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Parent Involvement in School Programs: How Parents are Actively Involved in Islamic Kindergarten

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe parental involvement in school programs at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten, Mataram City, as an effort to support the advancement of early childhood education (ECE). This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study method. Data collection techniques were carried out through triangulation, and data analysis was conducted inductively/qualitatively, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument. The study subjects included classroom teachers, the kindergarten principal, and parents of the children. Data analysis was conducted systematically by organizing, categorizing, synthesizing, and interpreting data from interviews, field notes, and documentation. The results indicate eight forms of parental involvement in school programs, including Committee Meetings, Inspiration Classes, Parent Classes, Parenting Classes, *Sabtu Budaya*, Outing Classes, Parent-Child Competitions, and the *Maulid Nabi* celebration. This involvement significantly benefits and supports the educational development of children. The parental involvement programs were successfully implemented and aligned with the planned objectives. Parents were not merely financial supporters but also participants, supporters, decision-makers, program implementers, and school committee members. This demonstrates strong collaboration between the school and parents in supporting early childhood education. The study, conducted in a single Islamic kindergarten, limits generalizability to broader contexts. Future research should compare diverse educational settings, incorporate parent surveys, and focus on long-term impacts. Reliance on interviews and documentation may overlook socio-economic influences. Additionally, researcher subjectivity suggests the need for more standardized methodologies.

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Introduction

The golden age, ranging from 0 to 6 years of age, is a critical period for a child's growth and development (Mustofa, 2022). During this phase, children experience rapid physical and mental growth, making it essential for parents and educators to provide optimal support. Recognizing and nurturing a child's potential during the golden age can have long-term positive effects on their development. Early Childhood Education (ECE) plays a significant role in maximizing this period, offering structured opportunities for growth. Parents, as the primary caregivers, have a crucial responsibility in shaping their child's future. The education and attention provided by parents significantly influence the child's overall development, making parental involvement indispensable (Cahaya, 2020).

However, current levels of parental engagement in early childhood education remain low, with many parents prioritizing work over spending quality time with their children. A survey by Oreo on Kompas.com (Setyani, 2012). revealed that 50% of parents spend more time working than engaging with their children. To address this issue, mandatory parental involvement programs in kindergartens and ECE centers are essential. These programs aim to enhance parents' knowledge and skills in areas such as nutrition, health, education, and child protection (Cholimah, 2018). . By

fostering consistent parental participation in children's learning processes, these initiatives can significantly improve children's motivation, behavior, and academic achievements, while reinforcing the partnership between parents and educators in ensuring the success of early childhood education (Irma et al., 2019).

Wortham (2013), as cited in Jamilah (2019) emphasized that providing services through quality programs is a critical criterion for achieving excellence in early childhood education (ECE). A quality school is one that effectively synergizes with parents, fostering a collaborative environment. This synergy is realized through programs specifically designed to ensure children's smooth and successful education, involving parents as integral participants. Parental involvement goes beyond educating parents about parenting through seminars or counseling; it includes active participation in their child's learning process, integrated into the school curriculum (Sari & Kosasih, 2019). on parental attachment, parents can support their children's learning through diverse approaches, including parent education, communication, volunteering, home-based learning, decision-making, and community involvement (Epstein, 2016). Morisson as cited in Rofita et al. (2022) describes parental involvement as the process of enabling parents to achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves, their children, and the programs they engage in. This definition highlights the reciprocal benefits of parental participation in their child's education, which positively impacts the parents, children, and schools. Parents' attention to their child's development serves as a pathway to achieving the primary goals of early childhood education (Tiara et al., 2023).

However, the current realities in schools reveal a persistent lack of awareness regarding the importance of parental involvement in early childhood learning. A survey conducted by the Oreo wafer brand, reported in *Kompas.com*, found that 50% of parents spend more time working than engaging with their children (Setyani, 2012). Furthermore, many kindergartens and ECE institutions have not yet implemented parent-bonding programs. Research by Khairiyah et al. (2019) in Pontianak City indicated that out of 117 schools, only 80 had adopted parenting programs, leaving 37 without such initiatives. Similar findings emerged in a study by Prabhawani (2016) in Sedyo Rukun, a nursery in Bantul, which revealed that the parental support framework in the school was inadequate. Parental involvement was limited to requests for funding for recreational activities, lacking a structured and planned approach to their engagement in education. The minimal involvement of parents in their children's education is influenced by various factors (Anjani & Mashudi, 2024).

