# School Board and Participation of the Parents: Critical Analysis of the Some Experiencing Cases Across-Countries

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## Abstract

Many school board reforms are initiated and implemented in order to improve the school performance and parental participation in school governance. Many studies on evaluation of these school governance reforms showed no only the moderate effect but also some challenges which affected negatively the effectiveness of school board operations in many countries. The objective of this theoretical analysis is to analyze critically the evidence of some challenges facing the school boards operations through the participation of parents in school boards across-countries. On this, the study used the documentary research and analysis. Using the evidences of the studies conducted in Africa, Europa, and America, the study showed the practices of school boards and participation of the parents in the school governance bodies. It emphasized less participation and involvement of parents and the frequent conflicts between the members of these structures of the school governance. The study supposes that solving the challenges of the school boards operations could reinforce quality of implementation of school governance reform through the governance system of school boards and improve the school performances. The study proposed the perspective for an "*effective, useful, transparent and peaceful school board*".

## 1. Introduction

Actually the specialists in education have given a particular attention to the school administration in their studies. All these specialists agree to say that the effective school administration or the school governance determines the outputs or results of the schools. To manage effectively the schools, management is placed at the top of each school to ensure its good performance. Among the studies conducted on qualities or characteristic of the effective or excellent schools, a strong direction is one of the key characteristics.

An effective school direction wants to associate all the actors of the school administration within a school board with a view to the participation of each actor in search of the effectiveness, efficiency, excellence, balance and transparency in the school performances [1-2].

Actually the researchers examined the contribution of each the school administration actor. Many authors studied the school board in different perspectives. In 2011, The World Bank reported that school-based management (SBM) is a key education policy or reform in many countries as well as high, medium and low incomes [3]. Generally five directions are exploited for this assessment: (i) the geographical scope of

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reform implementation; (ii) the methodology and level or components of the reform implementation; (iii) the duration of the effects of the reform by specifying the process, output and outcome goals; (iv) the parental involvement and (v) the impact of reform implementation on student academic performance [4]. However, few studies have evaluated the impact of SBM reform, especially in developing countries as in DR Congo. Extensive evaluation reports of SBM reform are published by international agencies and ministries of Education from developed countries (OECD, UNESCO, World Bank, Canada, USA, and UK) and independent researchers. Some characteristics of autonomy and responsibility are associated with the best performance and this relationship is variable. In particular, the combination of local accountability (publishing results) and transparency appear to produce positive results, rather than either policy element in isolation. A student who attends a school with above average autonomy scores 2.6 points higher in reading than a student attending a centralized school [5]. The evidence emphasize by the studies conducted in Central America suggests the positive correlations between the autonomy and the increased involvement of parents. This can be measured in terms of parental participation in the SBM meetings, of the participation of parents in school activities and their visits to classrooms and schools [6-9]. It sorts out from some study a longer time frames as effects differ in the short and long term. It estimates about five years before a successful school-based management reform can achieve results in student outcomes [10-11]. Borman et al, report in their meta-analysis of 29 SBM programs in the US that schools that implemented the models for 5 years showed strong effects on achievement [12]. In 2011, the World Bank reported on meta-analysis of more than 232 studies, 1000 observations and 29 programs found that SBM takes up to five years to produce fundamental changes at the school level and about eight years to improve pupil's outcomes [3]. Several studies came to the similar conclusion [13-16]. The school board reform intervention is correlated with higher test scores in science but no evidence of significant effects on math or language test scores. Many studies concluded to the similar conclusions [17-19].

This study aims at reviewing the literature of school board refereeing the experience of African, European and American studies on the parents' participation in the schools boards; to analyze the interactions within the schools board, to identify some challenges related to the parents' implication and to propose the prospective for an "effective, useful, transparent and peaceful school board". To achieve this objective, the study uses the qualitative approach through the documentary research. It is a question to prepare its research, to select the information sources, to seek and of locating the documents,

of evaluating the quality and the relevance of the sources and to set up a document which is suitable with this topic. The study selected the information sources: monographs, articles of reviews, theses, etc. From these documents, the study used the documentary analysis by reading, coding, encoding and noted the important information.

# 2. Overview on School Board

## 2.1. Meaning and Typology of School Board

The school board is the principal instance of decision-making authority and power of school at the local level. It is a governance body of institutional dialogue equipped with decisional competences. It is also the key body of governance of the school. It is an organization put in place having for objective to improve the access, the quality and the management of education through the participation of the community, the local government agencies and other partners [20-21]. The school board consists of delegated direct control powers (autonomy and authority of decision-making) of school by the state for the purposes of ensuring the management quality of school performance, resources and school operations. Despite the fact that their prerogatives are limited by the State, the school board ensures significant responsibility of decision making.

The effective school board can clearly help with the success of their schools. While contributing to the good performance of the school, the council can improve the conditions of training and teaching, and thus the school results of the pupils. It also is reinforce the governance, support a democratic participation and create links between the schools and the community.

According to the continents, geographical areas or the countries, the bodies of school management set up are known under several terms. In the majority of the European countries as in those who are members of the Organization for the Cooperation and Economic Development (OCDE), the bodies of management of the schools are known, according to the countries, under various names. It about the Advices of establishment, school government corporate, boards of trustees of establishment, school board, boards of management or council of school [20]. In the French-speaking countries of Africa in the south of the Sahara, the bodies of management of the schools are rather known under different terms such as boards of management of the school, the school council of management, the boards of school management or the school committees of the management resources [22-24]. All these expression refer to one term "*School board*".

