
A The role of parents as partners in early childhood education in kindergarten Singapore International school Cilegon: a descriptive study

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the role of parents as partners in early childhood education at TK SIS Cilegon. Parental involvement means that parents are involved in educating their children, both at home and at school. This is because parents are the first people to interact and educate children at home. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative through observation, interviews and documentation as data collection techniques. The subjects of the study were teachers and parents. The data analysis technique used the Miles and Hubberman model consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification stages. This article will discuss the implementation of the parent involvement program, identification of issues and problems of the parent involvement program, and solutions for developing the parent involvement program at TK SIS Cilegon. The results of the study showed that parents at TK SIS Cilegon played an active role in supporting the child's education process through good communication with teachers, involvement in school activities, and providing an environment that supports child development at home. In addition, collaboration between parents and schools has proven effective in improving the quality of education and child development. This study concludes that parental involvement as educational partners plays a very important role in creating an optimal learning environment for early childhood.

Keywords: *early childhood education; role of parents; parental involvement; TK SIS Cilegon.*

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a vulnerable individual who occupies the age of zero to six years (National Education System, 2023). In this phase, children are in the golden age where growth and development occur so rapidly. Thus, a special stimulation is needed that is carried out consistently to optimize all aspects of child development. One of the efforts that can be made to provide stimulation to early childhood is through education. According to Pristiwanti *et al.*

(2022), stated that education is a structured effort that has a positive impact on individual lives through knowledge gained throughout life. Meanwhile, Nur Cholimah (in Arifudin, 2021) defines Early Childhood Education (PAUD) as a connecting bridge aimed at individuals from birth to the age of six in order to optimize their physical, mental, and growth and development according to societal values, norms, and expectations.

In the process of optimizing early childhood development in early childhood education, parents also play a central role. Basically, the education provided by schools will not achieve the expected results if it is not balanced with learning at home. The role of parents to educate their children will not be replaced by anyone. Likewise in schools, because the role of teachers is only as a facilitator. Related to this urgency, the parent involvement program in PAUD is important to implement. One type of formal PAUD service that has various parent involvement programs is found in international standard kindergartens. According to Lestari *et al.* (2022) said that international standard schools are schools that have the main goal of producing a young generation who have high competitiveness by practicing the national competency curriculum. The implementation of parent involvement programs in international standard kindergartens can certainly support the teaching and learning process and improve students' understanding.

In involvement in early childhood education, parents have various roles. According to Coleman (in Nopiyanti & Husin, 2021) it is mentioned that the role of parents includes as supporters, teachers, students, advisors, protectors, and as ambassadors. Therefore, the author is determined to study more deeply the role of parents as partners in early childhood education at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten. In addition, the results of the previous study did not discuss much about the involvement program and the role of parents as partners in International Standard Kindergarten. So, the author decided to choose the object as a research material considering the alternatives offered by TK SIS *Cilegon* to increase the participation of parents who have personal busyness. With this research, it is hoped that it can become new knowledge for readers and writers and as a reminder of the importance of the role of parents in early childhood education and how to overcome existing obstacles.

METHODS

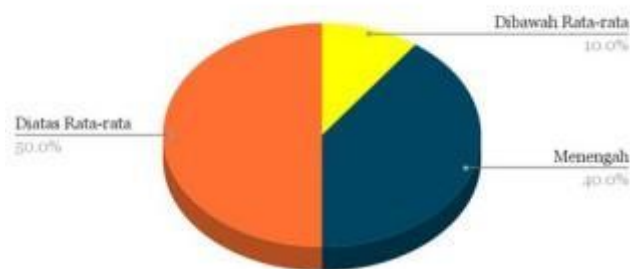
This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach through observation, interview, and documentation activities as a data collection technique. The subjects of the study were teachers and parents. The data analysis technique using the Miles and Hubberman model consists of the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. This article will discuss the implementation of the parent involvement program, identify issues and problems of the parent involvement program, as well as solutions for the development of the parent involvement program at TK SIS *Cilegon*. This can find out the extent of parental involvement and the problems faced by the school. In the data analysis technique, a qualitative descriptive approach is used using data collection techniques that include observation, documentation and interview activities. The interview activity was carried out by conducting structured and unstructured questions to the research subjects to obtain more in-depth and detailed information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data of Parents in Kindergarten SIS *Cilegon*

This research was conducted at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten, which is located on Jl. Raya Merak, Bonakarta No.49. The data collected in this study was through interviews, field observations and documentation studies. The results of the author's interview with one of the Academic Coordinators of TK SIS *Cilegon* regarding parental demographic data revealed that the socioeconomic percentage of parents of students in the upper middle class reached 50%, the factor is because many parents of students both have jobs. In addition, 98% of the parents of SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten students are Post-Graduate graduates. This factor is supported by the opinion according to Kuswati, Darusman, & Syaefuddin (2020), namely that there are several variables that are often used as indicators to measure socioeconomic status, including employment, income, and education level.

