PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAM "KELAS MANDIRI" IN KOTA SENTANI

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Abstract: *The role of parents is very important in formal education, non-formal education and informal education. The purpose of this study was to investigate parental involvement in their children's education within a non-formal educational setting. The study focused on parents with children enrolled in the Papua Language Institute's English Class program called "Kelas Mandiri". It employed a qualitative research design and collected data through observation, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The data were analyzed using Miles & Huberman's three-stage qualitative data analysis. The study found that parental involvement in supporting children in the "Kelas Mandiri" is relatively low due to limited educational resources, financial constraints, health issues, cultural events, marital relationships, and global changes. The implications suggest an increased focus on the religious approach within the community and family, as well as the development of non-formal programs. It is crucial to educate parents about their essential role in their children's lives and implement strategies to enhance their involvement in their children's learning at home*

INTRODUCTION

In the context of EFL learners, multiple institutions in Jayapura have demonstrated a strong commitment to providing the necessary services for addressing EFL education. Some of these institutions even offer non-formal education at no cost. The purpose is that the learning process with regulated standards and procedures can help students improve their language competency needs at their respective learning levels. Kelas Mandiri from Papua Language Institute is one of the institutions that have developed class programs funded by foundation donations. The aim is to enhance English proficiency and promote equitable access to quality education. As stated by Crystal (2000) and Nunan (2001), as well as the British Council (2013), the wide spread of English immediately provides unlimited access to the world of modern knowledge, information, and communication technology, money, power, international communication, and intercultural roles as well as several other fields. Thus, it is expected that the community can pay attention by supporting students in learning and achieving targets in learning. Litjens and Taguma (2010) observed that learners' educational experiences can be significantly enhanced by community and parents'

involvement. As indicated by Meador (2017), parental involvement refers to the level of engagement that a parent maintains in their child's education and school life. Research indicates that family and community engagement play a vital role in motivating children's learning and development (Barton, 2003). Epstein has outlined a model that encompasses six key elements related to parental engagement. These elements are derived from extensive research on the most impactful factors in children's education (Epstein et al., 2007). The six elements include parenting, communication, volunteering, at-home learning, decision-making, and community collaboration. Furthermore, this research has focused on the involvement of community and parents in children learning at Papua Language Institute.

Papua Language Institute (PLI) is a non-formal school under Maga Education Papua Foundation. The foundation aim is to assist Papuan people in overcoming educational challenges and succeeding in competitive environments. The institution prioritizes language training and provides some support programs. While PLI offers a variety of language training services, its primary focus is the English language classes program, which is the most prominent language program at the institution. As mentioned by Yembise (2011) that the linguistic and cultural diversity in Papua has made it difficult to achieve the national standard of education. Consequently, the government may address the obstacles hindering educational progress by ensuring that the EFL curriculum at all levels incorporates the cultures and languages of the Papuans in both non-Austronesian and Austronesian.

PLI's languages course learning, teaching and assessment is using CEFR. The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is designed as a reference document for language education, including assessment, curriculum and syllabus development, textbook writing, teacher training, and assessment (Council of Europe, 2001). It comprehensively reviews the elements involved in teaching and learning languages and includes scales that describe different levels of language proficiency. These proficiency levels have received considerable attention from professionals. With the aim of using standard English for various purposes at the Papua Language Institute, all learning and teaching as well as at the assessment stage use the CEFR standard. As stated by Byram and Parmeter (2012) the framework has rapidly taken on a prominent role in language education across Europe and, notably, has exerted influence in numerous countries worldwide.

Through the training process and the achievements that have been made, PLI has gained recognition both within and outside Jayapura. However, many potential and current students face the challenge of limited course fees. To address this issue, a new program called Kelas Mandiri has been established. The term "Mandiri Class" in English translates to "Independent Class." This class is referred to as independent because the community group served by this English program provides its own complete learning facilities, including appropriately equipped classrooms with desks and tables for student use. Additionally, PLI has prepared the teachers, study materials, markers, and whiteboards for the class.

Mandiri Class has begun in October 2020 and has established many classes across the city and region of Jayapura. Over a period of three years, Kelas Mandiri has established a total of 14 learning posts. These include the Abepura class, Waena class at Baliem Dormitory, Haway class at Nare-Nare Dormitory, Kampung Netar Class, Doyo Baru Class, Post 7 Class at Elizabeth Study Group, Ariyauw Alfa Omega Class, BOM Post 7 Class, Mimika Dormitory Class, Jalan Enggros Class, PPA Shalom Class, Ayapo Class and Kampung Harapan Class (Kunume).

