

TEACHER-PARENT COLLABORATION AT RA AL-MANSHURIYAH: EXAMINING THE FORMS, CONSTRAINTS, AND POTENTIAL OF STRENGTHENING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

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Abstract

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) plays a fundamental role in shaping an individual's holistic development, encompassing cognitive, physical-motor, socio-emotional, language, and character and moral values. The success of PAUD relies heavily on the synergy between two key ecosystems: the family and the educational institution. However, in practice, collaboration between these two parties often faces challenges, such as role perception gaps and suboptimal communication, which can hinder a child's development. The Independent Curriculum policy increasingly emphasizes the active role of families, but its implementation remains hampered by parents' limited time and a vague understanding of the partnership's scope. This study aims to explore and analyze the dynamics of the teacher-parent partnership at RA Al-Manshuriyah in depth. Using a qualitative case study design, the research involved in-depth interviews with teachers, parents, and the principal, as well as participant observation and documentation. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The research findings are expected to map the forms of collaboration implemented, identify stakeholders' perceptions of their effectiveness and benefits, and uncover the driving factors and obstacles encountered. The results of this study are expected to provide concrete recommendations to strengthen synergistic, sustainable partnerships that support optimal early childhood development at RA Al-Manshuriyah and similar institutions.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, Teacher-Parent Partnership, Educational Collaboration, RA Al-Manshuriyah, Merdeka Curriculum.

Abstrak

Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) memegang peranan fundamental dalam membentuk perkembangan holistik individu, yang meliputi aspek kognitif, fisik-motorik, sosial-emosional, bahasa, serta pembentukan karakter dan nilai moral. Keberhasilan PAUD sangat bergantung pada sinergi antara dua ekosistem utama: keluarga dan satuan pendidikan. Namun, dalam praktiknya, kolaborasi antara kedua pihak ini seringkali dihadapkan pada berbagai tantangan, seperti kesenjangan persepsi peran dan komunikasi yang belum optimal, yang berpotensi menghambat perkembangan anak. Kebijakan Kurikulum Merdeka semakin menekankan peran aktif keluarga, namun implementasinya masih terkendala oleh keterbatasan waktu orang tua dan pemahaman yang samar mengenai ruang lingkup kemitraan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali dan menganalisis secara mendalam dinamika kemitraan guru-orang tua di RA Al-Manshuriyah. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, penelitian ini melibatkan wawancara mendalam dengan guru, orang tua, dan kepala sekolah, serta observasi partisipatif dan studi dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan serta verifikasi. Temuan penelitian diharapkan dapat memetakan bentuk-bentuk

kolaborasi yang telah dilaksanakan, mengidentifikasi persepsi para pemangku kepentingan terhadap efektivitas dan manfaatnya, serta mengungkap faktor pendorong dan kendala yang dihadapi. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan rekomendasi konkret untuk penguatan kemitraan yang sinergis dan berkelanjutan guna mendukung perkembangan optimal anak usia dini di RA Al-Manshuriyah dan lembaga serupa.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Kemitraan Guru-Orang Tua, Kolaborasi Pendidikan, RA Al-Manshuriyah, Kurikulum Merdeka.

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a crucial foundation that shapes a child's holistic development. The early childhood period, often referred to as the "golden phase" or *golden age*, is a critical period during which the child's brain experiences rapid growth and development, laying the foundation for cognitive, social-emotional, physical-motor, language, and character and moral development (Berk, 2013). Comprehensive development at this stage includes not only mastery of academic knowledge and skills, but also the formation of independence, creativity, adaptability, empathy, and self-awareness (Berk, 2013). For example, a child who is trained at an early age to share toys with peers will develop empathy and social skills, which will later positively impact their interactions in the wider environment. Similarly, children who are encouraged to ask questions and explore actively will develop curiosity and problem-solving skills that will be important provisions in the future.

The meaningful learning process in this golden phase does not occur in a vacuum, but is greatly influenced by dynamic interaction with the immediate environment. In the context of early childhood education, the two main ecosystems that play a central, complementary role are the family and the educational unit (the school). The family, as the first and foremost environment, provides the emotional foundation, basic values, and early parenting patterns that shape a child's personality. Meanwhile, the educational unit serves as a more structured environment, providing a targeted learning experience, cognitive stimulation, and broader social interaction with peers and professional educators. The strong synergy between these two ecosystems, manifested in harmonious and collaborative partnerships, is a key determinant of the success of early childhood education. This confirms that the responsibility to educate children is not a single burden borne by one party, but rather a collective effort that requires active, integrated participation from both parties (Epstein, 2011; Jeynes, 2005).

