

## Social Sensitivity in Early Children Based on Grandparenting

Galih Retno Palupi<sup>\*</sup>, Yuli Kurniawati Sugiyo Pranoto<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Early Childhood Education Department, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>\*</sup>Correspondence to: [galihretnopalupi@students.unnes.ac.id](mailto:galihretnopalupi@students.unnes.ac.id)

**Abstract:** This study aims to determine the social sensitivity that comes from the care of grandparents in early childhood, where this analysis is based on aspects of social sensitivity, namely helping, self-awareness, and cooperation. Social sensitivity is a person's action to react quickly and appropriately to objects or social situations that exist in the surrounding environment. Based on the results of direct observations, it was found that the social sensitivity of young children is still not well developed. This research uses qualitative methods with interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The subjects in this study were grandmothers and grandfathers of early childhood in Sukoharjo. The results of this research show that young children have social sensitivity which is dominant in the aspect of helping. Based on the research results, the forms of grandparent care for early childhood are companionate and involved, because companionate is a form of grandparent care that is not fully involved in the individual's life because the parent still plays a role. Meanwhile, parenting is involved where grandparents are like parents of early childhood without any parenting involvement. This is because there are differences in the transition of care that occurs due to work factors and death factors.

**Keywords:** Social Sensitivity, Early Childhood, Grandparenting

## INTRODUCTION

In this advanced era, there are many ways to get an education, including through formal and non-formal education. At this time, education is a basic need that must be owned by everyone in order to face the challenges of life. Education is important for everyone, because education is the root of a nation's civilization.

Early childhood is a child who is in the process of growth and development. Early childhood is a child who is in the age range of 0-8 years, which is included in educational programs such as daycare centers, family child care homes, private and public preschool education, kindergartens, and elementary schools (NAEYC, 1992). At this age, experts call it the golden age, which only occurs once in human development.

Social development is the process of changing early childhood abilities to adjust to a wider social environment (Desmita, 2009). The environment that will accompany children in the process of social development.

Social development in early childhood is strongly influenced by the environment, namely the family, school and community environment around the child himself. Social development is the ability to behave well with peers, parents and society in order to adjust (Hurlock in Jamila, 2019; Mayar, 2013). In line with Hurlock's opinion, according to Aisyah (2012: 35) she argues that social development is a process of learning abilities and behaviors related to individuals to live as part of their group.

In simple terms, children's social sensitivity means that a person's ability to react quickly and appropriately to an object or certain social conditions around them (Tondok, 2012). Every early childhood must have a different stage of social sensitivity. Social sensitivity is not an ability that every child is born with.

Social sensitivity will be formed and developed from and through experience. The experience of each child is basically obtained from the interaction between the individual and the surrounding environment. Play is one of the children's interaction needs that must be met, because early childhood is in a golden period where the development and growth of children is developing very rapidly (Helmawati, 2015).

Social sensitivity includes behaviors such as sharing things with others, helping others, cooperation, honesty, generosity, and paying attention to the rights and welfare of others, such things can build interactions between other individuals to become more familiar and create a sense of mutual respect, mutual trust, and respect between others. According to Scott (in Sukardi, 2015) social sensitivity can increase a person's ability to make moral judgment, moral decision making, and moral action which is then applied in everyday life. The ability that children have will help them to interact with their fellow friends.

The family is a place to socialize in a society, which is the first destination in human life. The family itself is formed from a marriage between a man and a woman, which is a small group consisting of a father, mother, and children. The family is the smallest unit that is closely related to one another.

According to Cooley (in Soekanto, 2006) the primary group is a group characterized by the characteristics of knowing between its members and close cooperation that is personal in nature. So that directly the family will shape the character of the child, whether it is formed consciously or unconsciously into the parenting style applied.

Parents who transfer their care to grandparents due to parents working (economy), death (death), and divorce.

