

# THE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND PARENTS AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SCHOOL LEADERS

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## Abstract

This study aimed to explore the nature of the relationship between schools and parents in Saudi schools in the post-COVID-19 pandemic phase, from the perspective of school leaders, amidst the transformations that the educational process underwent during and after the pandemic. The study employed a qualitative methodology due to its suitability for the nature of the study's objectives and main research question, and its ability to deeply investigate participants' experiences and interpret their perceptions.

The results of the study showed that the school-family relationship is characterized by a high degree of strength and effectiveness. The majority of participants expressed highly positive evaluations of the level of this relationship, confirming the schools' interest in rebuilding and enhancing communication with parents after the pandemic and their awareness of the importance of the family as an essential partner in supporting student learning and their academic and behavioral stability. The results also revealed that continuous and multi-channel communication is one of the most prominent features of this relationship, as schools rely on diverse communication channels that are not limited to procedural aspects but extend to monitoring academic and behavioral performance and involving parents in educational matters.

Furthermore, the results highlighted that the relationship between schools and parents has evolved into a complementary educational partnership that has contributed to supporting school discipline, promoting positive behavior, and improving academic achievement levels, especially after the challenges brought about by the pandemic. Conversely, the results indicated the existence of some challenges, most notably the varying levels of educational awareness among some parents, the weak responsiveness of some families to communication channels, and the impact of social and professional circumstances on the level of interaction with the school. The study concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to reshaping the school-family relationship and raised awareness of the importance of the educational partnership as one of the fundamental pillars for supporting the quality of the educational process in the post-pandemic era.

**Keywords:** School-Family Relationship, COVID-19 Pandemic, School-Family Partnership, Parental Involvement in Education, School Leadership.

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the school and the family is considered one of the fundamental pillars supporting the educational process, due to its direct impact on improving learning outcomes and enhancing students' stability academically, behaviorally, psychologically, and socially. Educational literature has emphasized the importance of this relationship between schools and parents as a component of the educational partnership that contributes to achieving integration between the roles of the school and the family and supports the school's effectiveness in fulfilling its educational mission (Al-Ghaferi, 2007; Al-Sharif, 2024; Hibawi, 2023).

Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like the rest of the world, witnessed fundamental transformations during the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020. The pandemic led to the suspension of in-person education and a forced shift to distance learning, which contributed to changing the nature of the traditional educational landscape and expanding the scope of educational responsibilities, particularly those related to the family's role

in monitoring their children's learning, supervising their academic commitment, and maintaining continuous communication with the school through approved digital platforms. This phase contributed to the emergence of new patterns of interaction between the school and the family, characterized by intense communication and overlapping roles, imposing an educational reality different from the prevailing model before the pandemic (Al-Baqmi, 2022; Al-Harbi, 2022; Al-Rumaih, 2024).

With the return of in-person education to Saudi schools after the subsidence of the pandemic, fundamental questions have emerged regarding the nature of the relationship between the school and the family at this stage, the continuity of the communication patterns generated by the distance learning experience, and the clarity of the educational roles and responsibilities for each party in light of the return to the traditional educational model. Stemming from this, this study comes to shed light on the reality of the relationship between the school and the family in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia after the COVID-19 pandemic, in light of the transformations witnessed by the educational system and the challenges and opportunities produced by the pandemic experience, seeking to provide a scientific understanding that contributes to supporting the development of educational partnership practices and enhancing their effectiveness in line with the directions of educational development in the Kingdom.

### **Study Problem**

Studies have shown that the effectiveness of the partnership between the school and the family is directly linked to the level of academic achievement, behavioral discipline, and the quality of the school climate, making this relationship one of the fundamental cornerstones for the success of the educational process. In this context, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like the rest of the world, experienced a widespread suspension of in-person education during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a forced shift towards distance learning for a period extending nearly two years. This shift contributed to causing fundamental changes in the educational landscape and reshaped the roles and responsibilities of both the school and the family (Al-Baqmi, 2022; Al-Harbi, 2022; Al-Rumaih, 2024). The family became a direct partner in monitoring daily learning, supervising student commitment, and providing the home learning environment, while schools developed new mechanisms for communication, teaching, and assessment through digital media. This resulted in unprecedented patterns of interaction between the two parties, accompanied simultaneously by multiple organizational and educational challenges.

