



Contextualizing Parent–School Partnerships: A Comparative Study of Community-Based Collaboration Models in Two Jakarta Kindergartens

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Abstract

This study investigates community-based models of parent–school collaboration within early childhood education (ECE) in urban Jakarta, focusing on two contrasting institutions: TKIT Nurul Iman (East Jakarta) and TK Avicenna (South Jakarta). Using a qualitative case study approach, which includes participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, the research explores the dynamics, modalities, and contextual factors that facilitate or hinder collaborative practices. Findings reveal that TKIT Nurul Iman exemplifies a symbolic–religious model of collaboration, shaped by emotional, spiritual, and communal ties. In contrast, TK Avicenna represents an administrative–transactional model, characterised by formalised procedures and structured institutional involvement. The study proposes a typology of parent–school collaboration grounded in sociocultural and institutional dimensions, highlighting how localised practices are shaped by urban spatiality, religious orientation, and organisational culture. These insights provide practical implications for designing inclusive and context-sensitive family engagement policies in Early Childhood Education (ECE), particularly in diverse urban settings such as Jakarta. By centring sociocultural factors, this research contributes to the broader discourse on participatory education and localised educational governance.

Keywords: *parent–school collaboration; early childhood education; community-based model; sociocultural context; urban education; educational partnership; Jakarta*

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) serves as a crucial foundation for children’s holistic development, encompassing cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. The formative years shape not only children’s academic readiness but also their capacity to adapt socially and emotionally in formal schooling and beyond. In this context, effective collaboration between parents and schools emerges as a strategic pillar that underpins the success of early childhood education programs. Parents, as the child’s first educators, provide indispensable support and reinforcement to formal educational efforts, especially in nurturing values, motivation, and developmental stimulation. This partnership is particularly salient in urban Indonesian settings such as Jakarta, where social disparities, diverse family backgrounds, and institutional challenges pose unique obstacles to consistent parental engagement. Issues such as socioeconomic inequality, cultural heterogeneity, and varying levels of parental availability complicate the establishment of sustainable and meaningful school-family collaboration, making it a critical area for research and policy intervention (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; UNESCO, 2015; National Education System Law No. 20, 2003).

Existing literature underscores the positive correlation between parental involvement and children’s developmental outcomes, both globally and within Indonesia. Research on school-family partnerships has identified various models of collaboration, ranging from symbolic-communal approaches emphasizing cultural and emotional bonds, to administrative-transactional modes focusing on institutional procedures and communication, and participatory models that advocate for active parental agency and decision-making (Epstein, 2001; Hornby, 2011; Desforges

& Abouchaar, 2003). However, much of the extant research tends to treat parental engagement in generalized terms without fully addressing the nuanced influences of local community contexts and cultural particularities. Notably, there remains a gap in scholarship that systematically integrates the dimensions of community-based practices and localized cultural values within school-parent collaboration frameworks, especially in Indonesia's complex urban milieus. This gap suggests a need for context-sensitive models that reflect the lived realities of families and schools amidst Indonesia's social and cultural diversity (Arifin, 2020; Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006).

This study aims to contribute conceptually by developing a typology of school-parent collaboration grounded in community-based dynamics within urban Indonesia. By doing so, it not only enriches theoretical understandings of parental engagement beyond conventional institutional paradigms but also offers practical implications for crafting educational policies and PAUD (Early Childhood Education) management practices that are responsive to local needs. Such an approach recognizes that effective collaboration cannot be imposed top-down but must emerge from participatory relationships attuned to the socio-cultural fabric of communities (Epstein, 2011; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, this research endeavors to fill the identified literature gap by proposing an integrative model that holistically considers social, cultural, and economic factors shaping partnership quality and sustainability.