In most OCDE countries, some studies [20, 25-26]

concluded that the installation of the bodies of management within the schools is obligatory and lies within a legislative framework and/or administrative regulations. It means that the attributions and compositions of school board are generally defined, in an obligatory way, by the legislative or administrative general provisions which frame the transfer of competence towards the establishments [25]. However, certain European countries having been subject of this research, the texts do not define an obligation of creation of the structures of participation (school board), but the encouragement with a view to support the implication of the parents in the management of the schools.

In certain French-speaking African countries in the south of the Sahara which were the object of search for certain authors [27-28], there exists an obligation to create the schools of management bodies. In the case of the DR Congo, this obligation is also of setting in the official texts. But in a general way, the decision of creation of these structures of management (schools boards) emanates from the central level, generally of the Ministry of education [29-30]. At the local level, the schools only will apply the decisions taken at the national or central level.

## 2.2. Mission, Roles and Responsibilities of School Board

The missions assigned with the school boards vary according to country, a geographical zone, and a continent.

The advices of school management, school board, boards of trustees of school or boards of management, according to the denomination under whom they are known, exist in majority of the OCDE countries and are guaranteeing effectiveness of the governance, setting in place of a democratic mode of participation, and introduction of links between establishments and community. In France, the school council management has the role of voting the rules of procedure and of deliberating on the organization on school time. It gives his opinion and his suggestions on the operation of the school, on all the questions interesting the operation of the school [31]. It deliberates on the guard on the children in the buildings and the actions on support. It gives his consent to the organization of activities complementary, educational, sporting and cultural.

In RD Congo, the School Based-Management has the role of approving the plan of the school and of controlling financial management, of discipline, quality teaching and of the school infrastructures or facilities [29]. It comes out from this overview that school board, it its context does not matter, it must be equipped the following missions:

To mobilize the stakeholders (parents, local communities and school professionals and other partners) involving to the

development of education and school improvement;

To decentralize and share the decision-making power from macro level of school administration and governance to micro level of school leadership and governance;

To prepare and implement the school planning centered on activities of improvement of the access to education, quality of teaching and school management;

To control of management of the human, financial and patrimonial resources and teaching and socio-cultural activities of the schools;

To be used as body of prevention, mediation and regulation of the conflicts between the various actors of the education system at the local level.

From the responsibilities point of view, the school board cover methods varied according to the countries, education systems even of the schools within the same education system. The studies of Eurydice in 2007 and those of Pont et al. in 2008 reported about the diversity of the responsibilities assigned with the structures of management of the schools. If in certain countries, these schools boards hold significant responsibilities which authorize them to make decisions relating to the operation of the school; others on the contrary, play only advisory roles without any fixed responsibility [25-26]. The roles which vary according to the policies of decentralization, according to the countries or even still according to the schools, are exerted is inside or outside the school. They "go from a simple advisory function on questions of less importance, with a vaster mission of development of the strategy of the school".

In the French-speaking African countries, a certain number of research on the partnership school-parents, watch that the role of council of establishment is that of participation in the development of the budget and that of the plan of the development of the school without leaving of dimension the maintenance of the school infrastructures, the recruitment of pupils and the teachers [24, 32]. The studies of Ranson et al. conducted to the United Kingdom, on the roles, functions and structures of school board, mention roles such as the reduction of the accounts, the promulgation of advices, the support or the mediation, the renouncement or the adversity, the club of supporters or the partnership [33].

## 2.3. Actors of School Board

The actors of school governance are identified at the national, provincial, district and local levels. In the school, they classify students, teachers and personnel of school management (school principal and superintendents). Several studies on effective schools point out the parents and local communities' members among the actors of school

governance [34-35].

Thus, there are two groups of actors in school governance perspective: dependent and independent. The external dependent members are affiliated to the Organization, or contractual relationship with the Organization. In school, it can be the students and parents, or other educational partners (structures local, provincial, national, and international education support). The external independent, in school can be the partners (surrounding companies or industries on request of workers or wanting to use the schools in various purposes, the NGOs and international partners such as UNICEF, UNESCO, PASEC and others). Some of both categories of actors are even School Board Members. They are all stakeholders and they directly or indirectly influence school operation. Stakeholders may also be used interchangeably with the concept of a "school community," which necessarily comprises a wide variety of stakeholders. One typically refers to person who is invested in the school operations and school performance and its students, including administrators, teachers, other school employees, students, parents, families, community, local business leaders, and elected officials such as school board members, city councilors, and state representatives. Stakeholders can also be collective entities, such as local businesses, organizations, advocacy groups, committees, media outlets, and cultural institutions, in addition to organizations that represent specific groups, such as teachers unions, parent-teacher organizations, and associations of superintendents, principals, school boards, or teachers in specific academic disciplines.

The schools board of the many OCDE countries are generally composed, the parents of pupils, the school professionals (head teacher and teacher) possibly the pupils, the representatives of the community and sometimes the representatives of public authorities. The school principal can, or not, belongs of it [26].

