TEACHER PERCEPTION ABOUT THE FAMILIES' PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL – FACTORS PREDICTING PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze teachers' perception about families' participation at school. Also, it is intended to know what factors are those that predict this type of participation. For that purpose, it was selected a sample composed of 347 teachers from the Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education stages belonging to both public and private schools in Gran Canaria (Spain) with an average of 19.8 years of professional experience. It was used a 28 like Likert items with values between 1-6 with a total ordinal alpha of the scale of 0.95. Four factors were measured on this scale: opening school to the community, school's social prestige, closeness and personal treat towards families and students and families' participation in the school decision-making. As a result, significant differences were found among these factors depending on the teaching staff's age, the years of teaching experience, the type of school and the educational stage. Significant differences were also found depending on whether the teaching staff had held management positions as well as in relation to the degree of teachers' participation at schools. On the other hand, it was carried out a hierarchical multiple regression analysis that explains the variables that predict families' educational participation at schools. These predictive variables are the following ones: the age of the teaching staff, if this latter promotes cultural activities, being a member of the management team, a greater degree of teacher's participation at school, whether parents' association organizes activities at school and whether the teaching staff has got a good perception about the level of families' participation at schools.

Keywords: Educational participation. Family-school relationship. Educational engagement. Positive parenting.

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AS PERCEPÇÕES DOS PROFESSORES SOBRE O ENVOLVIMENTO FAMILIAR NA ESCOLA: FATORES QUE PREVEEM A PARTICIPAÇÃO

RESUMO: Este estudo tem como objetivo analisar a percepção dos professores sobre a participação das famílias na escola. Além disso, pretende saber quais são os fatores que predizem este tipo de participação. Para isso, foi selecionada uma amostra composta por 347 professores da Primeira Infância, do Ensino Fundamental e do Ensino Médio pertencentes às escolas públicas e privadas da Gran Canaria (Espanha) com uma média de 19,8 anos de experiência profissional. Foi utilizada uma amostra de 28 itens como Likert com valores entre 1-6 com um alfa ordinal total da escala de 0.95. Quatro fatores foram medidos nesta escala: abertura da escola à comunidade, prestígio social da escola, proximidade e tratamento pessoal com as famílias e estudantes e a participação das famílias nas decisões escolares. Como resultado, foram encontradas diferenças significativas entre estes fatores, dependendo da idade do professor, dos anos de experiência de ensino, do tipo de escola e do estágio educacional. Também foram encontradas diferenças significativas dependendo se o corpo docente tinha ou não ocupado cargos de direção, bem como em relação ao grau de participação dos professores nas escolas. Por outro lado, foi realizada uma análise hierárquica de regressão múltipla que explica as variáveis que predizem a participação educacional das famílias nas escolas. Estas variáveis preditivas são as seguintes: a idade do corpo docente, se este último promove atividades culturais, sendo um membro da equipe gerencial, um maior grau de participação dos professores na escola, se a associação de pais organiza atividades na escola e se o corpo docente tem uma boa percepção sobre o nível de participação das famílias nas escolas.

Palavras-chave: Participação educacional. Relação família-escola. Implicação educacional. Parentalidade positiva.

PERCEPCIÓN DEL PROFESORADO SOBRE LA PARTICIPACIÓN DE LAS FAMILIAS EN LA ESCUELA: FACTORES QUE PREDICEN LA PARTICIPACIÓN

RESUMEN: El presente estudio tiene como objetivo analizar la percepción del profesorado acerca de la participación de las familias en la escuela. Asimismo, se desea conocer qué factores son los que predicen la participación de las familias en los centros educativos. Para ello, se seleccionó una muestra compuesta por 347 profesores de las etapas de Educación Infantil, Primaria y Secundaria pertenecientes a colegios públicos y privados de Gran Canaria (España) con una media de 19,8 años de experiencia profesional. Se utilizó una escala compuesta por 28 ítems, de tipo Likert con valores entre 1-6 con un alpha ordinal total de la escala de 0.95. En la escala se miden cuatro factores: Apertura del centro educativo a la comunidad, Prestigio social del centro educativo, Trato cercano hacia las familias y el alumnado y Participación de las familias en la toma de decisiones en la escuela. Como resultado, se hallaron diferencias significativas entre estos factores en función de la edad del profesorado, de la experiencia docente, del tipo de centro y de la etapa educativa. También se encontraron diferencias significativas en función de si el profesorado había ejercido o no un cargo directivo, así como en relación al grado de participación de los docentes en la escuela. Por otro lado, se

realizó un análisis de regresión múltiple jerárquica que explica las variables que predicen la participación educativa de las familias en los centros educativos. Las variables predictoras son: la edad del profesorado, que este promueva actividades culturales, ser miembro del equipo directivo, un mayor grado de participación del profesorado en el centro educativo, que la Asociación de padres y madres organice actividades en la escuela y que el profesorado tenga una buena percepción sobre el nivel de participación de las familias en el centro educativo.

Palabras clave: Participación educativa. Relación familia-escuela. Implicación educativa. Parentalidad positiva.

Introduction

Both concept and idea of participation have been consolidated over time in all areas of our society, including the educational field. It is defined as taking part as well taking responsibility for a task and involving sharing, issuing ideas, making decisions even demanding rights and responsibilities. The educational task depends on both schools and families, which is why coordination between both institutions is essential to improve the quality of education and facilitate the comprehensive development of students. Therefore, the participation of families in schools is a right and a duty, but it also brings great benefits not only to students and families, but also to the educational community (HIDALGO et al., 2022).