The central research question guiding this inquiry is: *How do the dynamics of collaboration between parents and schools unfold within differing social contexts in urban Indonesia?* The study's primary objective is to develop a community-based collaboration model that can serve as a policy and practice reference for PAUD institutions operating in complex urban settings. This model aims to support the establishment of inclusive, adaptive, and effective partnerships that enhance early childhood developmental outcomes. The study focuses on two case institutions in Jakarta, selected for their contrasting social environments and institutional values: TKIT Nurul Iman in East Jakarta and TK Avicenna in South Jakarta. These sites provide fertile ground for exploring how varying family backgrounds, organizational cultures, and interaction patterns influence school-parent collaboration. By comparing these cases, the study sheds light on context-specific facilitators and barriers to partnership, offering insights into the diversity of collaboration forms in urban Indonesian PAUD settings.

The article is structured as follows: it begins with a description of the research methodology employed in the fieldwork, followed by a presentation of key findings regarding the forms, processes, and challenges of school-parent collaboration. Subsequent sections discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings and conclude with recommendations for policy and program development aimed at strengthening PAUD partnerships in urban Indonesia.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design to investigate the collaboration model between schools and parents in early childhood education settings. The research was conducted in two institutions, TKIT Nurul Iman in East Jakarta and TK Avicenna in South Jakarta, selected to capture variations in social, cultural, and geographic contexts that influence school-parent collaboration practices.

Data collection utilized multiple qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The interviews were guided by themes focusing on forms of collaboration, communication strategies and role distribution, contextual factors affecting collaboration, challenges faced, coping mechanisms, and the development of a contextual



collaboration model. These themes were adapted from Epstein's parental involvement framework, covering aspects such as communication, engagement, decision-making, and the impact of external events like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Documentation analysis involved reviewing institutional legal documents (such as establishment deeds, operational permits, and organisational structures), records of learning activities and parental participation (including meeting minutes, attendance lists, and event documentation), and facilities that support collaboration (such as learning media and communication infrastructure). These documents served to validate interview and observation data and to reveal patterns of communication and participation. Participatory observations were carried out to directly capture interactions between teachers and parents, as well as to observe the implementation of collaborative activities within the schools.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying relevant information from all data sources to identify key themes like communication patterns, stakeholder roles, collaboration challenges, and enabling factors. Data display was conducted through descriptive narratives, thematic matrices, comparison tables, and relationship diagrams to present findings clearly and systematically. The final stage, conclusion drawing and verification, entailed synthesizing the findings to formulate a contextual collaboration model, with verification performed through triangulation and comparison with existing theories.

To ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of the study, criteria from Lincoln and Guba (1985) were applied. Credibility was established via prolonged engagement, triangulation of data collection methods and sources, and member checking to confirm interpretations with participants. Transferability was supported through thick descriptions of institutional characteristics, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural contexts, allowing readers to assess applicability in other settings. Dependability was maintained by documenting the research process thoroughly through an audit trail, ensuring transparency and consistency. Confirmability was achieved by storing decision records, engaging in peer debriefing, and practicing reflexivity to mitigate researcher bias and ensure findings were grounded in empirical evidence.

Triangulation was implemented through both method and source triangulation. Method triangulation combined interviews, observations, and document reviews to provide multiple perspectives on parental involvement. Source triangulation involved interviewing different stakeholders—principals, teachers, and parents—to gather a comprehensive view of collaboration dynamics. This triangulated approach enabled a holistic and nuanced understanding of school-parent partnerships, acknowledging the complex and layered nature of social reality as emphasized by Flick (2018).

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

1. General Patterns of Parent–School Collaboration

The findings from the two case studies reveal that parent–school collaboration in early childhood education settings (PAUD) manifests in diverse patterns shaped by social, cultural, and institutional contexts. These collaborative forms range across a spectrum—from formal to informal, from individualized engagements to collective actions—and vary in intensity based on the school's philosophy and community dynamics. Rather than being limited to official events such

as parent-teacher meetings or academic consultations, collaboration frequently unfolds through everyday relational and symbolic interactions between educators and families.

