

# Mother Support for Early Childhood Development

Suardi

*Faculty of Science Education  
Universitas Negeri Makassar  
Makassar, Indonesia  
suardi@unm.ac.id*

Anshari

*Faculty of Science Education  
Universitas Negeri Makassar  
Makassar, Indonesia  
anshari @unm.ac.id*

Patta Bundu

*Faculty of Science Education  
Universitas Negeri Makassar  
Makassar, Indonesia  
patta\_unm@yahoo.co.id*

Sulaiman Samad

*Faculty of Science Education  
Universitas Negeri Makassar  
Makassar, Indonesia  
essamad@unm.ac.id*

**Abstract**—This study aims to examine maternal daily actions/responses given by mothers in facilitating child development at home. This study used a descriptive design involving 147 mothers as respondents who were determined through the non-probability method with purposive sampling technique. The results showed that mothers who were respondents in this study had shown a proper role in facilitating the needs of aspects of child development at home. There were sub-indicators that needed to be maximized, namely: (1) when the child would do something; (2) when child work in activities that are considered dangerous; (3) when child does something and fails; (4) activities available in the form of games; (5) child are not involved enough to do household chores; (6) limit the time children play, (7) availability of children's books in the form of stories or fables; (8) when child makes a mistake in doing something; (9) when children succeed in completing something and/or doing good deeds; (10) not talk much to child; and (11) lack of activity in reading books/telling fairy tales to children. The results of this study recommend the need for interventions to improve maternal knowledge and skills in supporting early childhood development at home.

**Keywords**—*mother support, child development, early childhood*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood regarding chronological age as affirmed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children who are in the age range between 0 - 8 years, while in the Republic of Indonesia Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, early childhood is children who are at age range 0-6 years. From a philosophical point of view, early childhood is seen as a period of elasticity and expression of goodness.

From the point of view of the characteristics of development as stated [1], early childhood are active learners who continuously get information about the world through their play, they experience to progress through developmental stages that can be estimated, and depend on growth through social interaction, and is a unique individual that grows and develops at different speeds. Whereas from the review of the classification of the child according to the period of development by Santrock [2], early childhood is a period of development from the end of infancy to approximately five or six years of age. This classification is in line with the opinion [3] which also divides children's time

in two periods of development within the range of human development, namely the beginning of childhood that lasts from two to six years, and the end of childhood that lasts from six years until the time comes for the child to become sexually mature

Early childhood development is optimally required stimulation from parents, family members, or other adults in their environment, especially because of the time spent by a child more at home. Stimulation is a stimulus that comes from the environment through vision, talk, hearing, touch. In other words, early childhood stimulation through games that involve the five senses of the child. Theoretically, children who are stimulated continuously and repeatedly in every aspect of their development, means they have had the opportunity to develop optimally. Therefore, stimulation becomes a booster that is beneficial for a child's development. The relationship with that, it can be said that stimulation is needed early childhood to hone the potential and optimize its development.

The most important party in providing stimulation too early childhood is a mother because of she who has the most time and are emotionally closer to children. Therefore, mothers as caregivers and child protectors essential to provide support. The role of mother is in line with the findings Barreto et al. and Kwaśniewska et al., which generally explain that early support from parents can facilitate child development [4][5].

One of the support needed child in developing all aspects of its development as stated Papalia, et al. [6] is support for expression, obtain reinforcement and appreciation to new abilities acquired, guidance in practice and expanding new skills, and protecting children from inappropriate punishment, as well as language stimuli and other communication symbols. Recent evidence from Dauch et al. [7] shows that one important aspect that needs to be considered in the process of child growth and development is the individual influence that allows children to explore and have fun. Also, other aspects that also need to be considered are elements that reduce children's involvement in play, namely instructions and reinforcement to maintain children's attention.

An overview of many published studies on mother support in the context of the family provides evidence that maternal support at home facilitates child development. Parke and Buriel [8] believe that mother can fulfill the

expected role in three ways, namely the interactive partner of the child, as a direct instructor, and as a provider of activities and opportunities that stimulate child growth. Furthermore, according to him, the mother realized this role throughout the game. In summary, [8] identifies the task of parents of child who are early in age, namely to be sensitive and responsive mother to maintaining a safe relationship with child; help children manage frustration and challenges so that child can feel success; stimulate child development through books and game activities; and provide assistance and guidance in conversations and games.

Based on the description above, it can be identified several aspects that need to be considered by mothers in providing support that can facilitate child development at home, namely supporting children to express, giving activities/providing real experiences through various play activities, provide reinforcement/appreciation for new abilities acquired by child, and involving verbal interaction/giving language stimulation. The relationship with that, this study examines the daily actions that are deliberately done the mother/the response given in facilitating the development of the child at home. More specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions.

