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School-Parents Relationship in the Era of School-Based Management: Harmony or Conflict?

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School-Parents Relationship in the Era of School-Based Management: Harmony or Conflict?

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Parents’ expectations and demands of schools have traditionally exposed school-level educators to a major difficulty of maintaining a proper balance between parental involvement and intervention with schools. The following study explores how the increase in schools’ authority following the introduction of School-Based Management (SBM) in schools and involvement with the community schools’ ideology provoke parents’ militant behaviors against schools. Questionnaires were administered in the Israeli educational system to 991 parents affiliated with three different groups of elementary schools: 20 SBM schools, 21 community schools and 19 SBM-community schools. Findings show that parents express the highest degree of militancy in terms of their willingness to use sanctions against schools in SBM-community schools. This finding remains stable even when parents’ trust and satisfaction with schools are statistically controlled. Taking into consideration the close relations maintained between parents and community schools and schools’ extended formal authority following the introduction of SBM, this finding indicates that the SBM-community school combination provokes parents’ militancy when they realize that schools capable of meeting their demands are reluctant to do so. It is concluded, therefore, that while SBM intends to empower schools by extending their authority and autonomy, it may lead to the opposite result in different organizational settings.

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Calls for pluralism and democratization have intensified in recent years in western democracies, advocating for the need to increase citizens’ involvement in official state institutions. Schooling is one area of many in public policy where government has sought to redefine the relationship between the consumer and the producer by increasing the influence and power of the former (Munn, 1998). Underpinning these policies is the belief in the potential of quasi-markets (Le Grand & Bartlett, 1993) to promote the quality of schooling and increase the satisfaction of parents and children (Nir, 2003).

There is a vast literature on school change and improvement arguing for the importance of parents as active participants in the policymaking process rather than as passive recipients of policy handed down from the center (Fullan, 1991; Hopkins, 1987). Moreover, it is often acknowledged that the increase of schools’ authority and flexibility following decentralization initiatives and the introduction of school-based management (SBM) in schools increases schools’ potential responsiveness to parental demands (Raywid, 1990; Robertson, Wohlstetter & Albers Mohrman, 1995). Therefore, one could argue that a discrepancy between the organizational conduct of SBM schools and parental expectations is likely to be seen by parents as school refusal rather than inability to meet their demands and, therefore, to provoke their anger and antagonism. Nevertheless, the literature lacks substantial evidence that could account for the impact of school empowerment reforms on school-parent interaction and on parents’ attitudes towards school.

Hence, the purpose of this study is to assess the relation between SBM and parents’ willingness to become involved in militant behaviors against schools as a means for making schools comply with their demands.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WITH SCHOOL

One immediate outgrowth of the tendency to democratize educational systems is evident in the demand for increased parental involvement in schools. This trend is not only an outgrowth of parents’ belief that their children will benefit from their involvement with schools (Chavkin, 1989), but is also supported by educators who believe that there is a need to get rid of the traditional perceptions of home-school relations (Epstein, 1992; Munn, 1993). It is widely perceived among education commentators that although parents of different social and economic background are characterized by varying degrees of involvement with school (Goldring, 1990), parent involvement is an overwhelmingly positive good that should be embraced as broadly and as promptly as possible. Many studies report that parental involvement in child education generally benefits children’s learning (Chavkin, 1993; Eccles & Harlod, 1993) and impacts positively on their achievement and cognitive development (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Henderson, 1987). Research findings also indicate that increased parental
involvement with school is a crucial component to the enhancement of school effectiveness (Bastiani, 1993; Epstein, 1992; Golby, 1993; Hornby, 1995; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis & Ecob, 1988; Munn, 1993; Ng, 1999). It is argued that effective schools are those that provide opportunities for parents to both support and participate in their children’s education (Smith & O’Day, 1991). Moreover, studies report that parental involvement affects the parents themselves in terms of their attitudes toward schools (Coleman, Collinge & Seifert, 1993) and their compliance with school norms and values (Vincent & Tomlinson, 1997).

