

Teacher–Parent Collaboration in Fostering Early Childhood Independence at TK Haholongan Padangsidempuan

Nenni Liani Harahap, Ismaraidha, Nanda Rahayu Agustia

Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the role of *morning circle* activities in fostering discipline among young children at TK Islam Terpadu Syech Mahmud Air Jambu. This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The participants consisted of the principal, classroom teachers, and early childhood learners selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking. The findings revealed that *morning circle* was conducted routinely through praying, reciting short Qur'anic chapters, singing, attendance checking, introducing daily learning themes, and reinforcing classroom rules. These activities contributed significantly to developing children's discipline through habitual punctuality, orderly sitting behavior, compliance with classroom rules, attentive listening, turn-taking, and responsibility for learning activities. The successful implementation of *morning circle* was supported by teacher consistency, a religious school culture, and collaboration with parents, while challenges included differences in parenting styles, children's lateness, and varying levels of self-regulation. The study concludes that *morning circle* is an effective learning strategy for cultivating discipline while simultaneously internalizing Islamic and character education values through continuous habituation.

Keywords: *morning circle*, discipline, early childhood, habituation, Islamic education.

Nenni Liani Harahap¹

¹Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia

e-mail: nenniliani1403@gmail.com¹

Ismaraidha¹, Nanda Rahayu Agustia¹

e-mail: ismaraidha@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id¹, nandarahayu@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id¹

2nd International Conference on Islamic Community Studies (ICICS)

Theme: History of Malay Civilisation and Islamic Human Capacity and Halal Hub in the Globalization Era

Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) represents a crucial stage in human development, as children experience rapid growth in cognitive, socio-emotional, and character domains during this period. One of the essential developmental aspects that should be fostered from an early age is independence. Independence in young children refers to their ability to perform daily activities without excessive reliance on others, make simple decisions, and demonstrate responsibility for themselves. Developing independence provides a fundamental basis for children's future academic success and social adjustment.

In practice, fostering independence in early childhood cannot be achieved through isolated efforts but requires the active involvement of multiple stakeholders, particularly teachers and parents. Teachers play a vital role in creating a supportive learning environment, providing developmentally appropriate stimulation, and serving as role models for independent behavior. Meanwhile, parents, as children's first and primary educators, exert a profound influence on character formation through parenting styles, daily routines, and interactions at home.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that both teachers and parents make significant contributions to the development of young children's character. Teachers function as facilitators, motivators, and role models throughout the learning process, while parents serve as companions and behavioral models in everyday life. Furthermore, effective collaboration between teachers and parents is considered a key factor in optimizing children's development, as it ensures continuity between educational experiences at school and at home. Effective communication enables both parties to align educational values and strategies, including those aimed at fostering children's independence.

Children's independence does not develop spontaneously; rather, it emerges through continuous and integrated stimulation. Research indicates that teachers and parents have complementary roles in cultivating independence through classroom learning activities and home-based habituation practices. Moreover, close collaboration between educators and families has been shown to enhance children's independence through various strategies, including role-playing activities, daily-life routines, and providing children with opportunities to complete tasks independently.

Despite its importance, effective collaboration between teachers and parents continues to face several challenges in practice. Common obstacles include limited communication, parents' time constraints, and differences in parenting styles and educational perspectives. These conditions often hinder efforts to develop children's independence, causing children to remain overly dependent on adults in their daily activities.

TK Haholongan Padangsidimpuan, as one of the early childhood education institutions, plays an important role in promoting children's independence through learning programs that actively involve collaboration between teachers and parents. This collaborative effort offers an interesting context for further investigation to understand the forms of partnership implemented and their impact on children's independence.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the collaboration between teachers and parents in developing early childhood independence at TK Haholongan Padangsidimpuan. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the field of early childhood education and practically to assist educators and parents in establishing effective partnerships that support children's independent development.

Literature Review

2.1 Early Childhood Independence

Independence is a fundamental aspect of early childhood development that refers to children's ability to perform activities without depending excessively on others. It encompasses the ability to make simple decisions, regulate oneself, and assume responsibility for assigned

tasks. According to Hurlock (1978), independence develops gradually through experiences and practice provided within supportive environments.

