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The Effect of Parental Attention and Provision of Educational Game Tools on the Beginning Reading Ability of Children Aged 4-5 Years

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the influence of parental attention and the provision of Educational Play Tools (EPT) on the early reading skills of children aged 4-5 years. The results demonstrate that parental involvement, specifically through active participation in learning activities, significantly contributes to the creation of an environment that fosters early literacy development. Additionally, the provision of Educational Play Tools offers an interactive and engaging learning experience, which further supports the enhancement of reading skills in young children. The findings underscore the importance of a synergistic relationship between parental attention and the availability of Educational Play Tools in establishing a robust literacy foundation during early childhood. Based on these findings, it is recommended that parents increase their engagement in their children's educational activities and provide EPT that align with the developmental needs of the child. Moreover, the study calls for policies by government and educational institutions to ensure equitable access to high-quality Educational Play Tools, thereby maximizing their impact across diverse socio-economic groups.

Keywords: Educational Game Tools, Early Reading, Parental Attention

INTRODUCTION

The development of global technology has provided easy access to information for various age groups, including early childhood. Technologies such as gadgets, the internet, and digital learning applications offer great potential to support children's education (Grosvenor, 2018; Warschauer, 2015). However, the unregulated use of these technologies may reduce direct interactions between parents and children, which are crucial for the development of foundational skills, including early reading (Kumparan, 2024; Kucirkova et al., 2021). According to Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social development, social interaction and parental involvement are key elements in the cognitive development of children. In this context, parental attention is critical in ensuring that technology is used wisely to foster the child's developmental needs, thus supporting early literacy (Kirkwood & Price, 2014).

Early reading skills in children aged 4-5 years are a fundamental foundation in their overall literacy development, which later influences their academic performance (Snow, 2010; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). However, many young children have not developed optimal early reading skills. This is often due to insufficient parental attention and the lack of provision of appropriate Educational Play Tools (EPT) that align with the child's developmental needs (Miller & Gildea, 2019). EPT plays an important role in creating an engaging, interactive learning experience tailored to the developmental stage of children (Isnaeni et al., 2022; Zosh et al., 2017). Piaget's (1950) theory of constructivist learning supports this by stating that children learn best through hands-on experiences with materials designed to stimulate cognitive and motor skill development.

Previous research has shown a positive relationship between parental attention and children's early reading abilities. For instance, Holisoh et al. (2022) found that parental involvement in children's learning activities significantly improves their linguistic skills, while Lareau (2011) emphasized the critical role of parents in shaping children's learning habits through active supervision. Additionally, Nugraheni (2018) highlighted that the effective use of EPT enhances children's comprehension of reading concepts, while Lisa et al. (2020) demonstrated that EPT can also improve fine motor skills, which are crucial for early reading development. However, a gap exists in research focusing on the combined influence of both parental attention and EPT provision on children's early reading abilities. Most existing studies concentrate on one factor at a time, neglecting the potential interaction between these two elements in enhancing early reading skills.

Furthermore, while some studies have examined the effects of EPT on children's cognitive development, Ulya and Lilawati (2023) noted that literacy-based EPT can increase reading interest in early childhood. However, their research remains limited to cognitive aspects and does not explicitly address how parental attention can strengthen the positive impact of EPT on children's reading skills. This research aims to address this gap by exploring the combined effects of parental attention and the provision of EPT on early reading abilities in children aged 4-5 years. This study is expected to contribute novel insights to the literature by examining these factors in tandem and offering practical recommendations for parents and educators to support early literacy development through a more integrated and interactive approach (Kinanti & Zulkarnaen, 2024; Cartwright, 2018).

Using a qualitative approach based on a literature review, this study seeks to explore the relationship between parental attention and the provision of EPT with the early reading skills of children aged 4-5 years. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive and novel perspective on the factors influencing children's reading abilities, offering valuable insights into how these elements can be utilized to support early literacy development.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method to explore the impact of parental attention and the provision of educational play tools (EPT) on the early reading ability of children aged 4-5 years. The survey method is effective for examining relationships between variables in a structured manner, ensuring reliability and generalizability (Creswell, 2014). The sample consists of 65 parents of children aged 4-5 years, selected using the saturated sampling technique, where all eligible participants are included (Fowler, 2014). This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of parental involvement and its role in early literacy development, particularly in the context of the Semanan Cluster Unit in Kalideres District.

