



A Study of the Impact of Parental Support on the Student's Academic Achievement in Selected Primary Schools in Indonesia

Siti Salmah*

Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidempuan

e-mail: siti041185@gmail.com*

Angela Syafriani

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)

angela.s@live.iium.edu.my

Linda Sari Bulan Siregar

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)

linda.sari@live.iium.edu.my

Abstract

This study aimed to examine how parents support their children's learning process. This phenomenological qualitative study was conducted among six parents of selected primary schools. These parents were divided into three categories; non-working mothers, working mothers, and working fathers. Individual interviews were carried out to collect the data for the study. Results revealed that the parents agreed to and lauded the importance of parental support. However, the results indicated that the parent's knowledge of parental support differed and their experiences also varied. They faced similar challenges in supporting their children's learning but developed different strategies to overcome them based on their different social backgrounds, genders, and occupations.

Keywords: *Parental support; Social backgrounds; Student's academic achievement*

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana para orang tua mendukung proses pembelajaran anak-anak mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan disain fenomenologi. Sebagai informan dalam penelitian ini enam orang tua telah dipilih. Para informan telah dibagi kepada tiga kategori yaitu ibu yang tidak bekerja, ibu yang bekerja dan ayah yang bekerja. Interview secara individu telah dilakukan sebagai metode yang dipilih untuk mengumpulkan data dalam penelitian ini. Hasil penemuan menyatakan bahwa semua orang tua setuju akan pentingnya dukungan orang tua dalam process belajar anak mereka. Namun hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa para orang tua

memiliki pengetahuan dan pengalaman yang berbeda tentang *parental support*. Para orangtua juga mengungkapkan bahwa mereka menghadapi tantangan yang berbeda dalam mendukung pembelajaran anak mereka, namun para para orang tua menggunakan cara yang berbeda dalam menyelesaikan masalah dan tantangan yang mereka hadapi. Hal ini disebabkan perbedaan latar belakang social, gender dan pekerjaan para orang tua.

Kata Kunci : *Dukungan orang tua; Latar belakang social; Prestasi belajar siswa*

INTRODUCTION

Importance of parental support is one of the ministries of education, as an attempt of the Ministry of Education in developing a national education blueprint to raise the international standard of education as well as better prepare children for the need of the 21st century.¹ The objective of enhancing parental support in children's learning is to help parents in supporting children's learning, such as preparing a good learning situation at home, having good social interaction and communication with the children, giving support to the children's success as well on preparing the strategies to solve the children's problem.²

Because of the role of the family as the first social institution responsible for children's education as a whole whether inside or outside the school, parents and family should be active, supportive, and involved in the children's learning process.³ In the 1980s, parental involvement in schools has become an important educational issue. It states that students perform much better in school when they have good support from parents and family.⁴

The role of parents in managing their children's learning experiences whether at home or school has long been considered critical for children's academic success.⁵ The importance of parental support in schools is well documented over

¹ Kristina Göransson, Yoonhee Kang, and Yeonjin Kim, "Navigating Conflicting Desires: Parenting Practices and the Meaning of Educational Work in Urban East Asia," *Ethnography and Education* 17, no. 2 (2022): 160–78.

² Sara Kramers et al., "Parental Strategies for Supporting Children's Psychosocial Development within and beyond Elite Sport," *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 2022, 1–23.

³ Suheri Sahputra Rangkuti et al., "Hatobangon: Character Building and Revitalization of Cultural Values in Panyabungan," *HIKMATUNA: Journal for Integrative Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2022): 119–33.

⁴ Jill Koyama and Fortidas Rwehumbiza Bakuza, "A Timely Opportunity for Change: Increasing Refugee Parental Involvement in US Schools," *Journal of Educational Change* 18, no. 3 (2017): 311–35.

⁵ Ahmed Eldegwy, Tamer H. Elsharnouby, and Wael Kortam, "Like Father like Son: The Role of Similar-Education Parents in Their Children's University Choice," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 2022, 1–20.

the years. The research showed that one of the most effective approaches to enhance student achievement is for parents to be actively involved in the education of their children. Furthermore, parental support plays an important role in children's education, by involving them in a broad range of activities at home as well as at school.⁶ Menon (2013), also came upon the same indications that parental support plays a significant role in the child's development. Thus, the teachers would not stand alone in carrying the responsibilities of enhancing the student's learning process. They may invite the parents to share their roles in providing better education for the students.⁷

However, the current researches show that most parents are working people, who are busy with their business. As a result, most parents pay less attention to their children's development including their children's learning process. On the other hand, parents do not have enough time to be involved in their children's learning process and the responsibility for children's learning was given to the school teachers. At the same time, the education system in present days is depending more on the teachers as a prominent group in children's education. The level of children's interest in education, performance, and achievement is simultaneously determined by the strategies and effectiveness of teachers in the teaching methodologies they are practicing. Also, schools still have a little concentration on parents as co-partners which can assist children in their education process. Indeed, the level of parental support in children's learning still needs to improve, and might be there some barriers faced by parents in supporting their children's learning.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research methodology and is employed as a phenomenological study. This method is recommended for the investigation of a phenomenon. To gain an appreciation of the phenomenon, in-depth interviews were

⁶ Karolina Eszter Kovács et al., "Is Resilience a Trait or a Result of Parental Involvement? The Results of a Systematic Literature Review," *Education Sciences* 12, no. 6 (2022): 372.