Hasil Persentase Status Sosial Ekonomi SIS *Cilegon*



Percentage chart of socioeconomic status of SIS *Cilegon*

Based on demographic data, 95% of students of SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten who have complete parents and those who are incomplete are only 5%. In addition, students of SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten also have siblings on average. From the demographic data that says that the average student of SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten has complete parents and siblings, of course this will have a positive impact on children's education. The family is the most important environment for children because they spend most of their lives within their family. As a result, the family environment becomes a place for children to get the most education. The family is the first place where children learn and receive education. From birth, children receive education from their families, especially from their parents. The family is also responsible for the social education that children must learn throughout their lives. Not only social education, the family or parents are also responsible for every aspect of their child's life. Family education is a process of allocating positive values for children's development as the basis for further education Mansur (2005) (in Nashooihul Umam, A, *et al.*, 2022). All parents want their child to be a successful and good person in the future. To achieve this, parents must try their best to give the best to their children. This includes providing nutrition, attention, and even education to children.

Likewise, when children have siblings, it will affect their learning motivation. Siblings can influence each other in behavior, learning, and development over the course of life, which

is relatively independent of their genetic potential. Cicirelli stated that your influence in learning is on children's learning behavior, motivation, and problems when they are at school. This is in line with the opinion of Deci & Ryan (in Sevira, 2016) that interaction in the family is one of the environments in which relationships affect motivation.

Forms of Activities in the Parent Involvement Program

Based on the results of the research, the parent involvement program at TK SIS *Cilegon* includes various activities designed to strengthen the relationship between parents, children, and schools.

Table 1. Forms of Activities in the Parent Involvement Program at Kindergarten SIS *Cilegon*

Yes	Aspects Observed	Exist	None	Indicators	Description
1.	Meetings/meetings for parents of students	✓		Name/agenda of the activity	Coffee morning
		✓		Personnel involved	Teachers and parents
		✓		Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Teacher competence, open and closed spaces that can be used for meetings, and presentation supplies
		✓		Parents' Opinions/Responses	Parents are willing to cooperate and attend
		✓		Impact of activities	Maintain friendship and get feedback by sharing ideas with each other
2.	Seminar/workshop classes for parents	✓		Name/agenda of the activities of the	Parenting seminar
		✓		Personnel involved	Teachers and parents
		✓		Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Resource persons as well as open and closed spaces that can be used for meetings, and presentation equipment
		✓		Parents' Opinions/Responses	Response from parents is good and able to collaborate with teachers
		✓		Impact of activities	Increase insight and knowledge about parenting

3.	School activities where parents are resource persons	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Parenting seminar
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers and parents
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Resource persons from the parents of students as well as open and closed spaces that can be used for meetings, and presentation equipment
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	Response from parents is good and able to collaborate with other parents
		✓	Impact of activities	Adding insight into parenting and maintaining friendship between parents
4.	Classroom staging at the end of the school year	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Art performances
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers, parents and students
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Stage, speakers, projectors, and so on
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	Welcomed by the parents of the students
		✓	Impact of activities	Strengthen the relationship between students and parents, introduce the culture/background of the student's parents
5.	Cocurricular, extracurricular, and other activities for children's self-development	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Extracurriculars in the form of taekwondo, swimming, and dance
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers, parents and students
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	There are adequate facilities and infrastructure such as

		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	sports rooms, swimming pools, and others
		✓	Impact of activities	Supporting extracurricular activities
				Increase children's skills and self-development
6.	Formation/appointment of school committees	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Class Mom
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers and parents
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Facilities and infrastructure are well available such as communication technology
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	
		✓	Impact of activities	The response from parents is kind and supportive and willing if chosen to be the head of the class mom
				Become more structured
7.	Activities organized by the school committee	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Teachers and Parents Conference
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers and parents
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Meeting rooms and supporting infrastructure
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	Parents are willing to cooperate or attend the activity
		✓	Impact of activities	Become more structured
8.	Formation of violence prevention teams in education units	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Training and Coaching
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers and parents
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	Facilities and infrastructure are well provided such as websites used to provide training to teachers and people to

				improve his understanding of Acts of violence
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	Parents' response is good and support
		✓	Impact of activities	Minimizing bullying
9.	Activities to prevent pornography, pornography, and abuse of drugs, psychotropics, and other addictive substances (NARCOTICS)	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Basic introduction of limbs
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers and students Facilities and
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	The infrastructure is well provided such as projectors used to help introduce the child's limbs
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	Parents' response is good and support
		✓	Impact of activities	Students can know basic things, such as examples of body parts that can or cannot be held
10	Activities to strengthen children's character education in education units	✓	Name/agenda of the activity	Social emotional skills
		✓	Personnel involved	Teachers and students
		✓	Availability of supporting facilities and infrastructure	There is availability of facilities and infrastructure adequate
		✓	Parents' Opinions/Responses	Parents give a good and supportive response
		✓	Impact of activities	Students have social skills and in managing their emotions

Based on table 1 above from the results of interviews at Kindergarten, SIS held parent involvement activities by holding socialization seminars on how parents educate children at home well. In addition, school activities such as UN Day, Kartini Day and several other activities also involve parents so that they know the various activities of children at school and support their growth and development. At TK SIS *Cilegon*, the Class Dojo application is implemented to communicate between teachers and parents of students, such as sending documentation of how and what activities at school that day, and people can review at home what has been learned at school. For the parent meeting, it is held directly once every 3 months and when the report card is distributed, the teacher not only tells the grades but also the teacher also informs the child's development at school and vice versa also the parents give consultation on how the child develops at home.

