Partnership Strategy for Early Childhood Education Units In Increasing Parent Participation

Ujang Rahmat1*, Ahmad Hufad1, Jajat Sudraja Ardiwinata1, Babang Robandi1

1 Faculty of Science Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung City, Indonesia

Received: October 15, 2023
Revised: November 27, 2023
Accepted: December 25, 2023
Published: December 31, 2023

Corresponding Author:
Ujang Rahmat
urahmat@upi.edu

DOI: 10.29303/jppipa.v9i12.6864

Abstract: Parents are one of the important components that play a role in children’s learning process in PAUD units. Examining PAUD unit partnership strategies to improve parental involvement is the aim of this research. The strategy used was descriptive qualitative research. The data used in this research was collected through observation, document collection, and interviews. After that, the information was reviewed using an interactive model validated by triangulation. The analysis, conclusions, and debates conducted on the results show that the partnership activities between Kober SPNF SKB Garut Regency and parents are based on standards that have been formalized in their implementation. Assistance and cooperation between families (parents) and PAUD units are the underlying principles of this relationship. The idea of 5C which stands for communication, connection, community, consultation, and cooperation is a reference in the partnership plan that has been implemented.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education Unit; Parent Participation; Partnership

Introduction

Education is a conscious and planned effort that is carried out as an effort to form a whole human being (Bai & Chen, 2008). There are many components involved in the process of organizing education (Chamblee, 2021). These components include educators, infrastructure, community support, and parental involvement. Parental involvement in education can be in the form of activities carried out by parents, both at home and at school, so that it will provide benefits for students, parents, and schools (Fadhilah et al., 2019). A factor that affects the success of student learning in teaching and learning activities is the lack of parental approach and involvement which makes students less effective in getting learning (Aini et al., 2016). Parental obligations start from the child not being able to think until they can be responsible for their own actions (Venables, 2019). For this reason, the influence of parental involvement is very important in the process of child development while learning (Mansur, 2005).

Parents actively participate in their children’s learning at a strategic level (Normina, 2016). The foundation for children's future learning is laid at home, especially before they start school. Children improve various communication skills, generate opinions, and acquire behaviors in the home education process (Dail, 1996). The position where literacy begins and grows is at home. There are tires. It can be difficult to analyze the gap in expectations between parents and schools (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Given their responsibilities in the larger scheme of children's learning and growth, parents and schools have different perspectives. PAUD units may be primarily responsible for children's learning and estimate parents' cooperation with school regulations. Meanwhile, parents may think that although the school helps facilitate this, they are ultimately responsible for their child’s education and development. This comparison of viewpoints may lead to a comparison of
expectations and descriptions of learning advocacy. It is unfortunate that families and PAUD units do not often have open conversations about this knowledge. However, this misunderstanding can cause challenging barriers between parents and instructors.

Communication is one of the identities or aspects of parent participation (Epstein, 1995). Invitations from teachers, initial meetings with parents, conferences, and changing communication strategies to accommodate the demands of different parents are examples of this communication. Initial meetings and teacher invitations are 2 meaningful components of communication because they have a major impact on how positions will change as bonds develop. Building individual bonds that will influence future contacts often begins with an initial visit with parents. This means mastering cultural comparisons in discourse, setting, and eye contact. For research, a key element in increasing parental participation is the teacher's invitation to parents.

Parental choices influence children's development and growth and can have both favorable and unfavorable consequences (Respler-Herman et al., 2012). According to Mowder (2012), parents' learning applications often reflect their ideas, which in turn are strongly influenced by their descriptions of how children grow (Respler-Herman et al., 2012). For Bornstein, Cote, Haynes, Hahn, and Park (2010), parental knowledge is an understanding of the appropriate attitudes to meet children's biological, physical, security, social-emotional, and cognitive needs as they grow and age. It has been shown that greater levels of description help families achieve more successful outcomes. For example, parents who are more knowledgeable about child development report greater levels of parental competence and happiness (Bornstein et al., 2008).

According to Respler-Herman, Mowder, Yasik and Shamah (2012), there is strong evidence that having a strong social network to support families is also associated with more effective parenting. However, early childhood education programs have actively sought to make teachers an important component of this support system by fostering good relationships between families and teachers (Respler-Herman et al., 2012). This social network often consists of family members, friends and neighbors. Many of the high criteria of early childhood education programs encourage close collaboration and collaboration between instructors and families, or even mandate it. Collaboration between ECE units and families, as part of these efforts, is essential to ensure that children in these pre-school learning environments grow to their full potential (Baumgartner & McBride, 2009).

