

# Relationship between Parental Involvement and The Development of Preschool Children in Piasau Zone, Miri

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## Abstract

Parental involvement is a driver of children's success and excellence. This is because parents are the earliest and often with their children. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify the relationship between parental involvement in home learning and language and communication development, early mathematics as well as the socioemotional and spirituality of preschool children in the Piasau Zone, Miri. The survey respondents consisted of 182 parents or children from nine preschools in the Piasau Zone, Miri. This survey uses a set of questionnaires to collect data. The study questionnaire obtained content validity and achieved reliability with Alpha Cronbach value of 0.932. This study uses quantitative design. The results have shown that parental involvement is at a high level. Data analyzer involves descriptive statistics and inference. The findings show that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and children's development in language and communication development ( $r=0.543$ ), early mathematics ( $r=0.413$ ) and socioemotional and spiritual ( $r=0.413$ ) at the level of confidence  $p<0.05$  using Spearman Rho Correlation. In conclusion, this study has demonstrated the importance of parental involvement in home-based children's learning with language and communication development, early mathematics and socioemotional and spiritual pre-school children in the Piasau Zone, Miri.

**Keywords:** Preschool, Child Development, Parents, Involvement, Home Learning

## Introduction

Early childhood education starts from birth until children are eight years old. This education includes programs for infants, toddlers, preschool, child care center, and early childhood programs, including kindergarten and primary school (Azizah, 2002). According to Fantuzzo et al (2013), the involvement of parents in early childhood education refers to the involvement of parents in the development of children not only at home but also the involvement of parents in preschool. Based on the National Preschool Education Standard Curriculum (2017), the involvement of parents is used. The interpretation and implementation of preschool programs to parents or caregivers should be encouraged to increase awareness of early childhood education and work together to ensure teaching and learning runs smoothly.

According to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2013-2015), the amount of time spent by children at home with their families and local communities is 52% of the time they spend at home. The time spent by students at school with teachers is 15%. It is clear that the involvement of parents in the development of children is a major factor and motivation for the success and brilliance of children because parents are the first and always individuals with children (Anderson & Ann, 1998). This is in line with the opinion of Ismail Ibrahim (2002) that parents are also an important group in creating and maintaining children's interest in learning.

### **Problems Statement**

The issue stated in the study by Chong et al (2012) shows that one of the problems of student academic performance is influenced by several factors, including parental factors. Teenagers and adolescents have low motivation and do not receive adequate support from parents. All parents expect their children to be brilliant in various fields, especially in personality and academics. However, parents lack the understanding of the importance of involving themselves in their children's learning especially learning at home. This goal will be difficult because they are also the source of their children's education. Parents are still the child's first teacher, simply because they know everything about the child that no one else does.

The parents' facilities program under PPPM 2013-2025 (KPM, 2013) began to be implemented. However, there is no official report on the status of parents' involvement in children's learning activities at home. The Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) is also seeking information on the effectiveness of the parents' resource program on student learning in several states. Previous studies rarely incorporate the five components of parental involvement in children's learning at home. According to Suresh Kumar (2015), several independent studies show involvement of parents in children's learning activities at home, especially at the secondary school level has been assessed within the cultural environment and a social context of Malaysia is missing. Therefore, in addition to recognizing the exact collection of parental involvement in a particular item, this study is believed to be the best platform for researcher to examine the prevailing phenomenon based on the five components of improvement.

Studies highlighting parental involvement in the education of Indian students have not been the focus of discussion since the beginning. This issue was also raised and voiced by the former Minister of Education, Khalid (2016) stating the latest statistics show parental involvement in schools in Tamil is volatile. Depending on the country, some places reach 50%, some places only 40%. The guidelines still do not seem to have reached the highest level and the need to be improved in the future. He also drew attention that the role of parents nowadays is not only limited to obtaining their children's school records, but requires them to actively involve themselves in school advisory activities.

### **Research Objectives**

- a. To identify the level of parental involvement during home learning.
- b. To identify the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotional and spirituality of preschool children in the Piasau Zone, Miri.

- c. To identify the relationship between the level of involvement of parents during home learning with the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as the socioemotional and spirituality of children.

