

Nurturing Self-Esteem in Early Childhood: A Novel Approach Through Parent-Teacher Collaboration in Positive Parenting

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Abstract

Early childhood is a critical period for the development of self-esteem, which lays the foundation for future emotional and social well-being. In this context, the synergy between parents and teachers plays a pivotal role in influencing positive outcomes. This study aims to investigate the collaborative efforts of parents and teachers in implementing positive parenting to enhance self-esteem in early childhood. Utilizing a qualitative research method and approach, the study engaged in in-depth interviews and observations to collect data. The respondents included 7 ECCE Principals and 30 parents who provided insights into their experiences and strategies in fostering positive parenting and self-esteem. Data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis, identifying patterns and themes related to parent-teacher collaboration. The findings reveal a significant emphasis on affection, mutual respect, and the development of warm relationships between children and parents. Furthermore, the study highlights the crucial role of open communication and shared values in aligning home and school environments to support children's self-esteem. The implications of this research underscore the importance of a synergistic approach between parents and teachers, suggesting that such collaboration is vital for the optimal development of self-esteem in early childhood.

Keywords: *Early Childhood, Self-Esteem, Positive Parenting, Parent-Teacher Collaboration, Child Development.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of self-esteem during early childhood is a crucial aspect of a child's overall development, with long-term implications for their psychological health and social functioning since self-esteem develops from middle childhood to young adulthood, with high rank-order stability in middle childhood, low in adolescence, and highest in young adulthood (Chung et al., 2017; Hermawati et al., 2021). Self-esteem in early childhood is a critical determinant of psychological well-being and social functionality in later life. High self-esteem is positively related to academic performance, but factors like socio-economic background and emotional reactions may contribute to low performance (D'Mello et al., 2018). Self-esteem is a personal worth or value that individuals ascribe to themselves. This foundational understanding of self-esteem is particularly relevant in early childhood, a period characterized by rapid developmental changes and the formation of self-concept (Aminah et al., 2021; Hasanah et al., 2023; Kartinih et al., 2018; Marliana et al., 2021; Sadiyah et al., 2021; Tasliyah et al., 2020; Yuliya et al., 2020). The development of self-esteem during these formative years is influenced by children's achievements and the feedback they receive from significant others, primarily parents and teachers (D'Mello et al., 2018). This period is crucial as the self-esteem established can have long-lasting effects on a child's future academic, social, and personal outcomes (Orth, 2018).

As primary agents of socialization, both parents and teachers play pivotal roles in shaping the self-esteem of young children (Nurhayati & Rosita, 2020; Nursa'adah et al., 2022; Rahayu & Nurhayati, 2023; Ratningsih et al., 2021). A recent study found that Family and school play crucial roles in children's cognitive and socio-emotional development, with communication and collaboration between the two essential for effective development (Campos Cancino & Moreno

Mínguez, 2020). The concept of positive parenting has emerged as a paradigm for nurturing self-esteem (Nurhayati & Rosita, 2020; Rahayu & Nurhayati, 2023; Wiranata, 2020). Characterized by warmth, nurturing, and constructive discipline, this child-rearing approach significantly impacts self-esteem development (D'Mello et al., 2018). Through consistent communication, emotional warmth, and encouragement, positive parenting practices are pivotal in instilling self-confidence and a sense of self-worth in children (Wiryany et al., 2022). Harmonious interactions within the microsystem, especially between parents and teachers, are instrumental in enhancing a child's development (Latif et al., 2023; Nurhayati et al., 2023; Suharyat et al., 2023). In line with this, empirical studies have affirmed that effective parent-teacher collaboration yields improved academic and social outcomes for children (Nurhayati, 2021; Nursa'adah et al., 2022; Ratningsih et al., 2021; Rosita et al., 2020). A consistent approach between home and school environments not only reinforces positive behaviors and attitudes but also fortifies a child's self-esteem (Edahiro, 2022).

