

The Influence of Parental Involvement on Early Childhood Education (ECE) Students' School Readiness in Makassar

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.803265S>

Received: 12 August 2024; Accepted: 17 August 2024; Published: 15 September 2024

ABSTRACT

Parents who are not actively involved in student's education will encounter obstacles in understanding the needs and abilities of the students, which may lead to academic struggles such as underachieving, or behavioral problems such as delinquency. This research was conducted to determine the influence of parental involvement on the school readiness of early childhood education (ECE) students before entering primary school in Makassar. The measurement tools used in this research are the Family Involvement Questionnaire-Short Form (FIQ-SF) and the Kindergarten Student Entry Profile (KSEP), which have been adapted to Indonesian and retested for their feasibility. The sample in this research consisted of 100 parents of ECE students. The data of this research were analyzed using simple linear regression. The results shows that there is a significant positive influence between the variable of parental involvement in students' school readiness ($r = 0.587$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) with an influence magnitude of 34.5% ($R^2 = 0.345$). This means parental involvement has an influence of 34.5% in determining students' school readiness. The implication of this research is that parents should strive for positive involvement in each of parental involvement aspects to support student's school readiness.

Keywords: early childhood education student, parental involvement, school readiness

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) aims to prepare students for formal education (Kayili & Ari, 2011). This goal is embedded in the Indonesian Government Regulation No. 27 of 1990 concerning Preschool Education and the Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 0486/U/1992. However, the participation rate of student receiving early childhood education before entering primary education is still far from the expectations outlined in Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010. This is because many parents believe that the ability to read alone is sufficient to measure a child's readiness for primary school (Pratiwi, 2018). In Makassar, according to the Basic Education Data from the Directorate General of PAUD and Dikdasmen, there are 18,357 early childhood education students, the highest number in South Sulawesi Province. Despite this, the Gross Enrollment Rate reported by the Central Statistics Agency indicates that the percentage of students attending ECE in South Sulawesi is only 30.56%.

Being ready for school means that students have met the physical, mental, and social requirements of primary school and are capable of performing certain behaviors (Kayili & Ari, 2011; Ulgen, 1997). According to Koçyiğit (2009), school readiness is a relative construct that varies from one individual to another and can be achieved at different ages. Increased maturity in each developmental aspect and the ability of a child to demonstrate specific skills are required before a child enters formal education. Students

who are ready to start formal schooling are more likely to succeed and contribute positively to society as productive citizens in the future (Rahmawati et al., 2018).

School readiness factors, according to Oktay (in Kayili & Ari, 2011), include physical, mental, and emotional factors, while social and environmental factors serve as moderators. Contemporary perspectives on school readiness are shifting towards a holistic definition that emphasizes the importance of personal and social skills, as well as the roles of family and community (Diamond, 2010). Recent findings that holistic school readiness can be influenced by family and community roles are reflected in the regulations of Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010, which mandates parents to provide basic education to students who have reached school age. This underscores the need for parents, as the closest social circle to students, to play a role in achieving school readiness.

Positive parental involvement impacts student success, enhances parental and teacher satisfaction, and improves the school environment that supports learning (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). The role of parents is significant in determining student's educational success, both cognitively, developmentally (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Nurhayati, 2021), and morally (Wahyuni, 2016). Conversely, neglectful parenting and involvement are major factors contributing to a child's lack of readiness for formal school (Bruwer, 2014). The role of parents does not end with fulfilling their obligation to provide access to primary school but also includes overseeing and facilitating their child's education.

Secondary data surveys on aspects of readiness that are lacking in ECE students transitioning to formal school, based on the School Readiness Survey by Dikdas Kemdikbudristek, include: a) physical aspect—difficulty jumping on one foot; b) physical welfare aspect—unable to wash hands or face independently; c) social aspect—lack of courage to explore the environment; d) emotional aspect—unfamiliar with various emotions; e) literacy aspect—unable to respond to visual messages or verbal symbols; f) numeracy aspect—unable to recognize cause and effect, natural or social phenomena; and g) learning involvement aspect—unable to follow rules (Kemendikbud, 2023).

