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Analysis of Early Childhood Education Policy Based on Parental Participation in Supporting Child Development

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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement in early childhood education (ECE) is a crucial factor in supporting holistic child development, yet its implementation varies across contexts and policy frameworks. This study aims to analyze ece policies that emphasize parental involvement, including its forms, influencing factors, engagement strategies, and impacts on child development. This research employs a systematic literature review (SLR) approach based on prisma guidelines, using 22 selected journal articles as data sources. Data were analyzed through thematic synthesis to identify patterns, relationships, and variations across studies. The results show that effective ece policies promote parental involvement through structured communication, school-family partnerships, parenting programs, and home-based learning support. Parental involvement is found to significantly contribute to children's cognitive, social-emotional, and academic development. However, the level of participation is influenced by factors such as parents' educational background, socio-economic conditions, and awareness of the importance of ece. The study also identifies that strategies based on context-sensitive and sustainable approaches are more effective in enhancing parental engagement. In conclusion, ece policies that integrate structured and sustainable parental involvement play a significant role in improving educational quality and child development outcomes. Therefore, future policies should emphasize context-based and evidence-driven approaches to strengthen parental participation.

1. Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) serves as a critical foundation for child development, as it occurs during the *golden age*, a period that significantly determines children's cognitive, social-emotional, and character development in the future. In this context, parental involvement, as the child's primary and earliest environment, becomes a crucial factor that cannot be separated from educational

success. The Indonesian government has also emphasized the importance of parental engagement through policies such as the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 30 of 2017, which promotes partnerships among educational institutions, families, and communities.

Along with the evolution of educational paradigms, the traditional school-centered approach has shifted toward a more collaborative model involving schools, families, and communities, commonly referred to as partnership-based education. Within this framework, parents are no longer positioned as external actors but as strategic partners in the educational process. Numerous studies have demonstrated that parental involvement significantly influences the success of early childhood education (Afia & Malik, 2024; Roy Chowdhury, 2025; Zannatunnisya et al., 2024). Empirical evidence indicates that parental participation contributes to improvements in children's cognitive development, social-emotional skills, and learning readiness. Wardah and Anggraeni (Wardah & Anggraeni, 2025) emphasize that effective communication between schools and parents significantly enhances parental involvement. This finding is supported by Amalia et al. (2024), who show that collaboration between ECE institutions and parents contributes to achieving early childhood education standards more effectively.

However, real-world conditions reveal that the level of parental participation remains uneven. Several studies indicate that parental involvement is influenced by various factors, including educational background, economic conditions, and awareness of the importance of early childhood education (Karani et al., 2022; Kracht et al., 2023; I. P. Sari et al., 2023; Webster, 2022). In certain contexts, such as rural areas, parental participation tends to be limited and passive, resulting in less optimal support for children's learning processes (Imran et al., 2025; Mulia & Kurniati, 2023; Saputra & Hafidz, 2025)

On the other hand, various efforts have been undertaken to enhance parental involvement, including parenting programs, digital communication strategies, and the development of school family partnerships (Masrukhin et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the implementation of these initiatives still faces several challenges, particularly in terms of consistency, policy support, and alignment with community socio cultural conditions. This indicates that parental involvement in ECE remains a complex issue requiring a more comprehensive and evidence-based approach. Although numerous studies have examined parental involvement in early childhood education, most of them remain partial and focus on specific aspects, such as forms of participation or their impact on child development. Studies that integrate these aspects, including influencing factors, engagement strategies, and policy implications, are still limited. Therefore, a comprehensive review is needed to synthesize existing research findings in order to develop a more holistic understanding of parental involvement in ECE.

Based on this background, this study aims to comprehensively analyze early childhood education policies based on parental involvement using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. Specifically, this study examines the forms of parental participation, factors influencing involvement, effective engagement

strategies, and their impact on child development. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable ECE policies and practices.

