



## **Analysis of School Decision-Making Factors in Early Childhood Education Institutions Viewed from Parent's Demography**

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### **Abstract**

Early Childhood Education is a coaching effort to help the child's growth and development process so that they have the readiness to enter further education. However, there has been a decrease in the number of children attending early childhood education institutions in the 2022/2023 academic year in Tlogopayung Village, Plantungan District, Kendal Regency. The research objective was to determine the factors that influence parents in making school decisions in early childhood education institutions. This type of quantitative research with a questionnaire as a data collection tool. The number of respondents was 64 parents. Using two analytical techniques, namely analysis of the chi-square test and factor analysis of Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The result showed that age, education, occupation, income, and number of family dependents did not affect decision-making to send children to early childhood education institutions. There are other influencing factors, namely family factors (33,159%), perception factors (11, 832%), social roles/status factors (9,117%), sub-cultural factors (5,982%), and knowledge factors (5,390%) and rest are influenced by other factors beyond this research.

### **How to cite**

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a coaching effort to develop self-potential that has a spiritual spirit of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for oneself, society, religion, nation, and state. Education is defined as an effort to shape the personality and abilities of children (Emor, Lonto, & Pangalila, 2019). In early childhood, there is a golden age, which is a period when children experience a process of rapid growth and development, or about 40% of all human development (Khaironi, 2018).

This golden age period must be utilized optimally by providing developmental stimulation to be able to create a strong foundation for children as a basis for further development, namely adolescence, and adulthood. Success during this golden age will affect children's lives and serve as the basis for lifelong learning (Rosiyana, 2021). Aspects of development in early childhood including moral, religious, cognitive, language, physical-motor, and social-emotional development can be stimulated through education. Therefore, parents as the person in charge of their child's education must consider deciding to send their child to an early childhood education institution. Because, early childhood participation in education is an index of success in the process of child development because children who do not attend early childhood education have delays in their development (Kartakusumah, 2018). Participation in early childhood education will provide a strong foundation for children to create quality human beings who can become the nation's successors who are ready to compete in the globalization era (Rohmani, 2021).

Children's participation in early childhood education in Indonesia itself is still limited to urban areas (Rohmani, 2021). This condition is what happened in Tlogopayung Village where only about 60% of the children attending Early Childhood Education institutions attended school. Out of 182 preschool-age children, only 90 children attended early childhood education at the Tlogopayung Village Early Childhood Education institution with a Kindergarten and Playgroup institution located in two hamlets, namely Pikatan Hamlet and Karangsari Hamlet. This number is no more than the previous school year when there was a decrease in the number of students at Early Childhood Education institutions in the 2022/2023 school year.

The location of the village which is far from Kendal City means that there is not as much information available in the city and internet ac-

cess is also not as smooth and fast as in urban areas. The people of Tlogopayung Village mostly work as farmers who spend their time in the fields. This makes the economic situation of the family a material consideration for sending children to early childhood education institutions. The last education of the people of Tlogopayung Village is on average at the elementary school level or equivalent, making awareness of the importance of early childhood education still low. There are still many parents in the village who think that a child's education does not have to start with Early Childhood Education. The village has provided infrastructure for early childhood education institutions that are adequate to support education at the early childhood education level. However, information on the importance of children's participation in early childhood education institutions has not been socialized properly by the Tlogopayung Village government, causing the participation of parents to send their children to school in early childhood education institutions is not high.

The condition of the facilities of the Early Childhood Education institution in Tlogopayung Village is adequate in supporting learning activities and has been accredited 'B' with linear teachers in the field of Early Childhood Education. Efforts have also been made by Early Childhood Education institutions, such as meeting parents directly regarding school plans for their children. However, this is also not enough to attract parental participation in sending their children to early childhood education institutions.

From these problems, parents play an important role in the decision-making process of their child's school. Parents have a full role and responsibility for their children starting from protecting, raising, and educating not only material but also spiritual things such as religion and also children's education (Jarbi, 2021). For this reason, it is necessary to conduct an assessment of parents regarding the factors that influence school decision-making in early childhood education institutions by also looking at the influence of parents' last education, income, occupation, number of family dependents, and parent's age. The purpose of this research is as an effort to address the problem of low parental participation in sending their children to early childhood education institutions, especially in rural areas, where solutions can then be found for handling them, especially for rural areas.

## METHOD

This research is quantitative research with a survey approach. The research was conducted in Tlogopayung Village, Plantungan District, Kendal Regency. The sampling stage is by recording the number of children aged 3.5 to 6 years in Tlogopayung Village in 2021. There are 182 children recorded with their parents as respondents. Furthermore, by using a random sampling technique, there were 64 parents filled out the questionnaire.