With the return of in-person education after the pandemic subsided, a transitional educational phase emerged characterized by a degree of ambiguity and variation in the nature of the relationship between the school and the family. Differences were observed in the level of communication, varying degrees of parental involvement, and a lack of clarity regarding the educational roles and responsibilities of each party compared to the situation during distance learning. Field practices also revealed disparities among schools in the continuity of utilizing the communication channels generated by the pandemic, reflecting the absence of a clear vision or an organized institutional model for managing the educational partnership in the post-COVID-19 phase.

Stemming from this, the problem of this study is defined in the need to reveal the reality of the relationship between the school and the family after the return from the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of school leaders.

### **Research Question**

What is the reality of the relationship between the school and the family after the return from the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of school leaders?

### **Significance of the Study**

- Shedding light on the reality of the relationship between the school and the family in Saudi schools after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Highlighting the impact of the pandemic in reshaping the patterns of communication and educational partnership between the school and parents.
- Supporting the development of educational practices and educational decisions related to enhancing the partnership between the school and the family.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To reveal the nature and effectiveness of the relationship between the school and parents after the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of Saudi school leaders.
- To identify the patterns of communication and the communication channels used in this relationship.
- To identify the most prominent challenges facing the school in dealing with parents in the post-pandemic phase.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The relationship between the school and the family is a primary and important one, and it has been discussed for a long time in contemporary educational thought. There is a conviction in educational circles that the educational process is not the responsibility of the educational institution alone; rather, it is the product of the interaction of an integrated system comprising the family, the school, and the community, as they all integrate with the school to achieve the best possible outcomes for students (Al-Ghaferi, 2007; Al-Sharif, 2024; Hibawi, 2023). Scientific literature indicates that the school-family relationship should be organized, continuous, and effective, achieving balanced academic, psychological, and social growth for the learner. The family-school relationship is understood as an interactive framework where responsibilities for supervision, follow-up, guidance, and support intersect. The family assumes a foundational role in upbringing, while the school plays a professional, organized role in

education, assessment, and building values and behaviors. Contemporary educational studies have confirmed that the strength of the family-school relationship is closely linked to students' academic achievement levels, their degree of behavioral commitment, their attitudes towards learning, in addition to its positive reflections on the school climate. The more this relationship is characterized by transparency and mutual trust, the greater the school's ability to implement its educational and pedagogical programs efficiently, and the greater the family's ability to support their children in an informed manner consistent with educational goals. At the same time, the weakness or absence of this relationship and effective communication between the family and the school leads to duality in educational guidance and conflicting messages presented to learners, which may negatively reflect on their academic performance and psychological stability.

In the context of the global transformations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the shift to distance learning for nearly two years in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the school-family relationship witnessed fundamental changes in its nature and tools. The partial or complete closure of schools and the sudden transition to distance learning led to a redistribution of educational roles between the two parties, where the family became a direct partner in implementing the daily educational process, not merely an external monitoring or supporting entity. This transformation contributed to enhancing the intensity of communication between the school and parents and necessitated the use of diverse digital tools, such as educational platforms, electronic applications, and virtual communication means, which provided new opportunities to build closer and more continuous interaction (Al-Ghaferi, 2007; Al-Sharif, 2024; Hibawi, 2023; Al-Bashr, 2025).

### **B. Previous Studies**

Al-Ruhaili and Al-Sisi (2019) conducted a quantitative study aimed at identifying the requirements for community partnership between the family and the school in light of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, from the perspective of female teachers and female students' parents in private schools in Madinah, western Saudi Arabia. The study adopted a descriptive survey methodology, using a questionnaire administered to a random sample of (292) teachers and (304) parents. The results showed that the degree of approval among teachers and parents in private schools regarding the requirements for activating the school-family partnership was generally high, as well as across the different partnership domains, which included: the domain of shared communication, the domain of voluntary participation, the domain of participation in decision-making, and the domain of social responsibility. The results also revealed statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level among the mean responses of parents attributed to the variable of educational qualification, while no statistically significant differences were found among the mean responses of teachers attributed to the variables of educational qualification or family income.