2. Methodology

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesize previous research findings related to early childhood education (ECE) policies and parental involvement in supporting child development. The SLR approach was selected because it provides a systematic, transparent, and replicable framework for reviewing scientific literature, enabling the identification of forms of parental involvement, influencing factors, implementation strategies, and their impact on child development (Karani et al., 2022; Kracht et al., 2023). The SLR process in this study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines, which emphasize transparency in the stages of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and synthesis of scientific articles (Zare Sakhvidi et al., 2023). Based on this process, a total of 22 articles met the inclusion criteria and were selected for further analysis.

The research procedures are as follows:

1. Identification Stage

The literature search was conducted through academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, Garuda, and national journal portals indexed by SINTA. The search process utilized combinations of keywords with Boolean operators, such as “early childhood education policy,” “parental involvement in ECE,” “child development,” and “early childhood education strategies.” This stage aimed to broadly capture relevant literature aligned with the research focus (Dalgaard et al., 2022). The initial search yielded 120 potentially relevant articles.

2. Screening Stage

At this stage, articles were screened based on their titles and abstracts to assess their relevance to the research focus. The initial inclusion criteria were:

1. Articles addressing ECE policies or parental involvement in early childhood education,
2. Articles published in scientific journals, and
3. Articles published between 2018 and 2025.

Duplicate, irrelevant, or contextually inappropriate articles were excluded at this stage (Karani et al., 2022). As a result, 60 articles were excluded, leaving 60 articles for further analysis.

3. Eligibility Stage

Articles that passed the screening stage were then subjected to a full-text review to ensure their eligibility based on the research criteria. The eligibility assessment included:

1. Direct relevance to ECE policy and parental involvement,
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2. Clarity of research objectives and methodology,
3. Availability of empirical data or analyzable findings, and
4. Publication in reputable journals (minimum SINTA 2 or equivalent) (Kracht et al., 2023). At this stage, 48 articles were excluded, resulting in 22 articles that met all eligibility criteria.

4. Inclusion Stage

A total of 22 articles that met all inclusion criteria were selected as the primary data sources for this study. These articles were analyzed in depth through data extraction, thematic coding, thematic synthesis, and quality appraisal to generate systematic and scientifically reliable findings. The detailed article selection process is presented in Figure 1

