

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS AND INITIATIVES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN 30 NATIONS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY USING TIMSS 1999 DATA

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ABSTRACT

Using the TIMSS 1999 data, this study examined school expectations and initiatives for promoting parental involvement at middle school level in 30 nations. In most countries, schools were more likely to expect parental involvement at home (e.g., prepare child lunchbox) and less likely to get parents involved in school governance. No significant relationship was found between national level of school expectations for parental involvement and national level of student academic achievement or attendance rate. Contrary to our expectation, the relationship between the national level of school expectation for direct parental involvement and national level of educational inequality was positively significant. In addition, national level of school initiatives in parental involvement was also positively associated with educational inequality. Comparison of six nations (United States, Canada, the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Netherlands) revealed that different school characteristics were associated with high levels of expectations and initiatives for parental involvement in different nations. Unlike other countries whose schools' expectations were influenced by a least one of those structural characteristics (school size, class size, et al.), U.S. schools' expectations for parental involvement were more likely to be affected by schools' cultural factors, such as teacher collaboration and school disciplinary issues. In the U.S., students attended school more often in those schools that had higher levels of expectations for parental involvement. Students in the United States were more likely to achieve better if their schools had higher expectations for parents' direct involvement. However, in Czech and Taiwan, school expectations or initiatives were negatively related to student attendance rates or mathematics achievement. Implications for educational policies and practices in these nations and future research were discussed.