However, achieving effective collaboration between parents and teachers is fraught with challenges (Latif et al., 2023; Nurhayati, 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2021, 2023; Suharyat et al., 2023). Divergent parenting beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and communication barriers often impede this collaboration (Suharyat et al., 2023). Additionally, socio-economic factors can limit parental involvement, thereby affecting the quality of the parent-teacher relationship (Wolf, 2020). In response to these challenges, educational programs aimed at both parents and teachers have been developed. These programs focus on imparting positive parenting strategies and collaborative techniques. Moreover, policies promoting family engagement in schools and supporting parent-teacher partnerships are crucial. Such initiatives are foundational in creating an environment conducive to the positive development of children.

While previous studies have underscored the individual roles of parents and teachers in child development, there remains a lacuna in the comprehensive understanding of their collaborative efforts. Existing literature primarily focuses on either parental influence or educational interventions, with limited exploration of the synergy between the two domains especially in implementing positive parenting to enhance children's self-esteem. Central to this investigation is the question: "How is the collaboration between parents and teachers in applying positive parenting strategies instrumental in enhancing self-esteem in early childhood?" This study aims to bridge the identified gap by investigating the collaborative dynamics between parents and teachers, specifically within the framework of positive parenting practices. It seeks to contribute new insights into the synergistic potential of this collaboration and its unique impact on enhancing self-esteem among early childhood learners. This research novelty lies in its integrative approach, combining educational psychology, family studies, and child development to offer a holistic understanding of nurturing self-esteem through collaborative efforts. By examining the challenges and strategies for effective collaboration, this research seeks to contribute valuable insights into the practices that can nurture the psychological and social well-being of children during their most impressionable years.

RESEARCH METHOD

Adopting a qualitative approach, this research was designed as a case study to intricately explore the dynamics of parent-teacher collaboration in the context of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Kota Bandung. The case study method was particularly apt for this inquiry, allowing for an in-depth examination of the collaborative practices and their influence on the application of positive parenting techniques aimed at enhancing self-esteem among young children.

Participants were carefully selected based on criteria that ensured they were central to the phenomenon under study. The sample included 7 ECCE principals and 30 parents, all of whom were actively engaged in the practices of positive parenting within their respective educational settings. Principals were required to have at least a year of experience in their current positions and a demonstrable history of fostering parent-teacher collaboration. Parents were selected based on their child's enrollment in the institution for a minimum of one year and their active participation in school activities and collaborative efforts with teachers. This purposive sampling strategy was

critical to ensure the study's insights were derived from individuals who were not just observers but active participants in the collaborative practices being explored.

The research utilized a triad of qualitative instruments: semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. The semi-structured interviews were facilitated by an interview guide designed to probe into the collaborative practices between parents and teachers. The guide was subjected to expert validation to ensure that the questions were both comprehensive and pertinent to the study's aims. Observational visits to ECCE institutions were conducted using a standardized checklist, previously validated through a pilot session, to ensure consistency and thoroughness in capturing the dynamics of parent-teacher interactions and the implementation of positive parenting practices. Furthermore, the study involved an analysis of relevant institutional documents, such as school policies, communication logs, and curriculum outlines, which were examined using a pre-established framework that had been reviewed by experts in the field.

The methodology entailed a systematic procedure for data collection. Following the recruitment of participants, informed consent was obtained, ensuring that participants were fully aware of the study's objectives and their rights. Data were then collected through interviews with principals and selected parents, observations within ECCE institutions, and document analysis. After the data collection phase, participants were debriefed, providing them with an opportunity to clarify or add to the information they had shared.

Data were analyzed through thematic analysis, with a particular focus on identifying patterns and themes related to the collaborative practices between parents and ECCE principals and their impact on positive parenting and child self-esteem. Triangulation was employed to cross-validate findings, enhancing the reliability and depth of the data. The study culminated in the construction of a narrative that cohesively integrated the identified themes, offering a comprehensive depiction of the collaborative practices within the ECCE settings of Kota Bandung.

