

Use of mobile application: Means of communication between parents and class teacher

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Abstract

Collaboration in between parents and teachers is an important step for student's achievement. Stakeholders in education sector are trying to find best solution to encourage parents' involvement in school activities. To involve parents in schooling activities and in other events, a good info-notice system should be established. Teachers should give exact information about any student's progress as well as other information. In Nepal, most of the schools use notebook called "communication book or school diary as the means of communication with parents". This traditional and most known system is still being used in many parts of the country. Class Teacher writes down a note or notice to parents on it about any information of current activities or forth coming events.

The use of mobile applications has been increasing rapidly, and is being used in many aspects in education. The aim of this study is to investigate parents' view on using mobile application to communicate with teachers. The Meridian Connect mobile application, which has been widely coming in use in between parents and class teachers, is used for this research. The study was designed to apply the questionnaire based survey methodology in which 573 parents of the students of Meridian International School were asked.. The results of data analysis indicated that parents' view on the use of mobile application to upgrade the education environment has been proved to be positive and useful.

Keywords: mobile application, parents, class teacher;

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1. Introduction

Collaboration in between parents and teachers is an important step for student's achievement. Stakeholders in education sector are trying to find best solution to encourage parents' involvement in school activities. To involve parents in schooling activities and in other events, a good info-notice system should be established. Teachers should give exact information about any student's progress as well as other information. In Nepal, most of the schools use notebook called "communication book or diaries as the means of communication with parents". This traditional and most known system is still being used in many parts of the country. Class Teacher writes down a note or notice to parents on it about any information of current activities or forth coming events. This communication links between parent and teacher on daily basis. This communication actively has positively impacted on student's overall achievement, success and personal behavior. Student feels and understands that "everyday my parent will check my "communication book" and will know everything about my educational progress." This action and system is giving a positive feedback to both parents and class teacher.

Mobile application, referred to as mobile app, is a designed software program specially coded to run on mobile devices, smart phones. There are many types of operating systems for mobile apps such as IOS, Windows and Android. Mobile apps have been designed for specific works and tasks. Meridian International School has prepared mobile app for communicating between parents and Class of Teacher to manage effective inter-communication.

Navariz (2015) study indicated that using mobile application is useful in classroom. The results of the Fiorello (2014) study showed that the use of mobile apps in the classroom as the students were engaged and motivated. Findings from Barrett-Greenly (2013) study recommended that many advantages were realized during use of mobile app in classroom. Teachers and parents concurred that use of mobile applications in classroom is positive (Barrett-Greenly, 2013). Mathur (2011) conducted a web-survey study to define students' view of mobile applications. The analysis of the study stated that students' acceptance of usefulness and students' perception of easing of use were favorable. Abedalla (2015) highlighted students' views of use of mobile apps in classroom. The result showed that majority of the participants liked to use mobile apps in learning activities.

There is a lack of literature on the use of mobile apps as communication tools (as referred in Nepal copy book) in schools; therefore, the researcher chose to investigate on using mobile app as a communication tool between parents and class teacher in the current study. The aim of this study is to investigate parents' view of using mobile app to communicate with class teacher.

2. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine parents' view on use of mobile apps as communication tools between parent and class teacher. For this purpose, Meridian Connect (Figure 1) mobile app has been used by both sides. Quantitative research methodology was conducted this investigation. In this quantitative study, the web survey included questions that was asked to participants to select a rating from a Likert-type scale, select one or more items from a list. The findings from this quantitative survey research study led assistance to refer the problem of understanding parents' view of use mobile app as communication tool between parent and class teacher. Meridian International School, Kathmandu has been selected as setting for this research study. Web-based survey has been used via survey monkey website and shared to all parents via Meridian Connect app, 573 parents had access to fill survey. All data had been collected from survey monkey web-survey platform and exported to PASW 18 statistics software. All data analyzed with help of PASW 18.

