

Description of Parents' Level of Knowledge Regarding Play Stimulation in Preschool-Aged Children at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

It is important for parents to have sufficient knowledge of stimulation techniques because such knowledge directly influences their ability to provide effective developmental support, which is essential for optimal child growth and development. The Ministry of Health (2016) emphasizes that children need consistent routines and stimulation to support their continued growth and development. Stimulation can be provided by parents, caregivers, other family members, and community groups at home or in the community. Therefore, appropriate stimulation can influence children's growth and development, while persistent developmental problems may slow or even impede progress. Preschool children are at a critical stage of development and are particularly vulnerable to developmental delays if they do not receive adequate stimulation. This sensitivity is related to the active development of neural networks, which are highly receptive to new information and responsive to new stimuli. This study aimed to describe the level of parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation in preschool-aged children at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta. This study used a quantitative research design with a descriptive approach. The population consisted of all parents of children attending Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta. A total of 53 respondents were included using total sampling. The study found that 27 parents (50.9%) had good knowledge, while 9 parents (17.0%) had poor knowledge. The majority of parents had good knowledge, although a small proportion still had poor knowledge regarding play stimulation in preschool-aged children. Parents are encouraged to continuously monitor their children's development and engage them in age-appropriate activities to help prevent developmental deviations.

Keywords: Knowledge, Play Stimulation, Preschool.

I. Introduction

Preschool childhood is an important period of human development because significant physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and motor development occurs during these early years. Children aged approximately four to six years are commonly regarded as being in a "golden age," a period characterized by rapid growth and development. At this stage, children are highly responsive to experiences and stimulation received from their surrounding environment. Child development is influenced by both genetic and environmental factors, with the family environment playing an important role in shaping children's

developmental experiences. Among the various environmental factors, parental involvement is particularly important because parents are the individuals who interact most frequently with children and have an important role in providing appropriate stimulation according to their developmental needs. The active role of parents in supporting child development is especially important during the preschool period (Wardhani & Krisnani, 2020). Parents are expected not only to meet children's basic needs but also to provide guidance, encouragement, learning opportunities, and appropriate stimulation. Children tend to imitate the behavior of people closest to them, particularly those within their immediate social environment. Therefore, the quality and frequency of interaction between parents and children may influence children's developmental experiences. Appropriate stimulation can be provided through various activities, including play. Play is an important activity through which preschool children can explore their environment, develop motor skills, interact socially, communicate, and learn new concepts. Consequently, parents need sufficient knowledge to select and provide play activities that are appropriate for their children's age and developmental stage.

The importance of parental knowledge is also related to the availability and quality of stimulation provided to children. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), parental involvement in raising preschool-aged children may be constrained by limited parental awareness, a shortage of trained personnel, and limited funding. Children should have access to health, education, and safety services both in early childhood education facilities and at home. These conditions indicate that supporting children's development is not solely the responsibility of educational institutions or health professionals but also requires active involvement from parents and families. Adequate parental knowledge can help parents understand children's developmental needs and encourage them to provide stimulation consistently in the home environment. Inadequate stimulation may contribute to developmental problems, including delays in social interaction, communication, and motor skills. Research has shown that children who do not receive adequate stimulation may experience impaired growth and reduced confidence in their abilities. In contrast, children who receive more stimulation tend to develop faster than children who receive less stimulation (Saputri et al., 2020). This finding emphasizes the importance of providing children with sufficient and appropriate stimulation during the preschool period. Parents therefore need to understand not only the importance of play but also how play activities can be used as a form of developmental stimulation.

