

# Mother Support in Cognitive Development for Pre-School Children: A Phenomenology Study

Wiwien Dinar Pratisti  
University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta  
wdp206@ums.ac.id

Muhammad Jundi Al Faqih  
University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta  
jundialfaqih20@gmail.com

Desy Purnama Sari  
University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta  
dpurnama520@gmail.com

**Abstract.** *Mother is the main pillar in supporting cognitive development particularly in pre-school children. There are many activities that can be held to stimulate cognitive development, one of which is play activity. The aim of this research is to reveal, understand and describe mother role for cognitive development in pre-school children by employing play activities. This research was indicated as a phenomenology study in which qualitative approach was implemented. In order to select the research subjects, purposive sampling was employed. The main criterion proposed by researchers in preferring the subjects is housewives whose children are in between 4 to 6.5 years old. In this research, there are 3 pairs of mother-child. In data collection, researchers applied tri-angulation method consisted of interview, observation and family coding system. The results have shown that mother-child interaction, chiefly in play activities, can be able to stimulate the cognitive development in 5 types of knowledge. These 5 types are language, geometric object, colour, function of objects and procedures or role of playing. In language, children have new vocabularies (wire fence, stick fire, Sub marine). In geometric object, children know how to classify object based on the ordered objects (fighter plane, wire fence, thorny fence). Still, Children are also able to differentiate many kinds of colour. Then, Children know the function and the procedure to operate the objects. The indicator of the result is based on the frequency of mothers in providing information (I) around the game of 60.50%, leading (M) of 30.43%, Initiation Order (PR) of 8.69%. Subsequently, the children respond by Patience (P) 64,85%, obedient with giving recommendation (PU) equal to 10,89%, and neglect response equal to (A) 9.4% both in verbal and non-verbal response.*

**Keywords:** *Child cognitive development, mother role play.*

## Introduction

Family is the first social unit that has the supreme interaction, both physical interaction (gesture and thoughts) and inner interaction (affection). Contact made between parents and children greatly influences children's personality development and social behavior which will certainly shape the character of children to do social interactions. Mayar (2013) mentions that social development is the achievement of maturity in social relations. It can also be interpreted as a learning process to adjust to norms, morals, and traditions such as Merging into a unity that communicates and collaborates with each other.

According to Bandura (in Tang Wu, Feng Tseng, Lu Wu, Miao Chen, 2016), the interaction between parents and their children involves observation and learning that become the most important process in human socialization, which makes parents as an important source of information about proper behavior. This statement is supported by task executor of Governor of Bengkulu, Rohidin Mersyah. In order to achieve a brilliant future for children, the role of parents is crucial to guide the learning process. It is for the reason that

their future does not depend on how smart they are, but it relies on how children respond and to the surroundings.

Based on smart parenting, new research from Essex University and University College of London in the UK explains that when a mother spends more time with children aged 3 to 7 years, children's cognitive and social skills are grasped to increase. As one of the writers, Professor Marco Francesconi, Ph.D elucidates that the study focuses on time spent by mothers with children has a real influence on early childhood development. Preferably, parents facilitate children's cognitive development with play activities. The interaction between parents and children during play activities will have effect if there mutual action and reaction between the two parties meet. Interaction will not occur if humans make a direct relationship with something that has no effect on the nervous system as a result of the relationship (Parinduri, Zubaidah & Wijaya, 2017).

Play activities can be compiled with fun and educational games that promote optimal functions for children development, such as physical improvement, language, cognitive and social adaptation abilities (Hidayat, 2015)

Play activities are activities that are very popular with children. Many terms say that play is the personal world of children. Based on Parten (in Atmajaya, 2017), development stages of early childhood play are group into 6 stages

1. Unoccupied Behavior. In this stage, the child has not played yet but he only observes something for a moment. For example, the baby observes his own fingers or toes and moves them without any purpose.
2. On locker Behavior or observing behavior. For example, a child watches his friends play hide and seek. Even though he is not involved in it, he feels happy as if he is playing.
3. Solitary Play or Playing Solitary. Children play alone and look for their own activities, regardless other people / friends around them.
4. Parallel Play. Children do play activities among other children without any element of mutual influence. For example, children play puzzles and other children also play puzzles, they are together but do not influence each other.
5. Associative Play or Associative Play. Children play activities with other children but there is no concentration of its goals. For example, some children play patting water in the pool together.
6. Cooperative Play. Children play activities together with friends in an organized manner and teamplay. There are achieved goals and there shared task. For example, playing a house is a father, mother and child, each has a task. Children make these houses with cloth or blocks and play roles with puppets.