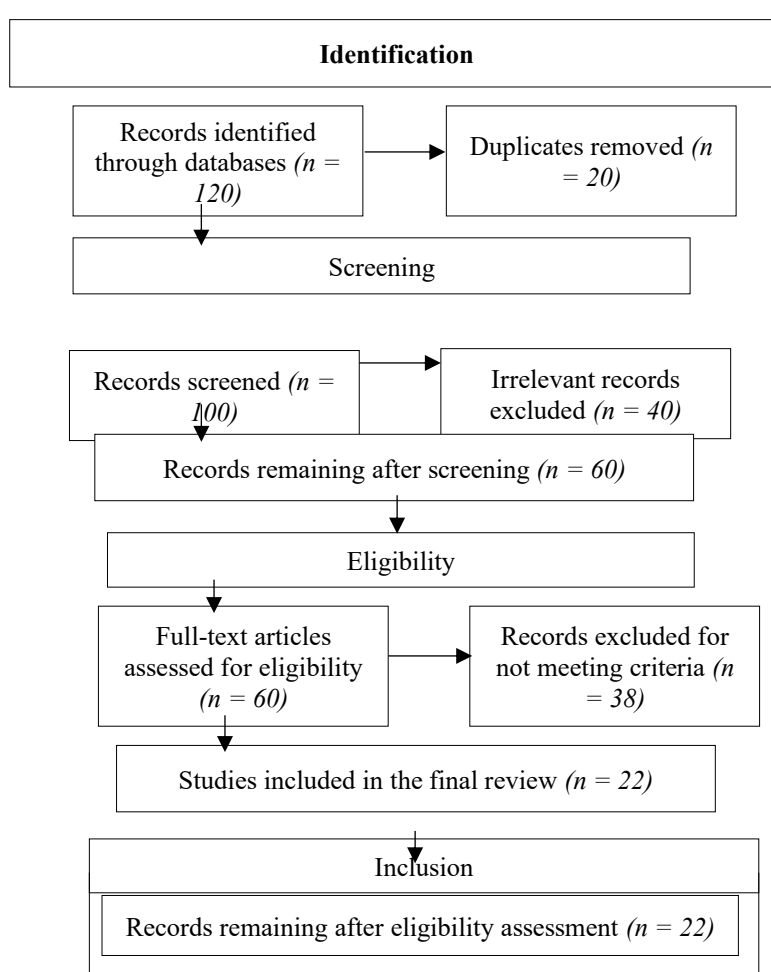


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of Article Selection

Data Extraction Technique

Data Extraction was conducted using a structured data extraction form developed in microsoft excel to ensure consistency, traceability, and replicability of the review process. Each selected article was systematically coded into a data matrix containing the following variables:

- (1) Author(s) and year of publication,
- (2) Country or research context,
- (3) Research objectives,
- (4) Study design and methodology (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method),
- (5) Sample characteristics,
- (6) Type of parental involvement examined,
- (7) Policy or program focus,
- (8) Key findings, and
- (9) Limitations of the study.

To enhance reliability, the data extraction process was conducted iteratively, where the researcher re-examined selected articles to ensure accuracy and consistency of the extracted information. This process aimed to facilitate comparison across studies and to identify patterns of findings in a structured manner (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

Thematic Coding and Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was carried out using a thematic synthesis approach, which enables the integration of findings from multiple studies into broader analytical themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008). The analysis process consisted of the following stages:

1. Data Familiarization

At this stage, the researcher conducted an in-depth reading of all selected articles to understand the context, methodological approaches, and key findings of each study. Initial notes were also taken to identify recurring issues related to parental involvement and early childhood education (ECE) policies.

2. Open Coding

Open coding was conducted by identifying meaningful units (meaning units) from each article, including phrases, sentences, or paragraphs related to the research focus. Each unit was assigned initial codes representing key ideas. The coding process was both inductive and deductive, meaning that codes emerged from the data while also being guided by the conceptual framework of the study.

3. Axial Coding

In this stage, related codes were grouped into categories by identifying relationships between codes. This process helped organize the data into more structured conceptual groupings such as types of involvement, enabling factors, and policy interventions.

4. Theme Development

Codes with similar meanings were grouped into broader themes. The main themes identified in this study include:

1. Forms of parental involvement,
 2. Factors influencing participation,
 3. Strategies for parental engagement in ECE policy, and
 4. Impacts on child development.
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5. Thematic Synthesis

The final stage involved synthesizing themes into an analytical narrative using a thematic synthesis approach, where findings from different studies were compared, contrasted, and integrated to generate higher-level interpretations. This synthesis not only summarizes the results of previous studies but also generates conceptual interpretations regarding the role of ECE policies in promoting parental involvement.

Quality Appraisal

To ensure the validity and credibility of the data sources, this study conducted a quality appraisal of the selected articles as a critical component of the systematic literature review process. Quality appraisal was conducted using a structured quality assessment checklist adapted from systematic review guidelines proposed (Kitchenham, B., & Charters, 2007). The assessment criteria included:

1. Clarity of research objectives,
2. Appropriateness of research design and methods,
3. Clarity of data collection and analysis procedures,
4. Validity and reliability of findings, and
5. Relevance to the research focus.

Each criterion was scored using a three-point scale (1 = low quality, 2 = moderate quality, 3 = high quality), allowing a maximum score of 15 for each article. Articles with scores below a predetermined threshold were either excluded or given less weight in the synthesis process.