Along with the growing support for parental involvement in school, however, this tendency is also viewed as a mixed blessing (Verhoeven & Gheysen, 1993). A main source of concern for school-level educators relates to the tension created following parents’ demand to have full control over school (Casanova, 1996) and to become involved in issues which educators do not consider legitimate for parental involvement, such as determining teachers’ and pupils’ placement in classes and school's pedagogical agenda. According to a survey of parent, teacher, and principal views on parent involvement, parents want more say in school and classroom affairs than teachers and principals are willing to allow (Chavkin & Williams, 1987). Moreover, parental involvement increases the number of parents challenging school decisions (Crozier, 1999). Therefore, educators want only a limited amount of parent involvement in schooling (Lorty, 1977). In some cases, these fears promote parents’ feeling of being patronized or antagonized by teachers (Fine, 1997, p. 461), since parents and teachers may be considered “natural enemies” who face enduring problems of negotiating boundaries between their “territories” (Waller, 1932).

Research evidence shows that one of the major sources of conflict in school is related to disputes between schools and parents and that most of the conflicts are related to school policy issues (Friedman & Bendes-Yaacov, 1998). Although policy areas are very diversified, parents are more interested in the general organization of the school and its pedagogical policy (Chapman, 1990) than in other school issues related to building maintenance or school enrichment activities.

Therefore, although many educators explicitly claim that they are interested in parent involvement, the type of parent involvement they typically have in mind is quite limited in scope. The implicit limitations on parent involvement usually do not become explicit until conflicts arise (Fagnano & Werber, 1994). Nevertheless, parental dissatisfaction with school and the discrepancy between what parents consider correct and what schools do is likely to promote their anger (Margolis, 1991) and, presumably, their militancy against schools, following research findings that shed light on the relation between parental satisfaction and tendency to become involved (Loucks, 1992). Moreover, schools’ unwillingness to involve parents may also lead to lack of trust, since trust is related to school openness and,
therefore, cannot be established if parents’ expectations for increased involvement fail to materialize (Strutton, Hamilton & Lumpkin, 1997, p. 568). Such circumstances may in some cases provoke a dispute, which in turn may encourage parents to take actions that would compel schools to act in accordance with their expectations. In considering that parents have individual (Weinberg & Lynn, 1979) as well as shared (Griffin, 1956; Schultze, 1975) interests, such militant actions may be carried out by individuals wishing to advance the interest of their child or may be evident in the collective action taken by a group of parents, when sharing a mutual interest.

Parental militancy may be evident in the demand for increased involvement in school management and in policy and decision-making processes. Parents may choose to withhold information in dealing with the school in order to advance their children’s interests and get what they think is due to them. Parents may seek the assistance of outsiders and involve the superintendent or the media, or they may take the law into their hands and initiate a strike or a demonstration against the school (Friedman, 1984) in order to get the attention of school staff and high-ranking officials. In the most extreme cases, however, parents might use violence against school staff (Arkin, 1999; Boutte, Keepler, Tyler, & Terry, 1992; Wallace & Wertheimer, 2000).

MODERATING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

In spite of the mixed emotions shared by school-level educators, parental involvement with schools is a social phenomenon which is gradually gaining strength (Goldberger, 1995). Such developments require educational systems to adopt strategies that will better enable them to meet parents’ expectations and promote their positive experiences and satisfaction related to school.