## Literature Review

### Epstein's Theory of Parental Involvement

Epstein's theory in the study of Ramalingam et al (2019) focuses on nine aspects of parental involvement namely aspects of motherhood, aspects of communication, aspects of learning at home, aspects of making decisions, aspects of collaboration with the community with aspects of volunteerism that allow parental involvement with school cooperation and outside communities to improve student academic achievement. The results of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between parental involvement in improving students' academic achievement namely in the aspect of learning at home, the aspect of motherhood, the aspect of making decisions and the aspect of volunteerism.

The study 'Parents' Involvement in Children's Education in Low School' by Hartini and Haron (2017) showed that the activities of helping children prepare schoolwork and checking children's schoolwork are the strategies most often carried out by parents regardless of their educational background to contribute to their children's education in low school level. This finding is in line with the purpose of the study, which is to explore the level of parental involvement in children's education while in low school based on Epstein's five types of parental involvement.

In addition, the study of Abdul Halim and Yunus (2022) in 'The Importance of Parental Involvement in Preschool Learning Activities' concluded that Joyce Epstein's parental involvement model is important in children's learning activities whether at home or in learning centers. This study is expected to help increase parental involvement in children's learning activities and provide awareness to parents that early childhood education is holistic.

### Parental Involvement

Independent studies show the importance of parental involvement in children's learning activities (Paezah & Faridah, 2016). Parents' involvement helps parents understand the concept of learning at an early stage and helps guide and educate children in learning. In addition, such involvement can help parents to know the developmental and proficiency stages of children and help to improve the quality of children's learning.

The involvement and cooperation of parents in childhood education is still modest and needs to be improved for the benefit of children's development. The study conducted by Abd Raof et al (2020), aimed to identify the level of parental involvement in childhood education in preschool center in Perak. The study findings show that parents' involvement from their perspective is at a low level. Findings of Ngu (2017) also shows parental involvement and emotional intelligence are very satisfactory while academic achievement is modest. The results of the study showed that both factors of parenting style and parental involvement have a significant influence on academic achievement and emotional intelligence. However, there is no significant influence between emotional intelligence and academic achievement.

The study by Yanti (2017) was conducted to identify the level of parental involvement in children's learning activities at home, identify the level of student academic achievement, identify the differences in parental involvement based on the location of residence, the highest level of education of the parents, the amount of income of the parents, the type of work of the parents and determine the relationship to student academic achievement. In addition, the study results show that there are significant differences in parental involvement based on the highest level of education of the mother, the amount of income of the father and also the type of occupation of the father while other items do not show significant differences.

### **Child Development**

The results of the Nisa and Abu Bakar (2021) study show that the parental factor has a significant relationship with children's emotional development. This study identifies the relationship between parents' emotions and children and their importance to children's development. In addition, Turcule and Tulbure (2015) explained that elements of emotional intelligence naturally need to develop from an early stage again in line with the opinion of Naimah et al (2018) which states that parents need to be good listeners so that children are brave and comfortable to express feelings.

However, the article 'Parents' Expression of Positive Emotions Affects Behavioral Problems (external and internal) among Tadika Children' by Damanhuri et al (2021) discusses how positive emotions among parents affect children's behavioral problems. The results show that positive emotions do not affect children's behavior problems. This suggests further studies need to be carried out to identify other influences for the formation of behavioral problems among children.

The study of Mairin et al (2020) aims to see the relationship between parental involvement and the role of teachers with the academic achievement of low secondary students in the Ranau Region. The results of the study show that there is a significant relationship between communication, provision of a learning atmosphere and parental support at home with the academic achievement of students, This shows that the involvement of parents in communication improves children's communication and language development.

The article by Habibie et al (2018) emphasizes communication to foster a good and harmonious relationship between parents and teenage children apart from discussing the issue of the role and responsibilities of parents to children and families. Another problem that contributes to social problems is the lack of communication between parents and children.

In addition, Syazwana et al (2019) in a study titled 'Devian Behavior among Adolescents in Peninsular Malaysia based on Factors of Parental Monitoring, Parental Communication and Religiosity' aims to examine conceptual studies based on freelance studies for factors that cause an increase in adolescent devian behavior in Peninsular Malaysia. Effective communication will create a sense of affection and a sense of being protected in children. The application of religious practices and knowledge makes children able to think carefully in making decisions. This study explains that the parents involvement not only contributes to the development of communication and language but also socioemotional and spiritual development.

The study by Abd Raof et al (2020) titled 'Stage of Involvement of Parents in Childhood Education in preschool center aims to identify the stage of involvement of parents in childhood education in preschool center in Perak. The findings of their study show that

parental involvement is still at a modest level and needs to be improved for the benefit of children's development. It is believed that this can be maintained consistently through activities recommended by teachers in the learning center.