Method

We can explore these topics in depth and detail in their social environment thanks to the descriptive qualitative research approach applied in this study. Qualitative research techniques allow for the exploration of multiple meanings that exist within the values, culture and social situation in question, as stated by Mack et al (2005). With this method, we can discover nuances that may not be apparent in research using a quantitative approach and gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies of the research topic (Bergin, 2018). Through the use of qualitative research, we can look beyond numbers and statistics to examine the experiences, perspectives, and understandings of the people involved in the situation being studied. This allows researchers to gain a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the topic under study (Denscombe, 2017).

This research was conducted in accordance with the research stages outlined by Creswell (1994:147) at Kober SPNF SKB Garut Regency, West Java Province. Three basic stages can be used to categorize the entire research process: (1) field research preparation, (2) field research implementation, and (3) data analysis. The stages often used in quantitative research have certain similarities, but there are significant differences in the focus and substance of each stage, especially in conducting field research and data analysis. Detailed contact with research participants, direct observation, and qualitative data collection through in-depth interviews and observation are part of the field research implementation stage in this qualitative study (Creswell & Creswell, 2009).

Data collection methods based on observation and documentation are the tools used to collect data. Implementation in the context of observation is centered on teaching teachers about learning and utilizing observation sheets to observe children. Important data or information will be collected using this observation sheet. In this case, Jorgensen (1989:23) provides advice, stating that observation should be done carefully so that the findings can answer the researcher's questions (Jorgensen, 2003). In addition, data was collected through the documentation method. This method was used to thoroughly investigate the material, especially information related to the main topic of the research, namely child development while attending school at Kober SPNF SKB Garut Regency information about local and intercultural education in particular.

In this study, a data analysis method was used that followed the stages suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data collection, which is an important step in the data analysis process, was given top priority in the
process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To collect data for this study, interviews and observations were conducted. The last stage, data reduction, involves selecting, simplifying, and modifying the raw data from the field notes. To minimize unnecessary data, data reduction begins at the collection stage by writing summaries, coding, looking for themes, grouping data, making notes, and so on. The information is then presented, and the final stage is to characterize the information collected so that decisions can be made and actions can be taken. Qualitative data collection is shown in the following figure.

![Data collection process](image)

Data Analysis Interactive Model (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The truth of the analytical data will then be verified. To ensure that the data collected is in accordance with the problem under study, this checking technique uses methodological triangulation which includes source triangulation and technical triangulation (Abdalla et al., 2018). Triangulation also uses various data collection methods, including document analysis, observation, and interviews. Researchers can then compare the results of several procedures to ensure that the results are consistent (Hamdi & Bahruddin, 2015). It is intended that by using these two triangulation methods, the data collected for this research will be strong in supporting previous findings and relevant to the problem under study.

**Result and Discussion**

**Understanding and Principles of Partnership**

Partnerships between PAUD units and families are an important part of providing high-quality teaching and promoting child development. Collaboration within this framework includes not only teachers and parents, but also the child's entire family. Effective working relationships are based on basic principles such as mutual respect, trust and shared accountability in raising children and young people. In addition to playing an important role as their children's first teachers, parents also have a lasting influence on their growth and learning during the school years and beyond. In this regard, maintaining and enhancing the relationship between PAUD units and families is critical to developing a learning environment that promotes children's development and progress.

Families and PAUD units have complementary roles in determining how children are educated (Irmalia, 2020). Families have a significant influence on a child's development and education, although PAUD units are where they receive most of their formal education. Improvements in learning outcomes, attendance rates and children's behavior are all attributed to the active participation of parents and communities in educational situations. This suggests that communities and families are just as responsible for providing education as the ECD unit or school as a whole. Regardless of sociological background.

The principles that support partnership activities between PAUD units and families are: a. Families and schools share the common goal of providing the best environment for students' growth, b. All children should be given the opportunity to realize their full potential, c. As the primary instructors of their children, families play an important role, d. Successful schools foster a friendly and safe learning environment, e. Schools and families highly value teachers' knowledge and appreciate their high standards of teaching, f. Families and schools value diversity within families as a tool for fostering community and collaboration, g. Relationships between families and schools are based on mutual accountability, respect and trust, h. The development, maintenance and renewal of this alliance relies heavily on leadership positions. i. Family-school partnerships increase children's motivation

Several support systems must be in place at both the school and school system levels to build and sustain successful PAUD units and family partnerships: Planning, organizing, implementing and assessing the partnership is the responsibility of a working team between the school and the family. School policies and practices that explicitly state and encompass the values and methods of successful collaboration. Support networks that encourage communication among the school community about problems, solutions and best practices. Being transparent to the community by outlining achievements and encouraging further relationships.

