

A NEEDS ANALYSIS OF PARENTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC) SERVICES IN ADDRESSING PARENTING CHALLENGES AT HOME IN BANDA ACEH, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify parental needs regarding Early Childhood Education (ECE) services in *Banda Aceh*, Indonesia. It employs a descriptive research using a quantitative approach to systematically examine the characteristics of parents in *Banda Aceh* and the parenting challenges that are encountered at home. The study collected numerical data for its data collection and used statistical analysis such as percentage-based summaries to identify common parenting barriers. A total of 169 respondents participated in a more than ten multiple choices questionnaire designed to capture diverse experiences, and perceptions of parenting obstacles. Data were analyzed using SPSS, with results presented in percentages to determine the extent of parents' needs for ECE services. The findings reveal two key areas of parental needs, which were parenting support and Institutional expectations. Parenting support indicated by the need for parenting classes to enhance life and soft skills, motivation, and guidance to strengthen parental roles. Institutional expectations, on the other hand, referred to the appropriate treatment of children in accordance with Islamic values, a conducive learning environment, and well-supervised activities. Additionally, parents expressed specific reasons and expectations regarding ECE services. These findings serve as a foundation for future research aimed at developing parenting class materials and modules tailored to address home-based parenting challenges while ensuring optimal early childhood education experiences.

Keywords: parental needs, ECE services, parenting obstacle, parenting class module, PAUD

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE), known as *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* (PAUD) in Indonesia, has experienced rapid growth in Aceh, with the number of PAUD institutions reaching 5,452 units (*Data Referensi*, 2023), a website providing statistical data on schools in Indonesia. This growth is driven not only by increased community awareness of the importance of PAUD services for children but also by government support through educational operational funding, known as *Bantuan Operasional Pendidikan* (BOP) (Bahri, 2017). The BOP program helps cover the daily operational costs of PAUD institutions (Ministerial Decree No. 3/P/2023).

PAUD institutions serve as specialized educational settings aimed at fostering children's growth and development through stimulation across six key areas: (1) religious and moral values, (2) physical-motor skills, (3) cognitive abilities, (4) language development, (5) social-emotional skills, and (6) artistic expression (Minister of Education Regulation No. 146, 2014). Therefore, PAUD is expected to function as an environment that observes, assesses, and stimulates children's development, ensuring their well-being and the fulfillment of their rights during their critical early years.

ECE plays a crucial role in shaping children's cognitive, emotional, and social development, as well as supporting language acquisition (Clarissa et al., 2019; Cadima et al., 2020; Ramli et al., 2024). Furthermore, ECE enhances children's abilities and readiness for the transition to primary education (Sylva et al., 2010; Wan Risad et al., 2023) and helps reduce achievement gaps, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Barnett, 2008). Additionally, ECE benefits parents by improving parenting skills, providing knowledge about child development, and promoting effective parenting techniques through parenting classes and positive discipline strategies (Bornstein & Bradley, 2003; Lansford et al., 2011). It also strengthens the parent-child bond by encouraging parental involvement both at home and in school, leading to greater engagement in the learning process (Fan & Chen, 2001; Epstein, 2011). Moreover, ECE can alleviate parental anxiety and stress related to child-rearing by enabling working parents to balance their professional and family responsibilities (OECD, 2017; Heckman & Karapakula, 2019).

PAUD services are particularly essential for parents who work full-time but still wish to ensure their children's right to play and develop during their early years. As a result, enrolling children in PAUD from ages 1 to 6 is strongly recommended, even though the Indonesian government has only mandated the final year of PAUD (ages 5–6) as a formal and compulsory preschool level (Ministerial Decree No. 14/P/2018). According to Suharyat et al. (2023), parents seek PAUD services for their children due to several factors, including limited care services at home caused by low economic status, low parental education levels, and dual-income households where both parents work full-time. Additionally, parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often lack the resources to independently support their children's development.

However, despite the increasing demand for PAUD services, several challenges remain. Studies by Anam (2021) and Farewell et al. (2022) highlight issues in PAUD institutions that impact parental needs and expectations, such as: i) Inadequate teacher competencies, both in regulatory compliance and practical application, ii) Limited and uncreative use of educational tools (*Alat Permainan Edukatif* or APE) and multimedia resources, iii) Conventional and unvaried teaching models and strategies, iv) Insufficient funding to establish a conducive learning environment.