As for the association or committee program called class mom, each class has one person who leads or becomes a facilitator of the communication line to convey information from the school and convey it to the parents of other students. For resource persons and experts at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten do not call experts from outside and use existing resources from the school, because SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten has many branches such as Jakarta, Malang, Surabaya and there are also those abroad, where the school utilizes resources from the central SIS who have expertise, for supervision and evaluation activities of parental involvement in SIS schools are carried out at the end of the school year then the school provides a survey to parents related to school, how do parents view SIS schools. Every academic year, 2 seminars are held, for the speakers are taken from the parents of students who have their own background expertise. So it is the parents who fill the seminar with an audience of other parents and teachers and people from outside the school. For example, there are several parents of students who work as doctors who will fill out the webinar.

Parent Engagement Program Resources

From the results of our interview with the Academic Coordinator of TK SIS *Cilegon*, it is known that the source of funding for parent involvement programs here comes from school activity funds that have been paid by parents every semester. Facilities in parent involvement activities are also mostly supported entirely by SIS *Cilegon* schools.

The other supporters in the implementation of parent involvement activities at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten in addition to teachers and parents of students are able to involve resource persons from various fields. For example, at parenting events, invited speakers can come from doctors or psychologists who have competence in providing information and guidance related to parenting and child development. Meanwhile, at the webinar event, the speakers presented were parents of students from experts in certain fields relevant to the topics discussed in the event. This aims to provide diverse information and insights to parents so that they can improve their understanding in supporting their children's development.

Expected Benefits

The expected benefits of the Parent Involvement Activities held by TK SIS *Cilegon* are: (1) Can build a bond between children and parents; (2) Can bring parents closer to children; (3) Parents can know their children's abilities; (4) Children get parental attention in

their learning activities at home; (5) Can establish cooperation to optimize children's development; (6) It can strengthen the relationship between parents and children; (7) Parents can find out their children's learning activities at school; (8) Parents can get to know the environment, teachers and activities that will be carried out at school.

It can be concluded that the expected benefits of parent involvement programs and activities are the most important for child development, then other expected benefits are regarding the closeness of parents, children, and teachers at TK SIS *Cilegon*.

Implementation of the Parent Engagement Program

From the results of our interview with the Academic Coordinator of TK SIS *Cilegon*, it shows that in every implementation of the program involving parents, there is an SOP, the teacher and the principal who inform the SOP to the parents of the students. In making this SOP, teachers work together. In the analysis of the needs of the parent involvement program, teachers and principals of SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten first look at what the purpose and direction are for, then teachers and principals adjust to the needs needed. At SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten every semester there are different activities and there are also activities that are carried out incidentally every year or every semester and there are new events that are updated and adjust to the needs of children. The event was designed by parents with the aim of strengthening the relationship between parents and children. Through this event or project, it is hoped that children can be closer to their parents and parents can further optimize their children's development. Meanwhile, at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten, the preparation of the annual program does not involve parents. The design of the parent involvement program or activity is packaged in an easy-to-understand format. At SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten, there is also a group called Class Mom, which has been explained above that this class mom is like a committee at school. To make it easier for teachers to communicate with parents, it is done through the google class room platform.

Indicators of the success of the parent involvement program at TK SIS *Cilegon* are in the form of an increase in the level of parental participation in school activities, an increase in the level of parental satisfaction with their communication and involvement in children's education, as well as an increase in parental support and participation in optimizing the learning process and child development. Parent engagement program evaluation instruments are used to measure the quality and effectiveness of the overall parent engagement program. Self-evaluations are conducted periodically to identify strengths, shortcomings, and challenges in the implementation of parent involvement programs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of observations, actively involving parents in the child's education process, thus having a positive impact on children's development and achievement. So that it helps create a positive and supportive learning environment for children. The percentage of parents who are not involved in the parent involvement program at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten is very low, it can be seen that the level of parental involvement in early childhood education at SIS *Cilegon* Kindergarten varies greatly. Actively involving parents in early childhood education is essential to creating a positive and successful learning environment for children. Thus, it can be concluded that the parent program in this kindergarten has run well because of

the involvement of both teachers and parents who are enthusiastic and active in the child's education process. Similar to conditions in the field, parents need advanced understanding to be able to continue to take part in children's learning, so that schools can collaborate with parents to achieve the expected goals. The Joyce Epstein model or it can be called the parental involvement model focuses on several categories in the model.

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