

The role of parents in learning and improving cognitive aspects in early childhood

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Abstract

Education has a very an important role in human life to build children's future. People education are expected to be able to develop their knowledge, skill, and creativity. The aim of this research is to determine the role of parents in learning activities and improving cognitive aspects in early childhood. This research is field research using a qualitative descriptive approach in describing research results through observation, interviews and documentation analysis to collect data from teachers, students and parents. The results of this research are the role of parents in early childhood learning. The majority of children entering play groups are still dependent on their parents. In children's daily lives, parents will provide children with learning related to new things by providing simple explanations to improve the child's cognitive aspects.

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INTRODUCTION

Education has a very important role in human life to build the future of children, with education humans are expected to be able to develop knowledge, skills and creativity. (Nisfa, Rismayanti, & Ilmi, 2023). From these activities, it is hoped that there will be changes in behavior that lead to something better for the child's future. The first education that children receive is obtained from the family environment. The family is the first place for children to learn about education because this environment is the first place for children to learn about the wider world..

The family members who are directly involved in introducing education to children are parents. (Nopiyanti & Husin, 2021). So the role of parents in the journey of early childhood education is very important. At that time it is a golden age, because children experience quite rapid growth and development and cannot be replaced in the future. Learning activities can be designed by parents when children are still small, in addition parents can also put their children in non-formal education such as playgroups (Lilawati, 2021). The goal is for children to have the competencies needed for their life and it is hoped that in the future children will achieve complete happiness both as individuals and as members of society.

Early childhood is also defined as a group of children who are in a unique growth and development process. They have a specific growth and development pattern according to their level of growth and development. Early childhood learning is more directed towards developing the potential possessed by children, such as language skills, social-emotional, motor skills, and cognitive/intellectual abilities. (Marzuki & Setyawan, 2022). In learning, it must also be adjusted to the characteristics of children who tend to have an active nature and a high curiosity about new environments.

Learning is not only done at school, but learning is also carried out at home so that early childhood children are accustomed to learning. The task of parents at home is to create fun learning for children because parents have a special closeness to their children so they know the needs of their children according to their interests and talents. So parents play a role in improving the cognitive abilities of early childhood children.

METHOD

This research is a field research using a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a research using non-numerical data, such as sentences, photos or sound recordings and images. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to deeply understand the context of the role of parents in cognitive aspects and explore the perceptions and experiences of related parties, such as teachers, students, and parents. This research uses a descriptive method, namely collecting information about the status of existing symptoms or what events occurred when the research was conducted.

Data collection in this study uses document analysis/literature study, observation and interviews. Interviews are used to find out information related to everything that will be studied. Information obtained from direct observation, interview notes in the form of dokumen dan catatan peristiwa yang processed into data. Data analysis in this study uses Miles and Huberman analysis which consists of: data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions/verification. To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses data triangulation techniques, namely source triangulation is carried out by comparing data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The cognitive aspect is an aspect to gain knowledge in life. This knowledge can be obtained from experiences that occur in life. The knowledge/cognitive domain in Bloom's Taxonomy is related to memory, thinking and reasoning processes. The knowledge dimension includes domain specifications, experience, social context in the process of building and developing knowledge. These four types of knowledge help teachers in designing and deciding what material will be delivered to students.

Early childhood is a child who is in the age range of 0-6 years (National Education System Law of 2003) and a number of child education experts provide a limit of 0-8 years. Early childhood is also defined as a group of children who are in a unique growth and development process. They have a specific growth and development pattern according to their level of growth and development (Mansur, 2005). At that time it is the golden age, because children experience quite rapid growth and development and cannot be replaced in the future. According to many studies in the field of neurology, it was found that 50% of children's intelligence is formed in the first 4 years. After the age of 8, brain development reaches 80% and at the age of 18 it reaches 100% (Suyanto, 2005).

Referring to the 2003 National Education System Law, article 1 paragraph 14, the development efforts aimed at children aged 0-6 years are carried out through Early Childhood Education (PAUD). Early childhood education can be implemented through formal, non-formal and informal education. Formal early childhood education is in the form of kindergartens (TK) and Raudatul Athfal (RA) and other forms of equal value.

