

Parent-teacher Communication as a New Solution to Increase Student Engagement in the Elementary School

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Abstract: One of several ways to increase engagement in the learning process of students in the classroom is through two-way communication between teacher and parents. Parent-teacher in the learning process is a step forward that both parties communicate each other to create success in the field of education for the next generation. This study aimed to determine the effect of PTC (Parent Teacher Communication) through communication technology towards the involvement of student in the class in grade four in SDN X Yogyakarta. The design of this study is two group pre test post test design. The primary data collection methods used in this research is student engagement behavioral checklist through observation. In addition, secondary data obtained from the results of final tests and interviews. Based on the research, it was found that the PTC has an effect on student engagement with demonstrated by the average score of post test in the experimental group increased from 21,25 to 29,9 and it's persisted during follow up in 28,5. While the secondary data obtained through mid term and final examination showed improvement, as well as interviews with parents who said that PTC is very helpful for child's learning process. Based on that explanation, it can be said that PTC could affect student engagement. Absolutely, it can develop the student achievement.

Keywords: Parent Teacher Communication, student engagement, communication technology, increase.

I. INTRODUCTION

The national development makes people of the country live in peaceful and prosperity. One of the factors that support the progress of the nation is education. The nation's progress could be seen from its education because it is a process which makes the country has a high quality of human resources. The quality of human resource is very important because it can support the educational progress. The good quality of human resource is also coming from a good education. Nugroho, Desti, and Manik (2006) said that Indonesia is a country that has low human resources. That matter based on a survey done by PERC (Political and Economic Risk Consultancy) based in Hong Kong that the quality of education in Indonesia ranks 12th or the worst in Asia.

One of the important components in the improvement of human resource is student engagement in the learning process. The student engagement is considered to be an important concern because it shows the engagement of students in class, school, and fellow students (Axelson & Arend, 2011). Student's engagement in the class is a concept that is very important to the students' success (Hart, Stewart, & Jimerson, 2011).

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The previous researches according to Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (Parsons, Nuland, & Parsons, 2014) indicate that the student engagement is important for their achievements. According to Brophy and Good (Parsons, Nuland, & Parsons, 2014), it's possible because the students engagement can represent the punctuality of the student's task that it is one of the aspects which is could be seen in the classroom.

According to Santrock (2011), primary school age (6-12 years) is phase which a child has the development of emotion, cognition, and psychomotor. One of the forms of development is through the engagement of children in the process of learning in the classroom. The student engagement in the classroom is including active discussion, do their task, listen to the lessons, etc. Student engagement has to be supported by several parties, both teachers and parents as the closest environment of students in the home. The result from Palts and Harro-Loit (2015) showed that parents with lower communication only give attention about the health and the grade, besides parents that maintain higher communication would discuss feedback that has been got and evaluate their children.

Many cases show how student have a lower classroom participation such as forget to do their homework, unfinished assessment, etc. For an example, it could be found in one of the Elementary School in Yogyakarta. One of the students which have a low intensity of class participation in that Elementary School, they who often skip their assignment is a student with lack of parent's control. In fact, due to Henderson., et al (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005) parents control is very important and influencing children active participation in class. If this kind of case left untouched, then it will lead to a bad grade and poor academic improvement.

According to Berger (2004), a relationship between parents and teacher in the learning process are a progress which is both of them communicated to create a successfully in education. That communication could help the students to memorize and engage in their school activities. The example in tasks that have been given by the teacher, students would do their task with parent's role although it was only to remembering students. Nowadays, many cases of parent-teacher communication happen only indirect communication. For an example which happened in the Elementary School that we observed, parent-teacher communication happened just if the student have a complex problem only or if toward socialization exam. Hence, it will be better if communication between the parent and teacher should be increased because

parents are very important for student's engagement in the learning process which is related to a preparation before going to learn in school. The teacher also has a significant role because of it the activeness of student could be improved. Teacher makes an effort to give an opportunity for the student to being active in class such as searching, processing, and manage input of learning process.