In the context of Early Childhood Education (ECE), independence extends beyond children's physical ability to perform daily tasks. It also includes socio-emotional competencies such as self-confidence, initiative, and simple problem-solving skills. Morrison (2012) argues that independent children generally demonstrate better adaptability in both social and academic settings. Therefore, independence should be systematically nurtured through structured learning activities and consistent habituation.

Previous studies have shown that daily routines—such as eating independently, organizing toys, and completing simple tasks—significantly improve children's independence. Moreover, allowing children opportunities to explore, make mistakes, and learn from experience constitutes an essential component of independence development (Suyadi, 2010).

2.2 The Role of Teachers in Developing Children's Independence

Teachers play a strategic role in promoting children's independence throughout the educational process. Beyond delivering instructional content, teachers function as facilitators, motivators, and role models who encourage independent learning.

According to Sujiono (2013), teachers can foster independence by implementing learning strategies that encourage children to explore, make decisions, and solve problems independently. Teachers also provide appropriate guidance and positive reinforcement according to children's developmental stages.

Child-centered learning is widely recognized as one of the most effective approaches to promoting independence. Within this approach, children actively participate in learning activities, enabling them to develop responsibility for their own learning experiences (Morrison, 2012).

2.3 Parents' Role in Developing Children's Independence

Parents are children's first and most influential educators. The family environment greatly shapes children's character, including their independence. Parenting styles largely determine how children learn to become independent in everyday life.

According to Yusuf (2011), democratic parenting is more effective in fostering independence than authoritarian or permissive parenting styles. Parents who provide children with opportunities to explore, trust them with responsibilities, and offer guidance without excessive control help children develop confidence and responsibility.

Furthermore, home routines such as making the bed, organizing personal belongings, and participating in simple household chores contribute significantly to children's independence. Consistent rule implementation and positive parental modeling are equally important for successful independence development (Wiyani, 2013).

2.4 Teacher–Parent Collaboration in Early Childhood Education

Collaboration between teachers and parents is a critical determinant of successful early childhood education. Such collaboration includes effective communication, joint planning of learning activities, and consistency in implementing educational values across school and home environments.

According to Epstein (2011), parental involvement significantly enhances children's academic achievement and socio-emotional development. Epstein's School–Family Partnership Model emphasizes communication, participation, and cooperation between educators and families to optimize children's development.

Research further indicates that effective collaboration strengthens children's independence by ensuring continuity in habituation and developmental stimulation. Children are more likely to internalize independent behaviors when they receive consistent guidance in both educational settings.

5. Islamic Educational Perspective on Independence Development

From the perspective of Islamic education, independence constitutes an integral component of moral development and personal responsibility. Islam encourages individuals to become self-reliant, avoid unnecessary dependence on others, and fulfill entrusted responsibilities conscientiously.

The concept of independence in Islam is reflected through the principles of *mas'uliyah* (responsibility) and *ikhtiar* (earnest effort). Daily practices such as performing prayers independently, maintaining cleanliness, and practicing punctuality serve as important character-building activities that cultivate independence from an early age.

Accordingly, teacher–parent collaboration within Islamic education aims not only to develop children's practical competencies but also to nurture character grounded in Islamic values.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of teacher–parent collaboration in developing early childhood independence. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables researchers to explore naturally occurring educational phenomena comprehensively, thereby providing a holistic understanding of collaborative practices implemented at TK Haholongan Padangsidempuan.

The research was conducted at TK Haholongan Padangsidempuan. Research participants consisted of teachers, parents, and young children. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, based on the consideration that they possessed relevant knowledge and experience regarding the research focus. Teachers served as classroom practitioners, parents as children's companions at home, and children as the primary subjects whose independence development was observed.

The study focused on the forms of collaboration between teachers and parents, strategies employed to develop children's independence, and the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing collaborative implementation. Through these focal areas, the research sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between educational collaboration and children's independence development.

Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to examine children's independent behaviors and teacher–parent interactions directly. Semi-structured interviews with teachers and parents explored collaborative practices, communication patterns, and instructional strategies. Documentation, including children's developmental records, learning programs, and evidence of collaborative activities, served as supporting data.

