



## The Role of the Family in Supporting the Enhancement of Early Childhood Social Competence at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan Kabupaten Indramayu

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Article Info :	ABSTRACT
Accepted: 20 October 2025	<b>Background:</b> Family involvement is critical in early childhood social competence development, particularly in Islamic early childhood education where moral, spiritual, and social learning are integrated. However, empirical studies examining family support for social competence within Islamic educational contexts in Indonesia remain limited. <b>Objective:</b> This study examines how families support early childhood social competence enhancement at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan, Indramayu Regency, identifying family support mechanisms, barriers and facilitators of engagement, and the influence of Islamic pedagogical values on family involvement. <b>Method:</b> Applying qualitative design, data were collected from 12 parents, 6 teachers, and 3 administrators through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, classroom observations, and document analysis. Thematic analysis identified patterns related to family support practices, communication structures, and value-based engagement. <b>Findings and Implications:</b> Three primary support mechanisms emerged: parental understanding integrating Islamic values into social competence conceptualization, intentional home-based practices emphasizing emotional and social learning, and structured family-school communication facilitating child-centered collaboration. Islamic pedagogical values significantly shaped engagement, with parents perceiving social competence as moral-spiritual development rather than merely behavioral skill acquisition. Barriers included time constraints, limited parental knowledge, and socioeconomic pressures, though strong institutional commitment sustained engagement. These findings extend international literature by demonstrating that culturally and religiously informed frameworks enhance participation despite structural constraints. <b>Conclusion:</b> Authentic family-school partnerships are foundational for optimizing early childhood social competence within cultural and spiritual frameworks. Integrating Islamic values into family engagement strengthens children's emotional, moral, and social development, underscoring the need for contextually grounded involvement models in Islamic early childhood education.
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## INTRODUCTION

Social competence represents a fundamental dimension of early childhood development that encompasses the capacity to interact effectively with others, manage emotions appropriately, and navigate social situations competently (Kennedy, 2018). Early childhood, typically defined as the period between ages three to six years, constitutes a critical window for the development of social and emotional skills that form the foundation for lifelong success and wellbeing (Bierman et al., 2018; Mukhlisin et al., 2024). During this developmental period, children acquire essential competencies including self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness dimensions identified as core to social-emotional learning frameworks (Berlianty, 2019).

While early childhood education (ECE) institutions play a significant role in facilitating social competence development, research demonstrates that family environments constitute the primary context for social learning and emotional development in young children. As emphasized in recent scholarly literature, family involvement encompasses multiple dimensions including parental engagement in home-based learning activities, quality of parent-child interactions, and the establishment of emotionally supportive family atmospheres (Liu et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021). The family environment, characterized by factors such as cohesion, expressiveness, and quality relationships, significantly correlates with children's social skills development and behavioral adjustment (Adib Machrus, 2017).

*Raudatul Athfal* (RA), as Islamic-based early childhood education institutions under the guidance of Indonesia's Ministry of Religion, serves children aged four to six years with curricula emphasizing both academic development and spiritual-moral values rooted in Islamic teachings (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama RI, 2020). RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan, located in Indramayu Regency, West Java, represents one instance of such institutions operating within Indonesia's diverse educational landscape. Given the integration of religious education with cognitive development in RA contexts, understanding how family support mechanisms contribute to social competence enhancement becomes particularly significant for informing both pedagogical practices and family engagement strategies within these institutions (Harun, n.d.).

The urgency of this investigation derives from multiple intersecting considerations. First, while extensive international research has documented the relationship between family involvement and child development outcomes, the specific contextual dynamics of Islamic early childhood education institutions in Indonesia remain underexplored within academic

literature. Second, social competence deficits in early childhood frequently persist and predict negative trajectories in academic performance, peer relationships, and psychological wellbeing across subsequent developmental stages (Denzin, 2012). Early identification and intervention through enhanced family support mechanisms offer preventative potential for such trajectories.

Third, the Indonesian context presents particular considerations regarding family structures, socioeconomic diversity, and cultural values that may influence optimal approaches to family engagement in RA settings. Indramayu Regency, characterized as a developing region in West Java, reflects demographic and socioeconomic patterns that warrant localized investigation of family-school collaboration mechanisms. Fourth, institutional emphasis within RA on character education and moral development, aligned with Islamic pedagogical principles, necessitates examination of how family engagement specifically supports children's development of socially competent behaviors within these value-oriented contexts.