This becomes an influence in the process of parents to guide and care for their children, so that sometimes in parenting parents need help from others, such as being cared for by their grandparents (Ingersoll-Dayton et al., 2020). In these conditions, it causes the opportunity for grandparents to take on a caregiving role for their grandchildren. Grandparents feel they have responsibility for the care of their grandchildren, because parents are not fully able to provide care for their grandchildren. Ayun (2017) Grandparents' care is as a substitute for parents by helping their children as the main caregiver who carries the burden of care responsibility.

Parents consider that grandparenting is very suitable for childcare as a substitute for their parents, because grandparents are more knowledgeable and experienced in caring for their grandchildren (Arifin, 2015). Grandparents feel obliged to take care of their grandchildren because trust and reciprocity are part of what happens in the correlation of relationships. In the process of caregiving by grandparents, it is usually influenced by the age of grandparents, which can have an impact on the relationship between grandparents and early childhood (grandchildren) (Drew et al., 1998).

Grandparenting has both positive and negative impacts. Because the care provided by grandparents at an early age will affect the child's next stage of development when he or she becomes a teenager and adult. Brooks in Arismanto (2008: 45) suggests that the positive impact of grandparenting is that children will have an independent spirit and never give up in carrying out daily activities, especially children whose parents are divorced. Negative impacts include children becoming disobedient to parents (sometimes fostered by grandparents), children tend to have a shy nature, and low learning achievement at school. In connection with this, grandparents can use parenting patterns perfectly and wisely on their grandchildren.

perfectly and wisely with their grandchildren.

Through observations made in rural areas, early childhood in rural areas aged 2-3 years tend to have social sensitivity in the form of helping. In that case, the role of grandparents provides care in the form of stimulation for early childhood to help others, share food, play with friends, and offer help. Early childhood given stimulation will be moved to do what their grandparents suggest. The care that grandparents provide will certainly affect aspects of early childhood social sensitivity that will respond quickly and accurately to an object.

Based on the results of a survey that has been conducted through a questionnaire form distributed on May 20, 2023 to June 10, 2023 to parents of early childhood in rural areas, it can be concluded that the number of parents who entrust their children to grandparents is 22.3% of 103 people, 3.9% of whom children are entrusted in daycare, then 63.1% of them children are fostered by their own parents. Due to several factors, one of which is far from parents. Then, parents in rural areas choose to entrust their children to grandparents.

In Sukoharjo district is a rural area, in some areas it is like an urban area, but not a few areas are still rural. Then from the survey conducted, it shows that 27 out of 103 parents prefer to entrust their children to grandparents on the grounds that children are more awake and parents are calm when they are cared for by their own grandparents. From the care that is divided between grandparents and parents, there will definitely be differences in the care of each of them, then from how to respond to things, and how to socialize with their environment.

## **METHODS**

This research was conducted in rural areas of Sukoharjo Regency. This research uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative research based on research observations with qualitative methods is doubtful by quantitative method research, but qualitative research involves social processes with the people studied. Qualitative research can basically be interpreted as research that involves a person's life, history, social activities, behavior, etc., as well as research that involves a person's life, history, social activities, and behavior.

Qualitative research methods are divided into biography, phenomenology, case study, grounded theory, and ethnography approaches.

The subjects in this study were determined based on the results of a research survey conducted through google forms that have been distributed in cities and villages. Which is distributed to parents of early childhood, and filled in by parents of early childhood related to the required data.

The data sources in this study include grandparents of early childhood who have a full-time form of care. Researchers used source triangulation and theory triangulation techniques to obtain valid data. Data were analyzed by using data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Grandparents in rural areas claim that their grandchildren are sensitive to their environment. In early childhood social sensitivity forms are helping, self-awareness, and cooperation. Early childhood tends to do a form of helping social sensitivity. With their social sensitivity, children can provide appropriate responses. Social sensitivity does not only tend to one aspect, other aspects of social sensitivity are also found in early childhood with the help of stimulus from grandparents, namely self-

awareness and cooperation.

### **1. Social Sensitivity related to Helping Hands**

The first finding is that when grandparents provide stimulus to their grandchildren, these early childhood can understand what their grandparents teach, even without being given a stimulus they can apply or offer a form of help to others, but there are some times they must be given understanding first.