PAUD units can better assist children's development by having a working team that includes families who are actively involved in forming partnerships (Rahmawati, 2022). In addition, schools can continue to develop and adapt better methods to involve parents in their children's education through assessments conducted by the learning community.
Parents' involvement in the entire partnership process results in a more inclusive and enduring educational environment, which benefits children's growth and development in the ECD unit. Therefore, by taking this action, schools and families can improve their relationship and create a good learning environment.

The ECD and family unit work team will carry out a number of tasks, including assessing current arrangements and practices and gathering opinions, experiences and requests from educators, parents, institutional leaders and children. They will ensure that the entire ECD unit community is informed about the idea of partnership and that institutional leaders and parent networks support it. In line with the Key Dimensions of Early Childhood Education Units and the Family Partnership Framework, they will then develop an implementation strategy, defining goals, timelines and performance indicators. In addition, they will plan training sessions for team workers, carry out predetermined tasks, assess the success of the partnership initiative, and continuously improve and coordinate procedures in line with the ECD Unit Key Dimensions and Family Unit Partnership Framework.

The parents we surveyed for the empirical research part of this project clearly understood the need for good communication with the ECD unit, accurate information about their child's development, and knowledge of the program run by Kober SPNF SKB Garut District based on the research findings. Some procedures, including homework assignments and parent-teacher conferences, seem to provide this information to parents with minimal effort and also allow instructors to benefit from parents' understanding of their children. Teachers understand that they can learn from parents in an environment where the ECD unit and the home function together effectively, and there is effective two-way communication.

According to some research (Rich, 1998), all children benefit greatly from having positive parental participation in their education. For children at risk of learning disabilities, the benefits are more pronounced, especially when there is genuine cooperation between parents and teachers (Caldas, 1997). Parents can provide details about their child's upbringing, personality, hobbies and experiences at school. This knowledge can serve as a foundation for the development of new literacy skills. On the other hand, ECD programs can provide families with tips and information on literacy development that they can use at home (Wearmouth, 2004). Visits to orphanages, as described by Pushor & Murphy (Pushor & Murphy, 2004).

**ECD Unit and Family Partnership Strategy**

It is not always easy to establish partnerships between PAUD units and families. It requires commitment and takes considerable time. Some families sometimes require special accommodations or additional support due to various stressors and circumstances in order to fully engage in their children's school life and help them reach their academic potential. But these initiatives have a big impact. Families who understand the education system and the difficulties schools face become an invaluable source of support that has a significant impact on schools. Families who participate in their children's education at school have access to a wealth of information and expertise that can support the development of strong communities.

The ECD and Family Unit Partnership Framework provides the following overview.

**Communicate**

Communication between families and schools should receive great attention and respect, and school organizations and education systems should value this communication. For teachers and school administrators to connect with families successfully and in an understandable way, it is important to plan education and training programs. Similarly, it is important to empower and inspire families to interact with schools productively.

**Connectivity of Learning in the ECD Unit and at Home**

It is important for PAUD units and families to have a common understanding of how much the home environment and ECD unit overlap. Successful partnerships and children's learning progress are closely linked, and it is vital for teachers and parents to ensure children have high standards for their performance in ECD courses. Families and PAUD units work together to help each child develop a good attitude towards learning. It is important to ensure that families are aware of and understand their children's development. Families and PAUD units also value and utilize the information and skills that children bring from home to the ECD unit and vice versa. Both recognize and make use of the learning possibilities that the family environment offers.

**Community and Identity**

This important factor focuses on initiatives to improve communal living standards while respecting local customs, traditions, beliefs and interpersonal ties. ECD programs can foster a sense of community among children by incorporating activities that influence students' identity and culture. The social, emotional, moral and spiritual aspects of the growth of young people are one of the objectives of PAUD units. ECD programs are essential in encouraging cultural rediscovery and personal growth. PAUD units can be a focal point for community meetings and involvement in
Collaborating Outside the ECD Unit

Collaboration is one important component in creating a relationship. Regular communication that consistently generates possibilities for improving child development will make collaboration more successful (Darmiyati Zuchdi, 2023). Partnerships that combine cooperation and collaboration center on practical and constructive methods to help children reach their full potential. Collaboration is a key component in planning and problem-solving, which is particularly important when children need extra help to complete specific tasks. This primary dimension is concerned with identifying, allocating and pooling communal resources. The larger community offers resources that can benefit early childhood education programs and their families. Children, families and PAUD units can work together as a learning community. Families are welcome to attend school.