Through play activities, children can develop life skills, such as social intelligence, cognitive intelligence, affective intelligence and conative intelligence. Through the game, parents can also introduce religious values, noble character and social norms applied in society.

This research is conducted to reveal the role of the game as a platform for developing children's knowledge guided by parents.

**Tabel 1. Description of subject**

Inform ation	Mother			Children		
	S	DW	AWI	IA	MAA W	AZF
Initial	S	DW	AWI	IA	MAA W	AZF
Age	32	37	29	5,8	4,9	4,5
Address	Boy olali	Suko harjo	Boy olali	Boy olali	Suko harjo	Boy olali
Educ ation	High scho ol	bach lor	bach elor			

**Methods**

The method used was a qualitative research accompanied by a phenomenological approach. Qualitative research methods were often referred to naturalistic methods because their research was carried out in natural settings (Sugiyono, 2010). Creswell (2013) revealed that the purpose of phenomenology itself was to

return to reality. This research was conducted when Mother and child were playing. Purposive sampling method was employed so as to select the subject participants based on the proposed principle. The participants recruited in this research were pre-school children whose ages ranged between 4 to 6.5 years together with their mothers.

In this existing study, triangulation method was employed in collecting the data. According to Moleong (2005), there are four techniques that could be used, namely triangulation of data (sources), investigation, theory, and method. From above types, interviews, observation and family coding were researchers' choices. This system was to find out the interaction of children involving mothers, fathers, and children, during discussions about children's behavior that concerned to parents and about parents who are disagreeing with each other. (Margolin & Gordis, 1992).

The interview technique used was a semi-structured interview where researcher had prepared several questionnaires. Yet, researchers also added more questions in accordance to the responses of research subjects during the interview session. Moreover, researchers used non-participant observations conducted for 15 to 20 minutes in which researchers positioned themselves as observers.

**Results and Discussion**

**Interview result**

Based on the results of the interview session, it is concluded that mothers can accompany and guide children during play activities either at home or outside. Besides that, mothers also take and picked up children from school.

*"Housewife." (W.S / 6-7)*

*"Taking care of the child (while laughing)." (W.S / 9-10)*

*"Yes, the most important is in the morning, I take and pick up my child, then go home. After that, I spend time with my friends." (W.S / 116-122)*

Giving direction if the child makes a mistake in saying or behaving, as well as instilling the values of noble character.

*"... but I have already made it safe for him to save, so what crucial for me is he doesn't think that everything is instant, all of that must be used ..." (W.DW / 414-417)*

*"... Even if I am mistaken, I know that if I run out of law, I apologize" forgive my mother for the law ". I give your explanation because of this ..." (W.DW / 452-454)*

Based on these data, it is also found that the subjects also introduce gadgets to their children under their guidance.

*"... I will also tell you if you go offline, like this, press this. So I never hid what the gadget is, I never hid it ..." (W.DW / 320)*

The closeness that exists between mother and child can be seen from the frequency of accompanying children to play and knowing the habits done by their children.

*"If you play it, change it every day, he likes new things*

Data	Mother			Children (Responden)		
	M	PR	IN	P	PU	A
1	46	4	34	3	3	12
2	19	16	96	104	6	7
3	19	4	37	24	13	0
Frekuensi Item	84	24	167	131	22	19
Total Inisiasi	276			202		

... (W.AWI / 36)

*"Yes, one hour and a half, but he is bored playing in an hour." (W.AWI / 53-54)*

**Observation Results**

In the observations of first subject, it is discovered that the child and mother play army games. In the beginning of the game, mother asks the child about the toy and the child answers while choosing a toy. The mother tells the child to place the toy in position. After several minutes, mother begins to lead the child by dividing the roles of the player, namely a good soldier and a villain. The child plays role as a good soldier while the mother plays the villain. Then, the activity is continued by dialogue between the child and mother and who are playing gunfire. During the tenth minute, mother plays while inviting the child to create dialogue about the good and evil even though the child sometimes plays helicopters and fighter planes between the dialogs occurred. Mother invites the child to play war situation in the fifteenth minute. The game is ended as the mother is defeated.