Al-Abidat and Al-Khudair (2022) conducted a study aimed at revealing the degree of application of the contemporary community school concept in the Irbid governorate of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, from the perspective of principals of basic and secondary schools. The study followed the descriptive-analytical method and relied on a questionnaire as the sole data collection tool. The study sample consisted of (172) principals. The results showed that the arithmetic means related to the sample members' estimation of the degree of applying the contemporary community school concept in Irbid governorate were at a moderate level across all study domains. The axis of local community support for activities implemented in schools ranked first, followed by the axis of parental participation in activities in second place, while the axis of obstacles to participation in community schools came in third and last place. In light of these results, the study recommended the necessity of increasing awareness of the community school concept through conducting introductory courses for teachers and schools, and developing planned educational policies aimed at transforming the school into a learning community and an effective educational environment. The study also emphasized the importance of schools focusing on involving the local community in financing their activities, holding technical courses for local community members, in addition to the necessity for schools to address issues in their surrounding environment.

Al-Asmari and Al-Sharbini (2024) conducted a study aimed at understanding the role of educational policies in enhancing the partnership between the family and the school as perceived by primary school leaders in the Abha and Khamis Mushait governorates in southern Saudi Arabia. The researchers adopted the descriptive survey method and relied on a questionnaire as the sole tool for collecting information to answer the study's questions. The study sample consisted of (171) individuals from primary school leadership in Abha and Khamis Mushait. The results revealed several key findings, most notably that the role of educational policies in enhancing the family-school partnership in primary schools was at a very high degree across all partnership domains, with an arithmetic mean of (4.51). It also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the role of educational policies in enhancing the family-school partnership attributed to differences in administrative experience. The findings also indicated that primary school leaders place high importance on the role of families in education. The study presented a number of recommendations, the most important of which were: maintaining this level and effectiveness in enhancing the family-school partnership; developing and supporting channels that strengthen links between schools and families, such as interactive sessions and electronic platforms; and organizing training and awareness workshops for administrators and teaching staff in various primary schools on how to achieve successful partnership with families and the importance of this cooperation in elevating the educational process.

Taha (2025) conducted a study aimed at revealing the role of family support in reducing school violence behaviors among adolescents from the perspective of teachers in middle schools in Jerusalem. The study used the

descriptive-analytical method, and data was collected through a questionnaire consisting of four main dimensions: emotional support, educational and guidance support, social support and monitoring, and the parental role model. The study sample consisted of (76) teachers selected randomly. The results showed that teachers' estimates of the importance of the role played by the family in reducing school violence behaviors were at a high level across all dimensions. The results also indicated no statistically significant differences in the responses of the sample members attributed to the variables of gender, educational qualification, or years of experience. In light of these results, the study recommended the necessity of enhancing the partnership between the family and the school, organizing guidance programs directed at parents, in addition to supporting the educational environment in Jerusalem to contribute to confronting the phenomenon of school violence.

Iman and Radhia (2025) conducted a study titled (The Nature of the Relationship Between the Family and the School and its Impact on the Academic Achievement of Primary Stage Pupils). The study aimed to identify the nature of the relationship between the family and the school, and the impact of this relationship on pupils' academic achievement. In this descriptive study, the sample consisted of (40) guardians and (10) teachers; they were chosen purposively from a primary school in an Algerian city. To achieve the study's objectives, reliance was placed on: an interview form containing approximately eighteen questions and the pupils' academic achievement results. For statistical data analysis, frequencies and percentages were used. The study concluded that a strong relationship between the family and the school has a positive impact on pupils' academic achievement, attributed to a set of factors, foremost among them being the educational level of the guardians, which affects parental communication with the school and their children's academic achievement.

