

## PARENTAL ROLE AND PARTICIPATION IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION: A RECONSTRUCTION FROM THE ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Suyono

SDN Tembok Dukuh Surabaya; [psuyonosdntembokdkh@yahoo.co.id](mailto:psuyonosdntembokdkh@yahoo.co.id)

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### ABSTRACT

#### Abstract

*This study aims to reconstruct the role and participation of parents in children's education from the perspective of Islamic education through a literature review approach. The research draws upon a range of primary and secondary sources, including the Qur'an, Hadith, and contemporary scholarly works in the field of Islamic education. The findings indicate that, within Islam, parents are regarded as the primary murabbi (educators), entrusted with instilling the values of tawhid, noble character (akhlaq), and essential life skills from an early age. Parental participation is understood not only in terms of material support but also through emotional, spiritual, and intellectual involvement in the educational process, both at home and in collaboration with formal educational institutions. This reconstruction highlights the importance of effective communication, exemplary behaviour, and the consistent practice of Islamic values in daily life. The study recommends a model of parental involvement grounded in tarbiyah Islamiyah, which is contextually relevant to the challenges of the modern era and capable of nurturing a generation that is knowledgeable, ethical, and positively engaged in society.*

### INTRODUCTION

The family is the most fundamental social institution and serves as the foundation for the development of all social structures in societies around the world. As a universal human need, the family plays a central role in an individual's life. From a sociological perspective, the family is classified as a primary group, not only because of the direct interaction among its members, but also due to the intimacy and deep emotional bonds it fosters (Asrori, 2015; Handayani & Utami, 2020; Suyatno; Jumintono; Asih; Mardati; Wantini, 2019). In the context of education, the family serves as the first and foremost educational environment, where children receive initial guidance, value habituation, and character formation (Bahm, 2012; Jewitt, 2008). As children spend most of their time within the family, the quality of interaction and the education they receive in this environment significantly affects their overall development.

Parental involvement in children's education is also formally recognised as one of the key pillars in the success of School-Based Management (SBM). This

participation encompasses moral and material support, as well as active engagement in understanding and supporting educational policies at both governmental and school levels. Adequate understanding of these policies encourages parents to recognise their roles and responsibilities, thereby enabling them to contribute meaningfully to their children's educational success. This aligns with Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which asserts that education is a shared responsibility of families, communities, and the government, conducted throughout life and carried out in the home, school, and wider society.

By nature, parents are the first and primary educators of their children. They serve as role models whose behaviour is identified, internalised, and replicated by their children (Hu & Deng, 2017; Lubis, 2015; Said, Umachandran, & Don, 2018). The parent-child relationship inherently contains educational elements that shape the child's personality and emotional maturity. Therefore, the active participation of parents in their children's education both directly through daily interactions and indirectly by providing learning resources is a critical factor in the success of the educational process.

Universal social changes, including revolutions in technology, communication, education, and mass media, have had a significant impact on societal norms, behaviour, social relations, and institutions (Fadjar, 1999). Characteristics of modern society include the technologisation of life, a tendency toward functional social relations, information overload, and increasingly open systems. In this context, educational preferences have shifted towards mastering technological skills, developing functional capabilities, enhancing individual competencies, promoting information literacy, and reinforcing ethics and morality through religious education.

This article seeks to reconstruct the role and participation of parents in children's education from the perspective of Islamic education, placing religious values at the core of integrating modern skill development with character formation. Through literature review and critical analysis, this study aims to contribute conceptually to a model of parental involvement that is aligned with the needs of contemporary society, while simultaneously strengthening the position of Islamic education within a competitive global landscape.

Within this context, the study's conceptual framework is designed to explain the relationship between the dynamics of social and technological change, parental preferences in educational choice, Islamic educational values, and their impact on educational quality and learning outcomes. Rapid social transformations, including the digital revolution and globalisation of information, have prompted parents to adopt a more critical and selective stance when choosing educational pathways for their children. Such decisions are influenced not only by academic considerations and future career prospects, but also by the degree to which educational institutions align with the family's moral and spiritual values. Islamic educational values, in this regard, serve as a primary filter guiding parents to select education that prioritises not only functional and technological skills but also the cultivation of noble character (*akhlaq*).

Parental participation thus emerges as a key variable mediating the relationship between parental choice and children's educational outcomes. This involvement manifests in various forms, such as open family communication, awareness of educational policies, and active engagement with schools. Open communication within the family strengthens value transmission; understanding education policies enables parents to make strategic decisions aligned with their child's development; and constructive interaction with educational institutions helps ensure coherence between formal and non-formal learning environments. The synergy of these three aspects contributes to the quality of Islamic education that excels not only academically but also in moral and spiritual dimensions. Ultimately, strong Islamic education leads to the formation of learners who are ethical, globally competitive, and firmly grounded in Islamic principles.