Additionally, as technology and digital information continue to evolve, parents are increasingly concerned about their children's exposure to gadgets and screen-based activities at home. According to the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (*Badan Pusat Statistik*, or BPS), 88.99% of children aged 5 and above use the internet for learning activities and social media (BPS, 2022). Excessive and unrestricted access to digital content has been linked to issues such as internet addiction, cybercrime exposure, eye health problems, and diminished communication skills (Paramita et al., 2023; Amanah & Robingatun, 2023). Therefore, PAUD institutions are expected to play a role in mitigating these negative influences by equipping parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to support their children's healthy development. Given these concerns, an in-depth analysis of parental needs regarding PAUD services is essential to address the challenges they face in raising their children at home.

Problem Statements

The availability of high-quality PAUD services is crucial for both parents and children, as it enhances service delivery and builds community trust and loyalty across generations. However, despite the large number of PAUD institutions in *Banda Aceh*, the quality and variety of services they offer do not always align with parental expectations. The rapid increase in PAUD institutions has also intensified competition among them, making service quality a key determinant of public trust. To attract prospective students, early childhood education institutions must meet parents' expectations regarding the services they seek. Therefore, it is essential to conduct research that gathers detailed insights and parenting obstacles at home into parents' attitudes, experiences, and opinions regarding PAUD services. A quantitative descriptive approach will be used to analyze these needs systematically.

Research Objectives

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. To identify parents' specific needs regarding early childhood education services?
2. To identify proper soft skills to develop in response to the parenting challenges they face?

Literature Studies

a. Parents' Needs in Child Rearing, Education and Care

The fundamental needs of parents in nurturing and educating their children begin with economic stability. When basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare are met, parents who experience mental well-being and happiness can better support their children's healthy and productive growth (Masten et al., 2021). Bergman (2021), in his field experiment on "Parent-Child Information Frictions and Human Capital Investment," found that providing parents with sufficient information regarding their children's development and challenges in school increases parental awareness and engagement in their children's learning. By obtaining timely updates on their child's progress, parents can address developmental issues early, preventing costly interventions later. Consequently, access to periodic and comprehensive information on children's achievements, challenges, and pending assignments is an essential need for parents.

Support for parents in the child-rearing process is also crucial. The first thousand days of a child's life significantly influence their development into adulthood. The concept of "nurturing care" has been widely promoted to integrate various disciplines and sectors serving parents, families, and young children (Richter, 2018). This model highlights that apart from economic stability, essential factors such as security, social inclusion, childcare services, and access to early childhood education (ECE) are critical in fostering healthy child development.

As such, PAUD institutions, which function as centers for early childhood education and care, play an essential role in supporting effective parenting.

b. ECE (Early Childhood Education) Services

Early Childhood Education (ECE) services cater to children from birth to six years of age, with service durations typically ranging from 3-4 hours per day for six days a week (Permendikbud, 2014; Reference Data, 2023). The primary function of PAUD institutions is to stimulate children's development across six key domains: religious and moral values, physical-motor skills, cognitive abilities, language proficiency, socio-emotional growth, and artistic expression. These developmental aspects are integrated into play-based learning activities. For instance, arranging blocks individually or in groups enhances children's cognitive, social, emotional, and fine motor skills. Unlike home-based care, PAUD institutions offer a structured learning environment with trained educators and diverse social interactions that enrich children's experiences (Duncan et al., 2022).

Another essential aspect of PAUD services is the periodic assessment of children's growth and development, including weight, height, and head circumference measurements. These assessments help identify growth irregularities early, allowing for timely interventions before problems become chronic (Damayanti et al., 2020). As a holistic service, PAUD institutions provide these health checks, reducing the burden on parents to seek separate medical consultations (Wulandari et al., 2018). Children attending PAUD institutions benefit from a diverse social environment, planned play activities, and exposure to educational tools that foster self-development (Yenita & Yul, 2021). Studies also highlight that parents who cannot personally care for their children due to work commitments benefit from enrolling them in PAUD, ensuring that their children receive adequate care and education (Han et al., 2019). However, parental awareness of effective parenting styles and involvement in their child's education remains crucial (Soenens, 2018; Cano, 2022; Spruijt, 2020).

c. Parenting Programmes and Types of Parental Engagement Activities

Establishing effective communication between parents and educators is vital for understanding parental expectations and improving ECE services. Parenting programs aim to foster strong school-parent relationships, enhance communication, encourage parental engagement, and provide parenting skills and strategies (Joo et al., 2020). Research indicates that incorporating parenting programs into ECE services positively impacts children's school readiness and developmental outcomes. However, engaging families from diverse backgrounds, particularly those with limited time and employment obligations, remains a challenge (Oke, Butler, & O'Neill, 2020).