On the other hand, Garreta Bochaca (2010) states that participation is a decisive factor for the quality of education, since it contributes to the improvement of the management of schools, thus being able to transform them into true educational communities. Sharing educational tasks should be the basis and principle of the relationship, because the family and the school participate in the same educational process, being the pillars on which education is based.

Along the same line, for Vallespir, Rincón and Morey (2016), family participation is considered not only a basic element for the school success of students, but also an indicator of the quality of the educational system. It also allows optimizing means, making society educationally responsible, giving social legitimacy to education, generating support for schools and bringing school culture closer to family and social culture. Therefore, sharing educational tasks should be the principle of the relationship, the main objective being to provide learners with a quality education. In fact, according to Reparaz and Jiménez (2015) parental involvement in school constitutes a quality factor that positively influences both the school climate and the academic performance of students. In fact, both the academic expectations of parents regarding the educational future of their children and their feeling of belonging to the school are the factors that have the greatest impact on their children's performance. These authors also affirm that the most effective schools and teachers are those that collaborate to a great extent with families. Thus, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in its PISA reports also introduces it as an indicator of the effectiveness of educational systems, with parental involvement being considered a foundation for success (OECD, 2017).

However, in order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to guarantee and promote greater channels of participation between schools and families (GARCÍA SANZ et al., 2010). In this sense, Glasgow and Whitney (2009) are in favor of a new way of understanding family participation in schools. It is not a unidirectional participation in which parents offer their collaboration to the school, but a bidirectional relationship in which they try to incorporate everyone. Hidalgo et al. (2022) also indicate that it is essential that communication between both spheres be regular, easy and bidirectional, with the family committing to inform the school of all important family situations (such as a divorce situation, unemployment of the

parents, etc.) and to communicate possible changes observed in their children, as well as taking an interest in their attitude in class, their academic performance and their relationship with their classmates.

On the other hand, San Fabián (2007) points out that it is important to differentiate between collaboration and participation. Asking parents to collaborate in educational centers only implies that they do what others have decided. Asking families to participate would imply being able to intervene in the decisions that the school must make, especially in what will affect the development and education of the students. In the same vein, Grant and Ray (2019) highlight a culturally responsive family engagement approach that is characterized by taking advantage of life experiences to enrich and energize the school curriculum, as well as classroom educational activities, leading to a respectful collaboration with the students' families. Therefore, these authors highlight trust as the determining element that should mark the family-school relationship, since the involvement of both in a common project can only be achieved based on trust between one and the other in shared responsibility.

Moreover, Castro et al. (2015) point out that family participation should be understood as competence, that is, as a capacity that can be exercised, trained, fostered and developed beyond the starting level or the particular characteristics of families. In this sense, according to Reparaz and Naval (2014), such competence requires the acquisition of knowledge, the development of attitudes (coresponsibility, trust and respect) as well as the disposition of intellectual and social skills (problem-solving capacity, decision-making, communication skills, initiative, teamwork and empathy).

In turn, Castro et al. (2015) highlight the figure of the tutor and their role in the establishment, development and strengthening of such competence, as this is the key link that allows optimal family-school relationships. However, this requires training. These authors point out in their research that educational centers in which high rates of family participation are observed are characterized by having tutors who are well trained in dealing with the families of students, as opposed to other schools with low rates of participation. However, it is not easy to have well-trained teachers. Thus, Paseka and Byrne (2019), based on an analysis of family involvement among different European countries, found that in teacher training in Norway there is a lack of attention to issues related to cooperation between home and school. They also found that when these issues are addressed, the emphasis is often on teaching students methods of dealing with parents and ways of relating to them in a professional manner, rather than teaching future professionals how to involve parents as partners in their children's learning process.

Regarding the difficulties for the participation of families, Ejido (2014) carried out a comparative analysis between different European educational systems, finding that there is resistance from teachers to the participation of families, since they consider that parents interfere in their work and that they are not qualified. Thus, this author was also able to confirm that in some schools the participation of families is limited to minor issues, such as the organization of parties or extracurricular activities, but is rejected in everything related to pedagogical matters, considering that their participation constitutes an intrusion in matters that do not concern them. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly necessary to focus teacher training on preparing future professionals to know how to develop cooperation with families.

On the other hand, Puig Rovira et al. (2000) state that a democratic school must create an open climate that allows all parties to take the initiative, including not only teachers and families but also students. Thus, participation is pursued based on both discussion and the realization of agreements and plans. Authentic participation unites the effort to understand each other with the effort to intervene together. Thus, in relation to school climate, the factor that differentiates schools with high indexes in this area from other schools is once again the feeling of belonging to the school expressed by families, which implies identification with its ideology and educational project (CONSEJO ESCOLAR DEL ESTADO, 2014). To this

end, it is necessary for educational centers to promote a close relationship with families and students, a fundamental aspect in any inclusive school. The aim is to promote help and cooperative work among students, teachers, families and the community (DURÁN; GINÉ, 2012).

Similarly, the educational center must be open to the community and, in this sense, Epstein (cited by SANTIZO RODALL, 2011) points out that when the school, the home and the community work together to promote the learning and development of students, they learn better. Therefore, it is necessary for the school to reflect in its educational plans the participation of families and the community in decision-making.

Finally, it is important not to forget that, as pointed out by Fernández-Enguita (2007) and Garreta Bochaca (2010), the participation of parents in the educational process of their children as well as in the management of schools is nowadays fully recognized and legally supported. However, there is still a long way to go ahead.

This study aims to study the teacher perception about the families' participation at school. To do so, teacher perception is analyzed in relation to both the treatment that the school offers to students and families and their participation in school decision-making. In addition, it is intended to know the teachers' perception about not only the opening of the school to the community but also the school's social prestige. Likewise, it seeks to know what factors predict families' participation at school.