Based on research activities that have been carried out in the Mutiara Kasih playgroup, it was found that the role of parents in early childhood learning is very crucial. Where all students when entering this playgroup, the majority still depend on their parents. In implementing learning in the playgroup, children still ask to be accompanied by their parents. In this case, the role of parents is very important when learning activities take place. This is in line with research conducted by (Yunita & Afrinaldi, 2022) which states that the role of parents in children's education is very important and determines the growth and development of children. Parents are everyone who is responsible for a family or household tasks who in everyday life are called father and mother. (Nurhayati & Husain, 23-39). Parents themselves are generally known as father and mother. Where father and mother are bound in a bond called marriage so that they can create a family.

In terms of improving cognitive aspects in children, parents usually conduct learning related to the child's daily life and introduce new things to children by providing simple explanations. Parents usually buy educational toys for children, invite children to interact by starting light conversations about the child's environment. (Khobir, 2009). This is in accordance with the results of interviews with parents that to improve children's cognitive aspects, parents can teach children in simple ways and still relate them to everyday life. The goal is for children to be well stimulated and to be able to prove what their parents taught them at that time so that their understanding is more complete. In addition, the most common thing parents do in an effort to improve children's cognitive aspects is to teach children literacy and numeracy in the simplest way, such as counting the number of carrots in the soup in the child's bowl, the number of mother goats, and other things that are still relevant to the child's life.

According to Daryanto in (Marzuki & Setyawan, 2022) has explained the principles of child learning. Where these principles are something that is inherent in children when they are learning. There are seven principles that have been explained, namely as follows:

a) Starting from what the child has

Every child brings all the knowledge, interests and talents that they have. Therefore, the learning experience should contain various elements that are already known to the child and some others are new experiences. (Sapriyah, 2019). Where by containing elements that are already known to children will be able to grow the desire to continue learning, after that parents and teachers need to collaborate to support the development of talents, interests, and knowledge possessed by children. This is in line with the results of the interview that children tend to like some activities that they are already able to, after that they explore new things.

b) Learning must challenge children's understanding.

The learning activities designed must challenge children, the aim being to develop understanding in accordance with what they have experienced. (Wahyuni & Azizah, 2020). Something new experienced by a child is an interesting topic of conversation with a child. In this case, parents can invite children to interact about experiences or things that have just been experienced by the child. The goal is for children to understand what they are experiencing. This is in accordance with the results of the interview that early childhood likes new things, especially things that have never been known before. As parents, we must support what our children do as part of their growth and development.

c) Learning is done while playing

Learning through play can provide children with the opportunity to explore, express feelings, be creative, and learn in a fun way. (Hayati & Putro, 2021). This is based on the fact that the world of children is playing, so it is very natural that when children are playing, children are also learning. Learning activities while playing are very appropriate activities for children, because children can do two things at once without reducing their other activities. This is in line with the results of interviews with parents that one of the things that children like is playing all the time. Parents realize that the world of children is still about playing and getting to know their environment. For this reason, parents tend to try to combine the two when children are at home.

So that it will provide its own benefits for the growth and development of children. From this it can be concluded that learning while playing is something that can be applied by parents in supporting children's learning activities and as an effort to improve their cognitive aspects.

d) Using nature as a learning tool

As we know, nature is a very broad and even unlimited learning tool for children to explore and interact in building knowledge. (Sunanik, 2018). This is in accordance with the conditions of the study group that was used as a research location. Where the area is still very closely related to nature, and the interaction of children with nature is still very close. Thus, including natural elements in learning activities is the right thing to do. This is in line with the results of the interview that those who live in rural areas have high motivation to accompany their children in learning. They introduce nature as early as possible so that learning becomes more concrete and easy to accept.

e) Learning is done through their senses

Early childhood children must be taught and given stimulus to maximize their senses. The goal is for the function of each of their senses to develop optimally. In the observation activities carried out, children who are taught and given stimulus with their senses will gradually become sensitive to things around them. This is in accordance with research conducted by (Ginting, 2018) that children will gain knowledge through their senses, so learning should provide stimuli that can stimulate every ability that the child has.

f) Learning equips life skills

Learning must be able to equip children to have life skills according to their abilities. Life skills do not have to be taught when children are adults. However, this is very important to be taught when children are still young. Life skills are not only big things. But also include various small but meaningful things that can be learned by children from an early age, such as preparing their own food, washing dishes, planting and caring for plants and many more.