According to Rahman and Sharakal (2022) stated that the majority of parents have a positive perception of their involvement in PdPR activities despite being out of town. This study helps to understand parents' perspectives, materials used and the efficacy of parents' involvement in children's development. It is evident that both parents ensure that children's development continues even when they are at home.

### Methodology

This study is a quantitative study in the form of a review by reporting all information filled in the research question given to parents or caretakers of preschool students in Zon Piasau, Miri. This study was conducted on 182 parents or guardians of demographic aspects such as gender, age, education level and income. The researcher chose to conduct random sampling due to the large scale of the population. The instrument of the research question is formed basically based on the objectives and problems of the study that have been set at the beginning of the chapter and also seen from three constructs or parts, namely Part A: Respondent Demographics, Part B: Stage of Parental Involvement in Kindergarten Learning at Home and Part C: Stage of Child Development. The views and feedback of language experts and colleagues in the field of early childhood education were also taken into account. The use of question items in the form of statements and the selection of answers has been done through the use of a Likert Scale from 1 to 5. The reliability value with Cronbach's alpha value is 0.932. The validity of the instrument was obtained through a language expert namely the Chairman of the SK Sayed Othman Malay Language Committee namely Encik Hafizuddin. Each question was answered using a 5 Likert scale. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (*Social Science Statistical Package*) version 26 software with descriptive statistics to obtain mean, percentages, frequency and standard deviations. Inference statistics were used to determine the relationship between two variables. Spearman Rho correlation was used to identify the relationship between the level of parental involvement in home learning and the cognitive, emotional, social and language development of preschool children.

### Results

Objective 1: To identify the level of parental involvement during home learning.

The descriptive statistical results in Table 1 show that parental involvement at home is more about cognitive development with a mean score of 4.50 (SP=0.62). This is followed by social development with a mean score of 4.47 (SP=0.48). Next, emotional development with a mean score of 4.31 (SP=0.63) and followed by language development with a mean score of 4.15 (SP=0.66).

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics by Aspect of Parental Involvement*

	Engagement Aspect	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Language	4.15	0.66
2.	Cognitive	4.50	0.62
3.	Emotion	4.31	0.63
4.	Social	4.37	0.48

Based on Table 2, the mean for the level of parental involvement in children's learning at home is 4.33 (SP=0.48). Referring to Table 7.0, the mean and the skill percentage indicate that the level of parental involvement in children's learning at home is at a very high level.

Table 2

*Overall Parent Involvement Stage*

Statistics		
Parent Involvement Stage in Kindergarten Learning While at Home		
N	Valid	182
	Missing	0
Mean		4.33 24
Std. Deviation		.482 53

Objective 2: To identify the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotional and spirituality of preschool children in the Piasau Zone, Miri.

The descriptive statistical results in Table 3 show that children's development in preschool as a result of the relationship that exists in parental involvement is more towards Language and Communication Development with a mean score of 4.34 (SP=0.63). This is followed by children's development in Socioemotion and Spirituality with a mean score of 4.23 (SP=0.71). Next, Early Mathematics recorded a mean score of 4.06 (SP=0.80).

Table 3

*Item Analysis for the Preschoolers' Cognitive, Emotional, Social and Language Development Levels Scale (KESB)*

	Developmental Aspects	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Language and Communication	4.34	0.63
2.	Beginning Math	4.06	0.80
3.	Socioemotional and Spiritual	4.23	0.71

Based on Table 4, the mean for the developmental stages of language and communication, early mathematics and socioemotional and spirituality of preschool children in Zon Piasau in Miri is 4.21 (SP=0.64). Based on these averages and standard deviations, the majority of preschool children's development is at a good level. The majority of preschoolers reached KESB 5 i.e. Language and Communication Development with a mean of 4.52 (0.70). Children can recognize and write the alphabet A to Z. The lowest mean score for socioemotional and spiritual development stage with a mean score of 3.81 (SP=1.10). Children lack self-confidence.

Table 4

*Overall Childhood Development*

Child Development		
N	Valid	182
	Missing	0
Mean		4.2088
Std. Deviation		.64165

**Objective 3:** To identify the relationship between the level of involvement of parents during home learning with the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as the socioemotional and spirituality of children.