- How are the responses and methods that are usually carried out mothers on early childhood at home in supporting the child to express?
- How are the responses and/or methods that are usually carried out mothers on early childhood at home to show their position as providers of activities/provide real experiences through playing activities?
- How are the responses and/or methods that are usually carried out mothers on early childhood at home, in providing reinforcement/appreciation to of new abilities acquired child?
- How are the responses and/or methods that are usually carried out mothers on early childhood at home related to the of involving verbal interactions/giving language stimulation?

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

This study uses a descriptive design. This design is used to explain the phenomena related to the role of mothers at home in providing support to early childhood related to support for expression, providing activities/providing real experiences through various playing activities, providing reinforcement/appreciation to new abilities acquired by a child, and giving verbal interaction/language stimulation.

### B. Research Sample

The current study involved 147 mothers. The determination of the research samples was based on the non-probability sampling, purposive sampling technique in particular. Criteria included in selecting the samples based on the research aim were that all participants had to: (1) age between 22-43 years old; (2) have a child aged between 2-8 years old; (3) be university graduates; and (4) live in Makassar, Indonesia. The exclusion criteria that caused the

respondents who met the inclusion criteria were eliminated from the study sample group were: (1) the mother lived at home with other families (not the nuclear family); (2) using child care services; (3) using the services of a professional babysitter; (4) less time with children than other people at home; and (5) not willing to provide the necessary information.

### C. Instructional Material Development Procedure

Before carrying out data collection to explain phenomena as they relate to the role of mothers in providing support for child development, instruments were first developed through a series of activities, namely: (1) determination of indicators and selection of sub-roles of mothers; and (2) validity instrument/testing feasibility test.

Determination of indicators and selection of sub-indicators of the role of mothers in providing support for child development at home refers to the theory and results of research [8][7][9][6].

Validity testing, especially content validity, was carried out through consultative interviews with child development experts and early childhood education experts, followed by a revision of the instrument draft. Revision results based on expert judgment were used as data collection tools in this study.

### D. Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect data in this study was a questionnaire divided into four indicators.

1) *First*, the role of mothers in providing support for a child to expression measured with five sub-indicators, namely: not much to blame/criticize children; not much forbid child; let the child do something independently; helping children do things when needed, and indirectly do something difficult for children.

2) *Second*, the role of mothers as providers of activities/providing real experiences through various play activities is measured with four sub-indicators, namely: preparing activities in the form of playing activities; allow children to participate in domestic work; children have to play time, and preparing the game tool.

3) *Third*, the role of mothers in provides reinforcement/appreciation to new abilities acquired children are measured by three sub-indicators, namely focusing on the positive things that children do; giving gifts/praise/hugs for the child's success and make children's mistakes to teach new abilities.

4) *Fourth*, the role of the mother in involving verbal interaction/giving language stimulation is measured by two sub-indicators, namely: much talking with children, and read books.

### E. Data Analysis

The collected data is analyzed by the percentage technique, each sub-indicator then looks for the mean to conclude the form of supporting each indicator that has been set. Next, looking for the average of each indicator to conclude mother support in facilitating early childhood development at home.

### III. RESULTS

This section outlines the results of the study based on the purpose of the study, namely examines the daily actions that are deliberately done the mother/the response given in facilitating the development of the child at home. The results of the study are presented as follows.

Responses and ways commonly used mothers for early childhood in supporting the child to expression show that as many as 76.45% of mothers have supported children to expression. The low response and/or support method is by the mother: (1) when a child will do something difficult, respond by giving the first example; (2) when a child performs activities that are considered dangerous, respond by prohibiting the child; and (3) when a child does something and fails, responds by directly providing assistance by showing. To be clearer is presented in table 1.

TABLE I. THE ROLE OF MOTHERS IN SUPPORTING FOR CHILD TO EXPRESSIONS

| No          | Indicator  | Parental response/method |  |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| 1           | Not much to blame child children                       | 85.48%                   | Not much to blame the child<br>blame child                             |
| 2           | Not much-forbidding children                           | 77.42%                   | Not much forbidding child<br>forbidding child                          |
| 3           | Allowing children to do it independently               | 83.87%                   | Allowing the child to do<br>Not allowing children to do                |
| 4           | Help do when needed                                    | 75.81%                   | Helps when needed  |
| 5           | Not directly do things that are difficult for children | 59.68%                   | Does not directly give an example<br>Directly give an example          |
| CONCLUSION: |  | 76.45%                   | Supporting children to express<br>Less support for children to express |

Responses and/or ways that are usually done by mothers too early childhood at home to show their position as providers of activities/provide real experiences through play activities show the role of 51.21% of the mother has a position as providers of activities. The responses that showed the lowest role were: (1) preparation of activities in the form of play activities where the majority of children play without program design, and the preparation of game tools for children is also limited; (2) children are not involved enough to do household chores; and (3) limiting the time children play. To be clearer is presented in table 2.

