



How Parents Involve in Cultivating Children's Reading Interests

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ABSTRACT

Discussing reading interest is not limited on the provision of literacy movements at school as reading interest is developed through habituation process since childhood. Therefore, the most effective habituation is started at home. Not many parents realize that parenting duty is to take care of children's "learning nature". Parents understand that having reading habit is better than just being able to read. However, not many of them understand how parents can have a role to grow the habit. Based on the phenomenon experienced by the parents, this research aims at finding the forms of parents' involvement in cultivating children's reading interests. The respondents are 521 parents with 5 to 9 year-old children live in Yogyakarta and Central Java. The characteristics of the respondents are parents which have a fairly average distribution in terms of education from elementary to undergraduate and 71% of the characteristics are working parent. Therefore, to reveal the meaning of the occurrence, this exploratory research with inductive approach was done to obtain information to be conceptually mapped. The instruments were made by researchers from the literature review and the validity had been tested. Descriptive data analysis technique was used to describe the forms of parents' roles in cultivating reading interest. The respondents' characteristics are as follows: on education category, 2.1% parents are elementary school educated, 5.93% are junior high school educated, 36,01% are high school/vocational school educated, 11.59% have associate's degree, 36.59% are bachelors. Based on parents' job category, there are 71% of parents work and 28.74% of parents do not work. Based on children's age category, there are 14% of the children are 5 years old, 38.52% are 6-7 years old, 33,72% are 7-8 years old, and 13,02% are 9 years old. An online questionnaire in the form of Google Microsoft was used to facilitate the data collection. The result of the research was in form of emergent theme on forms of parental involvement categorized into 3 aspects i.e. Modeling, Organizing, and Teaching.

Keywords: *Parental Involvement; Reading Interest*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to differ the meaning between can read and like to read. Some parents send their children to school so that they 'can read'. A mother complains to a teacher, "Why do my child get good score when answering Math problem with formula and fast way, but get low score when the form of the question is word problem?" The question gives important message to us that reading skill is much more difficult to be trained than being able to read. To be able to read, a child can just be sent to a 3 months intensive course but it takes a long time to have comprehension in reading.

The above information tells us that reading interest affects not only the literacy but also human resources' quality for global competitiveness. Then how to have

reading interest? The answer is that reading activities must be promoted as a routine activity. Parents' dominant roles in giving example of readers' attitude will be taken by children as a stimulus [12], so parent need to create conducive environment for growing children's reading interest [9]. Parents' participation in reading activities with children at home enriches experience and empowers children [4]. Parents are able to improve feeling of competence, confidence, and positive feeling [1]. Family as the first environment for children has a job in cultivating reading interests [11]. However, in fact, families have not had understanding on the effort can be made by parents to cultivate children's reading interest. The result of this research can be used as emergent theme for the next studies to make further review.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Reading Interest

Interest is close with inclination, passion, or desire toward something [13]. Interest can be learned, cultivated, and developed. The stronger the acceptance of something within one's self, the bigger the interest is [5]. One amongst individuals' activities that take interest is reading. Reading activities need long and stable love and curiosity [14]. Therefore, reading interest has to be cultivated early [18] in order to have reading habit. Having interest of reading is important for any child. Ironically, the average Indonesian only reads books 3-4 times per week with an average reading time per day of 30-59 minutes [7]. Meanwhile, the average number of books completed per year is only 5-9 books, so that the Indonesian reading interest index is low. Based on 2012 UNESCO statistics, Indonesia's reading interest index is 0.001, which means that for every 1000 residents only 1 person has an interest in reading. For reading ability, Indonesia's score at the beginning of taking the PISA test was 371 (in 2000) and experienced an increase of 382 (in 2003), 393 (2006), and 402 (in 2009), then continued to decline to 396 (in 2012), 397 (in 2015), and the lowest point was 371 (in 2018). Integrating digital devices in terms of literacy is one way to maintain interest in reading. Interest in reading is a behavior that expresses a love for reading individually and involves feelings for reading.

2.2. Parental Involvement

Unconsciously, the way parents interact with their children during reading activities has a positive or negative impact [6]. One of them is the ability to read books fluently and the ability to predict a story [16]. Various ways can be done by parents in growing awareness of reading from an early age, Modeling, Organizing, Teaching, and strategies for parents in increasing children's reading interest [3]. Parental involvement is a tangible form in which parents use all their abilities to fulfill their roles; a real form of parental participation in the education process of growth and development. Parental involvement is part of the practical technical support for doing something. Therefore, parents' perception of their children's interest in reading is very important. Parental involvement is very important, especially in selecting books that contain character values. According to Harjono [8], books that meet the criteria for children's tastes and interests will generate their enthusiasm as active readers, so that they will read happily, and of course the book must be in accordance with the child's age [15].