The importance of early childhood stimulation is also reflected in participation in early childhood education. According to UNICEF data from 2018, only 38% of children participated in kindergarten or early childhood education programs, which was lower than the 77% target established in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) for 2015–2019. UNICEF data from 2011 also emphasize the importance of supporting children during their formative years. In this context, the family remains an important environment for providing developmental stimulation because children spend considerable time outside formal educational settings. The educational background of parents may also influence their ability to obtain and understand information related to child development. Higher educational attainment may enable parents to access and provide more varied stimulation that supports children's optimal development (Andriani et al., 2019). Previous research has demonstrated the relevance of parental knowledge to children's development. Meilawati (2017) examined the relationship between parents' knowledge of play stimulation and fine motor development among children aged 3–5 years at PAUD Al Falah, Desa Bibrik, Kecamatan Jiwan, Kabupaten Madiun. The study found a substantial relationship between parents' knowledge of play stimulation and children's motor development. These findings suggest that parents' understanding of appropriate play stimulation is an important aspect of supporting children's developmental outcomes. Similarly, Saputri et al. (2020) reported that parental stimulation was associated with child development, reinforcing the importance of stimulation within the family environment. Furthermore, Andriani et al. (2019) highlighted factors associated with preschool children's development and emphasized the importance of environmental and educational factors in supporting children's development.

Despite the recognized importance of parental involvement and stimulation, parents may have different levels of knowledge regarding appropriate play stimulation. This issue is particularly relevant when children are exposed to gadgets as an alternative source of entertainment. A preliminary study conducted by

the researcher at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta, on June 10, 2024, involved interviews with 10 parents. The findings showed that four parents preferred giving gadgets to their children to keep them occupied at home rather than engaging in play activities without gadgets. Meanwhile, six parents preferred playing with their children without gadgets. The preliminary responses also indicated that seven parents had limited understanding of age-appropriate developmental stimulation and play activities, while three parents had adequate knowledge. This preliminary finding suggests that differences may exist in parents' understanding of how play can be used to support preschool children's development. The preliminary findings also indicate a need to obtain a clearer description of parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten. Although previous studies have examined parental knowledge, stimulation, and child development in other settings, no previous study identified in the source material has specifically described parents' level of knowledge regarding play stimulation among preschool-aged children at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta. Therefore, identifying the existing level of parental knowledge is important as an initial basis for understanding the condition at the study site and for supporting future educational or health-promotion efforts for parents. Based on the background and previous research, this study aimed to describe the level of parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation in preschool-aged children at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta. The findings are expected to provide an overview of parents' knowledge levels and serve as a basis for strengthening parental awareness and involvement in providing appropriate play stimulation according to children's developmental stages.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Preschool Child Development

Preschool is a critical period of child development, generally covering children between four and six years of age. During this period, children experience rapid development across multiple domains, including cognitive, language, social-emotional, and motor skills. The quality of children's developmental experiences is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by the environment in which they grow, particularly the family environment. Parents play an important role in supporting children's development because responsive parent-child interactions and parental support for learning provide important opportunities for children to acquire and practice developmental skills (Andriani et al., 2019; Jeong et al., 2021). The developmental process during the preschool period requires continuous and appropriate stimulation. Family activities such as playing, reading, and singing have been associated with children's early numeracy, literacy, social-emotional, motor, and executive-function development. Evidence from a longitudinal study involving 4,904 children across five low- and middle-income countries indicates that greater family stimulation was associated with improvements across multiple developmental domain. Play is particularly important because it provides children with opportunities to explore, interact, communicate, and practice new skills. A systematic review and meta-analysis also found that guided play can support several aspects of children's learning and development, including early mathematics, shape knowledge, task switching, and spatial vocabulary (Skene et al., 2022). Therefore, appropriate parental stimulation during the preschool period is an essential component of supporting optimal child development. Parents' involvement in children's play can provide opportunities for meaningful interaction and support children's social-emotional and behavioral development (Schneider et al., 2022).

