

THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT ON THE EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING PROCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood education forms the foundation of child development through play and parental support. Parental engagement, especially in the form of academic expectations, is essential for children's school readiness and optimal development. This study aims to examine the effect of parental engagement on the classroom learning process of early childhood students at Tunas Bangsa Early Childhood Education, Tanjung Sari II, Palembang. This quantitative research used questionnaires distributed to 24 respondents, with hypothesis testing conducted through a t-test. The results showed that parental engagement in early childhood learning was relatively high, with a mean score of 32.71 and a standard deviation of 3.56. Several indicators, such as parental participation and interaction, were categorized as very high, although aspects of creativity and learning stimulation still require improvement. The regression t-test analysis indicated a significant effect, with a significance value of 0.000 and a regression coefficient of 0.512. The R Square value of 0.537 indicates that parental engagement explains 53.7% of the variance in learning outcomes. Conclusion: Parents have a strong influence in supporting early childhood learning in the classroom.

Keywords: Gross Motor Skills, Early Childhood, Learning, Educational

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A. INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education plays an important role in laying the foundation for children's cognitive and social development through teacher-child interaction, play-based learning, and parental support in the education process from an early age (Astuti & Triani, 2024). Learning in Early Childhood Education is crucial for shaping the foundation of holistic child development through a child-centered play approach, which enhances engagement, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills from an early age (Zosh et al., 2018). Emotional support in classrooms is at a moderate level, while classroom organization and instructional support remain

low, indicating the need to improve the quality of early childhood educators to support optimal child development (Tilbe & Gai, 2020). In addition, participation rates among young children, especially those aged 0–5 years, remain low. Meanwhile, preschools, particularly private ones in urban areas often exceed capacity and do not meet physical standards, although safety and lighting are generally adequate (Gollopeni et al., 2022).

Parental engagement influences children's school readiness, so parents need to take positive roles in various aspects to support their children's learning readiness (Ridha et al., 2024). The most effective forms of parental engagement include supervising learning, setting high academic expectations, communicating with the school, and developing children's reading habits (Castro et al., 2015). The strongest parental engagement is reflected in academic expectations, while the weakest is in helping with homework. This pattern is consistent across education levels and ethnic groups but varies depending on the type of assessment used (Wilder, 2014). A well-designed curriculum also helps create an effective, efficient, and conducive learning environment, which makes educational goals easier to achieve. Planned management is key to improving the quality of learning in Early Childhood Education institutions (Baidowi & Widyaningsih, 2022).

Research by Putri and colleagues shows that parental engagement in Early Childhood Education increases children's interest in learning, motivation, and social-emotional development, while also creating a positive learning environment and modeling behavior for children (Putri et al., 2023). Further research by Nopiyanti and Husin (2021) reveals that parents are fairly involved in their children's education, especially in terms of protection and support, but less enthusiastic when it comes to cooperating with schools or participating in volunteer activities (Nopiyanti & Husin, 2021). Lastly, a study by Anjani and Mashudi (2024) found that parental engagement and family resilience in Early Childhood Education are generally at a moderate to high level, reflecting the family's ability to cope with difficulties and support child development (Anjani & Mashudi, 2024).

The novelty of this study lies in its empirical approach and specific focus on parental engagement in children's learning processes in the classroom. This research provides quantitative data that explains the effect of such engagement on learning outcomes something that has not been directly addressed in previous studies. Parents play a vital role in a child's education as the first school (madrasah), instilling essential life values and social interaction skills from an early age (Ayub & Fuadi, 2024).

Parental engagement is influenced by inhibiting factors such as economic and cultural challenges, as well as supporting factors like family support, school programs, and attention to religious activities (Tiara et al., 2023). In rural areas, parental participation in Early Childhood Education is generally limited to enrolling their children in school. This is influenced by distance, lack of outreach,

time constraints, economic conditions, educational background, and perceptions about the importance of early education (Mulia & Kurniati, 2023). Parents are advised to increase their roles in guidance and school visits to support success and character development in the era of the independent learning curriculum (Nanditasari et al., 2024).

This study aims to determine the extent to which parental engagement affects the learning process of early childhood students in the classroom. The research focuses on the Tunas Bangsa Early Childhood Education institution located in Tanjung Sari II, Palembang. In other words, the researcher seeks to explore whether parental engagement such as assisting children in school learning, communicating with teachers, or participating in school activities has a positive impact on children's enthusiasm, understanding, or learning achievement during classroom activities in Early Childhood Education. The research contributes to increasing parental awareness, strengthening participation programs in early education, and enhancing children's learning quality. Additionally, the findings serve as a reference for researchers and academics in the study of parental engagement in early childhood education.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The study employed a quantitative research method using a simple linear regression approach, with a total population of 44 individuals, comprising 4 teachers and 40 parents from the Tunas Bangsa Early Childhood Education institution in Tanjung Sari II, Palembang. The sample was selected using a quota sampling technique, with specific criteria: (1) parents' ability to understand and complete the research questionnaire either verbally or in writing, and (2) parents who frequently accompany their children to school. Based on these criteria, a total of 24 respondents were selected, consisting of 4 teachers and 20 parents. Data analysis was conducted with the assistance of SPSS version 26, involving several stages of statistical processing, including descriptive statistical analysis, tests for normality and linearity, validity and reliability testing, and hypothesis testing using the t-test.