To identify the relationship between the level of involvement of parents during home learning with the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotional and spirituality of children in Zon Piasau, Miri, the appropriate trend analysis used is the Spearman Rho Correlation. Spearman Rho correlation analysis has been carried out to identify the relationship between the level of involvement of parents during home learning with the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotional and spirituality of children in Zon Piasau, Miri.

### **The relationship between parental involvement and child development in language and communication development**

To answer study question 3, an alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was formed:



$H_a$ : There is a significant relationship between the level of parental involvement during childhood learning at home and the language and communication development of preschool children in Zon Piasau, Miri.

Based on Table 5, the study findings have reported that the Spearman Rho Correlation value shows that the significant correlation between parental involvement [ $r=0.543$ ,  $p<0.05$ ] with language and communication development is significant i.e. a simple positive relationship. Thus,  $H_a$  is accepted. Justeru, there is a relationship between parental involvement with language and communication development of preschool children in Zon Piasau, Miri. This explains that the higher parental involvement, the better the language and communication development of preschool children.

Table 5

*Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Parents' Involvement in Home Learning and Preschool Children's Language and Communication Development in Zon Piasau, Miri*

Father-Mother Involvement		Language and Communication Development
	Spearman correlation, $r_s$	0.543
	Significant, $p$	0.00
	Decision	Simple

### **The relationship between parental involvement and children's development in early mathematical development**

To answer study question 3, an alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was formed:

$H_a$ : There is a significant relationship between the level of parental involvement during childhood learning at home and the early mathematical development of preschool children in Zon Piasau, Miri.

Based on Table 6, the study findings have reported that the Spearman Rho Correlation value shows that the significant correlation between parental involvement [ $r=0.413$ ,  $p<0.05$ ] and early mathematical development is significant i.e. a simple positive relationship. Thus,  $H_a$  is successfully accepted while  $H_o$  is rejected. There is a relationship between parental involvement and early mathematical development of preschool children in Zon Piasau, Miri. This explains that the higher the parental involvement, the better the early mathematics of preschool children.



Table 6

*Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Parental Involvement in Home Learning and Early Mathematical Development of Preschool Children in Zon Piasau, Miri*

Father-Mother Involvement		Early Mathematical Development
	Spearman correlation, $r_s$	0.413
	Significant, p	0.00
	Decision	Simple

### **The relationship between parental involvement and children's development in socioemotional and spiritual development**

To answer study question 3, an alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was formed:

$H_a$ : There is a significant relationship between the level of involvement of parents during children's learning at home and the socioemotional and spiritual development of preschool children in Zon Piasau, Miri.

Based on Table 7, the study findings have reported that the Spearman Rho Correlation value shows that the significant correlation between parental involvement [ $r=0.413$ ,  $p<0.05$ ] with socioemotional and spiritual development is significant i.e. a simple positive relationship. Thus,  $H_a$  is accepted. So, there is a relationship between parental involvement and the socioemotional and spiritual development of preschool children in Zon Piasau, Miri. This explains that higher parental involvement, the better the socioemotional and spiritual development of preschool children.

Table 7

*Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Parents' Involvement in Home Learning and the Socioemotional and Spiritual Development of Preschool Children in Zon Piasau, Miri*

Father-Mother Involvement		Socioemotional and Spiritual Development
	Spearman correlation, $r_s$	0.406
	Significant, p	0.00
	Decision	Simple

### **Discussion**

This education is very important for children who have just entered school or before entering school but there are still some parents who do not send their children to school at an early stage anymore. In addition, according to Hanifah et al (2016), education is also the main key to increasing the knowledge and awareness of the general public about issues related to the surrounding environment in the present time.

The results are in line with the study of the existence of a significant relationship between parental involvement in cognitive aspects with the development of children in Tabika

KEMAS in the study of (Abdul Raof, 2020). This is because based on the results of child development findings showed 44.8% of respondents agreed that children have been able to mention numbers in order, understand the concept of numbers and match the number of objects with number symbols. This shows that the involvement of parents in cognitive aspects has a good impact on the development of Early Mathematics in children.

Based on study findings, children's cognitive development is influenced by parental involvement. Parental involvement Epstein explained that collaboration with parents can improve children's intellectual development by paying attention or spending time with children at home. For example, providing guidance to children while children are doing schoolwork and checking children's schoolwork. This case is in line with the study of (Hartini and Haron, 2017).