⁷ Asha Menon, "Barriers to Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Classrooms in Mumbai Slums as Perceived by Parents," *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal (LICEJ)* 2, no. 2 (2013): 1314–18.

conducted with individuals who have experienced it. The use of phenomenological study in this research would provide in-depth information for the researcher to examine what are some barriers that parents face in supporting their children's learning. The use of phenomenological study in this research would provide in-depth information for the researcher to examine what are some barriers that parents face in supporting their children's learning.

The participant of this study will be the parents who have children as students in primary schools. This research attempts to use purposeful sampling in selecting the participants for the interview session. Working and nonworking parents will be the criteria of participant selection for the purposive sampling in this study. In addition, the number of participants is very limited which are six parents. As stated the number of participants in a phenomenological study is about five to twenty-five (5-25). Careful attention was paid to the process of getting entry, selecting participants, developing and maintaining rapport as well as maintaining ethical protocols.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings obtained from the one interview conducted. There were several interview questions posed to help answer the central research question. This section will focus on the themes that emerged from the interview question. The themes identified in this study will be shown in the table below:

Table 1. Themes

Theme	Important point
The Parent's Perception of the Parental Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents have to know their children better - Parents as roles model - Parents have to guide their children in learning - Importance of parental support at a young age. - Parent's explanation helps to improve understanding.
Parent's Strategies for Supporting Their Children's Learning Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing good learning situations - Having good social interaction - Giving motivation - Preparation before the Class - Monitoring

The Barriers to Parental Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discipline - Gadget influences - Motivation - Monitoring - Teachers' method VS parent's method - Difference in Islamic studies - Difficult language used in the school materials - Deficiency of time - Hiring personal tutors is costly - Disobey the instruction
----------------------------------	---

Parents as Roles Model

The participants believe that parental support in children learning is a must. They believe that as parents they have to know and understand their children's development and achievement better than teachers because teachers have to handle so many students in school. Also, the participants thought that parental support is an important matter in supporting children learning because parents are roles model for their children. So, parents have to show good examples, especially in supporting their children learning at home.

Importance of Parental Support in the Young Age

From the interviews was understood that the participants perceive that parental support is an important aspect of the learning process of the children, especially he/she highlights that it is essential at the beginning of the study. Because during that period it may be hard to get used to the new structure and new environment, moreover they had to get results and learn from there, that's why parents' role is crucial to help children in improving certain skills, so it will be easier and beneficial to them in their future studies.⁸

The parents believe that he/she always have to guide their children in the learning process. As the participants mentioned, a young child has more effort he needs, meaning to say at the first stages of the study children need more help even in very simple things, for example in explanation of some words or tasks that they have to do, in this case, parents should be ready to help and explain them

⁸ Donald Azuatalam et al., "Reinforcement Learning for Whole-Building HVAC Control and Demand Response," *Energy and AI/2* (2020): 100020.

everything. Sometimes children cannot ask the teacher because of their shyness and parents should take into consideration all these situations.

Having Good Communication and Giving Motivation

The next point of what the parents should do in supporting their children's learning, another participant came with the point of view that having good communication and giving children motivation in learning is important in supporting children learning.⁹ She thought that as a parent she has to keep good communication with her children and even share stories with them. Also, she believes that parents have to motivate their children to study by using different strategies such as praising them and rewarding them. It is clear to say that keeping good communication and giving motivation was used with full effort in supporting children's learning success.

Some of the small children tend to be unconfident among their classmates. In that case, parents should know and try to help their children. In this situation, one of the participants can be a good example. She says that she tries to read and prepare her children before they start learning certain materials in the class, so it will make her children understand the lesson faster and easier, which is a very helpful activity in supporting children's learning processes.

The parents believe that monitoring children's homework considers one of the essential parts of supporting their learning process. As a mother of participants mentioned, yearly stages are especially crucial.¹⁰ Proper attention of parents towards the studies will prevent bad school performance in the future and leads to excellence in the upcoming achievements.¹¹ Even if she feels difficulties, she tries to monitor them for at least one hour daily, to check their progress and guide them.¹²

⁹ John Mark Froiland, "Parents' Weekly Descriptions of Autonomy Supportive Communication: Promoting Children's Motivation to Learn and Positive Emotions," *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 24 (2015): 117–26.