Parental involvement can be categorized into home-based and school-based strategies. Home-based involvement includes providing a structured learning environment and educational support at home, while school-based involvement entails attending school events, communicating with teachers, and participating in decision-making processes (Boonk et al., 2018). According to Indonesian education regulations (Permendikbud No. 30, 2017), parental engagement in ECE institutions includes: 1) Parental forums and meetings with school management, 2) Serving as resource persons in classroom activities (Inspired Class), 3) Attending children's performances and art exhibitions, 4) Participating in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, 5) Becoming a member of the school committee, 6) Contributing to

violence prevention teams within educational institutions, 7) Assisting in the prevention of drug and pornography exposure, 8) Supporting character education initiatives.

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend at least two parenting sessions per semester in addition to other school-related activities (Baswedan, 2016; Oke, Butler, & O'Neill, 2020).

d. Evaluation of Educational Institution Services and Community Needs Analysis

The rapid growth of PAUD institutions has led to increased competition and heightened demands for quality services. Consequently, continuous evaluation and improvement are necessary to maintain public trust and institutional credibility (Widyowati, Novitawati, & Sulaiman, 2024). Customer satisfaction, as defined by Kotler (2007), refers to an individual's perception of a service's performance relative to their expectations. When expectations align with actual experiences, satisfaction leads to trust and loyalty. In the context of PAUD services, parental satisfaction directly influences institutional reputation and enrollment rates (Joo et al., 2020; Oke, Butler, & O'Neill, 2020).

According to Hawkins and Lonney (1997), three key factors contribute to parental satisfaction: 1) Expectation Confirmation – Institutions must align their services with parental needs and expectations, 2) Ease of Access – Services should be user-friendly and accessible to all parents. 3) Willingness to Recommend – Satisfied parents are more likely to recommend PAUD institutions to others (Ismail et al., 2023).

Kotler (2016) defines service as an intangible activity offered to consumers, which may or may not be linked to a physical product. High-quality service standards lead to customer satisfaction, increased retention, and frequent usage. In education, service quality can be evaluated using the EDUQUAL model, developed by Khan and Mahapatra (2007), which consists of five dimensions: 1) Learning Outcomes – Ensuring reliable and accurate service delivery, 2) Responsiveness – Institutions' willingness to assist and provide prompt services, 3) Physical Facilities – Availability of appropriate infrastructure and learning materials, 4) Personal Development – Holistic development of children's knowledge and character, 5) Academic Excellence – Institutions' ability to provide personalized and expert education. The EDUQUAL framework serves as the foundation for assessing parental needs and perceptions in ECE institutions. A well-structured curriculum, effective classroom management, and the use of positive reinforcement are crucial in maintaining service quality (Novitawati, 2022). Institutions that prioritize parental satisfaction and engagement ultimately build a strong reputation and long-term loyalty among families.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research using a quantitative approach to obtain comprehensive and detailed information. To address the first research question, a survey method is utilised, where participants are asked about their needs and expectations. The population for this study consists of 300 parents of PAUD LATIFA, representing 150 children. According to Jackson (2016), the recommended sample size for a population of 300 is approximately 169 respondents, based on a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. This recommendation aligns with the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table, which also suggests 169 respondents for a population of 300. The sampling technique employed is probability-random sampling, ensuring that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. This method involves randomly selecting a group of parents from a

predetermined class (Jackson, 2016). The selected classes include B1 to B6 of the preschool group.