The successful implementation of school programs necessitates a high level of awareness among parents regarding the importance of their involvement and cooperation. It is essential for parents and teachers to align their understanding and objectives to ensure the success of children's education. This alignment fosters continuity between educators at home and teachers within the school environment. The family plays a crucial role in a child's growth and education, as reinforced by Helmawati (2014), cited in Rosalina et al. (2022), who emphasizes that the family particularly the parents is the first and most important setting where children begin to learn about life. Consequently, parental involvement is vital in early childhood education, especially in school programs specifically designed for this purpose. The benefits of parental involvement include enhanced school socialization, streamlined program implementation, and increased parental knowledge and skills, as well as providing parents with valuable insights into their child's development (Hidayatulloh & Fauziyah, 2020).

Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten offers various programs that actively involve parents; however, the implementation of these programs is not without challenges. Schools often encounter obstacles in engaging parents, including: (a) economic factors, (b) conflicting schedules and the busy lives of parents, (c) insufficient parental awareness of the importance of involvement in school activities, (d) limited parental understanding, often characterized by comparisons between contemporary and traditional teaching methods, and (e) parents' inability to use gadgets or social media effectively. Furthermore, two additional barriers were identified: (a) limited

availability of time on the part of parents, and (b) transportation challenges, as some parents lack access to or the ability to use vehicles, which hinders their participation.

Previous studies have shown that parental involvement in early childhood education (ECE) can enhance engagement in subsequent educational stages, although the outcomes vary depending on location and context (Varshney et al., 2020). Differences in how parental involvement is defined among stakeholders also highlight the need for a shared understanding in measurement and practice (Gross et al., 2020). Communication between educators and families of children with special needs is a critical factor in fostering effective partnerships (Swart et al., 2020). Family engagement practices influence the attendance and learning skills of English language learners (ELL), but their impact depends on the linguistic context of the classroom (Premo et al., 2023). However, the effects of family involvement often vary based on program and individual characteristics (Pilarz et al., 2024). Latina mothers from low-income families exhibit resilience and creativity in supporting their children's school readiness, despite facing various barriers (Coba-Rodriguez et al., 2020).

Despite these insights, existing research has not deeply explored parental involvement in the context of Islamic education, particularly in Islamic kindergartens. This study addresses this gap by focusing on parental engagement at TK Islam Nurul Iman, Mataram, through various collaborative programs. The study highlights forms of involvement where parents act not only as financial supporters but also as program implementers, decision-makers, and members of the school committee. It provides new contributions by identifying specific practices that successfully enhance parental involvement in Islamic early childhood education, an area that has been largely underexplored in prior research.

Methods

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study method to deeply explore parental involvement in educational programs at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten. Conducted over five months in 2023 in Sekarbela Village, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara, the research focuses on participants including the principal, 10 teachers, and 15 parents of students. Participants were selected purposively to ensure they could provide relevant and detailed insights into the study objectives. The principal was chosen for their strategic role in managing school programs, while teachers were selected based on their direct interactions with parents. Parents were included based on their active participation in school activities and their influence on their children's learning. The research aims to describe the various forms of parental involvement and uncover factors that influence their participation in school programs.

Data were collected using participatory observation, structured interviews, and secondary data analysis. Observations followed a detailed protocol to examine parents' attendance, interactions with teachers and children, and their contributions to school activities. Structured interviews with the principal, teachers, and parents aimed to gain in-depth perspectives on their roles, experiences, and challenges in engaging with school programs. Secondary data from books, school archives, and online sources enriched the primary findings by providing broader context and validating observations. Documentation, including photographs and reports, was used to provide visual evidence of parental involvement in various school events. Data were analyzed qualitatively using a descriptive approach, where coding and thematic analysis helped categorize the findings into relevant themes. Triangulation was applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the data by comparing observations, interviews, and secondary data.

