# Development of Strategies to Support Parental Engagement In the Early Childhood Education Unit Partnership

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**Abstract.** Providing education for early childhood is not enough only by maximizing the quality of activities in the classroom. Indeed, the parents' involvement should also be maximized. The study aimed to produce a valid and practical strategy prototype for the early childhood education unit to maximize the involvement of parents in a partnership program. This research and development using the Content Development Process-CDP model involved 202 subjects selected through purposive sampling technique. Research data were collected using a questionnaire, and the results were analyzed descriptively. Data analysis included calculating the percentage and average score and grouping data. The findings show that: (1) the development of the strategy to support the involvement of parents in early childhood education unit partnership is necessary because there is still a gap that needs to be solved in the partnership; (2) strategies to support the involvement of parents are divided into two clusters: the strategy to create family - friendly early childhood education; and preparing educators to work with families/parents. Each strategy cluster has core strategies with several action programs. The first strategy cluster consists of four core strategies with 13 action programs, while the second cluster strategy has two core strategies with seven action programs. Third, the results of the test performed by experts on the strategy prototype show that the product was in the valid / very feasible category. Also, the results of the test by target users show that the product was in the very practical category.

**Keywords:** Partnership; Parents; Early Childhood Education Unit,  Early Childhood Education.

## INTRODUCTION

Globally, the awareness of the importance of early childhood education increases. It is because early childhood is the most critical period of childhood development so that the positive intervention children get during the period has a big impact on the development (Bago et al. 2020; Black et al. 2017; Yoshikawa et al. 2013). Thus, it is important to maximize children learning experience during this critical period.

Educator as the person who accompanies children in the education unit needs the involvement of parents (Arnold et al. 2008; Barreto et al. 2017; Nievar et al. 2011; Pereira et al. 2016; Suardi et al. 2019) because parents are influential as the role model and guide for the kids, should know and understand more about their kids, and the trend of education

development in the 21st century which needs collaboration, contribution, and commitment in all aspects of a community (Dodd and Konzal 2002; Rockwell, Andrew, and Hawley 1996) Therefore, early childhood education is not enough only by maximizing the quality of activities in the classroom, but it must also optimize the involvement of parents.

There have been many forms of parents' involvement in the educational institution, and they have shown many benefits for children, teachers, parents, and schools (Park, Stone, and Holloway 2017; Scottish Executive Education Department Schools Division 2006). The latest study about the involvement of parents in early childhood education has covered wider aspects, showing that the support of parents care at home integrating between activities in the classroom and activities at home contributes to the early childhood education output (Özler et al. 2018).

In Indonesia, parents have been involved in early childhood education since 2016 through a partnership of early childhood education with families and societies. Partnership with families has three forms, namely: (1) strengthening two-way communication to gather information and input related to children's development both from the Family to the early childhood education unit and vice versa; (2) parental education to raise the awareness of the importance of children's education, like by developing a conducive learning environment at home; and (3) Voluntary activities by early childhood education units by conveying to parents about material or aspects of child development that should be deepened at home (Yuniarti et al. 2016).

In spite of a number of the theoretical basis and empirical proofs of the contribution of parents' involvement on early childhood education, some gaps have not been discussed empirically, especially in the partnership of early childhood education unit in Makassar, which is the strategy to support the involvement of parents in children education. It becomes strategic because empirical studies conducted in different areas found that parents' involvement in children's education has experienced degradation (Lau and Ng 2019).

Therefore, this study aimed to develop a strategy for early childhood education units to collaborate with parents to maximize their involvement. Parental involvement is not only in school activities but also in a broader spectrum both at school and at home.

## METHOD

This research and development adopted the Content *Development Process*-CDP model (Gustafson 2002). Because the study focused on developing a valid and practical strategy prototype, CDP stages conducted only included analysis, designing, creating the prototype, and formative evaluation. At the same time, the implementation phase and summative evaluation were performed in the next study.

The analysis phase included a preliminary study to discover barriers faced in the partnership program and possible alternatives. The phases involved 18 heads of kindergarten, 102 kindergarten teachers, and 59 parents who had kids studying in the kindergarten (selected purposively). Data were collected through a questionnaire with 31 questions referring to principles and challenges in developing partnership (Cox-Petersen 2011; Decker and Decker 2000; Grant and Ray 2010).