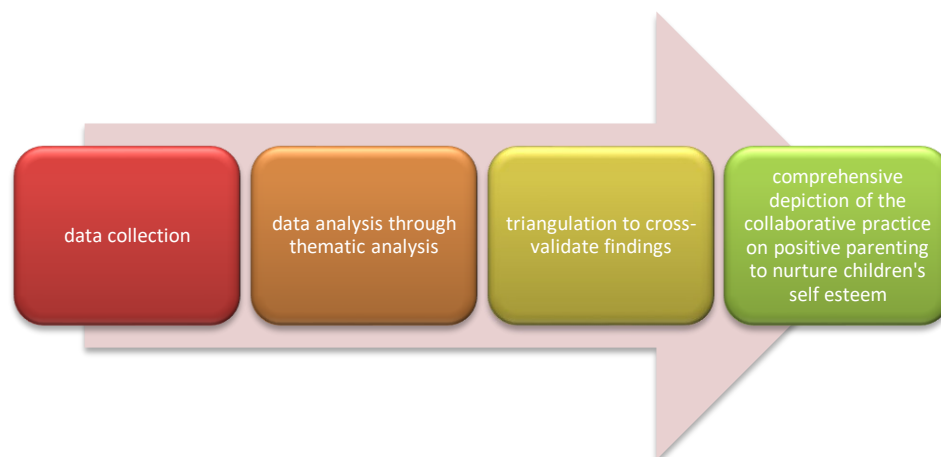


Figure 1. Research Flowchart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

RESULTS

The research delves into the collaboration between parents and teachers in applying positive parenting to enhance self-esteem in early childhood. A foundational aspect of this collaboration is a shared understanding of positive parenting. Both parents and teachers emphasize affection, mutual respect, and the significance of stimulating a child's development. One teacher articulates this shared vision: "Positive Parenting is nurturing based on love, mutual respect, building a warm relationship between children and parents, and stimulating the growth and development of children" (Respondent 1). This consensus is critical for ensuring that efforts from both home and school are congruent and mutually reinforcing.

The mechanisms facilitating this collaboration are diverse and interactive. They include regular meetings and school-based parenting activities, which serve as platforms for aligning parenting strategies and fostering consistency in the child's environment. Respondent 5 notes the importance of "parenting activities conducted at school," highlighting the school's proactive role in

fostering this partnership. Both teachers and parents recognize their complementary roles in a child's life. Teachers see themselves as educators within the school environment, while parents are viewed as the primary nurturers. This synergy is encapsulated by Respondent 4, who states, "The role of teachers in supporting positive parenting at school is: 'Providing approaches and education towards parenting and also the child.'" This complementary role is seen as vital in nurturing a child's self-esteem. The collaboration is further strengthened through various school activities designed to boost self-esteem, such as performances and public speaking. The involvement of parents in these activities is deemed crucial. As Respondent 1 suggests, the strategy is to "Involve parents in some school activities," thus ensuring that the child receives support and reinforcement both at home and at school. Effective communication stands out as a pivotal element in this collaborative effort. Regular and open communication between parents and teachers ensures that values and strategies are consistently reinforced across both environments. A teacher underscores this point: "To ensure the alignment of the child's self-esteem development goals between home and school, communication with parents is key" (Respondent 1).

However, this collaboration is not without challenges. Differing parenting approaches and a lack of parental involvement are noted as significant obstacles. Respondent 2 captures this challenge: "The challenge is when parents do not understand about self-esteem; we talk and provide understanding to be on the same frequency." Addressing these challenges involves educational parenting programs and open communication, suggesting a need for ongoing engagement and education of parents. Despite these challenges, the impact of collaborative efforts is palpable. Teachers observe positive outcomes such as increased child self-confidence and emotional stability. One Principal remarks, "Children become confident, resilient, and have stable emotions" (Respondent 1). These observations affirm the effectiveness of the collaborative approach in enhancing self-esteem in early childhood. In essence, the research highlights the multifaceted and dynamic nature of the collaboration between parents and teachers in applying positive parenting. This partnership, grounded in shared understanding, communication, joint activities, and consistent reinforcement of values and strategies, is instrumental in bolstering self-esteem in early childhood. While challenges exist, the observed positive impacts underscore the value of such collaborative efforts.