Primary data surveys also provide insights into current parental involvement. Of 34 parents surveyed, 41.2% cannot drop students off at school due to work. During school visits, 50% of parents cannot visit students at school due to being busy or having office commitments. Regarding helping students with homework, 20.6% of parents admitted they could not assist due to being too busy. However, we should not forget that parents can be involved in many other ways, hence it is important to find out the length which parents are involved in students' early childhood education and how said involvement influence students' school readiness.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach. Sampling was conducted using a non-probability sampling technique with a quota sampling method. The sample consists of 100 respondents, who are parents of early childhood education students in Makassar. Data collection was carried out online via Google Forms, distributed through personal messages and through parent association groups at several schools.

The scale used to measure the variable of parental involvement is the Family Involvement Questionnaire-Short Form (FIQ-SF) by Fantuzzo et al. (2013), as utilized in the study by Sim Hui Yee (Yee, 2023). The FIQ-SF was previously simplified from the Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) by Fantuzzo et al. (2000), reflecting Epstein's classification of parental involvement aspects, including home-school conferencing, school-based involvement, and home-based involvement. The scale used to measure the school readiness variable is the Kindergarten Student Entry Profile (KSEP), modified from Matthew et al. (2011). The KSEP is based on aspects of school readiness from major theories, including Piaget's cognitive theory, Vygotsky's language development theory, and Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, with aspects such as socioemotional and cognitive. Both measurements used Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1=Never

to 4=Always for FIQ-SF, and 1=Not Yet to 4=Mastered for KSEP) to acquire responses from parents.

The analysis technique used in this study is simple linear regression to test hypotheses. The hypothesis test is conducted to determine the significance of the influence in the research. The statistical significance level used is $p < 0.05$; if the correlation value obtained is less than 0.05, it indicates that the correlation between the two variables is significant. If the value is greater than 0.05, it indicates that there is no significant influence between the variables. Data analysis was performed using SPSS Statistics 26.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Subjects involved in this study are 100 parents residing in Makassar, Indonesia, with students aged between 2 and 7 years. The subjects are parents of students attending early childhood education at ECE-equivalent institutions in Makassar, 92 (92%) of said parents are mothers and the other 8 (8%) are fathers. Based on their job, 54 (54%) of those parents works as a housewife, 28 (28%) of them are civil servants or teacher, 10 (10%) of them classified as Others (doctor, nurse, entrepreneur), and 8 (8%) of them refuses to answer.

A total of 100 students were assessed based on their parents' perspective of their school readiness. Out of 100 students, 56 (56%) of them are male, the other 44 (44%) are female. Most student were 6 years old (49%) by the time they are assessed, 34 (34%) of them were 5 years old, with outliers being 1 (1%) student were 2 years old and 5 (5%) students were 7 years old as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Student Demography

N=100	Frequency	Percentage
Male	56	56%
Female	44	44%
2 Years Old	1	1%
4 Years Old	11	11%
5 Years Old	34	34%
6 Years Old	49	49%
7 Years Old	5	5%
≤ 11 Months	41	41%
12-23 Months	50	50%
≥ 24 Months	9	9%

Table 2 below describes parental involvement data obtained through the categorization of respondents' answers to the FIQ-SF scale. The parental involvement scale consists of 17 items with a score range from 1 to 4.

Table 2. Categorization of Parental Involvement

Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X > 51$	High	63	63%
$34 < X < 51$	Medium	37	37%
$X < 34$	Low	0	0%
Total		100	100%

The table above shows the results of the hypothetical categorization of respondents' parental involvement

data. It is known that there are 63 respondents (63%) in the high category, 37 respondents (37%) in the medium category, and no respondents (0%) in the low category. Based on these categorization results, it can be concluded that the majority of the subjects' involvement as parents falls into the high category.

The description of school readiness data was obtained through the categorization of respondents' answers to the KSEP scale. The school readiness scale consists of 12 items with a score range from 1 to 4.