However, there is a concern that the program is not achieving optimal attendance that may see in the attendance list of the class each meeting. The student attendance gradually decreases week to month. This is particularly problematic when teaching English to the community, as the program design is intended to meet the individual needs of each student within the student venue where the access to the class only by next door of their houses. The reason for student absences may see to not clear to the teacher, although some exceptions like illness or formal school exams are considered normal. However, student absenteeism is a common issue in almost all Kelas Mandiri in Jayapura's city and the region.

Recognizing the significance of parental and community engagement in children's education, it is crucial to explore the ways in which parents are involved in their children's learning at home, in the community, and at school. The implication is that learners derive from society, a group of humans, where different individuals and backgrounds are bound and shared in a place. TEFL experts point to linguistic barriers and cross-cultural understanding as primary issues (Burung, 1990). Effective instruction requires not only language proficiency but also cultural sensitivity for a positive learning experience. The primary focus of this research is to analyse the degree of involvement from the community and students' parents in supporting the students' learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Non-formal education- It differs significantly from formal education. It offers flexibility in terms of curricula and teaching methods, but learning in these environments is not left to chance; instead, it is deliberate and structured. The focus is on meeting students' needs and interests, with no fixed time frame. Moreover, interaction between students and instructors is limited, and a significant portion of learning occurs outside the classroom and educational institutions. Non-formal learning is an integral component of organized activities that are not explicitly designated as formal learning. These activities lack specific learning objectives, allocated learning time, or dedicated learning support, yet they encompass a substantial educational element. Non-formal learning is purposeful from the learner's perspective but typically does not culminate in certification. (Cedefop, 2014). Research indicates that non-traditional education better addresses students' needs, helping them gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the world. In general, non-traditional education centers on the student, tailoring itself to students' individual needs and interests and adapting promptly to evolving personal and societal requirements (Todaro, 1995).

Typically, there are three primary types of education: formal, non-formal, and informal education. Schools and training institutions are closely associated with formal education, while non-formal education is related to community and organizations. Informal education, on the other hand, occurs within friendships, families, and work settings (Novosadova, et al., 2013).

Informal education – The lacks a formal structure and occurs in diverse settings, with learning being unintentional. In informal education, the responsibility for learning lies with the individual. Mistakes hold value and are seen as crucial to the learning process; more mistakes equate to more learning. This type of education mostly takes place within friendships, families, and work environments (Novosadova, et al., 2013).

English is recognized as a foreign language in Indonesia. It is widely spoken around the

world, and its use is essential in Indonesia for education, business, and professional purposes. Mastery of English is necessary to meet the standards required in these fields. As English is widely used for international communication, the teaching of English has increased in countries where it is recognized as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) context.

General view of Education in Papua

Traditional Education

After the Pre-Historic period, the relationships between the Papuans and people outside Papua began to flourish through traditional trade, especially with the residents of the Maluku and Halmahera regions, as well as explorers and traders from European nations who traveled to the east. The trade relationships introduced Papuans to the values, traditions, knowledge, and technologies of their trading partners.

Modern education for indigenous Papuans on the North and West Coasts started in 1856 on Mansinam Island thanks to two European evangelists, Ottow and Gessler. They initially taught young men who had been rescued from being sold as slaves to the Ceramic slave traders traveling around the West Coast (van Hasselt, 1926). The education focused on instilling good daily habits such as maintaining health, order, farming, crafts, reading, writing, arithmetic, singing, and praying, now known as life skills. This education model was referred to as a "civilized school" or "Beschavingschool." This educational progress was closely linked to church teaching, schools, and health services.

Catholic education brought modern developments to the Papuan people in the South Coast and came in three stages: the first stage lasted from 1896 to 1905, the second stage from 1905 to 1920, and the third stage from 1920 to 1940 (Irian Jaya Regional History Aspects Team). The development of schools followed two models: the station model for village schools and the new village model for connection schools, similar to the ones developed by Protestant zending missions. This educational expansion started with stations in Merauke, Wendu, Okaba, Muyu, Mimika, and Fak-fak.

The regulations of the Papua Special Autonomy Law pertaining to education can be found in Article 56, which focuses on education and culture. Paragraph (1) stipulates that the provincial government bears the responsibility for providing education across all levels, pathways, and types of education in Papua. Furthermore, paragraph (3) guarantees that every resident of the province has the entitlement to receive high-quality education up to the secondary level without imposing a heavy burden on society. These two provisions highlight the significant obligation of the government to address the educational challenges in Papua, specifically the provision of decent and high-quality education.