#### **METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative approach using the **library research method** to analyze the role and participation of parents in children's education from the perspective of Islamic education. This method was chosen as it enables the researcher to examine, interpret, and synthesize various relevant literature sources, thereby identifying research gaps, building a theoretical foundation, and developing a comprehensive conceptual framework (Snyder, 2019). The data sources include both **primary and secondary literature**. Primary sources consist of the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic educational works such as those of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun. Secondary sources include indexed national and international journal articles, scholarly books, research reports from official institutions, and legal regulations, including Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. The selection of literature was carried out selectively, considering the credibility of the sources, recency of publication, and relevance to the research topic (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016).

Data collection was conducted through a **systematic search** using keywords such as "parental involvement," "parental choice of education," "Islamic education," and "tarbiyah Islamiyah." The search process was conducted across multiple databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, DOAJ, and Garuda, utilizing Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) to either broaden or narrow the search scope (Snyder, 2019). The collected data was then analyzed through three stages. First, the **literature selection stage**, which filtered publications that met the inclusion criteria. Second, **thematic coding**, which identified key themes such as parental roles in education, Islamic educational approaches, and the influence of social change on parental choice. Third, a **narrative synthesis** stage, which integrated various findings to produce a cohesive and comprehensive understanding while constructing a new conceptual model.

The validity of the study was maintained through **source triangulation** by comparing data from diverse literature to ensure the consistency of findings (Patton, 2015). Meanwhile, the reliability of the study was reinforced through detailed documentation of the entire literature search and selection process, ensuring the research could be replicated by other scholars. To uphold

transparency and traceability, the literature review process followed the guidelines of the **Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA)**, which provides a structured framework for conducting and reporting literature reviews (Page et al., 2021).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Parental involvement stands as a pivotal determinant in shaping children's academic and socio-emotional development. Rooted in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979), the family classified within the microsystem represents the child's immediate environment, where sustained and dynamic interactions lay the foundation for cognitive, behavioral, and emotional growth. Within this context, daily interactions such as guidance, value transmission, and emotional support significantly influence the child's personality and learning disposition (Brusa & Barilan, 2024; Chen, Yang, Wu, Lin, & Wang, 2024; Elledge, Smith, Kilpatrick, McClain, & Moore, 2019).

Parental participation refers to a multifaceted engagement in a child's educational journey, encompassing home-based support and school-related involvement. Epstein (2010) identified six typologies of parental engagement: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community. These forms collectively underscore that effective parental participation extends beyond material contributions and includes active emotional and social engagement, thereby fostering a motivational and structurally supportive learning environment.

Quantitatively, active parental involvement is evidenced through consistent attendance at parent-teacher conferences, support for extracurricular activities, and regular academic monitoring. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) argue that the degree of parental involvement is strongly correlated with parents' self-efficacy i.e., their belief in their own capacity to impact their child's education positively. This psychological belief not only propels engagement but also sustains it across varying academic contexts.

Empirical studies further corroborate the academic benefits of parental involvement. A seminal meta-analysis by Fan and Chen (2001) affirmed a robust positive association between parental involvement and academic achievement across education levels. Parental support constructs a learning-conducive home environment, instills discipline, and encourages responsibility factors essential to student success (Mohebbi, Mirnasab, & Wiener, 2016; Ulfah & Gustina, 2020).

From a developmental perspective, parental support also acts as "emotional scaffolding," a concept aligned with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. This refers to the emotionally nurturing framework provided by parents to assist children in managing academic challenges, building confidence, and acquiring problem-solving skills. Emotional scaffolding enhances resilience and enables children to navigate learning difficulties with greater adaptability.

Moreover, involvement in education contributes to the child's social competencies. As Lareau (2011) notes, children of highly engaged parents often display advanced communication skills, heightened empathy, and effective

collaboration abilities outcomes stemming from regular interactions that model and reinforce social norms, ethical conduct, and cultural expectations.

Parental routines, especially those centered around learning at home, serve as a “hidden curriculum” that cultivates time management, organizational skills, and learning discipline. These implicit lessons often have long-term benefits, equipping children with foundational habits necessary for academic perseverance and achievement.

Nevertheless, the extent of parental engagement is modulated by socioeconomic status, educational background, and cultural practices. Research by Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) highlights that parents with higher educational attainment are typically more involved in their child’s education due to increased awareness and confidence in supporting learning processes. Conversely, barriers such as time constraints, work obligations, and limited pedagogical knowledge can hinder participation among parents from lower socioeconomic strata (Tait, Voepel-Lewis, Munro, & Malviya, 2001).