In Spain, the composition of school council or school board of secondary and primary education is composed of fourteen members divided as follows: four parents' representatives, four teachers' representatives, two pupils' representatives, and the school principal, and a staff representative not teaching. At the elementary or primary schools, one finds there, besides the other members previously mentioned, a representative of the municipality [20].

In France, the school board names "council of school" which is the body of the level of the elementary schools management or governance. It is composed of the principal who chairs it, the mayor, the town councilor in charge of education, the teachers of each class of the school, the departmental delegate of national education, the parents' representatives, the national education inspector, and a

member of the network of psychophysiology assistance intervening in the school. This school council meets each quarter [26].

From the studies conducted in European countries [20, 25-26], the study regroups there are three types of the composition of school governance structures:

First category, the school board is represented by the members of the school administration, the teachers (the professionals of education) as well as the parents and the pupils (the direct users of the school). The countries such as Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Senegal, Mali and DR Congo follow this organization of school board. However, these African countries used the local school boards and not the district school boards such as in some European and American countries.

In second category, in majority of the countries, the schools boards are opened with a broad representation which generally understands members of the local authorities in charge of the schools and, more rarely, speakers of the civil society. The composition reflects the wish then to set up certain balances of powers in the representation of the various occupational classes and implied users: direction of the school, the group of the teachers, parents of pupils, pupils themselves, representatives of the local political authorities and those of the civil society in the broad sense (undertaken, social activities, cultural, etc). The composition of the school body of governance can first of all reveal the wish to represent the various speakers equally, as the Republic of Tcheque, United Kingdom, Stonie, Lestonie.

Third category, it also observes in certain countries the existence of different bodies of school management. And each one is entrusted complementary attributions. This movement which develops leads to a complexification of the school governance. Portugal looks like in this mode of the bipolar governance which rests on a dual power exerted by the director of the executive council (structure of management tightened around the internal members at the school) and chair it of the school assembly (open to the representatives external to the school).

In Africa, in Senegal for example, the school board is composed of two pupils representatives, two parents of pupils, the teachers, the principal which hold the position as the secretariat and finally the chief of the district which it presidency of the school council [27].

In DR. Congo, the school board is composes of the chief of establishment or school principal (president); the parents' representative (secretary); the director of studies, the pedagogic advisor, the director of discipline, the teachers' representative and students' representative. This structure of

the school governance usually meets two times by month and convened by the president, and extraordinarily has any moment when the need feels and convenes by convocation of the simple majority of the members [29, 36]. So, generally, the school board is composed of the parents, teaching staff, the school managers or administrators and the representatives of the local community. Thus, the members of school boards can be classified into two groups: (i) internal or dependent members (management and teaching staffs) and (ii) external or independent members (parents, partners, students).

## 2.4. Theoretical Models of School Board Analysis

### 2.4.1. Theoretical Model of Ortiz Completed by Leithwood and Menzies

In 2001, Ortiz identifies four models of structures of management of a school. Among these models of management of the schools, some are dominated by the professionals of management (director and or teaching) to the detriment of other members of the educative community, while others are largely opened all to the members of the educative community [37]. In a first case of figure, Ortiz evokes the case of bodies of management equipped with advisory powers. The principals look there like "presidents chief executive officers to vast attributions". In a second model, they are the teachers who are the principal persons in charge. With regard to the third model, they are the elected or named representing school community which is the principal persons in charge. When with the fourth model, one finds structures of school management dominated at the same time by the directors and teachers who exert their influence there. Leithwood and Menzies estimate that the following four models would be important to define who school board actor is invested with decision-making power in any SBM reform [38]. Among these models, there are: (i) Administrative Control SBM (devolves authority to the school principal); (ii) Professional Control SBM (devolves the main decision-making authority to teachers); (iii) Community Control SBM (devolves the main decision-making authority to parents or the community) and (iv) Balanced Control SBM (balances decision-making authority between parents and teachers, who are the two main stakeholders in any school).

### 2.4.2. Theoretical Model of Ranson et al,

Another study devoted to the bodies of school governance in the United Kingdom. This study listed four models distinct from governance, according to their finality and their responsibilities, the power struggle between chief of establishment and the school board, and the level of professionalization of which the school board show in their deliberations and their decision making [39]. Thus, the school board can be such as:

a) *"Governance as an enclosure of deliberation"*. The governance is exerted general manner within the framework of a gathering of members, often of parents, in which the debates proceed. In its capacity as leader professional, the chief of establishment animates this gathering. Parents do not call into question its authority, although they can sometimes ask explanations on certain points related to the results of the establishment.

b) *"Governance as a resonance chamber of consultation"*. Schools boards Members "test" the elaborate strategies and policies by the chief of establishment in his capacity as professional. This last subjects its measurements at the board of directors in order to obtain his approval. Measurements are examined, explanations are sometimes asked, even some operated adjustments, but it is incontestably the chief of establishment which has it last word.

c) *"Governance as an executive committee"*. The board of directors is legally responsible for the establishment and consequently for the aspects economic of its operation, namely the budget, staff and them infrastructures of the buildings. The chief of establishment is for its part responsible teaching programs and shutters. The council of establishment can be qualified as regards the policy, performance evaluation and of financial situation of the establishment. This organization can lead the council of administration to work out systems of follow-up and evaluation of establishment and of its operation.

d) *"Governance as a management"*. In these establishments, the body of direction establishes the strategic organization of the establishment and assumes total responsibility for its operation and its direction. The chief of establishment is a leading professional with vast attributions, but it is more a member, rather than the chief of the management which has the statute of legal person [20].