¹⁰ Jennifer A. Fredricks, Kristen Hackett, and Allyson Bregman, "Participation in Boys and Girls Clubs: Motivation and Stage Environment Fit," *Journal of Community Psychology* 38, no. 3 (2010): 369–85.

¹¹ Dennis M. McNerney and Gregory Arief D. Liem, *Helping Kids Achieve Their Best: Motivation—Theories and Practices* (Routledge, 2022).

¹² Jane M. Healy, *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds—for Better and Worse* (Simon and Schuster, 1999).

The Barriers to Parental Support

Disciplining children at home was the main problem that participants faced in supporting their children's learning process. A mother among the participants believes that teachers have to practice punishment in schools to discipline the students since it will affect parents in disciplining their children at home as well. In addition, a participant feels that disciplining her children at home is a challenge because sometimes her children tend to disturb each other or they are more interested to play around compared to studying. Even though they have room and schedule for their study that their parents have prepared, it is quite a challenge for me to discipline them to follow it.

Besides that, the participant perceives that parents must be straight in practicing regulations such as punishment to discipline their children. But it needs creativity and knowledge in choosing a suitable punishment from which the children will get something good from that punishment.

A participant came with a view of gadgets influences, one of the mothers among the participants feels that among the barriers to supporting her children learning is the gadget. Today, most children like to spend their leisure time with the gadget, they're busy with video games or social chat. As a result, as parents we have less social interaction with them social interaction is one way of supporting children's learning, especially at home.

It is clear to say that parents must be creative in creating interesting situations and activities that family members can do together to spend time together. So children will be more interested to do activities together compare to spending their time with the gadget as well as parents and children still have good social interaction, which is a good way in supporting children learning at home.

Motivation becomes one of the barriers that most parents faced in supporting their children's learning.¹³ In this term another participant came with the same views, she believes that we cannot deny that rewarding and praising children is one method

¹³ Yoon-Joo Lee and Hye Jun Park, "Becoming a Parent of a Child with Special Needs: Perspectives from Korean Mothers Living in the United States," *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 63, no. 6 (2016): 593–607.

of motivating children. However, sometimes it gives a bad effect on the children as well as become a barrier for the parents in supporting their children's learning, especially at home.¹⁴

It shows that parents have to find other good methods and strategies to motivate their children to learn rather than just rewarding them and praising them such as telling stories about someone who has succeeded in their life.

The participants believe that monitoring children's learning whether in school or at home is need collaboration and keep good communication between home and school. As an example, is giving homework, the respondent said that when the teacher gives some homework, it will be easier for her to monitor her children's learning at home such as to know the process of learning as well as their understanding of their lesson time by time. In addition, according to the responses from a participant, by keeping good communication and interaction between school and home, parents will be able to monitor the condition of their children during school time. It is clear to mention that the concept of "school partnership" is really useful in helping parents to monitor their children's learning process.

Teacher's Method vs Parent's Method.

In this case, the parent faces a problem with the difference between the teacher's method and her method of explanation. A mother complains that sometimes her children don't accept her method of teaching. She says that she wants to show and teach the easier way of solving some tasks or problems because the teacher's method often seems very long and complicated, but unfortunately, it becomes a problem of misunderstandings between the child and mother. She says that it is very difficult to explain to her kids that the method she explained is also correct and useful but her kids refuse to use them and believe more and use what the teacher teaches them. And this seems as the hardest problem in her way to support her child's learning process.

The next Participant came with the view that materials that have been used by the school, are sometimes very difficult to understand, sometimes she feels that

¹⁴ Garry Hornby and Rayleen Lafaele, "Barriers to Parental Involvement in Education: An Explanatory Model," *Educational Review* 63, no. 1 (2011): 37–52.

the level of the written books is high and seems not easy, which is quite tuff for children to read and understand immediately, so they need help in explanation.

Since the family adheres to certain religious schools, it is very important for them that child will also learn the same things. In this case, they have dissimilarity, because the school teaches the concepts of the other religious school, which is also not good and inconvenient for parents to explain and differentiate between them, later on, it may cause more serious problems regarding the understanding and perceiving of certain things by the child. The parent perceives this issue as a barrier to supporting her children's learning process.¹⁵

The time constraint is another kind of barrier that face our participants. She is a working and studying mother who has four children, and it seems very difficult for to her manage her time to pay more attention to her children, which is very essential especially if they are small.

Also, she states that it is very difficult when it comes to doing homework because she doesn't have the opportunity to monitor them for more than one hour per day, besides of that checking homework falls at night time when the child is already tired and wants to sleep. For the working parent that an hour is only enough to check, whether homework is done or not. There is nothing to say about repeating or learning something useful.