To minimize subjectivity, the quality assessment was conducted systematically by re-reviewing each article based on the same criteria, ensuring consistency in evaluation. This procedure aimed to enhance the reliability of the review findings and to ensure that the conclusions were based on credible, valid, and scientifically sound literature. By employing a PRISMA-based SLR framework, supported by systematic data extraction, explicit thematic coding procedures, and rigorous quality assessment using a structured checklist, this study is expected to produce a comprehensive, transparent, and replicable review. Furthermore, it provides a strong contribution to the development of early childhood education policies that emphasize parental involvement.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the systematic literature review of 22 articles that met the inclusion criteria indicate that studies on early childhood education (ECE) policies based on parental involvement demonstrate diverse focuses, both in terms of methodological approaches and research contexts. In general, the analyzed articles are dominated by qualitative approaches, although quantitative, mixed-methods, and research and development (R&D) studies are also present, providing empirical support for the findings. However, the findings should not be interpreted as uniformly consistent, as the methodological characteristics of the studies vary significantly. Qualitative studies tend to provide contextual and in-depth explanations of parental

involvement processes, while quantitative studies offer measurable evidence of the relationship between variables, particularly regarding child development outcomes. This difference in approach influences the strength and generalizability of the findings. The synthesis of findings, as presented in Table 1, shows that parental involvement in early childhood education is not only influenced by individual factors but also by structural and contextual factors, such as educational policies, socio-economic conditions, and the characteristics of the learning environment. In addition, variations across studies are evident in terms of forms of participation, engagement strategies, and their impacts on child development.

In addition, studies with higher methodological rigor, particularly quantitative and mixed-methods research, generally provide stronger evidence of causal or correlational relationships, whereas qualitative studies tend to emphasize interpretive insights without statistical validation. Despite the general consistency of findings, several inconsistencies and research gaps were identified across the studies. First, while most studies report positive effects of parental involvement, only a limited number of quantitative studies provide robust statistical evidence to support these claims. Second, there is a lack of longitudinal studies examining the sustainability of parental involvement impacts over time. Third, many studies focus on school-level interventions without exploring the role of broader policy implementation at regional or national levels. Moreover, there is an imbalance in research contexts, as most studies are conducted in urban or semi-urban settings, while rural and marginalized contexts remain underexplored. This limits the generalizability of findings and suggests the need for more context-sensitive research. To obtain a more systematic understanding, the results are organized into four main themes:

1. Forms of parental involvement,
2. Factors influencing participation,
3. Strategies for parental engagement, and
4. The impact of parental involvement on child development.

Each theme is analyzed integratively by considering differences in methodological approaches, research contexts, and the consistency of findings across studies. To provide a clearer overview of the studies included in this review, the key characteristics and main findings of each selected article are systematically summarized in Table 1. This table serves as the basis for identifying patterns, similarities, and variations across studies, which are further analyzed in the subsequent sections

Table 1. Characteristics and Synthesis of the Reviewed Studies

No	Author (s) & Year	Research Title	Method	Research Findings
1	Wardah & Anggraeni (2025)	Enhancing Parental Participation through School Communication in ECE	Qualitative	The study shows that effective communication between schools and parents through regular meetings, digital media, and child development reports is key to increasing parental participation. This improves parents' understanding of children's learning needs and

No	Author (s) & Year	Research Title	Method	Research Findings
				encourages active involvement at home, leading to improvements in cognitive, socio emotional development, and discipline.
2	Amalia et al. (2024)	Collaboration between ECE Institutions and Parents in Achieving Early Childhood Education Standards	Qualitative	The findings indicate that collaboration through parenting programs, intensive communication, and school involvement supports child development. Children with parental support demonstrate more optimal language, social, and cognitive development.
3	Widaningtyas (2022)	Case Study of Parental Involvement in PAUD Program in TK IPPA Nurul Haq	Qualitative	Parental involvement increases children's motivation and academic achievement. Participation in school activities also strengthens emotional bonds, positively affecting social development.
4	Christy et al. (2023)	Implementation of Partnership Programs between ECE Institutions and Families	Qualitative	Partnership programs create a consistent learning environment between home and school through two way communication, joint activities, and developmental monitoring. This enhances children's character, including responsibility, independence, and social skills.
5	Fadila et al. (2025)	Parents' Perceptions of the Role of ECE in Children's Socio Emotional Development	Quantitative	Positive parental perceptions significantly influence their involvement. Active parents contribute to improved socio emotional skills such as empathy, cooperation, and self regulation.
6	Ristama et al. (2023)	Analysis of ECE Participation Rates Based on Parental Factors	Quantitative	Parental education, economic status, and awareness significantly influence participation rates. Higher educational backgrounds increase awareness and improve children's development outcomes.
7	Anita & Priyanti (2023)	Development of a Parental Partnership Guidebook toward Quality ECE	R&D	The study produced a guidebook that effectively increases parental involvement. It helps schools design structured collaborative programs, improving service quality and child development.
8	Melati, IyanSofyan (2024)	Parental Involvement in ECE School Program Development	Qualitative	Involving parents in program planning increases program relevance to children's needs and strengthens parental responsibility and engagement.
9	Fatimah, Fauzi, & Ganiadi (2025)	Parental Participation in Early	Qualitative	Parental participation includes active communication and home learning support, creating continuity between school and home, improving socio