TABLE II. THE ROLE OF MOTHERS AS ACTIVITY PROVIDERS

| No          | Indicator  | Parental response/method |  |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| 1           | Preparing activities in the form of playing activities | 19.35%                   | Preparing child play program<br>Children play without playing program design |
| 2           | Allowing children to participate in household chores   | 27.42%                   | Allowing children to participate<br>Children do not participate              |
| 3           | Children have playing time                             | 70.97%                   | Children have playing time<br>Limiting children's play time                  |
| 4           | Preparing the game tool                                | 87.10%                   | Preparing the game tool<br>Not preparing game tools                          |
| CONCLUSION: |  | 51.21%                   | Act as a provider of activities<br>Less role as a provider of activities     |

The role of mothers as providers of activities, especially those relating to the preparation of game tools for early childhood at home, shows that there are still games that are not prepared mothers as a form of their role in providing activities to facilitate child development. However, the unpreparedness of the game equipment can still be replaced by something around the child so that the child's needs can still be facilitated such as a game tool to train children to distinguish smells; imitating animal movements, training children to tear and fold, as well as introducing attitudes to prayer and humming religious songs. To be clearer is presented in table 3.

TABLE III. TYPES OF GAME TOOLS PREPARED BY THE MOTHER

| No | Indicator                                    | Parental response/method |                                     |
|----|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | Development of religious morality and values | 20.93%                   | Humming religious songs             |
|    |  | 39.53%                   | Introducing prayer reading          |
|    |  | 18.60%                   | Introducing the attitude of prayer  |
|    |  | 20.93%                   | Introducing the movement of worship |
| 2  | Motor development                            | 34.21%                   | Capture, throw and jump             |
|    |  | 15.79%                   | Imitating animal movements          |
|    |  | 28.95%                   | Introducing texture                 |
|    |  | 21.05%                   | Tearing and folding                 |
| 3  | Language development                         | 19.51%                   | Carry out one command               |
|    |  | 19.05%                   | Asking question                     |
|    |  | 39.02%                   | Mention the name of the object      |
|    |  | 21.95%                   | Become a listener                   |
| 4  | Cognitive development                        | 35.14%                   | Distinguish form                    |
|    |  | 13.51%                   | Distinguish odor                    |
|    |  | 37.84%                   | Introducing colors and numbers      |
|    |  | 13.51%                   | Story/storybook                     |

Responses and/or ways that are usually done by mothers too early childhood at home, in providing reinforcement/appreciation of new abilities obtained by children, showed that the responses and/or methods commonly used by mothers were only 66.67% of mothers who showed reinforcement/appreciation and assistance to children. Responses and/or ways that indicate the lack of giving reinforcement/appreciation and assistance are: (1) when children make mistakes in problem-solving, these mistakes are not used to teach new abilities for children; and (2) when a child succeeds in completing something and/or doing good deeds, not all of them are given praise or appreciation. To be clearer is presented in table 4.

TABLE IV. THE ROLE OF MOTHERS IN GIVING STRENGTHENING

| No          | Indicator  | Parental response/method |   |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| 1           | Focus on the positive things a child does        | 90.32%                   | Focus on positive things                              |
|             |  | 9.68%                    | Focus on results                                      |
| 2           | Giving praise for the child's success            | 61.29%                   | Giving praise   |
|             |  | 38.71%                   | Not give praise                                       |
| 3           | Using children's mistakes to teach new abilities | 48.39%                   | Using children's mistakes to teach new abilities      |
|             |  | 51.61%                   | Do not use children's mistakes to teach new abilities |
| CONCLUSION: |  | 66.67%                   | Reinforcing to children                               |
|             |  | 33.33%                   | Lack of providing reinforcement                       |

Responses and methods commonly used by mothers for early childhood at home related to the involving of verbal interaction/giving language stimulation show that the response and/or the usual way of doing mother only 66.94%

of mothers who have given language stimulation to children. Responses and ways that indicate a lack of language stimulation in children are: (1) only speaking at certain times; and (2) lack of activity in reading books/telling fairy tales to children. To be clearer is presented in table 5.

