

## **PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

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### **Abstract**

Building a positive and strong bond is a relationship goal between parents and their children since it is the most significant in life. This relationship is believed to be able to construct the children's self-confidence and behavior. Getting involved in children's lives through parental home supervision is necessary to improve and strengthen the communication between parents and their children. This paper explores the role of parents in children's academic achievement as parents' involvement is essential apart of the solution to many problems in education (Fan & Chen, 2001). Ten participants consisting of 4 fathers and 6 mothers of children are studying at junior high schools in Banda Aceh were studied. Interview consisting of several questions was used to obtain any information from the participants to enrich the data required. The data then were analyzed by using descriptive analysis. The findings revealed that the way of the participants engaged in their children's academic achievement is different depending on various factors such as the parents' background of study and their social relationship.

**Keywords:** Parents' Participation, Children's Academic Achievement, Parental Home Supervision, Parents' Background of Study, Social Relationship

### **INTRODUCTION**

Family is where someone grows and prepares for the social lives outside of their home. It is a place to nurture a child from infancy to the next stages in life and therefore, a strong relationship with a family is essential (Grace et al. 2012; Mahuro & Hungu, 2016). Family usually consists of parents and children where the parents play the important roles in raising their kids through a long-lasting process called parenting (Keith, 1986, as cited in Chaudhry et al, 2015). Getting involved in children's lives, especially in their academic's journey, may foster their self-confidence and form their positive character. Parents who have good relationship with their children are able to build strong communication which is the foundation for positive bonds. Therefore, parenting style is the important matter to be considered in relation to the development of children.

As has been mentioned above, parenting is a process requiring multi-talented parents as they are the first educators at home. To be a good educator, a parent should be the role model for the children in terms of their characteristics and attitudes. This may encourage the children to react and behave positively as they are good imitators. The performance of their parents is very crucial, especially for the children at a young age. Parents, thus, are essential in children's daily lives and they play a significant role in their children's education. This paper tries to explore the involvement of parents in their children's academic achievement.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have been done related to parental issue since their involvement in children's lives is fundamental. Parents' involvement in children's lives affects not only on their academic achievement, but also their social lives and their emotional growth. This is even more crucial for children with special needs (Thornton, 2015). In addition, this contribution leads to having strong connection between home and school as children will be more interested in learning when they receive reinforcement of their parents. McNeal (2014) emphasized that parent involvement is any action taken by a parent that can theoretically be expected to improve student performance or behavior. In other words, parent's involvement consists of those actions that help a child meet or exceed the norms or expectations of the student role and encompasses parent-child, parent-teacher, and to some degree parent to parent relations.

Jaiswal and Choudury (2017, p. 111) stated that parents' participation can be defined as any interaction between parents and children at home or with the school to ensure that the children's academic performance is going in a positive way. This means that parents should be the motivators for the success of the children both at home and at school. Better school connections through interactive process between parents and teachers at school improve children's academic achievement.

Parents' contribution to children can provide positive impact on their development at any stage of their lives. Tutoring the children at home and being a good role model them by demonstrating positive behavior such as reading, writing and so forth is a good encouragement for children in their study. Decades of research in the area of family involvement have time and again supported the simple fact that children of involved parents have a much greater chance to develop into healthy, knowledgeable, responsible, and caring adults (Vijaya et al. 2016, p.1). Vijaya et al. (2016) added that parent involvement in children's learning is positively related to achievement and the more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning the more beneficial are the achievement effects.

Mante et al. (2015) reported that parents are important in providing environmental, social and economic factors, which have powerful effects on pupils' academic lives. They also asserted that parental involvement is integral to high student academic achievement. Eipstein (1995, as cited in Hara & Burke, 1998) confirmed that parents who are involved with their children's education are those who consistently demonstrate good parenting skills, communicate with the school staff, volunteer their time in the school, help their children learn at home, take an active role in school-related decision making, and who regularly collaborate with the school community. Taken together, Boonk et al. (2018) reported that parental involvement in the form of parent-child discussions had a moderate positive impact and parental aspiration had the strongest positive relationship with the achievement. It seems that parents have a major responsibility for their children, not only to be parents, but also act as the educator, tutor, model and negotiator.

## METHOD

This study is a qualitative approach by using descriptive analysis. The participants of this research, consisting of 10 (ten) people, are parents whose children are at junior

high school in Banda Aceh. The participants were chosen randomly, 4 males (the fathers) and 6 females (the mothers), and they were also informed that their confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained. The detail of the participants described as participant 1 (P1/mother), participant 2 (P2/mother), participant 3 (P3/mother), participant 4 (P4/ mother), participant 5 (P5/mother), participant 6 (P6/mother), participant 7 (P7/father), participant 8 (P8/father), participant 9 (P9/father), and participant 10 (P10/father). What is more, the data of this study were collected through interview consisting of 6 questions, and they were then analyzed descriptively.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results show that almost all participants provide similar answers towards the questions asked. The details of the interview process can be seen as in the following:

*Bagaimanakah anda membangun komunikasi dengan anak anda?*

How do you build communication with your children?

