



Parents Involvement in Early Childhood Education Institutions in Buleleng Regency, Bali

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Abstract

Parents are the first and the most important social environment in a child's life. This study aimed at describing parents' involvement at early childhood education institutions in Buleleng district, Buleleng regency, Bali. The data of the study were collected from 230 respondents at early childhood education institutions and were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results showed that most of the respondents had a tendency of a low involvement, i.e. , 136 respondents (59.1%) , while the number of respondents with a high involvement was 94 (49.9%). This indicates that there are still many parents who ignore the importance of parents' role at school. In addition, the school has not yet got a program that maximally supports parents at school.

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INTRODUCTION

Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2013 show the average level of dropouts for elementary school children in Indonesia was 0.67 percent or 182,773 children in which the averages for the low achieving provinces were higher (Srie, 2013). Obviously, there were many factors influencing the figure, but parental involvement, both physically and mentally also had a significant influence.

Basically, the presence and the involvement of parents can increase children's motivation to learn and explore their aptitudes, abilities and attitudes in meeting the challenges. So far, the academicians have believed that parental involvement in children's education has a positive effect to the children themselves. The study conducted by National School Public Relation Association showed that a high parental involvement will have an effect that will improve the children's academic performances, the children's attendance at school, and the formation of good behaviour at home and school. A similar result was pointed out by Keane (2007) who stated that parental involvement improves the children's chance to succeed at school. The finding by Hoover-Dempsey et. al. (2005) showed that parental involvement in the educational process at school plays an important role in helping the students in learning; the formation of behaviour that supports their school, teachers, and social environment; and the ability to adapt to the impact of globalization well.

Parental involvement, in this case, not only at the time children are outside of their homes or at school. The form of parental involvement in education can be identified in some different patterns such as cooperation between parents and children at home (for example, helping with homework), school-based activities (for example, attending school programs), or communication between the parent and the teacher (for example, talking with the teacher about homework), and observation of children's behaviour outside the school (Rahman, 2014). In this case, there is a need for cooperation between parents and school to give an optimal intervention to children's development. Parents cannot only hand the children fully to the teachers at the time they are at school and do not care about the activities or programs made by the school. In fact, the activities at school often need parental involvement, like in getting the children's report cards, etc. Moreover, the communication between teachers and parents both in the formal and informal contexts needs

to be done to improve parents' understanding and to plan activities consistent with what is obtained by the children at school.

Buleleng regency is located in the northern part of Bali island with the largest area compared to other regencies in Bali. From the point of the distribution of the population, the population of Buleleng regency mostly or 17.90% live in Buleleng district. The dominance of the people in Buleleng district is caused by the fact that Buleleng district is the center of government, economy, education, sociocultural, etc. This condition also causes the area of Buleleng district to become the most densely populated area, that is, with the total of 3,074 people/square kilometers (bulelengkab.go.id). With the dense population, of course it can be predicted that the majority of the population of Buleleng district are active workers. This of course has an effect on the situation of the parental involvement at school, especially at the early childhood education institution (PAUD). Thus, this study explored comprehensively parental involvement in children's education at school in the children's activities and in the communication that develops between parents and teachers at school.

In defining parental involvement, every researcher has a different point of view. So far, there has not any definition that is accepted by all. Larocque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011) defined parental involvement as parent's investment for children's education. Myeko (2000) sees parental involvement as the process in which parents participate in various children's academic activities. Nye, et al. (2006) defined parental involvement as parent's effective involvement in children out of the school hours that focuses on the improvement of children's academic performances. In this case, the stress is in the parents' involvement in the children's out of school activities, such as a visit to the zoo or when parents play with the children.

According to Vandergrift and Greene (2001), there are two main elements in the concept of parental involvement or what is often called parental involvement. The first element is parents' commitment in giving support to children. This element is related to giving moral support to children, showing sympathetic attitude, understanding children, etc. The second element is activity and participation, for example, by helping children to with their tasks, inviting them to go on picnic while learning, etc. It is the combination of these both elements

that is called parental involvement (La Bahn, 1995).

Dekker and Lemmer (1993) described parental involvement as activities starting from the presence at the school up to help parents to become good teachers for their children. Parental involvement is also seen as a continuum from activities at home, activities at school, to collaboration between home and school (Shores, 1998). The home activities cover checking children's homework, checking report cards, etc. School activities cover attending a meeting of the teachers and the parents or doing a volunteering activities at their children's schools while the last is the collaboration between teachers and parents that are shown by activities such as parents participating in planning activities at the school together with teachers in making policies at the school. These activities give the chance to parents to contribute and give influence to the school This view sees parental involvement as the connection between parents, teachers and students and the larger community in the framework of motivating, supporting and participating actively in the school activities. Parental involvement in children's education is the joint responsibility in which the school is committed to being involved through various ways, and parents are committed to actively supporting children's learning development.