Mahamid and Shaqhah (2025) conducted a study aimed at analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of Parent Councils in schools in a Palestinian city from the perspective of the parents themselves. The researchers adopted the descriptive-analytical method, and the study sample consisted of (37) individuals who were heads and delegates of Parent Councils in the Central Committee, in all governmental and private schools in that city. The study reached a number of results, the most prominent of which were: the effectiveness of Parent Councils was at an acceptable level overall; these councils possess a high influence on the educational process, manifested in their roles in resolving conflicts, collecting donations, and implementing charitable projects. The results also showed that Parent Councils face structural challenges, indicating the existence of fundamental obstacles and problems related to the structure of the system and its mechanisms, not resulting from individual characteristics such as gender or years of experience. The results indicated a significant crisis of trust among parents towards official responsible authorities, such as the Education Department and Inspection, due to their inability to adequately address existing problems. The study also revealed that, despite cooperation in non-essential activities, the participation of Parent Councils in fundamental decisions related to curricula is very weak, attributed to the absence of a clear legal framework regulating this partnership. The study showed no statistically significant differences in the effectiveness of Parent Councils attributed to the variables of gender, years of experience, or educational stage. In light of these results, the study recommended the necessity of preparing training programs for new Parent Council members, enhancing partnership with school administrations, in addition to emphasizing the importance of building trust with relevant official authorities.

### **C. Benefits from Previous Studies**

Previous studies related to the topic of educational partnership between the school and parents, whether Arab or foreign, were reviewed and benefited from in building the theoretical framework of the study, formulating its questions, designing the interview tool, and identifying the main axes of analysis. These studies also contributed to deepening the researcher's understanding of the dimensions of the school-family relationship, the factors influencing it, and the resulting educational impacts, especially in the context of the transformations witnessed in education after the COVID-19 pandemic. What was found in previous literature was utilized in interpreting the results of the current study and linking them to it, as the results showed clear consistency with the findings of previous studies which emphasized the importance of effective communication and educational partnership in enhancing school discipline, improving academic achievement, and supporting the stability of the educational environment. The current study is distinguished from many previous studies by being qualitative in methodology, relying on in-depth interviews and analysis of the field experiences of school leaders. This allowed for a deeper understanding of the educational context and contributed to revealing interpretive dimensions that often do not appear in quantitative studies, thereby enhancing the scientific value of the study and enriching educational literature in this field.

## **STUDY SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY**

The qualitative study sample consisted of thirty-six participants from school leadership positions in public schools in a Saudi city. They were selected using purposive sampling in accordance with the study's objectives and the nature of its research questions, ensuring the acquisition of in-depth data from a group directly engaged in school leadership practice.

The sample characteristics revealed that the majority of participants held the position of school principal, numbering twenty-eight principals, compared to eight participants who held the position of assistant school principal. This allowed for insights from both core school leadership perspectives and the supportive executive views within the school.



In terms of educational stage, the schools to which the participants belonged were diversified to include primary, intermediate, and secondary levels, with the strongest representation from the primary stage, constituting approximately half of the sample. This was followed by the intermediate stage, then the secondary stage. This stage-level diversity reflects the varied educational and organizational contexts in which school leaders operate, while noting that the predominance of the primary stage contributed to highlighting issues and challenges specific to this level, such as the intensity of educational follow-up and daily administrative burden.

Regarding gender, the sample data showed a relative balance between males and females, with twenty male participants compared to sixteen female participants. This added diversity to the professional experiences and perspectives reflected in the interviews, enriching the qualitative analysis.

The professional experience of the participants ranged between seven and twenty-one years in educational and administrative work. This reflects a diversity in experience levels between leaders with moderate field practice and others with extensive experience, contributing varied and rich insights into the reality of school leadership and its challenges.

All interviews with participants were conducted remotely using electronic communication tools. This provided flexibility in communication and access to school leaders across different geographical locations, facilitating the data collection process without compromising the depth of dialogue or the quality of extracted information. This approach also provided a comfortable environment for participants, enabling them to freely express their practical experiences and their vision of school work reality.