Regarding this question, most participants provide similar answers as P1 said that she is a good listener for her children. She spends most time to listen to the children's story that happened at home and at school. P2 and P3, in addition, also ask their kids for sharing and discussing any issue they experienced. They even encourage the children by telling the story about the famous figure in order to motivate their child in studying. P6 has another trick in communicating with her children by asking them to play together while telling and teaching them about their duty. By doing these activities it is expected that the children are comfortable to work together with their parents in any situation. The children are also more open in expressing any problems they experienced. Other participants, more and less, have the same ideas related to this point.

*Apakah anda selalu berperan aktif dalam mengawasi dan membantu mereka belajar? Seberapa sering? Bagaimana caranya? Kapan?*

Do you always supervise and assist your children in studying? How? When?

For this question, P6 said that she and her husband had a good collaboration to supervise their children in studying. They set the time for studying especially at night after Magrib prayer and reciting the qur'an. This is also applied by other participants in which they get their children to be accustomed to studying and doing good activities. Parents usually checked and asked the children regarding the homework given by the teacher at school and tried to help them to finish it. P5 and P8, additionally, said that if they have lack of time to participate to help their children in studying, the children will obtain low score academically. Also, if parents' contribution on their children study is high, the obtained academic score is high as well. Most participants, at this point, also have good communication with the teacher at school in order to monitor their children activities during the school time. In many cases, parents allocated special time to interact with the teacher for example by attending school associated activities like meetings and gatherings while observing their children's academic development.

*Bagaimanakah cara anda memotivasi mereka dalam belajar?*

How do you motivate your children in studying?

Provide a reward is one of the ways to motivate children in studying. This is important to attract the children's interest at first and usually it works and success. Almost all participants apply this technique for their children. However, getting the children to be familiar with the lesson itself is more beneficial among others. Therefore, the children should be taught to be more responsible towards themselves at a very young age.

*Dalam hal memberikan motivasi belajar terhadap anak, apakah ada kaitannya dengan latar belakang pendidikan anda?*

In terms of encouraging the children in studying, does it correlate with your background of study?

P10 ensured that parents' background of study does not have any correlation with the way of motivating children in studying. According to him, many children whose parents have different level of education succeed academically. This means that learning interest should be built within the children themselves. P6 and p8, on the other hand, believed that parents' background of study, more and less, play a significant role for children's motivation in studying. As a good imitator, the children try to duplicate their parents in any aspect of life. Similar ideas also delivered by P2 in which she agreed that parents' background of study influences the children motivation in studying.

*Menurut anda, apakah peran orang tua sangat berpengaruh terhadap prestasi anak di sekolah?*

Do you think that the role of parents influences the children's academic achievement?

Most participants strongly agree that the role of parents influence the children's academic achievement. As has been mentioned previously, parents' assistance is required in order to stimulate the children in learning. P5 and P7 stated that the role of parents in children's lives is able to increase their self-confidence resulted in exploring their skill wider. Besides, the children are also able to strengthen positive communication with their friends and teachers at school and they can be success academically. This is because healthy parental relationships affect positive child outcomes (Moore, et.al, 2011). P8 and P9 even declared that if parents have adolescent studying at junior high school means that they also have to study at the same level as their children do. This indicates that parents should be like friends for their children in order to ease them in studying.

*Apakah keadaan lingkungan juga berpengaruh bagi anda dalam memberi motivasi belajar terhadap anak? Mengapa?*

Does social relationship influence the way you motivate the children in studying? Why?

In the last session of interview, various answers were obtained from the participants in which some of them have a yes for this query. However, some others argued that social relationship influence the way of parents in motivating the children in studying. P1, P4 and P6 have similar ideas that there is correlation between the way of parents motivating the children in studying and social relationship/commitment. They added that the circumstance of the surrounded environment play important role in building the characteristic of the children. Positive atmosphere of the surroundings brings

positive influence and vice versa. P8 and P9 suggested that each parents should care of not only their own children, but also the other children especially the children in the neighborhood. On the other hand, the rest participants claimed that both social environment and the way of parents motivate the children in studying does not correlate each other. They confirmed that parental style depended on the parents themselves without interference of the social relationship.

## CONCLUSION

According to the results above, it can be concluded that when parents' relationship quality is high, their families and children have better outcomes. Positive parents – children communication should be prioritized in order to attract the children at first as well as to open the way of communication with them. If the children are comfortable in interacting with their parents, it is easy for them to share any problems they experienced both at home and at school. Parents also have to be better in managing time for their children such as time for studying, playing, watching and sleeping. At this point, building positive communication with the school stakeholders, which include teachers, is essential for the children academic development and achievement.

In terms of parents' participation in children's academic achievement, providing rewards when they obtain good score at school is one of the tricks that can be used to encourage them in studying. Accompanying the children while studying can also be applied to be close to the children. This activity is important to increase children's motivation in studying. Another crucial aspect that influences the children academically is the social environment. Positive atmosphere of the surroundings brings positive influence for the children. Likewise, if the social relationship is poor, it will have a negative impact on the children. Therefore, parents play important role in increasing children's academic achievement. Parents' participation in each stage of children's education is necessary and the children will have perpetual impression in their lives because of this.

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