Method

Participants

To carry out this research, a sample composed of 347 teachers from the stages of Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education belonging to public and private schools in Gran Canaria (Spain) was selected. This sample is representative since it has been selected with a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error. From the total sample, 69.9% are women while 30.1% of the participants are men. As for the average age of the participants, it is 47 years old. In relation to the years dedicated to service in the profession, the average is 19.8 years while the average number of years that teachers have been teaching at those schools is 9.2 years.

Most teachers participating in the study work in public schools, being the percentage of 93.4%. Also, 62.1% work in the Pre-Primary Education stage and 37.9% in Secondary Education. On the other hand, 56.8% are tutors of a group of students and 46.8% of the subjects have ever held a managerial position in the school.

Instruments

An ad hoc scale was used, consisting of 28 Likert type items with values between 1-6 ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (always) in order to measure the teachers' perception about students' families' educational participation at school. The resulting factor structure is presented in the results section.

Process

The questionnaires were answered by teachers of stages of Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education of both public and private schools during the school year prior to the start of the pandemic. To do this, firstly, it was contacted the headteachers of several public and private schools from the island of

Gran Canaria (Spain). The questionnaire was distributed and collected anonymously through the school administration. It was completed by the teachers in paper format. It was distributed in the middle of the school year so that the teachers would already have had time to get to know the new families that had joined the school for the first time.

An appointment was made not only to explain the objectives of the study but also to show the instrument that would be used to carry out the research. The questionnaires were delivered to the schools headteachers who were the responsible to distribute them to teachers. These last anonymously returned them once completed through the schools headteachers.

Data analysis

In this research, we have carried out different statistical analyses. First, we validated the scale of teachers' perception of family participation in school. For this purpose, the normality of the data was determined. Secondly, an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed, obtaining the fit indexes of the model analyzed. Thirdly, the reliability of the scale and the factors was calculated; fourthly, the significant differences in the scale factors according to the selected criteria variables were tested. Finally, a hierarchical regression was performed. For these analyses, the statistical package Mplus 7.3 was used, as well as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

The multivariate technique, exploratory structural equation modeling, developed by Asparouhov and Muthen (2009), was used to establish the factor structure of the scale. This analysis technique has the important advantage of combining exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with CFA.

In addition, for the EFA and CFA, the maximum likelihood and weighted least square mean and variance adjusted estimation method and the orthogonal geomin rotation method were used. Multiple indicators were used to analyze the model fit and determine if the model is correct. Kline (2015), primarily suggests reporting the following indexes: the model chi-square which allows us to assess the overall fit and the discrepancy between the sample and the fitted covariance matrices, but specifically we set the Chi-square minimum (CMIN) index which results from dividing the chi-square by the degrees of freedom; the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA); the comparative fit index (CFI); and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR).

Finally, contrasts of means (ANOVAs) were performed to check for significant differences in the factors obtained according to some of the criteria variables used in this research.

Results

For the validation of the scale, the descriptive values of central tendency and distribution of the variables that compose the scale were calculated. With respect to skewness, it has been observed that, of the 28 variables of the final questionnaire, the range oscillates between −1.78 to .029, while the kurtosis, the range goes from −1.35 to 4.43 presenting an acceptable distribution. The values of skewness and kurtosis, between −2 and +2 are considered acceptable to demonstrate a normal univariate distribution (GEORGE; MALLERY, 2010). However, Byrne (2010) argues that data are considered normal if skewness is between −2 and +2 and kurtosis is between −7 and +7. In any case, there are three items with kurtosis around 3, which has been decided to keep for theoretical reasons. These are the items related to the factor of teacher closeness to families and students, which, as expected, tend to score high.

To check if it is possible to perform an EFA, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measures and Barlett's

test of sphericity were found. The KMO adequacy measure is 0.919, a value considered excellent (HAIR; ANDERSON et al., 2004), and the Barlett's sphericity test obtained a significant value of 4,637.86 (p = 0.000). These results indicate that an EFA can be performed (KAPLAN; SACCUZZO, 2006).

The factor structure of the scale was established using the multivariate technique, exploratory structural equation modeling, developed by Asparouhov and Muthen (2009). An advantage of this technique is that it allows combining EFA with CFA. The results of this analysis determined the factor structure of the scale, obtaining an acceptable fit of the model to the data: CMIN = 2.5; RMSEA = 0.067 (90% C.I. = 0.060–0.073); CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.94 and SRMR = 0.04. The resulting factor structure is presented in Appendix 1.

Factor 1 measures the degree of openness of the school to the community while factor 2 measures the social prestige of the school. Factor 3 measures the close treatment of the teachers towards families and students, while factor 4 evaluates the participation of families in decision-making at the school. The total ordinal alpha of the scale is 0.95. Therefore, the factors explored are: Openness of the school to the community (collected in seven items, with an ordinal alpha = 0.86), Social prestige of the school (collected in five items, with an ordinal alpha = 0.74), Close treatment of teachers towards families and students (collected in ten items, with an ordinal alpha = 0.89) and participation of families in decision-making in the school (collected in six items, with an ordinal alpha = 0.73) (SOSA, 2017).

A significant effect was obtained in the analysis of the dimensions, showing that there are differences among the component variables, with a high effect size (F(3,347) = 291.02; p < 0.001; ŋ2 = 0.72). Considering the means of each factor, the highest score corresponds to the factor close treatment of the teachers towards families and students (5.15); in second place is the social prestige of the school (4.78); in third place, the participation of families in decision-making at the school (4.46); and in last place, the openness of the school to the community (3.55).