Table 1.
Numbers of parents (population)

| Services Program | Parents |
|-------------------------|------------|
| 1. Baby care (0-2 y.o) | 10 |
| 2. Play Group (2-4 y.o) | 30 |
| 3. Preschool (4-6 y.o) | 260 |
| Total | 300 |

Table 2.
Sample of study

| Group | Parents | Targeted to |
|--------------|------------|------------------------------|
| B1 | 30 | Questionnaire respondents |
| B2 | 30 | Questionnaire respondents |
| B3 | 30 | Questionnaire respondents |
| B4 | 30 | Questionnaire respondents |
| B5 | 30 | Questionnaire respondents |
| B6 | 19 | Questionnaire respondents |
| Total | 169 | Respondents of Survey |

The research instrument is a multiple-choice questionnaire consisting of 7 to 10 optional answers derived from relevant literature. The questionnaire is divided into the following sections: i) Demographic information (3 items), ii) Parenting barriers at home (1 item), iii) Soft skills (2 items), and iv) Evaluation of educational institution services for students and parents (5 items). The collected responses are analyzed using SPSS 27, which calculates the percentage of each response and applies data visualization techniques (Stobierski, 2021). Additionally, the findings are interpreted through descriptive analysis and presented in a chronological summary.

The survey is administered as an online/mailed survey, distributed via email or an online link, and responses are collected through email submissions. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a content validity test is conducted (Hendryadi, 2017; Puspitasari & Febrinita, 2021). The validators include experts in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), Curriculum Development, Social Psychology, and Bahasa (language studies).

The validity assessment is conducted using the Content Validity Index (CVI) statistical technique, as it has been widely applied in educational research over the past decade (Hendryadi, 2017; Syamsudin, 2020; Savira et al., 2018). The CVI measures content validity by engaging a panel of experts to evaluate whether each questionnaire item aligns with its respective construct (Polit & Beck, 2006). The CVI assessment consists of two types: 1) Individual item content validity (i-CVI), and 2) Overall content validity (s-CVI) (Lynn, 1986). In this study, four validators are used, adhering to a CVI standard of 1.00 (Polit & Beck, 2006; Polit et al., 2007).

RESULTS

A. Validity Test (Content Validity of CVI)

Table 3.
Validation Data

| Assessment Aspects | Relevant Proportions | | | | Mean i-CVI |
|--------------------|----------------------|----|----|----|------------|
| | V1 | V2 | V3 | V4 | |
| Instructions | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Content | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Language | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| s-CVI | | | | | 1 |

Table 4.
Data Validation of Questionnaire Items

| Item | Relevant Proportions | | | | i-CVI |
|-------|----------------------|----|----|----|----------|
| | V1 | V2 | V3 | V4 | |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 8 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 9 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 10 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| s-CVI | | | | | 1 |

It can be concluded that the questionnaire has a very high content validity value (very good) because the i-CVI and s-CVI values are in the range of $0.80 < \text{Mean I - CVI} < 1.00$ (Guilford & Fruchter, 1987). Furthermore, based on the data from the validation results of the questionnaire items, the i-CVI value for each question item in the questionnaire was 1 for items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. As for the s-CVI, the obtained value was 2.12. Based on the results of the i-CVI calculation; for items no. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10; it can be concluded that the questionnaire items are feasible or relevant because they meet the minimum threshold of 0.83 (Lynn, 1986; Denise F Polit et al., 2007).

In addition, the ten questions in the questionnaire have i-CVI values that fall within the range of $0.80 < \text{Mean I - CVI} < 1.00$, which means that the questions are stated to have very high or very good validity (Guilford & Fruchter, 1978). A reliability test could not be conducted on the essay and detailed survey instruments due to their qualitative nature. The respondents provided descriptive responses, expressing their opinions and feelings about PAUD stimulation services. In contrast, reliability tests are typically applicable to surveys where responses can be coded numerically using a set of predefined answer choices.

B. Demographic Information

The first part of the research findings describes the demographic information, and the second section describes a descriptive analysis of parental needs of Early Childhood Education and Care in PAUD LATIFA. The findings showed the followings:

Table 5.
Demographic distribution of respondents

| No. | Length of time enrolling children to PAUD | N=169 | % |
|--------------|---|------------|----------------|
| 1 | 0 – 1 year | 76 | 44.97% |
| 2 | 2 years | 31 | 18.34% |
| 3 | 3 years | 28 | 16.57% |
| 4 | 4 years | 16 | 9.47% |
| 5 | 5 years | 18 | 10.65% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

| No. | Demographic Information | Frequency (n=169) | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | Respondents Occupations | Number | % |
| 1 | Government officer/soldier/police | 30 | 17.75% |
| 2 | Private employee | 29 | 17.16% |
| 3 | Entrepreneurs | 36 | 21.30% |
| 4 | Housewife | 74 | 43.79% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 6.
Length of time enrolling children to PAUD

169 respondents comprised individuals from diverse professional backgrounds, including academics, lecturers, and teachers. Additionally, the sample included private employees, government officers, medical workers, state-owned enterprise employees, and housewives, with the majority being academics and government officers. Among these 169 respondents, it was also found that they had enrolled their children in PAUD at varying ages, ranging from 6 months to 4 years, across different generations of their children.

