

# The Impact of Parental Involvement on Early Childhood Development: A Case Study

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of parental involvement on early childhood development through a case study on a group of children in one of the early childhood education institutions. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, where data is obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results showed that active involvement of parents, both in educational, emotional, and social aspects, has a significant influence on cognitive development, language, motor, and character of children. Factors such as frequency of interaction, quality of communication, and emotional support have been shown to contribute positively in shaping children's behavior and abilities. These findings confirm the importance of collaboration between parents and educators in creating an environment that supports optimal child development.

**Keywords:** Parent Involvement, Early Childhood Development, Case Study.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood development is a crucial period that determines the direction of the formation of character, intelligence and social skills in the future (Hasanah, 2024). Various studies show that the early experiences that children experience, both at home and in the educational environment, play an important role in shaping the foundations of their development. In this context, parental involvement is one of the key factors that can directly or indirectly affect the quality of Child Development. Parental involvement includes a variety of forms of participation, from emotional support, learning supervision, to active involvement in school activities. Previous research, such as that conducted by M. Irfan Narudin & Taufik Hidayat, (2025), revealed that children who receive intensive support from parents tend to have better academic achievement and more mature social skills. However, most of these studies focused more on parental involvement at primary and secondary school age, while in the early age phase there was still limited discussion.

Attention to parental involvement at an early age is crucial because this period is often referred to as the "golden age" of brain development, where appropriate stimulation has long-term impacts. At the age of 0–6 years, neural connections grow rapidly, forming the foundation of thinking, language, and social skills (Nabillah, 2025). Therefore, understanding patterns of parental involvement during this stage is highly relevant not only for families, but also for policymakers and education practitioners. However, a frequent phenomenon observed in the field is the gap between theoretical understanding and practical implementation. Many parents recognize the importance of their role, yet not all are able to implement it effectively due to work commitments, limited knowledge, or lack of institutional support. This gap creates significant variation in children's developmental outcomes, even within the same community. To address this issue, the present study does not merely examine parental involvement in general terms, but specifically focuses on identifying the patterns of parental involvement, the barriers that hinder effective participation, and the strategies parents employ to enhance their engagement in supporting early childhood education. Case studies are employed as an effective approach to capture

these phenomena in depth and to uncover adaptable patterns that can be applied in other contexts (Apriliyanti, 2025).

In a global context, the role of the family in children's education is increasingly gaining attention along with increasing awareness of the importance of holistic education (Hidayatullah, 2024). However, in many areas, parental involvement is still seen as limited to attending school meetings or providing home learning facilities. In fact, overarching involvement involves effective communication, emotional accompaniment, to participation in the daily learning process. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on exploring parental involvement in early childhood education through in-depth case studies that take into account local socio-cultural aspects. This approach not only captures the phenomenon in general, but also examines how cultural background, family values, and societal habits shape patterns of parental involvement. Such contextual nuances are often overlooked in previous studies. For example, research by Johnson (2020) and Lestari (2022) predominantly measured parental involvement through standardized surveys and quantitative indicators, which led to generalized conclusions without fully addressing differences in socio-cultural settings. In contrast, this study adopts a more holistic perspective.

Another distinctive feature lies in the method of measuring involvement, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. While earlier studies such as Park & Chen (2021) focused mainly on the frequency or duration of parental participation, this research goes further by exploring the motivations behind parental involvement, the obstacles they encounter, and the strategies they adopt to support children's development. Consequently, the data obtained are richer and more capable of capturing the real dynamics in parent-child relationships (Dwi Antita et al., 2025). By combining narrative data with thematic analysis, this study provides a deeper and more contextualized understanding compared to prior research that tended to rely heavily on statistical generalizations. As a result, the findings not only generate accurate data but also yield practical insights that can be directly translated into recommendations for early childhood education institutions..

In addition, this study highlights the relationship between the quality of parental involvement with multidimensional Child Development. The dimensions studied include cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional development in an integrated manner. This multidimensional focus provides a new perspective because most previous research has only focused on one or two aspects of development, such as cognitive and language, without looking at the relationship with other aspects. By presenting a broader and integrated view, this research offers a significant contribution to the development of early childhood education theory and practice. The resulting understanding Model is able to explain that child development cannot be viewed separately per aspect, but rather as the result of a complex interaction between various factors that influence each other, including the quality of parental involvement. The findings of this study are expected to provide new input for the development of parental guidance models in early childhood education institutions. The Model can be designed based on a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural context, motivations, barriers, and strategies of parental involvement. Thus, early childhood education can be more inclusive, relevant, and effective in shaping a quality generation.