Table 3. Categorization of School Readiness

Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X > 36$	High	77	77%
$24 < X < 36$	Medium	23	23%
$X < 24$	Low	0	0%
Total		100	100%

Table 3 above shows the results of the hypothetical categorization of student readiness data. It is noted that there are 77 students (77%) in the high category, 23 students (23%) in the medium category, and no students (0%) in the low category. Based on these categorization results, it can be concluded that the majority of students fall into the high school readiness category.

Hypothesis Testing

According to the hypothesis, there is a significant influence of parental involvement on the school readiness of early childhood education students in Makassar, Indonesia. The hypothesis testing was conducted using simple linear regression analysis through SPSS Statistics 26.

Table 4. Hypothesis Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	705.907	1	705.907	51.567	.000 ^b
	Residual	1341.533	98	13.689		
	Total	2047.440	99			

Based on the value shown in Table 4, it is known that $p = 0.000$, in which $p = 0.000$ is smaller than the probability of 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an influence of parental involvement on the school readiness of early childhood education students in Makassar.

Additional correlation coefficient test was conducted to determine the extent of the influence of parental involvement on school readiness. The results of the correlation coefficient test, carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 shown by Table 5 below.

Table 5. Correlation Coefficient Test Results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.587	.345	.338	3.700

The correlation coefficient (r) obtained from the correlation coefficient test is $r = 0.587$. According to the categorization criteria for correlation coefficients, this value falls within the range of 0.40-0.599 (Moderate), indicating that parental involvement has a moderate influence on the school readiness of early childhood

education students in Makassar. Furthermore, the positive direction of the relationship is evident since the value of r is also positive, meaning that as the X variable (*parental involvement*) increases, the Y variable (*school readiness*) also increases. In other words, higher parental involvement is associated with greater school readiness among students. The coefficient of determination (R^2) obtained from the table above is $R^2 = 0.345$, which translates to a percentage of 34.5%. This means that parental involvement accounts for 34.5% of the variance in school readiness, while the remaining 65.5% is influenced by other variables not discussed in this study.

Additional Tests

Differences in Parental Involvement Based on Status

The first additional test was conducted to determine whether there are differences in parental involvement based on the respondents' status as the father or the mother of ECE students. The comparison test used is the *Kruskal-Wallis Test*, utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics 26.

Table 6. Parental Involvement Based on Parental Status

	Parental Involvement
Kruskal-Wallis H	4.040
<i>df</i>	1
<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>	0.044

Table 6 results indicate a significance value of $p = 0.044$. This significance value shows that $p < 0.05$, which means there is a significant difference in the level of parental involvement based on the respondents' status. It was found that respondents with the status of father have a mean rank of 70.25, while respondents with the status of mother have a mean rank of 48.78. This indicates that respondents who are fathers have a higher level of parental involvement compared to respondents who are mothers of the students.

Differences in School Readiness Based on Length of Study

The second additional test was conducted to determine whether there are differences in school readiness based on the length of study among students. The length of study is categorized into two groups: those who have studied for less than 12 months and those who have studied for more than 12 months. The comparison test used is the *Kruskal-Wallis Test*, utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics 26. The results obtained can be seen in Table 7 below.

Table 7. School Readiness Based on Length of Study

	School Readiness
Kruskal-Wallis H	0.473
<i>df</i>	1
<i>Asymp. Sig.</i>	0.491

The test results indicate a significance value of $p = 0.491$. This significance value shows that $p > 0.05$, which means there are no significant differences in the level of school readiness based on the length of study among students. It was also found that students who have received early childhood education for less than 12 months have a mean score of 48.06, while students who have received early childhood education for more than 12 months have a mean score of 52.13. This indicates that students who have received early childhood education for more than 12 months have a higher level of school readiness compared to those

who have received education for less than 12 months

Differences in School Readiness Based on Age

The third additional test was conducted to determine whether there are differences in school readiness based on the age of the students. The age of the students is categorized into two groups: those under five years old and those five years and older. The comparison test used is the *Kruskal-Wallis Test*, utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics 26. The results obtained can be seen in Table 8 below.