Current data on early childhood development and family engagement presents compelling rationales for focused investigation. International estimates indicate that approximately 69% of American children aged four to five years participate in center-based early childhood education programs, reflecting global trends toward institutional ECE provision. However, research consistently demonstrates that optimal child outcomes emerge through complementary home and school-based developmental supports (Yoshikawa et al., 2018).

Longitudinal research examining family involvement effects reveals that increased parental participation in home-based learning activities correlates positively with children's social skills development (*Permendikbud Nomor 45 Tahun 2015 Tentang Perubahan Atas Permendikbud No 68 Tahun 2014*, n.d.). Additionally, meta-analytic evidence identifies preschool participation as beneficial for social competence development in approximately 62% of examined studies, though outcomes vary considerably based on program quality and family characteristics (D'Onise et al., 2012; Puccioni, 2018). Indonesian-specific data on RA enrollment indicates substantial participation, yet limited empirical investigation has examined the mechanisms through which family-school partnerships optimize outcomes within these institutions.

Research on the Family Environment Scale (FES) applied across diverse populations demonstrates significant positive correlations between family cohesion, emotional expressiveness, and reduced family conflict with children's social adaptability and skill development, while these same environmental factors inversely correlate with behavioral problems and

anxiety manifestations ([Rodríguez et al., 2021](#)). These associations underscore the centrality of family environmental quality in determining social competence trajectories.

Prior scholarship examining family involvement in early childhood education has produced several relevant findings. Puccioni's (2018) analysis utilizing data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study identified positive associations between parental home-based involvement and children's social skills, though this research did not detect corresponding effects on children's self-regulatory skills. Ray and colleagues' experimental investigation of a preschool-based family-involvement intervention yielded no significant between-group differences in self-regulation skills, suggesting that specific intervention structures and implementation quality substantially moderate intervention effects ([Ray et al., 2020](#)).

Wang and Cheung's investigation provided partial confirmation that maternal and paternal involvement correlate with elevated child adjustment levels, indicating differential impacts dependent on family structure and parental role specificity. Recent research by De Fruyt and colleagues examining European populations revealed that home-based parental involvement associates with school engagement, which subsequently mediates associations with students' social-emotional development, suggesting indirect rather than direct pathways in some contexts ([De Fruyt et al., 2024](#); [Wang & Cheung, 2023](#)).

Denham and colleagues' extensive investigation of early childhood teachers as socialization agents identifies teachers' deliberate and responsive guidance as essential to children's social-emotional competence development, particularly when such guidance occurs within emotionally supportive classroom environments. However, these studies collectively indicate that research attending specifically to family support mechanisms within culturally and institutionally specific Islamic early childhood education contexts remains sparse (Denham et al., 2003; [Saona, 2025](#)).

Despite recognition within international literature of family involvement's importance for early childhood social competence, several notable gaps persist. First, the majority of empirical research originates from European and North American contexts, limiting generalizability to Indonesian educational institutions operating within distinct cultural, religious, and socioeconomic contexts. Second, existing research frequently examines family involvement as undifferentiated construct without attending to specific mechanisms through which families actively support children's social skill development. Third, research addressing family support roles specifically within Islamic early childhood education institutions remains minimal, despite such institutions'

substantial enrollment globally and their distinct pedagogical emphasis on character formation alongside academic development.

The novelty of the proposed investigation derives from several dimensions. This research addresses the specific institutional context of *Raudatul Athfal* as an Islamic early childhood education setting, examining contextually-situated family support mechanisms that may differ from secular institutional contexts. Furthermore, this investigation explicitly attends to mechanisms of family support encompassing dimensions such as parental understanding of social competence, specific supportive practices implemented at home, barriers to engagement, and family-school communication structures rather than treating family involvement as a unitary variable.

Such mechanistic understanding facilitates development of actionable recommendations for optimizing family engagement within RA contexts. Additionally, this investigation occurs within the Indonesian context, specifically in a provincial setting characterized by particular socioeconomic and demographic features, thereby contributing to the limited corpus of empirical research on family-school partnerships within Indonesian early childhood education institutions. The focus on RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan provides institutional-specific insights while contributing to broader understanding of RA contexts within Indonesia's educational system.

This investigation pursues the following research objectives: To identify and describe the specific mechanisms through which families support early childhood social competence enhancement within the RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan institutional context, including parental understanding of social competence, intentional supportive practices, and family-school communication structures. To examine the barriers and facilitators affecting family engagement in supporting social competence development, attending to institutional, family-level, and contextual factors that influence the extent and nature of family participation.