C. Answering RQ 1.

(How to specify parents' needs toward early childhood educational services?)

To specify parents' needs for early childhood education services, it is essential to first identify the following aspects: parenting challenges at home, the skills and methods required to address them, the reasons for enrolling children in PAUD, and parents' expectations for educational services and institutional support.

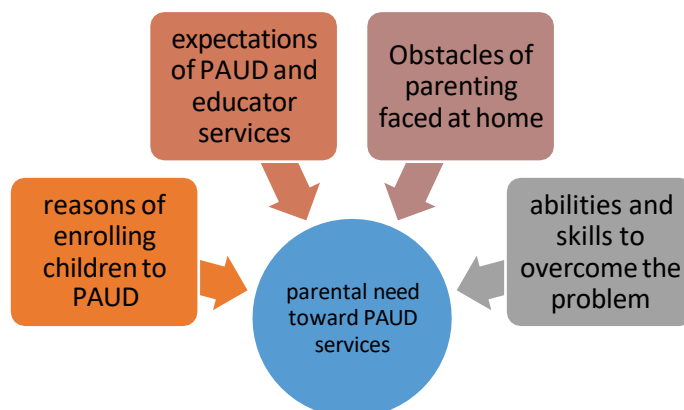


Figure 1. Diagram Specifying parental needs toward early childhood educational services

Table 7.

Obstacles often faced by parents in educating early childhood at home

| No. | Obstacles often faced by parents in educating early childhood at home | N=90 | % |
|--------------|---|------------|----------------|
| 1 | a. children often have tantrums | 20 | 11.83% |
| 2 | b. economic constraints | 4 | 2.37% |
| 3 | c. tired of taking care of more than one toddler | 6 | 3.55% |
| 4 | d. lack of patience and easily angered | 24 | 14.20% |
| 5 | e. lack of religious knowledge and parenting knowledge | 4 | 2.37% |
| 6 | f. mental health management (managing mental health) | 5 | 2.96% |
| 7 | g. bad influence of the environment around the AUD | 4 | 2.37% |
| 8 | h. be a role model | 18 | 10.65% |
| 9 | i. difficulty in managing children (eating patterns, sleeping, activities) | 16 | 9.47% |
| 10 | j. sibling rivalry (often arguing) | 16 | 9.47% |
| 11 | k. egocentric children | 3 | 1.78% |
| 12 | l. addictive gadgets | 22 | 13.02% |
| 13 | m. Healthy lifestyle management (food, sleep, physical health and personal hygiene) | 4 | 2.37% |
| 14 | n. Aggressive, quick-tempered and violent children | 5 | 2.96% |
| 15 | o. Critical thinking (cause and effect) | 4 | 2.37% |
| 16 | p. Children are lazy to eat and lack intake | 4 | 2.37% |
| 17 | q. speech delay | 6 | 3.55% |
| 18 | r. two different parenting patterns in one household | 4 | 2.37% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 8.
Skills needed in educating early childhood at home

| No. | Abilities/skills needed to be developed in educating AUD at home | N=169 | % |
|--------------|---|------------|----------------|
| 1 | a. Positive parenting | 7 | 4.14% |
| 2 | b. Educational skills | 23 | 13.61% |
| 3 | c. Problem solving | 7 | 4.14% |
| 4 | d. Be patient and listen to children | 33 | 19.53% |
| 5 | e. Broad knowledge and insight | 6 | 3.55% |
| 6 | f. Self-integrity management | 2 | 1.18% |
| 7 | g. Communication Skill (the ability to communicate effectively and positively) | 6 | 3.55% |
| 8 | h. Role model (being a good example) | 23 | 13.61% |
| 9 | i. Activities management (management of children's activity arrangements) | 25 | 14.79% |
| 10 | j. Implementation of positive discipline | 29 | 17.16% |
| 11 | k. Management of healthy lifestyles (food, sleep, body health and personal hygiene) | 7 | 4.14% |
| 12 | l. Critical thinking (cause and effect) | 1 | 0.59% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 9.
The necessity of parenting class for parents