The case study approach used in this study also provides its own uniqueness. Rather than taking a large, generalizing sample, the study sought to understand in detail the experiences of one group of children in the context of their daily lives. Thus, the results are expected to be more relevant and applicable to people who have similar characteristics. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the impact of parental involvement on early childhood development by considering the influencing social, cultural, and psychological factors. Hopefully, the results of this study can be a reference for educators, policy makers, and parents to optimize the role of the family in supporting children's development in their early life.

## **II. METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of parental involvement in early childhood development in certain socio-cultural contexts. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in detail the phenomena that occur, observe the direct interaction between parents, children and the educational environment, and interpret the meaning contained behind this form of involvement. The location of the study was determined purposively in one of the early childhood education institutions located in semi-rural urban areas. This location selection considers the diversity of parents' social and economic backgrounds, so it can provide richer data. The subjects of the study consisted of five families who had children between the ages of four and six and were actively involved in children's educational activities, both at home and at school. The data collection process was carried out through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were made to directly observe the interaction of parents

with children in various activities, both academic and non-academic. In-depth interviews were conducted with parents, teachers, and principals to explore perceptions, motivations, and obstacles faced in supporting children's development. Documentation includes the collection of written and visual data such as records of Child Development, recordings of communication between teachers and parents, as well as photos or videos of activities involving both.

The main instrument of the study is the researcher himself, who plays the role of observer, interviewer and data analyzer. To assist the data collection process, a semi-structured interview guide was used, which contains open-ended questions about the form of parental involvement, the frequency of involvement, the quality of interaction, and its influence on child development in various aspects. The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The stages of analysis include data reduction, in which the researcher sorts and summarizes relevant information; the presentation of data in the form of a systematic narrative to facilitate the withdrawal of meaning; and the drawing of conclusions accompanied by verification through comparing data between sources. Source triangulation is done by comparing information provided by parents, teachers, and official documents, while method triangulation is done by combining data from observations, interviews, and documentation.

To ensure the validity of the findings, researchers conducted member checking by asking for confirmation from the participants regarding the interpretation of the results of interviews and observations. In addition, the ethical aspect of research is maintained by seeking the written consent of all participants before the study begins, maintaining the confidentiality of their identities, and ensuring that all data is used only for academic purposes. The entire data collection process was carried out with full respect for the privacy of the family and the convenience of the child as the subject of the study.

### **III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Forms of parental involvement in Early Childhood Education**

The results of observations and interviews indicate that parental involvement in this case study can be grouped into two main categories: direct and indirect involvement. This categorization is based on Epstein's framework of parental involvement, which distinguishes between direct engagement in children's learning activities and indirect support through the provision of resources and conducive environments (Epstein, 2011). Direct involvement in this study is reflected in parents' participation in home learning assistance, bedtime storybook reading, teaching basic skills such as writing, counting, and letter recognition, as well as their presence in school activities such as parent-teacher meetings or annual events. Meanwhile, indirect involvement is manifested in the provision of learning facilities such as books, stationery, digital educational media, and the establishment of consistent home learning schedules.

Beyond academic aspects, parental involvement also extends to the cultivation of children's character. Parents instill values such as discipline, responsibility, good manners, and respect for others not only through verbal instructions but also through modeling behavior in daily interactions. This aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that children internalize behaviors and values through social interaction and observation. For instance, when parents consistently demonstrate punctuality and responsibility, children learn to adopt these values as part of their own conduct. Furthermore, some parents employed interactive strategies that encouraged children to question, reason, and relate concepts to everyday experiences. This process conceptually supports the development of critical and creative thinking by situating learning within meaningful contexts, thereby encouraging children to evaluate information, make simple decisions, and generate new ideas. In this way, parental strategies not only enhanced academic skills but also shaped cognitive dispositions that are essential for lifelong learning.

Interestingly, the results showed that some parents combine learning activities with daily activities. This integration is not done formally as in the classroom, but rather through natural interactions that occur in the home or neighborhood (Adela & Permana, 2020). For example, when shopping at the market, parents invite children to count the number of items purchased, recognize the color of fruits and vegetables, or distinguish the shape and size of objects. These simple activities not only expand the child's learning experience beyond the formal environment, but also make the learning process more relevant and enjoyable. This strategy provides natural and contextual cognitive stimulation. Children not only passively receive information, but also associate new knowledge with real situations that they experience every day. This is in line with the views of Jean Piaget who emphasized that children learn most effectively through direct experiences that are closely related to their lives. Thus, the process of internalizing concepts takes place more quickly and deeply because the child is actively involved in the learning process. In addition to the cognitive aspect, parental involvement also has a strong emotional role. Support in the form of praise, motivation, and positive

reinforcement is proven to increase children's self-confidence. Every time a child successfully performs a task, a positive response from the parents provides a feeling of appreciation that becomes an important foundation for the formation of a healthy self-concept.