The purpose of using qualitative research is to gain an understanding of social reality from the opinions of participants. Qualitative research can be grouped into several types. According to Denzin & Lincoln quoted by Irianto and Subandi (2015).

Providing help. Some statements experienced by grandparents in stimulating social sensitivity in the aspect of helping include.

#### **a. Children are able to provide help for others**

The child is willing to help others when someone asks for help or assistance, he/she does not think long and responsive to do or take action that must be done at that time. Children tend to immediately help what can be done after there is a request from others.

#### **b. The child is not yet emotionally stable**

In some time according to the research results, grandparents said that their grandchildren still need to be given input so that they can be responsive to things around them. Early childhood sometimes does not have the willingness to help, and prefers to be busy with what is being done regardless of the surroundings.

#### **c. Child is able to offer help to others**

Children who are able to offer help are quicker to respond to situations that are happening, children observe their surroundings, and they are not shy to offer help to others first.

In this statement, grandparents always provide stimulation to their grandchildren so that early childhood has social sensitivity in the aspect of helping. Thus, grandparents can do habituation and communication with their grandchildren so that they can understand how it should be. Communication between grandparents and early childhood must be well established in relation to the care provided by grandparents.

### **2. Social Sensitivity related to Self-Awareness**

The second finding regarding social sensitivity getting grandparent care is from the aspect of self-awareness. Self-awareness is instilled and becomes a habit in the daily life of early childhood. Grandparents sometimes need time to give understanding or explanation to their grandchildren. Early childhood is easy to realize something that happens around them. Some statements experienced by grandparents in stimulating social sensitivity in the aspect of self-awareness include:

#### **a. The child has a fairly good sense of awareness**

Children who can realize what is happening around them such as when grandparents are angry, early childhood understands and they cry or choose to be quiet first, if they know what to do, early childhood will apologize to grandparents without being given understanding first.

#### **b. Children easily sense what is happening around them**

When grandparents are angry, early childhood will control themselves not to do something that makes grandparents angry. But not a few of them sometimes cannot control themselves.

Then they can model what happens when grandparents are angry.

- c. The child is able to accept explanations when given directions by grandparents\

When early childhood makes a mistake, the grandparents as caregivers will provide their role, namely giving explanations to their grandchildren, this is done so that early childhood can understand the circumstances that occur, and can process their emotions properly. So that in the future it can be applied what if the things that have been given an explanation will be repeated.

- d. The child needs adjustment when given an explanation

Early childhood can understand what grandparents say when grandparents give explanations, but not all early childhood can understand the explanation correctly, sometimes requiring several repetitions in the explanation so that early childhood can understand it.

From the above results it can be said that early childhood requires time to be able to understand the situation around him, how he should act and take steps, and when he is wrong he should do what. But some time early childhood can understand and understand with *tepa tapa* that must be done without repetition of explanations from grandparents.

### **3. Social sensitivity related to cooperation**

The third finding regarding social sensitivity in early childhood who get grandparent care is from the aspect of cooperation. Cooperation carried out by early childhood together with their friends and family. The form of early childhood cooperation is in the form of cooperation in completing games, cooperation in tidying up toys, cooperation to complete something with the same goal. Early childhood cooperates with their peers when they are in the house and in the home environment. The following statement is experienced by grandparents in providing stimulation of social sensitivity (social sensitivity) aspects of cooperation, including:

- a. Children are able to interact with their peers

When early childhood is outside the home environment he is able to interact with his friends, he wants to play together with his friends, this can be done by early childhood because the grandparents have explained in advance with their grandchildren if they play with their friends outside the home, try to play with good, not to hit and hurt their friends.

- b. Children are willing to cooperate in the family environment with the direction of grandparents

When early childhood plays in the house, he will play with his toys, this will make his toys scattered on the floor, then the grandparents here take the role of giving understanding and modeling to their grandchildren so that they want to tidy up the toys that have been used. Then grandparents or aunts who are in the house cooperate with early childhood to tidy up their toys.