It was found that there were significant differences among all the dimensions compared two by two. To analyze the behavior of the scale, concurrent validity was calculated. To this end, it was analyzed whether there were significant differences in the factors according to the criterion variables used in this study (sex, age, years of teaching experience, type of school, educational stage, member of the management team).

It was also noted that there are no significant differences in the perception that teachers have in relation to families 'participation at school according to sex. However, it was found significant differences depending on the age of the teaching staff as it is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' perception about the participation of families in the school according to age.

Factors	24–44 M (SD)	45–52 M (SD)	Older than 53 M (SD)	F	P value
Opening schools	3.50 (1.11)	3.58 (1.18)	3.53 (1.09)	0.14	0.868
Social prestige	4.52 (0.90)	4.82 (0.76)	4.97 (0.64)	9.75***	0.000
Closeness and personal treat	5.06 (0.71)	5.07 (0.58)	5.29 (0.52)	4.93**	0.008
Decision making	4.29 (0.94)	4.48 (0.90)	4.63 (0.79)	4.15*	0.016

* p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

As it can be seen in Table 1, there are significant differences according to the age of the teachers in relation to the different factors measured on the scale. According to Rhea (2004), the P-value is important to determine the level of trust that the findings can offer; however, it does not provide any significant result of the treatment effect, so it has little significance when this data is presented alone. Hence it is necessary to calculate the size of the effect. In this sense, Cohen (cited by RHEA, 2004) states that a score less than 0.41 represents a small effect size, while 0.41 to 0.70 would be moderate and more than 0.70 would imply a size of significant effect.

Taking into account what has been mentioned above, firstly, there are significant differences in relation to the school's social prestige according to the age of the teachers (F(2,336) = 9.75; p = 0.000). Attending to post hoc tests (Tukey), teachers between 45 and 52 years of age report having perceived a greater degree of school's social prestige than those between 24 and 44 years old ($\bar{X}$(24-44 years old) = 4.52; Med (45-52 years old) = 4.82; p = 0.009). In this case, Cohen's effect size is low (d = 0.36). Likewise, 53 years old or older teachers report perceiving a higher degree about school's social prestige than those between 24 and 44 years ($\bar{X}$(24-44 years old) = 4.52; Med (53 years old or older) = 4.97; p = 0.0000). Cohen's effect size is medium (d = 0.58).

Secondly, there are significant differences according to age in relation to the closeness and personal treat towards families and students (F(2,336) = 4.93; p = 0.008). Attending to post hoc tests Tukey, 53 years of age or older teachers report perceiving a greater degree of close treatment towards families and students than those between 24 and 44 years (Med (24-44 years old) = 5.06; Med(53 years old or older) = 5.29; p = 0.017). The size of Cohen's effect is low (d = 0.37). Likewise, 53 years of age or older teachers report perceiving a greater degree about closeness and personal treat towards families and students than those between 45 and 52 years (Med(45-52 years old) = 5.07; Med(53 years old or older) = 5.29; p = 0.020). The size of Cohen's effect is low (d = 0.40).

Finally, there are significant differences according to age in relation to the families' participation in the school decision-making (F(2,336) = 4.15; p = 0.016). In response to post hoc tests (Tukey), teachers 53 years of age or older report having perceived a greater degree about families' participation in the school decision-making than those between 24 and 44 years (Med (24-44 years old) = 4.29; Med(53 years old or older) = 4.63; p = 0.012). The size of Cohen's effect is low (d = 0.39).

In the same way, in order to find out if the teaching experience can influence the teachers' perception about the different factors related to the participation of families at school. Only significant differences were found according to the years of teaching experience in relation to the school's social prestige (F(2,341) = 8.78; p = 0.000). Attending to post hoc tests (Tukey), teachers 26 or more years of teaching experience report receiving a higher degree of school's social prestige than those between 1 and 14 years (Med(1-14 years) = 4.54; Med(26 or more years) = 4.98; p = 0.000). The size of Cohen's effect is moderate (d = 0.54). In the rest of the factors no significant differences were found.

Relating to the school types variable, the goal was to know if there are significant differences between the teachers point of view about public and private schools referring to the factors which were studied. The results obtained are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Differences among factors according to the type of school.

Factors	Public schools M (SD)	Private schools M (SD)	F	P value
Opening schools	3.59 (1.11)	2.98 (1.14)	6.38*	0.012
Social prestige	4.77 (0.80)	4.86 (0.66)	0.22	0.663
Closeness and personal treat	5.15 (0.62)	5.13 (0.57)	0.02	0.864
Decision making	4.49 (0.85)	4.07 (1.19)	4.76*	0.030

* p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001

As can be seen in Table 2, according to variable called school type, there are significant differences in some factors related to teachers' perception. Specifically, public school teachers perceive a greater degree of educational families participation at schools than those from private schools, particularly in the following factors: opening schools to the community (F(1,346) = 6.38; p = 0.012) with a moderate effect size (d = 0.54) and in families' participation in the school decision-making (F(1,346) = 4.76; p = 0.030), also with a moderate effect size (d = 0.41).

Another issue raised was to know if there are significant differences between the Pre-Primary and

Primary Education teaching staff and Secondary Education ones in relation to their perception about each of the factors mentioned before. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Difference among the factors according to the teaching staff's educational stage.

