

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A HOLISTIC APPROACH

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Abstract.

Early childhood education in an Islamic perspective plays an important role in shaping children's character and spiritual values. This study aims to analyze the role of parents in early childhood Islamic education through a holistic approach in PAUD KB Amanah. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach with in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation as data collection instruments. The results showed that parents' involvement in early childhood Islamic education at PAUD KB Amanah. The holistic approach applied includes integrating Islamic values education, social skills and children's cognitive development in a balanced manner. This research underscores the importance of synergy between parents and educational institutions in providing a solid spiritual foundation for children. The findings are expected to serve as a model in the implementation of family-based early childhood Islamic education in other PAUD institutions.



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A. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) plays a strategic role in building the early foundations of child development, physically, intellectually, socially and spiritually. In the context of Islamic education, early childhood is a very important time to instill moral and spiritual values that will guide children's lives in the future. Effective Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning combines various comprehensive approaches, such as spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social approaches, by placing students as the center of the learning process to encourage a deep understanding and practice of religious values in everyday life (Nasution, 2024).

Early childhood Islamic education does not only focus on academic learning, but also on character building based on the values of faith and piety to Allah SWT. This is in line with the statement that “early childhood is a golden period where they easily accept and absorb various information, including religious values”. (Hidayat, 2019).

However, in practice, the implementation of Islamic education in early childhood often faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is the low level of parental involvement in the child's education process. Many parents leave their children's education entirely to PAUD institutions, without providing adequate support at home. In

fact, research shows that parental involvement in children's education has a significant influence on children's character and spiritual development. (Rahman, A., & Fauziah, 2020). In addition, the lack of synergy between parents and PAUD institutions often results in a gap between the values taught at school and those practiced at home.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand and strengthen the role of parents in early childhood Islamic education.

The role of parents in educating children from an early age is very important as the main foundation in forming a progressive Islamic generation, because through guidance based on Islamic values, children can grow into individuals who are faithful, noble, and able to contribute positively to civilization (Khaerudin & Latipah, 2024). In a modern era filled with the challenges of globalization and digitalization, children are increasingly exposed to various external influences that can affect the development of their moral and spiritual values. The role of parents as the primary educators at home becomes increasingly crucial to protect children from negative influences while instilling solid Islamic values. As stated by (Hakim, A., Mahmudah, L., & Widodo, 2021), "Children's education based on Islamic values must involve the active role of parents as the main partner of educational institutions."

KB Amanah PAUD is a relevant case example for this research, as it has a holistic approach in supporting early childhood Islamic education. This holistic approach includes the

integration of religious values education, social skills development, and the formation of children's emotional and spiritual intelligence. Self-development methods can be done by always getting closer to God, actively participating in social activities, being open to change, and committing to doing good, even in small things (Aji, 2024).

However, the success of this approach relies heavily on the active involvement of parents in supporting the activities designed by the PAUD institution. Previous research by (Yusra, M., 2019) confirms that collaboration between parents and educational institutions can improve the effectiveness of Islamic values-based learning.

The main objective of this study is to analyze the role of parents in early childhood Islamic education with a holistic approach in PAUD KB Amanah. It also aims to identify the factors that support and hinder parental involvement in the education process. By understanding these dynamics, it is hoped that the research results can provide practical recommendations for the development of a more effective and sustainable early childhood Islamic education model.

The urgency of this research is also supported by the fact that early childhood education has a long-term impact on the formation of children's character and behavior in adulthood. Emotional intelligence is the main foundation in equipping early childhood to face a future full of challenges, both in the academic realm and in building a harmonious life as part of the community and nation (Sudaryanti,

2015). Children who receive good Islamic education from an early age tend to have a strong spiritual foundation, which will guide them in facing various challenges in life, “Early childhood Islamic education is a long-term investment that not only impacts the individual, but also society as a whole.”

This research also has a strong rationalization in the context of strengthening the role of the family as the first and main educational institution for children. In Islam, families have a great responsibility in educating their children. This is reflected in the words of Allah SWT in QS. At-Tahrim: 6,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ٥

which means: “O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from the fire of Hell, whose fuel is man and stone; its guardians are the angels who are harsh, and hard, who do not disobey what Allah commands them and always do what is commanded.” This verse emphasizes the importance of the role of parents in providing proper education to their children.

In addition, the holistic approach used in this study provides a new perspective in understanding early childhood Islamic education. This approach does not only focus on cognitive aspects, but also includes the development of children's emotional, social and spiritual aspects. This is in line with experts' views that early childhood education should cover all dimensions of child development in a balanced manner (Al-Amin, 2022). Thus, this

research is not only relevant in the local context of KB Amanah PAUD, but also has a significant contribution to the development of theory and practice of early childhood Islamic education in general. The purpose of early childhood education is to form a generation that is pious, noble, has broad knowledge, is active, creative, independent, democratic and responsible, so that they are able to face future challenges with superior character (Husaini, 2020).

