

## **Family Support as a Determinant of Motivation in Early Childhood English Learning**

**Ni Nyoman Ari Ratnadi**

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Buleleng

[ariratnadi@gmail.com](mailto:ariratnadi@gmail.com)

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### **Abstract**

*Early childhood represents a critical period for language acquisition and motivational development, where family support plays a pivotal role. This study investigates the relationship between family support and English learning motivation among early childhood students in Group B of Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, Indonesia. Using a cross-sectional analytical survey method, data were collected from 69 respondents through validated questionnaires. The Spearman Rank correlation test revealed a significant positive relationship between family support and learning motivation ( $r = 0.623, p < 0.05$ ). The findings indicate that children with more excellent family support exhibit higher motivation levels, underlining the importance of parental involvement in fostering effective bilingual education. This research contributes to the growing literature on early childhood education by providing actionable insights into how family engagement can enhance language acquisition and learning outcomes. Future studies should explore intervention strategies tailored to diverse socio-cultural contexts to optimize early learning experiences.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood, often called the "golden age," is a critical period for a child's holistic growth and development. During this phase, children experience rapid cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and physical maturation ([Bekir, 2020](#)), making it an opportune time to establish foundational skills. This period is often characterized by significant neural plasticity, enabling young children to absorb and process information at an unparalleled pace ([Bjorklund, 2020](#); [Gariépy et al., 2020](#)). Consequently, early childhood presents a critical window of opportunity to establish foundational skills that form the basis for lifelong learning, well-being, and social integration. Early interventions during this stage have long-term impacts on a child's educational and personal trajectory, with parents playing a pivotal role in shaping these outcomes ([Luby, 2020](#)).

Research consistently demonstrates that children whose parents actively participate in their educational journey from an early age show improved academic performance, enhanced social-emotional skills, and greater self-confidence. Parental involvement in the child's education is manifested in two ways: involvement in school activities and parental involvement in home activities ([Belaić, 2021](#)). However, to achieve educational goals, parental participation in the educational process of early childhood education students is essential ([Alarcón & Ordinola, 2021](#)). The same thing was also stated by Wood et al., that parents' involvement in their children's educational interventions could significantly impact their children's academic success ([Wood et al., 2021](#)).

Today, many kindergartens worldwide are incorporating English language instruction into their curricula. For example, a private kindergarten in Salatiga, Indonesia, has introduced English to early children ([Kurniawan, 2020](#)). English language learning is also implemented in some early childhood education institutions in other non-English-speaking countries. These include kindergartens in Kuwait ([Al-Yaseen, 2021](#)), Saudi Arabia ([Al-Jarf, 2023](#)), China ([Wang et al., 2023](#)), Japan ([Nakamura, 2023](#)), and Croatia ([Karlak et al., 2022](#)).

Introducing a second foreign language to children from an early age can positively impact their first language acquisition. As stated by Yang, learning a second foreign language at an early age positively affects children's development at both biological and psychological levels ([Yang, 2023](#)). At the age of 4-6, children's language growth and development are rapid, and they are expected to be able to grasp and develop speaking and language skills. The earlier a child starts, the better they will learn ([Kadhun, 2021](#)). The experience of learning English at an early age contributes positively to later English language achievement and attitudes towards learning English ([Chen et al., 2022](#)). In addition, a research result states that learning a foreign language at a pre-primary age can help children develop their global citizenship competence ([Žegunienė, 2022](#)).

In Indonesia, Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten is one of the kindergartens that has implemented bilingualism in the school environment and the learning process. Based on the preliminary study, there are indications that students' motivation to learn English in communication is low. We explore information related to the causes of learning motivation. One of them is the lack of supervision and attention from parents.

Despite the well-documented benefits of early parental involvement in education and the growing integration of English language instruction in early childhood curricula, there remains a lack of comprehensive research on how parental engagement specifically influences young learners' motivation and outcomes in bilingual or English language learning settings, particularly in non-English-speaking countries like Indonesia. Existing studies primarily focus on students' performance ([Nekhely, 2021](#)) or learning development ([Surya & Mufidah, 2023](#)) without delving into the nuanced impact of parental involvement on language acquisition motivation.

The gap is particularly pertinent in contexts such as Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, where low student motivation in learning English has been observed. Investigating the role of parental involvement in addressing this issue could provide valuable insights and practical strategies for enhancing early language education and fostering lifelong learning habits. This study aims to investigate the role of parental involvement in enhancing young learners' motivation to learn English in bilingual early childhood education settings, with a particular focus on identifying strategies to address low motivation among students at Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten in Indonesia.