Factors	Pre-Primary and Primary Education M (SD)	Secondary Education M (SD)	F	P value
Opening schools	3.85 (1.01)	3.13 (1.16)	34.61***	0.000
Social prestige	4.9 (0.74)	4.57 (0.82)	13.22***	0.000
Closeness and personal treat	5.26 (0.56)	4.96 (0.67)	17.16***	0.000
Decision making	4.6 (0.77)	4.35 (0.90)	6.67**	0.010

* $p \le .05$; ** $p \le .01$; *** $p \le .001$

As shown in Table 3, there are significant differences among the factors according to the teaching staff's educational stage. Thus, it can be verified how Pre-Primary and Primary Education teaching staff, unlike Secondary Education ones, perceive a greater degree of families' educational participation at schools in relation to each studied factors. In particular, Pre-Primary and Primary Education teaching staff, unlike those of Secondary, report that they perceive a greater degree in the following factors: Opening schools to the community ($F(1,318) = 34.61$; $p = 0.000$) with a moderate effect size (d = 0.66); school's social prestige ($F(1,318) = 13.22$; $p = 0.000$) with a low effect size (d = 0.42); closeness and personal treat towards families and students ($F(1,318) = 17,16$; $p = 0.000$) with a moderate effect size (d = 0.49) as well as families' participation at school decision making ($F(1,318) = 6.67$; $p = 0.010$) with a low effect size (d = 0.29). Figure 1 shows these differences.
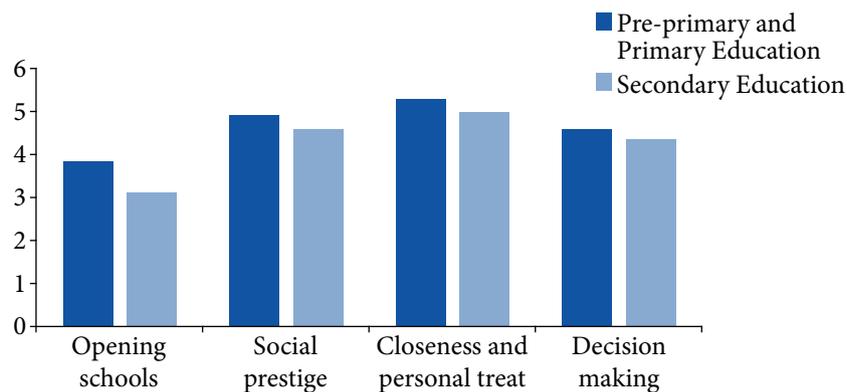

Figure 1. Averages among the different factors according to the educational stage.

With regard to management team variable, it was to know if there were significant differences in respect of teachers' perception between that who belong to management team and those do not hold any position at school. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Differences among the studied factors in respect of teachers' perception between that who belong to management team and those do not hold any position at school.

Factors	Teachers who no position hold M (SD)	Management team teachers M (SD)	F	P value
Opening schools	3.50 (1.13)	3.78 (1.07)	3.03	0.083
Social prestige	4.73 (0.81)	5.01 (0.64)	6.07*	0.014
Closeness and personal treat	5.10 (0.64)	5.38 (0.38)	10.33***	0.001
Decision making	4.37 (0.9)	4.92 (0.65)	19.76***	0.000

* $p \le .05$; ** $p \le .01$; *** $p \le .001$.

As can be seen in Table 4, there are significant differences in most of the studied factors according to the management team variable. In the significantly statistics differences, teachers members of the management team, unlike teachers who do not hold any position, report that they perceive a greater school's social prestige ($F(1,345) = 6.07$; p = 0.014) with a low effect size (d = 0.38); greater closeness and personal treat towards families and students ($F(1,345) = 10.33$; p = 0.001) with a moderate effect size (d = 0.53) as well as a greater families' participation in the schools' decision making ($F(1,345) = 19.76$; p = 0.000) with a moderate effect size (d = 0.70).

In relation to the perception that teachers have about the degree of teachers' participation at school, it was found that there are significant differences depending on various already mentioned factors. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Teacher perception about the level of teacher participation at school in relation to the study factors.

Factors	Very low to medium M (SD)	High / very high M (SD)	F	P value
Opening schools	3.28 (1.06)	3.72 (1.14)	12.9***	0.000
Social prestige	4.56 (0.76)	4.93 (0.79)	18.8***	0.000
Closeness and personal treat	4.88 (0.69)	5.33 (0.49)	48.0***	0.000
Decision making	4.28 (0.96)	4.6 (0.81)	10.7***	0.001

* p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

As can be seen in Table 5, there are significant differences among the four factors, according to teachers' perception in relation to themselves participation in their schools. Firstly, teachers who perceive that the level of teachers' participation in their school is high/very high inform that there is a greater openness of the school to the community unlike those other teachers who perceive a low/medium level of participation of the teachers ($F(1,337) = 12.9$; p = 0.000). The effect size is low (d = 0.4).

Secondly, teachers who perceive that the level of teachers' participation in their school is high/very high report that there is a greater school's social prestige, unlike those other teachers who perceive a low/medium level of teachers' participation ($F(1,337) = 18.8$; p = 0.000). The effect size is moderate (d = 0.48).

Thirdly, teachers who perceive that the level of teachers' participation in their school is high/very high inform that there is a closer treatment towards families and students as opposed to those other teachers who perceive a low/medium level of teacher participation ($F(1,337) = 48$; p = 0.000). The effect size is large (d = 0.75).

Fourthly, teachers who perceive that the level of teachers' participation in their school is high/very high report that there is a greater families' participation in school decision-making, unlike those of other teachers who perceive a level low/medium teachers' participation ($F(1,337) = 10.7$; p = 0.001). The effect size is low (d = 0.36).

It was also wished to know what factors predict the families' participation at schools. Therefore, in the first place, a new factor called *Teacher perception on the families' educational participation at school* (M = 4.49; SD = 0.69) was calculated as the result of the average of the different factors, that is to say Opening of the school to the community, School's social prestige, Closeness and personal treat towards families and students and teachers' perception about families' participation's level in decision-making at school.