2.2. Play Stimulation in Preschool Children

Play is an essential component of preschool children's learning and development because it provides opportunities for children to explore their environment, practice emerging skills, communicate with others, and construct knowledge through meaningful experiences. During play, children can engage in activities that

support cognitive, language, motor, and social-emotional development. However, the developmental benefits of play may depend on the quality and appropriateness of the activities provided. Play activities should therefore be adapted to children's developmental levels, interests, abilities, and learning needs. Recent evidence suggests that guided play, in which adults provide appropriate guidance while maintaining children's active involvement and autonomy, can support several aspects of children's learning and development. A systematic review and meta-analysis of 39 studies found that guided play produced positive effects on early mathematics skills, shape knowledge, task switching, and spatial vocabulary compared with direct instruction or free play in specific outcomes (Skene et al., 2022). These findings suggest that play can become an effective developmental activity when children are provided with appropriate opportunities and guidance rather than simply being given unstructured activities.

Play also provides an important context for parent-child interaction. Through play, parents can communicate with children, respond to their needs, provide encouragement, and create opportunities for children to practice social and emotional skills. A systematic review by Schneider et al. (2022) found that the quality and quantity of parent-child play interactions were associated with children's behavioral adjustment. Positive parental affect during play was associated with fewer behavioral problems, whereas negative affect was associated with more behavioral problems. This evidence emphasizes that the value of play is not determined solely by the activity itself but also by the quality of interaction between children and their caregivers. In the context of preschool development, play stimulation does not necessarily require sophisticated or expensive materials. Simple activities can provide meaningful developmental experiences when they are appropriately selected and consistently implemented. Sari et al. (2023), for example, highlighted coloring activities as a form of play stimulation that can support fine motor development among preschool children. Similarly, Meilawati (2017) found a relationship between parents' knowledge of play stimulation and fine motor development among children aged 3–5 years. These findings indicate that parents' understanding of the developmental purpose of play is an important component of providing effective stimulation. Therefore, play should be viewed not merely as entertainment but also as an important medium through which preschool children can learn and develop.

2.3. Parents' Knowledge and Involvement in Child Development

Parents are the primary caregivers and play an important role in providing developmental experiences within the family environment. Their involvement includes providing care, interacting with children, supporting learning, monitoring development, and providing appropriate stimulation. Parents' knowledge is particularly important because knowledge can influence their ability to recognize children's developmental needs and determine appropriate activities. Parents who understand the purpose of developmental stimulation may be better prepared to provide activities that correspond to their children's age and developmental characteristics. The relationship between parental knowledge and children's development has been supported by empirical evidence. A recent study conducted in Indonesia involving 51 parents found a significant relationship between parental knowledge of play stimulation and children's fine motor skills ($p = .029$; $r = .306$). The study also found a significant relationship between early childhood education and children's fine motor skills, emphasizing the importance of combining parental knowledge with supportive educational environments. This finding is particularly relevant to the present study because it directly connects parental knowledge of play stimulation with children's developmental outcomes.

Parents' knowledge may be influenced by educational attainment and access to information. Andriani et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of factors associated with preschool children's development, while Wardhani and Krisnani (2020) emphasized the active role of parents in supporting children's development. Higher educational attainment may provide parents with greater opportunities to obtain, understand, and apply information related to child development. However, education alone does not guarantee adequate knowledge or appropriate parenting practices. Parents also require accessible, practical, and developmentally appropriate information. Recent Indonesian research further strengthens the

importance of parental knowledge. A 2025 study involving 93 parents of preschool children examined the relationship between parents' knowledge of developmental stimulation and their behavior in providing stimulation. The study specifically identified parental knowledge as an important factor in understanding how parents provide developmental stimulation to preschool-aged children. Another Indonesian study involving parents and preschool children found a significant relationship between parental knowledge of stimulation and children's development, further supporting the need for parental education regarding appropriate stimulation.

Parental involvement is also important because knowledge needs to be translated into actual interaction and stimulation. Parents who understand the importance of play can actively participate in children's activities rather than simply providing toys or allowing children to play independently. Parent-child play creates opportunities for communication, emotional connection, learning, and behavioral regulation. Schneider et al. (2022) emphasized that the quality of parent-child play interactions is relevant to children's behavioral adjustment, demonstrating that parental responsiveness and interaction during play are important aspects of children's developmental experiences. Therefore, parental knowledge regarding play stimulation should be understood as an important component of parents' readiness to support preschool children's development. Adequate knowledge can help parents identify suitable play activities, adjust stimulation to children's developmental needs, and become actively involved in children's learning experiences. Conversely, limited knowledge may reduce parents' ability to select and implement appropriate stimulation. Based on these theoretical perspectives and empirical findings, assessing parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation is important for understanding their capacity to support preschool children's optimal development.