Community Involvement

Parental Involvement Aspects

Kelas Mandiri can encourage parents to create a good learning atmosphere at home. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), it is essential to attract children's attention to learning in informal interactions, such as at home. Informal interactions that occur at home are referred to as the home curriculum, where children are formed and educated in certain ways through activities that take place at home. Parents can interact with children properly and teach them through daily routine activities, such as preparing food, calling children, giving shopping lists, getting dressed, and many others. These daily activities can encourage discussions with parents, deepen children's curiosity in learning, and encourage them to

explore their abilities by communicating with parents. Foster et al. (2005) and Weigel et al. (2006) have suggested that parental attention to home curriculum development can improve children's communication skills and cognitive values for academic achievement. In addition to speaking skills, writing skills can be developed through social, cultural, and religious activities that are actively carried out at home (Hjort et al., 2009).

Home Learning Environment (HLE)

Barriers to Parental Involvement

The habit of reading books at home can enhance children's reading skills and cognitive abilities (Ermisch, 2008; Leung et al., 2010). Reading habits are highly recommended to be practiced at home, as they have been proven to effectively improve children's learning abilities (Huebner et al., 2010). However, parents' income also plays a role in supporting children's learning. The importance of parents' educational background is also an essential factor in helping children in learning activities (Ermisch, 2008; Feinstein et al., 2007, 2008). Nevertheless, teachers can help parents by providing guidance and support.

Children require a comfortable learning environment at home, and parents play a significant role in providing it. Sylvia (2004) has mentioned that children aged 3 to 10 years have a good range of potential for learning at home, and children aged 5 to 7 years receive more attention from parents to enhance their learning abilities. This research has focused on mathematics and English, and the data is presented in the table below. The data shows that young children spend a lot of time with their parents, which is crucial for their cognitive development. Scandinavian studies have shown that various written activities provided to children in the home through social, cultural, and religious practices have been effective (Hjort et al., 2009). A more impactful home curriculum also involves engaging in explicit learning activities, including shared book reading, which significantly influences children's cognitive and language development (Ermisch, 2008; Leung et al., 2010). There is compelling evidence that parents can be taught to participate in book reading in ways that effectively enhance this development (Huebner et al., 2010).

According to Deforges and Abouchaar (2003) and Harris and Goodall (2006), children's early education at home is critical for their future academic success. Learning at home is the most effective way to develop children's learning skills (Belsky et al., 2007; Melhuish, 2010). The Mandiri course faces similar challenges, such as parents' actions and community support for children's learning. The Kelas Mandiri program aims to address the challenges faced by parents who cannot afford adequate educational programs for their children. Kelas Mandiri already exist in the Sentani community, but they are not utilized to their full potential. This is mainly because the community does not support children's learning programs. There are several ways to support learning in kelas Mandiri, such as providing activities and assignments for students and parents, assisting parents in teaching children to read, and providing makeshift facilities for literacy skills. Mandiri class teachers can also help parents in the community to work on learning materials, such as making wooden tables for children's home study needs or creating wooden letters. With the contribution of parents in the community, it is believed that the community have played an active role in supporting children's learning. According to Halgunseth and Peterson (2009), the assistance provided by families in the community to support learning has a significant impact on children's learning closeness and the success of the program.

Williams and Sanchez (2011) have identified four main obstacles to parental involvement: time constraints, limited access, financial barriers, and lack of awareness. According to Johnson (1994), parents may refrain from communicating with schools due to feelings of inadequacy, limited educational background, or being preoccupied with meeting basic needs. Lee and Bowen (2006) and Dika and Singh (2002) have highlighted the positive correlation between social capital within families and their children's academic success, graduation rates, higher educational achievements, as well as motivation and engagement in school. Similarly, Ho (2009) has discussed how parental involvement in schools can help parents overcome a lack of social capital. Additionally, Hill and Taylor (2004) have emphasized that parental involvement in schools can enhance students' academic performance by expanding the parents' social networks.

Various forms of parental involvement, such as volunteering and participating in parent councils or parent-teacher organizations, though acknowledged for their significance in ensuring parental satisfaction and staff support, have been found to have minimal or no impact on children's academic performance (Deforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Harris and Goodall, 2006).