Findings from the case study suggest that the emotional dimension of parental involvement plays a critical role in shaping children's learning behaviors. Rather than merely being "valued and cared for," children who experience consistent emotional support develop stronger intrinsic motivation and persistence in learning tasks. This aligns with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which posits that feelings of relatedness and security foster autonomy and competence, thereby enhancing engagement in learning activities. In this context, parental warmth and responsiveness function as psychological scaffolding that enables children to take risks, explore new tasks, and sustain curiosity despite encountering challenges.

The integration of emotional and academic involvement should therefore be viewed as a complementary process. Emotional support provides the affective foundation upon which cognitive development can take place, while academic guidance translates this foundation into concrete skills and knowledge. Conceptually, this resonates with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, where cognitive growth occurs through social interaction mediated by trusted adults. When parents combine emotional nurturing with structured learning strategies—such as questioning techniques or problem-solving activities—children are more likely to internalize critical and creative thinking processes.

In this way, parental strategies do not merely "encourage" a mindset but actively operationalize the development of higher-order thinking skills. For example, by modeling evaluative reasoning in everyday contexts (e.g., comparing product quality when shopping or justifying household decisions), parents provide children with early exposure to analytical frameworks. Such practices gradually build children's ability to evaluate evidence, generate alternatives, and apply reasoning in novel situations. Consequently, parental involvement that integrates emotional support with deliberate cognitive scaffolding produces a holistic learning environment that fosters both character formation and the development of essential 21st-century skills.

However, the form of involvement was not always uniform among the entire family that was the subject of the study. There are variations that are influenced by educational background, economic level, and parents' awareness of the importance of early childhood education. For example, parents with higher education tend to have more structured learning strategies, while parents with lower education rely more on practical experience and daily activities. From these findings, it can be concluded that the form of parental involvement is multidimensional, involving academic, emotional, and moral aspects. The variety shows that each family has a unique way of contributing to a child's education, but the core of that engagement lies in the consistency and quality of the interactions provided.

### **The impact of parental involvement on children's cognitive development**

The results showed that parental involvement has a significant influence on early childhood cognitive development. Children who received intensive assistance from parents tended to have more extensive language skills, were able to understand basic mathematical concepts, and showed the ability to think logically faster than children whose parental involvement was low. For example, children who are accustomed to daily dialogue with their parents show faster vocabulary development and are able to construct more complex and structured sentences. This finding can be explained through Vygotsky's scaffolding theory, where parents act as facilitators who provide temporary guidance until the child is able to be independent. This guidance process can take the form of open-ended questions that stimulate critical thinking, brief explanations to expand understanding, or directions to solve a specific problem. In this way, children not only receive information passively, but also learn how to think and solve problems independently, so that their cognitive skills develop more optimally. In addition, the study emphasizes the importance of the quality of interaction between parents and children. The results show that the duration of time is not always the main determining factor. Children who receive assistance for 20-30 minutes per day, but with full focus, optimal attention, and the right method, still show good cognitive development. Conversely, long study periods without full attention tend to be less effective in building children's thinking skills. This confirms that quality involvement is more valuable than just the quantity of time spent with the child.

The strategies that parents apply in learning activities also play an important role. The use of interactive approaches, such as asking thought-provoking questions, giving concrete examples, and relating concepts to everyday experiences, has been shown to strengthen children's cognitive abilities. For example, when parents teach mathematical concepts through everyday activities such as cooking or shopping, children can more easily and enjoyably grasp ideas of number, size, and comparison.

Beyond the academic aspect, parental involvement contributes to the formation of critical and creative mindsets through specific cognitive processes. When children are encouraged to ask questions and justify their answers, they engage in higher-order thinking that develops their ability to analyze and evaluate information. Similarly, when parents present problems with multiple possible solutions—such as negotiating rules at home or making decisions about daily routines—children practice divergent thinking, which supports creativity. In this way, parental strategies do not merely transfer knowledge but also create opportunities for children to construct, question, and reinterpret information.