One prominent strategy is evident in the tendency toward the establishment of community schools. Becoming a community school reflects schools’ conscious decisions to allow increased parental involvement (Street, 1997, p. 4), which may typically take two forms: involvement in the teaching processes such as assisting children to prepare their homework, and involvement in school administration processes (Lazar, Guttmann, & Margalit, 2000). Becoming a community school reflects a change in the nature of schools as social systems by expanding the permeability of their boundaries with the external social environment (Goldring & Shapira, 1996). The change in the patterns of participation between schools and parents is evident in community schools through the increased information that is offered to parents and in schools’ inclination to involve parents in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of various activities, including school policy (Harpaz, 1995). The upgrading of the relations between parents and community schools is evident not only in the quantity of interactions, but also in
their nature, as parents become involved in issues related to the inner circle of the school (Goldberger, 1995). One immediate outcome of becoming a community school may be evident in the decreased psychological gap between the school and the parents following the close relations and intense interaction between the two parties. Sergiovanni emphasizes this notion by stating that “communities are collections of individuals who are bonded together by natural will . . . This bonding and binding is tight enough to transform them from a collection of ‘I’s’ into a collective ‘we.’ As a ‘we,’ members are part of a tightly knit web of meaningful relations. This ‘we’ usually shares a common place, and over time, comes to share common sentiments and traditions that are sustaining” (1996, p. 48).

Along the same line, the tendency towards decentralization and the introduction of SBM in schools is another major feature of school reform around the world (Caldwell 2003, p. 93; Caldwell & Spinks, 1998b) intended to bring parents and school-level educators closer. Simply stated, SBM refers to the increase of authority at the school site (Clune & White, 1988; Caldwell & Spinks, 1998a, p. 4) and emphasizes maximum delegation of decision making to the school within a centrally coordinated framework (Boyd, 1990, p. 90). The main assertion inherent in SBM is that increasing schools’ authority and flexibility will better and more effectively allow for educational processes likely to correspond with local needs (Caldwell, 1990, p. 17). The rationale for increasing local power may be explained in considering that local-level educators are better aware of local needs and may therefore better and more efficiently direct effort, resources and educational processes to meet them. SBM welcomes increased parental involvement and suggests to include them in site-based governance councils, since the members of the local community are considered to best represent and express the needs of children of the community. Therefore, in spite of claims which argue that SBM is inherently a political process (Scribner, Reyes & Fusarelli, 1995) and a compromise made to satisfy minorities who seek more resources and multicultural curricula (Brown & Hunter, 1998), it opens opportunities for parents to become more involved in setting school policy and decision-making processes.

SBM can contribute to school management (Cheng & Cheung, 1999) and provide a context for substantive parent involvement that extends beyond fundraising and the overall management of the school (Cross & Reitzug, 1995, p. 16). This argument is sustained in particular in educational systems that traditionally have featured a highly centralized structure, which implied strong limitations for parental involvement with schools.

Previous studies that focused on parent involvement with schools following implementation of SBM have produced, however, mixed findings. Studies revealed that teachers expressed discomfort with parent participation (Trubowitz, 1995) and that principals of SBM schools were exposed to an increased number of demands placed by parents (Hatton, 1995) and,
therefore, tended to limit parent involvement with school (Gay & Place, 2000). Research findings reinforce the notion that school reform efforts intended to increase parental involvement in schools often end up reinforcing traditional power relations (Anyon, 1995; Smrekar, 1996). Nevertheless, although previous studies provide little information regarding parents’ satisfaction with and trust in SBM schools, evidence shows that parents favor SBM as a reform strategy (Scomyers, 1996) since SBM promotes expectations for quick and substantial improvements in schools (Brown & Hunter, 1998) and grants them more power while negotiating with schools (Rivarola & Fuller, 1999).

Hence, although SBM expands schools’ authority and ability to meet parental demands and is therefore assumed to increase parents’ satisfaction trust and involvement with schools, it may also lead to the opposite outcome if parents expect more participation but do not receive it because authority relationships in schools have not changed. Parents’ frustration is likely to be aggravated, especially if they maintain close relations with schools as in the case of community schools, where they may be encouraged to confront schools openly. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the relation between SBM and parents’ willingness to exercise militant behaviors against school. Taking into consideration the close relations maintained between parents and community schools and schools’ extended authority following the introduction of SBM, it is assumed that parents of SBM-community schools may view schools more positively in terms of their trust in satisfaction with schools, yet, at the same time, will be more inclined to engage in militant behaviors against school. Specifically, this study attempts to explore to what extent parents differ in their willingness to become involved in militant acts directed against schools, which differ in their involvement with SBM and with the community-oriented ideology.