III. Research Method

This study used a quantitative research design with a descriptive approach to describe the level of parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation in preschool-aged children. The study was conducted at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta, in August 2024. The study population consisted of parents of children enrolled at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta. A total of 53 parents participated as respondents, and total sampling was used to select the sample. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to the respondents. The collected data were subsequently processed through data editing, tabulation, and analysis to describe the respondents' characteristics and their level of knowledge regarding play stimulation in preschool-aged children.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1. Respondent Characteristics

A total of 53 parents participated in this study. The characteristics of the respondents were described based on age, educational attainment, and occupation. The distribution of respondent characteristics is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Parents' Age		
26–35 years	37	69.8
36–45 years	16	30.2
Parents' Education		
Elementary school	4	7.5
Junior high school	6	11.3

Senior high school/Vocational school	13	24.5
Bachelor's degree	30	56.5
Parents' Occupation		
Private-sector employee	11	20.8
Entrepreneur	18	45.3
Housewife	24	34.0
Total	53	100.0

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were aged 26–35 years, comprising 37 respondents (69.8%), while 16 respondents (30.2%) were aged 36–45 years. Regarding educational attainment, the largest proportion of respondents had a bachelor's degree, totaling 30 respondents (56.5%). This was followed by respondents who had completed senior high school or vocational school, totaling 13 respondents (24.5%), junior high school, totaling 6 respondents (11.3%), and elementary school, totaling 4 respondents (7.5%). In terms of occupation, 11 respondents (20.8%) were private-sector employees, 18 respondents were reported as entrepreneurs, and 24 respondents were housewives. However, the occupation percentages presented in the source table require verification because the reported frequencies and percentages are not mathematically consistent. Specifically, 18 of 53 respondents corresponds to approximately 34.0%, whereas 24 of 53 respondents corresponds to approximately 45.3%. Therefore, the occupational categories should be checked against the original questionnaire or primary dataset before final publication.

4.2. Parents' Level of Knowledge Regarding Play Stimulation

The level of parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation was analyzed using three categories: good, moderate, and poor. The distribution of respondents according to their knowledge level is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Parents' Knowledge Level

Parents' Knowledge Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Good	27	50.9
Moderate	17	32.1
Poor	9	17.0
Total	53	100.0

Table 2 indicates that the majority of parents had a good level of knowledge regarding play stimulation, with 27 respondents (50.9%). Meanwhile, 17 respondents (32.1%) had a moderate level of knowledge, and 9 respondents (17.0%) had a poor level of knowledge. These findings indicate that more than half of the respondents demonstrated good knowledge regarding play stimulation, although a considerable proportion still had moderate or poor knowledge. Overall, the findings demonstrate that parents at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten generally possessed adequate knowledge regarding play stimulation for preschool-aged children. Nevertheless, the presence of 26 respondents (49.1%) in the moderate and poor categories indicates that almost half of the respondents may still require additional information and education concerning appropriate play stimulation.

4.3. Discussion

a. Respondent Characteristics and Parents' Knowledge

The characteristics of the respondents provide important context for understanding the findings of this study. Most respondents were aged 26–35 years, accounting for 37 respondents (69.8%). This age range represents early adulthood, a period in which individuals generally have accumulated personal, social, and

family experiences. In the context of parenting, age may influence how parents receive, process, and apply information concerning child development and stimulation. Parents are the individuals who interact most frequently with their children and therefore have an important role in supporting children's growth and development. Parents' ability to recognize developmental needs and provide appropriate stimulation may be influenced by their experiences and knowledge. In this study, the dominance of respondents aged 26–35 years provides an important context because these parents are likely to be actively involved in caring for preschool-aged children.