Used an instrument in the form of a questionnaire with measurements of answers using a Likert scale, namely strongly agree, agree, disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. There are 31 statements given. The instrument has passed the Cronbach alpha reliability test of  $0.702 > 0.6$  and the validity test of experts and trials on 30 respondents before being used. The dependent variable in this study is parental decision-making. The independent variables of the study are demographic characteristics which include age, religion, last education of parents, occupation, income, marital status, and the number of family dependents. Using two analytical techniques, namely the chi-square statistical test with a significance level of 5% and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is used to reduce the questionnaire data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demography is the study of changes in population conditions or matters related to the components of the changes themselves such as births, deaths, and migration to create conditions and population structure according to a certain age and gender (Wulantari, 2018). Indonesia is ranked 4th with the largest population in the G20 country members after the United States, India, and China (Annur, 2022). In 2022 the population will reach 275.77 million people with 22.09 million children aged 0-4 years (BPS, 2022).

Demographic characteristics of parents in this study include age, education, occupation, religion, income, marital status, and the number of family dependents. The results showed that most of the parents aged 31 to 40 years were 37.58% with a primary school education of 60.9% and an income of around Rp. 500,000-Rp. 84.4% (table 1).

**Table 1.** Effect of Demographic Factors on School Decision Making

Demographic Factors	Schools in Early Childhood Education Institutions			P-Value
	Yes	No	%	
Age				0,331
20-30 years	15	3	18,28	
31-40 years	26	11	37,58	
41-50 years	7	2	9,14	
Religion				a
Islam	48	16	100	
Education				0,315
Elementary School	28	11	60,9	
Junior High School	11	5	25	
Senior High School	6	0	9,4	
University	3	0	4,7	
Work				0,790
Teacher	2	0	3,1	
Housewife	40	15	85,9	
Trader	1	0	1,6	
Farmer	1	1	3,1	
Carpenter	1	0	1,6	
Self-Employed	1	0	1,6	
Businessman	2	0	3,1	
Marital Status				a
Married	48	16	100	
Income				0,780
<Rp500.000	7	5	18,8	
Rp 500.000 - Rp1.000.000	23	2	39,1	
Rp 1.000.000 - Rp2.000.000	7	7	21,9	
>Rp2.000.000	11	2	20,3	
Number of Family Dependents				0,216
1-3 people (low)	7	2	14,1	
4-6 people (medium)	41	13	84,4	
>6 people (height)	0	1	1,6	
TOTAL	64			

Demographic characteristics of age have a value of  $P > 0.05$ , namely 0.331, which means that there is no influence between parents' age on the decision to send their children to early childhood

education institutions. Parents do not see how old they are but focus on the obligation of parents to provide education rights for their children. Parents should improve children's lives by providing education and teaching knowledge so that children become smart and knowledgeable (Noble, Oktarina, & Ridwan, 2021). The results of this study are in line with previous research that there is no relationship between parents' age and sending their children to Early Childhood Education (Darojah, Wijayanti, & Sugiharti, 2022).

Education has a value of  $P > 0.05$ , which is 0.315, which means that the parents' last education does not influence the decision to send their children to early childhood education institutions. Previous research also stated that parental education did not affect the status of participation in Early Childhood Education in West Papua (Takerubun & Marsisno, 2020). Even though parents have low education, parents also have forward thinking about their children's education. Many parents want their children to get a better education than their parents. They will try hard to send their children to school in the hope that the children can elevate their parents' status in the future (Nurjannah, 2019).

Occupation and income with a value of  $P > 0.05$  respectively 0.790 and 0.780, which means that parents' occupation and income do not affect school decision-making in early childhood education institutions. People who have jobs will generate varying amounts of income. A large amount of income also does not guarantee that parents have concern and awareness of the importance of early childhood education. Parents' awareness and concern for education in early childhood will affect the growth and development of children (Salmiah, 2016). This is in line with previous research that the socioeconomic status of parents does not affect the level of children's education, but motivation in the child and parental concern for children's education affects the level of children's education (Fahmi, 2020).

The number of family dependents with a  $P$  value  $> 0.05$ , namely 0.216, means that there is no influence on parents' decisions to send their children to early childhood education institutions. The number of family dependents indicates the number of people who must be supported by the head of the family in one family. A large number of family dependents will have an impact on the number of expenses. With a large amount of spending, it will trigger the enthusiasm and reason for parents to work hard in the hope that the results of their hard work can be enjoyed by those who are their dependents. As is the case with

parents who will work hard for their children's education despite a large number of family dependents. The results of this study are also in line with previous research that the number of family dependents does not affect children's education (Asrahmaulyana & Irmawati, 2021).

Parents' decision-making to send their children to early childhood education institutions is not influenced by age, occupation, income, parents' last education, and the number of family dependents. The results of this study are in line with previous research which states that there is no relationship between parents' age, education, and parents' occupation in sending their children to Early Childhood Education (Darojah, Wijayanti, & Sugiharti, 2022).

Decision-making is influenced by four factors, namely cultural factors, personal factors, social factors, and psychological factors (Keller, Kotler, & Lane, 2008). These factors are described in statement indicators which are then processed using the PCA (Principal Component Analysis) factor analysis technique. The results of the PCA factor analysis formed 5 factors with eigenvalue  $\geq 1$  which influenced decision-making to send children to early childhood education institutions with a percentage of 65.479% and the rest were influenced by other factors outside this study (table 2).