In the designing phase, a draft of strategies to support the involvement of parents in the partnership was designed. The phase was based on the analysis performed on the previous stage to ensure that the draft was based on needs. The prototype was created by reviewing and editing the design made in the previous stage.

In the formative evaluation phase, the validity of the prototype is tested by experts, and the user target tests the practicality. The phase involved three experts and 20 kindergartens. Experts' validity data were gathered using a questionnaire containing 19 questions related to the basis of development, language, and substance of strategy formula. While the data of practicality from user target were collected using a questionnaire containing ten questions about readability, attractiveness, clarity, easiness, and the suitability between regulation and action program. The questionnaire to raise responses from experts and user targets contains questions and columns to write comments or suggestions.

Data collected in the analysis phase was analyzed with descriptive percentages. In

contrast, data in the numeral form in the formative evaluation phase was processed by finding out the mean score of each indicator or sub aspect of product feasibility / validity assessment from three experts and heads of kindergarten as target users (form practicality test). Next, the average score from the average score of each indicator was calculated to determine the feasibility of assessment components / aspects. The average score of assessment indicators / sub aspects and component / aspects was categorized according to the appropriate ranges.

The ranges and criteria of feasibility / validity of the developed strategy were determined by calculating the difference between maximum and minimum scores. The different score was then divided into four criteria. Thus, the range score of each class (criteria) was 0.75. The criteria of product validity and practicality were set as below:
3,26-4,00 = Very valid and very practical
2,51-3,25 = Valid/Practica1,
75-2,50 = Not Valid/Not practical
1,00-1,75 = Very no valid / very not practical

While suggestions and comments from three experts and 20 heads of kindergartens as he target of users were analyzed by grouping based on the research domain, interpretation, reflection, and conclusion. Results of the analysis on qualitative data from experts were used to support some aspects related to prototype content of strategy, while analysis on qualitative data from user targets was to support some aspects related to the display and readability of strategy prototype which was developed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The analysis phase includes the study to discover the discrepancy in creating an early childhood education unit environment that is Family - friendly, on the development of Family - friendly communication, and on the preparation of educators to work with the Family. Results of the study are presented below table 1.

Results of the analysis on data related to the creation of the Early Childhood Education Unit show that in general (87.7 %) orients in a family - friendly environment. Results of the

analysis on data about the development of communication show that (95.7%) the Early Childhood Education Units has developed Family - friendly communication. Results of the analysis on data related to the readiness of educators to work with families were at 83,7%, meaning that they have been ready to collaborate with families. However, those three aspects should be maximized. Some points that need to be prioritized in the development of strategy include: (1) Screening for the needs of education of all students' parents/families; (2) Consideration of the needs of families / parents related to family education in the determination of the program; (3) The availability of special space for families / parents to talk with teachers / staff when they are in the unit; (4) Communication with families / parents who rarely attend the school events; (5) The availability of offline and online communication channels can be used to send notifications to families / parents and vice versa; (6) Teachers communicate with families / parents not only when there is a problem; (7) Teachers are open when a family / parent is offering to assist teachers in the classroom voluntarily; (8) Encouragement to families/parents to volunteer at schools; (9) Families / parents should be invited to discuss critical problems; (10) Family/parents' time availability should be considered in scheduling an event; (11) The use of informal language when communicating with families / parents.

Designing phase is conducted to create a strategy to support the family involvement in the partnership based on the analysis results. Firstly, we studied theories relevant to school, community, and family partnerships; and did a task analysis of the structure of the strategy, which is believed to increase the involvement of the parties in the partnership as a follow-up to the various trends and challenges of partnership barriers that are generally faced by PAUD units. We obtained a partnership strategy from this phase to support parental involvement in Early Childhood Education Unit partnerships, as visualized in Figure 1. The visualization of strategy design is as follows:

*First, a* partnership strengthening team consisting of school communities, families/parents, and community/community organizations) is formed. The number of partnership strengthening teams and their subs

are based on the needs. In developing this strategy, the partnership strengthening team was divided into two groups: the team to strengthen the formation of a friendly family Early Childhood Education Unit environment and the team to prepare educators to work with families/parents.