Next, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed using the stepwise method. The following groups of variables were used as predictive variables: a) Sex, age, years of teaching at school, years of teaching experience, if the teacher promotes cultural activities at school b) type of school, educational stage offered by school, how parents' associations at school work; if parents' associations organizes activities at school c) if the teacher is a member of the management team, if he is a class-group tutor, if he had ever hold a managerial position and the level of teacher participation at school.

Then, it was calculated the different regression models that predict teachers' perception of the of families' educational participation at school. Table 6 shows the three models that were significant with only the significant predictor variables.

Table 6. Explanatory model of the families' educational participation at school.

Predictors	Teaching staff N = 347		
	B weights	**rs²**	**AdjR²**
Model 1			0.062***
Type of educational institution	0.16*	0.013	
Educational stage	−0.29***	0.045	
Model 2			0.19***
Educational stage	−0.22**	0.03	
Teachers promoting cultural activities	0.12*	0.017	
Faculty member of the management team	0.19**	0.03	
Level of faculty involvement	0.32***	0.11	
Model 3			0.38***
Age	0.18*	0.014	
Teachers promoting cultural activities	0.10*	0.013	
Perception of the level of participation of families	0.14*	0.016	
Faculty member of the management team	0.19***	0.039	
Level of faculty involvement	0.21***	0.053	
Parents Association organizing activities	0.23*	0.021	

$* p \leq .05; ** p \leq .01; *** p \leq .001$. Variance explained by model 3: 38% (R2 = 0.38).

Significant results have been obtained by the regression analysis of *Teacher's perception about families' educational participation at school* ($F(14,302) = 12.55$; $p = 0.000$) explaining 38% of the variance. Taking into account specifically the variables whose regression coefficients differed significantly from zero, it is observed that older teachers ($\beta = 0.18$), promoting cultural activities ($\beta = 0.10$), being a member of the management team ($\beta = 0.19$), the highest degree of teacher involvement in the school ($\beta = 0.21$), the Parents' Association organizing activities ($\beta = 0.23$) and teachers having a good perception of the level of family participation in the school ($\beta = 0.14$), contribute significantly to the model.

Discussion

Teachers have a medium perception about the school opening to the community as well as a medium-high perception of both the school's social prestige and families' participation's level in decision-making at school. They also have a high perception about that there is a close treatment towards families and students. In this sense, Kaplan (1999) not only does point out that every school's plans must address the participation of both families and community in decision-making, but he also states that participation is a value in the educational entity since it internalizes in its own nature democratic dimensions, communication experiences and learning possibilities. In fact, it also brings great benefits not only to students and families, but also to the educational community (HIDALGO et al, 2022). Likewise, Rivas Borrell (2007) affirms that school's participation is a necessary legal mechanism, so that families and school can join forces and collaborate in children's education. Teachers' work in this task is decisive, since, according to this author, educators own the possibility of helping to increase or decrease the participatory culture at school and so being able to reinforce, or not, the provided participation channels. All this depends on the training that teachers have received on how to deal with the students' families (CASTRO et al., 2015), since in schools where there is more training, the rate of family participation is higher. Thus, teachers in these educational centers develop many activities

aimed at promoting treatment, communication, joint activities and training with families.

With regard to the analyzes performed to know if there are differences in the various factors measured in the scale with respect to the sociodemographic variables, it has been found that there are significant differences according to the age of the teaching staff. Thus, older teachers, compared to younger teachers, report perceiving a greater degree of school's social prestige, a greater degree in families' participation in the school decision-making and a closer treat towards families and students. In the same vein, and related to the teachers' teaching experience, significant results have been found related to the school's social prestige. Thus, teachers with more years of experience have a greater perception about if their school prepares students well and that it is a school much requested by families to enroll their children. In addition, these teachers perceive that school has a high social consideration and that, even, it would be able to recommend that school to people in its family and social environment. However, in relation to the years of experience, no significant differences were found in the factors related to decision-making, opening schools and closeness and personal treat towards family and students. Regarding this last variable, Marchena et al. (2015), in a study conducted on the risk of early school leaving, also found no differences in closeness and personal treat towards to students, depending on the years of teaching experience.

With regard to the differences between teachers from public and private schools, public ones perceive a greater families' participation in school decision-making as well as an increased level of school opening to the community. In this sense, Epstein (cited by SANTIZO RODALL, 2011) points out that when school, home and community work together to promote student's learning and development, these last learn better. It has been found that parental involvement in the school constitutes a quality factor that influences both the academic performance of students and the school climate (CONSEJO ESCOLAR DEL ESTADO, 2014). Therefore, it is needed that school to open to the community. However, Valdés and Sánchez (2016) affirm that there are obstacles that prevent it, since many teachers do not consider parents to be equals roles in the educational process. One of the causes of this attitude is teachers' beliefs have about families, being a barrier to families' involvement in their children's education. This coincides with what Ejido (2014) states that teachers consider that parents are not trained and interfere in the teaching work. Hence, teacher training is determinant in this regard (PASEKA; BYRNE, 2019). However, it is essential that there was also a good relationship between them even though parents and teachers play a different role in this educational task. There should also be a close treatment based on respect and recognition of the work done by each part. In the same vein, Grant and Ray (2019) start from a culturally responsive family engagement approach that includes practices that respect and acknowledge the cultural uniqueness, life experiences and views of students' families, basing such relationship on mutual trust. Similarly, Ryan et al. (2013), state that not only would teachers have to show greater acceptance and attention to family members' opinions but they should also offer more accessible schedules to attend parents as well to allow them to use school resources during nonschool hours.