- c. Children participate in group activities with friends

Activities carried out by early childhood are not only at home, of course, early childhood activities outside the home as well such as playing with neighbors, playing with younger siblings or older siblings outside the home, or participating in activities around the house such as TPQ (Taman Pendidikan Al- Qur'an). In these activities the child will meet many friends who are his age or older than him. Children will work together when there is a game or mission from the ustadz or ustadzah who teaches at the TPQ. Early childhood can play and work together cooperatively. Early childhood wants to be together with their friends to complete the game or

mission given.

The stimulation provided by grandparents is certainly not all that can be done by early childhood, because some time early childhood needs to be given repeated understanding. However, grandparents will not give up if early childhood cannot reach the point of development they expect, grandparents will always try to provide stimulation to their grandchildren. As grandparents who take care of early childhood, they must have several options in providing stimulation to children. So that if there are options that have not been successful, they can use other options to stimulate early childhood.

Social sensitivity will slowly grow in early childhood if they get good stimulation from their environment. Grandparents will try to make their grandchildren understand what action to take if something happens around them. Even so, if the young child is still struggling, the grandparents will stimulate the young child with developmentally appropriate care.

#### **4. Forms of Grandparenting towards Early Childhood**

The research findings related to the form of grandparents' care for early childhood are different. Because each family has a different background which results in different forms of parenting as well. So, in this case it can be seen that the form of grandparent care can be caused by factors; economy, family, parents died. In this case, the grandparents take on the role of providing care to early childhood as their grandchildren. Grandparents provide maximum care for early childhood, so that children can grow and develop according to their age stage of development.

When viewed from the factors that cause grandparentin parenting, the forms of parenting that occur also vary, including:

##### **a. Companionate**

Researchers' findings regarding the form of parenting grandparents who take on the role of caring for early childhood with the condition of the early childhood parents are single. Because the mother of the early childhood has died when he was 4 days old. So grandparents take on the role of providing full-time care so that the child does not lose the care he should get.

##### **b. Involved**

The findings of early childhood researchers who are fostered by grandparents like grandparents like parents because parents work outside the city, so grandparents take on the role of caregivers because early childhood is left behind by both parents to earn a living outside the city. Then, the next research findings regarding early childhood who have younger siblings with a slight age difference, in that case the two parents decide to entrust their older siblings first with their grandparents, so that the care provided is maximized. Even though the older sibling must be with the grandparents, this will not reduce the parents' affection for the older sibling.

The different forms of parenting from each grandparent will still provide the best care for their grandchildren. In fact, grandparents act like early childhood parents. Because the care provided is full-time care. Early childhood for 24 hours with grandparents without the role of parents in it.

Parents continue to monitor from a distance due to limited circumstances that require them to be apart for some time. Early childhood also understands that he is with his grandparents not with his parents, in this case early childhood can also learn to be independent.

## DISCUSSION

In the research results section, data on social sensitivity in the aspects of helping, self-awareness, and cooperation have been presented. Then the data on the form of grandparents' care for early childhood has also been presented. Furthermore, researchers will discuss in more depth about the three aspects of social sensitivity and the form of grandparents' care in early childhood.

### 1. Social Sensitivity related to Helping Hands

Every child has a tendency to do something, as is the case in social sensitivity, early childhood tends to carry out social sensitivity in the aspect of helping. In this case, grandparents as full-time caregivers try to instill and stimulate early childhood so that they can help others properly without coercion.

The attitude of helping is the most important education for early childhood. Morals, character, honesty, helping, kindness, independence, religion and others, can be instilled in children (Salma, 2020). Helping is very close to the social spirit where helping is an attitude of giving mutual assistance to others who are in need.

Helping is a social action that is often found in the surrounding community whether it is when we play, study, and in other activities. The culture of helping is a must of every individual, when we help others at a time when we will need the help of others then others will also help us, because helping will create brotherhood, affection with friends, neighbors and people around them (Elfindri, et.al., 2012).

If grandparents have difficulty in stimulating early childhood, they will try to build closeness with early childhood, because if children are forced to do something without intention, they will try to resist because they are forced and feel pressured. So the attitude of helping must grow by itself from the child.