During the observation activity, children who have been equipped with life skills tend to have a sense of responsibility and self-confidence. They believe in themselves that they are able to overcome existing problems and have a sense of responsibility for themselves.

g) Learning by doing. Learning by doing or practicing directly can provide opportunities for children to be active, willing to work, and productively find various new knowledge and experiences. Learning that is directly practiced is one of the meaningful learning for children. In addition to children being able to know more deeply, they can also remember it forever.

Parents are the people who gave birth to us, namely mothers and fathers who care for and guide their children by giving good examples in living everyday life. In addition, parents also introduce new things to their children that they do not yet understand. The first knowledge that children receive comes from their parents because parents are the center of the child's spiritual life and as the cause of the child's blending with the outside world, so every emotional reaction of the child and his thoughts in the future are influenced by his attitude towards his parents. (Wahidin, 2019). Parents are the first place of education for children, so parents can be said to be the first teachers for children. Parents are the closest people to children who are able to introduce children to their surroundings and help children find answers to their curiosity.

Based on the results of the interview, parents have a good understanding of the role of parents in children's education, where children's education is greatly influenced by the mindset and way of educating parents since the child was small. Parents believe that education is continuous jadi harus dilandasi dengan

fondasi yang kuat. Salah satunya dengan mendidik anak sesuai dengan usia dan juga kebutuhan anak dijenjang usianya.

The role of parents in early childhood education is to condition the family environment by making the home a comfortable place to support children's education because each child has a different level of development. Parents have many ways to introduce the wider world to children. Children can develop daily life skills and self-care, as well as develop reading and numeracy literacy skills. This is in line with the results of the interview that learning in early childhood is very important, parents not only act as guides, but also provide examples, guides, become friends, and parents must be able to provide clear reasons for what can and cannot be done.

Parents, family and the environment greatly support children's education. This is evidenced by maximum guidance for children. Parents who take time for their children, communicate well with their children will increase their child's development (Anugrahana & Rustiani, 2022). This can be observed during the observation process that parents who are proactive in all their children's activities and always take the time to simply help their children will make their children's development much faster compared to children whose parents do not always take the time. From this case, it can be concluded that the role of parents is very crucial and cannot be separated. In developing children's cognitive abilities, parents must be able to motivate, supervise, choose children's play equipment and be partners in children's play.

The results of the observation showed that children's abilities in terms of creativity, curiosity, speaking, imagining when playing dolls, playing cars and other toys had increased. Other cognitive abilities that emerged were self-confidence, children were not ashamed to express their opinions and were more courageous in asking questions about things they did not understand. The results of the observation showed that children's abilities in recognizing objects around them, for example, mentioning the shapes of objects, mentioning colors, asking many questions and listening to answers from teachers and friends had developed. The results of the observation also showed that most children were skilled in the ability to convey initiatives and complete difficult tasks, children were also still starting to be able to express their work completely

Based on the research that has been conducted, there are several studies that are relevant to the research that has been conducted. The first one (Yunita & Afrinaldi, 2022) which states that the role of parents in children's learning is very important and determines the growth and development of children. The second study was conducted by (Khobir, 2009) In his research he stated that in terms of improving cognitive aspects in children, parents usually conduct learning related to the child's daily life and introduce new things to children by providing simple explanations. Parents usually buy educational toys for children, invite children to interact by starting light conversations about the child's environment. The third research conducted by (Anugrahana & Rustiani, 2022) in his research stated that parents, family and environment greatly support children's education. This is proven by maximum guidance for children. Parents who take time for their children, communicate well with their children will increase the child's development.

CONCLUSION

Parents have a very important role in early childhood learning activities because this period is the golden age where children experience quite rapid growth and development and cannot be replaced in the future. In these activities, the role of parents is more dominant than teachers so it is important for parents to always accompany their children's learning activities so that children grow and develop optimally. In terms of improving cognitive aspects in early childhood, parents must take the time to accompany and invite their children to play. By playing, parents can include elements of learning in it because early childhood is inseparable from playing. This can improve children's cognitive abilities.

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