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process to protect participants' rights and ensure the credibility of the study. Participants were informed about the research objectives and their consent was obtained before data collection. Confidentiality was maintained, and the information provided was used solely for research purposes. The researcher committed to transparent reporting and shared findings with stakeholders at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten. This ethical adherence, combined with a comprehensive data collection strategy, allows the study to provide meaningful insights into parental involvement. By understanding

these dynamics, the study aims to inform better strategies for enhancing collaboration between schools and parents. Ultimately, the findings are expected to contribute to developing more effective educational programs that foster active parental participation.

Result

Based on the observations conducted, data was gathered from ongoing school programs involving parents, as explained by the Head of Kindergarten during the interviews. The interview and observation findings are further supported by documentation, serving as evidence of the implementation of parental involvement programs at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten. From the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, it was identified that the forms of parental involvement programs at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten include the following:

Committee Meeting

Parental involvement in this program is evident through their active participation in committee meetings conducted at the beginning of each semester. These meetings serve as a platform for parents to engage in discussions about the semester's educational programs designed by the school. Parents are encouraged to ask questions, voice concerns regarding the teaching methods, and provide constructive feedback. This process highlights the school's recognition of parents as essential educational partners. Additionally, the school employs a democratic approach by seeking parental approval of program plans through a voting system rather than imposing decisions unilaterally.

Observations show that these meetings are well-attended, with a significant portion of parents participating actively. During the most recent meeting, various suggestions were recorded, particularly concerning the incorporation of extracurricular activities that align with students' interests and talents. Teachers responded by revising the semester's plans to accommodate feasible adjustments, illustrating the strong collaboration between parents and the school in fostering a supportive educational environment for children.



Figure 1. Parents and teachers discussing in the school meeting program.

Inspiration Class

The Inspiration Class program is an initiative that actively involves parents in schools. According to a teacher:

"This program aims to invite professionals to share their knowledge and experiences with both children and their parents at the school. The invited professionals represent a wide range of careers, including police officers, soldiers, doctors, firefighters, pilots, and others, complete with their uniforms."

The school deliberately brings in these professionals to introduce various professions to the children and educate them and their parents. This initiative is carried out under the theme *"Together in Synergy to Build the Dreams of Indonesian Children."*

The program's output was further elaborated by the principal, who stated:

"The Inspiration Class program is expected to inspire, motivate, and help children pursue their dreams in the future. The involvement of parents in Kelas Inspirasi reflects a collaborative effort between the school, parents, and professionals to provide children with a rich and meaningful learning experience."

This is supported by observational data indicating active parental involvement in the program. Not only were the children highly interested and enthusiastic about participating, but parents were also actively engaged, asking questions to the professionals. They encouraged their children to stay motivated in their studies to achieve their future aspirations. Additionally, parents assisted teachers in maintaining order and ensuring the program ran smoothly.



Figure 2. Providing education in the inspiration class program.

Parent Class

The Parent Class program is an initiative organized by the school to engage parents with expertise in various fields as resource persons or activity facilitators, allowing them to showcase their skills in front of the children. Observational data indicates active parental involvement, as parents participate by sharing their expertise during the Parent Class sessions. Each class features different skills tailored to the parents' areas of specialization, providing a platform for parents to demonstrate their talents. This not only enriches the learning experience for the children but also instills a sense of pride in them, knowing their parents are contributing meaningfully to the program.



Figure 3. Children and parents process food in the parent class program.

Parenting Class

Parenting Class is a monthly program conducted in individual classes, involving parents in focused sessions. Based on observational data, this program provides an opportunity for teachers to deliver materials on early childhood parenting strategies, educate parents on effective methods to guide children's learning at home, and discuss the children's development during their time at school.

Parental involvement in this program is evident through their regular participation in the monthly Parenting Class sessions. During these classes, parents gain insights into early childhood education and learn practical ways to support their children's learning at home. Additionally, these sessions serve as a platform for parents and teachers to discuss children's development and share challenges encountered in guiding their children.



Figure 4. Providing parenting science education in the classroom.