In spite of all these models, an open spirit and flexibility are invaluable assets to fill the active way its role of representative. Then that realities and the context change, the members of the council of establishment must have to take care of the complexity and variability of situational context in the choice of the model to be applied.

### 2.4.3. Theoretical Model of Luboya et al,

The Local school boards (LSB) can help in establishing the processes that create conditions for productive change, which in turn impact the teaching and learning environment

throughout the school district, and, in turn, impact the learning of students in schools. In other words, the way in which school boards govern can impact student outcomes [40-41]. On this, the model of Ford links school board variables and academic performance of students. This model consists of five components, notably (i) background of boards' members, (ii) black box of governance, (iii) zones of discretion, (iv) hygienic factors and (v) academic outcomes. Several studies support these five components [42-45]. This model used to evaluate the governance system of school boards at district levels in USA. Based on DRC legal framework of Local School Board and referring to the

theoretical model of Ford, Luboya et al adapted one reference model of governance system Local School Boards (LSB) of primary schools in DR Congo [29]. This model is consisted of two categories of variables: (i) dependent variable includes school performance, students' academic performance or achievement, teacher performance and parent involvement or participation. And (ii) the independent variable variables include three components: (i) Characteristics of members and LSB, (ii) LSB Leadership and control power and (iii) LSB competences. The figure 1 support three components of LSB impact one outcome of students. The figure 2 sets the relation between dependent and independent variables.
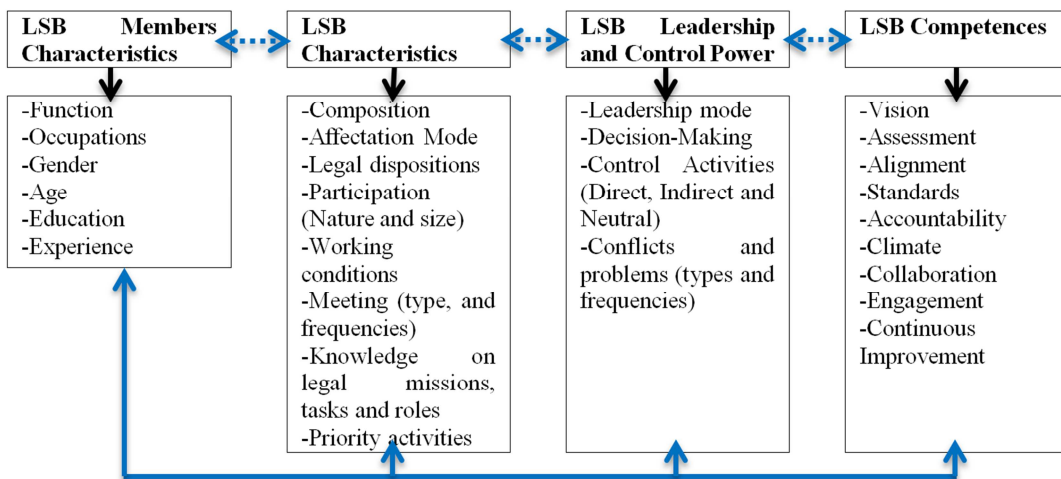