Research Hypothesis: There is an influence of parental engagement on the learning process of early childhood students in the classroom at Tunas Bangsa Early Childhood Education, Tanjung Sari II, Palembang. Research Design:

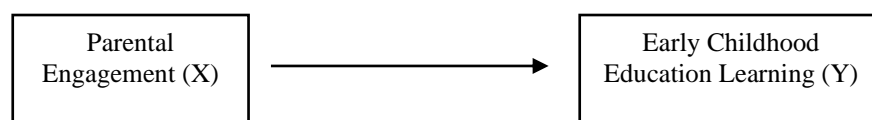


Image 1. Research Hypothesis

Table 1. Research Instrument

Variable	Indicator	Statement/Question Item	Average Score
Parental	Active	1. Do parents consistently participate directly in	4.5

Engagement (Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004; Fredricks et al., 2004)	participation in classroom learning	classroom learning activities? 2. Does the presence of parents in the classroom disturb the child's motivation to learn?	4.7
	Interaction with students	3. Do parents often interact with their children during classroom learning?	4.4
	Interaction with teachers	4. Do parents frequently interact with the teacher during classroom learning?	4.3
	Emotional engagement (emotional engagement)	5. Does the presence of parents in the classroom make the child feel safe/not cry during learning?	4.7
		6. Does the presence of parents in the classroom make the child feel comfortable and willing to stay and learn?	4.3
	Cognitive engagement (cognitive engagement)	7. Does the presence of parents in the classroom affect the child's learning outcomes/performance/understanding?	4.8
		8. Does the presence of parents in the classroom stimulate the child to learn?	3.6
	Child interaction	9. Is the child able to develop cooperation/interaction with peers when parents are present in the classroom?	4.3
		10. Is the child able to develop cooperation/interaction with the teacher when parents are present in the classroom?	4.0
	Development of imagination Learning in a free and comfortable atmosphere Outdoor learning (environment)	11. Is the child able to develop imagination and creativity when parents are present in the classroom?	3.4
		12. Is the child able to learn freely and comfortably when parents are present in the classroom?	4.5
		13. Is the child able to learn effectively in open/natural environments when parents are present?	4.8

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Descriptive Data Analysis

Based on Table 1, the recapitulation of average scores from 13 statements using a 5-point Likert scale can be interpreted as follows: most respondents indicated a very high level of agreement, with scores ranging from 4.21 to 5.00. Statements such as parental participation in classroom activities (4.5), interaction with children and teachers (4.4 and 4.3), and the positive impact on children's comfort, sense of security, and learning outcomes (4.5–4.8) reflected a very high response level. However, two aspects parents' role in stimulating children's learning (3.6) and children's creativity development (3.4) were in the “high” category, though lower compared to other indicators. This indicates that while parental presence is highly beneficial for early childhood education, there remains room for improvement in fostering creativity and learning motivation. Parental engagement in early childhood education significantly influences children's cognitive, social-emotional, and motor development through

effective collaboration between parents and educators (Hidayat, 2023).

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parental engagement	24	26.00	39.00	32.7083	3.55673
early childhood education learning	24	15.00	25.00	19.0000	2.48474
Valid N (listwise)	24				

From the descriptive statistics of 24 respondents, the variable *Parental Engagement* showed a minimum score of 26 and a maximum of 39, with a mean of 32.71 and a standard deviation of 3.56. This suggests that parental engagement is generally in the high category, with a relatively stable distribution. Meanwhile, the variable *Early Childhood Education Learning* had a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25, with a mean of 19.00 and a standard deviation of 2.48. This indicates that early learning outcomes are generally above average, with relatively consistent data spread. Parental engagement increases student motivation and learning outcomes; however, challenges such as limited time and lack of confidence can be overcome through training and regular school-parent communication (Rantari et al., 2024).

2. Data Normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Parental engagement	.121	24	.200*	.973	24	.749
early childhood education learning	.115	24	.200*	.959	24	.410

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of the Shapiro-Wilk normality test showed that the *Parental Engagement* variable had a W value of 0.973 with a significance of 0.749, and the *Early Childhood Education Learning* variable had a W value of 0.959 with a significance of 0.410. Since both significance values are greater than 0.05, the data is considered normally distributed. Therefore, the data meets the normality assumption, making it suitable for parametric statistical analysis such as Pearson correlation or linear regression, which require normally distributed data.

