Educational Management

Parent-Student Partnership and School in Improving Student Achievement at SDN Dawuhan 03, Sirampog District

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Article Info	Abstract
	Partnerships between parents and schools play an important role in improving student achievement, especially at the primary school level. This study aims to analyze the forms of partnership, the level of parental involvement and its impact on student achievement at SDN Dawuhan 03, Sirampog sub-district. Using a qualitative case study approach, data was collected through interviews, observation and documentation. The results show that the forms of partnership include six types of involvement according to Epstein, namely parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community. The level of parental involvement is generally still in the instrumental and representative categories according to Sarah C. White's typology. Nevertheless, this involvement has a positive impact on students' academic and non-academic achievements. This study recommends the need to strengthen partnership programs based on two-way communication and more participatory parenting training to increase parental involvement in a transformative and sustainable manner.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational success is not solely the responsibility of the school but requires the active involvement of all stakeholders, including families. Parental involvement in children's education has been shown to significantly contribute to learning outcomes, the development of social attitudes, and the creation of a conducive learning environment (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Epstein (2001) developed a model of parental involvement in education that encompasses six main forms: parenting, communication, volunteering, homeschooling, decision-making, and community collaboration.

Although various studies demonstrate the importance of parents' roles, the reality on the ground still shows limited involvement. Initial observations at SDN Dawuhan 03 showed that only around 25% of parents were actively involved in school activities. This school has demonstrated considerable achievement at the sub-district and district levels. This limited participation is influenced by several factors, such as parents' education level, work commitments, low educational literacy, and ineffective communication between the school and parents.

Sarah C. White (1996) classifies participation into four types: nominal, instrumental, representative, and transformative. Based on a review of elementary schools in Indonesia, parental involvement generally remains nominal and instrumental, meaning they are only present when invited or involved in formal, temporary activities.

This situation indicates an urgent need to build more meaningful and sustainable partnerships between parents and schools. Especially in the era of globalization and the rapid development of information technology, elementary school children are highly vulnerable to negative influences such as gadget addiction, decreased motivation to learn, and even weak character development. In this context, collaboration between home and school is a key factor in effective character education (Lickona, 2013). Various previous studies have examined the relationship between parental involvement and children's learning outcomes, such as a study by Hornby (2011), which demonstrated the importance of two-way communication between home and school in building partnerships. However, research that explores in-depth the form, level, and impact of partnerships in local contexts such as semi-rural elementary schools is still limited. This research attempts to fill this gap by conducting a case study at Dawuhan 03 Elementary School in Sirampog District.

Thus, this research is novel in terms of local context, an in-depth qualitative approach, and the integration of epstein's theory and white's typology of participation to analyze parental involvement. The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify and analyze the forms of partnerships between parents and schools;
2. To measure the level of parental involvement in their children's education based on the typology of participation; and
3. To assess the impact of these partnerships on students' academic and non-academic achievement.

These findings are expected to generate strategic recommendations that can support strengthening the synergy between home and school to sustainably improve the quality of basic education.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design. This design was chosen to explore in-depth the phenomenon of parent-school partnerships in improving student achievement. The qualitative approach allowed researchers to holistically understand the role of parents, the perspectives of teachers and principals, and the dynamics of social interactions in the context of primary education. The research was conducted at SDN Dawuhan 03, Sirampog District, Brebes Regency, Central Java Province, which was purposively selected because it has a fairly active and consistent parent-teacher partnership program. The study was conducted over three months, from May to July 2025. The target of this study was the partnership between schools and parents in supporting children's educational processes. The research subjects included:

1. Principals, as policymakers and managers of the partnership program.
2. Classroom and subject teachers, as implementers of learning activities and facilitators of communication with parents.
3. Parents of students from various socio-economic backgrounds, as partners in their children's educational processes.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling, selecting informants who were actively involved in school activities and able to provide relevant information. Other criteria included gender representation, educational background, and profession to ensure a diversity of perspectives. The steps in conducting this research included:

1. Preparation: Developing research instruments, obtaining research permits, and obtaining initial observations.
2. Data Collection: Conducting in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documenting school activities.
3. Data Analysis: Compiling transcripts, coding, conducting thematic analysis, and interpreting.
4. Validating Findings: Through triangulation and member checking with informants.
5. Report Preparation: Compiling results and discussions in a narrative format, including direct quotes from informants.

The main data collected were:

1. Primary data in the form of in-depth interviews with the principal, teachers, and parents.
2. Secondary data in the form of school documents such as partnership programs, activity attendance lists, student achievement records, and photographic documentation.

The research instruments consisted of:

1. A semi-structured interview guide containing indicators based on Epstein's theory of engagement and Sarah C. White's typology of participation.
2. A participant observation form to record interactions, participation, and the atmosphere of the activities.
3. A documentation sheet to record administrative and visual information.

Three main techniques were used:

1. In-depth interviews to explore the experiences, perceptions, and motivations of informants.
2. Participant observation, conducted directly at activity locations such as parenting classes, school meetings, and community events.
3. Documentation study, examining school documents relevant to partnerships and student achievement.

This study used triangulation to ensure data validity:

1. Source triangulation: comparing data from the principal, teachers, and parents.
2. Technical triangulation: using interviews, observations, and documentation simultaneously.
3. Temporal triangulation: collecting data at different time points.