In TKIT Nurul Iman, parent–school collaboration predominantly takes on an informal and organic character. It is rooted deeply in shared religious values and communal proximity, often expressed through spiritual gatherings, Islamic parenting programs, and informal peer communication. This indicates that collaboration is not only a function of educational necessity but also a manifestation of social cohesion and spiritual alignment. On the other hand, TK Avicenna showcases a more structured and administratively organized model of collaboration. Engagements are facilitated through scheduled meetings, structured feedback mechanisms, and digital communication channels such as WhatsApp groups or electronic reports. Here, collaboration is embedded in institutional frameworks and informed by managerial logic, aiming at measurable and efficient interaction.

Despite the contrast in operational forms, both schools demonstrate that the parent–school relationship is inherently reciprocal and shaped by shared commitments to children’s development. These dynamics align with the conceptual frameworks proposed by Epstein (2011) and Christenson and Sheridan (2001), who argue that effective school–family partnerships are built upon two-way communication, mutual respect, and shared educational goals. The presence of trust, empathy, and continuity of dialogue are essential for sustaining meaningful engagement, regardless of whether the collaboration is initiated formally or emerges informally from community life.

The divergence between TKIT Nurul Iman and TK Avicenna further emphasizes the contextual nature of collaboration in early childhood education. What may be effective in one school context may not resonate in another. As such, formalized participation does not necessarily ensure deeper relational engagement, while informal collaboration should not be mistaken for being disorganized or unstructured. The effectiveness of these collaborative efforts hinges on their ability to respond to and reflect the lived realities of the communities they serve. As Leenders, Berenst, and Romi (2019) note, parent involvement is most impactful when aligned with both the institutional values of the school and the sociocultural identity of the families involved.

Moreover, the findings reaffirm the importance of designing flexible and adaptive models of collaboration that can embrace local variation. As early childhood education takes place within an ecosystem involving children, families, teachers, and community institutions, rigid or top-down models may fail to accommodate the nuances of grassroots engagement. The two case studies thus offer evidence for a pluralistic approach to parent–school collaboration, where legitimacy is derived not from compliance with standardized protocols but from resonance with local norms, values, and relational networks.

In sum, these general patterns underline a key principle: there is no one-size-fits-all model for parent–school collaboration. Instead, successful partnerships are those that are able to mediate between institutional expectations and communal capacities, forming hybrid practices that reflect both the formal demands of the school and the informal, affective investments of the family. The evidence from TKIT Nurul Iman and TK Avicenna illustrates that both symbolic-emotional and transactional-managerial models can be equally functional—if they are grounded in the real-life contexts of educational actors.

2. TKIT Nurul Iman: Symbolic–Religious and Communitarian Collaboration

The model of collaboration observed at TKIT Nurul Iman exemplifies a symbolic–religious and communitarian approach, where relationships between the school and families are grounded



in shared values, emotional bonds, and collective religious identity. Rather than operating through bureaucratic or managerial mechanisms, collaboration at this school emerges from a lived sense of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and communal trust, sustained through regular interactions both inside and outside the formal educational setting. As one teacher described, "nggak ada sekat, kita gerakanya bareng" (PI/A51), signaling a fluid and egalitarian atmosphere where parents and educators perceive themselves as co-educators and moral allies.

The religious character of the school is not merely an institutional identity but an organizing principle for parental engagement. Collaborative activities often include Islamic parenting sessions, joint prayers, religious holidays, and community-based rituals such as *pengajian* and *santunan*. These forms of engagement allow for an emotional investment that transcends academic development, fostering a sense of shared purpose in raising children within a spiritual framework. Parents, in interviews, expressed their participation not as an obligation but as an “emotional and educational investment” for their children (P7/A57), which reflects the symbolic dimension of their involvement.

Teachers at TKIT Nurul Iman are seen not only as pedagogical facilitators but also as spiritual role models and community leaders, a dual role that enhances their moral authority and deepens their rapport with parents. This role is reminiscent of what Dereli and Türk Kurtça (2023) describe as the “affective leadership” style in religiously-oriented educational environments, where emotional bonding is prioritized over institutional hierarchy. The relational warmth generated by these shared values creates a sense of collective responsibility and a willingness among parents to support the school through voluntary acts—such as helping with events, donating resources, or offering time without formal recognition.