| No. | Parents who agree on the need for parenting classes | N=169 | % |
|--------------|---|------------|----------------|
| 1 | Yes, very necessary | 63 | 37.28% |
| 2 | Just okay | 76 | 44.97% |
| 3 | No need | 30 | 17.75% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 10.
Reasons of enrolling children to PAUD

| No. | Reasons of enrolling children to PAUD | N=169 | % |
|--------------|--|------------|----------------|
| 1 | a. Adaptation and interaction with social environment (educators, friends and guests/resource persons) | 42 | 24.85% |
| 2 | b. Learning activities to literation (recognizing letters and numbers) | 23 | 13.61% |
| 3 | c. Playing facilities outside and inside the classroom | 14 | 8.28% |
| 4 | d. Avoiding and reducing addiction to gadgets/other digital devices | 13 | 7.69% |
| 5 | e. Obtaining stimulation for children's growth and development | 18 | 10.65% |
| 6 | f. Sharpening communication skills with the language environment | 14 | 8.28% |
| 7 | g. Training children's discipline and independence | 31 | 18.34% |
| 8 | h. Reducing egocentric attitudes with caring and sharing | 14 | 8.28% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 11.

PAUD services that parents expected for ECEC

| No. | PAUD services that parents expect for ECEC | N=169 | % |
|--------------|---|------------|----------------|
| 1 | a. Clean and good playing environment | 40 | 23.67% |
| 2 | b. Complete and good playing facilities and APE | 31 | 18.34% |
| 3 | c. Good Curriculum Development and Implementation | 56 | 33.14% |
| 4 | d. Many and varied extracurricular activities | 20 | 11.83% |
| 5 | e. Regular, clear and accurate Information and Communication Services | 22 | 13.02% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 12.

The educators' attitude that parents expect to their children

| No. | The educators' attitude that parents expect to their children | N=169 | % |
|--------------|---|------------|----------------|
| 1 | a. Serve children with love | 41 | 24.26% |
| 2 | b. Responsive and attentive to children | 49 | 28.99% |
| 3 | c. Dress, behave, and speak politely according to Islamic norms | 44 | 26.04% |
| 4 | d. Be fair, do not show favoritism and do not differentiate between children negatively | 35 | 20.71% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

Table 13.

Expected educator services to parents

| No. | Expected Educator Services to Parents | N=169 | % |
|--------------|--|------------|----------------|
| 1 | a. Establishing positive and effective communication | 40 | 23.67% |
| 2 | b. Responsiveness of questions, problems, and permissions submitted by parents | 28 | 16.57% |
| 3 | c. Good cooperation in educating and caring for children (school and home) | 62 | 36.69% |
| 4 | d. Understanding, appreciating and respecting each other (parents and educators) | 39 | 23.08% |
| Total | | 169 | 100.00% |

The data analysis results show that the obstacles that parents often face in educating and caring for children at home were: lack of patience and easily angered (14.20%), addictive gadgets (13.02%), and children often have tantrums (11.83%). Quoad, parents admitted that they need to develop abilities/expertise in educating and caring for their early childhood at home in the form of to be patient and listen to children (19.53%), implementation of positive discipline (17.16%), and children's activities management (14.79%). Then, from 169 parents 31.95% acknowledged that they agree and need to take part in special classes for parents, 38.46% responded normally (it's okay) and 29.59% admitted there is no need for this.

Most of respondents send their children to PAUD for the first reason as adaptation and interaction with social environment (educators, friends and guests'/resource persons) 24.85%, Learning activities to literation (recognizing letters and numbers) (13.61%), Training children's discipline and independence aspect (18.34%). They also expected PAUD institution services to provide the following things to their children such as clean and good playing environment

(23.67%), Complete and good playing facilities (18.34%), Good Curriculum Development and Implementation (33.14%).

They also hoped that educators treat students as follows; Serve children with love (24.26%), Responsive and attentive to children (28.99%), then to dress, behave, and speak politely according to Islamic norms (26.04%). Lastly, parents hoped that educators can provide services to parents as follows; Good cooperation in educating and caring for children (school and home) (36.69%), Establishing positive and effective communication (23.67%), and Understanding, appreciating and respecting each other (parents and educators) 23.08%.

D. Answering RQ 2.

(How to consider proper soft skills which parents’ need to improve according to the obstacles they face?)