No	Author (s) & Year	Research Title	Method	Research Findings
		Childhood Education		emotional development and learning readiness.
10	Mulia & Kurniati (2023)	Parental Participation in Rural ECE	Qualitative	Parental participation in rural areas remains passive and limited due to lack of awareness, resulting in suboptimal child stimulation at home.
11	Yani, Darmiany, & Handika (2025)	Parents and Teachers in Developing Disciplined Character in Early Childhood	Mixed Method	Collaboration enhances children's character, especially discipline and responsibility, and helps internalize positive behaviors.
12	Luthfie Noor Fithriasari (2023)	The Role of Parents in Early Childhood Education in the Hadith of the Prophet	Qualitative	Parents as primary educators significantly influence children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, as well as motivation and social interaction skills.
13	Arum (2025)	Parental Involvement in ECE Learning Activities	Qualitative	Parental involvement improves learning motivation, emotional bonding, and positive character traits such as confidence, independence, and responsibility.
14	Estri, Arimbi Lidya, Herlin (2025)	Empowering Teachers and Parents of Early Childhood Children on Disaster Preparedness for Facing Mount Merapi Eruptions at SPS Bina Yoga Pakem	Qualitative	Training activities improved teachers' and parents' knowledge and skills in disaster preparedness for Mount Merapi eruptions.
15	Rachma et al. (2025)	The Effect of Parental Participation on Children's Achievement	Qualitative	Parental involvement directly affects academic performance, especially literacy and numeracy, and improves social skills.
16	Sari & Rasyidah (2020)	The Role of Parents in Early Childhood Independence	Qualitative	Active parental roles foster independence, decision making skills, responsibility, and self confidence.
17	Millah (2025)	The Impact of Parental Involvement on Children's Education	Quantitative	Parental involvement significantly influences academic and social development through emotional support and learning facilities.
18	Awali (2025)	Strategies to Improve Parental Participation in Education	Qualitative	Strategies such as school partnerships, active communication, and evaluation involvement effectively increase parental awareness and responsibility.

No	Author (s) & Year	Research Title	Method	Research Findings
19	Piyanti & Husin (2021)	Parental Involvement in Playgroup Education	Qualitative	Parental involvement improves school readiness and social adaptation skills.
20	Mutakim et al (2025)	The Role of Parents in Teaching to Enhance Early Childhood Learning Experiences	Qualitative	The program strengthens collaboration and communication between teachers and parents, contributing positively to children's holistic development.
21	Alani & Mashurdi (2024)	Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education	Qualitative	Involvement is influenced by socio economic factors; higher education and income lead to greater participation.
22	Sitorus (2024)	Family Based Approach in ECE Institutions	Qualitative	A family based approach enhances holistic learning quality and balances cognitive, social, and emotional development

Table 1 presents a summary of the characteristics and key findings of each study analyzed. Based on this table, general patterns and variations in the findings can be identified, which are further discussed in the following subsections.

Forms of Parental Involvement

Based on the synthesis of the reviewed articles, parental involvement in early childhood education demonstrates relatively consistent patterns, although variations exist in the level and intensity of engagement. Most studies, particularly those employing qualitative approaches, describe parental involvement in three main forms: participation in school activities, active communication with teachers, and support for children's learning at home (Amalia et al., 2025; R. A. Sari et al., 2024; Wardah & Anggraeni, 2025). Based on thematic coding, three dominant forms of parental involvement were identified: (1) school-based participation, (2) home-based learning support, and (3) communication with teachers.