RESEARCH METHOD

The subjects of the study were parents who had children with the ages that ranged from 4 to 5 at kindergartens in Buleleng district. This study involved 230 respondents from 15 early childhood institutions. Data collection was done using questionnaire and the data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative approach and qualitative approach through interviews with 15 headmistresses of kindergartens in Buleleng Bali in order the study could give significant results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

From the 300 questionnaires that were distributed, there were 230 questionnaires that were returned and could be used. The number of these respondents was obtained from the number of the parents of the students who went to 15 PAUD institutions that were distributed all over Buleleng district.

Based on table 4.1 below, the number of respondents was dominated by women, in which there were 158 women (68.7%), while

there were 72 men (31.3%). In terms of ethnicity, there were 207 Balinese (90%), while there were 23 other ethnic people (10%). The educational levels in this study were divided into two, that is, diploma degree and lower (119 or 51.7% respondents) and undergraduate degree and higher (111 or 48.3% respondents). In terms of occupational status, 154 or 67% respondents were employed and 76 or 33 % unemployed. In terms of marital status, there were 221 or 96.1% respondents were married and 9 or 3.9% respondents were separated or single parents.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Data

Respondents' Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	72	31.3%
Female	158	68.7%
Ethnic Group		
Balinese	207	90%
Non-Balinese	23	10%
Education		
Diploma and lower	119	51.7%
Undergraduate and higher	111	48.3%
Occupational Status		
Employed	154	67%
Unemployed	76	33%
Marital Status		
Married	221	96.1%
Separated	9	3.9%
Child's gender		
Male	126	54.8%
Female	104	45.2%

General Description of Parental Involvement

In addition to the general description of parental involvement, in table below there is the general description of house, school and house- school based parental involvements as follows:

Table 2. General Description of Parental Involvement

Variable	Mean	SD	Lowest Score	Highest Score
Parental Involvement	2.37	0.55	1.10	3.71
Home-based involvement	2.75	0.57	1.00	4.00
School-based involvement	2.02	0.66	1.00	3.57
Home-school involvement	2.35	0.71	1,00	3.71

Based on the table above, it is apparent that the mean of parental involvement was 2.37 with Standard Deviation of 0.55, the lowest score was 1.10 and the highest score was 3.71. Each dimension in the parental involvement is also shown in the table above. The means for home-based involvement, school-based involvement, and home-school involvement respectively were 2.75, 2.02, and 2.35. While the standard deviations for home-based involvement, school-based involvement, and home-school involvement were 0.57, 0.66, and 0.71 respectively.

From the scores obtained, the respondents can then be categorized into two categories: the respondents with a high involvement and those with low involvement with the scales 1- 4. The respondents with scores from 1.00 to 2.51 fall into low category. And those with scores from 2.51 to 4 fall into high category. The following is the distribution of scores of the respondent parental involvement:

Table 3. Distribution of Parental Involvement Scores

Variable	Low		High	
	F	%	F	%
Parental involvement	136	59.1%	94	40.9%
Home-based involvement	75	32.6%	155	67.4%
School-based involvement	173	75.2%	57	24.8%
Home-school involvement	134	58.3%	96	41.7%

Based on the table above it can be seen that most of the respondents had a parental involvement that tends to be low, that is, 136 (59.1%) of them tend to have a low parental involvement, while the number of respondents with a high parental involvement was 94 or 40.9%. This result is like the result for school-based involvement and that for home-school involvement in which most of the respondents had a low parental involvement. Different from these is home-based involvement, in which the number of respondents with a high involvement exceeds that with a low involvement. The number of respondents with a low home-based involvement was 75 respondents (32.6%), while the number of respondents with a high home-based involvement was 155 respondents (67.4%).

Description of Parental Involvement Based on Demographic Data

The following is the description of parental involvement seen based on demographic data that consist of gender, ethnic group, occupational status, education, employment status, marital status, and child's demographic data that consist of sex, ethnicity, education, employment status, marital status, and the child's sex:

Table 4. Table of parental involvement based on demographic data

Respondent's Characteristics	Parental Involvement			
	Mean	SD	Lowest Score	Highest Score
Sex				
Male	2.24	0.55	1.24	3.43
Female	2.43	0.54	1.10	3.71
Ethnicity				
Balinese	2.36	0.55	1.10	3.71
Non-Balinese	2.48	0.55	1.33	3.43
Education				
Diploma and lower	2.28	0.54	1.10	3.62
Undergraduate and higher	2.47	0.54	1.24	3.71
Occupational Status				
Employed	2.35	0.53	1.24	3.62
Unemployed	2.42	0.59	1.10	3.71
Marital Status				
Married	2.37	0.55	1.10	3.71
Separated	2.46	0.50	1.86	3.29
Child's Sex				
Male	2.36	0.53	1.10	3.52
Female	2.39	0.57	1.33	3.71

The table above shows that female parents had a higher level of involvement than male parents. Respondents from Balinese ethnic background tended to have a lower level of involvement than their non-Balinese counterparts. In addition, from the educational level point of view, respondents with a diploma degree and a lower degree had a lower level of involvement than those with an undergraduate degree or a higher degree. The same tendency is shown by the respondents who were married compared to those who were separated (single parents). Then when looked at from the occupational status, a quite significant difference is shown between the respondents who were employed and those who were unemployed. The respondents who worked tended to have a low level of involvement than those who did not

work. Finally, the respondents with female children showed a level of involvement that was more or less the same as those who had male children.