However, the idealism of collaboration between families and schools in early childhood education often faces complex and challenging realities. A common phenomenon is a fragmented understanding of each other's roles. On the one hand, some parents tend to leave the responsibility for their children's education entirely to the school, assuming that

teachers have greater competence and time to support their children's development. On the other hand, educators in education units often expect full support from parents at home, both in terms of supervision, strengthening learning materials, and applying the values taught at school.

This perception gap, if left untreated, can lead to significant communication and coordination gaps that ultimately hinder optimal child development. In fact, various empirical evidence and systematic reviews have consistently shown that close partnerships, open and reciprocal communication, and alignment between home parenting and learning methods at school have a tremendous impact on various aspects of a child's development, including improved academic achievement, strong character building, independence, high learning motivation, and a decrease in behavioral problems (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hill & Tyson, 2009).

As an illustration, when parents are actively involved in reading activities with their children at home, discussing the stories they read, and relating them to everyday experiences, this not only enriches the child's vocabulary but also fosters a love for literacy, which will be an asset when the child enters formal education. Consistency between approaches at home and at school creates a coherent, safe, and more meaningful learning environment for children, so they feel comprehensively supported at every stage of their development.

In the context of national education policy, the importance of the family's active role in the early childhood education process is further emphasized by the presence of the Independent Curriculum. The curriculum emphasizes child-centered learning, Pancasila character development, and flexibility in the learning process, all of which require more substantial parental support and involvement. However, the implementation of this collaboration-oriented curriculum in the field still faces various multifaceted obstacles.

Parents' limited time due to work demands, difficulties establishing effective, reciprocal communication channels between parents and teachers, and a vague understanding of the boundaries and scope of their respective roles are among the real barriers to realizing harmonious, sustainable, and transformative partnerships. For example, parents' busy work schedules often make it difficult for them to attend regular school meetings, while teachers may be overwhelmed with managing communication with dozens of parents individually.

Amid the complexity of these challenges, Raudhatul Athfal (RA) Al-Manshuriyah is an interesting case study. This educational institution has demonstrated strong initiative and commitment to building bridges of collaboration with parents through the organization of various activities that involve them in the child's educational process. This initiative should be appreciated as a concrete effort to address the gaps that often occur.

However, the crucial question that arises is the extent to which the collaborative practices carried out at RA Al-Manshuriyah are effective and have a significant impact on children's development. How are these forms of collaboration actually manifested in daily practice, including all aspects, and how do stakeholders (teachers and parents) perceive the effectiveness and benefits of these partnerships? Furthermore, what are the specific challenges that accompany the implementation of this collaboration within RA Al-Manshuriyah, and what strategies have or can be developed to overcome them? It is these questions that require in-depth exploration and critical analysis to produce a comprehensive understanding.

Therefore, this study has a main objective: to analyze in depth the dynamics of the partnership between teachers and parents at RA Al-Manshuriyah. This study seeks to map in detail the various forms of collaboration implemented by the institution, ranging from regular communication and parent-teacher meetings to joint activities involving the active participation of both parties. More than just a description, this study will also critically explore and analyze teachers' and parents' perceptions of the value, effectiveness, and perceived benefits of such partnerships.

A deep understanding of these perceptions is important for identifying successes and areas that still need improvement. Furthermore, this study aims to identify the driving factors that have contributed to the establishment of good collaboration and the specific obstacles encountered in its implementation, which can then serve as the basis for formulating relevant and applicable development recommendations.

Through this comprehensive and integrated understanding, it is hoped that a solid theoretical and practical foundation can be established to strengthen the partnership between teachers and parents at RA Al-Manshuriyah. The partnership built is not just ceremonial or formal, but a truly synergistic, sustainable, and transformative collaboration that optimally supports all aspects of early childhood development, enabling the next generation to develop character, intelligence, and noble character.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative case-study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of this research is to explore the meaning, deep understanding, and experiences of stakeholders (teachers and parents) regarding partnerships in RA Al-Manshuriyah. The design of the case study was chosen to enable an in-depth exploration of partnerships in a specific context, namely RA Al-Manshuriyah, thereby identifying unique characteristics, challenges, and strategies relevant to the environment (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case studies allow researchers to understand phenomena in their actual context, where the boundaries between phenomena and context are not always clear (Yin, 2018).