Method

Sample: To meet this goal a comparison between three groups of randomly sampled elementary schools operating in the Israeli educational system was performed (see Appendix A): Community schools which had introduced SBM (group 1; n = 19); SBM schools which are not community schools (group 2; n = 20); and community schools which had not introduced SBM (group 3; n = 21). The sample consists of elementary schools, which introduced SBM and/or the community ideology in the 1999 school year, three years before the study was conducted.

The title “community” and/or “SBM” school in the Israeli educational realm implies that a school has formally introduced a policy plan set by the Ministry of Education, which grants the school additional resources and the legitimacy to initiate activities that correspond with the policy’s guidelines. However, the process by which a school becomes a community school slightly differs from the one characterizing the introduction of SBM in schools.
Becoming a community school is usually an outgrowth of a school's ideology, that favors increased parental involvement in school. Therefore, becoming a community school is usually an outgrowth of bottom-up action initiated by the school. The implementation of SBM follows different lines, since SBM is being introduced to schools as a top-down restructuring initiative. This process follows the recommendations of a steering committee commissioned in 1992 by the Israeli minister of education to explore the possibility of extending the scope of school autonomy and introducing SBM in Israel. This was done after a number of central initiatives to decentralize the educational system carried out during the 1970s and the 1980s ended with no significant changes to school autonomy. Although SBM was intended to increase schools' autonomy, it is interesting to note that schools were not allowed to introduce SBM unless a contract was signed between the municipality within which they operate and the ministry of education. In other instances, schools were even forced by the municipality to introduce SBM after a contract had been signed in order to ensure unity and facilitate city-level administration.

The main change brought by SBM was that each school received an annual budget that the school could use to support its administrative and pedagogical agenda. In each of the schools sampled, questionnaires were randomly distributed among fifth- and sixth-grade children who were asked to deliver them to their parents. These classes were chosen to guarantee that parents who responded to the questionnaires were well acquainted with the school because many had had their children in the school from first grade. In each family, one parent received a questionnaire and a stamped and self-addressed envelope and was asked to mail the completed questionnaire directly to the researchers. The rate of return was approximately 25% as 991 completed questionnaires were eventually received out of the 4,000 initially distributed, 261 from the SBM + community schools group (group 1), 334 from the SBM schools group (group 2), and 396 from community schools group (group 3). An analysis of schools' background data revealed no statistically significant differences between the groups in parents’ level of education, age, religiousness or socio-economic level.

**Research tools:** The research questionnaire contained several scales that were used to measure parents’ experiences with school in terms of their trust, satisfaction, and involvement in school and their willingness to become involved in militant behaviors directed against school.

**Parental trust in school** was measured using a two-factor 12-question scale developed by Cummings and Bromiley (1996). The reliability obtained for the first factor (school’s perceived sincerity and honesty when negotiating with parents) is $\alpha = .74$ (example item: I feel that the school staff is sincere) and for the second factor (school staff patronizes and takes advantage of its power position when interacting with parents) is $\alpha = .92$ (example...
item: I feel that school staff takes advantage of parents’ delicate position when interacting with them).

**Parents’ satisfaction with school** was measured using the Peres and Pasternak scale (1993), which consists of nine items ($\alpha = .84$) (example item: I am satisfied with school’s level of teaching).

**Parental involvement scale** developed by Shapira and Goldring (1990) was employed to measure parental actual involvement with school. A factor analysis conducted on the data set yielded three factors: involvement with school’s social activities ($\alpha = .89$) (example item: I was involved with organizing school’s cultural and social activities); involvement with school policy making ($\alpha = .88$) (example item: I was involved in determining school’s set of rules); and involvement with school’s educational and pedagogical processes ($\alpha = .80$) (example item: I was involved in determining school’s formal curriculum).