Relying on school principals and their assistants in this study is appropriate given its nature and objectives, due to their direct field experience in school management, decision-making, and handling daily administrative and educational challenges. This enhances the credibility of the results and grants them a deeper realistic and analytical dimension.

#### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The interviews were recorded to ensure the accuracy of the information. Audio recordings were then transcribed into written texts. Peer review was also employed to confirm the credibility and reliability of the qualitative data, which is often subject to debate.

The study employed a qualitative methodology due to its appropriateness for the research objectives. Qualitative research helps in understanding many topics more deeply through qualitative data collection tools, including interviews. The study adopted a phenomenological approach within qualitative research as its methodological framework. This methodology focuses on illuminating ideas about the studied phenomenon, prioritizing understanding over the generalization of results (Al-Rashidi, 2018).

For data analysis, the study relied on the methodology proposed by Bingham (2023), consisting of five stages:

1. **Stage One:** Organizing the interview data and generating initial codes for common themes.
2. **Stage Two:** The process of sorting and categorizing the data.
3. **Stage Three:** The process of comprehending and making sense of the data.
4. **Stage Four:** Interpreting the data, which involved identifying patterns and overarching themes.
5. **Stage Five:** Explaining the data and presenting the synthesized findings.

## **RESULTS**

This section of the study aims to present the interview results to help reveal the nature of the educational partnership between the school and parents after the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of school leaders in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The data analysis process was guided by the understanding that the post-pandemic phase represented a different educational context, in which schools and parents reshaped patterns of communication and cooperation, creating a new reality in managing the educational relationship between the two parties. After analyzing and organizing the interview data, it became clear that participants' responses converged around a set of common themes. Accordingly, the results were divided into five main themes expressing the nature of the educational partnership between the school and parents after the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of school leaders in a Saudi city. The themes are:

1. The strength of the relationship and the high level of communication between the school and parents.
2. Continuous communication and the multiplicity of communication channels with parents.
3. The educational partnership and integration between the school and the family in supporting the student.
4. The formal organization of the relationship between the school and parents.
5. The most prominent challenges facing the school in dealing with parents after the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **Theme One: Strength of the Relationship and High Level of Communication Between the School and Parents**

The interview results indicate that, overall, the relationship between the school and parents from the perspective of Saudi school leaders is characterized by strength, effectiveness, and a high level of communication in the post-COVID-19 phase. The majority of participants expressed highly positive evaluations of this relationship, using descriptions such as "excellent," "strong," "very high," "solid," and "distinguished." This evaluation reflects the participants' perception that the school has paid increased attention to rebuilding and strengthening its relationship

with parents following the pandemic, in response to the transformations the educational process witnessed during and after the period of distance learning. The results show that the strength of this relationship is understood not as a formal or temporary connection, but as an active relationship based on continuous interaction and regular follow-up. Participants believe the school plays a clear role in involving parents in educational matters and keeping them informed of educational and organizational updates, especially in light of the changes in teaching patterns, assessment methods, and follow-up after the pandemic. This level of communication was considered an indicator of the school's awareness of the importance of the family as a fundamental partner in supporting the student and enhancing their academic and behavioral stability.

The results also revealed that participants generally believe a strong school-family relationship is a pivotal element for the school's success and stability, not merely a traditional or formal administrative practice. They indicated that a solid relationship facilitates communication when needed, speeds up the resolution of educational or behavioral problems, and enhances student discipline and commitment, which positively reflects on the overall school climate, especially after the psychological and educational challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings also showed that a strong relationship between the school and parents helps build mutual trust and supports parents' sense of reassurance regarding the school's performance and its ability to follow up on their children, which enhances their cooperation and responsiveness to the school's requirements and guidance. Participants noted that this level of trust is a direct result of continuous communication and clarity of roles and responsibilities between the two parties.