This interaction pattern fosters metacognitive awareness, self-confidence, and independence in learning, which are essential foundations for further academic development. Thus, parental involvement in early childhood education should be understood not only as the provision of time or resources but as the facilitation of meaningful cognitive engagement. Emphasis on the quality of interaction, attention, and methodologically sound strategies produces a more significant long-term impact than simply increasing the duration of parental presence. These findings provide strong evidence that the role of parents is vital in shaping children's cognitive and intellectual foundations from an early age. The use of varied learning media was also found to play an important role. Parents who mix storybooks, educational games, and controlled digital media tend to be able to maintain a child's interest and encourage curiosity. In this case study, some parents even took advantage of daily activities such as cooking or gardening as an opportunity to teach simple science concepts. Cognitive development resulting from parental involvement also has an impact on children's achievement in school. Teachers report that children who have support at home understand the subject matter more easily, actively ask questions, and complete tasks faster. This indicates a continuity between learning at home and at school that reinforces the child's academic achievement.

Thus, parental involvement not only increases children's knowledge, but also forms a critical and creative mindset that is an important provision for the next level of Education. These findings reinforce the view that early childhood education requires close synergy between home and school.

### **Influence of parental involvement on the socio-emotional development of the child**

In addition to the cognitive aspect, parental involvement also plays a major role in the socio-emotional development of children (Maulana & Eliasa, 2024). Children who get emotional support from parents show better ability to recognize and manage their emotions (Kurniati, 2024). They tend to be more confident, have a high sense of empathy, and are able to interact with peers positively. In this study, it is seen that regular communication between parents and children is a key factor. Children who are used to telling their daily experiences, both pleasant and disappointing, tend to be more open in expressing feelings. This openness helps children develop social skills such as listening, respecting the opinions of others, and cooperating. These findings are in line with Bowlby's attachment theory, which emphasizes the importance of secure emotional attachment in shaping a child's social character. Children who feel safe with their parents are more willing to take the initiative in relationships and more easily develop healthy relationships with others. Parental involvement also helps children overcome social conflicts with more adults. Children who are taught how to solve problems through dialogue and compromise tend to be able to avoid aggressive behavior. In this study, some parents consciously taught children to say sorry, express wishes politely, and respect differences of opinion. In addition to the influence on cognitive aspects, emotional support from parents has been shown to have an important role in building a child's psychological endurance. Children who feel emotionally supported by the family tend to be able to deal with failure or difficulty more calmly and quickly get up to try again. For example, when children face difficulties in completing tasks or have conflicts with peers, children who get parental support show a better ability to regulate their emotions and find constructive solutions.

This phenomenon shows that parental involvement not only provides academic stimulation, but also shapes children's ability to deal with pressure and challenges. Resilience that is built from an early age becomes an important capital for children to face life in the future, both in the context of education and social life (Mbato, C. L., & Sungging, 2022). Psychologically resilient children tend to be more confident, brave to take the initiative, and able to adjust in a variety of situations. In addition, emotional support also contributes to the development of the child's emotional intelligence. Children who regularly receive encouragement, praise, and attention from parents tend to be better able to recognize, manage, and express their emotions appropriately. They learn to respond sensibly to their own and others' feelings, which has positive implications for their social relationships.

The involvement of parents in the emotional aspect also has an impact on the formation of a positive social character. Children who receive emotional attention and direction from parents are more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviors, such as sharing, cooperation, and respect for others. This behavior is the basis for the formation of moral values that will be useful throughout the child's life, both in

everyday interactions and in building a healthy social network. These findings reinforce the view that parental involvement should be viewed holistically, encompassing both academic and emotional aspects simultaneously. Parents who are able to provide a balance between cognitive stimulation and emotional support create a safe, positive, and enjoyable learning environment for the child. Thus, it is clear that parental involvement not only shapes academic intelligence, but also builds strong emotional intelligence and social character. Children who are emotionally guided early on have a better foundation for dealing with life's challenges, forming healthy social relationships, and growing into Balanced, Independent, and adaptive individuals.

### **Obstacles faced by parents in engaging in children's Education**

Although parental involvement is very important, the study found that there are a number of barriers that hinder their optimal participation. The main obstacle is time constraints due to job demands. Parents who work full - time often do not have enough opportunities to directly accompany children in learning and playing activities. In addition to time constraints, the lack of pedagogical knowledge is also a challenge. Some parents claim that they do not know how to teach material that is appropriate for the child's age development. This makes them tend to leave the learning process entirely to the school. In the long run, this lack of involvement can hinder the child's development.