Hiring a Personal Tutor is Costly and not Affordable

Every parent wants his child to become the best; different parents use different methods to achieve their desires. Some of them believe that personal tutoring is one of the ways to get their children to higher levels but some of them cannot afford it. The participant that was interviewed says that some of the parents hire personal tutors for their children to support their learning process but it is very costly and not all able to do it, she also sees it as a barrier that prevents her from providing one of the conditions in supporting her children's learning process.

¹⁵ Kitty Yuen-han MO and Simon Tak-Mau CHAN, "Involvement of Parents of Children with ADHD in Schools: Implications for Social Work Practice," *Journal of Social Work* 22, no. 4 (2022): 915–30.

Undoubtedly that educating children in this globalization era is very complicated. They are not living as we live not before. For example, they tend to play with more gadgets, watch television and even disobey the instruction.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

To sum up, from the responses of the participants who have children studying in different primary schools, we can see the parents' perceptions towards parental support and the way of influencing methods and strategies that parents practice in supporting their children's learning. In addition, the barriers that parents faced might be different from others as well as the way they solve these barriers can be in different ways as well.

REFERENCES

- Azuatalam, Donald, Wee-Lih Lee, Frits de Nijs, and Ariel Liebman. "Reinforcement Learning for Whole-Building HVAC Control and Demand Response." *Energy and AI* 2 (2020): 100020.
- Eldegwy, Ahmed, Tamer H. Elsharnouby, and Wael Kortam. "Like Father like Son: The Role of Similar-Education Parents in Their Children's University Choice." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 2022, 1–20.
- Fredricks, Jennifer A., Kristen Hackett, and Allyson Bregman. "Participation in Boys and Girls Clubs: Motivation and Stage Environment Fit." *Journal of Community Psychology* 38, no. 3 (2010): 369–85.
- Froiland, John Mark. "Parents' Weekly Descriptions of Autonomy Supportive Communication: Promoting Children's Motivation to Learn and Positive Emotions." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 24 (2015): 117–26.
- Göransson, Kristina, Yoonhee Kang, and Yeonjin Kim. "Navigating Conflicting Desires: Parenting Practices and the Meaning of Educational Work in Urban East Asia." *Ethnography and Education* 17, no. 2 (2022): 160–78.
- Harmon, Justin, and Lauren Duffy. "Alienation from Leisure: Smartphones and the Loss of Presence." *Leisure/Loisir* 46, no. 1 (2022): 1–21.

¹⁶ Justin Harmon and Lauren Duffy, "Alienation from Leisure: Smartphones and the Loss of Presence," *Leisure/Loisir* 46, no. 1 (2022): 1–21.

- Healy, Jane M. *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds—for Better and Worse*. Simon and Schuster, 1999.
- Hornby, Garry, and Rayleen Lafaele. "Barriers to Parental Involvement in Education: An Explanatory Model." *Educational Review* 63, no. 1 (2011): 37–52.
- Kovács, Karolina Eszter, Beáta Dan, Anett Hrabéczy, Katinka Bacskai, and Gabriella Pusztai. "Is Resilience a Trait or a Result of Parental Involvement? The Results of a Systematic Literature Review." *Education Sciences* 12, no. 6 (2022): 372.
- Koyama, Jill, and Fortidas Rwehumbiza Bakuza. "A Timely Opportunity for Change: Increasing Refugee Parental Involvement in US Schools." *Journal of Educational Change* 18, no. 3 (2017): 311–35.
- Kramers, Sara, Sam N. Thrower, Karl Steptoe, and Chris G. Harwood. "Parental Strategies for Supporting Children's Psychosocial Development within and beyond Elite Sport." *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 2022, 1–23.
- Lee, Yoon-Joo, and Hye Jun Park. "Becoming a Parent of a Child with Special Needs: Perspectives from Korean Mothers Living in the United States." *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 63, no. 6 (2016): 593–607.
- McInerney, Dennis M., and Gregory Arief D. Liem. *Helping Kids Achieve Their Best: Motivation—Theories and Practices*. Routledge, 2022.
- Menon, Asha. "Barriers to Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education Classrooms in Mumbai Slums as Perceived by Parents." *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal (LICEJ)* 2, no. 2 (2013): 1314–18.
- Rangkuti, Suheri Sahputra, Muslimin Hutapea, Nurintan Muliani Harahap, and Eko Sumadi Eko. "Hatobangon: Character Building and Revitalization of Cultural Values in Panyabungan." *HIKMATUNA: Journal for Integrative Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2022): 119–33.
- Yuen-han MO, Kitty, and Simon Tak-Mau CHAN. "Involvement of Parents of Children with ADHD in Schools: Implications for Social Work Practice." *Journal of Social Work* 22, no. 4 (2022): 915–30.