**Figure 1.** Theoretical model of Governance system of LSB.
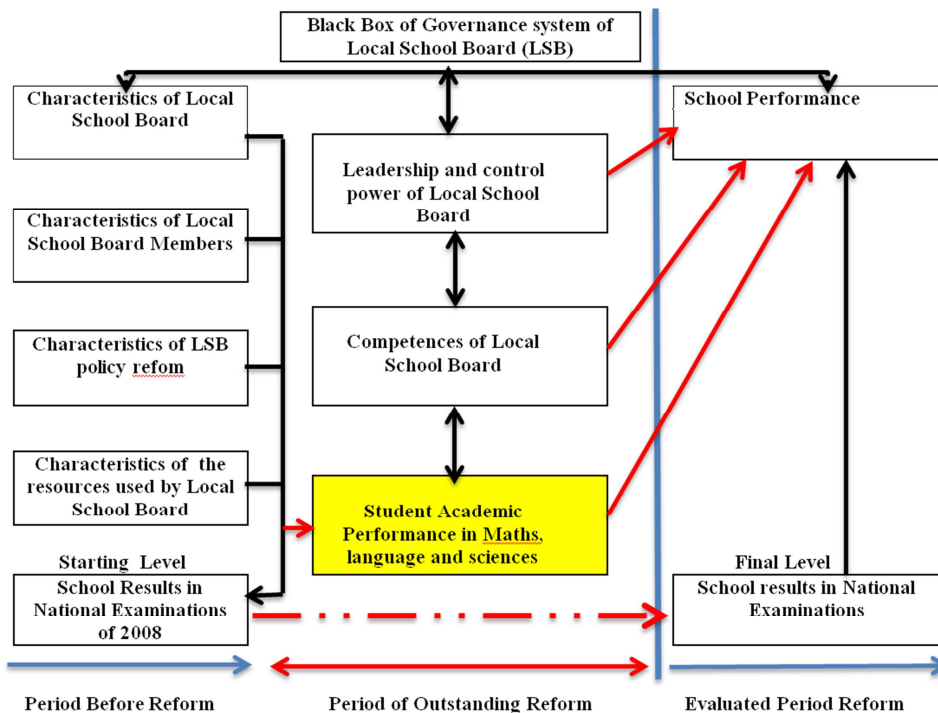
Source: Authors



**Figure 2.** Pattern of analysis of the relationships between the variables of LSB Governance system.

Source: Author

## 2.5. Factors and Challenges Affecting the Efficiency of School Board Operations

There are many factors influencing the effectiveness of schools boards. There are also many challenges which affect negatively the school boards missions.

### 2.5.1. What Are the Factors of Effectiveness of the School Boards

Theoretically, the school boards will be effective only if the school boards and its members: (i) are suitably prepared, (ii) have a precise idea of their roles and their responsibilities; (iii) profit from the suitable support to conclude their tasks form integral part of the structure of governance of the establishment.

The schools boards are more effective when the following elements are joined together: priority granted to the results of the pupils and the regulation which to them is applied; effectiveness of the direction; introduction of conditions and structures making it possible to the chief of establishment to conclude its administrative duty; process of evaluation of the chief of establishment defined in community and evaluation and formation in the school; trust relationships and effective collaboration between the chief of establishment and the members of the council of establishment; good communication with the outside and the public authorities and satisfactory development of the policies and financial management. The recruitment procedures and selection of the schools boards' members must be able to bring candidates of quality, motivated, having necessary competences and reflecting the diversity of the population, to present their candidature.

Practically and empirically, some studies emphasize that some policies of charter schools reforms in USA had associations with better effects on achievement including a longer school year, more time devoted to English each day, a small rewards and small penalty discipline policy, teacher pay based somewhat on performance, and a mission statement that emphasizes academic performance [6, 10, 13, 18, 33, 40-41]. Three components of LSB explained the higher performance of pilot schools and its pupils (80-100%) in TENAFEP in DR Congo. LSB characteristics, LSB leadership and control power and LSB Competences retained are associated positively with the pupils' performances. However, the component of LSB competences is most effective. It explains 22% of variation of pupils' academic performance; following by LSB Characteristics with 17% and LSB leadership and control power about 12% [29].

### 2.5.2. What Are the Limits Which Affect Negatively the Effectiveness of the School Boards

A certain number of criticisms are addressed on the one hand, the non-clarification of the responsibilities, functions and of the roles of the bodies of school management. In addition, the insufficiency of leadership of school boards can be explained by some challenges. It can be noted that the main challenges of school boards are relied to the roles and functions of the members of school boards. The study classifies these challenges into six groups: (i) the candidates for the function of schools boards members are not many; (ii) the definition of the role and the responsibilities of the school boards lack of clarity; (iii) too many responsibilities for an occupied function on a purely voluntary basis; (iv) sometimes the tensions exist between the school boards and the chiefs of establishment when the roles are badly delimited ; (v) a participation and an implication of the different schools boards members remain limited and (vi) a lack of competences of certain the school boards members.

In several African countries, the lack of training of the elected members constitutes one of the limits raised by certain authors, compared to the composition and with the operation of the bodies of school management [20, 46]. The trained members of these bodies of school governance who have the control skills of the financial management remain relatively very few in the most of cases. This situation of lack of skills questions about the capacity of school board members to play their roles of management planning and control of the resources of the schools [24]. In the study conducted in RD Congo and Benin, it emphasize that the school board reform and its policy about the elections of members faced some problem in implementations [32]. This study underlines that either, the members are appointed by the school principals or the school managers, or, the number of candidate is limited by a series of S conditions of eligibility, (to have an employment, a piece).

Thus, the absence of official texts clearly defining the roles and the responsibilities for the various members of these bodies, blocks also their harmonious and effective operation. Even for the countries where the texts exist, the deficiencies in "literacy" of certain elected members, in fact of the parents of the pupils, do not allow them to benefit from opportunities which are granted to them as school management. While referring to certain countries of Africa, especially those of central Africa, the parents in general remain excluded from the planning, the improvement of the school, management and the teaching aspects, because they are usually dominated by the principals [47].

# 3. Participation of Parents in the School Boards: The Evidence of Some Countries

## 3.1. Between the Expectation of Involvement of the Parents in the School Governance and Real Involvement

The some researches emphasize the experiences of the participation and implication of the parents with the authorities in decision making of the schools.

In Canada, the study of the school boards showed a passably positive assessment about participation of parents in school board. The school principals and the parents who took part in this quantitative study mention good performance of these structures of the school governance [48]. Other studies mentions that the experiment of the schools boards is far from being entirely positive owing to the fact that a part only of those functioned well [49]. These studies raise the major problems according to the certain parents would know little about their roles, functions and responsibilities, several would tend to exaggerate the powers which are granted to the councils of schools or school boards. The school board would be often a place of fight to be able and confrontation, in particular on the questions of a teaching and financial nature.