**Parental Militancy** was measured using three scales with five, five, and three items developed for the purpose of this study, in order to assess parental willingness to initiate acts that will force school to comply with their individual and/or collective demands and interests. A principal component factor analysis with Varimax rotation that analyzed the responses of 991 parents formed three subsets explaining 51.2% of the variance. One subset stands for parents’ demand to take an active part in school’s policy and decision-making processes ($\alpha = .86$). A second subset reflects parents’ willingness to expose their dispute with school to the public by applying to outsiders or by using sanctions such as initiating a strike ($\alpha = .82$). A third subset reflects parents’ willingness to withhold information in dealing with school in order to advance their children’s interests ($\alpha = .72$) (see Appendix B). A seven-point Likert type scale was employed throughout the questionnaire, where 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 7 “strongly agree.”

**Results**

The data analysis was conducted in three sequential stages. Following previous studies that argued for the significance of personal background data in explaining parental involvement in school, the initial analysis involved a comparison of parents’ demographics among the three groups of schools. The second stage of the analysis involved a set of Analyses of Variance followed by Scheffe Contrasts procedure to determine whether the three groups compared differ in parents’ trust in school, actual involvement, satisfaction with school, and willingness to act militantly against school. In the final stage, an additional Analysis of Variance was used to determine if differences in parental militancy among groups remain when parents’ trust in school, actual involvement in school, and satisfaction with school are statistically controlled.
An analysis of parents’ demographics reveals no statically significant differences between the three groups of schools. The profile of the respondents reflects that most of them are Israeli-born, married mothers. Their ages range between 29 and 59 (42 years on average); 754 respondents (approximately 76%) reported having an academic degree obtained from a college or a university.

An analysis of variance procedure used to assess the extent to which the three groups compared differ in parents’ actual involvement with the school revealed no statistically significant differences between the groups for parental involvement with school variables. The mean score obtained for parental involvement with school’s social activities is 2.4, with school’s educational and pedagogical processes is 1.7, and with school’s policymaking processes is 1.6, reflecting that, in general, parents consider themselves as minimally involved with school’s activities.

In addition, no significant differences were found in the extent to which parents trust school educators. The average score obtained in the sample for this variable was 5.47, reflecting that parents consider educators as honest when they interact with them. Furthermore, no statistically significant differences between the groups were found in parents’ militancy evident in their willingness to withhold information while interacting with schools. The relatively low score obtained for this variable (average score = 2.05) may indicate parents’ integrity or reflect their reluctance to report such willingness because of its negative connotation.

However, statistically significant differences were found between groups in parents’ satisfaction with school, to the extent to which parents consider school staff attitude as patronizing, and in parental militancy evident in parents’ demands for increased involvement and willingness to use sanctions against school (see Table 1).

The average scores obtained for parents’ satisfaction with school reflect that parents in general are satisfied with their children’s school. However, a Scheffe Contrasts procedure revealed that parents in SBM-community schools are the most satisfied (mean = 5.39) and that parents in community schools are the least satisfied (mean = 5.06). Similar differences between groups are obtained when parents refer to the extent to which they consider school staff attitude as patronizing. Findings show that parents do not feel that school educators are patronizing them. However, educators were considered as most patronizing by parents of SBM schools that are not community schools (mean = 3.31) and least patronizing by parents of community schools that had not introduced SBM (mean = 3.04).

Since the observed power (Eta Squared) between the group type and parents’ satisfaction with school as well as the extent to which parents perceive school educators’ attitude as patronizing is low, it may be argued that the differences found between the groups are mainly an artifact of the large
 Turning to parents’ militancy, it is evident that although parents in general reported that they are not very keen to become engaged in militant acts against their children’s school, the findings show that parents of SBM-community schools are more willing to conduct militant acts than are parents in the other groups of schools that were studied. A Scheffe Contrasts procedure revealed that parents of SBM-community schools were more persistent in their demands to become involved in school (mean = 2.97) than were parents of community schools that had not introduced SBM (mean = 2.63). Moreover, it was found that parents of SBM-community schools were more willing to use sanctions against schools (mean = 2.69) than were parents in community schools (mean = 1.90) or parents in SBM schools that are not community schools (mean = 1.80). The findings reflect a moderate observed power between the group type and parental willingness to use sanctions against school (Eta Squared = .146). These findings seem to support the assumption that the SBM-community school combination promotes parents’ willingness to conduct militant behaviors directed towards school.