In relation to teachers who carry out their teaching work in the different educational stages, it was found that Pre-Primary and Primary teachers, unlike Secondary Education ones, perceive a greater degree of school opening to the community, a greater school's social prestige, a closer treatment towards families and student, as well as a greater participation of families in the school making-decision. These results are coincident with what was affirmed by García Sanz et al. (2010), who affirm that the lower the school level in which children are, the greater parental involvement's degree is. Similarly, Cheung (2019) states that parental involvement tends to be more direct and participatory when children are younger. However, as children grow older, participation is less, because parents often undertake a quite more advisory role because they expect their children to be more responsible for their own learning. Likewise, the Spanish State School Council (2014) refers in a report

to the scarce involvement that parents have in this country's school councils. But this low involvement differs according to the educational stage in which the students are. Thereby, only one fifth of the parents of secondary schools show their availability to be a member of the school board while, in primary schools, it is a quarter of parents who are available. Therefore, this greater parents primary schools participation in the school councils facilitates that families can make decisions about the school daily life. Similarly, Rivas Flores, Leite Méndez e Cortés González (2011) point out that there are notable differences in the transition from primary to secondary education. In this sense, primary school teachers show a greater families' participation in several types of tasks, such as helping teachers, collaborating in work related to solidarity groups or participating in extracurricular activities. In this same sense, Gutiérrez Ascanio and Alonso Sánchez (2011) point out that both teachers and parents confirm that the level of families' participation at schools is low even though participation in the lower educational stages is usually higher. Paradoxically, in Secondary Education, which is the educational stage in which there is the least family participation and, nevertheless, it is the one in which family participation has the highest incidence (CONSEJO ESCOLAR DEL ESTADO, 2014).

Likewise, teachers belonging to school's management team, unlike teachers who do not hold any positions, report perceiving a higher degree of school's social prestige, a greater closer treatment towards families and student as well a higher level of families' participation in the school decision-making. This result may be associated with the fact that teachers who hold managerial position have more information about students' social and family context. In other words, management team members display a greater personal involvement with school families which makes the deal closer. This closeness in turn gives them greater knowledge about each family's characteristics. This result coincides with that provided by Santana Hernández et al. (2018) who found, in a study on teaching management tasks, that teachers who have held a management position, compared to those who have never hold it, have a closer treatment because they talk more to students about their personal and family situations as well as because they spend more time attending parents. Principals are a key piece in establishing strategies and implementing parent training programs (EJIDO, 2014). They are the ones who with their management style can foster awareness of collaboration with the school's educational project and teach parents and teachers how to manage power (REPARAZ; JIMÉNEZ, 2015).

On the other hand, it has been found that the perception about the families' educational participation at school is predicted by a series of variables which are the following ones: teachers' age, if the teaching staff promotes cultural activities at school, being a member of the management team, whether Parents Association organizes activities at school, whether the teaching staff has a good perception of families' level of participation at school and if there is a greater degree of teacher participation. Regarding to teachers' participation and involvement, Katenkamp (2008) conducted a research on the practices used by teachers to involve parents, in which he states that the invitations made by teachers to families to participate in the school are important predictors of parental involvement. Although the general invitations made by school are relevant to parents, specific invitations made by teachers can be even more important. By contrast, if parents believe that their children's teachers do not accept their participation at school, they are unlikely to be involved in it. Another factor that best predicts parental satisfaction with school is related to whether parents obtained special support at school in the face of their children's educational or behavioral difficulties (PASEKA; BYRNE, 2019).

Regarding to family's level of participation at school, Cheung (2019) states that parents are more involved not only if they participate in meetings which gather families and teachers but if there is also openness by the school or if they participate in school governance tasks. On the other hand, Bonell and Ríos (2016) were able to identify various ways of family's participation that contribute to improve school performance and coexistence in schools; these are participation in decision-making processes, as well in the evaluation of educational processes and in educational activities aimed at students and their families. In addition, these

same authors affirm that the participation of parents and adults in educational activities has a great impact on the performance of children as well as the reduction of the rate of social exclusion in families. According to these authors, participation at school can help little educational success families to overcome their situation of social exclusion. The mixed commissions are one of the measures studied by Bonell and Ríos (2016) during a research carried out in different European countries. These commissions consist of small teams of teachers, parents and community members who work together to achieve improvement objectives in the school, objectives that have been previously decided by the whole educational community. The decisions made by these commissions are usually successful because they integrate different perspectives and knowledge. These spaces for participation encourage student performance in addition to promote the democratization of the school. A second group of measures proposed in this same research are those that include instrumental learning activities for children, especially in reading and writing activities with families, community members and other volunteers' participation. A third group of measures are characterized by activities related to family education in which families must decide what type of training they need. They usually choose an apprenticeship that is useful for their personal development and that serves to effectively support their children at school. An example is the dialogic literary meetings, in which parents who have never read a book participate in the reading of these works, accompanied by dialogues on current issues such as the role of women in society. Along this same vein, there are group parental education programs in the Canary Islands (Spain) that promote parental skills, that is, positive parentality. It is an important experience that is applied in the Canarian schools in collaboration with third sector entities, etc. This develops parents' intellectual competences, their motivation to learn as well as their self-confidence. Its implementation also led to an increase in the participation of parents in the School Council as well as in the Parents' Association, along with a greater involvement of parents in the school's activities (HIDALGO et al., 2022).

Conclusions

In this research, it has been noted that families' educational participation at school is predicted by a series of variables, such as the age of the teaching staff, if being a member of the management team, if promote cultural activities at school, whether the Parents' Association organize activities at school as well if there is a greater level of teachers' participation or a teachers' greater perception about families' participation at school.

However, it should be stressed that the communication difficulties between families and schools are mainly due to the parents' work and personal conditions, since they prevent their attendance at school. Therefore, it is advocated that schools establish more flexible ways and schedules so that families can attend meetings, tutorings, events and activities.