Some empirical studies announce that the little enthusiasm for the school principals with regard to the implication of the parents in the school activities, in particular, in the decision-making bodies. Some studies mention that certain school principals maintain the parents in distance from the school governance and limit or contain their interventions in school governance [32, 49, 50-51]. These studies suggest seeing the parents dealing with their implication. This participation of parents does not complicate or increase the tasks of school principals as some school principals agree. Many school principals estimate that the implication of the parents to the school governance would be an implication too invading.

In many reports of UNESCO, it was observed that the responsibility for the parents in decision making often encounters strong objections. Schools, although in theory persuaded of the legitimacy of the participation of the parents and local community, do not manage to concretely create the manners of materializing this participation and of incorporating it in the life of the school [52]. Consequently, it arises that in the educational process, certain fields and decisions remain always spring of the institution, its political or officials' representatives. The direct involvement of the parents in the school business, thus, remains of restricted range, as well in the developed as under development countries [53].

Even when the parents take part normally in the management of the school, their word is limited. It should be noted that the accent puts on the variation of implementation of school board reform can be between the intentions to imply the parents and the members of the local communities in the processes of decision making and the reality which prevails with the center of the aforesaid authorities [54]. Although the education systems are directed towards a greater freedom granted to the parents of pupils and to local communities, they do not accompany this evolution by a modification by the schools piloting in terms of autonomy in decision and school projects.

## 3.2. Realities Behind the Involvement and Interactions Between Parents and Management Staff in the School Boards Operations

For better understanding of the interaction between school boards and the members in the different environments' where the school governance was tested, a recession of the studies were made. These studies show the questions of the operation of these structures of school management and put forward some aspects its dysfunction (conflict between members, defect of implication and weakness of implication). A stress will be laid on implication of a category of members, the parents of the pupils.

### 3.2.1. Study of Mrsic-Garac

The study of Mrsic-Garac carried out in DR Congo evokes the strategies and the power struggles which are spread between the elementary schools boards. This study reported that in 2007, the Non-Governmental Organization GAAD whose seat is in Kinshasa received OXFAM GB a subsidy intended to train the committees of parents' members, directing body of Association of the parents of pupil in school [32].

Following an election, the committee of the parents' members appointed their vice-president to be used as intermediary between GAAD and the committee of the parents. The vice-president was considered as president of school board by delegation to achieve all the financial transactions related to the activities of the partnership. This vice-president of parents' nomination is not appreciated by the principal who shows the committee of the parents to want to involve itself in the internal affairs of the school. In complicity with the president of the parents committee, the principal proceeded to the dismissal of the vice-president, shown to nourish conflict relations within the school.

This unilateral nomination, contrary with the democratic principles, was not taste of the vice-president. According to the statutes which govern the installation of the parents of

pupils associations in Democratic Republic of Congo, it is the General Assembly which has the power to proceed to such a decision. On basis of texts in force, the vice-president thus shows his president to be in collusion with the principal.

In a letter of defense which He addresses to all the hierarchy of education, the relieved vice-president, pins the principal and the president of the parents committee to make a nontransparent management of the financial resources of the school.

The financial resources' management constitutes one of the principal problems, sources of conflicts between the schools boards' members especially in the countries where the parents contribute financially to the schooling of their children. The directors are marked to want to monopolize themselves all powers by opposing any refusal to the shared responsibilities and the respect. It is not excluded that they misuse to be able to them and to cause conflicts within the local community. Chiefs of villages isolated of the management of the school, can mobilize their population against the principal which they describe as "robber" of "dictator" and "local potentates with respect to the users" [32].

### 3.2.2. Study of Luboya

In 2012, Luboya conducted the analysis of educational partnership school-parents in some public secondary schools in DRC- Kinshasa [30]. This study wanted to tester knowledge level of the School board regulations of the parents in terms the knowledge of legal provisions envisaged in the school governance, and their implication in the activities of the school board and the school operations. The survey used the occasional sample of 125 participants (parents, teachers and school principals). After analysis and interpretation of the data, the study noted what follows:

Theoretically, the importance of this partnership primarily constitutes the support to the good education of the children (28%), the mechanism of control and follows up of progress of academic permanence of the pupils on both: school employees and parents (23%) and the assumption of responsibility of the schooling rate by the parents (20%). There exists for each school a committee of the parents of pupils (96%). This situation justifies the legal requirement and official, each school to have the school board. The committee of the parents intervenes with regard to the school expenses, the bonuses of the teachers and the development of the school budget without forgetting the construction of the infrastructures [30].

In almost each school, the parents are represented at the school by a committee of the parents. Only in the minority of schools (29%), this committee functions with a President, a secretary and a treasurer and his members. It means that the majority of the schools don't have adequate local school board members. This situation is justified by some difficulties, in particular the timid participation of the parents in the meetings, the lack of truth and honesty on both sides, the members of the committee of the parents who come with the idea to have hands laid on finances of the school and certain tense atmosphere between the committees of parents and the chief of establishment and the dumb aspects of the legal texts of the partnership parent-school [30].