The research will be conducted at RA Al-Manshuriyah, an early childhood education institution. The selection of this location was based on preliminary observations indicating institutional efforts to build partnerships with parents, but further exploration of its effectiveness and dynamics was still needed.

The research subjects in this study are individuals with firsthand knowledge and experience of partnerships between teachers and parents in RA Al-Manshuriyah. The selection of research subjects was conducted using *purposive sampling* (Creswell & Poth, 2018) to ensure that the selected informants could provide rich, relevant information. The informant category includes 3 RA Al-Manshuriyah teachers, 10 parents of students, and 1 school principal/manager of RA Al-Manshuriyah.

To obtain comprehensive and multidimensional data, the researcher will use several data collection techniques, including semi-structured in-depth interviews with each informant. The researcher will prepare an interview guide that covers key topics such as: (a) perceptions of the definition and importance of the teacher-parent partnership; (b) the forms of collaboration that have been implemented and the benefits are felt; (c) obstacles and challenges in realizing partnerships; (d) effective strategies in building and maintaining partnerships; (e) expectations for future partnerships. The interview will be recorded with the informant's permission and transcribed verbatim.

Then make observations in the RA Al-Manshuriyah environment during learning activities and during activities involving parents. This observation aims to: (a) directly observe the interaction between teachers and parents, as well as teachers and students; (b) understand the school atmosphere and culture related to partnerships; (c) identify collaborative practices that may not be disclosed in the interview. Furthermore, the Researcher will collect and analyze relevant documents related to the partnership program at RA Al-Manshuriyah. These documents may include: (a) Learning Implementation Plans (RPPs), which may include a parent involvement rubric; (b) Agenda of school activities involving parents; (c) Parent-teacher meeting minutes; (d) Brochures or information materials distributed to parents; (e) Report on school activities. The analysis of this document will help enrich an understanding of the context and policies underlying partnership practices.

Data analysis in this qualitative research will be carried out continuously and cyclically alongside the data collection process, following the analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014).

RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

Results

This research produced comprehensive findings regarding the dynamics of partnerships between teachers and parents at RA Al-Manshuriyah. In-depth qualitative data analysis through interviews, observations, and documentation studies identified several key themes, including forms of collaboration, stakeholder perceptions, and driving factors and constraints in partnerships.

1. Forms of Teacher-Parent Collaboration at RA Al-Manshuriyah

RA Al-Manshuriyah has implemented various forms of collaboration with parents, which can be categorized as follows:

- a. *Regular and Informal Communication.* Most initial interactions between teachers and parents occur through regular communication outside of learning hours. This includes short conversations when parents drop off or pick up children, conveying information about the child's daily development through a contact book or a short message (e.g., WhatsApp), and a brief discussion of the child's urgent needs. Teachers reported that this informal communication was very effective at building initial closeness and fostering trust. This can be seen from the following interview:

"Usually in the morning or evening when I meet at the gate, I have a short chat with Mrs. Ani. I know that my son is a bit fussy today, or that he was eating a lot. It makes parents feel close and know their child's development," said Mrs. Siti.

"It's nice to see that my son is playing in the classroom and that he likes to play with his kids. It's like being involved in children's activities." Said Ani's mother.

- b. *Formal Meetings and Forums.* RA Al-Manshuriyah periodically holds parent-teacher meetings, such as those at the beginning and end of the school year, as well as special meetings to discuss individual child development (if needed). This meeting is a forum to convey general information about school programs, curriculum, and policies, and to provide opportunities for parents to ask questions and discuss.

"We have a routine schedule of student guardian meetings twice a year. There, we explain the program, learning targets, and also how parents play at home. This is important to equalize perceptions." Explained Ratna's mother.

"Observation noted that in parent meetings, questions and answers sessions are often used by parents to clarify the learning methods applied in the classroom." Said Mr. Budi.

c. *Involvement in School Activities*. The school actively invites parents to participate in various activities at RA Al-Manshuriyah. This form of involvement varies, ranging from:

1) *Theme/Project Peak Event*. Parents are often invited to watch or even participate in events resulting from a child's learning project, such as a work exhibition, art performance, or play activity that involves parents as facilitators. Regarding efforts to align the vision between the school and the family, Mrs. Ratna, as the principal explained:

"We have a routine schedule of student guardian meetings twice a year. There, we explain the program, learning targets, and how parents play at home. This is important to equalize perceptions".