Therefore, according to that explanation, authors would like to inform how is the role of parent teacher communication through communication technology can increase student engagement. Authors use communication technology as media for parent teacher communication because based on Tossell., et al (2015), at the advanced era now almost everyone use smartphone. While the media is commonly used as an SMS (Short Message System), Line, Whatsapp, etc. Communication using this medium can be considered very helpful in communication between parents and teachers because it can share each other and communicate both ways.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is a stage how the emergence of student engagement in a learning and how students connect school, school, and fellow students (Axelson & Arend, 2011). In line with this, Haryanto (2012) also means the involvement of students as active participation of students in the learning process. While NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) (in Axelson & Arend, 2011) defines the engagement of students is a major problem associated with the behavior of the students in which such behavior can be observed. Student engagement is represented through the time and energy devoted student in the learning process with the support of the school (George., et al, 2008).

Brophy and Good (Parsons, Nuland, & Parsons, 2014) said that in the process of learning, student engagement conceived as timeliness in performing tasks where it is the only aspect of teacher commands directly in the classroom. Fredrick, Blumenfeld, and Paris (Sutherland, 2010) said that student engagement is also seen as a deterrent that lets in a decrease in motivation and achievement. In addition, Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, and Kindermann (Turner, 2012) said that the student engagement is often associated with short-term goals and long-term goals of students overall. Short-term goals could be a process of improvement in aspects of learning, values, and achievement while the long-term goals include improving the pattern of retention, graduation, and academic resilience. There are six components outlined by Haryanto (2012) the student engagement in the learning process, such as the student is at the core of the learning process, the teacher as a facilitator and observer, attractive or not the subject matter and level of mastery of students and teachers, comfortable atmosphere and classrooms, the right timing, and facilities that support teaching and learning in the classroom. Typically, the factors examined in student engagement related to student background, institutional characteristics, the interaction between the students and the school or friends, students' perception regarding the learning environment, and the quality of the student effort devoted to education (George., et al, 2008).

Sutherland (2010) describes the student engagement in the classroom is affected by two factors which are the activities at the school and a sense of belonging. In that study, the student engagement will occur at two levels, namely the relationship of students with learning environments (schools, decision-making, participation, and relationship with teachers) and students' relationships with their own learning (learning motivation, comfort, and interest in students with lessons). Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (Parsons, Nuland, & Parsons, 2014) says that the active role of the students is also required in the process of achieving accomplishments. This engagement is defined by Hart, Stewart, and Jimerson (2011) as an activity that is based on the motivation and ideas in completing the task. In addition, students would also learn more effective and tend to retain the information that has been obtained and can transfer them in another form. Student engagement can't be separated from the role of the teacher because the teacher plays an important role in student engagement in the classroom during the learning process (Ahmad., et al, 2014). Dimjati and Mudijono (Haryanto, 2012) also stated the same thing that teachers can encourage students' activity in the classroom. The role that could be run by teachers, provide an opportunity to be active in the classroom good looking, process, and manage the acquisition of learning.

Based on research Nurtjahjo (2010), the behavior that includes student engagement are as follows: 1) complete the assigned task 2) listening to the teacher's explanations 3) say no to friends to tease 4) eyes looking straight at the blackboard while the teacher write or explain 5) raised his hand to answer a teacher's question 6) participated in the discussion 7) copy the records provided by the teacher. While disengage behavior can be seen through the following behaviors: 1) not doing the homework 2) do not listen to the teacher's explanations 3) read books that are not related to the current lesson 4) joking with friends/ respond joke friend (poke, throwing papers, tease, chat with sign language, etc.) 5) eye view in the other direction other than teachers and friends of the group when the teacher explain/ give instructions 6) daydreaming/ eyes looked empty/ dreamy 7) doodling paper/ book coretannya no relationship with lessons 8) playing stationery/ fingers in order to distract him from the lessons 8) play hands, body, and head on the table, stretched but did not return attention to the teacher/task.

Parent Teacher Communication

Berger (2004) defined parent-teacher communication in the learning process as a step forward which both of them communicate for construct a success on education for the next generation. Parent-teacher communication in learning process will impact the students. One of the effects is an active parent engagement on children's school which is impact student indirectly. According to Henderson., et al (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005), parent engagement is very important in supporting children's learning in formal school and courses. Hawes and Jesney (Tolada, 2012) interpreted that parent engagement in the learning process as parent's effort in participating in student education and experience. Gonzales-DeHass (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2010) mentioned that parent engagement

in learning process will directly relate to children motivation and achievement.

According to a research of Turner (2012), explained that there is a positive and significant correlation between parent engagement in learning process perceived by students and teacher reports toward emotional engagement of students in class. Research conducted by Chairani, Wiendijarti, and Novianti (2009) also proved that optimal interpersonal communication between parent and teacher would very influent the formation of child behavior.