The committee of parents plays the intermediary role or the bridge between the schools and the parents of pupils. Less are the committees of parents who are in cooperation with the direction of the school (67% of are surveyed). It should be noted that the parents neglect certain aspects of their implication to the school governance with the profit of the financial management questions. This aspect is also the cause most frequent of the conflict between the committee of parents and the school principals in DR Congo. Such is the case of analysis of the study showed that among the types of school governance activities in which the parents are implied, there are financial management (82%); pedagogy (12%), the administration (4%) and the materials recourses' management (2%).

The regulatory provisions relating to the rights and obligations of the parents in school management are known by the committees but completely ignored by the parents (87%). This situation is explained in fact that parents' committees have difficulty reaching their respective base (parents meetings). And fails their mission in particular the popularizing the legal texts relating to the educational partnership and of ensuring the connection and of drawing up the report of collaboration between the school and the parents of pupils. This situation can be explained by the report according to which in DR Congo, compared to the implication of the parents of the pupils, it distinguishes four types of parents:

a) First Type: favorable and active participation parents. These parents support their children at home and they are very actively implied in the activities of the school can even be used in the bodies as management.

b) Second Type: unfavorable, but active participation parents. These parents: are difficult to identify, can attend the meetings of the parents, can also attend certain activities of the school, and do not give a support for their children to the house.

c) Third Type: favorable but participation inactivates parents. These parents: held their children at the home but they are not actively implied in the activities of the school.

d) Fourth Type: unfavorable and participation inactivates parents. These parents do not support their children at the home, do not take part in the activities of school, are not implied, and are difficult to reach [4, 55].

### 3.2.3. Study of Dutercq

In 2001, the study of Dutercq conducted in four colleges in France is centered on the operation of the authorities of participation laid down by the law, in fact the board's class and the schools boards. This study answered the following question: "How the voice of the parents is expected in the school?" From this question, the following answer was proposed: "it is impossible the criticizing participation of parents in school management". This impossibility is relative from one school to other [51].

Each studied college adopted a particular strategy in his relationship with the parents. While some build their relation with the parents. While some build their relation with the parents of pupils while being based on legislative measures in force, others on the contrary, being well aware of limits shown by the aforementioned devices, showed certain creativity by adopting other strategies in their exchanges with the parents.

Dutercq comments about the dysfunction of the schools boards in certain secondary schools. He also underlines that the debates which should take place there are often limited or moved towards other places.

Finally, this author thinks that "one can propose like objective with the establishments, in the framework of their autonomy, the reduction in the excessive constraints which think on the public expression of the parents, without to remove those which are related to the legitimate needs for the organization of the debate and decision making".

To the "Jaures College", as example, in 2001, Dutercq reports that the concern of the parents was centered around three principal points: the security of the pupils, the follow-up of teaching and financial questions [51]. Opposite these parental concerns, the chief of establishment criticizes the travelling position that the parents of pupils adopt in his connection. The posture adopted by the representatives of parents in the treatment of the different problems is not appreciated by the chief of establishment.

The representatives of the parents, in their negotiations with the chief of establishment, adopt various strategies. Dutercq stresses that the relationship between the various recipients is characterized by a climate this user-friendliness when it is a question of solving problems which touch a particular pupil directly. On the other hand, the reports become conflict at the time the relative intervenes as a representative of the whole of the parents of pupils of the college. This manifest duplicity

in the control of the parents is not appreciated by the chief of establishment which prefers that its relationship with the parents become good [51].

Another point raised by Dutercq relates to the posture of the college in front of the requests of the parents. It seems that the colleges distinguish from "good and bad requests" emanating from the parents [51]. For the school principals and the teachers, the participation of the parents is considered to be good when the parents answer the invitations which theirs are addressed by the school, that they bring supports to them with the projects and the decisions taken by the school or at the time that they take part in out-of-school activities of the school. The parents who agree to direct their participation in this direction are welcome. The most appreciated waiting relates to the parents seen like a "resource". It milked with the assistance and the voluntary support that the parents bring to school staff and to the school.

There are on the other hand other forms of participation which are not appreciated at all by the professionals of the college. Those do not appreciate especially the parents who involve themselves in the relative questions with the teaching technical sides.

### 3.2.4. Study of O'Donoghue and Dimmock

O' Donoghue and Dimmock examined the role of the parents in the processes of improvement of the schools in USA. The results resulting from their studies report that the parents implied various manners for the success of the projects set up [56].

The contribution of the parents related that the parents implied different manners for the success of the school projects. The contribution of the parents related especially on the location of the needs and the determination for the objectives of the expansion plan of the school by the mediation their participation in the council of school and has its subcommittees. However, the responsibility to formulate the strategies to achieve the goals of improvement was allocated to the principal, with the support of the teachers.

The participation of the parents in the decision making process was not easy whole. Research brings back the way in which the parents were interested in the wellness of their own children to the detriment of the unit of all the pupils [56]. Moreover, it proved that certain teachers questioned the commitment and the aptitudes of the parents owing to the fact that they missed with certain meetings.

It arises from the searches of these authors that the impact of the participation of the parents was minimal, but positive. The parents helped to determine the needs and objectives of the school, but, in general, the teachers did not estimate that they were collaborators particularly useful or interested in the

planning of the school development. For the teachers, the success of the projects of planning depends on their own commitment but not the parents of pupils.

### 3.2.5. Study of Flinspach and Ryan

The studies of Flinspach and Ryan related on the parents of pupils participation in the planning of the elementary schools in the Chicago within the 14 schools boards in USA.