TABLE V. THE ROLE OF MOTHERS IN INVOLVING VERBAL INTERACTION

| No          | Indicator                | Parental response/method |   |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1           | Always Talk to the child | 64.52%<br>35.48%         | Always talk to children<br>Speak at a certain time                        |
| 2           | Read a book              | 69.35%<br>30.65%         | Involved in reading books/fables<br>Less involved in reading books/fables |
| CONCLUSION: |                          | 66.94%<br>33.06%         | Involves verbal interaction<br>Less involve verbal interaction            |

Analysis of maternal role aspects in providing support for early childhood development at home shows that in general mothers have provided excellent support for early childhood development processes at home (65.32%). To be clearer is presented in table 6.

TABLE VI. RECAPITULATION OF THE ROLE OF MOTHERS AT HOME

| No   | Indicator   | Category    |        |
|------|---|-------------|--------|
|      |   | Play a Role | Less   |
| 1    | Supporting children to express  | 76.45%      | 23.55% |
| 2    | Providers of activities/provide real experiences through various activities | 51.21%      | 48.79% |
| 3    | Providing reinforcement/appreciation of new abilities that children get     | 66.76%      | 33.33% |
| 4    | involving verbal interaction/giving language stimulation                    | 66.94%      | 33.06% |
| Mean |   | 65.2%       | 34.68% |

Based on tables 1 to 6 it can be explained that there are still several role dimensions that need attention, namely: (1) mentoring to children in doing something new or considered difficult by adults. (2) involvement of children in carrying out household activities; (3) giving praise/reinforcement/appreciation to children; (4) lack of draft playing programs prepared for children; (5) involvement of verbal interactions; and (6) lack of children's books/story books/fairy tales.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of tables 1 to 6 show that mothers who were respondents in this study had provided support or had shown a good role in facilitating the needs of aspects of child development at home (on average = 65.32%). The existence of such mother supporting, provides opportunities for children to be able to optimize their cognitive development potential in the first five years of life, as the views summarized by Brooks[8], that the behavior and efforts of parents at home are the most important, although not the only thing that affects child development. The parents' attention and sensitivity to the child's playing process is a form of environment that supports child development. [9].

Based on the analysis above, it is also known that there are still some roles of mothers in providing support for early childhood who have not been maximized so that there is an opportunity for children to go through the process the growth

and development by obtaining minimal stimulation support. Many experts have explained that unpleasant experiences at an early age will make an impression and sufficiently give effect to change the composition of cells in the brain, and children who are raised in an environment with minimal stimulation support are less intelligent, and these opportunities are unlikely to be replaced next time. Furthermore, various theories also explain that the effort to maximize child development, stimulation must be given for the first three years of life. Starting stimulation at the age of 5 can be said to be very late.

The analysis shows that there is still a role dimension that needs to be improved to improve the response/way mother of facilitating child development at home. This increase is very urgent as stated by Suryanto et al., [10] in his research that the role of mothers has a positive effect on the growth and development of personal social, language, motoric in infants. Likewise, the findings of Takahashi et al. [11], that high-quality care practices have implications for improving children's social skills at an early age.

The dimensions of the role of mothers that need to be improved include:

1) *First*, accompanying children in doing something new or considered difficult by adults. As stated by Dauch et al. [7] that the opportunity for children to explore and have fun within the appropriate limits and let children explore new space is very important. Therefore, accompanying a child to do something new or which is considered difficult by adults, it is necessary to give the child the freedom to do it independently/parents do not give examples directly before the child tries to do it independently, and provides assistance when the child needs it.

2) *Second*, the involvement of children in carrying out household activities. The finding is consistent with the opinion of Black et al. [12], that the initial environment is needed to facilitate cognitive development in the form of home activities including playing with household objects and bringing children to experience household activities that support development early.

3) *Third*, giving praise/strengthening/ appreciation of children. This dimension is important because inappropriate maternal responses can be one of the causes of reduced attention so that children's involvement also becomes low. One aspect that needs attention in children's exploration activities is an element that might reduce children's involvement in play, namely direction from others to strengthening and maintain children's attention. Dauch et al. [7]. Likewise, the opinion of Baretto et al. [4], that the quality of mother-child interaction and affection expression are factors that enhance cognitive development during childhood.

4) *Fourth*, the design of play programs for children. Chen et al. [13], explained that a positive parenting environment has a positive influence on children's behavior problems three years later. Furthermore, Pereira et al. [14], argued that a parenting environment with limited opportunities has the potential to carry the risk of delays in the process of child development. Therefore, the care environment requires the design of play programs for children, as stated by Engle et al. [15], that high-quality intervention programs have a significant influence on children's development.