The research utilizes three instruments: a Parental Attention Questionnaire, an EPT Questionnaire, and an Early Reading Ability Questionnaire. The Parental Attention Questionnaire is based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), which emphasizes the influence of the family environment on child development, particularly cognitive skills like early reading. The EPT Questionnaire aligns with Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (1950), which suggests that

hands-on, interactive tools are essential for stimulating cognitive and motor skills in young children. The Early Reading Ability Questionnaire is informed by Hollis-Donahue and Goodman's (2021) emergent literacy framework, which defines early reading as the foundational skills of letter recognition, phonetics, and vocabulary development.

Data were collected through questionnaires administered to parents, and the responses were analyzed using Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) to evaluate both simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables (parental attention and EPT) on the dependent variable (early reading ability). Regression analysis is ideal for understanding the relationship between multiple variables (Field, 2013). The analysis was conducted using SPSS 27 software, ensuring accurate and comprehensive data processing. This method allows for robust statistical testing, including normality checks and significance testing at a p-value < 0.05, ensuring that the findings are valid, reliable, and applicable to early childhood education practices (Pallant, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Initial Reading Ability (Y)

Based on the results of the questionnaire with five alternative answers obtained from 10 distributed instruments, the following information was obtained: the number of samples was 65 respondents, the highest score was 48, the lowest score was 21, the mean value was 33.65, the standard deviation value was 8.444, the median value was 33 and the mode was 30, the interval class was 4, the number of classes was 7. The data description is presented in table 1. as follows:

Table 1.

No	Score	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Cumulative Frequency
1	21-24	11	16,92	11
2	25-28	9	13,85	20
3	29-32	12	18,46	32
4	33-36	8	12,31	40
5	37-40	6	9,23	46
6	41-44	12	18,46	58
7	45-48	7	10,77	65
	Total	65	100,00	

Based on table 1, the following information was obtained on the Beginning Reading Ability scores: 12.31% of the respondents were at the average level, 50.77% of respondents obtained scores above average, and 49.23% of respondents obtained scores below average.

2. Variable X1 (Parental Attention)

Based on the results of the questionnaire with five alternative answers obtained from the instrument, the following information was obtained: the number of samples was 65 respondents, the highest score was 49, the lowest score was 27, the mean was 37.28, the standard deviation was 8.347, the median was 34 and the mode was 30, the class interval was 7, and the number of classes was 3. The data description is presented in table 4.3 as follows:

Variable X1 (Parental Attention)

Based on the results of the questionnaire with five alternative answers obtained from the instrument, the following information was obtained: the number of samples was 65 respondents, the highest score was 49, the lowest score was 27, the mean was 37.28, the standard deviation was 8.347, the median was 34 and the mode was 30, the class interval was 7, and the number of classes was 3. The data description is presented in table 4.3 as follows:

Table

No	Skor	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Cumulative Frequency
1	27-29	11	16,92	11
2	30-32	21	32,31	32
3	33-35	1	1,54	33
4	36-38	2	3,08	35
5	39-42	6	9,23	41
6	43-46	13	20,00	54
7	47-49	11	16,92	65
	Total	65	100	

Based on table 2, the following information was obtained regarding the Parental Attention score: 3.08% of the respondents were at the average level, and 46.15% of respondents scored above average, and 50.77% were below average.