## **METHOD**

This four-week research was carried out at Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, which is located in Bali, Indonesia. This type of research is an analytical survey with cross-sectional data collection. The number of samples in this study was 69 children in group B, consisting of B1, B2, and B3, taken using total sampling techniques. Data was collected through interviews using questionnaire guidelines, which were tested for validity using the Spearman-Rank test.

This questionnaire comprised 15 statements, eight positive and seven negative, and was written in Indonesian to enhance comprehension. Before deployment, the questionnaire's validity was assessed by using SPSS. Then, the reliability of the instruments was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha value, with a threshold set at 0.6. It was distributed either at school or at the respondents' homes. The data were evaluated using a Likert scale with four response options: never, sometimes, usually, and always. The results were categorized into four intervals: very good, good, fair, and poor.

## **RESULT**

The results of this study are described as follows:

### **1) Preliminary Study**

The researcher conducted a preliminary study on April 22, 2023, during the 2022/2023 school year at Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten. The focus was on Group B, which includes classes B1, B2, and B3, with 69 students. A sample of 10 children was randomly selected from this group for interviews.

Using a family support questionnaire with 20 statements read by the researcher, the following data were collected about the types of family support for children:

Table 1. The types of family support for children

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Not Good Support</b>	4 families (40%)
<b>Quite Good Support</b>	3 families (30%)
<b>Good Support</b>	2 families (20%)
<b>Outstanding Support</b>	1 families (10%)

It was found that family support for the introduction of English varied: 4 families (40%) rated their support as "not good," 3 families (30%) rated it as "quite good," 2 families (20%) rated it as "good," and 1 family (10%) rated it as "outstanding." In addition, interviews on learning motivation in early childhood were conducted at home using a questionnaire with 16 statements. The results were as follows:

Table 2. Learning motivation in early childhood

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Low Motivation</b>	5 students (50%)
<b>Moderate Motivation</b>	3 students (30%)
<b>High Motivation</b>	1 student (10%)
<b>Very High Motivation</b>	1 student (10%)

The results showed that 5 students (50%) reported low motivation, 3 students (30%) reported moderate motivation, 1 student (10%) reported high motivation, and 1 student (10%) reported very high motivation. This lack of motivation has impacted children's confidence in interacting with friends and their environment. The lack of parental attention, monitoring, and guidance during study sessions at home exacerbates the issue, leading to low learning motivation and, consequently, less effective learning outcomes.

## **2) Respondents Demographic**

The following table presents data exposure regarding the demographics of respondents in this study.

Table 3. Frequency distribution of respondents by gender

<b>Gender Characteristics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
Male	39	56,5
Female	30	43,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 shows that of the 69 respondents at Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, the majority were male, 39 (56.5%), and the lowest were female, 30 (43.5%).

Table 4. Frequency distribution of respondents by age

<b>Age Characteristics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
5	46	66,7
5-6	23	33,3
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 shows that of the 69 respondents, the school-age children were mainly 5 years old, namely 46 (66.7%) respondents, and the lowest were 5-6 years old, namely 23 (33.3%) respondents.

### 3) Univariate Analysis

The univariate analysis of family support characteristics among the respondents is summarised in Table 3, which highlights the distribution of perceived support levels as follows:

#### 3.1 Family support

Table 3. Frequency distribution of family support respondents

<b>Family Support Characteristics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
Bad	13	18,8
Good Enough	36	52,2
Good	18	26,1
Excellent	2	2,9
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>

From Table 3, it can be seen that of the 69 respondents, the majority of respondents with quite good family support were 36 respondents (52.2%), and the lowest was excellent support, namely two respondents (2.9%).

#### 3.2 Learning Motivation

Table 4 Frequency distribution of respondents based on early childhood learning motivation

<b>Learning Motivation Characteristics</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
Low	5	7,2
Average	33	47,8
High	22	31,9
Very high	9	13,0
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 shows that of the 69 respondents, the majority had moderate learning motivation, 33 respondents (47.8%), and the lowest was low motivation, 5 respondents (7.2%).

### 4) Bivariate Analysis

The following tables summarize the findings of the bivariate analysis conducted to explore the relationship between family support and learning motivation in young children.