To analyze how Islamic pedagogical emphasis within the RA context shapes family understanding of and engagement in supporting children's social competence development, including dimensions of character formation and moral development. To develop evidence-based recommendations for enhancing family support mechanisms within RA institutional contexts that respect cultural and religious values while optimizing conditions for children's social competence development.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This investigation employed a qualitative research design to explore the multifaceted mechanisms through which families support early childhood social competence enhancement within RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan. A qualitative approach was selected as most appropriate for this inquiry based on several epistemological and methodological considerations. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for examining complex social phenomena, uncovering meanings embedded within participants' lived experiences, and generating contextually-grounded understanding of mechanisms and processes that operate within specific institutional settings (Creswell, 2013; Spector J. M. & Bishop, 2016).

Given the research objectives focused on identifying specific supportive mechanisms, barriers to engagement, and the interplay between Islamic pedagogical values and family engagement practices, a qualitative approach enabled comprehensive exploration of these dimensions beyond what quantitative measurement alone could provide. Furthermore, qualitative methodology facilitates the discovery of unexpected findings and emergent themes that might not be captured through predetermined instruments, thereby allowing the research to reveal nuanced aspects of family-school partnerships within the RA institutional context (Nazir, 2011). The exploratory and descriptive nature of this investigation necessitated the flexibility and depth that qualitative inquiry uniquely affords.

Data collection occurred through multiple techniques designed to capture diverse perspectives and rich descriptive information from participants (Ranney et al., 2015). Semi-structured in-depth interviews constituted the primary data collection method, conducted with parents (n=12), teachers (n=6), and school administrators (n=2) at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan. Interview protocols were developed to explore parental understanding of social competence, specific practices families implement to support social development, perceived barriers and facilitators to engagement, communication mechanisms between families and the institution, and understandings of how Islamic values inform child development perspectives. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian language to ensure participant comfort and communication clarity, with an average duration of 45-60 minutes per interview. Additionally, focused group discussions (FGD) were conducted with two groups of parents (n=8 participants per group) to explore collective perspectives on family support practices and institutional-family collaboration mechanisms.

Observations of classroom interactions, family engagement activities, and parent-teacher conferences (approximately 20 hours of observation) provided

contextual data regarding the nature of family-school interactions and social competence-related activities within the institutional setting. Document analysis of institutional records, curriculum materials emphasizing social-emotional development, family engagement policies, and communication materials supplemented interview and observation data, yielding triangulated evidence regarding institutional structures and family engagement frameworks.

Research participants were purposefully selected according to inclusion criteria designed to provide rich information regarding family engagement in social competence support. Parent participants (n=12) were selected to include families with children currently enrolled in RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan across multiple classroom levels (ages 4-6 years), with intentional inclusion of parents demonstrating varying levels of institutional engagement to capture diverse engagement perspectives. Teacher participants (n=6) comprised the complete teaching staff at the institution, including classroom teachers and specialists responsible for social-emotional development programming. Administrative participants (n=2) included the school principal and family engagement coordinator, individuals with comprehensive institutional knowledge regarding family-school partnership structures and policies.

FGD participants were selected from parents demonstrating active engagement in institutional activities, purposefully recruited to ensure discussion of substantive experiences with family support practices. Additionally, snowball sampling techniques were employed to identify key informants with particular expertise regarding family engagement mechanisms. All participants provided informed consent prior to participation, with particular attention to informed consent procedures respecting participants' educational backgrounds and language preferences. The total participant pool of 28 individuals provided diverse perspectives across family, teaching, and administrative roles, yielding sufficient depth for comprehensive analysis while remaining manageable for rigorous qualitative analysis.

Data analysis employed thematic analysis methodology combined with constant comparative techniques to systematically organize, code, and interpret qualitative data. Following data collection completion, all interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim from recorded audio files, with transcriptions conducted by trained research assistants and subsequently verified for accuracy (Rutakumwa et al., 2020). Thematic analysis proceeded through iterative phases: initial open coding involved systematic examination of transcripts to identify meaningful units and

preliminary codes reflecting key concepts; axial coding organized codes into thematic categories representing coherent clusters of related ideas; and selective coding identified overarching themes integrating the categorical structure and addressing research objectives directly (Lillard et al., 2013). The constant comparative method was applied throughout analysis, whereby emerging codes and themes were continuously compared with additional data segments, existing codes, and conceptual literature to ensure analytical rigor and comprehensive capture of data meaning.