Since parents’ trust in school, actual involvement in school and satisfaction with school are mentioned in the literature as significant in explaining parents’ attitudes towards schools, an additional analysis is used to determine whether the differences found in parental militancy between the groups remain, when these variables are held constant in the analysis (see Table 2).

The findings show that when parents’ trust in school and satisfaction with school are held constant in the analysis, parents’ affiliation with a particular group of schools remains statistically significant (the main effect of
parental demand for increased involvement yielded an f-ratio of F (2, 985) = 3.50; p < .05). However, the low observed power between these variables suggests that parents' involvement with a particular group of schools little explains parental demand for increased involvement in school. However, a different picture is revealed when a similar analysis is conducted for parental willingness to use sanctions against school (i.e., applying to superiors, to the media, or even initiating a strike).

The results of this analysis (see Table 3) indicate that although parents’ trust in school plays a significant role in determining parents’ willingness to use sanctions, it is evident that the SBM-community school combination still plays a significant role and is related (Eta Squared = .146) to parents’ willingness to take drastic measures and use sanctions against school (the main effect of parental willingness to use sanctions against school yielded an f-ratio of F (2, 985) = 84.16; p < .001).

### TABLE 2
Analysis of Variance: Parents’ Demand for Involvement in School (Parents’ trust in school, actual involvement in school, and satisfaction with school are used as Covariates.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>164.64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.93***</td>
<td>.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>104.19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44.09***</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.85*</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>17.58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.44**</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patronizing</td>
<td>73.61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31.15***</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>16.54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.50*</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>2337.44</td>
<td>985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10146.60</td>
<td>991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>2492.09</td>
<td>990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

### TABLE 3
Analysis of Variance of Parents’ Willingness to Use Sanctions against School (Parents’ trust in school, actual involvement in school and satisfaction with school are used as Covariates.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>179.98</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42.94***</td>
<td>.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>78.62</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.85***</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.26**</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patronizing</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21.33***</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>141.08</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>84.16***</td>
<td>.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>825.59</td>
<td>985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5280.24</td>
<td>990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>1005.58</td>
<td>990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
In order to explain the findings obtained for parental militancy, two assertions need to be made. First, sanctions are more likely to be used when parents as individuals or as a group believe in their potential to make a difference. Second, demands for increased involvement are likely to take place at the beginning of or during a process, whereas sanctions are likely to be employed at the end of a process, after all other means have failed to produce the anticipated outcomes.

Bearing in mind these two claims, it may be argued that the discrepancy found between school conduct and parents’ expectations in SBM-community schools, which are ideologically more willing and formally more capable of positively responding to parental expectations, is likely to encourage parents’ use of sanctions against schools as a final resort, based on their belief that these schools are capable of meeting their expectations but are reluctant to do so.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether schools that differ in their formal authority and/or explicit community ideology also differ in parents’ willingness to become involved in militant acts directed against schools. In general, the study provides evidence for the low degree of actual parental involvement in schools, reflecting the finding that parents hardly ever participate in the initiation and implementation of school’s social activities, policy-making, and pedagogical processes in all the schools that were studied. These findings support the assertion that the explicit community ideology characterizing community schools is not considered by parents to increase the opportunities for their involvement with school, since community schools involve parents to a similar degree as do non-community schools. This finding supports earlier publications (Chavkin & Williams, 1987; Lorty, 1977; Verhoeven & Gheysen, 1993; Casanova, 1996) arguing that a school’s tendency to adopt a community ideology may also reflect an effort to reduce parental intervention rather than increase their involvement with school.