This statement is reinforced by observational notes indicating that, during the meeting, parents were very proactive in using the question-and-answer session to clarify the learning methods teachers applied in the classroom. Regarding the involvement of parents in school activities such as art exhibitions, art performances, or becoming facilitators, Ibu Sari expressed her enthusiasm:

"My son is very happy to be invited to make crafts together at school when there is a themed event. I feel proud to see the results and be able to help the child."

2) *Guest Speaker*. Some parents with a specific profession or skill set are invited to share their experiences in front of the class, such as a pediatrician explaining health, or a craftsman demonstrating how to make something. Regarding the school's efforts in building formal communication with students' guardians, Ms. Ratna explained:

"We have a routine schedule of student guardian meetings twice a year. There, we explain the program, learning targets, and how parents play at home. This is important to equalize perceptions".

This is consistent with observational notes indicating that parents are very active in using the question-and-answer session during the meeting to clarify the learning methods implemented by teachers in the classroom. In addition to regular meetings, the school also invites parents to share their professional experiences with the class. In this regard, Mrs. Ratna added:

"We once invited parents who work as police officers to tell stories about their duties. The children were very enthusiastic. It's a different learning experience."

The school often invites parents to watch or serve as facilitators at events arising from learning projects, such as art exhibitions and performances. Ibu Sari revealed the positive impact of the involvement on the parent-child relationship:

"My son is very happy to be invited to make crafts together at school when there is a theme event. I feel proud to see the results and be able to help my children".

- 3) *Enrichment and Volunteer Activities.* Parents are sometimes involved in enrichment activities outside of school hours, or volunteer to help with the smooth running of school events.
- d. *Parent Education Program.* RA Al-Manshuriyah also seeks to provide parents with knowledge and skills through educational programs. This can be in the form of a short seminar on parenting, stimulation of child development at home, or the provision of relevant reading materials/infographics. Regarding the school's efforts to equate the vision with the student's guardian, Mrs. Ratna explained:
- "We have monthly programs, sometimes short seminars on parenting. We invite psychologists or expert teachers to provide the material. The goal is for parents to have the same understanding of how to educate."*

Regarding the provision of knowledge for families, Mrs. Siti explained: *"We have monthly programs, sometimes short seminars on parenting. We invite psychologists or expert teachers to provide the material. The goal is for parents to have the same understanding of how to educate"*.

Regarding learning innovations by presenting parents in the classroom, Mrs. Ratna added:

"We once invited parents who work as police officers to tell stories about their duties. The children were very enthusiastic. It's a different learning experience."

Meanwhile, from the point of view of the student's guardian, Mrs. Ani expressed her enthusiasm for school activities:

"My son is very happy to be invited to make crafts together at school when there is a theme event. I feel proud to see the results and be able to help my children".

2. Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of Partnerships

Stakeholders' perceptions of the value and effectiveness of partnerships show mostly positive views, but there are also nuances that warrant examination.

a. Value of Partnership Benefits

- 1) *For children.* Teachers and parents consistently agree that a good partnership has a significant positive impact on children. Perceived benefits include: increased motivation to learn, higher self-confidence, better social-emotional development (e.g., the ability to interact, share, and resolve conflicts), and consistency between learning at school and parenting at home.

Regarding efforts to align the vision between school and family, Mrs. Ratna explained that regular meetings are needed:

"We have a routine schedule of student guardian meetings twice a year. There, we explain the program, learning targets, and how parents play at home. This is important to equalize perceptions".

In addition, the school is also active in facilitating education for students' guardians. Ratna's mother explained:

"We have monthly programs, sometimes short seminars on parenting. We invite psychologists or expert teachers to provide the material. The goal is for parents to have the same understanding of how to educate".

Regarding contextual learning innovations in the classroom, Mrs. Ratna shared the experience of the school inviting students' guardians as resource persons:

"We once invited parents who work as police officers to tell stories about their duties. The children were very enthusiastic. It's a different learning experience."

From the parents' point of view, direct involvement in the school's project activities leaves a very positive impression. Mrs. Ani expressed her enthusiasm:

"My son is very happy to be invited to make crafts together at school when there is a theme event. I feel proud to see the results and be able to help my children".

