

THE ROLE OF FATHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (PAUD) FOR PAUD TEACHERS IN SUKAMARA DISTRICT

Vera Novita Sari¹

¹) Program Studi Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Nur Ahadiyah, Kotawaringin Barat, Kalimantan Tengah, Indonesia.
e-mail: vrnovita93@gmail.com

Abstract

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) plays a vital role in a child's development, as it is during this stage that they acquire essential foundational skills that shape their future growth. However, while mothers are often the primary focus in child education, the significant contribution of fathers in supporting early childhood learning tends to be overlooked. This counseling aims to educate PAUD teachers about effective strategies in involving fathers in early childhood education. This community service activity, conducted on June 15, 2024, at the MTsN Sukamara building, used the counseling method to educate PAUD teachers on the importance of fathers' roles in early childhood development. Attended by 20 out of 45 invited teachers, the session measured knowledge improvement through pre-test and post-test evaluations. The counseling successfully enhanced PAUD teachers' knowledge in Sukamara Regency about the role of fathers in early childhood education, as indicated by an average score increase of 2.75 points. To reinforce this understanding, follow-up sessions and program expansion to other areas with tailored materials are recommended.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Counseling for PAUD Teachers, Knowledge Improvement.

BACKGROUND

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a crucial phase in a child's development, as during this time, children begin to develop foundational skills that will influence their growth in the future. The role of the family, especially parents, is highly significant in shaping the character and personality of a child (Duncan et al., 2023). However, in the context of child education, the focus is often more on mothers, while the role of fathers in supporting early childhood education has not received the attention it deserves (Retnawati et al., 2021). Based on research and observations, there is a gap in understanding the importance of fathers' involvement in supporting the growth and development of children in the PAUD stage (Watini, 2020). In many cases, fathers tend to be more involved in the economic aspects of the family, while mothers often take the primary role in the education and caregiving of children (Aziz et al., 2022). However, active father involvement in a child's education can have a positive impact on the development of social, emotional, and intellectual values in children (Ramli, 2022).

Sukamara Regency, as a developing region, faces challenges in improving the quality of early childhood education. In this context, it is essential to engage all family members, especially fathers, to play an active role in supporting their children's education. Therefore, there is a need for more in-depth socialization regarding the role of fathers in early childhood education, particularly for PAUD teachers who are at the forefront of early childhood education (Hambal, 2020). Through this community service project, it is hoped that the awareness of PAUD teachers in Sukamara Regency regarding the importance of fathers' roles in early childhood education will be increased (Duncan et al., 2023). Additionally, this initiative aims to provide practical knowledge to PAUD teachers on how to actively involve fathers in the educational process, as well as equip them with tools to support fathers' roles within the early childhood education environment (Nair et al., 2020).

The active participation of fathers in early childhood education is not only beneficial for the children's development but also helps in creating a more balanced family environment where both parents contribute to the upbringing of their children (Ratningsih et al., 2021). When fathers are involved in their children's education, it fosters a sense of shared responsibility and strengthens the bond between the father and the child, which can have long-term positive effects on the child's self-esteem and overall well-being (Deneault et al., 2021). By raising awareness and promoting the importance of father involvement, this initiative can also encourage a cultural shift in Sukamara Regency, where fathers are recognized as essential partners in the educational journey of their

children. This cultural shift will contribute to the creation of a more supportive and enriching environment for early childhood education, ultimately benefiting the community and society at large (Garcia et al., 2022).

PAUD teachers have a key role in shaping early childhood education patterns, but they also need to be equipped with a deeper understanding of how to involve parents, especially fathers, in the process of educating children. In many situations, PAUD teachers may find it difficult to invite fathers to be more actively involved in children's educational activities, both at home and at school. Therefore, training and workshops that educate PAUD teachers about effective strategies in involving fathers need to be held. This activity is expected to not only improve the competence of teachers, but also help them in creating a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for children.

METHOD

This community service activity was carried out using the counseling method on June 15, 2024. Participants in the activity were all PAUD teachers who attended the invitation to the counseling activity. The location of the activity was the MTsN Sukamara building. The activity was attended by 20 PAUD teachers from 45 invitations sent. The counseling aims to provide PAUD teachers in Sukamara Regency with knowledge and understanding about the importance of the role of fathers in early childhood development.