Table 8. School Readiness Based on Age

	School Readiness
Kruskal-Wallis H	3.079
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	0.079

The test results indicate a significance value of $p = 0.079$. This significance value shows that $p > 0.05$, which means there are no significant differences in the level of school readiness based on the age of the students. It was also found that students under five years old have a mean score of 39.67, while students aged five years and older have a mean score of 52.88. This indicates that students who are five years and older have a higher level of school readiness compared to those who are under five years old

DISCUSSION

Based on the simple linear regression analysis conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 26, the significance comparison indicates that there is an influence of parental involvement on the school readiness of early childhood education students in Makassar. The direction and influence of parental involvement on school readiness are demonstrated by a correlation value of $r = 0.587$, indicating a moderate positive influence, meaning that as parental involvement increases, so does the school readiness of the students. Furthermore, the extent to which parental involvement can determine school readiness is quantified by the coefficient of determination, $R^2 = 0.345$. This means that parental involvement accounts for 34.5% of the variance in school readiness among early childhood education students in Makassar.

Based on the categorization of parental involvement data, it was found that the majority of parents of students have a high level of involvement, with a prevalence of 63 respondents, or 63%. This is followed by 37 respondents (37%) who have a moderate level of parental involvement. Data provided indicates that, in general, parents of students in Makassar have a high level of engagement in student's education. This reinforces the popular saying that parents always want the best for their children. Parents categorized as having high involvement are likely to invest their time and resources as much as possible to support student's educational success. There are three main constructs believed to explain why parents choose to engage in student's education; a) First, parents have a strong belief in what they should do regarding their child's education, which leads them to be involved in making decisions they consider important for their child's well-being and success. b) Second, sense of efficacy, parents' confidence in their ability to positively influence their child's education also motivates their involvement. This sense of efficacy encourages parents to actively participate in their child's learning and development. c) Third, the perception that their child or the school wants their involvement further promotes parental engagement. When parents feel that their participation is desired and valued, they are more likely to engage actively in their child's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997).

Based on the previous analysis, no parents fall into the low involvement category, while 37 respondents

(37%) are categorized as having moderate involvement. Parents in this category may not be able to engage in every aspect of parental involvement or may participate passively and not proactively. The lack of parental involvement in students' education can be associated with several predictors, including work schedules (McLaughlin-Evans, 2021), poor time management (Kazlauskiene & Kravčenkaitė, 2019), gender, education level and income sources of parents can also predict passive parental involvement. For example, parents with higher education levels and stable incomes may be more inclined to engage actively in their child's education (Lemessa et al., 2023).

Based on the categorization of the school readiness, it is shown that 77 students (77%) fall into the high readiness category, while 23 students (23%) fall into the moderate readiness category. Notably, there are no students categorized as having low school readiness. It was found that the majority of students assessed by the respondents fall into the high school readiness category. Students in this high category are assumed to have achieved the measured aspects of school readiness, indicating they are prepared both cognitively and socio-emotionally. The students categorized as having high readiness are presumed to be influenced by several supporting factors, including age-appropriate cognitive maturity, positive parent-child interaction, availability of learning materials at home, mother-child bonding, emotional intelligence, and parental involvement (Mashar & Pudji Astuti, 2022).

While the majority of students fall into the high readiness category, 23% of students are still categorized as having moderate school readiness. Students in this category are assumed to have achieved some aspects of school readiness, although not fully or to the established standards. Incompletion of all school readiness aspects in students within this moderate category may be influenced by several factors, including socioeconomic limitations and access to resources which significantly impact cognitive development and readiness (Chikwanda et al., 2022), physical and mental health (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2023), family structure, age, gender (Janus & Duku, 2007), parental decision-making (Gandhi, 2020), and lack of parental involvement (Ghimire, 2018).

The additional data analysis conducted to examine differences in school readiness based on students' learning duration in Makassar indicated that there were no significant differences ($p = 0.491$). Similarly, a subsequent analysis investigating differences in school readiness based on students' ages also found a difference that was not significant ($p = 0.079$). Several factors may contribute to these findings including the age at which student enroll in ECE (Gandhi, 2020), natural or genetic factors (Lemelin et al., 2007) and student motivation to attend school (Vladimirovich, 2019). While age is a contributing factor to school readiness, it is not the sole determinant of whether a student is prepared to enter elementary school. Other skills, such as development of fine and gross motor skills, observational skills, concentration abilities, comprehension skills and situational assessment (Ramadhini & Nasution, 2022).