The program also fosters communication between parents and teachers, allowing them to align their approaches to better support the children's education. This is reinforced by the teacher's statement:

"Through these discussions, parents can gain valuable insights and strategies to enhance their parenting skills, ultimately contributing to their children's overall development and success in school."

Thus, this collaborative environment seeks to strengthen the partnership between parents and educators, ensuring a more holistic approach to the children's learning experience.

Sabtu Budaya

The *Sabtu Budaya* program at TK Islam Nurul Iman is a flagship initiative that stands out with its unique activities, distinguishing it from similar programs in other preschools. Centered around the theme of Sasak culture, this program requires all members of the school community—from the principal and teachers to the students and their parents—to wear traditional Sasak attire when attending school on these days.

Based on observations during the program, all participants are also required to use the Sasak language when interacting. Additionally, the program features three traditional activities: a traditional market, traditional games, and a performance of traditional arts. Held regularly once a month, the program takes place on the third Saturday of each month.



Figure 5. Children line up wearing traditional traditional clothes.

Parents play an integral role in the success of *Sabtu Budaya*, as emphasized by the principal:

"Parental involvement in the Sabtu Budaya program is evident through their active participation in various activities organized by the school. Beyond that, all members of the school community, including parents, are required to wear traditional Sasak clothing as a demonstration of their commitment to preserving our culture."

Parents are actively involved in the three core activities traditional markets, games, and art performances. By attending and participating, they not only support their children in learning about and appreciating Sasak culture but also strengthen the relationship between parents and the school. This collaboration fosters a more immersive and cooperative environment for cultural learning.

Outing Class

The outing class is a school program conducted outside the school premises, involving both students and their parents. It is organized irregularly during the semester, sometimes occurring once a month or even twice within a month. The program aims to strengthen the bonds between teachers, students, and parents through shared experiences.



Figure 6. Teachers and children going on tour together.

Outing class activities take place in various locations, including historical museums, orphanages, traditional craft centers, and tourist attractions. Parental involvement is a key

element of the program, as parents accompany their children during these excursions. By participating in these visits, parents help enrich their children's learning experiences. Their presence not only fosters closer relationships between parents, teachers, and students but also provides opportunities for meaningful discussions on topics such as cultural appreciation, history, and the value of sharing. This collaboration between parents and the school enhances the overall educational journey for the children.

Competition with Parents

The Competition with Parents program is a school initiative encouraging parents to participate in competitions with their children. This activity occurs at least twice each semester, typically at the beginning of the semester and during Indonesia's Independence Day celebration on August 17. To motivate participation, the school provides prizes for competition winners, fostering enthusiasm among children and their parents.



Figure 7. Parents and children taking part in the competition on August 17.

Parental involvement in this program plays a vital role in strengthening the bond between parents, children, and the school. By engaging in various activities such as painting, collage-making, flag planting, pen-in-bottle challenges, and cracker-eating competitions, parents actively contribute to their children's enjoyment and success. These shared experiences not only inspire children but also create lasting memories of teamwork and collaboration.

Additionally, the requirement for parents and children to wear red and white attire during the August 17 competitions symbolizes unity and national pride, reinforcing the connection between family values and cultural heritage. This collaborative effort enriches the educational and social experience for all participants.

Maulid Nabi

Maulid Nabi is a school program that brings parents together to celebrate the Prophet Muhammad's birthday alongside other families at the school. This event is celebrated in the traditional style of the people of Lombok, incorporating the unique practice of *begibung*. *Begibung* is a longstanding tradition of communal dining among the Sasak tribe in Lombok, where 3–4 people or more share a single serving place called a *dulang*.

Parental involvement in the *Maulid Nabi* program is crucial, as it encourages active participation in this meaningful celebration with their children and the broader school community. Through the *begibung* tradition, parents collaborate in groups to prepare and contribute a variety of dishes, ensuring a rich and diverse culinary experience for everyone. This collective effort fosters a strong sense of community among parents, teachers, and students, while also preserving and celebrating cultural heritage.



Figure 8. Parents and teachers eat together at school.