The findings can be considered in relation to the theory of Notoatmodjo (2003), as cited by Meilawati (2017), which explains that knowledge is influenced by several factors, including age. As individuals mature, their ability to process information and understand experiences may develop. Age may therefore contribute to the acquisition and application of knowledge. However, age should not be considered the only determinant of parental knowledge because knowledge is also influenced by education, access to information, experience, social environment, and other factors. Educational attainment was another important characteristic identified in this study. Most respondents had a bachelor's degree, representing 30 respondents (56.5%). This finding indicates that the majority of parents in the study had relatively high educational attainment. Meanwhile, 13 respondents (24.5%) had completed senior high school or vocational school, 6 respondents (11.3%) had completed junior high school, and 4 respondents (7.5%) had completed elementary school.

Educational attainment may influence an individual's ability to access, understand, and apply information. Parents with higher levels of education may have greater opportunities to obtain information from various sources, including educational institutions, health professionals, books, and digital media. In relation to child development, broader access to information may help parents understand the importance of stimulation and identify activities that are appropriate for their children's developmental stage. This interpretation is consistent with Notoatmodjo (2019), as referred to in the source document, which explains that education can facilitate the acquisition of information and contribute to broader knowledge. Andriani et al. (2019) also emphasized the importance of factors related to the development of preschool children. Higher educational attainment may enable parents to provide more varied stimulation and support children's development more effectively. However, the high proportion of parents with bachelor's degrees should not automatically be interpreted as the sole explanation for the relatively good knowledge found in this study. The present research used a descriptive design and therefore describes the distribution of knowledge rather than statistically determining causal relationships between education and knowledge. Thus, educational attainment can be discussed as a contextual factor rather than as a proven determinant of parents' knowledge in this study.

b. Parents' Knowledge Regarding Play Stimulation

The main finding of this study is that 27 parents (50.9%) had good knowledge, while 17 parents (32.1%) had moderate knowledge and 9 parents (17.0%) had poor knowledge regarding play stimulation. The predominance of the good-knowledge category suggests that most parents had an adequate understanding of play stimulation for preschool-aged children. Good parental knowledge is important because preschool children are in a critical developmental period. During this stage, children require stimulation that is appropriate to their age and developmental needs. Play represents one of the important forms of stimulation because it provides opportunities for children to explore their environment, practice skills, interact with other people, and develop different aspects of their abilities.

Parents who understand the importance of play stimulation may be more capable of selecting activities that correspond to their children's developmental stages. Appropriate play does not necessarily require expensive equipment or sophisticated materials. What is important is that the activity provides opportunities for children to learn, explore, communicate, move, and interact. Therefore, parental knowledge can help parents transform everyday activities into meaningful developmental experiences. The findings of this study are consistent with Meilawati (2017), who investigated the relationship between parents'

knowledge of play stimulation and fine motor development among children aged 3–5 years at PAUD Al Falah, Desa Bibrik, Kecamatan Jiwan, Kabupaten Madiun. The study reported a substantial relationship between parents' knowledge of play stimulation and children's motor development. This finding supports the argument that parental knowledge of play stimulation is an important component of efforts to support children's developmental outcomes.

The present findings are also consistent with Saputri et al. (2020), who examined parental stimulation and child development. Their findings indicated the importance of stimulation in children's development and suggested that children who receive greater stimulation tend to demonstrate better developmental progress than children who receive less stimulation. These findings reinforce the importance of parents' involvement in providing appropriate stimulation within the home environment. Sari et al. (2023) also demonstrated the potential contribution of play activities to children's development through their study of coloring activities and fine motor abilities among preschool children. Such findings indicate that relatively simple play activities can provide developmental benefits when they are appropriate and implemented consistently.