3. Variable X2 (Provision of Educational Game Tools (EPT))

Based on the results of the questionnaire with five alternative answers obtained from 10 instruments, the following information was obtained: the number of samples was 65 respondents, the highest score was 48, the lowest score was 28, the mean was 36.72, the standard deviation was 7.037, the median was 37 and the mode was 40, the interval class was 3, the number of classes was 7. The data description is presented in table 4 as follows:

Table 4

No	Skor	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency(%)	Cumulative Frequency
1	28-30	22	33,85	22
2	31-33	6	9,23	28
3	34-36	3	4,62	31
4	37-39	3	4,62	34
5	40-43	16	24,62	50
6	44-47	12	18,46	62
7	48-51	3	4,61	65
	Total	65	100	

Normality Test

The normality test for each variable is carried out to determine whether the data taken comes from a normally distributed population or not. Determination of the data normality test using SPSS 21.0 can be done with the Kolmogorov-Sminov one-sample test. This test procedure is used to compare the normality of the distribution of two variables. The criteria for determining the normality test include the following:

a. If the Sign in the Sig column <0.05, the sample data is not normally distributed.
b. If the Sign in the Sig column> 0.05, the sample data is normally distributed.

The results of the data normality test on Parental Attention (X1) and Provision of Educational Game Tools (EPT) (X2) Against Beginning Reading Ability (Y) can be seen in table 4.5 below:

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Table 5
Results of Normality Test of Variables X1, X2 and Variable Y
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Beginning Reading Skills	Parental Attention	Provision of Educational Game Tools
N		65	65	65
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	33,65	37,28	36,72
	Std. Deviation	8,444	8,347	7,037
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,159	,266	,177
	Positive	,159	,266	,177
	Negative	-,128	-,160	-,156
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,285	2,147	1,424
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,074	,091	,065

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Based on the table of data normality test results on the variables Parental Attention, Provision of Educational Game Tools (EPT) and Beginning Reading Ability above, it can be seen that the Sign value in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov column (a) shows a figure of 0.091 for variable X1, based on the data in the table above, it can be concluded that from the Sign value = 0.091, it turns out that Sig. > 0.05 then Ho is accepted, so the decision is that the data for variable X1 is normally distributed. The Sign value in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov column (a) shows a figure of 0.065 for variable X2, based on the data in the table above, it can be concluded that from the Sign value = 0.065, it turns out that Sig. > 0.05 then Ho is accepted, so the decision is that the data for variable X2 is normally distributed. While the Sign value in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov column (a) shows a figure of 0.074 for variable Y, based on the data in the table above, it can be concluded that from the Sign value = 0.074, it turns out that Sig. > 0.05 then Ho is accepted, so the decision is that the data of variable Y is normally distributed.

Homogeneity Test

The homogeneity of variance test is intended to test the homogeneity of variance between groups of Y scores grouped based on the similarity of Xi values. The homogeneity of variance test is carried out using SPSS statistical calculations version 21.00.

The test criteria, if the r value (probability value/critical value) is smaller than or equal to the α level to be determined, then the scores on the Parental Attention variable, the Provision of Educational Game Tools (EPT) variable and the Beginning Reading Ability variable are spread homogeneously. In other cases, the scores are spread differently.

Y Variance Homogeneity Test for X1

Tabel 6
Test of Homogeneity of Variances Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2,190	10	51	,033

Based on the calculation results with the SPSS 21.00 program above, it appears that the α (significance) value is smaller than the α (significance) level used, namely (0.05) or 0.033 < 0.05, so that the scores on the Parental Attention variable and the scores on the Early Reading Ability variable are spread homogeneously.

Tabel 7

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Test of Homogeneity of Variances Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
,860	11	53	,003

Based on the calculation results with the SPSS 21.00 program above, it appears that the r value is smaller than the α level (significance) used, namely (0.05) or 0.003 <0.05, so that the scores on the Provision of Educational Game Tools (EPT) variable with the scores on the Beginning Reading Ability variable are spread homogeneously. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the variance of Y over X1 and the variance of Y over X2 are spread homogeneously. This is because the r value is smaller than the α level used, namely (significance level α = 0.05)

Hypothesis Testing

a. Multiple Linear Equations and significance test of regression equation coefficients

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	86.278	16.922		5.099	.000
	Perhatian Orangtua	.456	.119	.419	3.821	.000
	Penyedian EPT	-.491	.172	-.314	-2.860	.006