The warm and festive atmosphere created by *begibung* strengthens family bonds and reinforces the connection between families and the school. This shared experience emphasizes the values of collaboration, cultural appreciation, and communal celebration within the school environment, making the event a memorable and meaningful occasion for all involved.

The parent involvement programs at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten have successfully fostered close collaboration between the school, families, and the community through a range of innovative activities, including Committee Meetings, Inspiration Classes, Parent Classes, Parenting Classes, Cultural Saturdays, Outing Classes, Parent Competitions, and *Maulid Nabi* celebrations. These activities reflect a holistic educational approach that not only supports early childhood development but also strengthens the relationship between families and the school. Active parental participation in these programs enriches children's learning experiences by embedding cultural, social, and religious values and creating a supportive learning environment.

These findings offer relevant insights into best practices for parental involvement that can be replicated in other educational institutions. However, this study has several limitations, including the limited sample scope of a single school and the potential subjectivity inherent in the observational and interview methods used. To enhance the validity and generalizability of these results, further research involving a broader range of schools and employing more diverse methodological approaches is recommended. Such studies could provide a more comprehensive contribution to the development of parental involvement programs in early childhood education.

Discussion

The study aimed to evaluate the implementation of parent involvement programs at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten and found that these programs successfully fostered close collaboration between the school, families, and the community through innovative activities, including Inspiration Classes, Cultural Saturdays, and *Maulid Nabi* celebrations. These activities support early childhood development and embed cultural, social, and religious values into children's learning experiences. Parental involvement in programs at Nurul Iman Islamic School is deemed successful, as parents actively participate despite their diverse professions, including housekeepers, entrepreneurs, private officers, and civil servants. This reflects Epstein's theory, which underscores the vital role of parents in supporting their children's education (Rahayuningsih et al., 2022). School programs such as committee meetings, parent classes, parenting classes, and cultural events facilitate effective communication between parents and teachers. These programs enable parents and educators to share information about school plans and children's development, fostering collaboration that aligns with Pusitaningtyas (2016) emphasis on the importance of parent-teacher partnerships in education.

However, challenges to parental involvement persist, especially for those with lower educational backgrounds who may lack confidence in supporting their children's education

(Oktavianingsih, 2018). Additionally, work obligations and daily life responsibilities can hinder some parents from participating fully in school activities (Putri et al., 2023).. Despite these barriers, many parents at Nurul Iman demonstrate a strong commitment to their children's education by attending and engaging in school programs, which reflects a collective effort to create a supportive learning environment.

During the implementation of these committee meetings and parental classes, there is interaction between parents and teachers and the head of kindergarten, which is the continuation of discussions, both on school curriculum design, evaluation, technical, advice, and input, until information about the development of the child becomes a topic of discussion or discussion during the program. In line with what (Coleman, 2013) parents need to act as counselors by engaging in discussions with the teacher and participating in the student guardian meetings. The purpose of this program is to convey information to the parents as well as some agreements that must be agreed with the parents. On occasion, parents act as program supporters because they prepare the program requirements before the program starts. As expressed by (Ningtiyas, 2020) parents can play an important role behind the scenes, helping schools in preparing and organizing lessons and other activities. In addition, parents also participate actively in the educational process by providing criticism and input to the school. This is in line with the statement (Coleman, 2013) which states that the role of parents is to help teachers prepare behind the scenes and consult with teachers about their children's progress. So according to the researchers, it is important to involve parents in the planning of the school program because it is a form of parents' contribution to the school that can help the program go smoothly.

In addition to committee meetings with parents, the inspiration class is the next school program aimed at parents. The inspiration class is a school program designed for children and parents by inviting the source or professional to deliver material and demonstrate their profession for introduction to the children and the parents. As it was by (Arifiyanti, 2015) the school can bring sources from outside the school to provide material related to the child. The program is entitled "Together synergistically building the dream of Indonesian children", the school hopes that this program can introduce a variety of professions to help children achieve their dreams. As has been done recently, the school brings the Traffic Police into an inspirational class program. Where the opportunity is a container for the cops to introduce their profession as cops and to give instructions on the order of crossing to children from early to introducing various kinds of traffic barriers to children and the parents who are present. According to (Pravitasari et al., 2017) schools and police need to work together to improve traffic safety and order.

