



The Impact of Parents' Habits of Accompanying Children Into Class at The Luksagu State Kindergarten

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ABSTRAK

The habit of parents accompanying children into the classroom is a common phenomenon in early childhood education institutions, including Kindergarten Negeri Luksagu, Luksagu Village, North Tinangkung District. This habit potentially hinders the development of children's independence, social-emotional skills, and self-confidence. This community service activity aims to educate teachers and parents about the negative impacts of this habit and to provide alternative strategies to support children's readiness for learning. Methods used included socialization, counseling, focus group discussion (FGD), and direct mentoring to teachers and parents. The activity targeted 20 students, 3 teachers, 1 principal, and all parents/guardians at Kindergarten Negeri Luksagu. The results showed an increase in teachers' and parents' understanding of the importance of early childhood independence, as well as behavioral changes among parents in releasing their children at the school gate. The conclusion is that continuous education and collaboration between teachers and parents are essential for optimally fostering early childhood independence

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (PAUD) plays a crucial role in laying the foundation for children's cognitive, social-emotional, and moral development, as well as their independence. Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System states that early childhood education is a developmental program intended for children from birth through age six. One important aspect that needs to be developed at this age is independence – that is, a child's ability to perform daily activities without relying too heavily on others (Fadlillah, 2021).

However, a common phenomenon observed in various ECE institutions, including at Luksagu State Kindergarten, is the habit of parents accompanying their children all the way into the classroom, and even sitting with them during the learning process. Based on initial observations conducted at Luksagu State Kindergarten in Luksagu Village, North Tinangkung Subdistrict, it was found that out of 20 enrolled students, approximately 75% – or 15 children – are still accompanied by their parents into the classroom every day. Only 5 children, or about 25%, are able to enter the classroom independently. This situation was also confirmed by 3 teachers and the principal, who stated that this practice has been going on for a long time and poses a unique challenge to the learning process.

Luksagu Public Kindergarten is located in Luksagu Village, North Tinangkung Subdistrict, Banggai Islands Regency, Central Sulawesi Province. Luksagu Village consists of five hamlets situated in a rural area. The majority of residents work as farmers and fishermen, and parents' educational levels vary. Socially, the culture of mutual cooperation and togetherness remains very strong; however, parenting styles that tend to be overprotective are one of the factors driving the habit of accompanying children into the classroom. Low economic status also impacts parents' limited access to appropriate parenting information (Wiyani, 2020).

Research by Nugraha et al. (2022) indicates that children's dependence on parents within the school environment has a negative correlation with the development of their independence and social adaptation skills. Meanwhile, Mulyasa (2019) noted that excessive parental presence in the classroom can disrupt children's concentration and hinder teachers from implementing effective teaching strategies. Furthermore, Susanto (2021) pointed out that children accustomed to having their parents accompany them in the classroom tend to have low self-confidence and struggle to socialize with peers.

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IMPLEMENTATION AND METHOD

The methods used in this community service activity consist of several stages. First, a socialization and counseling method conducted through meetings with parents and teachers to convey information about the importance of independence in early childhood, the negative impacts of dependency, and the gradual release strategy. Second, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conducted with teachers and parents to explore perceptions, barriers, and applicable solutions. Third, direct mentoring over two consecutive weeks to monitor changes in the behavior of parents and children within the school environment. Fourth, the activity was evaluated through the completion of pre-test and post-test questionnaires to measure parents' level of understanding before and after the activity, as well as observations of children's and parents' behavior within the school environment (Pratiwi & Hartati, 2021).