Qualitative studies predominantly emphasize that communication between parents and schools is the most fundamental and influential form of involvement. This communication is carried out through regular meetings, the use of digital media, and periodic reports on children's development (Christy et al., 2023). These findings indicate that communication functions not only as a means of information exchange but also as a mechanism that enhances parents' understanding and awareness of their children's learning needs, thereby encouraging more active engagement in the educational process. However, this claim is primarily derived from qualitative evidence, which limits its generalizability. In contrast, quantitative studies tend to emphasize measurable outcomes, such as improvements in children's cognitive and social-emotional development, rather than exploring the process of involvement itself.

In addition, parental involvement in school-related activities, such as parenting classes, evaluation meetings, and school–family collaborative programs, also represents an important form of participation. Studies show that involvement in these activities not only improves parents’ understanding of child development but also strengthens the relationship between schools and families as partners in education (Amalia et al., 2025; Widaningtyas, 2022). In this context, parental involvement evolves from passive participation into active engagement that supports the continuity of children’s learning processes. Furthermore, the synthesis presented in Table 1 indicates that quantitative studies reinforce these findings by demonstrating a significant relationship between the level of parental involvement and children’s development, particularly in social-emotional and cognitive domains (Fadila et al., 2025; Millah, 2025). This highlights that parental involvement is not only a normative expectation but also has measurable empirical impacts on children’s developmental outcomes.

Nevertheless, some studies report lower levels of parental involvement, particularly in rural contexts, indicating an inconsistency in participation levels across different settings. This suggests that parental involvement is not a universal phenomenon but is highly context-dependent. However, not all studies report similar levels of parental involvement. Research conducted in rural contexts indicates that parental participation tends to be limited and passive, often influenced by limited understanding and restricted access to educational information (Mulia & Kurniati, 2023). In such contexts, parental involvement is frequently confined to sending children to school without being accompanied by active support for learning at home or meaningful communication with teachers. These variations suggest that parental involvement is not a universal phenomenon but is highly influenced by contextual conditions, such as educational background, socio-economic status, and environmental and policy support. Therefore, parental involvement in early childhood education should be understood as a dynamic and context dependent practice shaped by the interaction between individual factors and the broader social environment

Factors Influencing Parental Involvement

Based on the synthesis of findings, parental involvement in early childhood education is influenced by multiple factors that are multidimensional in nature. These factors can be broadly categorized into internal factors, external factors, and educational policy support. This indicates that parental involvement is not determined by a single factor, but rather emerges from the interaction of various variables within specific contexts. However, the relative influence of these factors varies across studies depending on their methodological approach. Qualitative studies often emphasize internal factors such as motivation and awareness, while quantitative studies highlight external variables such as socio-economic status as statistically significant predictors. Internal factors, such as parents’ motivation, awareness, and understanding of the importance of early childhood education, serve as primary drivers of their involvement. Most studies indicate that parents with higher levels of awareness and understanding tend to be more actively engaged in supporting their children’s learning, both at home and at school (Wardah &

Anggraeni, 2025; Widaningtyas, 2022; Amalia et al., 2024). In addition, parents' educational background plays a significant role in shaping participation patterns, as those with higher levels of education generally demonstrate a better capacity to understand children's learning needs and the importance of their involvement in education (Ristama et al., 2023; Alani & Mashurdi, 2024). On the other hand, external factors, including socio-economic conditions, social environment, and institutional support from educational institutions, also significantly influence parental participation. Several studies reveal that economic constraints may limit parents' ability to engage, particularly in terms of time availability, access to learning resources, and exposure to educational information (Mulia & Kurniati, 2023; Millah, 2025). Furthermore, the social environment and support from schools play a crucial role in shaping participation, where effective communication and strong collaboration between teachers and parents can significantly enhance parental involvement (Yani et al., 2025; Sitorus, 2024).