From a theoretical perspective, this model aligns with Epstein’s (2011) framework of “parenting” and “volunteering” dimensions, but with localized interpretations. Rather than structured volunteering programs, involvement at TKIT Nurul Iman is informal and socially embedded—emerging through existing networks like *majelis taklim* or neighborhood gatherings. The school’s religious foundation also resonates with findings from Baharuddin (2019), who argues that religious values can serve as unifying forces in building strong school–family ties in Islamic contexts.

Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (1979) provides an apt lens to interpret this relational structure. The *microsystem* of the child (involving teachers, parents, and peers) is closely interlinked with the *mesosystem* of religious communities, creating a coherent and mutually reinforcing environment. The *exosystem*, such as the presence of an active foundation (*yayasan*) and localized religious institutions, further supports the smooth flow of collaborative initiatives. On the *macrosystem* level, the school reflects broader cultural patterns of urban Muslim communities in East Jakarta, where educational decisions are strongly influenced by religious norms and social cohesion.

Importantly, this model of collaboration is not institutionalized in the conventional sense; it does not rely on formal agreements or systematic evaluation procedures. Rather, it is built on trust, shared moral objectives, and informal reciprocity. While such an approach might appear less rigorous from an administrative standpoint, it provides a sustainable and emotionally rich model for long-term collaboration. As Dahlia et al. (2023) highlight, parental engagement rooted in cultural and religious resonance is often more effective in community-based early childhood settings than externally imposed frameworks.

Nevertheless, this model also carries certain limitations. The absence of formal mechanisms can risk exclusivity, as parents who are not socially embedded or do not share the dominant religious values may feel peripheral to the core community. Moreover, the informality of decision-making may blur accountability lines and make it harder to scale or replicate the model. However, within its own context, TKIT Nurul Iman's approach exemplifies how affective solidarity and religious symbolism can powerfully structure and sustain parent–school partnerships.

In conclusion, the collaboration model at TKIT Nurul Iman reflects a deeply embedded communal ethos that prioritizes harmony, spiritual growth, and collective responsibility. It stands as a valuable counterpoint to more formalized models, offering insights into how parent–school collaboration can flourish through relational warmth, symbolic participation, and shared identity.

3. TK Avicenna: Administrative–Transactional and Institutionalized Collaboration

In contrast to TKIT Nurul Iman's symbolic and value-based collaboration model, TK Avicenna demonstrates a distinctly administrative–transactional and institutionalized approach to parent–school collaboration. The school operates within a more formal governance structure, where interactions with parents are shaped by clear procedures, designated roles, and measurable outcomes. Rather than being driven by shared religious or communal values, the partnership at TK Avicenna is structured around professionalism, efficiency, and accountability—values that resonate with the predominantly middle-class, professionally employed families that the school serves.

The school has developed multiple institutional mechanisms to facilitate parental participation, including scheduled parent–teacher meetings, satisfaction surveys, and routine consultations regarding child development. Collaboration is often mediated through the Parent Committee, which functions as a formal conduit between the school's management (*yayasan*) and the parent community. This body plays a crucial role in both upward communication (channeling parental input) and downward communication (disseminating institutional messages). A teacher remarked that cooperation with parents must be “efficient, impactful, and respectful of their time” (P5/A166), indicating the premium placed on structured, results-oriented interaction.

Communication at TK Avicenna largely relies on digital channels, including WhatsApp groups and e-report systems. While these tools enhance speed and accessibility, they also introduce certain challenges, such as information overload and uneven responsiveness. Teachers noted that some parents, due to their professional commitments, either ignore or miss critical announcements, only engaging reactively near deadlines (P4/A103). In response, the school has been proactive in evaluating and refining its communication strategy, aiming for clarity, conciseness, and inclusiveness (P4/A122). This reflects findings from Leenders et al. (2019), who emphasize that digital communication in schools must balance frequency with relevance to avoid disengagement.