In the second subject, it is found that in the first minute the mother tries to get the child to play with the soldier toys. At the beginning of the game, mother asks about the names of the objects chosen and the child is able to answer correctly. Besides that, the mother also

This initiation, orders and information are given. From the table, it can be seen that mother does initiation for 84 times, gives orders for 24 times and provides information for 167 times. Based on the number of these initiations, it can be seen that the mother is more giving lots of information to children. Meanwhile, the response given by the child in the form of obedient 131 times, obeyed by giving proposals 22 times and the ignored response is 19 times. Then, the data that have been obtained are converted into percentage form by using the following formula:

$$X = \frac{\sum x}{\sum N} \times 100\%$$

Information :

<b>X</b>	:	Item
<b>x</b>	:	item frequency
<b>N</b>	:	total initiation or response

gives some information about the types and functions of game tools such as planes, tanks, soldiers, and others. In addition to play games that have been provided by the child, they also play with toys that they own. During play, mothers often associate toys with films that have been watched with children.

When observing the third subject, it is discovered that during the observation process, the interaction between mother and child begin at ± 15.40 local time. Mother invites her child to play and begin asking various names of existing toys. The mother asks her child to count the how many toy soldiers are available. The child counts the number of toy soldiers he has. Then, mother invites the child to start playing. During the play activities, child is always observing the toys. Mother also actively asks the child about the type of game they play. The child is always obedient to the mother’s orders and He answers the questions proposed by his mother. Sometimes, the child also provides long explanation for a type of game the mother asks about. Moreover, the child often imitates the sounds of shots and bombs. In this play activity, the mother and child are equally active.

**Data analysis**

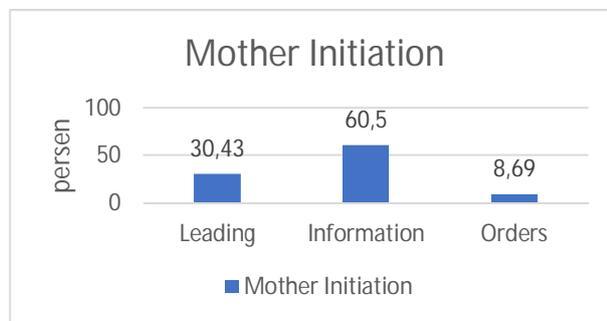
These data are obtained from Family coding as follows:

- Information:
- M: Lead
- PR: Commands
- IN: Information
- P: Obedient
- PU: Comply with the proposal
- A: ignore

**Tabel 2.** Family Coding Data

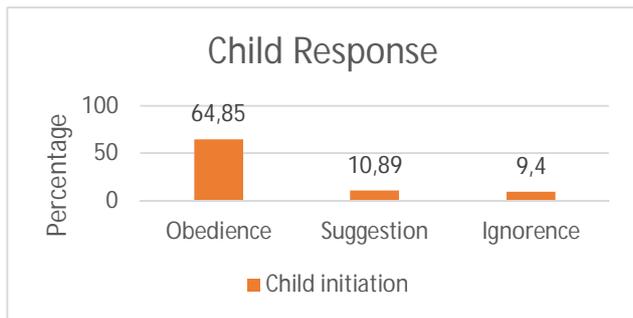
The table above shows the frequency of the emergence of initiation proposed by the mothers together with the response shown by the children during play activity. The initiative done by the mother to start playing is Based on calculation results, it is clear that mother's playing activity shows the command initiation (PR) of 8.69%, lead (M) of 30.43%, and provided Information (I) of 60.50%.

For further details, see graphic below.



**Grafik 1.** Mother Initiation

Children shows compliant response of (P) 64.85%, it is obeyed by giving a proposal (PU) of 10.89%, and the response is ignored by (A) 9.4%.



**Grafik 2.** Child Response

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that the mother uses the game as a platform to convey information that can support children's cognitive development. This information is in the form of toys, colors, roles, playgrounds, vocabulary, memory etc. The dominant response raised by the child is compliance with the initiation given by the mother. Compliance is manifested in the form of verbal responses such as, mother asks "Why do you try this? (pointing at the tank) "then the child answers" Tank "

Non-verbal responses are indicated by gestures which show approval or do what the mother initiates. For example, mother asks "Come on, what?" Then the child answers with a gesture "(Raising the shoulder may indicate no idea)".

**Conclusion**

Family is the main background for children in learning. Moreover, the way parents behave is indicated as a source of information for their children. This is in line with the results of interview data, observation, and family coding analysis. Parents do play activities as mediators for introducing and developing children's knowledge.

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