From the scores obtained, the respondents in each characteristic can be categorized into two categories: the respondents with a high level of involvement and those with a low level of involvement with the scales (1-4) used. The respondents with means between 1.00 – 2.51 fall into a low category, and those with means between 2.51 – 4.00 into a high category. The following is the distribution of the scores of parental involvement of the respondents.

Table 5. Parental Involvement Scores Distribution Based on Demographic Data

Respondents' Characteristics	Low		High	
	F	%	F	%
Sex				
Male	50	69.4%	22	30.6%
Female	86	54.4%	72	45.6%
Ethnicity				
Balinese	124	59.9%	83	40%
Non-Balinese	12	52.2%	11	47.8%
Education				
Diploma and lower	77	64.7%	42	35.3%
Undergraduate and higher	59	53.2%	52	46.8%
Occupational Status				
Employed	95	61.7%	59	38.3%
Unemployed	41	53.9%	35	46.1%
Marital Status				
Married	130	58.8%	91	41.2%
Separated	6	66.7%	3	33.3%
Child's Sex				
Male	72	57.1%	54	42.9%
Female	64	61.5%	40	38.5%

Most of the male and female respondents, showed a tendency to have a low level of involvement than a high level. However, the difference is more obvious in the male respondents. In the male respondents, the low level of involvement was 69%, and the high level was 30.6%. The female respondents with a low level of involvement was 54.4% and the high level was 45.6% respondents. Then, for Balinese respondents, most of them had a tendency to have a low level of involvement. Different from Balinese respondents, the non-Balinese respondents had a tendency to be balanced in the number of those with low and high level of involvement. When looked at from the point of view of education, the level of involvement tended to be low in the respondents with a diploma degree or a lower level of

education than a diploma degree and those with an undergraduate degree or a higher degree that an undergraduate degree. However, this difference is more clearly seen in the respondents with a diploma degree or a lower level of education. In the respondents who were employed, 61.7% had a low level of involvement while the ones with a high level of involvement was 38.3%. The same was true with the married respondents. There was 58.8% of them had a low involvement and only 41.2% had a high level of involvement. The difference between the low and the high involvement was not so obvious in the respondents who were separated (single parents). Then, in the respondents with male children, the level of their involvement tended to be low (57.1%) compared to the high involvement (42.9%). Similarly, in the respondents with female children there was 61.5% of them had a low involvement and only 38.5% of the respondents had a high level of involvement.

In addition to distributing the questionnaires to the parents, the writer also had interviews with kindergarten headmistresses and it was revealed that most of the parents were active going to the schools who were dominated by mothers. From the result of the interviews it was also known that the programs that involved parents at the schools were only school program activities socialization and a meeting in which children progress report cards were handed to their parents. Fifteen headmistresses stated that they had not yet had programs that really involved parents in the teaching process. However, the schools always attempted to open communications with parents. This was done among others by using a contact book, holding a meeting with parents if their children had problems or communicating with the parents every day when the parents take their children to the schools or pick them up from the schools. If we refer to the statement made by Rahman (2014) that parental involvement at the school can be seen when parents help their children with their homework, when they attend the school programs or when there is a communication between parents and teachers, then the parents in Buleleng district have been involved in their children's education. However, the question is: Can attending a school activity socialization and a meeting where children's progress report cards are handed to parents fully support children's development maximally? Whereas according Epstein (1995) there are 6 types of parental involvement, that is parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making

and collaborating with community. Thus there is a need to make further attempts by the school to involve parents in a the teaching and learning programs at school.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study done in Buleleng district on parental involvement in the early childhood education institutions (PAUD), then it can be concluded that there are still many parents who have a low level of involvement at the schools. This indicates that many parents ignore their roles at the schools. The reason why they ignore their roles, when we see it from the demographic data analysis is that many parents who work can be categorized as parents with a low level of involvement, and this can be safely concluded that because they are busy with their jobs, they do not have time to be involved in the school activities. The second conclusion is that the schools have not yet had a program that supports the involvement of parents at the schools maximally. Therefore, it can be suggested that the result of this study can be used as reference for doing further research on the development of a program of parental involvement at school.

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