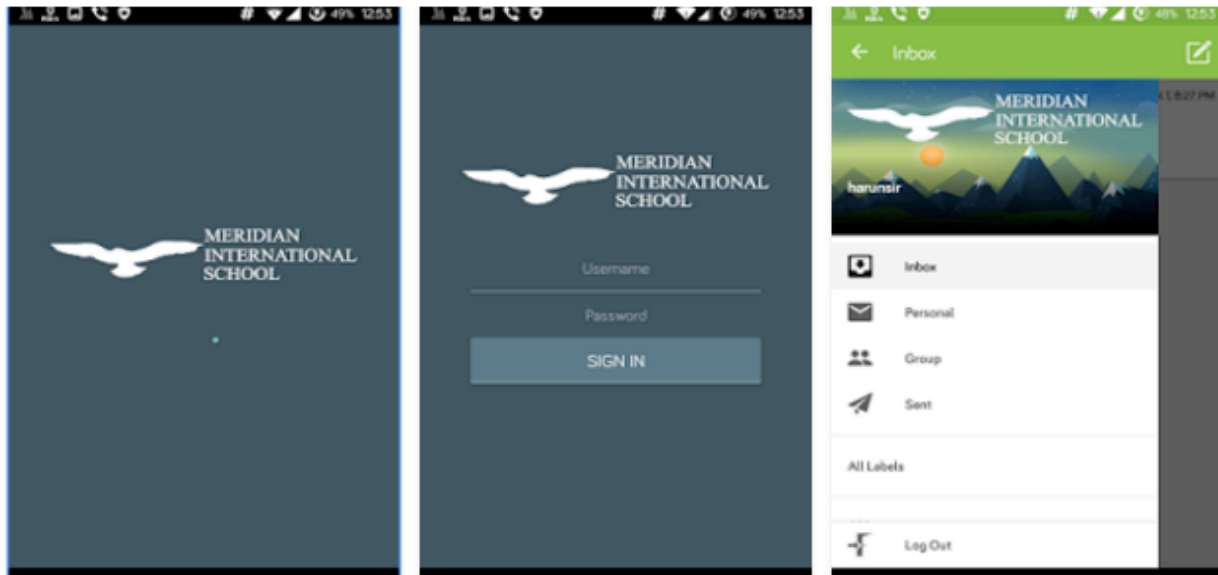


Figure 1: Meridian Connect Mobile App

2. Results

Descriptive statistics were conducted by researcher to investigate the findings of the majority. The data analyses include descriptive statistics of the Parents' view on using mobile app to communicate with Class Teacher. Participants were performed "Parents' view on using mobile app to communicate with Class Teacher" web-based survey which consists of 8 items rated on a five-point Likert-type scale. The results are illustrated below in detail in Table 1.

Table 1: Parents' View on using mobile app to communicate with Class Teacher

Statement	Percentage				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Meridian Connect app provides effectively communication between parent and class of teacher	0	5.2	7.2	21.5	66.1
Meridian Connect app provides to parents flow of information regularly	0	1.4	3.7	28.4	66.5
Meridian Connect app establish cooperation between school and parent	0	41.2	23.9	21.5	13.4
My communication with Meridian Connect app is easy and user-friendly	0	0	0	27.2	72.8
Using Meridian Connect app would improve my communication with class of teacher	0	2.3	16.8	17.6	63.4
Meridian Connect app enhances my involvement as parent	0	1.9	5.8	37.2	55.1
I am satisfied with using Meridian Connect app	0	0	2.6	15.9	81.5
I will continue to use Meridian Connect app as communication tool	0	0	2.3	15.5	82.2

1.1 Meridian Connect app provides effectively communication between parent and class of teacher

Table 1 reveals the percentage of the participants' opinion about first statement. The results showed that 66.1% participants strongly agreed, 21.5% participants agreed, 7.2% were neutral, 5.2% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed with the statement "Meridian Connect app provides effectively communication between parent and class teacher" The results showed that the majority of high responses was between strongly agree and agree.

1.2 Meridian Connect app provides to parents flow of information regularly

Table 1 finds out that 66.5% strongly agreed, 28.4% agreed, 3.7% were neutral, 1.4% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed with the statement "Meridian Connect app provides to parents flow of information regularly" The majority of high responses was between strongly agreed and agreed.