In this context, this research not only contributes to the development of early childhood Islamic education theory, but also provides practical implications that can be applied by educators, parents and policy makers. The results of the study are expected to form the basis for the development of educational programs that are more effective in supporting the role of parents in early childhood Islamic education. Thus, this research has the potential to have a significant impact on improving the quality of early childhood Islamic education in Indonesia and even at the global level.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at KB Amanah PAUD, an Islamic-based early childhood education institution located in Banggai district. This location was chosen because of the holistic approach applied in its education system, which integrates Islamic values with the development of children's social, emotional and cognitive skills. This research focuses on parental involvement as the

main object, with the scope covering practices, challenges and supporting factors in their role towards early childhood Islamic education.

This study uses quantitative data analysis. The main research variables include the level of parental involvement (independent variable) and early childhood development outcomes in the aspect of Islamic values (dependent variable) (Sugiyono, 2020). The results of the data analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the pattern of parental involvement and its impact on early childhood education. This research is relevant to the findings of (Yusra, M., 2019), who stated that active collaboration between parents and teachers greatly influences the success of children's Islamic education.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on data obtained through in-depth interviews, observations and document analysis, this research has uncovered some important findings that reflect the dynamics of parental involvement in supporting early childhood education. To strengthen the results, tables and graphs are presented to illustrate the pattern of involvement and its impact on children's development.

Parental Involvement

Based on interviews, most parents (80%) stated that they actively provide emotional support through loving interactions and reinforcement of religious values. These activities include guiding children to recite

prayers, introducing prophet stories, and familiarizing congregational prayers at home.

However, there is variation in the level of parents' participation in school activities. As shown in Table 1, about 65% of parents regularly attend activities organized by PAUD, such as monthly recitation, parenting classes, and Islamic parenting workshops. The rest (35%) have limited time due to busy work or distance from the school.

Table 1. Parent Participation in PAUD Activities at KB Amanah

Activities	Parent Participation (%)
Monthly Recitation	75%
Parenting Class	60%
Islamic Parenting Workshop	50%
Children's Religious Activities	85%

In addition, observations show that strengthening Islamic values at home is one aspect that is quite consistently carried out by parents. As many as 90% of parents interviewed stated that they familiarize their children with Islamic routines, such as praying before and after meals, reading the Qur'an, and maintaining noble morals in daily interactions.

The Relationship between Parental Involvement and Child Development

The impact of parental involvement on children's development is seen in cognitive, social and spiritual aspects. Based on teacher observations and child development reports, it was found that children whose parents have a high level of involvement tend to show significant progress in the ability to recognize and understand Islamic values. These children

are also better able to apply these values in their daily behavior, such as showing respect for each other, sharing, and discipline in performing worship. The results show that children with high-involvement parents had an average Islamic values understanding score of 85%, significantly higher than children with low-involvement parents (50%). These results indicate a positive correlation between parental involvement and children's spiritual development.

Barriers to Parental Involvement

Although most parents showed significant efforts in supporting their children's education, some barriers were identified. The main barriers include busy work schedules, a lack of understanding of the importance of Islamic education and a lack of supporting facilities at home. Interviews with low-involvement parents revealed that they often feel constrained by time-consuming work demands. This results in limited time to accompany their children or attend activities at PAUD.

Another obstacle found was the lack of awareness among some parents about the importance of Islamic education at an early age. About 15% of respondents stated that they focus more on their children's academic education, such as reading and counting, without realizing that spiritual education also plays an important role in shaping children's character.

KB Amanah's PAUD Strategy in Supporting Parent Involvement

KB Amanah PAUD has implemented various strategies to increase parental involvement in early childhood Islamic education. These strategies include Islamic-based parenting programs, involving parents in religious thematic activities, and intensive communication through digital applications to facilitate coordination between school and parents. For example, this PAUD regularly holds family recitations involving all family members, including children, to build synergy between the values taught at home and at school.

The success of this strategy is reflected in the increase in parental participation from 55% in 2020 to 75% in 2022. Graph 2 shows the trend of increasing levels of parental involvement over the past three years.

Discussion

The results of this study show that parental involvement in early childhood Islamic education has a significant influence on children's spiritual, emotional and social development. This finding underlines the importance of synergy between parents and educational institutions in realizing holistic Islamic values-based learning. In this discussion, the research results will be analyzed more deeply by linking them to Islamic education theories, previous research findings, and the surrounding socio-cultural context.

Parental Involvement as the Foundation of Early Childhood Islamic Education

Parents' involvement in early childhood education, especially in the context of Islamic education, is an implementation of the moral and spiritual responsibilities given by religion. In Islam, children's education is not only the task of formal educational institutions, but also the primary responsibility of the family. This is reflected in QS. At-Tahrim: 6, which emphasizes Allah's command to parents to protect their families from hellfire. The role of parents as the first educators becomes very strategic in instilling Islamic values from an early age.