Table 5. Analysis of the relationship between family support and learning motivation of young children

<b>Family Support</b>	<b>Learning Motivation</b>									
	<b>Low</b>		<b>Average</b>		<b>High</b>		<b>Very High</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Bad</b>	3	4.3	10	14.5	-	-	-	-	13	18.8
<b>Good Enough</b>	1	1.4	21	30.4	14	20.3	-	-	36	52.2

Family Support	Learning Motivation									
	Low		Average		High		Very High		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Good</b>	1	1.4	1	1.4	7	10.1	9	13.3	18	26.1
<b>Excellent</b>	-	-	1	1.4	1	1.4	-	-	2	2.9
<b>Jumlah</b>	5	7.2	33	47.8	22	31.9	9	13.3	69	100

Table 5 shows that of the 69 respondents, the majority had quite good support, namely 36 (52.2%) respondents, while the least had outstanding support, namely 2 (2.9%) respondents. Regarding learning motivation, the majority had moderate motivation, namely 33 (47.8%) respondents, while the lowest was low motivation, namely 5 (7.2%) respondents.

Table 6. Analysis of the relationship between family support and learning motivation of early childhood children

Variable	Correlation coefficient	P Value
The relationship between family support and learning motivation	0,623	0,000

From Table 6, the Spearman Rank Correlation Test analysis using the SPSS computer program shows that the calculated  $r$  is 0.623 with a significance level (sig) of 0.000. Based on these results, it can be seen that the significance of 0.000 is smaller than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that the alternative hypothesis in this study is accepted. So, there is a significant relationship between family support and early childhood learning motivation in classes B1, B2, and B3 at Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, with a strong relationship between the variables.

Bivariate analysis using the Spearman-Rank test on the family support variable with early childhood learning motivation in Group B Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten obtained a correlation coefficient of 0.623 with  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). It shows a relationship between family support and the learning motivation of early childhood children in Group B, Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, and this relationship is statistically significant.

## DISCUSSION

### 1) Insights from Preliminary Study

According to the preliminary research, most families (70%) fall into "not good" or "quite good" support categories, indicating a lack of optimal family involvement. Only a tiny fraction of families (30%) provided "good" or "outstanding" support, demonstrating the minority of families offering adequate encouragement for their children's development, particularly in introducing English. This condition aligns with existing research highlighting the critical role of family engagement in child development and language acquisition. Philominraj et al., in their study, mentioned that higher parental commitment is directly proportional to the level of success in English language learning (Philominraj et al., 2022).

Several research studies have found that parental monitoring and other factors in the family environment influence children's self-esteem development ([Krauss et al., 2020](#)). Krauss et al. emphasized that effective monitoring involves staying generally aware of a child's activities without being overly intrusive. This approach is a foundation for safeguarding the child and establishing boundaries suitable for their developmental stage ([Krauss et al., 2020](#)). Besides, parents who actively communicate and engage in their children's education tend to enhance their children's motivation to learn and sense of discipline ([Amin et al., 2021](#)).

Therefore, several programs designed to educate parents on effective monitoring strategies, as highlighted by Krauss et al., can encourage a balanced approach where parents are aware of their children's activities without being overly controlling. Such training could include a workshop on communication skills, guidelines for developmentally appropriate boundaries, or encouraging active engagement in education. Collaboration between parents and educators is essential to maximize impact; for example, it can be done by establishing systems to keep parents informed about their child's progress and ways to support learning at home.

## **2) Relationship Between Family Support and Learning Motivation**

The study reveals a strong positive relationship between family support and early childhood learning motivation, with higher levels of support associated with greater motivation. Among 69 respondents, the majority perceived their family support as "Good Enough" (52.2%), while very few rated it as "Excellent" (2.9%). Similarly, most children exhibited "Average" (47.8%) or "High" (31.9%) learning motivation, with only a tiny percentage showing "Low" motivation (7.2%).

A significant proportion of the respondents, 33 (47.8%), exhibited moderate motivation. Additionally, 22 respondents (31.9%) displayed high motivation, which is a promising finding. This group reflects a considerable percentage of individuals likely to be proactive and committed, contributing positively to the research context. On the other hand, only 9 respondents (13.0%) demonstrated very high motivation, representing the most driven and ambitious individuals. Though more minor, this group could play a pivotal role in achieving exceptional outcomes in the study's area of focus. The lowest category, with 5 respondents (7.2%) showing low motivation, suggests that a small portion of the population might require additional support, interventions, or strategies to enhance their engagement and drive.