The results resulting from their investigation report that more half of the local schools board worked out structures of participation relating to the planning development process of their schools. Certain schools board formed of the committees of improvement planning of the schools gathering the principal, of the teachers and the members of the local council of school. Others named members for their representing in the committees of improvement planning of the schools. Some of them held one period of time during their meetings to speak about the revisions of the planning of the improvement of the school [57].

In the other schools, no official tool of participation in the improvement planning of the schools is detected by research, though several local schools boards approved the plan submitted by the school committees. In some of these schools, the parents and the schools boards were encouraged to take part in the process of improvement planning of the school but, preferred to play a less active part.

During the development of the plan, the parents formulated suggestions relating to the security and the school discipline. Certain suggestions refer to the participation of the parents themselves and the participation of the community members. Contrary to this these different suggestions, the parents did not tackle questions relating to the curriculum.

Then, Flinspach and Ryan carried out a meticulous analysis on the process of improvement by the participation of the parents within the schools boards in a subset of three units. These authors note certain differences marked in decisional power exercised by the parents. In one of the studied schools, the director dominated the process of planning. And the school board realized that the important questions are not taken into account by the school principal [57]. Under the powers which are conferred this council, the local school board thus proceeded to the dismissal of the director and replaces him by new, the more inclined to collaborate with the school community. The new director created a participation committee for the school improvement, which later became a subcommittee of the local school board. It also endeavored to begin the debate with all the recipients committed in the development of the plan of improvement of the school.

### 3.2.6. What the Study Emphasizes from the Experiences of Above-Mentioned Empirical Studies

These different practices of the participation of parents in the school governance can emphasize three lessons:

Firstly, the results of these various studies are focused more on the participation of the parents in the planning of the improvement of the school indicate that, even if the role of the parents can vary, those have an influence limited on the nature of the plan and on its implemented. The participation imposed by law does not change anything with the way in which the schools are organized and with the reception which the parents have of their role as participants.

Secondly, the principals and the teachers set up as principals actors in the projects of the school improvement. That does not mean however that the parents do not affect or contributions has to make. On the contrary, it comes out from these studies that the parents can take part and will do it in the fields where they think of having knowledge and the aptitudes to contribute effectively.

Thirdly, if the participation of the parents had negative consequences, such as conflicts and the resistance of the teachers, there were also positive results. Among the positive effects, one counts the improvement of school environment, better relations and a mutual understanding increased between the parents and the teachers, better information on the needs for the community and the integration with the plan of objective which cause the support of the parents for the school activities, the development of the capacities of leadership of the parents by the formation and the experiment, and of the possible links to an improvement of the output and training of the pupils [35].

## 4. Conclusion

### 4.1. What Are Necessary Lessons to Be Retained in This Research Primarily from the Theoretical Perspective

Although, it exist several expressions which indicate the structures of the school governance, a number of the characteristics deserve raised. It is about a structure of schools management (school board) which accepts the participation of the main school administration actors in decision making, development of the school plan, the budget and governance of the finances, materials, humans, and information and times resources. Among the members composing these school governance structures, generally we have firstly the group of those who manage school daily, secondly the group those who undergo the governance and are witnesses and thirdly group of those who are directly out

school but indirectly they are invested management power of suggestion and control.

It should be noted that installation of school board is either obligatory, or optional according to the countries, the continents, the schools of the same regional or national or provincial convention. It plays the roles, functions or responsibilities different according to the official texts from each country. A number of the criteria or factors determine its effectiveness.

Many researches were carried out on the practices of school board and participation of the parents in these structures in Africa, Europe, and America announces a number of the weaknesses and conflicts in the interaction of members of these structures of the schools management. The study suppose that a reflection on these questions will be able reinforce the good performance of the bodies of the school governance.

### 4.2. Towards a School Board Useful, Transparent and Peaceful

If in many countries, schools boards have been given vast responsibilities and must be give more accountable to the improvement of institutions, they do not however have the necessary support. The schools boards' members are often volunteers, elected or named. Concrete data show tensions between boards and principals because of the absence of demarcation between their respective roles, the lack of candidates for council members, the high absenteeism of members in the activities of schools boards and the lack of knowledge or skills.

The study also shows that effective school boards may contribute significantly to the school performance. However, school board reform and its policy must be suitably prepared before its implementation, to have a clear or precise idea of their roles and responsibilities and receive the suitable support to fill their tasks; they must also be an integral part of the governance structure of the establishment. The persons in charge of the development of the policies can help them in their mission and give them more weight within the frameworks of development of the policies. The study recommends to each country which wants an effective school:

a) To reform and reinforce the legal foundation governing the school board with a system of the management just, integrated, integral, transparent and excellent centered on the results and quality;

b) To take care of coherence between the objectives of the council, expectation in line with its composition and the support which it receives; in particular, to clarify the roles and the responsibilities for the schools boards with respect to the establishments and the school principals.

c) To improve the selection processes in order to recruit and to encourage candidates of quality and implied, who have necessary skills for school board operations;

d) To develop structures of support intended to guarantee the implication of the school boards members, and to propose formations to them on topics related to the governance of the schools, in particular their evaluation and their improvement.

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