3. METHOD

This research is an exploratory study with an inductive approach. The research began by conducting a literature study and reviewing research on parental involvement and reading interest. Researchers used a deductive approach to obtain an overview of parental involvement in fostering interest in reading in 5-9-year-old children. Research data were collected using a questionnaire given to parents. The analysis technique used was descriptive analysis. The sampling method used was purposive sampling by taking into account the characteristics of parents who have children aged 5-9 years. The subjects used in the study were 522 parents with 5- to 9-year-old children in the Special Region of Yogyakarta and Central Java areas. The respondents' characteristics are as follows: on education category, 2.1% parents are elementary school educated, 5.93% are junior high school educated, 36.01% are high school/vocational school educated, 11.59% have associate's degree, 36.59% are bachelors. Based on parents' job category, there are 71% of parents work and 28.74% of parents do not work. Based on children's age category, there are 14% of the children are 5 years old, 38.52% are 6-7 years old, 33.72% are 7-8 years old, and 13.02% are 9 years old. An online questionnaire in the form of Google Microsoft was used to facilitate the data collection.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Parental involvement is a participatory process that connects parents and school programs using all the best of their abilities and forms of collaboration between parents and teachers to support children's education and experiences to generate benefits for parents, children, and school programs. In this study, there are 18 statement items that represented aspects of parental involvement in cultivating reading interest, i.e. modelling, organizing and teaching. These three components are important to provide information related to parental involvement in growing reading interest. The information obtained will be used by parents as the basis for determining the parenting method to be applied. The questionnaire instrument for the involvement component is as follows: The modelling aspect includes the following statements 1) I choose children's reading books according to the child's development. 2) I make a schedule for reading with my children, such as when going to bed, before lunch and so on. 3) I invite children to discuss shopping experiences, going to restaurants, sightseeing, etc. 4) Every day I am involved to talk about the experiences that children have been through. 5) I explained about the responsibility to look after the books they borrow. 6) I use the book as a material for discussion with the children.

The next aspect is organizing. The items of the instrument statement are as follows 1) I provide learning materials that support children's literacy at home (such as: books, tapes, puzzles, videos), 2) I provide books in one corner of the house (reading corner). 3) I help children make a schedule for learning to read. 4) I explain to the children the components in the reading book such as cover, table of contents, book title, author profile and others.

The third aspect is the teaching aspect with instrument statements as follows: 1) I direct my children to save specifically to buy reading books. 2) I accompany children to learn through internet pages. 3) I download games on my mobile phone that can foster children's reading interest. 4) I encourage children to tell their

experiences in a day. 5) I can make up stories from picture books. 6) I can retell to the child the stories in the book without bringing the book. 7) I explain to the children how to hold and read a book correctly. 8) I introduce books as a fun toy to children.

The scales of 'always', 'often', 'sometimes' and 'never' have informed the various types of activities that have been carried out by respondents. In this instrument the 'always' indicator is when activities are carried out every day, are scheduled, and routinely. 'Often' is when the activity is carried out every 3-5 days a week, while 'sometimes' means that the activity is carried out every 1-2 days a week, and 'never' means that parents do not do it at all. How parents involve in fostering children's reading interest is presented in the three Figure below.

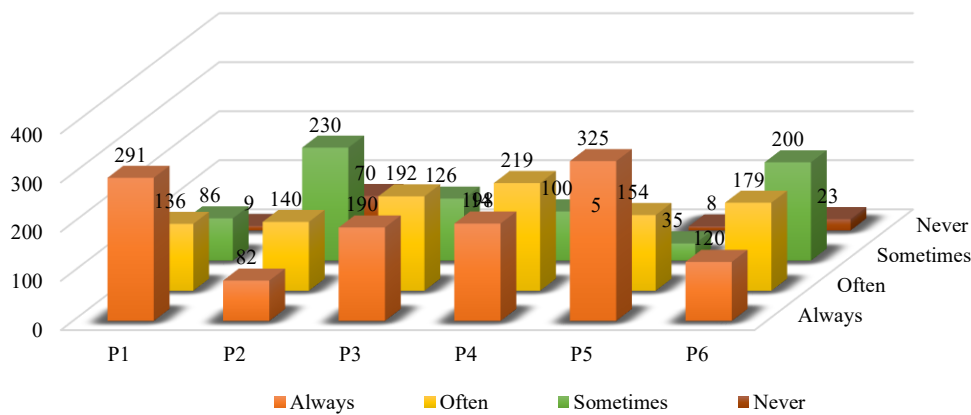


Figure 1 Modelling Aspect

The interesting thing in the Figure 1 is the statement that parents are involved in choosing children's reading books according to their development, but it is not in accordance with statement 2 which says that they are not involved in making a reading schedule with their children. This is supported by the statement of most parents that books are not the subject of daily discussion. So in this aspect of modelling, the dominant parents' involvement in growing reading interest is to help children choose reading materials that are in accordance with their development. Parental involvement such as

making schedules, using books as a material for discussion, and how to be responsible to take care of books have not been used as important stimuli in growing reading interest. Parents as models for children in building a literacy atmosphere in parenting are not yet optimum.

Furthermore, the organizing aspect, where parents support the growth of reading interest by providing facilities and infrastructure, can be seen in the Figure 2.