5) *Fifth*, involving verbal interaction/giving language stimulation. The role of parents in this dimension is expected to be realized in the form of talking to children, and the intensity of reading books to children is also high. The parental attention and sensitivity to children's play processes encourage exploration and problem solving, and parents use more languages, and different words in daily activities are one of the demands that must be practiced by many mothers at home [9].

6) *Sixth*, the lack of children's books/story books/fairy tales. This dimension is also related to the dimension of language stimulation. The lack of children's books/story books/fairy tales has an impact on the lack of early experiences of children who can encourage their development, as stated by Black et al. [12], to facilitate cognitive development, of home activities such as telling stories will bring children to experiences that encourage early development. Likewise according to Iltus [9], that the availability of children's reading materials and books is an important aspect that needs to be considered at home.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that there is still a form of mother's role in supporting early childhood development whose implementation is not optimal, namely: mentoring to children in doing something new or considered difficult by adults. Involvement of children in carrying out household activities; giving praise/reinforcement/appreciation to children; lack of playing programs design prepared for children; (5) lack of involvement of verbal interactions; and lack of children's books/story books/fairy tales. Therefore, it is imperative to give serious attention for improving the ability of parents, especially in providing positive support for early childhood development, so that children can go through the process of growth and development with their families at home by getting positive stimulation.

This finding promotes the need for interventions in the form of guidelines for mothers to facilitate early childhood development. This intervention is becoming increasingly important given that there are no special schools to become parents, including an increasing number of mothers who spend their time working outside the home so that positive stimulation for children at every opportunity also becomes increasingly difficult.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia who has funded this research so that it could be carried out as it was planned in the first place. Our gratitude also goes to the reviewer who has evaluated this article.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] C. H. Wolfgang and M. E. Wolfgang, *School for young children: Developmentally appropriate practices*. Allyn & Bacon, 1999.
- [2] J. W. Santrock, "Life-Span Development Jilid I (Alih Bahasa: Juda Damanik dan Achmad Chusairi)," *Jakarta: Erlangga*, 2002.
- [3] E. . Hurlock, *Developmental Psychology: An Approach Throughout the Range of Life*. Jakarta: Erlangga, 2002.
- [4] F. B. Barreto, M. S. de Miguel, J. Ibarluzea, A. Andiarrena, and E. Arranz, "Family context and cognitive development in early childhood: A longitudinal study," *Intelligence*, vol. 65, pp. 11–22, 2017.
- [5] J. M. Kwaśniewska, J. Gralewski, E. M. Witkowska, M. Kostrzewska, and I. Lebuda, "Mothers' personality traits and the climate for creativity they build with their children," *Think. Ski. Creat.*, vol. 27, pp. 13–24, 2018.
- [6] D. E. Papalia, S. W. Olds, and R. D. Feldman, *Human Development*, 8th ed. New York: McGraww-Hill, 2001.
- [7] C. Dauch, M. Imwalle, B. Ocasio, and A. E. Metz, "The influence of the number of toys in the environment on toddlers' play," *Infant Behav. Dev.*, vol. 50, pp. 78–87, 2018.
- [8] J. . Brooks, *The Process of Parenting*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011.
- [9] S. Iltus, "Significance of home environments as proxy indicators for early childhood care and education," *Pap. Comm. EFA Glob. Monit. Rep.*, 2007.
- [10] S. Suryanto, H. Purwandari, and W. A. Mulyono, "Family and Social Support in Growth and Personal, Social, Language, and Motorbike Development in Toddlers in Banyumas Regency," *J. Public Health (Bangkok)*, vol. 10, pp. 103–109, 2014.
- [11] Y. Takahashi, K. Okada, T. Hoshino, and T. Anme, "Developmental trajectories of social skills during early childhood and links to parenting practices in a Japanese sample," *PLoS One*, vol. 10, no. 8, p. e0135357, 2015.
- [12] M. M. Black et al., "Early childhood development coming of age: science through the life course," *Lancet*, vol. 389, no. 10064, pp. 77–90, 2017.
- [13] W. Chen et al., "The influence of home-rearing environment on children's behavioral problems 3 years' later," *Psychiatry Res.*, vol. 244, pp. 185–193, 2016.
- [14] K. R. G. Pereira, R. Sacconi, and N. C. Valentini, "Cognition and environment are predictors of infants' motor development over time," *Fisioter. e Pesqui.*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 59–67, 2016.
- [15] P. L. Engle et al., "Strategies for reducing inequalities and improving developmental outcomes for young children in low-income and middle-income countries," *Lancet*, vol. 378, no. 9799, pp. 1339–1353, 2011.