Further regarding the importance of communication alignment, Ms. Ani added:

"If the teacher and I connect, my child will be stronger. He knows that at home and at school, they are both supported".

Confirming the statement of the student's parents, Mrs. Siti, as the classroom teacher, saw the real impact of good communication on the development of students' adaptation:

"Children whose parents are diligent in communicating with me usually adapt faster and are more enthusiastic about learning. They feel cared for from two sides".

- 2) *For teachers.* Teachers view partnerships as a source of support in carrying out their duties. Parental involvement helps teachers better understand individual needs, makes it easier to deliver learning materials that need strengthening at home, and reduces the burden of managing children's behavioral problems.

Regarding efforts to align the vision between school and family, Mrs. Ratna explained that regular meetings are needed to equalize views:

"We have a routine schedule of student guardian meetings twice a year. There, we explain the program, learning targets, and how parents play at home. This is important to equalize perceptions".

In addition to regular communication, the school also actively facilitates education for students' parents. In response to this, Mrs. Ratna explained:

"We have monthly programs, sometimes short seminars on parenting. We invite psychologists or expert teachers to provide the material. The goal is for parents to have the same understanding of how to educate".

Regarding the innovation of contextual learning in the classroom, Mrs. Ratna shared the school's experience when inviting students' guardians as guest speakers:

"We once invited parents who work as police officers to tell stories about their duties. The children were very enthusiastic. It's a different learning experience."

From the student's guardian's point of view, direct involvement in school project activities provides a sense of pride. Mrs. Ani expressed her enthusiasm:

"My son is very happy to be invited to make crafts together at school when there is a theme event. I feel proud to see the results and be able to help my children".

Further regarding the importance of the alignment of support between home and school, Mrs. Ani added:

"If I and the teacher connect, my child will be stronger. He knows that at home and at school they are both supported".

Confirming the statement of the students' parents, Mrs. Nisa, as the classroom teacher, saw the real impact of intense communication on students' mental development:

"Children whose parents are diligent in communicating with me usually adapt faster and are more enthusiastic about learning. They feel cared for from two sides".

In addition, good cooperation with the family is very helpful for teachers in guiding their students. Mrs. Nisa affirmed:

"Cooperative parents are very helpful. If there is a child who has a problem at home, I can find a solution together."

- 3) *For the Elderly.* Parents feel calmer and more confident in educating their children when they have a good relationship with the school. They gain new knowledge about child development and learning methods, and feel part of their child's educational community.

Regarding the school's efforts in building the same vision as the student's guardian, Mrs. Ratna explained:

"We have a routine schedule of student guardian meetings twice a year. There, we explain the program, learning targets, and how parents play at home. This is important to equalize perceptions".

Regarding the school's initiative in providing parenting skills, Mrs. Siti explained:

"We have monthly programs, sometimes short seminars on parenting. We invite psychologists or expert teachers to provide the material. The goal is for parents to have the same understanding of how to educate".

The positive impact of this program was felt directly by Mrs. Ani, one of the parents of the students, who revealed:

"I have a better understanding of how to play educational games for children at home after hearing from school seminars. It used to be just a game".

In an effort to provide a different learning experience, schools involve parents who have specialized professions. Ratna's mother added:

"We once invited parents who work as police officers to tell stories about their duties. The children were very enthusiastic. It's a different learning experience."

Mrs. Nisa confirmed that intense communication between the two parties has a great effect on the development of children:

"Children whose parents are diligent in communicating with me usually adapt faster and are more enthusiastic about learning. They feel cared for from two sides".

He also emphasized the importance of a cooperative attitude in solving student constraints:

"Cooperative parents are very helpful. If there is a child who has a problem at home, I can find a solution together."

b. The Effectiveness of Collaboration

1. *Informal Communication.* Considered very effective for building closeness and providing quick daily information. However, the limitation is the lack of depth and documentation.
2. *Formal Meetings.* Important for the delivery of strategic information and equalizing perceptions. However, the frequency is still considered insufficient for some parents, and the delivery method sometimes feels too theoretical.
3. *Involvement in Activities.* Highly effective in providing a pleasant learning experience for children and strengthening the parent-school relationship. However, the level of participation varies depending on the time and the parents' willingness.
4. *Educational Programs.* High value for parent capacity building, but need to consider the schedule and topics that are most needed.