The previous table presents twelve essential abilities and skills required to support the parenting process at home. These abilities and skills are identified based on the parenting barriers faced by parents in managing and caring for their young children. For instance, a lack of patience and frequent anger are among the most common difficulties experienced by parents (14.20%). As a result, many parents recognize the need to develop patience and improve their ability to listen to their children (19.53%). The relationship between parenting challenges and the necessary skills to overcome them is illustrated as follows:

Table 14.

Skills consideration to support parenting obstacles at home

| No | Parenting obstacles | % | Abilities/skills needed | % |
|----|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Lack of patience and easily angered | 14.20% | Be patience and listen to children | 19.53% |
| 2 | Gadgets addictive | 13.02% | Implementation of positive discipline | 17.16% |
| 3 | Children often have tantrums | 11.83% | Children’s activities management | 14.79% |

Among the three most common parenting obstacles, a clear relationship emerges between these challenges and the top three abilities or skills parents need to develop. This relationship highlights the "solutions" parents seek for their own self-development. At the second level, parents report struggling with children’s addiction to gadgets (13.02%), while 17.16% recognize the need to learn and apply positive discipline to address this issue. According to Nelsen (2006) in *Positive Discipline*, this approach helps children learn from their mistakes, develop self-discipline, and understand the natural consequences of their actions in a constructive manner. Activities that reflect positive discipline include: i) Morning Routine Chart (waking up, making the bed, brushing teeth, and having breakfast), ii) Problem-Solving Games (storytelling, role-playing, and discussions), iii) Reward Charts, iv) Time-In (helping children manage their emotions), v) Helping Hands Activities (such as arranging toys, watering plants, or cleaning the table after meals). Therefore, a strong understanding and practical application of positive discipline was expected to reduce or even eliminate children’s addictive gadget behaviors.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The first part of this study, "Education and Nurturing Early Childhood at Home," highlights various challenges parents face in educating and caring for young children at home. These challenges are critical issues that need to be addressed through parenting classes. Identifying the different types and percentages of these challenges helps in selecting appropriate materials and activities for future parenting programs. Additionally, the study identifies the essential abilities and skills parents need to develop in order to overcome these challenges. This can be achieved by enhancing knowledge and insights through literacy initiatives, expert-led classes, and problem-solving discussions with both experts and fellow parents, considering empirical and historical perspectives.

Based on the questionnaire results, a higher percentage of mothers (31.95%) expressed interest in attending parenting classes compared to fathers (29.59%), who preferred not to participate. Meanwhile, 38.46% of parents (both fathers and mothers) agreed on the need for such classes. These findings align with preliminary study data, which indicate that mothers are traditionally assigned the primary role of caring for, educating, and nurturing children at home. As a result, they are more frequently confronted with obstacles in education and childcare. In contrast, fathers were less inclined to participate, often citing work commitments or an inability to allocate time for parenting classes. This finding has implications for the development of a structured and relevant parenting class module in Early Childhood Education (ECE).

The second part of the study, focusing on ECE services, reveals that parents primarily enroll their children in PAUD to provide them with a social environment for interaction, engage them in literacy activities such as learning to read and write, and foster their independence and sense of responsibility. Additionally, parents expect educational institutions to offer a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment, including well-maintained play facilities and toys. They also emphasize the need for curriculum development that prioritizes character building, religious practices, and Quran memorization (*tahfidz*).

Furthermore, parents have specific expectations regarding educators. They prefer teachers who are loving, sincere, responsive, and attentive to children's needs. Additionally, they expect educators to uphold Islamic values by dressing, behaving, and communicating politely in accordance with Islamic norms. These findings underscore the need for an evaluative study of the operational education system, including teacher performance at PAUD LATIFA, *Kota Banda Aceh*. Moreover, they highlight the importance of enhancing educational services, improving teaching quality, and strengthening educators' capacity and integrity to foster better communication with parents and provide optimal support for children's development.