### **Theme Two: Continuous Communication and Multiplicity of Communication Channels with Parents**

The interview results indicate that continuous communication is a key feature distinguishing the school-parent relationship in the post-COVID-19 phase in Saudi schools. All participants confirmed that the school relies on multiple, regular communication channels aimed at keeping parents consistently informed about developments in the educational and organizational process. This approach reflects the school's recognition of communication as an essential tool for enhancing the educational partnership, especially after the experience imposed by the pandemic and the accompanying expansion in the use of digital means and distance learning patterns.

The interview results revealed that communication between the school and the family is not limited to procedural aspects or emergency cases. Rather, it extends to monitoring students' academic and behavioral performance, informing parents of changes related to school regulations and instructions, and involving them in relevant educational programs and activities. Participants indicated that this pattern of communication contributes to parents feeling a shared responsibility for following up on and supporting their children within the school environment.

The results also showed that the diversity of communication channels—such as direct contact, phone calls, electronic groups, and periodic meetings with parents—has increased the effectiveness of the relationship and facilitated access to parents at different times, accommodating their professional and social circumstances. Participants pointed out that adopting these multiple channels is a natural extension of the communicative experience that emerged during the pandemic, which helped establish a culture of rapid and direct communication between the school and the family.

However, the results revealed a relative disparity in the level of interaction among parents with the available communication channels, as not all respond to the same degree despite the diversity and ease of use of these means. This disparity suggests that the effectiveness of communication is not only related to the availability or diversity of channels but is also influenced by parents' awareness of the importance of continuous communication and their readiness to participate effectively in their children's educational affairs.

### **Theme Three: Educational Partnership and Integration Between the School and the Family in Supporting the Student**

The results reveal that, from the participants' perspective, the relationship between the school and parents is a complementary, collaborative one that transcends traditional communication boundaries to become an effective educational partnership, especially in the post-COVID-19 phase. Participants expressed their conviction that the transformations witnessed in the educational process during the pandemic contributed to enhancing the understanding of the importance of the shared role between the school and the family in following up on students' educational and behavioral affairs and supporting their psychological and academic stability.

The results show that this educational partnership is manifested in involving parents in monitoring their children's academic and behavioral performance, keeping them continuously informed of positive and negative aspects, and engaging them in the educational measures taken to address undesirable behaviors or reinforce positive ones. The results also indicated that participants view partnership with parents as a fundamental link between the school and students, contributing to enhancing academic achievement, discipline, supporting moral values, and improving levels of attendance and positive behavior within the school. Participants confirmed that effective cooperation between the school and the family helps contain many behavioral or educational problems before they escalate and enhances students' sense of responsibility and commitment.

The interview results suggest that a positive relationship between the school and parents plays a vital role in promoting school discipline, supporting ethical behavior, and raising students' academic achievement, particularly in the post-COVID-19 phase. Participants expressed their belief that effective and continuous communication with parents directly contributes to improving students' adherence to school rules and instructions and reduces

manifestations of absenteeism and laxity that appeared among some students after the return to in-person education.

The results showed that keeping parents continuously informed about their children's academic and behavioral levels enables the school to enhance family follow-up and creates a state of positive oversight within the family, which is reflected in student behavior at school. Participants indicated that a parent's knowledge of their child's academic level, as well as behavioral and ethical aspects, contributes to supporting seriousness in dealing with studies and reinforces commitment to attendance and discipline, especially in light of the educational challenges following the pandemic.

The results also illustrated that a strong relationship with parents enables the school to intervene early to address behavioral or academic problems before they escalate, through coordinated efforts between the school and the family. Participants confirmed that this joint intervention contributes to faster problem resolution and enhances the effectiveness of the educational solutions taken, compared to cases where communication is absent or weak. Furthermore, the interview results clarified that participants see a good relationship between the school and parents as playing an effective role in creating a positive school climate that supports learning and discipline, where students feel consistency and integration between what is expected of them at school and what is reinforced at home. According to the participants, this integration was reflected in improved general student behavior, increased motivation towards learning, and enhanced academic performance among a segment of students.