Decision-making: Involving families in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, and other parent organizations.
The involvement of parents in their children's education is widely acknowledged as crucial, but there are considerable disparities in parental engagement. Educational institutions often grapple with factors beyond their control, posing a significant challenge for education policymakers (Feuerstein, 2000).

The study was also conducting a comprehensive investigation of the obstacles encountered by parents and explore methods for improving their effectiveness in parental roles. Epstein (2001; 2009) emphasizes the importance of each school selecting the factors that are deemed most likely to help the school achieve its academic success goals and fostering a sense of partnership between the school and the homes. It is hoped that Mandiri class and their respective communities would play a significant role in supporting children's learning.
Parenting: Assisting families with parenting skills, understanding child development, and creating home environments that support children as students at each age and grade level.

METHOD
Research Design
The study primarily employed the qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative research is related to the ideas, perspectives, and beliefs of the person being studied, and not all of these can be measured. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand the importance that individuals or groups place on a social or human issue. The nature of the subject requires the use of qualitative methodology. Qualitative methodology enables a more in-depth exploration of issues. One of the primary motivations for conducting a qualitative study is the exploratory nature of the research. This indicates that there is limited existing literature on the topic or population under study, and the researcher aims to actively listen to participants and develop an understanding based on their viewpoints (Creswell, 2003). The data in this study were gathered from parents whose

children are enrolled in Kelas Mandiri, Papua Language Institute. Data was collected through observation and written transcription. The data were then analysed to explore the form, extent, obstacles, and approaches to parents' involvement with their children to study.

Subject of the Study

The research focuses on parents of students attending the English study program at Kelas Mandiri in Jayapura regency. Subsequently, 5 parents of Kelas Mandiri students were selected to represent a group study. Arikunto (2016) explains that the research subject refers to the specific object, thing, or person from which the data for the research variables are derived. In this study, the subject consists of 20 parents of the students in Kelas Mandiri Sentani.The following 4 study groups have been chosen to represent different ethnic at Kelas Mandiri groups: 1) Kelas Doyo Baru: Majority tribe from Kurima, Yahukimo, 2) Kelas Pos 7: majority tribe from Yali and Mixed tribe, 3) Kelas Ariyauw: The Sentani tribe and mixed tribe around Tabi Jayapura, 4) Kelas Kunume Harapan: The Puncak tribe from Lani Jaya.

A total of 20 parents were selected to this research. In the event of a selected parent refusing or being unable to participate, the next immediate parent in line were chosen.

Technique of Collecting Data

In this qualitative research, descriptive method is used to present the research findings. The data was collected using written question guidelines for interviews and FGD, while school documents were used for school observation. Parents were sampled for data collection. According to Creswell (2014), the data collection process involves defining the study's boundaries, gathering data through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, and establishing a protocol for recording information. A focus group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative method used to obtain in-depth information on the concepts, perceptions, and ideas of a group. The aim of FGD is to facilitate discussion among group members with guidance from a facilitator, rather than simply engaging in a question-and-answer interaction (Elmusharaf, 2012).

The data collection procedure involved several steps. The first step was to communicate with the Kelas Mandiri coordinator for each study group. The second step was to obtain permission to collect the data. The third step was to schedule visits to the selected 4 classes for research purposes. Finally, the data was presented based on the analysis of the research questions.

Instrument for Collecting Data

The research utilized observation, interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) as its primary instruments. The school observation included daily class activities, weekly minutes of teacher meetings, and term results. The interview questions were formulated to obtain demographic details, while the FGD guide was designed to collect data pertinent to the research objectives. The interview consisted of 8 inquiries, and the FGD including 12 questions. The FGD questions were divided into four groups. The first category consisted of questions about the parent's involvement in their children's learning activities at home, school, and in community activities. The second category focused on the parent's extention of their participation in their children's learning activities. The third category pertains to the obstacles that communities and parents face in supporting their children's studies. Lastly, parents were encouraged to provide any suggestions and additional information related to the topic.

Technique of Analysing Data

In the data analysis, the process employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of four main steps: data collection, data presentation, reduction, and drawing conclusions. The researcher conscientiously documented any acquired data and deliberated on methods to studying by non-formal education. Subsequently, the data have categorized according to its relevance to the research problem. The study was scheduled in June, with a particular emphasis on two academic years of the Kelas Mandiri Program at the Papua Language Institute. The research was conducted in Sentani, Jayapura Regency.

In qualitative research, data gathered from interviews, observations, and FGD are documented in field notes comprising descriptive text. Once collected, data reduction is performed to select pertinent and meaningful information, focusing on data that addresses research questions, solves problems, or reveals new insights. The data is then systematically organized and simplified to highlight important findings and their significance.