3. Factors Driving Effective Partnerships

Several factors were identified as the main drivers for establishing effective partnerships at RA Al-Manshuriyah:

- a. *Commonality of Institutions' Vision and Mission.* There is a strong commitment from the management of RA Al-Manshuriyah to build partnerships as an integral part of the educational philosophy. This is reflected in policies and resource allocation.

- b. *Initiative and Openness of Teachers.* Teachers who are proactive in establishing communication, showing empathy, and willing to listen to input from parents. Teachers' openness to accept differences of opinion is also key.
- c. *School Accessibility and Flexibility.* The school's willingness to adjust schedules and communication methods to be more accommodating to busy parents.
- d. *The Role of the Principal.* The principal is the driving force, facilitating and providing support to teachers in building partnerships.
- e. *A culture of mutual respect.* There is mutual respect between teachers and parents, both teachers appreciate the role of parents as the main educators, and parents appreciate the professionalism of teachers.
- f. *Quality of Communication.* Communication that is clear, transparent, reciprocal, and focused on child development.

4. Obstacles in Realizing Optimal Partnerships

Despite many efforts and positive results, the research also identified several significant obstacles faced in realizing optimal partnerships:

- a. *Parental Time Limitations.* This is the most frequently mentioned obstacle by both sides. Many parents have busy work (whether as office workers, self-employed, or housewives with domestic responsibilities) that makes it difficult to attend formal meetings, participate in school activities, or give extra time for reinforcement at home.

Confirming the positive impact of intense communication, Mrs. Nisa, as a classroom teacher, saw real developments in students' mentality:

"Children whose parents are diligent in communicating with me, usually adapt faster and are more enthusiastic about learning. They feel cared for from two sides".

However, he also acknowledged that there are challenges for working parents:

"Sometimes, if you want to invite parents to come and discuss their children, only their grandmother or aunt comes. His mother couldn't come because of work".

This is in line with the expression of one of the working students' guardians, Mr. Budi, who stated:

"I work from morning to evening, ma'am. If there is a night meeting, maybe you can. But during the day, it is very difficult. My son left his grandmother".

- b. *Differences in Parents' Background and Level of Understanding.* Parents have diverse educational, social, and economic backgrounds. This has implications for their

different understandings of the importance of early childhood education, the role of parents, and learning methods. Some parents may have a more theoretical understanding of early childhood education, while others prioritize the traditional parenting aspect.

"There are parents who are very literate in early childhood education, but there are also those who still think that early childhood education is just a joke," said Mrs. Ratna when met in her office. *"Well, this is our challenge to equalize perceptions."*

- c. *Lack of Consistent Mutual Communication.* Despite efforts at communication, it is sometimes one-way or less consistent. Parents may be reluctant to ask questions or provide feedback, while teachers may be overwhelmed to respond to every message or call from multiple parents simultaneously.

"Sometimes I am confused about what else to ask the teacher. It feels like it is enough to be given information on child development. But if there is a new problem, I will ask," said Mrs. Sari during the interview session.

- d. *Limited Institutional Resources.* Sometimes, RA Al-Manshuriyah faces resource limitations (e.g., funds, additional educational personnel) in organizing more innovative or intensive partnership programs.

Mrs. Ratna, as a representative of the school, acknowledged operational obstacles. *"We would like to make an event that involves more parents, but sometimes there are financial constraints. You can't make a big seminar every month."*

- e. *Perception of Role Limitations.* There are still some parents who tend to think that learning is the realm of the school and household affairs are the realm of parents, without recognizing the existence of a strong slice.

Discussion

The findings of the research on the dynamics of teacher-parent partnerships at RA Al-Manshuriyah provide a rich and in-depth picture of the implementation of collaborative practices at the early childhood education level. This discussion will integrate these findings with relevant theoretical frameworks, previous scientific literature, and analyze their practical and theoretical implications.

1. Forms of Collaboration: Flexibility as the Key to Accessibility

The findings on the various forms of collaboration applied in RA Al-Manshuriyah, ranging from informal communication to formal forums and participation in activities, are

consistent with the partnership models proposed by Epstein (2011) within the framework of *Six Types of Involvement*. This model emphasizes the importance of different ways for parents to get involved, which include: (1) *Parenting* (supporting families in understanding children and their challenges); (2) *Communicating* (developing effective communication between home and school); (3) *Volunteering* (supporting the school through voluntary participation); (4) *Learning at home* (providing information to parents about schoolwork and how to help children learn); (5) *Decision-making* (involving parents in school decision-making); and (6) *Collaborating with the community* (identifying and integrating community resources).