**Table 2.** School Decision-Making Factors in Early Childhood Education Institutions

Factors	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative
Family Factor	6,300	33,159	33,159
Perception Factor	2,248	11,832	44,990
Status Social Factor	1,732	9,117	54,107
Sub-Cultural Factor	1,137	5,982	60,089
Knowledge Factor	1,024	5,390	65,479

Parents' decision-making to send their children to early childhood education institutions is influenced by 5 factors, namely family factors (33.159%), perception factors (11.832%), social role/status factors (9.117%), sub-cultural factors (5.982%), and knowledge factor (5.390%) (table 2).

The family factor is the factor that has the greatest influence on the decision to send children to early childhood education institutions, namely 33.159%. Families consisting of fathers and mothers have responsibilities towards

their children, especially in the field of education. Parents are fully responsible for their children starting to protect, raise, and educate not only material things but also spiritual ones such as religion and children's education (Jarbi, 2021). The family factor with the largest percentage is also due to the desire of parents so that children have a better education than their parents by optimizing the potential that children have. Parents will also choose schools with learning that support children's development in preparation for further education. Thus, the greater the desire and sense of responsibility of parents for their children's education, the greater the decision-making by parents to send their children to early childhood education institutions.

The parents' perception factor with a percentage of 11.832% is the second factor that influences school decision-making in Early Childhood Education institutions. Parents' perceptions of Early Childhood Education can vary from one parent to another. These different perceptions can affect how parents support sending their children to early childhood education institutions (Zahrawani, 2021). When parents are satisfied to include their children in early childhood education institutions with a school environment that supports children's development, it will affect parents' perceptions of early childhood education itself. However, not a few parents also have an unfavorable view that early childhood education is not very important (Cahyanengdian, 2021). Therefore, it is important to provide parents with an understanding of the importance of including children in Early Childhood Education institutions. This is intended so that parents get information and knowledge about the importance of Early Childhood Education so that attitudes change and they can reconsider the decision to send their children to Early Childhood Education institutions. Positive parental perceptions about Early Childhood Education will make parents provide full support for Early Childhood Education.

Social role/status factor with a percentage of 9.117%. The role is defined as an activity carried out by a person which of these roles will bring a status that reflects the value that will be given (Liani & Napitupulu, 2019). For example "educated family status". With this status, parents will consider the decision to send their children to early childhood education institutions. The granting of these statuses will have an impact on decision-making, actions, or activities carried out by parents to obtain this status or to maintain the status that has been obtained.

Sub-cultural factors have an influence of

5.982% on schools in Early Childhood Education institutions. Sub-cultures are small subsets of cultures that provide more specific identification for their members such as geographic region and religion. If religious teachings are internalized and internalized religious teachings, then the religious teachings will influence the outlook on life and all actions (Casriyanti, 2020). Religion will influence how parents behave or take action as is the case with the decision making of a child's school as a form of religious teachings or the belief that children's education is sufficient to be done at home with parents. However, this is inversely proportional to previous research that decision-making has a low relationship with religiosity, there are other factors, namely the dominant influence from both the family and other social environments (Fahrudin, 2019).

The geographical area as part of the sub-culture has to do with the object of research, namely school decisions, parents will consider the distance between the school and home. School locations that are close to home will provide convenience with cheaper transportation costs than school locations that are far from home. Thus, the closer the school is to home, the greater the desire of parents to send their children to early childhood education institutions.

The knowledge factor with the lowest percentage is 5.390%. Knowledge is defined as information stored in memory. Knowledge is closely related to education, where knowledge can be obtained through education. However, having a low educational background does not prevent parents from obtaining information about Early Childhood Education or learning about Early Childhood Education. In this modern era, parents can find it easy to get information and knowledge about Early Childhood Education, such as through books, inspirational videos from YouTube, or parenting outreach. Parenting is an activity that is intended for parents to understand the importance of being involved in the Early Childhood Education program and for parents to have a basic knowledge of early childhood education in providing stimulation for children's development (Lestari, 2019). Therefore, the government or village must contribute as a reference group that has direct or indirect influence in holding parenting activities, especially in rural areas with low educational backgrounds. Good parental knowledge about Early Childhood Education will also have a good impact on the decision-making of children's schools in Early Childhood Education institutions.

## CONCLUSION

Parents' decisions to send their children to early childhood education institutions are not influenced by age, income, occupation, education, and number of family dependents. Parents' awareness and concern for children's education with advanced thinking, namely that children get a better education than their parents, is a factor that influences school decision-making in early childhood education institutions. However, there is still the perception of parents, especially in rural areas, that the role of Early Childhood Education is still not important. Therefore, the government and villages must also contribute to changing this opinion through socialization activities or new policies that can support increased parental participation in early childhood education, especially in rural areas.

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