Another obstacle that arises is the lack of effective communication between schools and parents. Some parents feel that they are not getting enough information about the child's development or the learning methods that teachers use. As a result, they find it difficult to adjust the support provided at home. Economic factors also affect the level of engagement. Parents with financial limitations are sometimes unable to provide adequate learning facilities, such as books or educational media. However, this does not mean that they do not care, but rather that they rely more on learning methods that do not require additional costs, such as storytelling or role-playing. Psychological barriers such as a sense of inferiority or lack of confidence are also found. Some parents feel their abilities are not good enough to educate children, especially when compared to the academic standards of teachers at school. This feeling can reduce the initiative to be actively involved.

These constraints suggest that to increase parental involvement, systematic support from schools and government is needed, including the provision of parenting training and more intensive communication between teachers and families.

### **Optimization strategies for parental involvement to support Early Childhood Development**

Based on research findings, optimizing parental involvement requires an integrated approach between schools, families, and communities. One effective strategy is to take advantage of everyday moments as a means of learning. Simple activities such as preparing meals together, cleaning the house, or gardening can be a medium for teaching math concepts, science, and social skills. Schools can facilitate this engagement by providing parenting programs that focus on home learning techniques. The Program can be a short training, a guidance module, or a consultation session with a teacher. Through this way, parents gain practical knowledge on how to provide support according to the child's developmental stage. The use of technology can also be a solution to overcome time constraints. Online communication groups, learning apps, and digital progress reports allow parents to keep track of their child's progress even if they are not always physically present at school.

The close collaboration between teachers and parents is a decisive factor in the success of this engagement strategy. Teachers can provide specific advice based on their observations in the classroom, including aspects of a child's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Meanwhile, parents provide feedback on the child's behavior, interests, and challenges at home. This continuous exchange of information ensures continuity between learning at school and the experience at home, so that children receive consistent and integrated stimulation.

In addition, it is important to consider cultural and social factors in designing engagement strategies. In communities with strong family values, involving extended family members such as grandparents, uncles, or aunts can be an effective way to expand support for the child. The involvement of the extended family not only adds resources and attention, but also strengthens social bonds and values that are transmitted to the child from an early age. Planned and contextual engagement strategies enable parents to provide more effective support, even if they face limited time or resources. For example, learning activities inserted into the daily routine, such as cooking, gardening or shopping, can be a means of meaningful learning while strengthening the emotional connection between parents and children. Teacher-parent collaboration also includes coordination in the preparation of learning methods that suit the needs of children. Teachers can identify difficulties or potentials that arise in the classroom, while parents can adjust the approach at home to support optimal development. This

approach enables more targeted interventions, increases learning effectiveness and builds the child's skills holistically.

Furthermore, attention to cultural and social aspects also helps engagement strategies become more relevant and accepted by families. A sensitive approach to local values, customs, and traditions will make it easier for parents to actively engage without feeling overwhelmed or alienated. This is important to ensure the long-term sustainability of parental participation. With the implementation of these strategies, parental involvement can be effectively increased, thus providing a sustainable positive impact on Child Development. These impacts include cognitive, social, emotional, and moral aspects, all of which are interrelated and form a strong foundation for the child to face the challenges of life in the future. Optimal parental involvement not only helps children learn, but also forms the character, empathy, and adaptability that are important capital for their success in various areas of life.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that parental involvement has a very significant role in supporting early childhood development, both in cognitive, social-emotional, and character formation aspects. The forms of involvement found are multidimensional, including learning assistance, providing emotional support, instilling moral values, and providing a conducive environment for learning. The results of the study showed that the quality of interaction between parents and children, more than the quantity of time, is the key to successful stimulation of Child Development. On the cognitive aspect, parental involvement is proven to accelerate language acquisition, understanding of basic mathematical concepts, and critical thinking skills. Meanwhile, in the social-emotional sphere, parental support helps children develop self-confidence, communication skills, empathy, and resilience to face challenges. These findings are in line with child development theories that place the family as the primary educational agent in early life.

However, parental involvement is not free from challenges. Obstacles such as time constraints, lack of pedagogical knowledge, economic constraints, and lack of effective communication with schools are factors that can reduce the optimization of their role. Therefore, there is a need for systematic strategies to increase parental participation, including parenting training, the use of educational technology, and strengthening collaboration between schools and families. Recommendations from this study include the need for schools to develop structured partnership programs, facilitate intensive two-way communication, and provide practical guidance that can be applied at home. Governments and Related Agencies are also advised to provide policy support and resources to minimize barriers to parental involvement. Overall, consistent, warm, and purposeful parental involvement can be a strong foundation for optimal early childhood development. With the synergy between family, school and social environment, the child has a greater chance of growing into an intelligent, characterful and adaptive individual facing the future.

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