The findings that informal communication and short conversations during shuttles are effective starting points suggest that flexibility in communication methods is key to reaching parents with limited time. This reinforces Jeynes' (2005) argument that forms of engagement that do not require a large time commitment are often more accessible to parents from diverse backgrounds, especially those who work. RA Al-Manshuriyah's success in using short messages and liaison books as a means of routine communication demonstrates an adaptation to the practical needs of modern parents.

However, this limitation of informal communication also needs to be observed. As revealed in the findings, while effective for daily information, it is less in-depth and less documented for strategic discussions or handling complex child development issues. This demonstrates the need for a balance between prompt informal communication and structured formal communication, such as guardian meetings and one-on-one meetings. Formal gatherings, although often considered "ideal" in the literature (Hill & Tyson, 2009), can be challenging for parental attendance, as also identified in this study.

The involvement of parents in the theme peak event or as guest speakers shows the application of the *Volunteering* and *Collaborating with the community* model on a small scale. This experience not only enriches children's learning through real-world experiences but also builds a sense of togetherness and parental ownership of the school. This is consistent with research showing that active participation in school activities can increase parents' positive perceptions of schools and teachers (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

2. Positive Perception But with Nuances of Implementation Challenges

The positive perceptions expressed by teachers and parents about the benefits of partnerships are very consistent with the existing literature. Increased children's learning motivation, confidence, and improved social-emotional development are often reported outcomes in various studies (Fan & Chen, 2001). Teachers feel significant support, while parents feel more confident and informed. This underlines that an effective partnership is not just a formality, but has a real impact on all parties involved.

However, an analysis of the effectiveness of the form of collaboration reveals differences in perceptions and experiences. Although informal communication is valued for its convenience, parents and teachers are aware of its limitations in the depth of discussion. Formal meetings, while important, face challenges related to attendance. This indicates that the effectiveness of a form of collaboration depends not only on its existence, but also on its suitability to the needs and capacities of parents, as well as on the support provided by school infrastructure.

The findings regarding differences in parents' understanding by background highlight the complexity of building partnerships. This is in line with the concept of "*parental cultural capital*" (Bourdieu, 1986), in which parents with higher educational and social backgrounds may have a better understanding of the "language" and expectations of the formal education system. RA Al-Manshuriyah needs to continue to strive to bridge this gap through more inclusive and adaptive educational programs.

3. Factors Driving Inclusive Culture and Strong Leadership

The driving factors identified in RA Al-Manshuriyah, such as the common vision of the institution, teacher initiative, school flexibility, principal's support, and a culture of mutual respect, are crucial elements that often determine the success of partnership programs.

- a. *Transformational Leadership of School Principals.* The principal's role as both a driving force and a facilitator is vital. This is consistent with transformational leadership theory that emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire, motivate, and create a shared vision (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Principals who are proactive in building a culture of partnership and providing support to teachers will create an environment conducive to collaboration.
- b. *Culture of Mutual Respect and Trust.* The findings on the importance of a culture of mutual respect underscore that successful partnerships are built on a foundation of trust. When teachers value parents as the main partners in children's education, and parents value teachers' expertise and dedication, psychological barriers can be overcome. This is consistent with the concept of a "reciprocal relationship" in partnership theory (Epstein, 2011).
- c. *Flexibility and Accessibility.* The school's willingness to adapt to parents' circumstances, such as offering diverse communication options and adjusting activity schedules, indicates a *family-centered approach*. This is also in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes the flexibility and relevance of learning.

4. Structural and Individual Constraints: Universal Challenges in Partnerships

The constraints faced by RA Al-Manshuriyah, especially parental time constraints, differences in understanding backgrounds, and challenges in reciprocal communication, are universal issues and are widely reported in the school-family partnership research literature in various countries (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2005).