The transactional nature of collaboration at TK Avicenna is further evident in how parent participation is often role-based and time-bound, focused on contributing expertise or resources to school programs. Events like Parent Teaching Day, professional seminars, and thematic celebrations are examples of targeted engagements where parents offer support in ways aligned with their competencies (P5/A10–A11, P4/A15). Rather than participating in ongoing volunteer activities, parents contribute to discrete projects with defined objectives. This mirrors the model discussed by Gross et al. (2022), in which parental involvement in urban middle-class contexts is best understood as project-based, strategically aligned, and integrated into professional schedules.



Despite its transactional character, the collaboration at TK Avicenna is not devoid of emotional investment. Teachers display sensitivity to the high expectations of parents and navigate relational complexities with tact. As one teacher mentioned, some parents can be “perfectionist” or “demanding,” requiring adaptive emotional labor from educators to maintain harmony and shared goals (P11/A77). This dynamic affirms Khalfiah’s (2020) observation that the professionalization of early childhood education has shifted teacher–parent relations toward more regulated, yet still emotionally charged, interactions.

Using Epstein’s (2011) typology, TK Avicenna’s collaboration model activates several domains, notably parenting, communication, decision making, and volunteering, though each operates through formalized procedures. For instance, the Parent Committee serves as the primary venue for decision making, with structured agendas and feedback loops. Volunteering is channeled through planned events rather than spontaneous participation. Communication is strategic and curated by the school, and parenting support is offered via seminars and psychological consultations.

From the Bronfenbrenner ecological systems perspective (1979), the collaboration at TK Avicenna is shaped by a tightly organized *microsystem* involving the child, teachers, and psychologists, embedded within a functionally driven *mesosystem* of institutional relations. The *exosystem*—represented by the school foundation and its managerial culture—exerts a top-down influence, while the *macrosystem* reflects the values of Jakarta’s professional middle class: efficiency, competitiveness, and self-optimization. These layers of structure create a predictable and scalable framework for collaboration, one that appeals to parents seeking measurable progress and institutional reliability.

Nevertheless, this model also poses certain risks. Over-formalization may limit the space for spontaneity, warmth, or community bonding. The school’s heavy reliance on procedural communication and scheduled involvement can potentially alienate parents who prefer more relational or culturally embedded forms of engagement. Still, within its context, TK Avicenna’s model proves functional, particularly in aligning with the expectations of busy urban professionals who value clarity, time-efficiency, and competence.

In conclusion, the administrative–transactional model adopted by TK Avicenna illustrates how school–parent collaboration can succeed through managerial precision and institutional design. While it differs from relationally grounded models, it offers an effective pathway for engaging high-capacity families in meaningful, though often episodic, educational collaboration. Its strength lies in its clarity, adaptability, and responsiveness to the social realities of the professional class it serves.

4. Factors Supporting and Inhibiting Collaboration

The effectiveness of parent–school collaboration in early childhood education is not solely determined by the model of partnership adopted, but also by a range of supporting and inhibiting factors that shape the quality, frequency, and sustainability of engagement. Drawing from the two case studies—TKIT Nurul Iman and TK Avicenna—this section outlines how socio-cultural alignment, communicative practices, and institutional responsiveness can either strengthen or hinder collaboration.

4.1 Supporting Factors: Shared Values, Open Communication, and Social Trust

One of the most prominent enabling conditions in both schools is the presence of shared values between educators and parents. At TKIT Nurul Iman, the alignment of religious,

cultural, and emotional goals fosters a sense of unity and purpose. Parents frequently cited their involvement as a form of “emotional and educational investment” for their children, grounded in Islamic parenting principles and a collective commitment to moral development (P7/A57). This congruence of values contributes to what Dereli and Türk Kurtça (2023) describe as “value-based engagement,” where emotional resonance and moral solidarity become the basis of collaboration.