Hawes (2008) said that teacher has to communicate with parent immediately, especially when the teacher is aware of a serious academic or discipline issue. Sheperd (2010) gives strategy to the teacher in a process of increasing communication with the parent such as send a message to the parent about the target has been achieved by the student and another positive message, also show acceptance from teacher to student. Positive words allow the professional and interactive relation between teacher and parent. According to the research by Epstein and Dauber (Berger, 2004), instructed to the teacher to inform parent to guide the student on learning at home such as read and ask about their activities in class, play activities, come to school and library, and help students to do their homework.

In the era of internet society, the rapid evolution of communication technology has broadened the channels such as telephone, voice message, e-letters, and blogs formats of communication between families and school (Palts & Harro-Loit, 2015). By presenting the findings from an empirical study Vornberg and Garret (Palts & Harro-Loit, 2015) claimed that, although parents want the same information about their children, they prefer to receive it in different ways. Graham-Clay (Palts & Harro-Loit, 2015) points out the difference between one-way communication (which occurs when teachers seek to inform parents about events, activities, or a student's progress through a variety of sources) and two-way communication. Graham-Clay (Palts & Harro-Loit, 2015) revealed that the latter involves interactive dialogue between teachers and parents through telephone calls, home visits, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and various school-based community activities.

II. METHOD

This research is experimental developmental research that serves to test, check, or to prove a hypothesis about the causal relationship between variables (Hadi, 2015). In this study, there are two main variables that will be examined are independent variables and the dependent variable. The independent variable or variables that are used as material intervention is the relationship between parents and teachers while the dependent variable is the variable that is measured is the involvement of students in the classroom. The involvement of students as the dependent variable given the treatment in the form of communication between parents and teachers with the use of the role of communications technology in the form of SMS. Measurements were made after the intervention was completed. This research was conducted in SDN X Yogyakarta for approximately four months, namely since the end of February 2016 to the end of

June 2016. The process of data collection started on March 31, 2016 until the date of June 15, 2016.

III. RESEARCH SUBJECT

The study involved a fourth grader at SDN X of Yogyakarta as many as 13 people where the main criterion for selection is the subject of the subject's parents are active users of mobile phones. In this study, the overall students will be divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group is a group that is given in the form of PTC intervention and the control group is the group that was not given the intervention PTC. The experimental group of eight people, while the control group of five people. Researchers used the technique of random assignment to locate the students into two groups. Technique of random assignment is a technique of determining subjects in the experimental group and a control group that was done by draw the names of the subject (Thach and Berger, 2005). It is intended that all subjects in the study had the same chances to serve as members of the experimental group or the control group

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

The design used in this study is a randomized two-group pretest posttest between subject ie independent variable measurements before and after the intervention given to randomize the placement of subjects in each group (Seniati et al, 2015).

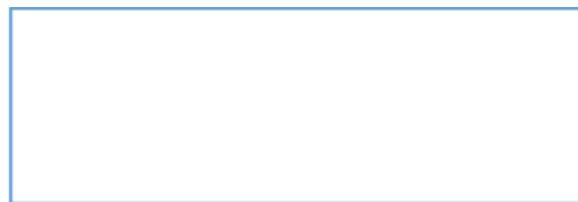


Fig. 1: Experimental design

The interventions given to parents in the form of two-way communication between teachers and parents. Form of communication between parents and teachers in the form of short messages using SMS in the format contains homework, course materials for the next day, the development of children in the classroom, children in school activities, and remind parents to control their children. The SMS also contains positive sentences from teachers to parents. During the intervention, the SMS is given every day in the late afternoon to evening to parents of students in the experimental group. Furthermore, after providing treatment in the form of SMS to the parents, student engagement data retrieval is done by recording the form of student engagement in the classroom using cameras placed at each corner of the classroom. In this study design, measurement is performed three times, namely the time before the given intervention (pretest), after a given intervention (posttest), and a few weeks after being given the intervention (follow up). Last measurement or follow-up is useful to know whether the effects of the intervention persisted.

V. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

Data collection is done based on aspects of student engagement in the classroom. According to Hart et al. (2011), there are three aspects of student engagement in the classroom is the involvement of behavioral, cognitive engagement, and affective involvement. Three aspects are obtained in different ways. Involvement of behavior is the primary data, while the involvement of cognitive and affective involvement is secondary data.