This research supports the findings consistent with previous studies that parental involvement has an impact on students' school readiness (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Bandura et al., 1996; Sheridan et al., 2008; Diamond, 2010; Herbst & Tekin, 2011; Voorhis et al., 2013; Ye, 2016; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Nurhayati, 2021; Prayudha et al., 2022). However, it is noteworthy that parental involvement in this study accounts for only 34.5% of the predictor variables for students' school readiness. According to findings from several similar studies, school readiness can also be influenced by students' age and gender (Janus & Duku, 2007), physical and mental condition of students (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2023), and intrinsic factors such as students' emotional quotient (EQ) and intelligence quotient (IQ) (Mashar & Pudji Astuti, 2022).

One of the findings obtained in this study is that no significant differences were found between age and students' school readiness, nor between learning duration and school readiness. Although the findings of this study are unorthodox compared to the sentiments of similar research, the results are not surprising because, as school readiness is a multifaceted construct that is not solely determined by chronological age. It is influenced by various factors, such as cognitive development, language skills, motor abilities, and socio-

emotional factors that can vary from one individual to another (Ko & Saban, 2014; Boddy, 2023). Regarding learning duration, most studies have found that the length of early education plays a role in preparing students for formal schooling (Kurniasari, 2015). However, it is also possible that students who receive education too early may develop a decreased interest in schooling before entering formal education (Vladimirovich, 2019; Michalak, 2023). One form of parental involvement is making decisions related to their child's education (Epstein, 2001). This includes decisions about when and where a child will attend school, which is also the responsibility of parents (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). The education a child receives from birth until they approach early childhood education institutions is critical (Vladimirovich, 2019). Therefore, parents should not rely solely on educational institutions and teachers to educate students, nor should they assume, that students can become independent without parental involvement.

The results of this study align with similar research indicating that parental involvement plays a significant role in students' educational aspects. For instance, Astari (2018) found a strong positive correlation coefficient of $r = 0.690$ between parental involvement and school readiness. A related study by Prayudha et al. (2022) explored the relationship between parental involvement and school readiness in terms of socio-emotional competencies, finding a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.172, which means that parental involvement contributes 17.2% to preschoolers' socio-emotional competencies.

Research on parental involvement and school readiness is not a new topic; however, it continues to be a trend that is updated with various combinations of approaches, research methods, measurement tools, and research contexts. Therefore, this study had achieved its goals to enrich the database on parental involvement and school readiness, particularly for early childhood education students in Makassar. It employed the FIQ-SF and KSEP scales, which are adaptations that represent a novel approach and warrant further examination.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions presented, it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of parental involvement on the school readiness of early childhood education (ECE) students in Makassar, Indonesia, with a significance value of $p = 0.000$ and a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.587$. The independent variable contributes 34.5% to the dependent variable, as indicated by the coefficient of determination (R^2). The positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.587$) suggests that as parental involvement increases, so does the school readiness of ECE students. Respondents, consisting of parents or guardians involved in this study, demonstrated a high level of parental involvement. Similarly, the students assessed by the respondents also exhibited a high level of school readiness, placing them in a favorable category. This finding highlights the importance of active parental engagement in supporting student's educational outcomes, particularly in the context of early childhood education.

SUGGESTIONS

For parents, it is hoped that parents will proactively involve in their child's education and not rely solely on institutions or teachers to ensure that students receive essential education. Parental involvement at home, combined with good communication with teachers and engagement at school, becomes a formula that can support students in reaching their academic potential and becoming individuals who contribute positively to society and the country in the future.

Future researchers conducting studies related to school readiness are advised to employ different methods for assessing school readiness. Additionally, it is recommended to integrate specific aspects, different constructs of school readiness, and more specific research contexts, such as the school readiness of students following a particular curriculum, such as Montessori or Reggio-Emilia; or the school readiness of students

with special needs

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