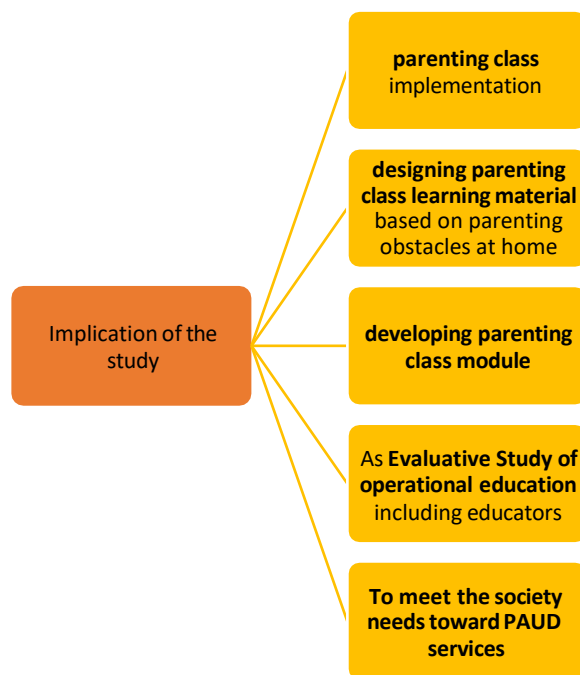


Figure 2. Implication of the study

CONCLUSION

Among the 18 parenting obstacles identified through a literature review, the three most prevalent challenges reported by 169 respondents were: lack of patience and quick temper (14.20%), children's excessive use of gadgets (13.02%), and frequent tantrums (11.83%). Addressing these issues requires religious coaching, empirical and historical insights, problem-solving skills through expert discussions, and consistent motivation to help parents gradually overcome these challenges and establish positive habits. Additionally, parents need effective strategies, skills, and time management techniques to regulate children's activities and minimize their dependence on digital devices. Moreover, parents expressed the need to develop the following key parenting abilities: patience and active listening (19.53%), implementation of positive discipline (17.16%), and effective management of children's activities (14.79%). These abilities require knowledge, environmental support, and reinforcement, ensuring they become integral habits in parenting. The study further identifies parents' expectations from ECE services, including addressing parenting challenges at home, acquiring the skills and strategies needed to overcome them, understanding the reasons for enrolling children in PAUD, and clarifying expectations regarding educational institutions and educators.

Parents benefit significantly from parenting forums, which provide essential knowledge, updated insights, problem-solving skills, motivation, and reinforcement to help them navigate parenting challenges effectively. Additionally, frequent interactions with ECE institutions foster positive and effective communication, ensuring that parents receive accurate and timely information regarding their child's development and the progress of educational programs. For children, Early Childhood Education (ECE) plays a crucial role in maximizing growth and developmental stimulation across various domains, including language, cognitive, motor, social-emotional, and artistic development, while placing a strong emphasis on religious and moral values. Children thrive in safe, nurturing, and well-equipped learning environments,

where they have access to age-appropriate play facilities and structured curricula designed to support their holistic development.

Furthermore, they benefit from fair, responsive, and compassionate treatment from educators who are attentive to their individual needs. Educators are expected to serve as role models, upholding Islamic values and ethical teaching practices. Their responsibilities extend beyond academic instruction to include emotional support, character-building, and fostering positive behavioral development among students. By providing nurturing guidance and constructive discipline, educators play a vital role in shaping children's moral and social development. For ECE institutions, establishing strong home-school collaboration is essential in optimizing children's learning experiences. Institutions must also enhance communication and information-sharing systems among parents, educators, and school administrators to ensure transparency, effectiveness, and constructive engagement. Strengthening collaboration between families and educational institutions fosters a supportive learning environment, enabling better educational outcomes and holistic child development.

Study Implications and Future Research

The findings emphasize the need to develop a comprehensive and structured parenting class module, designed to equip parents with practical skills and evidence-based strategies for overcoming parenting obstacles and fostering positive home environments. The implementation of parenting classes is expected to cultivate healthier parenting habits, align with societal expectations of PAUD services, and enhance parental involvement in early childhood education. Additionally, this study highlights the necessity of conducting an evaluative study on the operational aspects of PAUD education, including educator performance and institutional effectiveness in *Banda Aceh*. Strengthening educational services, improving teaching quality, and enhancing educators' professional development and integrity will contribute to better childcare practices and more effective parent-teacher collaboration.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares that there were no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this study. The research was conducted independently, and no personal, financial, or professional relationships influenced the design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the findings.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The sole author was responsible for all aspects of this study. This encompassed the conceptualization and design of the research, the collection and analysis of data, and the interpretation of the results. Furthermore, the author undertook the complete preparation, writing, and finalization of the manuscript.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI USE

The entire process of this manuscript—including the design, data collection, analysis, interpretation of the findings, and the writing itself—was completed without the use of generative artificial intelligence tools.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Upon reasonable request, the corresponding author will provide the data supporting the findings of this study.

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