Data can be presented using various methods such as writing, visual aids like pictures, graphs, and tables. The aim of data presentation is to effectively communicate the observed situation.

Throughout the research process, temporary conclusions are drawn during data reduction, and final conclusions are made when all data is collected. The data is then consolidated into information units, forming categories adhering to holistic principles, and interpreted independently without additional information.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to Sanders and Sheldon (2009), establishing strong connections between students, parents, teachers, and the local community is key to creating thriving schools. Non-traditional education focuses on customizing itself to meet the unique needs and interests of students, and adapting to changing personal and societal demands (Todaro, 1995). It highlights the importance of positively adapting to global developments through strategies derived from strong family and community support.

The establishment of Kelas Mandiri in communities across the city and district of Jayapura was addressed through research focusing on Sentani. This study also addresses certain aspects of education as covered by Modouw (2015) in "Papuan Education and Civilization". The civilization of Papua is currently undergoing a critical phase characterized by rapid changes resulting from accelerated development in the era of Papua's special autonomy. It is crucial to leverage the educational process to mitigate potential mental and sociocultural challenges.

Parenting: parents in the Mandiri class actively care for their children well, as evidenced by the support of parents to send their children to formal education and non-formal education such as Mandiri classes, as well as additional education for children's skills such as tambourine, piano, karate, soccer, and volleyball. Parents also show their role in taking their children to school, developing education at home and understanding child development.

Community collaboration: Mandiri class parents appear persistent in seeking proper education not only at home but are clearly seen through the presence of Mandiri Classes in 4

groups in Sentani proving that Mandiri class parents have played an active role in collaborating with the surrounding community in one learning activity for non-formal education. Another thing that is a form of family and community collaboration is activities from a religious perspective, namely joint prayer activities in the environment formed by the church.

Communication: Parents in the Mandiri class show positive involvement in effective school-to-home and home-to-school communication about school programs and student progress, as evidenced by school meetings, active information committee members known by parents. Support the English class activities like final exam, daily class also picnic day.

It is crucial to integrate education effectively at every stage of Papuan social development during this rapid period. Failing to do so could result in the premature development of personality, intelligence, and technological skills. This premature development may be attributed to incomplete knowledge and a weak foundation that lacks essential values, norms, ethics, and aesthetics, all of which are closely intertwined with both science and one's own culture. Ultimately, such premature development can lead to two unfavorable outcomes: premature mortality or a life characterized by numerous weaknesses in both personality and individual capacities in science and technology (Modouw, 2015).

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this study is to examine the extent to which parents are involved in enrolling their children in non-formal education programs Kelas Mandiri. As non-formal education begins at home, the researcher asserts that the research objectives have been met as the significance of parental involvement and the role of parents are prominently highlighted in the findings of this study.

The task of supporting children's learning in alignment with Epson's theory poses a significant challenge for parents. Within the framework of the Independent Class non-formal learning program, parents have assumed various responsibilities. These include actively engaging in childcare by supporting their children in formal and non-formal education, as well as in additional skill development activities such as music, martial arts, and sports. Moreover, parents have demonstrated positive involvement in school-to-home and home-to-school communication, as evident in their participation in school meetings and information committees. Furthermore, parents have voluntarily directed their children's involvement in church and home activities to enrich their educational experiences. In addition, they have been instrumental in facilitating home learning, providing academic support, and participating in decision-making processes through various committee meetings and school activities. Lastly, parents have exhibited a strong commitment to collaborating with the surrounding community, evident in the presence of Independent Classes in Sentani. This collaboration has extended to community activities and religious engagements, such as joint prayer activities within the church environment.

The research confirms that parents play a crucial role in imparting values and skills that are essential for academic success and future endeavors. The findings highlight the fundamental obstacles in the home and environment as additional causative factors. Addressing the basic challenges faced by parents, such as limited educational resources at home, financial constraints, health issues, cultural event, the marital relationship at home

and global change. It is imperative for parents to recognize that these fundamental needs must be fulfilled in order to be actively engaged in their children's learning process at home. It is therefore crucial to educate parents about the significant role they play in their children's lives and develop strategies to provide them with opportunities to experience the impact of their involvement, ultimately enhancing parental participation. Otherwise, the risk is that unless parents comprehend the significance of their involvement and feel the effects of their participation, they may not be enthusiastic about engaging in their children's education.

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