*Second,* the team formed formulated the action plan, which becomes a new strategy to build a positive relationship with families. The team coordinates with the early childhood education unit principal in that process. The action plan focused on creating a family - friendly early childhood education unit to prepare educators to collaborate with parents / families. Besides designing an action plan, the team also had the responsibility to perform, supervise the progress, solve problems, and write reports of the action plan that had been planned.

*Third, the* action that implements the plan was evaluated annually to identify which actions need to be improved and maintained. Results of evaluation should be coordinated with the principal of the Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents. The evaluation step also aims to create a new action plan to improve the involvement of families / parents in the partnership of the Early Education Childhood Unit.

The phase of making prototype was conducted by: 1) reviewing the draft of strategy to support the involvement of parents in The Early Childhood Education Unit partnership; (2) formulating types of strengthening actions as the follow up on the main problems/ barriers generally faced by The Early Childhood Education Unit; (3) organizing various ideas of strengthening actions and dividing them into two main parts: creating family / parents friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment and preparing educators to work with families / parents. The strategy prototypes produced in this step are:

*First,* rational, containing the general explanation about the importance of partnership between Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents and aims of the partnership.

*Second, the* partnership development approach explains systematic activities that need to be conducted to improve parents/families' involvement in the early education unit partnership.

*Third,* the strategy to support parents/families' involvement describes various practices that The Early Childhood Education Unit can implement. The practices focused on creating a family / parents-friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment. In this case. The Early Childhood Education Unit should be open to making partnerships with all families / parents, not only with the frequently involved ones, and prepare the educator to collaborate with parents / families. In this case, The Early Childhood Education Unit facilitates effective collaboration between educators and parents / families for their children's education.

Formative Evaluation Phase, the test by experts involved three experts and target user test involved principal of The Early Childhood Education Unit. The results of both tests are presented below.

Based on the assessment performed by experts, the strategy prototype got an average score of 3.52 (valid). Besides assessment using questionnaire / instrument, experts in the trial process also gave suggestions and comments followed up in the consultative interview. Therefore, although the developed prototype had met the validity criteria, suggestions and comments from experts were followed up by revising the prototype. Based on the suggestions and comments from the experts, the prototype was revised. The output of the revision was consulted again by the experts until it was regarded as valid.

The valid prototype was then tested to the target of users to get judgment praxis (the practicality of a valid prototype). Based on the assessment performed by the user target, the valid prototype obtained a score of 3.63 (very practical). Thus, it was concluded that the prototype of strategy to support the involvement of parents in the Early Childhood Education Unit partnership, which was developed, had met the criteria of practicality.

Referring to the results of tests by experts and target users in the formative evaluation phase in the CDP model, it was identified that the prototype of the strategy was valid and practical to be implemented in the Early Childhood Education Unit to maximize the involvement of parents in the partnership program.

**Discussion**

A family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment is important to raise the sense of self-acceptance because it is an important factor in involving parents in the school (Halgunseth et al., 2009). Friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment has open and useful aspects of supporting the partnership program with the whole family members, not only some of them. It is important considering that a school that is not open will inhibit the involvement of parents. Thus, a Family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment is only concerned with activities that support the involvement of families. Still, the buildings and policies of the unit should be easily accessed by the Family (Ballen and Moles 1994). The research findings indicated some categories which needed to be improved to create a friendlier Early Childhood Education Unit for families. Those categories were: (1) the Early Childhood Education Unit had not screened some family education needs; (2) the need of families / parents of family education had not been accommodated / taken into account in the determination of programs; and (3) space for families / parents to talk with teachers when there are in the Early Childhood Education Unit were not available yet. In contrast, empirical proofs from earlier studies suggested that the availability of such space suggests that the parent's presence in the school is welcomed and appreciated (Lueder 1998). Also, a well-facilitated need for family education will motivate families to be more actively involved in partnership programs, especially in improving their children's learning. Family education is an important component of parental involvement programs, which offers opportunities for parents to learn various skills that are effective in improving their children's achievement