#### **Theme Four: Formal Organization of the Relationship Between the School and Parents Through Councils and Periodic Meetings**

The interview results revealed that the formal organization of the school's relationship with parents is one of the main factors supporting the enhancement and sustainability of this relationship, especially in the post-COVID-19 phase from the study sample's perspective. Participants confirmed the existence of clear organizational frameworks governing communication between the school and the family. These frameworks were represented in allocating specific days for parent councils, holding regular periodic meetings, in addition to phone communication when needed, ensuring the regularity of the relationship and preventing it from being subject to individual or arbitrary interpretations.

The results showed that this formal organization provides a space for direct dialogue and exchange of viewpoints between the school and parents, contributing to discussing educational and behavioral issues related to students more effectively and methodically. Participants indicated that having clear schedules and official channels for communication helps in time management, setting priorities, and enhances clarity of roles and responsibilities between the two parties—a factor whose importance became more prominent after the pandemic, given the need to coordinate educational efforts.

The results also demonstrated that the formal organization of the relationship helps raise the level of mutual trust between the school and parents and reduces misunderstandings, as parents feel valued and respected as partners in the educational process, not merely recipients of information. Participants confirmed that these organizational frameworks contribute to enhancing commitment to attending meetings, improving the quality of dialogue, and supporting positive cooperation between the school and the family.

In general, the findings indicate that managing the relationship between the school and parents in a formal and organized manner is an effective educational and administrative practice. It contributes to enhancing community partnership and achieving greater integration between the roles of the school and the family, which positively reflects on the quality of the educational environment and its outcomes in the post-COVID-19 phase.

#### **Theme Five: Prominent Challenges Facing the School in Dealing with Parents After the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The interview results indicate that, despite being generally positive, the relationship between the school and parents is not without a set of challenges that have emerged to varying degrees among schools, especially in the post-COVID-19 phase. Participants' responses reflected that these challenges are diverse and interconnected and cannot be attributed to a single specific factor; rather, they are linked to cognitive, cultural, behavioral, organizational, and social aspects.

The results revealed that the low level of educational awareness and educational culture among some parents is one of the fundamental challenges facing the school. Participants pointed to the difficulty of convincing some families of the importance of educational partnership and its role in following up on students, especially after the pandemic which transferred part of the educational responsibility to the family. This challenge appeared more clearly in the early educational stages, where some parents showed a lack of acceptance of the nature of these stages or the school policies associated with them.

The results also showed that some parents' refusal to accept weaknesses or shortcomings in their children represents an obstacle to achieving educational integration between the school and the family. A number of participants noted that some parents tend to defend their children absolutely or reject the school's observations regarding behavior or academic performance, which limits opportunities for cooperation in addressing these aspects and affects the effectiveness of educational interventions.

The problem of weak response and communication from some parents also emerged as a recurring challenge. Participants pointed to the lack of responsiveness from some families to the school's communications, their failure to commit to attending meetings, or the absence of continuous follow-up on their children. This negatively

impacted the school's efforts to enhance school discipline and address behavioral or educational problems in a timely manner, especially after the pandemic which required a higher level of coordination and communication. Furthermore, the results indicated that lack of cooperation and excessive unwarranted complaints are among the challenges faced by some schools. Participants noted that some parents resort to comparisons or express dissatisfaction without full awareness of the school context or the regulatory constraints within which the school operates. In some responses, this was associated with manifestations of impatience or lack of flexibility in dialogue, which increases the difficulty of managing the educational relationship constructively. The results also showed that the social and economic family circumstances of some parents—such as family problems, economic pressures, or increased professional commitments after the pandemic—may affect their level of interaction with the school, whether in terms of follow-up, commitment, or communication. This poses an additional challenge for the school in achieving balanced and effective communication with all families. Collectively, these results indicate that the challenges facing the school in dealing with parents after the COVID-19 pandemic are largely related to the level of awareness, communication, and mutual cooperation. Addressing them requires adopting clear communication strategies, awareness programs, and flexible frameworks for educational partnership that contribute to enhancing mutual understanding and supporting the integration between the roles of the school and the family, which positively reflects on the student and the educational process as a whole.