Behavioral aspects akau calculated based on the total number of points in each measurement using student engagement by Nurtjahjo behavioral checklist (2010). The measuring instrument consists of nine behavioral involvement of students in the class, defined by the results of previous observations. This determination using the method of observation with five observers who have been trained before. Researcher using inter-rater which measures four students who were randomly selected to be observed jointly by the observer where the results will be averaged. This is intended to avoid the assessment is too high or too low on the behavior displayed by the students. According to Chapman (2003), the involvement of students is calculated at intervals every minute for 40 minutes. But in this study, measurements were performed for 35 minutes in accordance with the time duration of the subjects and the limited ability of the camera's memory. Measurements performed three times in the first lesson by installing a camera in the corner of the classroom. Students are said to be engaged in the classroom when the manifest behavior of engagement for at least 35 seconds from 60 seconds of observation time. If students meet these criteria will be calculated by one point from the 35-minute observation time.

A second aspect of cognitive engagement is measured by the value of Middle Semester Exam (UTS) as pretest and Final Examination Semester (UAS) is used as a posttest. UTS value is used as a pretest for UTS held prior to the intervention while the value of UAS used as a posttest because it was held after the intervention is completed. Students are said to be engaged in the classroom when the UAS value is higher than the value of UTS.

Aspects of affection involvement measured through parental interviews to the experimental group and the class teacher. The interviews were conducted after the last measurement. The interview consisted of several questions related to student activities at home after a given intervention. In addition, the interview guidelines also contain matters relating to the impact of their interventions. Students are said to be engaged in the classroom when the results of interviews with parents indicate that parents say students are more interested in learning, better enjoy the lessons, and more accountable to the homework given.

VI. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The procedure consisted of four parts: preparation, execution, data processing, and evaluation. Here is a translation of each of these began:

a. Preparation

- 1) Preparation of measuring instruments to study the measurement tools that already exist as well as the preparation of the administration is to make the necessary records researcher, for example the data of students and parents, the data use of mobile phones of parents, tables recording homework by teachers, tables subjects the next day, the seating charts, and manufacture of SMS templates that will be sent to parent.
- 2) Preparation of data capture equipment such as the camera and laptop.
- 3) Determination of the appropriate criteria and briefing observer.
- 4) Filtration subject of the elimination of students who do not meet the criteria and randomization of subjects of dividing groups randomly.
- 5) determination of the subject as the subject of inter-rater with a lottery.

b. Implementation

- 1) Pre test. Data collection was performed by mounting the camera to record conditions in every corner of the classroom is not possible to reach students. Installation is done a few minutes before the students enter the classroom. After approximately 35 minutes, or one subject, researchers will take a camera.
- 2) Mapping seating for purposes of ease of observation which divides student sitting adjacent to the data observed by the observer then distributed to the appropriate mapping observer.
- 3) Documenting homework and other information as a template SMS is done every day after the completion of the learning process. This is useful as information to be provided to the parents as a form of intervention provided by the researcher.
- 4) The intervention is requested permission from the teacher that researchers will use the name of the teacher to send sms and requested that the school did not communicate with the control group parents. Interventions performed for about 1 month 2 weeks continuously.
- 5) posttest done when the intervention ended.
- 6) Follow-up was a few weeks after the intervention ended.
- 7) Collecting data on observations made at any time after the distribution of data is done by the observer.
- 8) Data of the UTS and UAS value is done after students completed the UAS.
- 9) Interviews with teachers and parents do after the intervention ended to reveal aspects of affective involvement in the experimental group.

c. Data processing

Data processing is done quantitatively and qualitatively.

d. Evaluation

Discuss the things that need to be improved more flexibly.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The data that has been obtained is processed so that the data can be interpreted. To reveal aspects of behavior, the researchers conducted categorizing students into the criteria involved or not involved in the classroom. Behavioral aspects

analyzed first by using statistical analysis Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 for Windows. The assumption of normality were analyzed using one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. While the assumption of homogeneity were analyzed using the box's test of equality of covariance matrices. Primary data was processed using statistical techniques anava mixed disign. The discussion on the cognitive aspects such as the UTS and the UAS and affective aspects in the form of interviews to teachers and parents subject experimental group further discussed theoretically.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the test results of normality with a one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it is known that the distribution of normal data with the value of $P = 0576$ ($P > 0.05$). That is, the data obtained in the field has a normal distribution and it can be said that no distribution of data between empirical data and theoretical. While the results of the homogeneity test box's test of equality of covariance matrices show that the value of $P = 0322$ ($P > 0.05$), which means that the two groups of subjects having similar characteristics or homogeneous.