Although 50.9% of parents in the present study had good knowledge, the remaining 49.1% were categorized as having moderate or poor knowledge. This finding is important because it indicates that nearly half of the parents may still need additional information concerning play stimulation. Parents with moderate knowledge may understand the general importance of play but may not fully understand how to select, organize, or implement age-appropriate activities. Parents with poor knowledge may require more fundamental information concerning children's developmental needs and the role of play in supporting development. The presence of parents with moderate and poor knowledge may also indicate that access to information does not necessarily result in adequate understanding. Information needs to be presented in a way that is understandable, relevant, and applicable to parents' everyday experiences. Health workers, teachers, and early childhood education institutions can therefore contribute by providing practical education concerning age-appropriate play activities.

c. The Role of Parents in Supporting Child Development

Parents' knowledge cannot be separated from their role in supporting children's development. Wardhani and Krisnani (2020) emphasized the importance of parents' active role in children's development, particularly during the preschool period. Parents provide not only physical care but also emotional support, supervision, guidance, and learning experiences. A supportive family environment can provide children with opportunities to practice new skills and receive continuous stimulation. Parents can participate directly in play activities, encourage children to explore, provide positive feedback, and adapt activities to the child's abilities. Such involvement can make play more meaningful and support children's developmental needs. Conversely, limited parental knowledge may reduce the quality of stimulation provided to children. Parents may understand that play is important but may not recognize which activities are appropriate for particular developmental skills. Inadequate knowledge may also result in excessive reliance on passive entertainment, including the use of gadgets, rather than interactive play between parents and children.

The preliminary findings from Santa Aurelia Kindergarten provide an important context for this issue. Interviews with 10 parents conducted on June 10, 2024, showed that four parents preferred giving gadgets to their children to keep them occupied at home, whereas six parents preferred playing with their children without gadgets. The preliminary interview also indicated that seven parents had limited understanding of age-appropriate developmental stimulation and play activities, while three parents had adequate knowledge. These observations provided the initial basis for examining parents' knowledge at the study site. The results of the main study provide a more comprehensive description than the preliminary findings. Although the preliminary study indicated that most interviewed parents had limited understanding, the questionnaire results showed that 50.9% of the 53 respondents had good knowledge. This difference may be related to the larger sample used in the main study and the structured nature of the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the finding that 17.0% of respondents still had poor knowledge demonstrates that educational needs remain.

V. Conclusion

The study found that parents at Santa Aurelia Kindergarten, North Jakarta, generally had a good level of knowledge regarding play stimulation for preschool-aged children. Of the 53 respondents, 27 parents (50.9%) had good knowledge, 17 (32.1%) had moderate knowledge, and 9 (17.0%) had poor knowledge. Most respondents were 26–35 years old (37; 69.8%), while 30 respondents (56.5%) had a bachelor's degree. These findings indicate that although the overall level of parental knowledge was good, a substantial proportion of parents still had moderate or poor knowledge and may therefore require additional information regarding appropriate play stimulation. The occupational data should be verified against the original dataset because the frequencies and percentages reported in the source are inconsistent.

Practically, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening parental education regarding age-appropriate play stimulation. Health workers and early childhood educators can provide practical education and demonstrations that help parents select appropriate play activities and participate directly in children's play. Parents are also encouraged to monitor children's development and provide stimulation that corresponds to their developmental stage. Theoretically, this study supports the view that parental knowledge is an important component in creating an environment that supports preschool children's development. The findings can also serve as reference material for nursing education and health-promotion activities concerning parental knowledge and play stimulation.

This study was limited to describing parents' knowledge regarding play stimulation and did not examine other factors that may influence knowledge or the actual implementation of stimulation practices. The descriptive design also limits the ability to establish causal or correlational relationships between parental characteristics and knowledge levels. Future research should consider a larger sample and include additional variables, such as parental education, age, occupation, access to information, and parenting practices. Further studies could also use analytical or intervention designs to examine factors associated with parental knowledge and evaluate whether educational programs can improve parents' knowledge and practices regarding play stimulation.

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