At TK Avicenna, although the foundation is less symbolic, a shared expectation of professionalism and child development outcomes binds parents and teachers. The recognition of teachers’ expertise, combined with the use of structured communication and feedback systems, enhances trust and reliability in the school’s institutional performance. This resonates with Leenders et al. (2019), who argue that institutional trust and clarity of roles are essential for sustaining participation, especially in urban school contexts.

Another key factor is the quality of communication. Both schools implement communication strategies tailored to their communities: TK Nurul Iman emphasises warm, informal dialogue facilitated through social gatherings, religious activities, and direct interpersonal contact, while TK Avicenna employs digital tools, regular newsletters, and parent meetings. While the modalities differ, both approaches serve as channels of information exchange, empathy-building, and feedback—essential components in DeVito’s (2015) framework of effective interpersonal communication. In both cases, active listening and reciprocal understanding contribute to collaborative resilience.

Finally, social trust plays a vital role, particularly at TKIT Nurul Iman, where trust is not only institutional but also deeply interpersonal and communal. Teachers are perceived not just as educators but as moral guides and community members. The absence of strict institutional boundaries—“nggak ada sekat, kita geraknya bareng” (PI/A51)—illustrates a form of communitarian trust (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001), where collaboration is based on kinship-like ties rather than contractual obligations.

4.2 Inhibiting Factors: Time Constraints, Communication Gaps, and Role Misalignment

Despite many strengths, both schools encounter persistent challenges that complicate parent–school collaboration. The most frequently cited issue is time constraints. At both institutions, parents—especially working professionals—struggle to attend meetings or participate in daily activities. This is particularly visible at TK Avicenna, where a teacher remarked that some parents often “don’t read the announcements or respond until the last minute” (P4/A103). These delays affect planning, coordination, and mutual accountability. While asynchronous communication (e.g., WhatsApp updates) attempts to mitigate this, the burden of responsiveness remains uneven.

Communication gaps also emerge as a recurring barrier. At TKIT Nurul Iman, misunderstandings occasionally arise due to limited articulation of institutional goals or lack of consistent messaging (P2/A33; P3/A30). Meanwhile, at TK Avicenna, overly formal communication can lead to disengagement or confusion, especially when expectations are unclear or not tailored to parents’ needs. This aligns with findings from Gross et al. (2022), who caution that digital communication, if not carefully curated, may exacerbate rather than bridge communicative divides.

Another inhibiting factor lies in role misalignment and expectation mismatches. Teachers at both schools note challenges in balancing diverse parental expectations, as some parents are highly demanding, while others are passive or disengaged. At TK Avicenna, a parent described the difficulty of maintaining communication with others in the parent community due to



interpersonal differences and varying levels of involvement (P11/A77). This underscores the importance of expectation management and role clarification, without which, collaboration can devolve into frustration or mistrust.

Additionally, structural issues—such as digital literacy gaps, economic disparities, and logistical challenges—can impede inclusive participation. While not always explicit in interview responses, these factors are implied in the narratives of uneven information access and differentiated capacity to engage. These findings echo Khalfiah (2020), who emphasizes that socioeconomic status and digital competence are increasingly central in shaping parents' ability to participate meaningfully in early education settings.

4.3 Comparative Insights

Comparing the two institutions highlights how context mediates both enablers and inhibitors. TKIT Nurul Iman thrives on symbolic cohesion and community solidarity, which compensate for logistical and infrastructural limitations. Conversely, TK Avicenna relies on procedural robustness and adaptive professionalism, enabling structured collaboration despite social distance or fragmented time availability. This comparison supports Epstein's (2011) claim that no single model of collaboration fits all; rather, success depends on the mutual adaptation of school systems and parental realities. What appears as a barrier in one setting—e.g., informality—may be a strength in another, just as over-formalisation in structured environments can inhibit genuine engagement.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored the empirical patterns of parent–school collaboration in two early childhood education institutions—TKIT Nurul Iman and TK Avicenna—uncovering the diversity of practices, structures, and relational dynamics that shape parental engagement. The analysis reveals that collaboration is far from monolithic; rather, it is contextually constructed, shaped by the socio-cultural, institutional, and communicative ecosystems in which it operates.