3. Linearity

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
early childhood education learning * Parental engagement	Between Groups	(Combined)	111.033	11	10.094	3.912	.014
		Linearity	76.303	1	76.303	29.568	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	34.730	10	3.473	1.346	.309
	Within Groups		30.967	12	2.581		
	Total		142.000	23			



Based on the linearity test, the significance value (Sig.) for the Linearity component is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates a significant linear relationship between *Parental Engagement* and *Early Childhood Education Learning*. Additionally, the significance for Deviation from Linearity is 0.309, greater than 0.05, suggesting no significant deviation from linearity. Thus, the relationship between the two variables is linear, validating the use of parametric tests such as Pearson correlation or linear regression.

4. Validity

Correlations			
		Parental engagement	early childhood education learning
Parental engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.733**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	24	24
early childhood education learning	Pearson Correlation	.733**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	24	24

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation analysis yielded a value of 0.733 between parental engagement and early childhood learning, with a sample size of 24 and a p-value of 0.000. This value exceeds the r-table value of 0.404 at the 5% significance level (df = 22), indicating a valid relationship. Additionally, the p-value of less than 0.01 shows a statistically significant relationship. Therefore, parental engagement has a strong and significant correlation with early childhood education. It contributes positively to children's academic achievements through consistent support and guidance (Putri et al., 2023).

5. Data Reliability

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.815	2

An instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.6. The obtained value was 0.815, indicating good internal consistency and reliability of the instrument. This means the items tested are consistent and stable in measuring the intended variables. The instrument used is thus trustworthy for assessing parental engagement and early childhood learning. It demonstrates high reliability across various dimensions of engagement, reflecting strong internal consistency (Cai et al., 2024).

6. Hypothesis Testing (t-Test)

Coefficients ^a					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t
1	(Constant)	2.250	3.332		.675
	Parental engagement	.512	.101	.733	5.055

a. Dependent Variable: early childhood education learning

Based on the results of simple linear regression shown in the Coefficients table, the significance value (Sig.) is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that *Parental Engagement* significantly influences *Early Childhood Education Learning*. The regression coefficient (B) is 0.512 with a t-value of 5.055, confirming a positive influence. This means that the higher the parental engagement, the better the early childhood learning outcomes. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted as it meets the t-test criteria, i.e., a significance value less than 0.05, indicating a significant effect. Parental engagement significantly affects student achievement; hence, schools and parents should encourage better learning outcomes (Eliyanti et al., 2023). There is a positive relationship between parental engagement and student achievement, as parental support enhances motivation, learning enthusiasm, and educational success (Zulparis et al., 2021).

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.733 ^a	.537	.516	1.72807

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parental engagement

The SPSS output in the Model Summary section shows an R Square value of 0.537. This indicates that 53.7% of the variation in early childhood learning outcomes can be explained by the *Parental Engagement* variable. The remaining 46.3% is influenced by other factors not included in this study. Therefore, it can be concluded that parental engagement has a significant and fairly strong impact on early childhood education, although other influencing factors also exist. Parents’ motivation about future planning, attention to school activities, and active participation significantly affect learning outcomes, making it crucial for schools to foster greater parental engagement (Thahir et al., 2024). Parental engagement includes monitoring learning activities, guiding children, teaching at home, and temporarily acting as teachers during remote learning (Epstein & Becker, 2018).

D. CONCLUSION

Overall, parental engagement has a strong and meaningful influence in supporting early childhood learning. The level of parental participation in

children's learning processes is considerably high, reflecting an active role in accompanying, guiding, and motivating their children. Several indicators, such as attendance in learning activities, communication with educators, and positive interaction at home, fall within the very high category. These factors positively contribute to children's development and learning outcomes, which are also rated highly. However, there are still aspects that require improvement, particularly in stimulating creativity and learning motivation at home. The analysis results indicate that the higher the parental engagement, the better the children's academic performance. This influence is significant, indicating that parental presence and engagement are not merely supportive, but rather essential elements in the success of early childhood education. Parental engagement accounts for more than half of the variance in children's learning outcomes, making it a factor that should be seriously considered by all stakeholders in early childhood education. Parental engagement has been proven to significantly influence and serve as a key predictor of academic achievement among children aged 5–6, reflecting their active role in supporting the learning process (Dewi et al., 2022).

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- Author1 : Responsible for problem formulation, developing the research background and objectives, and coordinating the overall research process
- Author 2 : Contributed to the theoretical framework, literature review, and collection and analysis of field data.
- Author 3 : Involved in the research methodology design, development of research instruments, data validation, and result interpretation.
- Author 4 : In charge of writing the results and discussion sections, final report preparation, and comprehensive manuscript editing.

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