Observational field notes were analyzed for patterns regarding family-school interaction quality, social competence-related activities, and institutional structures facilitating or constraining family engagement. Document analysis involved systematic examination for references to family engagement frameworks, social competence definitions, Islamic values related to child development, and family-school communication structures. Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis software was utilized to organize codes, manage large data volumes, and facilitate systematic retrieval and comparison of coded segments. Trustworthiness was enhanced through prolonged engagement at the research site (three months), persistent observation, triangulation across multiple data sources and collection methods, member checking wherein preliminary findings were shared with selected participants for verification and refinement, and peer debriefing with research colleagues to examine analytical interpretations and ensure findings reflected data rather than researcher bias.

The methodological approach pursued in this investigation serves multiple purposes aligned with the research objectives. First, the qualitative design enables comprehensive exploration of family support mechanisms operating within RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan, capturing the specific practices, understandings, and values informing family engagement in social competence support. Second, the purposeful participant selection and multiple data collection techniques facilitate identification of both barriers and facilitators affecting family engagement, thereby illuminating factors that institutional leaders might address to enhance family-school partnerships. Third, the emphasis on participants' own perspectives and meanings reveals how Islamic pedagogical values shape family understandings of child development and social competence, a dimension central to understanding RA contexts specifically.

Fourth, the rigorous analytical procedures and trustworthiness enhancement strategies ensure that findings represent faithful interpretation of participant experiences and institutional realities rather than researcher impositions, thereby generating credible evidence suitable for informing

recommendations for institutional practice. Finally, the detailed contextualization inherent in qualitative inquiry provides rich descriptive data that educational leaders and policymakers can use to understand family-school partnership dynamics within similar RA institutional contexts, contributing to evidence-based enhancement of early childhood education practices in Islamic educational settings (Creswell, 2014).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of qualitative data revealed that families supporting children's social competence development at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan employed multiple interconnected mechanisms organized across three primary dimensions: parental understanding and beliefs, intentional home-based support practices, and family-school communication structures. Parental understanding of social competence extended beyond narrow conceptualizations of behavioral compliance to encompass emotional expressiveness, relationship skills, empathy development, and self-regulation dimensions aligned with contemporary scholarly conceptualizations. Notably, participants frequently articulated social competence through Islamic values frameworks, emphasizing development of *akhlaq* (moral character), *adab* (respectful conduct), and *ta'awun* (cooperation) as culturally-embedded expressions of social competence. Parents described social competence as "children learning how to live together harmoniously while following Islamic guidance" and emphasized development of compassion, honesty, and respect as foundational.

Regarding intentional support practices, parents implemented diverse strategies including emotional coaching through everyday conversations, role-modeling prosocial behaviors, facilitating peer interaction opportunities, and creating emotionally supportive home environments characterized by warmth and responsiveness. Parents reported deliberately modeling conflict resolution strategies, discussing social situations encountered in daily life, and reinforcing positive social behaviors through specific praise and recognition. Teachers corroborated these findings, noting that children whose families actively supported social development demonstrated notably enhanced peer relationships, emotional regulation, and prosocial behaviors in classroom contexts. One teacher commented, "Children from families engaged in social coaching clearly show more confidence in group activities and better ability to manage frustration."

Family-school communication structures included regular informal conversations, attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in family engagement activities, and utilization of informal communication

channels. RA leadership actively facilitated communication regarding children's social development, providing parents with specific information about social competencies their children were developing and suggesting home-based strategies for support (Li et al., 2023). Document analysis revealed that RA curriculum materials, family engagement policies, and parent communication materials explicitly addressed social competence development, indicating institutional prioritization of family engagement in this domain.

Analysis identified multiple barriers constraining family engagement in supporting social competence. Time limitations emerged as the most frequently cited barrier, with parents citing occupational demands, household responsibilities, and multiple children requiring care as constraints on engagement. Several parents expressed difficulty sustaining consistent engagement practices while managing economic pressures common in the provincial context. Limited parental knowledge regarding specific developmental processes and evidence-based support strategies constituted a second significant barrier. Despite generally positive attitudes toward family involvement, several parents acknowledged insufficient understanding of social competence development mechanisms and uncertainty regarding optimal support strategies. Institutional barriers included limited alternative communication modalities for families with varying work schedules, minimal systematic evaluation of family engagement program effectiveness, and variable quality of family-school communication across different teachers.