- a. *Parental Time Limitations.* This is the most prominent structural constraint. Modern economic and social demands often limit parents' ability to be physically involved in their children's schools. The possible solutions to be developed depend not only on schools, but also on broader social policies that support work-life balance. For schools, this means continuing to explore forms of engagement that don't necessarily require a physical presence, such as more sophisticated digital partnerships or projects that can be done at home with clear guidance.
- b. *Differences in Understanding and Cultural Capital.* This understanding gap requires a sustained intervention strategy. Parent education programs should be designed not only to provide information, but also to build general early childhood literacy, use easy-to-understand language, and integrate local cultural values. An approach that empowers parents to be active learners in their own parenting context is essential.
- c. *Reciprocal Communication.* These challenges often involve time constraints, hesitation, and a lack of effective communication skills. Schools need to proactively create space and encourage parental participation in providing feedback. Developing consistently two-way communication channels, such as online forums or structured feedback sessions, can help address this.
- d. *Limited Institutional Resources.* These constraints often limit the school's ability to implement innovative programs. However, it can also encourage schools to think creatively in utilizing existing resources, such as partnerships with local communities, voluntary programs from parents, or efficient use of technology

5. Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study confirms the validity of existing partnership models (e.g., Epstein, 2011) in the context of early childhood education in Indonesia. However, these findings also highlight the importance of adapting these models to local realities, particularly related to the challenges of time accessibility and the diversity of parental backgrounds. The concept of *a family-centered approach* is becoming increasingly relevant, in which schools not only invite parents to participate but also actively understand and respond to the needs and capacities of the family.

For RA Al-Manshuriyah: It is necessary to continue developing more varied and flexible communication strategies, enrich parent education programs with relevant,

participatory materials, and consistently facilitate two-way dialogue. For Other PAUD Units: These findings can serve as a reference for designing or improving teacher-parent partnership programs. It is important to map parents' needs and capacities in their respective environments and to develop forms of collaboration that are responsive to the local context. Share Education Policy: The results of this study can inform policymakers on the importance of more structured support for early childhood education units in building effective partnerships, including the provision of resources and training programs for teachers and parents.

Overall, the teacher-parent partnership at RA Al-Manshuriyah shows great potential, but it still requires ongoing efforts to overcome existing obstacles to be fully realized. Long-term success will depend heavily on the institution's ability to continue innovating, adapting, and building strong relationships built on trust and mutual respect.

CONCLUSION

The research conducted at RA Al-Manshuriyah has explored in depth the dynamics of partnerships between teachers and parents in the context of early childhood education. Based on a comprehensive analysis of qualitative data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation studies, several main conclusions can be drawn: *First*, the diversity of collaboration forms implemented. RA Al-Manshuriyah has shown a strong commitment to building partnerships with parents through various forms of collaboration. Starting from routine and informal communication that is at the forefront of building closeness, formal forums such as student guardian meetings that serve to equalize perceptions, to active involvement in various school activities and parent education programs. Flexibility in communication methods and participation is the key to reaching out to parents with limited time.

Second, a positive perception of partnership values, but with the challenge of effectiveness. Both teachers and parents generally have very positive perceptions of the value and benefits of partnerships. They agree that effective collaboration significantly contributes to children's cognitive, social-emotional, and motivational development (Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Teachers feel supported, while parents feel more confident and informed. However, the effectiveness of each form of collaboration varies: informal communication is highly valued for its convenience but lacks depth, while formal forms face presence constraints.

Third, the Driving Factors Underlying Effective Partnerships. Effective partnerships at RA Al-Manshuriyah are driven by several key factors, namely a strong institutional vision of the importance of partnerships, proactive initiatives and openness of teachers, flexibility and accessibility offered by the school, transformational leadership of principals, a culture

of mutual respect between teachers and parents, and the quality of clear and reciprocal communication. *Fourth, Significant Structural and Individual Constraints.* The implementation of optimal partnerships remains hindered by multifaceted obstacles. Parental time constraints due to work demands are the biggest structural challenge. In addition, differences in parental backgrounds and understandings, lack of consistent mutual communication, limited institutional resources, and a vague perception of role boundaries are also real obstacles.

Overall, RA Al-Manshuriyah has built a strong foundation of partnerships, but the challenge of realizing fully synergistic and sustainable collaboration still requires greater adaptability and strategies. Based on the above conclusions, this study recommends several things to strengthen the teacher-parent partnership, both for RA Al-Manshuriyah and similar PAUD units in the aspects of Diversification and Optimization of Communication Methods, Development of Needs-Based Parent Education Programs, Increasing Flexibility and Alternative Participation, Strengthening Teachers' Capacity in Building Partnerships, Overcoming Background Differences and Improving Early Childhood Literacy, and Encourage Active Principal Involvement and Institutional Support.

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