The Spearman Rank Correlation Test showed a significant correlation ( $r=0.623$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), indicating that family support plays a crucial role in enhancing children's motivation to learn, highlighting its importance in early childhood education. The Spearman Rank Correlation Test yielded a correlation coefficient ( $r=0.623$ ), indicating a strong positive relationship. That means that learning motivation also tends to increase as family support increases. It is similar to what was found in a study in 2021, which states that as family support increases, learning motivation and the use of learning strategies in early childhood also tend to increase ([Burgos et al., 2021](#)).

The result showed that children with better family support showed higher levels of English learning motivation. Conversely, children with lower levels of family support were likelier to exhibit lower levels of English learning motivation.

### **3) The Role of Family Support in Children's Development**

Family support shapes a child's emotional, academic, and language development. It can take various forms, such as instrumental support, which involves providing assistance, funds, or time to help children express their feelings ([Armstrong-Carter & Telzer, 2021](#)). As Dolan et al. stated, children's rights are best met in the family environment ([Dolan et al., 2020](#)).

To ensure children grow up motivated, families must accept their children's strengths and weaknesses. This acceptance allows children to feel comfortable with themselves, facilitates positive peer relationships, and enhances family communication ([Hadjicharalambous & Demetriou, 2020](#)). Family support, expressed through love, attention, and necessary facilities, helps children develop resilience and adaptability. Children receiving consistent support are more likely to experience emotional well-being and social competence.

However, a lack of motivation—whether intrinsic or extrinsic—can hinder children's learning experiences ([Zhang, 2023](#)). For instance, research has shown that students often exhibit moderate motivation levels, as reflected in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation questionnaires, where many respondents disagreed with positive statements about motivation. That indicates insufficient motivational support, disrupting learning processes and adversely affecting outcomes.

Some of the barriers to parental involvement are: family education level, having many children in the family, father's absence in classroom activities, parents' reluctance to do homework, parents not participating in seminars, lack of space, and overcrowded classrooms ([Ekinci-Vural & Doğan-Altun, 2021](#)). On the other hand, a lack of time, knowledge, skills, and resources could be a significant barrier to parental involvement in early childhood ([Mwarari et al., 2020](#)). Regarding the problem of lack of time, knowledge, skills, and resources, schools can provide practical resources for parents, such as providing study materials or after-school programs. However, schools need to recognize the diverse needs of families in order to accommodate them.

### **4) Family Influence on Language Acquisition**

The family also plays a significant role in language acquisition, especially in introducing children to a new language, such as English. According to Alfin & Pangastuti, children initially acquire language from their family environment ([Alfin & Pangastuti, 2020](#)). They learn their first language through interactions at home ([Wirth et al., 2022](#)), which serves as the foundation for their communication skills. Families that provide ample stimulation and encouragement for language development enhance their children's linguistic abilities ([Breeze & Halbach, 2024](#)). On the other hand, a lack of family support can delay language development and hinder communication skills.

Regarding parental support for children's language acquisition, a study suggested parents' active involvement can assist teachers in building an appropriate learning framework to support young children's first contact with a foreign language ([Korosidou et al., 2021](#)). In line with that, Chavez et al. stated that parent involvement in English language teaching serves as a brilliant step toward promoting literacy and communication among children ([Chavez et al., 2023](#)).

Family involvement, which includes offering advice, input, and motivation, is particularly critical during a child's early years of learning



English (Chavez et al., 2023). One form of impact is the increased motivation of young learners to learn English as a second language (Tanaka & Takeuchi, 2024). Children can develop strong language skills with the proper support, setting the stage for effective communication and academic success.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate a significant and positive correlation between family support and the learning motivation of early childhood students, particularly in their acquisition of English as a second language. The data reveal that children with more excellent family support exhibit higher levels of motivation, highlighting the pivotal role of familial involvement in fostering educational engagement.

To address the identified gaps in learning motivation, particularly in contexts like Triamerta Singaraja Kindergarten, interventions must prioritize empowering families with strategies to provide consistent, quality support. That includes workshops on effective communication, understanding developmental needs, and fostering a balanced, supportive learning environment at home. Additionally, collaborative efforts between educators and families can optimize learning outcomes by ensuring alignment in educational goals and practices.

Future research could expand on these findings by exploring the specific types of parental support that most significantly influence motivation and comparing these trends across diverse socio-cultural contexts. Such insights would provide valuable guidance for developing targeted programs that cater to the unique needs of children and their families, fostering a foundation for lifelong learning and success.

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