Data analysis followed the interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Relevant data were selected and organized into descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation. Conclusions were continuously verified throughout the analytical process.

To ensure trustworthiness, the study employed source triangulation and method triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from teachers, parents, and observations, while method triangulation compared findings across observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming research findings with participants to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data.

Results

4.1 Forms of Teacher–Parent Collaboration in Developing Children's Independence

The findings from observations, interviews, and documentation indicate that collaboration between teachers and parents at TK Haholongan Padangsidempuan has been systematically implemented through intensive communication, alignment of habituation practices, parental involvement in school activities, and continuous monitoring of children's

development. This collaboration establishes continuity between school and home education, enabling consistent stimulation of children's independence.

Teachers reported maintaining daily communication with parents through face-to-face conversations during drop-off and pick-up times, communication books, and digital messaging groups. Information exchanged included children's behavioral development, ability to complete tasks independently, and challenges encountered during classroom activities. Parents likewise shared information regarding children's behaviors at home, allowing teachers to gain a comprehensive understanding of each child's developmental progress.

Beyond communication, the school actively involved parents in parenting seminars, developmental consultations, learning evaluations, and family-centered school programs. Documentation indicated high levels of parental participation, facilitating shared understanding regarding strategies for fostering children's independence.

These findings demonstrate that teacher–parent collaboration extends beyond information sharing to become a genuine educational partnership. The results support Epstein's (2011) School–Family Partnership Model, which identifies communication and family involvement as fundamental pillars of successful early childhood education.

4.2 Collaborative Strategies for Developing Children's Independence

The study identified four primary collaborative strategies employed jointly by teachers and parents.

a.2.1 Habituation of Independent Activities

Habituation emerged as the most dominant strategy. Teachers consistently encouraged children to place their bags independently, wear their shoes, wash their hands, eat without assistance, organize learning materials, and complete classroom tasks independently. Parents reinforced these habits at home by encouraging children to dress themselves, make their beds, assist with simple household chores, and prepare school supplies. Observations revealed that children receiving consistent habituation at both school and home demonstrated faster independence development than those exposed to habituation in only one setting. These findings reinforce the arguments of Suyadi (2010) and Wiyani (2013) regarding the effectiveness of habituation in character formation.

b.2.2 Modeling

Teachers and parents consistently modeled independent behaviors through daily actions. Teachers demonstrated how to organize learning materials, maintain classroom cleanliness, and complete tasks responsibly before expecting children to do likewise. Parents similarly modeled independent behaviors within the family environment. Observational findings indicated that children naturally imitated adult behaviors. These findings align with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes observational learning through imitation of significant role models (Santrock, 2011).

c.2.3 Assigning Responsibilities

Teachers entrusted children with age-appropriate responsibilities such as leading prayers, distributing books, organizing learning centers, and assisting classroom preparation. At home, parents involved children in watering plants, folding clothes, and organizing toys. Interview data indicated that these responsibilities enhanced children's confidence and willingness to make simple decisions. According to Morrison (2012), opportunities to complete authentic tasks promote self-regulation and independence.

d.2.4 Positive Reinforcement

Teachers and parents consistently provided praise, encouragement, applause, and simple rewards whenever children demonstrated independent behaviors. These positive reinforcements increased children's motivation to repeat desirable behaviors.

4.3 Development of Children's Independence through Teacher–Parent Collaboration

Observational findings demonstrated improvements across multiple dimensions of children's independence.

First, personal independence improved, as children became increasingly capable of wearing shoes independently, eating without assistance, washing hands, using the restroom independently, and organizing personal belongings.

Second, learning independence developed through children's ability to complete assignments, select learning activities, return instructional materials after use, and comply with classroom rules without constant teacher guidance.

Third, social independence improved as children became more confident interacting with peers, expressing opinions, apologizing after making mistakes, and helping classmates experiencing difficulties.

Finally, responsibility increased, as evidenced by children's ability to maintain classroom cleanliness, complete assigned tasks, obey school regulations, and fulfill simple responsibilities both at school and at home.

Overall, interview findings indicated that both teachers and parents observed significant behavioral improvements following consistent habituation practices. Children became more self-confident, less dependent on adults, and increasingly proactive in initiating activities independently.