The member-checking technique was used to ensure the researcher's interpretations aligned with the informants' intentions. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, which includes three stages:

1. Data reduction: selecting and simplifying relevant data, grouping them by themes such as partnership type, level of involvement, and impact.
2. Data presentation: in narrative form, matrices, and thematic tables.
3. Conclusion drawing: conducted through interpretation of results, comparison with theory, and confirmation of patterns of parental involvement on student chievement.

In addition to triangulation, an audit trail was conducted using field notes, documentation, and interview recordings. Interpretation was carried out carefully to avoid researcher bias and maintain consistency of results with field data.

Triangulation of methods compares results from interviews, observations, and documents. The triangulation method is presented in Figure 1.
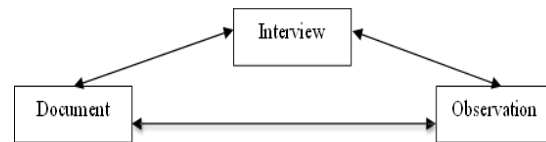

Figure 1. Triangulation of Method

The data analysis technique in this study used the Miles & Huberman (1994) Interactive Analysis Model. The Miles and Huberman analysis is presented in Figure 2.
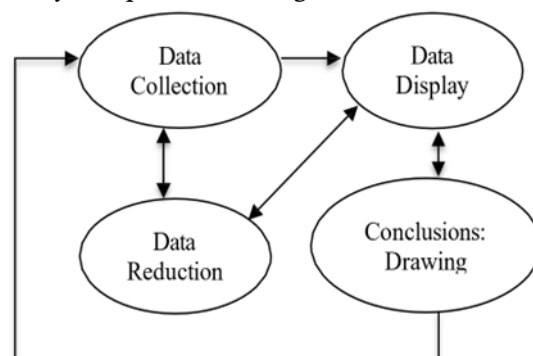

Figure 2. Interactive Analysis Model Miles & Huberman

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Results

Forms of Parent Partnership at SDN Dawuhan 03 This research shows that the partnership between parents and the school at SDN Dawuhan 03 reflects the six dimensions of engagement based on Epstein's (2001) model: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Interviews, observations, and documentation revealed the concrete implementation of each dimension.

1. Parenting: The school regularly holds parenting classes to equip parents to support their children's learning and parenting at home. One teacher stated: "We hold

parenting classes every semester so parents know how to support their children's learning and parenting at home." (Interview, Grade 5 Teacher, 2025)

2. Communication: The school communicates with parents through WhatsApp, contact books, and face-to-face meetings. The principal emphasized: "We encourage homeroom teachers to actively communicate, especially when children experience learning difficulties or changes in behavior." (Interview, Principal, 2025)

3. Volunteering: Parents participate in school activities such as competitions, parades, and religious studies. However, this involvement is still incidental and not yet comprehensive.

4. Learning at Home: Teachers assign homework that encourages parental involvement, although participation remains low due to limited work time.

5. Decision Making: Parental involvement in decision-making is evident through participation in school committees. Unfortunately, only a small proportion are truly active.

6. Collaborating with the Community: Schools collaborate with various institutions such as community health centers and community leaders to support children's holistic education.

Although all six forms of involvement have been implemented, the intensity and quality of their implementation still need to be improved, particularly in the aspects of decision-making and learning support at home.

Referring to Sarah C. White's (1996) typology of participation, parental involvement at SDN Dawuhan 03 is predominantly at the instrumental and representative levels:

1. Instrumental: Parents are involved because they are asked by the school, not on their own initiative. This is evident in the statement of one parent: "I come when there's an invitation to a meeting or competition, and the teacher usually reminds me." (Interview, Parent, 2025)

2. Representative: Some parents serve on the school committee and provide input on policies. The Committee Chair stated: "We have parent representatives on the committee, but not all parents know about it or are interested in getting involved." (Interview, School Committee Chair)

3. Transformative: Transformative partnerships, namely involvement that empowers parents to participate in designing and evaluating educational programs collaboratively, are virtually nonexistent.

This demonstrates the importance of facilitation strategies and parent education to move their involvement toward a transformative level.

The partnerships have been proven to have a positive impact on student achievement, both academic and non-academic.

1. Academic Aspect: Students with parents who actively communicate and support their learning demonstrate better learning outcomes. "Children whose parents often communicate with me have good report card grades and are active." (Interview, Grade 6 Teacher)

2. Non-Academic Aspect: Parental support in extracurricular activities fosters greater self-confidence and discipline in children. "When my child participated in the adhan (call to prayer) competition, I helped him practice at home. Alhamdulillah (Thank God), he won at the sub-district level." (Interview, Parent) Furthermore, parenting activities and religious study sessions strengthen students' religious character and polite behavior. This demonstrates that synergy between home and school is a key factor in character formation and improving the quality of students' education holistically.

CONCLUSION

The partnership between parents and the school at SDN Dawuhan 03 has taken various forms, following Epstein's model, but remains predominantly instrumental and representative. Nevertheless, this involvement has had a positive impact on students' academic and non-academic achievement. Therefore, strategies to strengthen two-way communication and more participatory parenting programs are needed to create a transformative and sustainable partnership that supports the quality of basic education.

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