Activity materials include: (1) the concept of independence in early childhood and its importance for child development; (2) the psychological and social impacts of the habit of accompanying children into the classroom; (3) positive parenting techniques and gradual separation strategies; (4) the teacher's role in creating a classroom environment that is safe, comfortable, and supportive of children's independence; and (5) effective communication strategies between teachers and parents. The evaluation of the activities was conducted quantitatively by comparing the pre-test and post-test scores on parental understanding, and qualitatively through observations of changes in the behavior of parents and children during and after the mentoring (Zulkifli, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service activity at Luksagu State Kindergarten was carried out in four stages: preparation, implementation of socialization and counseling, mentoring, and evaluation. During the preparation phase, the community service team conducted initial observations, interviews with the principal and teachers, and developed evaluation materials and instruments. The observation results indicated that the practice of parents accompanying their children into the classroom had been ongoing since the establishment of Luksagu State Kindergarten and had never previously received structured intervention (Isjoni, 2019).

During the implementation phase, the socialization and counseling sessions were attended by all teachers (3 people), the school principal (1 person), and 18 out of 20 parents/guardians (90% attendance rate). Based on the pre-test results, data showed that the average score for parents' understanding of children's

independence prior to the activity was 58.3 (on a scale of 100), with only 22% of parents demonstrating a good understanding. After the educational sessions and focus group discussions were conducted, the average post-test score increased to 82.7, with 78% of parents demonstrating a good understanding. This increase amounted to 24.4 points, or approximately 41.8%, indicating the effectiveness of the educational activities carried out (Suharsimi, 2021).

During the two-week mentoring phase, significant behavioral changes were observed among the parents of the students. In the first week of mentoring, 10 parents (50%) still accompanied their children into the classroom. By the end of the second week, this number had decreased to 4 parents (20%), with the note that these 4 parents had specific reasons, such as a child attending school for the first time or a child who was unwell. Thus, 80% of parents had successfully changed their habits and began dropping off their children at the school gate (Rakimahwati, 2022).

In terms of child development, teachers reported an increase in students' confidence and independence. Children who previously cried and fussed when their parents left the classroom gradually demonstrated better adaptability. This aligns with Astuti's (2023) findings, which state that consistent changes in parenting styles and teacher support have a positive impact on the development of children's independence within a relatively short period of time.

Table 1. Comparison of Parents' Understanding Before and After Activities

Understanding Indicators	Pre-Test Score (%)	Post-Test Score (%)	Improvement (%)
Early Childhood Independence	55	85	+30
Impact of Accompanying Children to Class	50	80	+30
Gradual Discharge Strategy	45	78	+33
Parental Role at School	60	85	+25
Teacher-Parent Communication	62	84	+22
Average	58,3	82,7	+24,4

Table 2. Changes in Parental Behavior During Supervision

Parent Observation	Parents Enter Class	Parents Drop Off at the Gate	Percentage of Independent Students
Before Activity	15 People	5 People	25%
Week 1:	10 People	10 People	50%
Week 2:	4 People	16 People	80%

Table 3. Strengths and Weaknesses of Community Service Activities

Strengths	Weaknesses/Challenges
Significantly increased parental awareness	Some parents still find it difficult to change habits
Involved all school stakeholders	Limited mentoring time (2 weeks)
Used participatory methods (FGD)	Not all parents attended the socialization
Behavioral changes occurred relatively quickly	No structured long-term follow-up
Full support from the principal and teachers	Geographical conditions limited home visits



Figure 1. Brief Socialization Regarding Independence In Early Childhood

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CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the community service activity conducted at Luksagu Public Kindergarten, it can be concluded that the habit of parents accompanying their children all the way into the classroom has a significant negative impact on the development of independence, self-confidence, and social skills in early childhood. The educational activities proved effective in increasing parents' understanding by an average of 24.4 points (from 58.3 to 82.7) and changing the behavior of 80% of parents to drop off their children at the school gate within a two-week period.

The strength of this initiative lies in its comprehensive and participatory approach, which yielded tangible changes in a short period. A limitation is the lack of a sustainable follow-up mechanism after the program concludes. For future development, it is recommended that schools establish a regular parenting class program, develop locally-based parent guides, and collaborate with village governments and education departments to expand the program's impact. Consistent collaboration among teachers, parents, and the school community is the key to fostering optimal independence in young children.

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