Family - friendly communication generally becomes the first step to developing the involvement of parents in the Early Childhood Education Unit. Even the wider the chance to communicate, the stronger the bond between home and school (Hiatt-Michael 2001). Results of the analysis show that the Early Childhood Education Unit had developed Family - friendly communication. However, to maximize the communication, the Early Childhood Education Unit should maintain communication with parents who rarely attended the school events. In this case, the Early Childhood Education Unit should provide an offline and online communication channel that can be used by teachers / staff to send a notification to families /parents and vice versa. It is in li with the study by (Adams and Christenson 2000), which stated that good communication between school and families / parents could improve families/parents' trust to involve, and it can boost the trust in the school in caring for their children.

The readiness of teachers to work with families shows that, in general, the unit is ready for the program. However, some categories need improvement to support the involvement of parents/ families in the partnership program. Categories identified needed to be maximized were: (1) teachers communicate with parents / families in various ways like via telephone or WhatsApp not only when there is a problem; (2) teachers are ready to welcome parents /families who want to volunteer in the classroom; (3) the principals should encourage parents / families to volunteer at school; (4) Families / parents are invited to discuss critical problems; (5) families / parents' time availability should be considered in scheduling an event; and (6) the use of informal language in communication with families / parents. Teachers' readiness is in line with the late 1990s trend about the obligation of educators to have knowledge and skills related to parental involvement, both through pre-service training and continuous professional development (Hiatt-Michael 2001).

As the strategy to maximize the effectiveness of the communication, the study developed a very valid and very practical prototype. The prototype consists of:

*First,* rational containing general explanation about the importance of partnership between Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents; the goals of the partnership between Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents; the principles of partnership between Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents; and forms of partnership between Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents.

*Second,* the partnership development approach explains systematic activities that need to be conducted to increase the involvement of families / parents in the Early Childhood

Education Unit.

*Third*, the strategy to support the involvement of families / parents contains an explanation of various practices to be held in the Early Childhood Education Unit. The practices are divided into two categories or clusters: a cluster of strategies 1: creating family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment that is open and beneficial and tries maximally to make partnership with families parents not only with them who are frequently involved; and cluster strategy 2: preparing work with families / parents. Those practices are explained below according to the strategy clusters for more detail.

The cluster of strategy 1: creating a family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment to support the involvement of families / parents in the partnership program. The strategy consists of four cores and 13 best practices as below:

*First*, preparing supporting infrastructures like a central area in the Early Childhood Education Unit to coordinate events where parents can involve, a bulletin board to exhibit photos of school events involving families / parents; and a booklet containing useful information for families / parents about policies in the Early Childhood Education Unit (partnership, human resources, volunteer vacancy, and so on).

*Second*, building harmonic connection and the relation between the personnel of the Early Childhood Education Unit and the families / parents through various practices like intensifying informal social events involving families / parents in the creating family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit; encouraging effective communication between the personnel of creating family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit and families / parents through various ways, not only when there is a problem. They can talk about children's activities in the Early Childhood Education Unit or at home; organizing activities that unify or connect between families / parents of new students and school personnel or other parents.

*Third*, building responsive and caring atmosphere for family/parents through various practices like considering the needs and preferences of each parent / family when deciding the partnership program and scheduling the programs; arranging the series of

families / parents' involvement in the Early Childhood Education Unit flexibly that can accommodate the different needs of families / parents; admitting and appreciating the level of families / parents' involvement from planning to decision making; visiting families / parents' home who had difficulties to visit the Early Childhood Education Unit.

*Fourth*, supporting families / parents chance to access education through some practices like identifying the content and the form of education needed by families through need assessment by the personnel of Early Childhood Education Unit; involving families / parents in planning the education programs for families / parents; and preparing family education program which can reach families / parents rarely involving in the events conducted by Early Childhood Education Unit.

The cluster of strategy 2: preparing teachers to work with families / parents. To support the involvement of families / parents in the partnership program, there are two core strategies with seven best practices as below:

*First*, facilitating teachers to develop their knowledge, skills, and sensitivity to work effectively with parents like providing training on how to make a good and respectful relationship with families / parents; conducting training on how to show sensitivity on the difference of social and cultural background of each family / parents; and preparing training on how to assist parents in giving attention on their children's development.