From an Islamic perspective, the role of parents in the education of their children is not merely a social responsibility but a divinely mandated trust (amanah) with profound theological and moral dimensions. This duty is rooted in the Qur'anic injunction found in Surah At-Tahrim (66:6), which commands believers to “protect themselves and their families from a fire whose fuel is people and stones,” indicating that safeguarding the moral and spiritual well-being of one’s family is an essential act of worship. In this regard, parents are considered the child’s first and foremost educators (al-mu’allim al-awwal), tasked with instilling the principles of tawhid (monotheism), noble character (akhlaq), and proper manners (adab) as foundational elements of life.

The Qur'an presents education as a comprehensive (syamil) endeavor encompassing the development of the spiritual, intellectual, and physical dimensions of the human being. Al-Ghazali, in his seminal work *Ihya’ Ulumuddin*, emphasizes that a child’s education must aim to cultivate a balanced personality one that integrates knowledge ('ilm) and action ('amal). Accordingly, parental involvement in Islamic education extends beyond academic support and includes modeling rituals of worship, nurturing ethical conduct, and providing spiritual mentorship.

The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ further illuminate the critical influence of parents. The well-known hadith “Every child is born upon fitrah (natural disposition), and it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian” (Bukhari & Muslim) highlights the decisive role of the family environment in shaping the child’s identity and belief system. Thus, Islam assigns a dual role to parents: as murabbi (moral and spiritual nurturers) and as mu’allim (imparting knowledge). As murabbi, parents are to demonstrate values through *uswah hasanah* (exemplary behavior), while as mu’allim, they are responsible for providing beneficial knowledge ('ilm an-nafi’) and ensuring access to quality formal education.

Ibn Khaldun, in his *Muqaddimah*, advocates for an age-appropriate, staged approach to education, echoing the Islamic pedagogical principle of *tadarruj*

(gradualism). Parents are therefore responsible for guiding their children through these stages in alignment with their cognitive and moral development. In addition to instruction, Islamic education emphasizes the role of *muraqabah* (vigilant oversight). Parents must monitor their children's peer interactions, time management, and information consumption especially in today's digital age where unsupervised access to media can challenge Islamic ethical boundaries. This aligns with the concept of *hisbah*, the Islamic duty to promote good and prevent harm within one's family and community (Domi & Alazzam, 2020; Munawir, 2014; Sabarudin, Ayyubi, Rohmatulloh, Suryana, & Wijaya, 2024).

Ultimately, the Islamic perspective on parental roles in education is holistic and integrative, combining moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions. Parents are not merely facilitators of education but architects of a righteous civilization, tasked with raising generations grounded in ethical integrity, scholarly aptitude, and social responsibility. When undertaken with sincerity and consistency, this sacred duty lays the foundation for success in both this life and the hereafter.

## DISCUSSION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of modern education, the paradigm of parental choice has undergone significant transformation, driven largely by social change and technological advancement. With the proliferation of digital platforms and information accessibility, parents are now more informed and analytical in evaluating educational options for their children. This phenomenon, which Gorard (2018) terms "informed parental choice," reflects a shift toward decision-making based on data and comparative analysis ranging from curriculum content and teaching methods to school facilities and performance metrics.

However, parental choice is not solely shaped by rational or objective factors. It is equally influenced by family ideologies, cultural values, and religious commitments. For many Muslim families, educational decisions are steered by the imperative to integrate academic excellence with Islamic values. This often leads to a preference for schools or *madrasahs* that combine general education with spiritual development, reflecting a holistic view of success in both worldly and hereafter dimensions (Valentic, Simetin, Mayer, Simetin, & Pavic, 2024; Zhang, Sun, Zhang, Zhang, & Wang, 2025).

Socioeconomic status also plays a decisive role in shaping access to educational choices. Research by Choy et al. (2018) reveals that families with greater economic resources are more likely to access high-quality private schools, while lower-income families may be constrained to more affordable public options. This disparity in access contributes to the stratification of educational opportunities and perpetuates systemic inequalities.

The rise of school choice as a competitive dynamic among educational institutions has ushered in what some scholars describe as the marketization of education. Schools, particularly in urban and multicultural contexts, increasingly adopt market strategies to attract students emphasizing innovation,

performance, and branding. While this competition can stimulate improvements in quality, it also risks excluding marginalized groups and deepening inequities in educational access.

In pluralistic societies, parental choice is often motivated by considerations of identity preservation and cultural continuity. Many parents prefer educational institutions that reflect their linguistic, cultural, or religious backgrounds, thereby reinforcing a sense of belonging and value alignment for their children. Conversely, some parents opt for culturally diverse schools to prepare their children for inclusive, globalized environments.