Parental involvement in education significantly enriches children's learning experiences. Mante et al. (2021) emphasize that active participation of parents in school activities has a substantial impact on children's academic achievements. By engaging directly in educational activities, parents can instill cultural, social, and religious values that shape children's character. This aligns with An-nizzah and Choiri (2017) assertion that parents should serve as role models for their children. In this context, parental involvement transcends mere physical presence, encompassing the teaching of values that support children's holistic development. Initiatives such as the Parent Class at TK Islam Nurul Iman enable parents to share their skills and knowledge, positioning them not only as supporters but also as educators. As Coleman (2013) highlights, parental contributions can provide valuable support to teachers, principals, and students, fostering an environment where children view their parents as role models, which enhances their motivation and pride.

Furthermore, parental involvement serves as a lifelong learning model for children. When children observe their parents valuing education and continuously seeking knowledge, they are more likely to adopt positive attitudes toward learning. This perspective echoes Schunk's argument (in Ristiani, 2015) that parents play a crucial role in motivating children to learn and achieve their aspirations. Activities such as *Sabtu Budaya* and Maulid Nabi celebrations further

strengthen the bond between schools and the broader community, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment. The collaboration among parents, schools, and the community exemplifies a synergy that enhances children's education. Mahmood et al. (2023) note that the transmission of knowledge, skills, and competencies across generations is pivotal to the socio-economic growth of a nation. By involving parents and communities in children's education, we can create a nurturing environment that holistically supports their growth and development.

Parenting is a school program that educates parents about parenting and invites parents to discuss the development or progress of the child to the obstacles that the child encounters both at school and at home. The school believes that parents have a right to know their child's educational progress. This is because the involvement of parents in the education of the child is an important factor that can affect the child's educational success (Ardiyana et al., 2019). Therefore, it must have been the teacher and the parent to establish two-way communication. This communication is effective because both parents and teachers need to send and receive information about the child. Through this program, the teacher can find a practical way to communicate and give a description or explanation to the parents in a particular class. In this way, the Master does not require much time and energy to meet in person with each parent. In the implementation of this program, neither teachers nor parents agree on how to solve problems. Therefore, to avoid a debate between the opinion of the Master and the parents, it is necessary to conduct discussions and discussions to produce a single view. Schools can handle children's problems faster if there is good communication between them and parents (Ristiani, 2015).

Culture Saturday is a flagship program initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture of West Nusa Tenggara Province to instill love and pride in local culture, shape children's character, and strengthen their motivation. At Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten, this program has unique features compared to its counterparts in other schools, including traditional art performances, buying and selling traditional food, and engaging in traditional games. These activities aim to cultivate noble character and foster children's appreciation of their heritage. Parents play a crucial role by preparing traditional attire and assisting with traditional food preparations, reflecting Schunk's view Ristiani (2015) that parental support significantly impacts children's learning success. Through this program, the school strengthens the bond between parents, children, and the community while emphasizing cultural preservation.

The school also organizes outing classes and parent race activities, both of which require active parental involvement. Outing classes provide children with practical knowledge and skills through visits to historical sites, community enterprises, and tourist attractions, promoting hands-on learning that complements classroom instruction. Parents support these activities by participating alongside their children, fostering collaboration as highlighted by Hodgkinson in Prabhawani (2016). Similarly, parent races strengthen the emotional connection between parents and children by encouraging teamwork and social interaction. These events provide valuable opportunities for children to develop self-confidence, recognize their strengths, manage emotions, and learn how to navigate both victories and defeats. The school emphasizes the importance of parental engagement in these activities to enhance the educational experience and strengthen family bonds, aligning with Coleman's assertion (2013) on the critical role of parental involvement in supporting educational programs.

Maulid Nabi is the last school program involving parents at Nurul Iman Islamic School. Maulid Prophet is a school program that involves parents to commemorate the day of the Prophet together at school. Through this program, the school wants to tighten the bonds of mercy with the parents of the children. This is a yearly remembrance of Allah and His Apostle (peace and blessings be upon him). In addition, the school also believes that reminding Maulid the Prophet will cause parents to get closer to Allah and take wisdom and valuable lessons from the life and teachings of Muhammad SAW.