*Second*, implementing various family-oriented services like encouraging parents to volunteer in the classroom and teachers organize them well, showing appreciation to parents who want to volunteer through various ways, and involving parents in evaluating their children's progress.

Based on the discussion above, the study formulated strategies that can be used to improve the involvement of parents in the Early Childhood Education Unit partnership. In implementing the strategies, some points to be considered include: The flow of approach formulated in the developed strategy must be followed systematically; the selection of a core strategy is adjusted to the conditions of the Early Childhood Education Unit. Therefore it must be based on and adopt a strategy that is in accordance with the challenges and obstacles

faced by the Early Childhood Education Unit; The Early Childhood Education Unit should not only focus on the action programs listed in the core strategies but can propose other programs relevant with the core strategies, and action programs should be mapped out and scheduled according to the academic calendar to make them well organized.

**Table 1.** Results of Analysis on The Creation of Early Childhood Education Unit Environment

| No | Categories/Statements | Responses |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | The early childhood education unit designs social events to gather families / parents and all school communities. | 66,5% Highly agree<br>30,7% Agree<br>2,8% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 2 | Social events at school give the impression that the involvement of families / parents is important for the early childhood education unit, especially in educating children. | 68,7% Highly agree<br>26,8% Agree<br>4,5% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 3 | There is a meeting between headmaster and families / parents | 49,7% Highly agree<br>45,3% Agree<br>5% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 4 | Meeting for headmaster and families / parents allow families / parents to deliver all their concerns. | 62,6% Highly agree<br>31,3% Agree<br>5% Disagree<br>1,1% Highly disagree |
| 5 | All families / parents are invited to events held by the school. | 58,1% Highly agree<br>33% Agree<br>6,7% Disagree<br>2,2% Highly disagree |
| 6 | Various forms of involvement in the early childhood education unit are available, and parents / families can flexibly choose it. | 38% Highly agree<br>57% Agree<br>5% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 7 | early childhood education unit identified the educational needs of all students' parents / families | 0% Highly agree<br>67% Agree<br>9,5% Disagree<br>23,5% Highly disagree |
| 8 | The needs of the family/parents regarding family education are accommodated/ taken into account when determining the program | 1,1% Highly agree<br>71,5% Agree<br>14% Disagree<br>13,4% Highly disagree |
| 9 | Family/parent involvement is very flexible, meaning that they do not always have to be physically present | 46,4% Highly agree<br>52% Agree<br>1,7% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 10 | The early childhood education unit provides a medium for families/parents to talk with other families/parents as well as with teachers/staff while in the unit. | 11,7% Highly agree<br>59,8% Agree<br>21,2% Disagree<br>7,3% Highly disagree |
| | The average of the creation of family friend early childhood education unit | 40,3% Highly agree<br>47,4% Agree<br>7,5% Disagree<br>4,7% Highly disagree |

**Table 2**. Results of the analysis on the development of communication in the Early Childhood Education unit

| No | Categories / Statements | Responses |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | The percentage of family/parents who attended the events was higher than those who did not attend | 34,6% Highly agree<br>60,3% Agree<br>5% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 2 | Families/parents who are unable to attend the events confirm their absence | 45,3% Highly agree<br>52,5% Agree<br>2,2% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 3 | Families/parents who are unable to attend find out information about events that have been carried out | 33,5% Highly agree<br>60,9% Agree<br>5,6% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 4 | Offline communication channels are available for teachers/staff to notify families/parents and vice versa | 32,4% Highly agree<br>61,5% Agree<br>,16% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 5 | Online communication channels are available for teachers/staff to notify families/parents and vice versa | 50,8% Highly agree<br>46,4% Agree<br>2,8% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 6 | Teachers or staffs give quick respond s on information they get from families / parents. | 20,1% Highly agree<br>76,5% Agree<br>,43% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 7 | families / parents give quick respond s on information they get from Teachers or staffs | 43% Highly agree<br>52,5% Agree<br>4,5% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 8 | Families / parents can communicate individually face-to-face or through communication devices with teachers about their children's progress. | 52% Highly agree<br>46,9% Agree<br>1,1% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 9 | The school tries to keep in touch with families/parents who rarely attend events at school | 25,1% Highly agree<br>67,6% Agree<br>7,3% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| | The Average Score of The Development of Family - Friendly Communication | 37,4% Highly agree<br>58,3% Agree<br>4,2% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |

**Table 3**. Results of Analysis on the Readiness of Educators to work with families

| No | Categories/ Statements | Responses |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Teachers/school staff are very friendly and open in communicating with family/parents | 64,2% Highly agree<br>31,3% Agree<br>3,4% Disagree<br>1,1% Highly disagree |
| 2 | teachers/staff use very academic/formal language in communicating with family/parents | 5,6% Highly agree<br>83,2% Agree<br>7,3% Disagree<br>3,9% Highly disagree |
| 3 | There is no difference in how teachers / staff treat families / parents due to their levels of education, occupation, or the economy. | 41,9% Highly agree<br>53,6% Agree<br>4,5% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 4 | The headmaster encourages families/parents to contribute to the school voluntarily | 8,9% Highly agree<br>56,4% Agree<br>24% Disagree<br>10,6% Highly disagree |
| 5 | Teachers openly accept families/parents who want to volunteer in their class | 1,1% Highly agree<br>64,2% Agree<br>12,3% Disagree<br>22,3% Highly disagree |
| 6 | Family/parental time availability is taken into account when scheduling an event | 9,5% Highly agree<br>66,5% Agree<br>24% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 7 | Families/parents are invited to discuss critical issues | 9,5% Highly agree<br>59,2% Agree<br>21,2% Disagree<br>10,1% Highly disagree |
| 8 | Families/parents are involved in planning the school program | 33% Highly agree<br>60,9% Agree<br>6,1% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 9 | Teachers/staff communicate with family/parents through various ways, like via telephone or WhatsApp when there is a problem | 6,1% Highly agree<br>57% Agree<br>28,5% Disagree<br>8,4% Highly disagree |
| 10 | Communication between teachers and staff and families/parents is dominantly about problems faced by children | 54,7% Highly agree<br>43,6% Agree<br>1,7% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 11 | Teachers actively involve families/parents in learning activities in the classroom | 36,9% Highly agree<br>59,8% Agree<br>3,4% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 12 | The school designs activities that allow families/parents and children to study together at school | 49,7% Highly agree<br>47,5% Agree<br>2,8% Disagree<br>0% Highly disagree |
| 13 | The average score of the development of Family - friendly communication | 26,8% Highly agree<br>56,9% Agree<br>11,6% Disagree<br>4,7% Highly disagree |
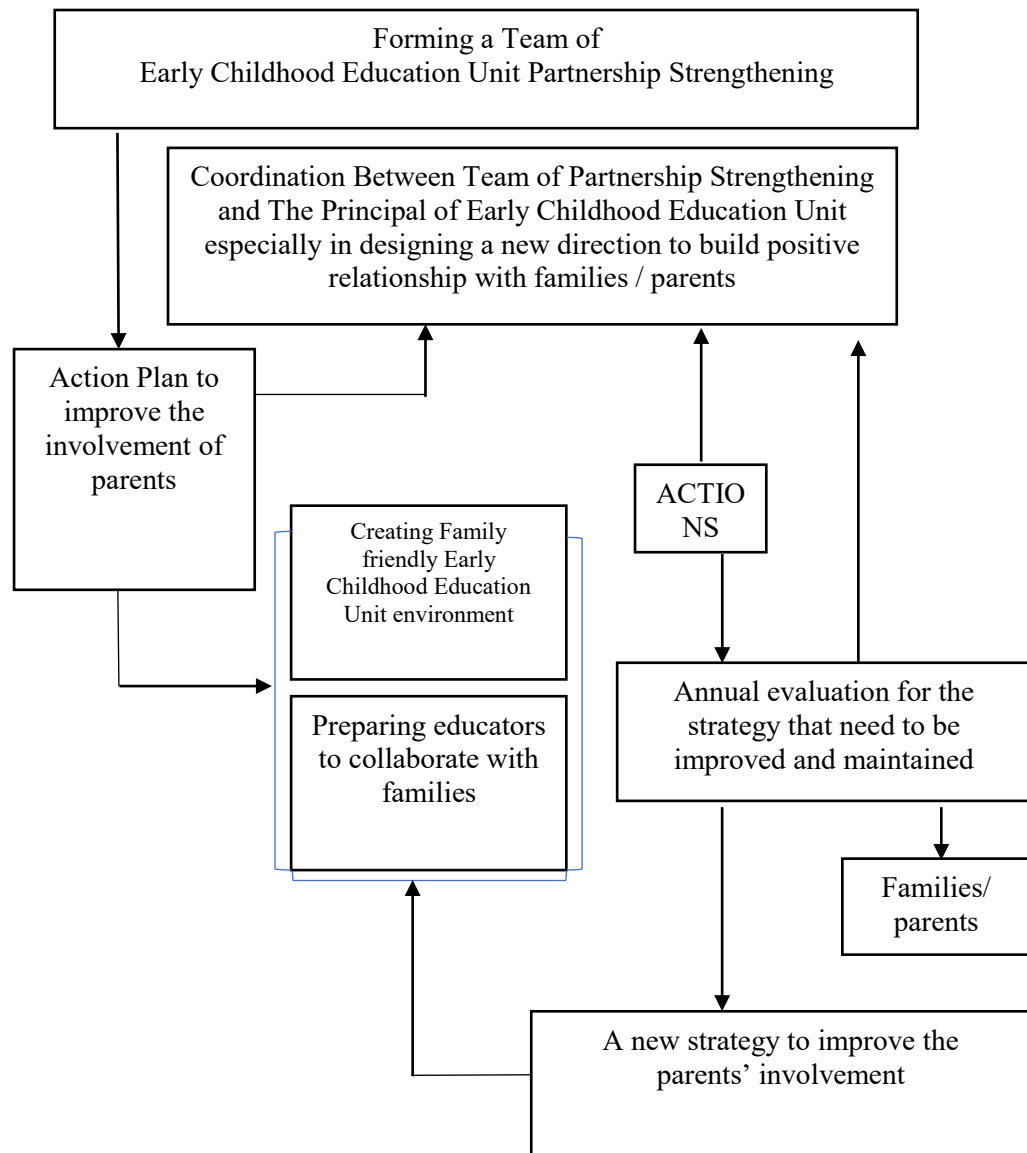
**Figure 1.** Design of Partnership Strategy to Support the Involvement of Families / parents in Early Childhood Education Unit Partnership