Discussion

The research on the collaboration between parents and teachers in applying positive parenting to enhance self-esteem in early childhood has yielded findings that are in harmony with contemporary research in the field. A core theme that emerged is the shared understanding and application of positive parenting principles, which is a critical component in fostering a child's self-esteem (Kyriazos & Stalikas, 2018). Positive parenting principles, such as knowing, protecting, and dialoguing with children, are generally present in daycare centers, but vary based on the educational environment and children's social background (Rocha & Araújo, 2023). Moreover, Parenting support programs that promote positive parent-child relationships can enhance self-regulation capacities in both parents and children, leading to more positive life outcomes and fewer mental health, social, and relationship problems (Sanders et al., 2019). This consensus among parents and teachers underscores the principles highlighted in the literature, such as the importance of providing a nurturing environment characterized by affection, respect, and developmental stimulation. Such an environment is known to be conducive to the healthy development of self-esteem in children (Garcia et al., 2018; Wiranata, 2020).

The research also sheds light on the complementary roles of parents and teachers, a concept that resonates with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Crawford, 2020). According to this theory, a child's development is influenced by various environmental systems, and the interplay between the home and school environments is particularly significant. Recent study found that multiple features of the family environment shape self-esteem development in children from late childhood to adolescence, with warmth, monitoring, low maternal depression, economic security, and father presence positively impacting self-esteem (Krauss et al., 2020). The collaboration between family environment and teachers creates a robust support network that is essential for the cultivation of self-esteem in early childhood. Effective communication and consistency between

parents and teachers emerged as pivotal elements in the research. The literature supports the idea that consistent messaging and reinforcement between home and school settings are crucial for maintaining a stable and supportive developmental environment for children (Zeidler et al., 2022). Furthermore, the implementation of structured school-based activities aimed at boosting self-esteem has been shown to be effective, especially when coupled with parental involvement (Hermawati et al., 2021). Such involvement reinforces the skills and values taught at school and is supported by research indicating the effectiveness of structured programs in enhancing social and emotional competencies in children.

However, the research also acknowledges the challenges in collaboration, such as differing parenting views and limited parental involvement this is in line with Suharyat (2023) which found the importance of parent participation and parents empowerment in supporting ECCE institutions in enhancing the quality of children learning and development. These challenges are well-documented in the literature, and the solutions identified, including educational programs and open dialogues, are in line with strategies recommended to enhance parental engagement and harmonize educational efforts (Maruddani & Sugito, 2022; Nurhayati et al., 2023). Finally, the observed positive outcomes, such as increased self-confidence and emotional stability in children, validate the effectiveness of collaborative approaches in creating supportive environments conducive to children's self-esteem development (Messer et al., 2018; Sanders, 2008). These outcomes are consistent with findings from research on evidence-based parenting and teaching practices. The findings from the research on the collaboration between parents and teachers in positive parenting practices to enhance self-esteem in early childhood are well-aligned with current research. The themes identified reflect the principles and recommendations of contemporary literature, emphasizing the significance of shared understanding, complementary roles, effective communication, structured programs, and evidence-based practices. These elements are instrumental in fostering a nurturing environment that supports the development of self-esteem in early childhood.

CONCLUSION

the collaboration between parents and teachers in applying positive parenting techniques has shown to be a pivotal factor in enhancing self-esteem among early childhood learners. The findings of this research elucidate a shared understanding of positive parenting principles, emphasizing the roles of affection, respect, and developmental stimulation. This reflects a harmonious blend of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, where home and school act as integral microsystems fostering a child's self-worth. Effective communication and consistency emerge as cornerstones for this collaborative effort, ensuring that children receive uniform messages about their value and capabilities. The implementation of structured programs and activities has proven beneficial in supporting the emotional and social competencies of children, validating the necessity of a cohesive approach between parents and teachers. However, the study also highlight on the challenges of achieving seamless collaboration, mainly due to divergent parenting styles and varying degrees of parental involvement. These hurdles underscore the need for targeted educational programs and open dialogues to bridge gaps and harmonize educational strategies. The research contributes to the field by providing a nuanced understanding of the dynamics between parental and educational spheres in nurturing self-esteem during early childhood.

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