Galakan from parents who answered this research question agreed that their involvement in their children's learning helps to improve the development of Early Mathematics including cognitive children. This is supported by the study of Mageret Lo and Yasin (2022) which states that there is a significant relationship between the involvement of parents and community with the motivation of Malay language learning of SJKC students. In this study, children's cognitive is more clearly presented through the development of Early Mathematics i.e. through pre-number proficiency at an early stage.

In the aspect of children's language development as well, there is a significant relationship between parental involvement in the aspect of children's language development. This suggests that children's language formation can be enhanced by the involvement of parents. Parents are the earliest individuals who influence children's language development to some extent. Children's language development is a major need where if this need is met, then it has a positive impact on children's reading and writing activities. According to Masran et al (2010), parents play a role in helping children to improve reading skills. In this regard, children's language and communication development will improve.

According to Bachman and Heather (2010), parents are the first teachers of children and are indirectly involved in educating children. This study was able to determine the extent of the role of parents to ensure children's development whether at home, preschool or in the community. So, this relates to the opinion of Machado (2016) which states when children are born, language skills are the first skills mastered by them. In addition, children's social behavior is one of social communication and a way to connect with others (Leaf et al, 2016). Parents play the role of monitoring children's language and communication achievements at home in line with an age-specific features of language development.

Study findings suggest that parental involvement at home encompasses the holistic development of children. Indirectly, children's language and communication development progresses rapidly. This is because as parents provide every guidance in children's activities at home indirectly improves children's literacy. For example, playing and helping children prepare for schoolwork.

In the aspect of activities with children, this study illustrates that parents are involved in children's learning at home either directly or indirectly. In addition, the influence of parents' involvement and behavior has a significant relationship with children's development.

Apart from that, children will have the potential for development through experiences in the activities they carry out while at school. Here children will cause the nature of maturity by associating and familiarizing themselves with their environment inside or outside the school. This fact is supported by (Chandra, 2017) which states that children's development

is all the changes that will occur and seen from various aspects, especially children's motor development. With this, parents will indirectly involve themselves in their child's education at the beginning of their schooling. Moreover, in order to have a perfect and effective education, teachers need to provide teaching and learning that suits each of their child's development.

### Conclusion

As a formulation, through this study, we can identify the relationship between the level of involvement of parents during children's learning at home with the development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotional and spirituality of preschoolers in Piasau Zone, Miri. The development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotion and spirituality of preschoolers in Piasau Zone, Miri is better if the involvement of parents during children's learning at home is high.

Overall, the involvement of parents or caregivers can increase the level of confidence of children in carrying out the activities assigned to them either at preschool or at home. Indirectly, when the involvement of parents increases, children's development becomes better. This has impacted the findings of the study and further confirms the level of involvement of parents during children's learning at home has an influence on the level of development of language and communication, early mathematics as well as socioemotional and spirituality of preschool children in Piasau Zone, Miri.

Parental involvement has an impact on child development. This is evidenced through the study of (Plotkin et. al., 2013). He stated that the results of parental involvement bring benefits to children's emotional development including behavioral problems and their academic achievement. Parental involvement during children's learning at home is important in ensuring holistic child development. This study contributes to the country's education system as shown in Table 8 below:

Table 8

#### *Importance and Contribution of the Study*

No.	Parties involved	Importance of the Study	Study Contribution
i.	Parents or Guardian	According to Bachman and Heather (2010), parents are the first teachers to children and are indirectly involved in educating children. For example, in preschools, the relationship between parents and educators can be manifested in the learning and development of children.	This study is able to determine the extent of the role of parents to ensure the development of children whether at home, preschool or in the community.
ii.	Teachers and School	According to Epstein (1991), schools, parents and communities provide opportunities for students to gain exposure to the outside world and influence students' learning and experiences directly. This study describes the role of	This study establishes a creative and intimate teacher-parent relationship that encourages parents to continue to be actively involved in childhood education.

		teachers in creatively using various approaches to enhance continuous parental involvement. Parental involvement affects children's development. For example, teachers provide ideas or materials to parents for children to use during home learning.	
iii.	Pejabat Pelajaran Daerah (PPD), Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri (JPN) dan Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (KPM)	Policy makers such as the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) need to take into account policies that can enable collaboration between schools and parents. For example, through training and professional development in collaboration with schools. For example, creating training modules for parents and educators that promote motherhood and home and preschool relationships.	This study helps to lay the groundwork for the development of systems and mechanisms.

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