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The research findings showed that: First, the development of a strategy to support the involvement of parents in the Early Childhood Education Unit partnership is necessary because there are still some gaps between the ideal and real condition of partnership programs like the need to create family - friendly Early Childhood Education environment and the readiness of teachers to work with parents.

Second, the strategies to support the

involvement of parents in Early Childhood Education Unit partnership is packed in action programs and divided into two strategy clusters: (1) strategies to create a Family - friendly Early Childhood Education Unit environment; and (2) strategies to prepare teachers to work with families / parents. Each strategy cluster consists of some core strategies and is operationalized into action programs. The first cluster has four core strategies and 13 action programs, while the second cluster has two core strategies and seven action programs. Third, results of evaluation by experts showed that the prototype was in the very valid / very feasible category.

Also, the assessment performed by target users showed that the product is very practical.

The strategies formulated in this research and development followed a particular approach and can be adjusted with the condition of the Early Childhood Education Unit. The study results showed that the product was feasible to be applied (valid and practical). Related to that, the Early Childhood Education Unit principal should apply various strategies to improve the involvement of parents in the Early Childhood Education Unit partnership.

The implementation of strategies should follow some technical suggestions, including the Early Childhood Education Unit should systematically follow the flows formulated in the developed strategies. The selection of core strategies should be based on the condition of the Early Childhood Education Unit. Thus it is suggested to adopt proper strategies for challenges and barriers faced by the Early Childhood Education Unit; the Early Childhood Education Unit should not only focus on the action program listed in the core strategies. Yet, it should consider its appropriateness with the core strategy it belongs to; and the Early Childhood Education Unit should map and schedule the action programs and match them with the academic calendar to make it well organized.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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