In addition, when parents report about their trust in school and satisfaction with school, their responses reflect a relatively high degree of satisfaction with school and trust in school-level educators. A deeper look at the data reveals, however, that a major discrepancy in parental militancy between the groups compared is found between SBM-community schools and community schools. This finding may be explained by considering that both community and SBM ideologies emphasize increased correspondence between school activities and students’ and parents’ needs and expectations and, therefore, SBM-community schools are likely to be more willing and better able to meet such expectations. However, it is important to note that while the community ideology increases in many ways the cooperation between schools and parents, it also determines the standards as well as
limitations for parental involvement with school. This duality also characterizes SBM: it grants schools extended authority that can be used to better cope with local expectations, but also to better resist parental pressures and demands which fail to correspond with the school’s agenda. Hence, extending school autonomy and authority does not necessarily translate itself into increased school responsiveness to needs and demands presented by parents, contrary to the theoretical assumptions embedded in SBM (Caldwell, 1990, p. 17; Johnes, 1995; Conley, 1991; David, 1989, p. 46).

Although the different groups of schools did not differ in actual parental involvement with school, it appears that the SBM-community combination is significant in explaining parental militancy, as parents of these schools were found to be more willing to become involved in militant acts against schools in comparison to parents in the other groups of schools. One explanation that may account for this finding may be related to the close relations that schools and parents maintain in community schools, which decrease the psychological distance between the two parties and therefore reduce the barriers for parental militancy. Another explanation may be that the SBM-community combination encourages parents to present their demands to schools based on their awareness that these schools are better able in light of their extended authority and are ideologically more willing to positively respond to their demands. However, the findings also reflect that the increased authority of community schools following the introduction of SBM promotes parents’ willingness to initiate militant acts against schools, assuming that in these newly created circumstances, militant acts have a better chance of forcing schools to meet their demands. This pattern is more evident in SBM-community schools than in SBM schools that are not community schools, since the psychological distance between schools and parents in the former is relatively small. Therefore, while SBM is intended to empower schools and increase their control and flexibility, our findings suggest that it may lead to the opposite consequences in different organizational settings in general, and in community schools in particular, when they are exposed to increased demands and pressures.

Hence, it is suggested that the introduction of SBM in each particular school has to be accomplished in accordance with its unique organizational settings. The training and the preparation of teachers and school principals in schools where SBM is introduced has to be realized in a different manner and must emphasize strategies that improve coping with parental militancy, especially when community schools are involved. Moreover, our findings suggest that implementing SBM uniformly in educational systems characterized by a variety of schools may prove problematic, since schools characterized by different ideologies are likely to experience different challenges and difficulties and are, therefore, likely to make use of their increased autonomy to various degrees. This may be the case for schools particularly if they need to deal with militant parents while attempting to fulfill their educational ideologies and tasks.
REFERENCES


**Appendix A** The sampling model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SBM School</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community School</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix B** Factor analysis solution for parental militancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I demand to be involved in decisions related to the admission of new teachers to school</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I demand to be involved in decisions related to the placement of students in classrooms</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I demand to be involved in decisions related to the placement of teachers in classrooms</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I demand to be involved in policy planning processes related to school's pedagogical agenda</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I demand to be involved in decisions related to the distribution of school's budget</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I apply to the superintendent or the Ministry of Education when I am not satisfied with school's conduct</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I apply to the police if I am not satisfied with the way school treats violence</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I am not satisfied of school’s policy or its administration I am ready to organize a demonstration</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ready to take part in a strike against school when I don't approve of school actions</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In case of a dispute with school, I don't hesitate to involve the local press</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ready to say whatever seems appropriate in order to maintain good relations with school</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although I am sure I am right, I disregard my opinion if I think that by doing so my child will benefit</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I choose not to tell the whole truth to the school principal when I ask for special favors</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factor 1: (Eigenvalue = 3.33); factor 2: (Eigenvalue = 2.44); factor 3: (Eigenvalue = 1.78).