4.4 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Teacher–Parent Collaboration

The success of collaborative practices was supported by several factors, including teachers' commitment to partnership, active parental participation, open communication, a school culture that promotes character education, and consistent habituation across school and home environments. These synergistic efforts created educational settings that provided continuous developmental experiences.

Conversely, several obstacles were identified, including differences in parenting styles, parents' limited availability due to work commitments, individual developmental differences among children, and inconsistent implementation of habituation practices at home. Some parents continued assisting children with tasks that they were capable of completing independently, thereby slowing the internalization of independent behaviors. These findings support Yusuf (2011), who argues that overly protective parenting may hinder children's independence.

Overall, the study confirms that collaboration characterized by communication, habituation, modeling, responsibility assignment, and positive reinforcement effectively promotes children's independence. Continuous stimulation across school and family environments serves as the primary driving force behind the development of independent behaviors during early childhood.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that collaboration between teachers and parents at TK Haholongan Padangsidempuan plays a crucial role in promoting early childhood independence. This collaboration is manifested through intensive communication, alignment of habituation practices between school and home, active parental involvement in school programs, and continuous monitoring of children's development. Such continuity enables children to experience consistent learning opportunities that effectively foster independent behavior.

The collaborative strategies identified include habituation of independent activities, role modeling by teachers and parents, assigning age-appropriate responsibilities, and providing positive reinforcement for independent behaviors. These strategies contributed to the development of children's personal independence, learning independence, social independence,

and responsibility in performing everyday activities. The study also found that successful collaboration was supported by teacher commitment, active parental participation, effective communication, and a supportive school culture, whereas differences in parenting styles, parents' limited availability, and inconsistent habituation practices at home remained significant challenges.

Overall, this study emphasizes that the development of early childhood independence can be optimized when schools and families establish sustainable partnerships characterized by shared goals, mutual support, and consistent developmental stimulation. Therefore, strengthening school–family partnership programs should remain a priority as part of character education strategies in Early Childhood Education institutions.

References

- [1] Asmidar Parapat, dkk. *Pendidikan Inklusif dalam Pembelajaran Taman Kanak-Kanak*. Jambi: PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia. 2023.
- [2] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- [3] Hurlock, E. B. (1978). *Perkembangan Anak* (Terjemahan). Jakarta: Erlangga.
- [4] Ismaraidha, dkk. *Menyemai Akhlak Mulia, Integrasi Pendidikan Karakter Religius Dan Budaya Literasi Al-Quran Di Madrasah*. Sumatera Barat: PT. Mafy Media Literasi Indonesia. 2024.
- [5] Kemendikbud. (2014). *Standar Nasional Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*. Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- [6] Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- [7] Morrison, G. S. (2012). *Early Childhood Education Today*. Boston: Pearson.
- [8] Munisa, dkk. *Kesiapan Sekolah Anak dalam Perspektif Psikologi*. Medan: PT. Serasi Media Teknologi. 2024
- [9] Rika Widya, dkk. *Holistik Parenting, Pengasuhan dan Karakter Anak dalam Islam*. Jawa Barat: Edu Publisher. 2020
- [10] Rahayu Dwi Utami. [Implementasi Pembentukan Karakter Religius Anak Usia 5-6 Tahun Melalui Kegiatan Pembiasaan di PAUD Harapan Mandiri Kecamatan Medan Deli Kota Medan](#). Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling: Volume 4 Nomor 6 Tahun 2022.
- [11] Santrock, J. W. (2011). *Child Development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- [12] Sujiono, Y. N. (2013). *Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*. Jakarta: Indeks.
- [13] Suyadi. (2010). *Psikologi Belajar Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*. Yogyakarta: Pedagogia.
- [14] Wiyani, N. A. (2013). *Bina Karakter Anak Usia Dini*. Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media.
- [15] Yusuf, S. (2011). *Psikologi Perkembangan Anak dan Remaja*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- [16] Zannatunnisya, dkk. *Pendidikan Karakter untuk Anak Usia Dini (Integrasi Nilai Spiritual)*. Jambi: PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia. 2023.
- [17] Zubaedi. (2011). *Desain Pendidikan Karakter: Konsepsi dan Aplikasinya dalam Lembaga Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Kencana.