Parent bonding programs in schools provide significant benefits for both parents and schools. These programs allow parents to better understand their child's development, aligning with Komala (2015), who emphasizes the importance of parental awareness regarding their child's progress. Additionally, schools can foster collaborative education between home and school, as noted by Apriani (2021), highlighting the importance of teacher-parent cooperation for young children. These programs also facilitate effective communication between teachers and parents, which, as Migianti (2019) suggests, builds mutual understanding that benefits children's learning. Moreover, such initiatives help parents recognize and connect with other teachers and parents, fostering empathy and social skills that indirectly teach children the value of interaction and learning from others' experiences (Husaini & Lestari, 2019).

To encourage parental participation in these programs, schools must adopt various strategies. As (Prabhawani, 2016) suggests, schools should engage parents in shared educational responsibilities. Efforts include involving parents in program design, ensuring the initiatives align with their circumstances and culture (Jamilah, 2019) and using platforms like WhatsApp groups for communication (Pendidikan et al., 2016). Schools can also establish committees comprising parents to collaboratively develop educational policies (Fathurrahman, 2020). and utilize contact books for direct communication (Ramhawati, 2017). e) Additionally, leveraging social media can spark early childhood interest in school activities (Mahyudin, 2020). Effective parental involvement requires clear guidance and structured opportunities provided by schools, ensuring parents can actively support their child's educational success (Rohmah, 2018).

The implementation of parental cohesion programs in schools often faces challenges that hinder full participation. Economic factors are a significant barrier, as parents with financial limitations may feel less confident about engaging in their child's education (Malahayati, 2022). Additionally, occupational constraints make it difficult for some parents to find suitable times to attend school programs (Jamilah, 2020). A lack of awareness regarding the importance of parental involvement also limits participation, as parental understanding is essential for fostering positive relationships between schools and families (Mulia & Kurniati, 2023). Furthermore, limited parental insight, often rooted in outdated perceptions of education, poses challenges (Wuryantoro, 2020), inability to use gadgets or social media further complicates engagement, as technology facilitates communication and access to school activities (Neno, 2022). Other factors, such as time constraints and transportation issues, also hinder parental participation, as parents may struggle to balance their schedules or lack reliable means of transport (Syahrani et al., 2015).

To overcome these barriers, schools must adopt strategies that foster effective collaboration with parents. Programs like those at Nurul Iman Islamic School demonstrate the importance of parental involvement in supporting children's academic and emotional development. Despite diverse professional and economic backgrounds, parents actively participate in initiatives such as inspiration classes, committee meetings, and cultural events, reflecting their dedication to their children's education. Schools can address challenges by maintaining open communication, offering flexible program schedules, and ensuring activities remain relevant to parents and children alike. This collaboration strengthens the bond between families and the school, creating a supportive environment that enhances children's holistic development and reinforces the shared commitment to educational success.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the pivotal role of parental involvement in the educational processes at Nurul Iman Islamic Kindergarten. The various programmes implemented ranging from committee meetings and parenting classes to cultural events have not only fostered a collaborative partnership between parents and educators but have also significantly contributed to the holistic development of children. Parents have engaged actively as decision-

makers and implementers, moving beyond traditional roles as financial supporters. This active participation underscores the importance of establishing strong communication channels and shared goals between schools and families.

Despite these successes, challenges remain. Economic constraints, busy schedules, and insufficient awareness of the significance of parental involvement often hinder participation. Moreover, technological barriers and transportation issues further complicate engagement. Addressing these obstacles is essential for enhancing parental involvement. Future research should focus on developing strategies to mitigate these challenges, particularly by improving access to technology and offering more flexible participation options. Ultimately, the study underscores that robust parental involvement is crucial for enriching early childhood education and fostering a supportive learning environment. By recognising and addressing barriers to engagement, educational institutions can enhance collaborative efforts with families, thereby contributing to the overall success and well-being of children in their formative years. The insights gained from this research can inform the development of more effective parental involvement programmes across diverse educational settings, thereby strengthening the educational landscape for young learners.

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