### 2. Social Sensitivity related to Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is a way for someone to understand their own behavior, which is good and which is bad to do. With self-awareness one can introspect oneself to be better in the future. Self-awareness is the foundation of almost all elements of emotional intelligence, an important first step to understanding yourself and to change. According to Mayer (in Riley, 2008: 278) a psychologist from the University of new Hampshire who became a coformulator of intelligence theory, argues that self-awareness means being aware of both one's mood and thoughts about mood.

Self-awareness that grows in early childhood can make it easier for them to interact with others. The stimulation that grandparents provide will help early childhood to have the ability of self-awareness. Self-awareness is an understanding of their physical characteristics, personality, character, and temperament, recognizing their natural talents and having a clear picture or concept of themselves and all their strengths and weaknesses (Atosokhi, 2002).

Self-awareness comes from the bottom of the heart that will confirm the actions he does or gets. Daniel Goleman (2003) argues that one's self-awareness is continuous attention to one's inner state. So in this state, the mind will observe and explore experiences, including emotions.

### 3. Social sensitivity related to cooperation

Humans are social creatures, humans cannot stand alone to carry out activities to meet their needs, without the help of others. Likewise with early childhood, in their activities children definitely

need the presence and role of others. So in that case, children need to interact with others early on, one form of interaction is cooperation. Cooperation in early childhood is generally in the form of playing together and completing missions together.

According to Wiyani (2014) cooperation is the ability to balance one's own needs with the needs of others in group or joint activities. Good cooperation is cooperation that always realizes mutual goals together closely related to cooperation. The emotional level of early childhood in terms of playing is still very strong to cooperate, because of that grandparents as much as possible provide sufficient supervision when accompanying early childhood while playing, because sometimes the child's mood changes and wants to win alone because he feels he has lost to his friend.

According to the Early Childhood Education Competency Standards (2003) the ability in child cooperation is; children like to play with friends, children can carry out group tasks, and children can praise friends or others. Early childhood should try to place themselves when they are with their friends.

#### **4. Forms of Grandparenting towards Early Childhood**

Grandparents who care for grandchildren become substitute figures for parents to care for their children. This can happen if the parents of early childhood have several factors that cause their care to shift to grandparents, including; work, divorce, or death. Although the care is transferred to grandparents, parents are still involved in it, but not dominant.

Parenting by grandparents is a substitute for parents by helping their children as the main caregiver who carries the responsibility of parenting. In Cherlin and Furstenberg's theory (Sigelman & Rider, 2009) which divides the forms of grandparent care into three, namely remote, companionate, and involved.

- a. Remote: the care of grandparents who are not involved with the lives of individuals because there is still a role of parents
- b. Companionate: the care of grandparents who act as assistants to single parents when parenting
- c. Involved: grandparents who act as parents to their children. Grandparents have become the primary caregivers who predominantly perform caregiving duties in the absence of parents.

In the research findings, there are forms of companionate and involved parenting based on the factors that cause grandparents' care. This can be seen from the role of grandparents in parenting.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results and discussion of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Social Sensitivity of Early Childhood Children with Grandparents' Care.

The results of interviews and observations of researchers with respondents related to aspects of social sensitivity, it is known that early childhood has various aspects of social sensitivity, including; helping both with friends, with the home environment, with siblings and with grandparents; self-awareness, which is one form of children's emotional intelligence where children's feelings can sort and choose which ones are good and which ones are bad, which ones are painful and which ones are fun; cooperation, early childhood can socialize well, play together with their friends, participate in



activities together, it indicates that children are easy to get along with their peers.

## 2. Forms of Grandparenting for Early Childhood.

Grandparent respondents have different forms of parenting, namely companionate and involved parenting, because companionate is a form of grandparent parenting that is not fully involved with individual lives because there is still a parental role. Meanwhile, involved parenting is where grandparents are like early childhood parents without any parenting involvement. This is because there are differences in the transition of care that occurs due to work factors and death factors.

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