Moreover, early childhood education policies play a strategic role in promoting parental involvement. Some studies indicate that policies supporting school–family partnerships, such as parenting programs, educational workshops, and the provision of guidance for parents, can enhance parental engagement in a more structured and sustainable manner (Christy et al., 2023; Anita & Priyanti, 2023). In addition, policies that improve access to information and provide flexibility in educational activities have also been shown to encourage broader parental participation (Rachma et al., 2025; Yulianti & Susanto, 2019). However, only a limited number of studies empirically evaluate policy effectiveness, indicating a gap between policy design and evidence-based policy impact assessment.

Overall, the findings indicate that parental involvement in early childhood education is the result of interactions among internal factors, external conditions, and policy support. Internal factors act as primary drivers, external factors shape enabling or constraining conditions, and educational policies function as facilitators that bridge these elements through partnership programs, educational services, and systematic support for parental engagement. Therefore, efforts to enhance parental involvement require an integrated and context-sensitive approach that considers social, economic, and institutional characteristics comprehensively.

Strategies for Parental Engagement

Based on the synthesis of findings, strategies for promoting parental involvement in early childhood education demonstrate diverse and evolving approaches, shaped by the needs and contexts of individual ECE institutions. In general, the strategies identified across studies can be categorized into three main approaches: strengthening communication between schools and parents, developing school–family partnership programs, and providing educational services that are responsive to the needs of both parents and children. Based on cross-study comparison, strategies can be classified into structural strategies (policy-driven programs), interactional strategies (communication-based approaches), and adaptive strategies (context-specific interventions). Most qualitative studies indicate that effective and sustained communication between teachers and parents is the most fundamental

strategy for enhancing parental involvement. This communication includes regular meetings, the use of digital media, and periodic reporting of children's developmental progress (Wardah & Anggraeni, 2025; Estri, Arimbi Lidya, Herlin). Structured communication serves not only as a channel for information exchange but also as a mechanism for building trust, increasing parental awareness, and fostering emotional engagement in the educational process. However, there is limited quantitative evidence measuring the effectiveness of these strategies, which limits the ability to determine which strategy is most impactful.

In addition, parental engagement is widely facilitated through partnership-based programs between schools and families. These programs include parenting activities, educational workshops, and parental involvement in school events as well as educational planning (Amalia et al., 2024; Awali, 2025). The synthesis indicates that such partnership-based approaches help create alignment between learning environments at home and at school, thereby supporting children's development more effectively. In this context, parents are not merely supporters but active partners in the educational process. On the other hand, several studies emphasize the importance of adaptive and context-sensitive strategies, particularly in addressing socio-economic constraints and diverse community characteristics. In certain contexts, parental engagement strategies need to be tailored to local conditions, for example through community-based approaches or gradual educational interventions for parents with lower levels of education (Mulia & Kurniati, 2023). This suggests that the effectiveness of engagement strategies largely depends on their alignment with the needs and social realities of the community.

Furthermore, educational policy plays a critical role in determining the success of parental engagement strategies. Studies show that strategies supported by clear, structured, and sustainable policies tend to be more effective than those that are sporadic or unplanned (Christy et al., 2023; Hartati et al., 2023; Anita & Priyanti, 2023). Policies that provide operational guidelines, parental training, and institutional support enable schools to implement engagement strategies in a more systematic manner. Nevertheless, policy implementation is rarely evaluated systematically, and there is a lack of comparative studies analyzing different policy models across regions or countries. This represents a significant research gap. However, variations in the effectiveness of these strategies are evident across studies. In some contexts, formal strategies such as parenting programs and workshops yield significant results, while in others, informal approaches based on personal relationships between teachers and parents are equally effective, particularly in building trust and emotional connection. These differences indicate that no single strategy can be universally applied. Overall, the findings suggest that parental engagement strategies in early childhood education should be designed to be flexible, context-sensitive, and sustainable, taking into account social, economic, and policy-related conditions. Therefore, the success of parental involvement is determined not only by the type of program implemented but also by the extent to which the strategies align with community needs and are supported by an enabling policy framework.