Facilitators promoting engagement included institutional leadership commitment to family partnerships, teachers' welcoming attitudes toward parent participation, accessibility of engagement opportunities, and cultural alignment between family values and institutional practices. Parents particularly appreciated engagement approaches respecting Islamic values and recognizing family expertise regarding their children. Teachers identified parental motivation to support child development, recognition of family-school partnership benefits, and clear institutional communication as primary facilitators. The organizational practice of regular parent-teacher conferences specifically discussing social development facilitated meaningful engagement, as did informal conversations enabling relationship development between families and teachers. Additionally, engagement activities incorporating religious education such as family discussions of Islamic moral teachings and their application to social interaction aligned particularly well with RA's value system and enhanced participation rates.

Qualitative analysis revealed that Islamic pedagogical values substantially shaped family understandings of and engagement in social competence

support. Parents conceptualized social competence development as inherently moral-spiritual process, not merely behavioral skill acquisition. Specifically, participants integrated Islamic principles including Quranic teachings on compassion and justice, Prophetic example (Sunnah) regarding respectful interpersonal conduct, and community values (ummah) emphasizing collective responsibility. Parents articulated beliefs that authentic social competence required "hearts aligned toward goodness" rather than merely learned behavioral repertoires. One parent stated, "Teaching children to be kind only because of rules is incomplete; they must learn kindness comes from Islamic values and love of Allah's creation."

Family engagement practices reflected this integration. Parents reported discussing how social behaviors aligned with Islamic teachings, using Quranic verses and Hadith to illustrate principles of compassion, honesty, and respect. Family engagement activities incorporating religious dimensions received enhanced participation. Teachers reported that children frequently referenced Islamic teachings when explaining their social reasoning and behaviors, indicating successful family transmission of values-integrated social competence understanding. This finding suggests that effective family support mechanisms within RA contexts necessarily incorporate rather than separate religious and social-emotional development.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Alignment with Established Frameworks and Theoretical Perspectives**

The findings from this investigation extend and contextualize existing theoretical frameworks regarding family involvement in early childhood development. Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement provides useful organizational structure for categorizing the family engagement mechanisms identified in this research. Within Epstein's framework, parenting (Type 1 involvement) occurs when family practices and home environments support children as students and when schools understand children's families; communicating (Type 2 involvement) occurs when educators, students, and families design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications; and volunteering (Type 3 involvement) involves recruiting and organizing parent help and support and counting parents as audience for student activities.

The current investigation identified all these involvement types operating at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan. However, the research extends Epstein's framework by demonstrating that effective family engagement within Islamic institutional contexts requires not merely implementation of involvement types, but cultural and religious contextualization that aligns engagement

approaches with institutional values and family worldviews. The study findings also align with and extend contemporary research on emotional competence as pathway to social competence. Denham's longitudinal research demonstrates that preschoolers' patterns of emotional expressiveness, emotion regulation, and emotion knowledge contribute to both concurrent and kindergarten social competence, with emotional competence assessed at 3 to 4 years of age contributing to long-term outcomes.

The current investigation extends this work by identifying specific family mechanisms facilitating emotional competence development and documenting how families operationalize support for these dimensions. Particularly notable is the finding that parents implemented emotional coaching strategies deliberate guidance through which parents helped children identify emotions, understand emotional causes, and develop emotion regulation strategies directly supporting development of emotional competence dimensions Denham identifies as predictive of social competence.

Additionally, research consistently demonstrates that parent involvement is associated with children's social competence, with identification and understanding of variables impacting parent involvement essential for developing interventions enhancing parent involvement. This investigation contributes to such understanding by identifying specific mechanisms of family support and contextual factors affecting engagement within the Indonesian RA context. The barriers identified—including time constraints, limited knowledge, and communication challenges—align with barriers documented internationally, while facilitators emphasizing cultural and religious alignment represent contextually-specific findings extending international literature.

The study revealed that families strategically supported children's emotional competence encompassing emotional expressiveness, emotion knowledge, and emotion regulation as primary pathway to enhanced social competence. Children's emotional competence encompasses abilities vital for developing self-efficacy during social interactions and building relationships, with indicators including emotional expressiveness, emotion knowledge and ability to identify others' emotions, capacity to manage and control emotions, emerging empathy, and learning cultural and social expectations for emotional expression across situations. Families in this study deliberately fostered development of these emotional competence dimensions through multiple strategies.

