totally agree and 20% agree but on the other hand 34, 7% do not agree and 24% do not agree at all. As we can see there are parents (graf.15) who say that teachers are people, who protect and take care of their children, specially about these kinds of problems in school and class. Concerning the idea of creating educational programmes for the pupils against these kinds of abuses, the parents in 68% of them totally agree to have and practice these kind of, 22.7% agree, only 2.7% do not agree and 6.7% do not agree at all about the application of these programmes in school. The reason they do not accept these programmes is because they are afraid that these discussions can force their children to abuse with these substances and they also admit that they avoid the discussions with them for this reason. (graf.16)

## Conclusions

Based on our research and on the answers given through the questionnaire we noticed that:

Parents prefer to go to school not when they are motivated and pushed by the school, but they think that the initiative had to come from themselves, but on the other hand it is a fact that parents go to schools only when their children have problems or on monthly parent's meetings with the teachers. But this problem seen in the mondial point of view brings a different experience where the initiative have to come by teachers and the school, they should be the involvers of the parents as the most important collaborators.

The major part of the parents are interested about their children communication with the different members of the community about different topics and problems related to real life out of school, which aim to teach the pupils about the real life out of school. On the other side the parents identify gaps on education about the different ways of communication and information and they feel the need to improve them.

Parents are interested to know about the educational politics of school, meanwhile they appreciate their role in improving the curricula and the results of their children. They are interested to know about their rights toward school, but on the other hand they do not have information about the Law and the Normative Dispositions to be policy makers and members with all their rights in school according to the law.

Parents want to have the support of school and the teachers about the difficulties they face with their children when they learn and study at home. The mondial experience offers trainings about the way they have to help their children with their home work and their learning. This helps us to understand that the experiences our parents are facing now are the same as they used to be in other developed countries and this shows us the opportunity to make new educational politics according to their childrens' needs.

About the idea of an annual evaluation of the educational needs of their children, the parents see this topic as very important and they agree about its presence as a practice in our schools. It is good to appreciate their idea, because it is a very significant fact indicates the presence of needs which are facts that disturbe parents.

According to the answers given by the parents, they accept the fact that in our schools do not exist special programmes for gifted children. They see this fact as a need.

They support the idea of having individualized support for their children based on the problems and the difficulties they face, when their children get prepared at home.

About the idea that school is a good alternative to prepare the pupils for the open society, the parents agree about this aspect. They see it as a very important part in the educational aspect, but they admit that the school don't touch all the topics and the information is not complete, they need the presence of tranings in different topics as: alcohool, smoking, or drugs. So, the parents accept the fact that not only they are interested in that aspect, but they have also the teachers' support about all their problems and those of their children too.

## **Recomandations**

Because school has to fullfill all the requests and needs of pupils and parents they have to:

- Make known the politics, the aims and what it offers to its clients, parents, pupils and the community.
- To involve parents and community as part of their work aiming the improvement of its objectives as an institution.
- To support the parents about their needs offering lots of opportunities as part of the school and its different activities.



- To moderate the forms and ways of communication with parents and to find and offer the most appropriate possibilities for the school and community context.
- To offer services, programmes and activities, where the parents can feel as an active part of school, not only as part of it, but also as collaborators with their ideas and their support too.

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