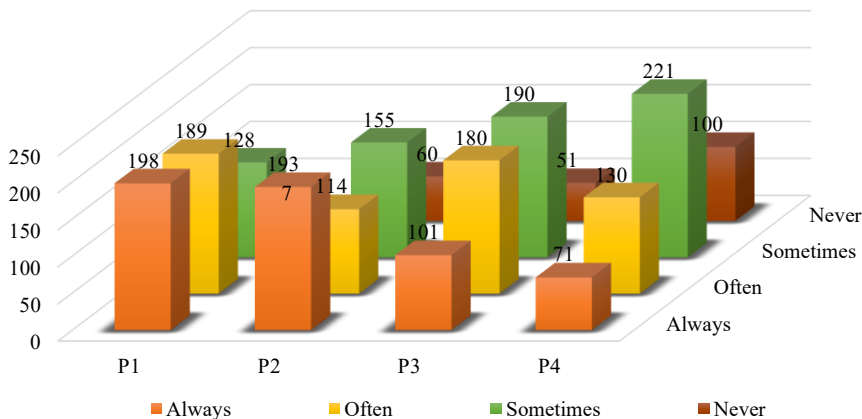


Figure 2 Organizing Aspect

Parents support children by providing learning materials in the form of books, tapes, videos and so on. In the graph above, it can be concluded that parents facilitate the needs that support literacy activities but have not been more involved in growing reading interest. In the question item regarding the provision of learning materials in the form of books, most of the respondents did not do so. Having books at home is twice as important as father's level of education.

Cultivating the reading habit in one’s self or a family member without providing adequate books is like advising a hungry person to eat without food available. Having a reading corner at home with a conducive atmosphere can foster interest in reading. It does not need for a 'mini library' with lots of books, a small space in the corner of the house can be used as a reading corner with just a table, carpet, small shelf, as well as books at home that have been arranged according to categories. It would be more interesting if the books are covered in plastic so they would not get dirty and damaged easily. The reading

corner is provided as a stimulus to increase the interest of people in the house to read books, especially for families that have family members of preschool age.

The role of parents in growing reading interest, besides being a model and providing support in providing materials, is also providing assistance. The following is the parent involvement presented in the Figure 3.

Parental support in fostering reading interest in the teaching aspect is dominated by facilitating mobile phones by downloading games that can foster children's reading interest. Parents have not been fully involved in directing their children to save money to read books, treat books as a source of knowledge, and provide opportunities for children to retell the contents of books. Introducing books as a toy has not been a priority for parents to do. An interesting finding in this graph is that although other support has not been optimum, parents facilitate children when they tell the contents of story books.

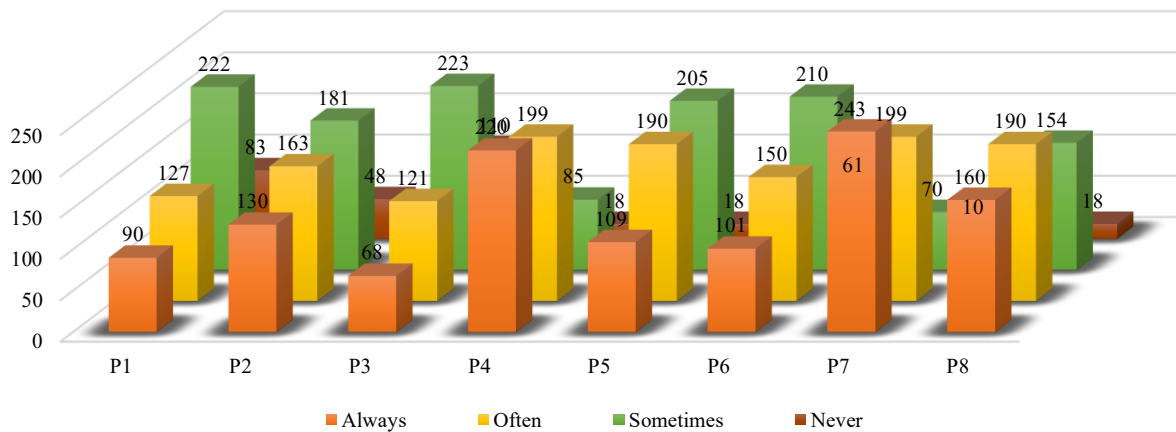


Figure 3 Teaching Aspect

5. CONCLUSION

From the research that has been done, it can be concluded that (1) Parental involvement in learning at home is how parents provide support, decisions, and togetherness in making plans as well as assistance and encouragement to children when they are at home in the learning process. (2) Involvement can be in the form of creating home conditions that support children's education, providing moral and emotional support, providing facilities for children to support the learning process, making a daily schedule which includes reading books together and discussions, making special schedule for families and children to determine various activities that support the development of children's learning abilities. (3) The involvement of parents in growing children’s reading interest is mostly done in the form of providing materials to support learning. Parents have not been optimally involved in assisting children’s reading activities, making schedules, and building a literacy atmosphere at home.

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