### CONCLUSION OF THEMES

The combined results of the themes indicate that the educational partnership between the school and parents after the COVID-19 pandemic is characterized by a high degree of strength and effectiveness. It is based on continuous, multi-channel communication and a complementary partnership that contributes to supporting student discipline, ethical behavior, and academic achievement. However, there is a relative disparity in the level of interaction from some parents, alongside formal organizational frameworks that help regulate and sustain the relationship. The results also showed that the pandemic was an influential factor in reshaping this relationship, contributing to raising awareness of the importance of educational partnership, alongside the emergence of a set of cognitive, organizational, and behavioral challenges that require addressing through informed educational mechanisms. Overall, these findings are consistent with previous educational literature, which confirmed that a positive relationship and effective communication between the school and parents are fundamental pillars for the success of the educational process, and that educational partnership contributes to enhancing school discipline, improving academic achievement, and supporting the holistic development of students (Al-Hassani, 2024; Al-Jawarnah, 2024; Al-Asmari & Al-Sharbini, 2024; Mahamid & Shaqhah, 2020; Saeed, 2024; Iman & Radhia, 2025; Al-Hassani, 2024; Taha, 2024; Al-Abidat & Al-Khudair, 2022; Al-Ruhaili & Al-Sisi, 2019).

### Study Recommendations

In light of the study's results and conclusions regarding the degree of the relationship between the school and parents in the post-COVID-19 phase, and the strengths and challenges it revealed, a set of recommendations can be offered to enhance this relationship, support its sustainability, and raise its educational effectiveness, thereby positively impacting the student and the educational process.

- **Firstly**, the study recommends the necessity of institutionalizing the concept of educational partnership between the school and parents by explicitly incorporating it into school policies and operational plans. Communication with parents should not be viewed as a supplementary procedure but as a fundamental element of school quality performance, especially in the post-pandemic phase.
- **Secondly**, the study suggests developing and regularly activating communication channels with parents, continuing to benefit from the digital means that proved effective during the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside traditional channels. This ensures reaching various segments of parents and considering their professional and social circumstances.
- **Thirdly**, the study recommends implementing awareness and educational programs targeting parents, aimed at raising their educational awareness, familiarizing them with school regulations and instructions, and clarifying their roles in supporting their children's learning and following up on their behavior and academics, with a focus on the requirements of the educational stage for each age group.
- **Fourthly**, the study suggests enhancing the formal organization of the relationship between the school and parents by activating parent councils, organizing periodic meetings according to a clear schedule, and documenting the outputs of these meetings. This contributes to organizing dialogue, clarifying roles, and building mutual trust between the two parties.
- **Fifthly**, the study recommends building the capacities of school leaders and teachers in communication skills and managing relationships with parents through specialized training programs. These should focus on dialogue skills, conflict management, effective communication, and dealing with different types of parents, especially in contexts characterized by diverse social and cultural backgrounds.
- **Sixthly**, the study proposes developing mechanisms for joint early intervention between the school and the family to address behavioral or academic problems. This involves engaging the parent from the early stages of a



problem and unifying educational efforts, which reduces problem escalation and enhances the effectiveness of the solutions taken.

- **Seventhly**, the study recommends adopting flexible strategies to encourage the participation of less interactive parents by diversifying communication methods and offering alternative participation models not limited to direct attendance, such as virtual meetings or interactive messages. This should consider their different circumstances and encourage positive engagement.
- **Eighthly**, the study recommends promoting a culture of positive dialogue and problem-solving in partnership between the school and parents, and reducing confrontational approaches or unconstructive complaints. This can be achieved by establishing clear frameworks for complaint management and directing them towards organized and constructive educational pathways.
- **Ninthly**, the study suggests conducting future in-depth studies that address the school's relationship with parents in different educational contexts, compare multiple educational stages, or focus on the impact of educational partnership on specific variables such as academic achievement, student mental health, or school discipline, to enrich educational knowledge in this field.

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