To assist school communities in forming relationships between PAUD units and families, a number of partnership-building techniques based on key factors are recommended below. Communities in PAUD units can use these tactics to evaluate existing procedures and make plans for change. This approach helps families form partnerships, provides helpful advice to early childhood education units on how to do so, and puts forward the family's perspective on the subjects covered by the partnership. Both approaches are seen as complementary to each other and not as stand-alone "magic solutions". In addition, this plan serves only as an illustration of best practices to assist the school community in developing partnerships rather than being a complete plan. These tactics can be adapted or changed depending on each key.

**Table 1. Key Dimensions of 5C Implementation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>Since direct presence in PAUD units is not possible, organized and effective measures should be taken to create substitute techniques for parent-teacher interviews. This includes creating a common communication protocol, advising parents and instructors on how to communicate via phone, WhatsApp or email, and offering technological assistance to those who need it. To enhance the child's learning experience, educators can obtain parents' opinions on the child's development by using this alternative interview method. This keeps the lines of communication open between school and family while promoting early childhood development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting</td>
<td>With frequent meetings between teachers and parents and advice on how to help children's learning at home, it is important to incorporate families early on into the ECD unit to promote children's development. An effective partnership between school and family relies on open communication, which will allow children to develop their full potential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>The well-being of community members living in PAUD units, especially children, is largely supported by the local community. The school community can initiate initiatives for the physical and emotional well-being of students, such as teaching about nutrition, athletics and healthy lifestyles, in addition to establishing links with health and welfare agencies in the neighborhood. The community can also assist in finding and gaining access to additional services, such as psychological care, for children who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health. A supportive environment is created through collaboration between early childhood education centers, families and the local community, to ensure that children have access to all the resources they need to succeed in school and in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative</td>
<td>Especially when it comes to new regulations and curricula, parents have a significant influence in educational decision-making. For the community to take part in discussions, it is important to provide training and knowledge. To inspire parents to actively participate, schools should be transparent and open with parents. The child's learning experience will be enhanced, the ECD unit-family partnership will be strengthened, and the child's overall development will be supported through active engagement between the ECD unit and parents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Children's academic achievement, social skills and emotional well-being are shown to improve when parents and teachers have good interactions (Christine et al., 2021). Children learn more effectively when parents and teachers collaborate, both at home and in PAUD units. Scientific studies show that children's learning behavior, attitudes towards school and academic success improve when a partnership approach between parents and teachers is evident (Nasir & Hand, 2006). In addition, they show stronger social skills, have fewer behavioral problems, and are better able to adjust to different circumstances and engage in social interactions. In addition, parents and teachers benefit from this. When they collaborate as partners, their communication becomes more effective, they build strong interpersonal bonds, and their ability to assist the child's growth and learning improves.

Successful collaboration between schools, families and communities relies on a family-centered perspective (Swick, 1992). It is very important for parents to be involved in their children's education. Teachers should always remember that parents are the first teachers of their children and that cooperation between home and school is helpful to children, families and teachers. Building responsive relationships presents both possibilities and problems because of the diversity of cultures, languages and ethnic groups in each community and the differences between rural and urban locations. Teachers and other educators working in PAUD units should not assume that parents do not care if they do not participate. They should strive to understand the barriers that prevent some parents from being involved in their children's education. Family-friendly PAUD units should connect with families (Sormunen et al., 2011).

Conclusion

From the results of the analysis, findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the partnership program implemented is in accordance with the established principles and its implementation at SKB Kober SPNF Garut Regency. Collaboration and assistance between families (parents) and schools are emphasized in the partnership principles. The 5C model, which includes communication (both direct and indirect), connection (the relationship that exists between PAUD units and families), community (parent groups), consultation (coaching and delivery of process input), and collaboration (cooperation in various aspects), is a partnership strategy used to increase parental participation. Opportunities and difficulties must be overcome to realize this partnership program, and the help of the community and government is essential.

Community and government participation is essential in overcoming the possibilities and obstacles in implementing this partnership initiative. Communities can help by getting involved in initiatives to improve children's education, taking an active role in PAUD unit events, and offering recommendations. The government can also offer resources and training for teachers and parents, as well as policies that encourage and recognize the value of collaboration between schools and families in early childhood education. It is hoped that with strong cooperation from all parties involved, this partnership initiative can further develop and provide more benefits for child development in the Kober SPNF SKB early childhood education unit in Garut District. This will be an important action to ensure early on.

Acknowledgments
This article was prepared by four people, namely U.R, A.H., J.S.A., and B.R. All research members carried out each stage cooperatively until this article was completed.

Author Contributions
all authors contributed to the research and writing of the article

Funding
This research received no external funding

Conflicts of Interest
The authors declare no conflict of interest

References


Bumi Aksara.