Emotional expressiveness support involved parents encouraging children to articulate emotions, validating emotional experiences, and modeling healthy emotional expression. Parents created safe environments where

children could discuss emotional experiences without shame or punishment, particularly important for emotions perceived as negative. One parent described approach: "When my child is angry, I don't punish or dismiss. I help him understand why he feels angry and what he could do instead. This is how he learns to express anger appropriately." Emotion knowledge development occurred through parents labeling emotions, discussing emotional causes and consequences, and helping children recognize emotional states in peers. Parents used daily situations siblings' conflicts, peer challenges, community interactions as teachable moments for emotion knowledge development.

Emotion regulation support most critical dimension for social competence involved multiple parental strategies. Parents employed co-regulation, wherein they provided external support for children's emotional regulation through soothing, distraction, cognitive reframing, and guided problem-solving. As children matured, parents gradually transferred responsibility from co-regulated to self-regulated emotion management. Parents taught specific emotion regulation strategies including deep breathing, taking breaks in safe spaces, physical activity, and cognitive strategies. Importantly, parents embedded these skills within Islamic frameworks, framing emotion regulation as obedience to Islamic teachings emphasizing patience (*sabr*), trust in Allah (*tawakkul*), and seeking wisdom (*hikma*).

The investigation demonstrates that authentic family-school partnerships at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan reflected Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems perspective and Epstein's overlapping spheres model, wherein schools, families, and communities exert mutually reinforcing influences on child development. The research revealed that institutional leaders consciously structured engagement approaches recognizing this interdependence, as exemplified through deliberate information-sharing regarding children's social development, provision of home-based activity suggestions, and incorporation of family input into institutional social competence programming. Teachers' emphasis on collaborative problem-solving regarding children's social challenges rather than unilateral professional determination reflected overlapping spheres conceptualization.

However, the investigation also identified tensions within partnership enactment. Some teachers expressed concerns about parental expertise in child development, occasionally preferring to retain professional authority rather than fully embrace collaborative partnerships. A small number of parents expressed anxiety about institutional judgment of their parenting practices, constraining transparency regarding home situations. These findings suggest that while overlapping spheres framework provides useful conceptualization, authentic implementation requires deliberate attention to

power dynamics, mutual respect, and genuine valuing of family expertise alongside professional knowledge.

A particularly novel contribution of this investigation concerns demonstration that Islamic pedagogical values fundamentally shape family engagement approaches and optimal partnership structures within RA institutional contexts. While international family involvement research frequently develops context-general frameworks, the current study reveals that within Islamic educational institutions, effective family engagement necessarily incorporates religious and moral dimensions alongside practical skill development. This finding challenges implicit assumption within some international literature that family engagement operates similarly across diverse institutional and cultural contexts.

Specifically, the integration of Islamic values into family engagement strengthened participation and deepened support intensity. Parents responded with particularly high engagement when institutional communication explicitly connected social competence development to Islamic principles and when engagement activities incorporated religious education. The finding that children frequently referenced Islamic teachings when explaining social reasoning suggests that values-integrated social competence development creates more meaningful, internalized learning than purely behavioral approaches. This aligns with character education literature emphasizing that sustainable moral and social development requires integration with foundational value systems.

The investigation reveals that family support mechanisms' effectiveness depends substantially on implementation quality rather than mere activity provision. Parents implementing emotional coaching with consistency, authenticity, and developmental sensitivity—gradually transferring regulation responsibility as children matured—evidenced more substantial child social competence enhancement than parents implementing comparable activities more superficially. Teachers' specific, timely feedback regarding children's social progress motivated sustained family engagement more effectively than general information. Engagement activities explicitly connecting family practices to observable child development outcomes—such as parent observations of children's enhanced peer relationships following specific engagement approaches reinforced engagement commitment more powerfully than generic exhortations regarding family involvement importance.

These findings suggest that professional development for early childhood teachers must extend beyond promoting family involvement generally to developing sophisticated implementation skills: capacity to provide specific,

actionable feedback; ability to recognize and affirm family expertise and cultural values; skills facilitating genuine partnership rather than parent compliance; and competence assessing family engagement program quality and effectiveness.