In addition, it is necessary to foster dialogue between both parties, establishing regular meetings between families and teachers to exchange information. As a result, not only is the relationship between them favored but a mutual knowledge is also improved. In this way, it is also possible to generate trust which is crucial in this type of relationship. Consequently, teachers perceive as positive the link established with families because it allows them to learn about families' sociocultural and economic context. Thus, when an educational decision about a specific student is made, it will be possible to take into account the circumstances faced by this student's family. It is therefore important to start from a culturally responsive family engagement approach.

On the other hand, it is considered essential to carry out training and awareness actions among teachers that facilitate a change of mind regarding families' participation in the educational task. Teachers must

have the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to know how to encourage family's participation in the school environment. Therefore, the school's management team must worry about training their teachers in this area, as this is a key criterion which measures whether the educational quality of the teachings offered. Hence, the management style adopted is a determining factor in this regard.

Likewise, it is necessary to advocate for a greater involvement by teachers in the promotion of cultural activities aimed at families as well as a greater commitment by the public administration. It is important that schools being given more resources so that the parents' associations can organize a greater number of activities for families and their children, thus generating a greater level of family's participation at schools. It should be reminded that the greater the feeling of belonging to the school, the greater its positive impact on school performance.

Finally, it is essential that school is open to the community as it must be a useful social asset, open and accessible to the entire community in which it is located. This last is extremely important in those slums where the school is one of the few public resources available to the community.

Author's contribution

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Appendix

Table A1. Factor weights of the items of the scale of teachers' perception of family participation in school.

ITEMS	F1	F2	F3	F4
El colegio o instituto permite que la asociación de vecinos del barrio realice actividades en el Centro	**0,678**	−0,11	−0,031	0,175
El colegio o instituto tiene en cuenta a los padres y a las madres para tomar decisiones sobre aspectos importantes del Centro	0,081	−0,007	0,025	**0,793**
El profesorado se preocupa por ayudar a las familias que tienen problemas.	0,119	0,033	**0,436**	0,227
En qué medida cree que el Centro prepara bien a sus alumnos/as para que sigan estudiando	−0,097	**0,383**	0,281	0,287
El Centro permanece abierto fuera del horario escolar para que las personas del barrio puedan hacer uso de sus instalaciones	**0,785**	−0,009	0,077	−0,121
El colegio o instituto promueve que los padres y las madres participen en la evaluación del funcionamiento del Centro	0,313	0,174	−0,094	**0,456**

Continue...

Continuation...

ITEMS	F1	F2	F3	F4
En qué medida considera usted que el Centro Educativo es muy solicitado por las familias a la hora de matricular a sus hijos/as	0,124	**0,75**	0,028	0,021
En qué medida cree usted que los vecinos del barrio participan en las actividades que organiza el Centro	**0,52**	0,114	0,014	0,162
El colegio o instituto es considerado como un buen Centro Educativo	0,015	**0,902**	0,02	−0,024
El Centro realiza actividades para fomentar el desarrollo del barrio	**0,839**	0,11	−0,068	0,01
Las reuniones que convoca el Centro se realizan en un horario adecuado para que las familias puedan asistir	−0,069	−0,013	**0,469**	0,362
El Centro Educativo promueve que los padres y las madres participen en el Consejo Escolar	−0,009	−0,051	0,349	**0,515**
Cuando un padre o una madre quiere hablar con el profesorado y no puede hacerlo en el horario establecido para ello, el profesorado se adapta al horario en el que puede la familia	0,117	−0,174	**0,838**	−0,052
El profesorado se preocupa por ayudar al alumnado que tiene problemas	0,013	0,048	**0,831**	0,02
El colegio o instituto está abierto a que las familias y los vecinos impartan talleres dirigidos al alumnado del Centro	**0,431**	−0,165	0,324	0,169
Cuando un padre o una madre necesita hablar urgentemente con un/a profesor/a lo puede hacer fácilmente	0,033	0,047	**0,703**	−0,039
En qué medida cree que el profesorado promueve que los padres participen en el Centro	0,2	0,059	**0,426**	0,193
El profesorado tiene un trato cercano hacia los padres y las madres	0,048	0,045	**0,751**	0,074
En qué medida cree usted que el Centro colabora con el barrio	**0,822**	−0,039	0,09	0,025
En qué medida cree que el Centro tiene reconocimiento social por las actividades que realiza	0,282	**0,468**	0,017	0,21
El profesorado tiene un trato cercano hacia el alumnado	−0,035	0,11	**0,756**	−0,009
En el colegio o instituto se reúnen asociaciones que realizan actividades culturales y deportivas	**0,701**	0,167	0,005	−0,097
En qué medida cree usted que el profesorado es comprensivo con el/la alumno/a cuando tiene problemas	−0,037	0,159	**0,758**	−0,019
Cuando el equipo directivo tiene que tomar una decisión importante que afecta al Centro, suele consultar a las familias antes de decidir	0,047	0,018	0,045	**0,684**
El colegio o instituto tiene horarios cómodos para que las familias puedan hablar con el profesorado	−0,061	0,002	**0,702**	0,226
Se promueve la existencia del AMPA en el Centro Escolar	0,079	0,111	0,241	**0,505**
En qué medida cree usted que la participación de las familias significa tomar decisiones en el Centro Educativo	−0,003	0,054	0,003	**0,415**
Teniendo en cuenta la calidad educativa del Centro en el que imparte docencia, ¿en qué medida recomendaría a un familiar cercano que matriculase a su hijo/a en el Centro?	0,002	**0,562**	0,072	0,319

The significant factorial weights that are related to each factor are in bold.