Impact on Child Development

Based on the synthesis of findings, parental involvement in early childhood education has a significant impact on various aspects of child development, including cognitive, social, emotional, and school readiness dimensions. Overall, the analysis indicates that parental involvement is a key factor contributing to the holistic optimization of children's development. However, the strength of this claim varies depending on the type of evidence. Quantitative studies provide stronger support through statistical analysis, while qualitative studies offer contextual explanations without measuring effect size. Most qualitative studies show that parental involvement in educational activities, both at school and at home, creates a consistent learning environment that supports children's development. This involvement not only strengthens the emotional relationship between parents and children but also enhances learning motivation and social interaction skills (Christy et al., 2023; Septiani et al., 2025; Supriani, 2023). Children who receive active parental support tend to demonstrate more adaptive behaviors, such as independence, responsibility, and the ability to cooperate within their social environment.

In contrast, some studies indicate that the impact of parental involvement is conditional, depending on the quality, consistency, and context of involvement. This suggests that not all forms of involvement lead to optimal outcomes. Meanwhile, quantitative studies reinforce these findings by demonstrating a significant relationship between the level of parental involvement and children's developmental outcomes, particularly in cognitive and academic domains (Millah, 2025; Rachma et al., 2025). Children with higher levels of parental involvement tend to have better literacy and numeracy skills, as well as greater readiness to transition into formal primary education.

Beyond cognitive and academic aspects, several studies also highlight the impact of parental involvement on children's social-emotional development, including emotional regulation, empathy, and communication skills (Fadila et al., 2025; Amalia et al., 2024). This indicates that the role of parents extends beyond academic support and contributes significantly to character building and personality development from an early age. However, variations in impact are evident depending on the level and quality of parental involvement. Studies indicate that active, consistent, and well-directed involvement produces more significant outcomes compared to limited or sporadic participation. In certain contexts, such as families with limited socio-economic resources or lower educational backgrounds, the impact of parental involvement tends to be less optimal (Mulia & Kurniati, 2023). This suggests that the quality of involvement is a critical factor in determining its effectiveness. Furthermore, the impact of parental involvement cannot be separated from its interaction with other factors, such as socio-economic conditions, environmental support, and educational policies that facilitate engagement. Therefore, the positive effects of parental involvement on child development are more likely to be achieved when supported by appropriate engagement strategies and responsive, sustainable educational policies.

This inconsistency highlights a critical gap in the literature, namely the lack of standardized measures for assessing the quality of parental involvement and its direct effect on specific developmental domains.

Overall, the review identifies three major research gaps:

- (1) the lack of longitudinal and experimental studies to establish causal relationships,
- (2) limited integration between policy analysis and empirical child development outcomes, and
- (3) insufficient attention to marginalized and rural contexts.

Addressing these gaps is essential for developing more effective, evidence-based early childhood education policies that promote sustainable parental involvement.

4. Conclusion

This study confirms that parental involvement plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of early childhood education (ECE) policies and in optimizing children's developmental outcomes. The findings demonstrate that parental involvement is a multidimensional construct, shaped by the interaction between internal factors (such as awareness and motivation), external conditions (including socio-economic background and social support), and educational policies that facilitate engagement. This study also identifies that effective parental involvement is reflected through three main forms: active communication with schools, participation in school-based activities, and consistent support for children's learning at home. These forms of engagement contribute significantly to children's cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral development. However, the level and quality of participation vary across contexts, indicating that parental involvement should be approached through flexible and context-sensitive strategies rather than uniform interventions.

Furthermore, the study highlights that policies promoting structured school–family partnerships, supported by adaptive and sustainable strategies, are key to strengthening long-term parental engagement. This study contributes by providing a holistic synthesis that integrates forms, factors, strategies, and impacts of parental involvement within a policy perspective, which has been limited in previous studies. Therefore, strengthening parental involvement requires an integrated approach that combines policy support, institutional practices, and family readiness. Future research is recommended to conduct longitudinal and empirical studies to validate parental involvement models across diverse socio-cultural contexts and to assess the effectiveness of specific intervention programs in improving both participation and child development outcomes.

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