While substantial research documents family involvement benefits, the current investigation identifies specific contextual factors in the Indonesian provincial context constraining engagement. Economic pressures requiring multiple family members' employment, limited childcare alternatives for younger siblings, and transportation challenges limit some families' physical availability for engagement activities. These structural barriers require institutional responses extending beyond individual family motivation enhancement: flexible engagement timing, alternative participation modalities, integration of engagement into existing family routines rather than requiring additional time commitments, and community-level support addressing economic and logistical constraints.

The finding that limited parental knowledge regarding social competence development mechanisms and evidence-based support strategies constrained engagement despite positive attitudes suggests that institutional family education programming, delivered accessibly and respecting diverse educational backgrounds, could enhance engagement. Parents value information regarding developmental processes and concrete support strategies; institutions providing such information experienced enhanced engagement. This aligns with research demonstrating that parental sense of efficacy confidence in ability to positively influence child development—predicts engagement levels (Albanese et al., 2019).

This investigation contributes novel understanding in several dimensions. First, while extensive international research documents family involvement importance, empirical investigation of family support mechanisms specifically within Islamic early childhood education institutions remains minimal. The current study demonstrates that Islamic values fundamentally shape optimal family engagement approaches, requiring institutional adaptation of generic family involvement frameworks to incorporate religious and moral dimensions. Second, the focus on mechanisms specific practices families employ to support social competence rather than involvement as undifferentiated variable reveals actionable strategies early childhood professionals can recommend and support. Third, the emphasis on emotional competence as pathway to social competence provides specific developmental focus useful for targeting professional development and family education. Fourth, the identification of barriers and facilitators within the specific

provincial Indonesian context contributes to the limited literature on early childhood family partnerships within developing nation contexts.

Furthermore, the study reveals that when institutional contexts explicitly value and systematically support family involvement in child social competence development, substantial engagement occurs despite economic and logistical constraints. The willingness of families at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan to maintain high engagement despite time and economic pressures suggests that institutional commitment to partnership genuinely resonates with family values and priorities. This finding challenges deficit narratives sometimes present in international literature attributing low engagement to family apathy or prioritization failure, instead revealing that engagement patterns reflect institutional structures, communication quality, and genuine valuing of family expertise.

The findings suggest several implications for enhancing early childhood institutional practice. First, institutions should assess current family engagement approaches for cultural and religious alignment, adapting generic frameworks to reflect community values and worldviews. Second, early childhood educators require professional development in specific family support mechanisms and implementation quality—not merely engagement activity provision but skillful facilitation of genuine partnerships. Third, institutions should implement systematic programs educating families regarding social-emotional competence development and providing specific, developmentally-informed suggestions for home-based support. Fourth, institutions must address structural barriers constraining family engagement through flexible scheduling, alternative participation modalities, and community advocacy addressing economic and logistical constraints. Finally, institutions should establish systematic evaluation of family engagement program quality and child outcomes, allowing continuous improvement and evidence-based refinement of approaches.

**Table 1.** Summary of Family Support Mechanisms for Social Competence Enhancement at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Primary Mechanisms</b>	<b>Illustrative Examples</b>	<b>Barriers Identified</b>
Emotional Competence Support	Emotional coaching; Emotional expression validation; Co-regulation; Emotion knowledge development;	Parents labeling emotions, discussing emotional causes, teaching breathing/self-calming techniques;	Limited parental knowledge of developmental processes; Time constraints for consistent implementation; Uncertainty

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Primary Mechanisms</b>	<b>Illustrative Examples</b>	<b>Barriers Identified</b>
	Emotion regulation strategy instruction	Parents modeling emotional expression; Framing emotion regulation through Islamic values ( <i>sabr, tawakkal</i> )	regarding age-appropriate strategies
Home-Based Social Practice Opportunities	Facilitating peer interactions; Role-modeling prosocial behaviors; Family discussions of social situations; Reinforcement of positive social behaviors	Parents arranging playdates and peer interaction; Parents discussing daily social challenges and potential solutions; Parents using Quranic teachings to illustrate social principles; Specific praise for prosocial actions	Economic pressures limiting social activity engagement; Transportation and childcare constraints; Limited access to diverse peer groups in provincial context
Family-School Communication & Partnership	Regular parent-teacher conferences; Informal daily communication; Participation in family engagement activities; Information-sharing regarding child social development	Deliberate teacher feedback on children's social progress; Institutional communication connecting social development to Islamic values; Parent participation in religiously-integrated engagement activities; Teachers providing specific recommendations for home support	Variable communication quality across teachers; Limited systematic feedback mechanisms; Insufficient institutional evaluation of program effectiveness; Language and educational background differences affecting communication clarity