This study found that most parents in PAUD KB Amanah actively provide emotional support and reinforcement of Islamic values at home. Activities such as guiding children to recite prayers, telling stories of prophets, and involving children in family worship are integral parts of this role. This finding is in line with research by (Hakim, A., Mahmudah, L., & Widodo, 2021), which states that strengthening religious values at home has a long-term impact on children's character formation. Children who receive consistent religious support from their parents tend to have better spiritual awareness and are more disciplined in practicing worship. Students' character, such as responsibility, honesty and respect for rules, greatly influences their level of discipline in learning, as good character helps students build regular and consistent study habits (Tyaningtyas et al., 2021).

However, variations in the level of parental involvement are also a concern. Some parents, especially those with busy work schedules, have limited time to spend with their children. This obstacle often leads to children not receiving adequate attention in learning Islamic values. This is consistent with the findings of (Rahman, A., & Fauziah, 2020), who revealed that the lack of time provided by parents for children's education is one of the main inhibiting factors in the implementation of Islamic education at home.

Holistic Approach in Early Childhood Islamic Education

KB Amanah PAUD implements a holistic approach to early childhood education, which includes the balanced development of children's spiritual, emotional, social and cognitive aspects. This approach emphasizes the importance of integration between formal education at school and informal learning at home. The results show that this approach is effective in helping children understand Islamic values and apply them in everyday life.

This holistic approach supports the views of Fatmawati and (Arrizki, 2021), Early childhood brains develop very rapidly, allowing them to absorb information and learning more effectively, so this period is an important moment in supporting the optimal development of their education and skills. They emphasize that the development of spiritual aspects must go hand in hand with the development of social and emotional aspects. In the context of KB Amanah PAUD, strengthening children's spirituality is done

through activities such as reading prayers and the Qur'an, while social development is facilitated through group activities that teach values such as cooperation and caring.

The positive influence of this approach was seen in the observation results, where children whose parents were actively involved tended to show a better understanding of Islamic values. These children not only understood the concept of Islamic values but were also able to practice them, such as sharing with friends, respecting teachers, and performing worship voluntarily. These results show that a holistic approach not only supports academic learning but also the formation of a strong Islamic character.

The Relationship between Parental Involvement and Child Development

The relationship between parental involvement and child development found in this study showed a significant correlation. Children whose parents had high levels of involvement showed an average score of understanding Islamic values of 85%, compared to 50% in children whose parents had low levels of involvement. This finding supports the research of (Yusra, M., 2019), which states that parental involvement in early childhood education has a direct impact on children's learning success.

In addition, this study identified that parental involvement also affects children's social and emotional aspects. Children who received adequate emotional support from their parents showed better social skills, such as sharing, cooperating and respecting their

friends. This is in line with (Al-Amin, 2022) view, which states that emotional support from parents helps children develop social and emotional skills that are important in their lives.

However, there are differences in the impact of parental involvement on children's development based on the socioeconomic background of the family. Parents from families with better socioeconomic backgrounds tend to have greater access to educational resources, such as Islamic books and digital media, that support children's learning at home. In contrast, parents from economically deprived families often face constraints in providing these resources, which can affect their child's development.

Barriers and Solutions to Increase Parental Involvement

The study also identified various barriers faced by parents in supporting early childhood Islamic education. The main barriers include busy work, lack of understanding of the importance of Islamic education and the lack of supporting facilities at home. These barriers are in line with (Rahman, A., & Fauziah, 2020) findings, which state that economic pressures and work demands are often the main obstacles for parents in supporting children's education.

To overcome these barriers, KB Amanah PAUD has implemented several strategies, such as providing Islamic-based parenting classes, family recitation and intensive communication with parents through digital applications. These strategies aim to increase parents' awareness and skills in supporting children's education at home. The success of

this strategy can be seen in the increase in parental participation in school activities from 55% in 2020 to 75% in 2022.

In the context of early childhood Islamic education, parental involvement has proven to be a key factor in shaping children's strong Islamic character. The holistic approach applied at KB Amanah PAUD illustrates how early childhood education can be effectively designed to support children's spiritual, emotional and social development. Although there are obstacles faced by parents, joint efforts between schools and families can help overcome these obstacles. The findings of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of better early childhood Islamic education policies and practices in the future.

D. CONCLUSION

This research confirms that parental involvement plays a vital role in early childhood Islamic education, particularly in supporting the holistic approach adopted at KB Amanah PAUD. This includes emotional support, participation in school activities and reinforcement of Islamic values at home. As a result, children whose parents are actively involved show a better understanding of Islamic values and significant social and emotional development. Barriers such as busy work schedules and lack of understanding of the importance of Islamic education can be overcome through strategies such as strengthening communication and parent training.

As an implication, this study suggests the importance of synergy between educational institutions and families to create a supportive learning environment. For users and readers, the results offer practical insights in the development of early childhood Islamic education, while for the authors, the findings open up opportunities for further research on the role of technology in supporting parental involvement.

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