To measure the increase in knowledge of counseling participants is by providing an evaluation sheet with the pre-test and post-test methods. The process can be explained in the following table:

Table 1. The process of measuring participants' knowledge level

Process	Purpose	Implementation	Contents	Time
Pre-test	Measuring participants' initial level of knowledge about the role of fathers in early childhood development.	Before the counseling begins, distribute the pre-test sheets to the participants (PAUD teachers).	This sheet can consist of multiple-choice questions, short answers, and questions about understanding the positive impact of father involvement in children's education and examples of activities that fathers can do at home to support their children's education.	10-15 minutes
Implementation of Counseling	Providing new knowledge and understanding to participants about the importance of the role of fathers in early childhood education, through lectures, discussions, videos, or practical exercises.	Socialization is carried out using various appropriate interactive methods, such as explaining material about the positive impact of the role of fathers, group discussions, and sharing experiences.	Provides concrete examples of how fathers can be involved in their children's education from an early age.	90 minutes and more
Post-Test	Measuring the increase in participants' knowledge after attending counseling and training.	After the counseling is complete, provide a post-test sheet that is similar to the pre-test, but with more in-	The post-test questions tested participants' understanding of the role of fathers in supporting child development, as well as the application of new knowledge gained	10-15 minutes

		depth questions based on the material that has been taught.	during the counseling session.	
Analysis	Calculate the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for each participant, which can indicate how much knowledge has increased.			
Evaluation	If the post-test score is higher than the pre-test, this indicates that the counseling was successful in increasing participants' knowledge.			

RESULT AND DISCUSSION



Figure 1. Implementation of the socialization

The following are the results of the increase in pre-test and post-test scores from the counseling activities for PAUD teachers in Sukamara Regency, with 20 participants.

Questions given: 10 multiple-choice questions that measure basic understanding of the role of fathers in early childhood education.

Table 2. Result of pre-test and post-test

Participant	Pre-Test score	Post-Test score
Peserta 1	4	8
Peserta 2	5	7
Peserta 3	6	9
Peserta 4	3	7
Peserta 5	7	9
Peserta 6	6	8
Peserta 7	5	7
Peserta 8	4	7
Peserta 9	6	8
Peserta 10	5	8
Peserta 11	7	9
Peserta 12	5	8
Peserta 13	4	7
Peserta 14	6	9
Peserta 15	3	8
Peserta 16	8	10
Peserta 17	4	7
Peserta 18	6	9
Peserta 19	5	8
Peserta 20	6	8

Post-Test Score Average:

Total post-test score = 161

Average = $161 / 20 = 8.05$

Score Improvement Analysis:

Average Score Improvement

- Pre-Test Average: 5.3

- Post-Test Average: 8.05

- Average Improvement: $8.05 - 5.3 = 2.75$ points

Percentage of Knowledge Improvement

- Improvement: $(\text{Average improvement} / \text{Maximum score}) \times 100 = (2.75 / 10) \times 100 = 27.5\%$.

These results indicate that there was an average increase in knowledge of 27.5% among participants after attending the counseling.

The results of the pre-test and post-test in this community service activity demonstrate a significant increase in the participants' knowledge regarding the role of fathers in early childhood education. The average pre-test score was 5.3, which improved to 8.05 in the post-test, showing an average increase of 2.75 points, or approximately 27.5%. This indicates that the socialization activities, including lectures, discussions, and practical training, were effective in enhancing the teachers' understanding of how fathers can contribute to early childhood development. This aligns with research which emphasize the importance of targeted outreach efforts to improve the knowledge and skills of educators in specific areas of child development (Aslam et al., 2020; Romijn et al., 2021).

The significant improvement in the participants' knowledge supports the notion that active engagement through direct training and workshops can effectively enhance educators' awareness of social issues, including the critical role of fathers in early childhood education. Previous studies, have shown that when fathers are actively involved in their children's early learning, the children exhibit improved cognitive, social, and emotional development (Amodia-Bidakowska et al., 2020; Diniz et al., 2021; Garcia et al., 2022). This finding underscores the importance of teacher education programs that incorporate father involvement as a key factor in child development, which was successfully addressed in this program.

Moreover, the results from this community outreach program are consistent with the broader findings in educational psychology and child development literature, which suggest that teachers who are well-informed about the positive impacts of father involvement are better equipped to engage families in supporting children's education (Sylaj, 2020). By providing PAUD teachers in Sukamara with both theoretical knowledge and practical tools to involve fathers, this initiative mirrors similar programs that have been successful in other regions. The program's success in increasing teachers' knowledge highlights the potential for future initiatives to further integrate father involvement into early childhood education practices in diverse settings.

CONCLUSION

The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that the counseling conducted successfully improved the knowledge of PAUD teachers in Sukamara Regency regarding the role of fathers in early childhood education. The average score of participants increased by around 2.75 points after attending the counseling, indicating a significant increase in their understanding of the material provided.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to hold follow-up sessions or further training to strengthen the understanding and application of the role of fathers in early childhood education in Sukamara. Then similar programs can be expanded to other areas by adjusting the materials to be more relevant to the specific needs of local PAUD educators.

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