Source: Data processed

Table 1 presents a comprehensive summary of three primary dimensions of family support mechanisms identified through qualitative analysis at RA Subulussalam Juntikedokan. The first dimension, Emotional Competence Support, encompasses foundational mechanisms through which parents

develop children's emotional awareness, expression, and regulation capacities. Parents employ emotional coaching strategies, particularly by labeling emotions and discussing their causes, while simultaneously validating children's emotional experiences. Notably, families frame emotion regulation techniques such as breathing and self-calming strategies—within Islamic value frameworks (*sabr*, patience; *tawakkul*, trust in Allah), thereby integrating religious teachings with emotional skill development. However, barriers including limited parental knowledge of developmental processes and time constraints for consistent practice implementation restrict the scope and consistency of these supportive practices.

The second dimension, Home-Based Social Practice Opportunities, addresses mechanisms facilitating children's actual social interaction and behavioral learning. Families actively create peer interaction opportunities, model prosocial behaviors, and use everyday situations as teachable moments for discussing social challenges. The integration of Quranic teachings into family discussions of social behavior represents a culturally distinctive feature reflecting the Islamic educational context. Barriers to engagement in this dimension are primarily structural and economic: transportation limitations, childcare constraints, and financial pressures restricting families' capacity to facilitate diverse social experiences constrain the breadth of opportunities available to children in this provincial context.

The third dimension, Family-School Communication & Partnership, addresses institutional structures and processes facilitating collaborative family-school engagement. Effective communication involves regular conferences, informal interactions, and explicit institutional messaging connecting social development to Islamic values. This dimension highlights the importance of institutional quality and consistency; variable teacher communication practices and insufficient systematic evaluation mechanisms represent significant barriers limiting partnership effectiveness. Collectively, these three dimensions demonstrate that optimal family support for social competence development operates across emotional, behavioral, and relational domains, requiring coordinated effort across home and school contexts while acknowledging the structural constraints and knowledge limitations families encounter.

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engagement within Indonesian institutional contexts. The Foundation's recognition of the importance of understanding family-school partnerships in Islamic early childhood education institutions provided essential resources enabling comprehensive data collection, qualitative analysis, and rigorous dissemination of findings.

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## CONCLUSION

This investigation examined family support mechanisms for early childhood social competence enhancement within RA Subulussalam Juntikedokanin Indramayu Regency, employing qualitative methodology to explore parental perspectives, institutional practices, and contextual factors shaping family-school partnerships. The study identified three primary dimensions of family support parental understanding and beliefs regarding social competence, intentional home-based support practices encompassing emotional competence development and social learning opportunities, and structured family-school communication mechanisms operating interdependently to facilitate children's social development. A particularly novel finding concerns the central role of Islamic values in shaping family engagement approaches and children's internalization of social competence; effective family support within RA contexts necessarily integrates religious and moral dimensions. alongside behavioral skill development, requiring contextualization of generic family involvement frameworks to align with institutional values and community worldviews. While barriers including time constraints, limited parental knowledge, and socioeconomic pressures constrained some families' engagement, the investigation revealed substantial participation motivated by institutional commitment to genuine partnership, professional communication regarding child development, and engagement approaches respecting family expertise and cultural values. These findings extend international literature on family involvement by demonstrating that

when institutions systematically support family engagement in social competence development and deliberately incorporate cultural and religious alignment, families maintain high involvement despite structural constraints, suggesting that deficit narratives attributing low engagement to family apathy require reconsideration. The investigation contributes actionable insights for early childhood educators and institutional leaders regarding mechanisms supporting social competence development, professional development priorities for enhancing family partnership quality, and the necessity of culturally and religiously-informed approaches to family engagement within Islamic educational institutions. Future research should extend this investigation across multiple RA institutions to examine generalizability of findings, employ longitudinal designs to document child outcomes associated with varying family support intensities and qualities, and investigate institutional and systemic factors at national policy levels affecting early childhood family partnerships in Indonesia. Ultimately, this research affirms that authentic family-school partnerships grounded in mutual respect, clear communication, and shared commitment to children's holistic development—encompassing social, emotional, and moral dimensions—constitute foundational structures through which early childhood institutions optimize conditions for children's flourishing within culturally and spiritually meaningful frameworks.

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