Based on the analysis, it can be said that there is no difference in variance between the experimental group and a control group so that it can be said that the data obtained represents the entire population. Based on the results of hypothesis testing with mixed design ANOVA, if you look at the comparison between pretest and posttest in the experimental group it can be seen that the PTC intervention has an effect on student engagement in the classroom. This is demonstrated by the average value of the experimental group at the time that is equal to 21:25 pretest and posttest time of 29.8 according to Table 1. Therefore, the hypothesis in this study received that there is influence between administration of PTC to the involvement of a fourth grader at SDN X of Yogyakarta.



Fig. 2: Curve Student Engagement

There are several important factors that affect student engagement in the classroom according to Trowler (2010), namely students, teachers who interact directly with students, and the learning environment. Ahmad et al (2014) also states that teachers hold a very important role during the learning process. This is consistent with the results of this study that the interventions given by teachers to parents to have an influence on student engagement in the classroom. Not only provide a record homework, subjects the next day, and the activities of students are recorded by the teacher, but the teacher also controlling and observing the behavior of

students in the classroom. In practice, the teacher plays an important role in the system of two-way communication with parents as teachers is a party which is likely to initiate this communication process. In connection with the teacher's message to parents, in this study teachers also use positive language meant to show acceptance of teachers to students. This is consistent with the statement Sheperd (2010) that one of the strategies that can be used to establish communication between teachers and parents are giving positive messages and language that indicates the acceptance of the student teachers who performed in both directions. Successful communication is built between teachers and parents in this study proves the increased involvement of students in the classroom, which shaped the involvement of students in the behavioral aspects. Therefore, it is in accordance with the results of Haryanto (2012) which states that an increase in communication between teachers and parents have an impact on the quality of learning and motivation of students who are represented through the involvement of students in the classroom. The results also support the research Chairani et al (2009) which states that the successful communication between teachers and parents formed a very important role in the formation of the child's behavior. The cognitive aspect also supports the results of these studies are shown through an increase in the value of UAS on some subjects. For example, subjects Citizenship initially 63 to 76, from 65 to 66 IPS, Math from 71 to 76, the IPA from 70 to 75, but for a lesson Indonesian decreased from 92 to 77.

Based on the results of interviews conducted to teachers related to student behavior in the classroom when approaching UAS, teachers mentioned that students are more diligent about work and homework. In addition, students are also more diligent attention when the teacher explained to the class. These results support a previous study conducted by Turner (2012) which states that the communication between teachers and parents have a positive and significant correlation to the emotional involvement of students in the class. Means of communication used are SMS as based on forms that are disseminated to the subject's parents showed that most of the subject's parents tend to use SMS communication media. Two out of three parents who have been interviewed by investigators after a series of studies ended up saying that the PTC is very help the children's learning. Besides parents are also pleased with the SMS messages sent each day because during the communication between teachers and parents is only done when the reception report only. Parents also feel greatly helped with the delivery of SMS as previously had never been done. This shows that the research results are consistent with research Vornberg and Garret (Palts and Harro-Loit, 2015) which states that although the parents want the same information, but the parents prefer to receive information in ways different eg through communications technology. This study certainly has various limitations of the camera installation is several times less strategic to disrupt observations, man's natural condition as when the teacher was sick and could not control the learning process, and the arrangement of the seating of students were randomly so that the subjects in the experimental group and the control group can be influenced. Therefore, for further research are strongly encouraged to use CCTV cameras to be

more effective and use the subject in a different class but still have equivalence criteria subject.

IX. CONCLUSION

The involvement of students in the class are measured based on three major aspects of the involvement of behavioral, cognitive engagement, and affective involvement. On the involvement of behavior, based on statistical analysis found that the average value of the experimental group increased when the posttest. In cognitive engagement, the majority of several subjects at grades UAS experience peningkatan. While on the affective involvement, parents and teachers explained that the PTC greatly assist the process of learning in the classroom and at home. Based on the translation, it can be concluded that the hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is the influence of TCM to the involvement of a fourth grader at SDN X of Yogyakarta. Therefore, it can be concluded that the PTC could be used as a learning support system in school because they can increase student engagement in the classroom.

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