1.3 Meridian Connect app establish cooperation between school and parent

The results indicated that 13.4% strongly agreed, 21.5% agreed, 23.9% were neutral, 41.2% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed with the statement "Meridian Connect app established cooperation between school and parents". The highest number of responses was between disagree and neutral.

1.4. My communication with Meridian Connect app is easy and user-friendly

The results demonstrated that 72.8% strongly agreed, 27.2% agreed, 0.0% was neutral, 0.0% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed with the statement "My communication with Meridian Connect app is easy and user-friendly". The results showed that the majority of responses was between strongly agreed and agreed.

1.5. Using Meridian Connect app would improve my communication with class teacher

When participants were given the statement "Using Meridian Connect app would improve my communication with class of teacher" results stated that 63.4% strongly agreed, 17.6% agreed, 16.8% were neutral, 2.3% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed. The highest number of responses was between strongly agreed and agreed.

1.6. Meridian Connect app enhances my involvement as parent

The results revealed that 55.1% strongly agreed, 37.2% agreed, 5.4% were neutral, 1.9% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed with the statement "Meridian Connect app enhances my involvement as parent". The highest number of participants' responses was between strongly agreed and agreed.

1.7. I am satisfied with using Meridian Connect app

The results showed that 81.5% strongly agreed, 15.9% agreed, 2.6% were neutral, 0.0% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed with the statement "I am satisfied with using Meridian Connect app". The highest number of participants' responses was between strongly agreed and agreed.

1.8. I will continue to use Meridian Connect app as communication tool

When participants were given the statement "I will continue to use Meridian Connect app as communication tool" results stated that 82.2% strongly agreed, 15.5% agreed, 2.3% were neutral, 0.0% disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed. The highest number of responses was between strongly agreed and agreed.

2. Finding and Discussion

The findings from quantitative data were very positive. The majority of parents' view on using mobile app to communicate with class of teacher was favorable. In this research, the researcher collected the responses of 573 participants to determine their view of the use of mobile apps in communicating with class of teacher. Based on their responses, the participants indicated that they were satisfied with using Meridian Connect. They had positive view about the Meridian Connect mobile app. This result supports Abedalla (2015) study, he stated that use of mobile apps were very helpful and convenient for the participants.

The findings were also consistent with previous research like (Ho, Hung, & Chen, 2012) which stated that attitude toward using the mobile communication perceived usefulness. With regards to parent-teacher communication, the result of this investigation corresponded to previous study (Chen, Yu, & Chang, 2007) which indicated that technology based system obtains good communication role between parent and teachers. Karal, Ozlu, and Kokoc (2010) conducted a study to investigate "Teacher's and parent's opinions on the applicability of online teacher-parent meeting". According to (Karal et al., 2010)'s study that parents had positive view about online teacher-parent meeting. Their results also support this researcher finding.

Strom and Strom (2003) conducted a study to define the potential of new communication methods between parents and teacher via portable device adapter. In Strom and Strom (2003) study confirmed that using mobile messaging system is easy to use. The researcher finding is on the same page with (Strom & Strom, 2003) research based study. Another result in Seal (2011) study is that majority of parents used texting system for communication with teacher, data showed that parents' view is positive. Trevino (2012) conducted exploratory research to determine the progress of social networking system using in communication between parents and teachers. His final analysis reported that using social networking provides effectively communication between parents and teachers.

3. Conclusion

Efficient communication has vital elements in establishing beneficial and useful relationships between parents and class teacher. This study attempted to understand parents' view on using mobile app to communicate with class teacher. This research also tried to fill in the gap literature of using mobile apps to redound constructive communication between parents and class teacher. In this study investigated the implications of using Meridian Connect mobile app to lead effective communication between parent and class teacher.

According to this study, using mobile apps between parents and class teacher stated positive result. Based on the web-based survey report, the following conclusions were made:

- Using mobile app as a communication tool in education provides effective relationship.
- Flow of information from class teacher can be supported via mobile app.
- It establishes cooperation between school and parents while they are using mobile app

- Development of communication between parent and class teacher can be built via mobile app
- Using mobile app as a communication tool contribute parental involvement.

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