1. Key Findings

First, general patterns across both schools indicate that collaboration manifests through a spectrum of forms—formal and informal, individual and communal. Parent–teacher partnerships do not only reside within official channels such as school meetings or institutionalized forums; they also thrive through everyday symbolic gestures, emotional investment, and relational trust (Epstein, 2011; Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Importantly, depth of engagement is not always a function of structural formality but of relational quality.

Second, TKIT Nurul Iman exemplifies a symbolic-religious and communitarian model of collaboration. Rooted in shared spiritual values, this model is sustained through informal but emotionally resonant interactions—such as collective parenting practices, religious gatherings, and interpersonal warmth. Teachers are viewed not only as educators but as moral and social leaders within the community. This supports the assertion by Dereli and Türk Kurtça (2023) that value-based alignment fosters meaningful and sustained parental involvement.

In contrast, TK Avicenna presents an administrative-transactional and institutionalized model. Here, collaboration is shaped by formal structures, clear role delineations, and efficient communication systems. While less emotionally embedded than Nurul Iman, Avicenna's model achieves stability through managerial responsiveness and professional clarity (Gross et al., 2022; Leenders et al., 2019). Parents participate primarily through scheduled consultations, satisfaction surveys, and curated involvement opportunities aligned with school governance.

Third, both models are influenced by distinct supporting and inhibiting factors. Shared values, trust, and effective communication enhance collaboration, while time constraints, misaligned expectations, and communication breakdowns often hinder it. While TKIT Nurul Iman draws strength from social trust and spiritual kinship, TK Avicenna benefits from structured systems that accommodate parents' professional commitments. These findings resonate with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which emphasizes how micro-, meso-, and macro-level forces interact to shape educational relationships.

Fourth, comparative analysis suggests that no single model of collaboration is universally optimal. Instead, effective partnership is situated—emerging from specific histories, community needs, and socio-institutional capacities. What functions well in one setting may be inappropriate or ineffective in another. This confirms Epstein's (2011) proposition that successful school–family partnerships must be adaptable to context, rather than bound to prescriptive formulas.

2. Conclusion

In sum, this study finds that parent–school collaboration in early childhood education is a dynamic and contextualized phenomenon, shaped by cultural norms, institutional structures, and interpersonal practices. Two dominant models emerge: (1) the *symbolic-religious communitarian model*, which thrives on shared moral values and informal collective engagement; and (2) the *administrative-transactional model*, which emphasizes structure, efficiency, and formal roles. Crucially, both models demonstrate strengths and limitations, neither being superior in an absolute sense. The effectiveness of collaboration lies not in rigid adherence to a standard but in the capacity to reflect community needs, values, and resources. Thus, collaboration should be seen as an adaptive process, continuously negotiated between schools, families, and the broader socio-cultural environment. The findings reinforce the need for policy frameworks that recognize pluralism in collaborative practices, supporting context-specific strategies over uniform mandates. They also highlight the importance of developing teacher competencies in communication, empathy, and cultural sensitivity, which are pivotal for sustaining inclusive and resilient parent–school relationships.

Acknowledgement

I sincerely thank Prof. Dr. Bedjo Sujanto, M.Pd., for his unwavering support, insightful guidance, and constructive feedback throughout the development of this study. May Allah reward him abundantly for his dedication and generosity in sharing his knowledge in the field of educational policy. His encouragement at every stage has been a great source of motivation and has deeply shaped both the direction and depth of this research. I am also profoundly grateful to Prof. Dr. Nurhattati, M.Pd., whose mentorship and scholarly wisdom have greatly enriched my understanding of early childhood education and community engagement. May Allah bless her with barakah in all her endeavors. Her thoughtful advice, meticulous attention to detail, and continuous encouragement have helped me navigate the complexities of this research with confidence and clarity. This work would not have been possible without their academic leadership, patience, and the generous time they devoted to helping me refine my ideas. I pray that Allah SWT grants them the highest place in Jannah and continues to bless their efforts in nurturing future generations of scholars.

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