Moreover, modern parents increasingly factor in long-term institutional reputation, alumni success, and networking opportunities when selecting schools. This reflects a forward-looking orientation, where educational institutions are evaluated not just by their immediate outputs but also by their potential to secure future socioeconomic advantages for students.

In Indonesia, parental choice faces the unique challenge of uneven quality across state schools, private institutions, and Islamic madrasahs. Despite the moral and religious strengths of madrasahs, they are often perceived as second-tier institutions (Fadjar, 1999), primarily due to resource limitations and gaps in curriculum innovation and teacher qualifications. To remain competitive, Islamic educational institutions must undergo comprehensive reform strengthening infrastructure, enhancing pedagogy, and aligning with contemporary educational standards (Brusa & Barilan, 2024).

Islamic education in the 21st century thus stands at a critical juncture, confronted by the dual pressures of preserving religious integrity and embracing global relevance. One of the most pressing challenges is the widespread perception that Islamic schools lag behind in scientific and technological integration. Parents' active participation can play a transformative role in dispelling this stigma. Through collaborative engagement with schools, parents can contribute to curriculum reform, promote teacher development, and advocate for institutional excellence.

Digital technology presents both opportunities and risks. While it enables parents to engage more closely with their children's learning processes, it also exposes young learners to content and ideologies that may conflict with Islamic values. In this context, parental oversight aligned with the Islamic principle of *hisbah* (promoting good and preventing harm) is crucial in guiding children's digital literacy and media consumption.

Globalization further complicates the educational landscape, exposing children to diverse and sometimes conflicting cultural norms. Active parental involvement becomes essential in transmitting Islamic ethics, instilling critical thinking, and fostering spiritual resilience. This requires not only strong religious literacy among parents but also the ability to adapt Islamic teachings to contemporary challenges through dialogue and modeling.

Despite these challenges, Islamic education possesses inherent strengths that are increasingly valued in character education discourses. Core values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and discipline provide a moral compass in

an era often marked by relativism and ethical ambiguity. When reinforced at home, these values can align with school programs to produce ethically grounded and socially responsible graduates.

Strategic parent-school partnerships also hold the potential to catalyze curricular innovation. For instance, integrating Islamic epistemology with STEM education can position Islamic schools as competitive yet value-oriented institutions. Such initiatives resonate with the aspirations of modern Muslim families who seek education that is both intellectually rigorous and spiritually enriching.

Furthermore, parental engagement can expand school networks with external stakeholders, including businesses, research institutions, and faith-based organizations. These networks can enrich student learning through internships, skill development programs, and community-based projects that are grounded in Islamic ethical frameworks.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study affirms that parental roles and active involvement in children's education significantly influence the effectiveness of the learning process academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. Within the framework of Islamic education, parental engagement is not merely a voluntary option but a divine trust (*amanah*) imbued with moral and religious responsibility. Parents are positioned as both *murabbi* (spiritual and moral nurturers) and *mu'allim* (primary educators), consistent with the holistic vision of Islamic pedagogy, which encompasses character formation, faith reinforcement, and life skill development.

The concept of *parental choice of education* in contemporary society illustrates a growing critical consciousness among parents. They are increasingly selective, assessing schools based on academic achievement, character development, curriculum relevance, and religious integration. Although Islamic educational institutions, particularly *madrasahs*, still grapple with the stigma of being "second-tier" alternatives, opportunities remain wide open to enhance their competitiveness through curriculum innovation, teacher development, and stronger collaboration with parents.

Globalization, technological advancement, and shifting social values pose significant challenges that demand Islamic education to be both adaptive and responsive. In this context, parental involvement becomes a strategic factor capable of converting challenges into opportunities. Through synergistic and sustained participation, parents can reinforce the position of Islamic education amid global competition while ensuring their children receive an education that aligns both with worldly competencies and spiritual obligations.

Therefore, this study recommends the development of a partnership model between families and Islamic educational institutions, grounded in Qur'anic values, high educational literacy, and parenting strategies that meet 21st-century demands. Such a model aims to cultivate Muslim generations who are knowledgeable, ethical, and globally competitive positioning Islamic

education not merely as an alternative, but as a primary choice in building an enlightened civilization.

Based on the research findings, several practical recommendations are proposed to strengthen the synergy between parents, Islamic schools, and policymakers. For parents, the dual role as *murabbi* and *mu'allim* must be actively realized through moral example, open communication, and consistent religious practice at home. This ensures the values taught in school are reinforced within the family environment. Moreover, parents must enhance their educational literacy by staying informed about school choices, understanding curricula and pedagogy, and objectively evaluating school quality. The use of digital technologies also requires parental supervision, ensuring they are used to support learning and do not conflict with Islamic teachings, while simultaneously equipping children with critical digital literacy.

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