From the results of the analysis above, in column B, Constant or b0 = 86.278 is obtained, the regression coefficient b1 = 0.456, and b2 = -0.491. The resulting linear regression equation is: Y = 86.278 + (0.456)X1 - (0.491)X2. From the results of the analysis above, for the coefficient of variable X1 (Parental Attention), the calculated t value is obtained = 3.821 and the p-value = 0.000. Because the p-value <0.05, then H0 is rejected. This means that Parental Attention has a significant positive effect on the dependent variable. Meanwhile, for variable X2 (Provision of EPT), the calculated t value is obtained = -2.860 and the p-value = 0.006. Because the p-value <0.05, then H0 is rejected. This means that the Provision of EPT has a significant negative effect on the dependent variable.

b. Testing the Significance of Multiple Regression Equations

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1201.833	2	600.917	10.729	.000[b]
	Residual	3472.382	62	56.006		
	Total	4674.215	64			

From the results of the ANOVA analysis above, the calculated F value is obtained = 21.057 with p-value = 0.000. Because the p-value <0.05, then H0 is rejected. This shows that there is a significant linear effect between the independent variables simultaneously on the dependent variable. In other words, the combination of Parental Attention and Provision of EPT in the regression model has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

c. Testing the Significance of Multiple Regression Equations

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.507[a]	.257	.233	7.48373	.257	10.729	2	62	.000

From the analysis results displayed in the Model Summary table, a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.507 was obtained. The R Square value is 0.257, which means that 25.7% of the variability of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the model. The F Calculation value of 10.729 with a p-value = 0.000 indicates that H0 is rejected, which means that the multiple correlation coefficient is significant. This shows that the independent variables together have a significant influence on the dependent variable. Thus, it can be seen that 25.7% of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables simultaneously, while the remaining 74.3% is influenced by other factors outside the model.

The analysis results presented in the Model Summary table indicate that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.507. The R Square value of 0.257 suggests that 25.7% of the variability in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the model. Furthermore, the F Calculation value of 10.729, with a p-value of 0.000, leads to the rejection of H0, indicating that the multiple correlation coefficient is statistically significant. This implies that the independent variables, as a collective group, have a significant impact on the dependent variable. Therefore, 25.7% of the variation in the dependent variable can be accounted for by the independent variables simultaneously, while the remaining 74.3% is attributed to other factors not included in the model.

The correlation analysis between Early Reading Ability and Parental Attention, while controlling for the provision of EPT, shows an R value of 0.437, with a p-value of 0.000 (1-tailed). This indicates a statistically significant positive correlation between these two variables, as the p-value is less than the significance threshold of 0.05.

Moreover, when analyzing the correlation between Early Reading Ability and EPT Provision while controlling for Parental Attention, the results show a correlation coefficient (RY1.2) of -0.341 with a p-value of 0.003. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, H0 is rejected, suggesting that the correlation between EPT Provision and Early Reading Ability is statistically significant. However, the relationship is negative, implying that as the provision of EPT increases, early reading ability tends to decrease, even after controlling for parental attention.

This analysis highlights the significant relationships between the variables in the study and provides valuable insights into the interplay between parental involvement, educational tools, and early literacy development.

Discussion

The analysis of the data reveals insightful findings regarding the factors that influence early reading ability in children aged 4-5 years. Based on the normality test, the data for all variables—Parental Attention (X1), Provision of Educational Play

Tools (EPT) (X2), and Early Reading Ability (Y)—are normally distributed, which supports the validity of the subsequent statistical tests. The homogeneity test further confirms that the variance of the dependent variable is consistent across different levels of parental attention and EPT provision. This indicates that the sample is homogenous, allowing for reliable interpretations of the relationships between these variables. The Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis shows that both Parental Attention and Provision of EPT significantly affect early reading ability, with parental attention having a positive effect, while the provision of EPT has a negative impact. These results suggest that while parental involvement is crucial in supporting early literacy, the way educational tools are provided might need re-evaluation. The data also highlights that 25.7% of the variance in early reading ability can be explained by these two factors, indicating the importance of other external variables not captured in this study.

In addition, the correlation analysis reveals a significant negative relationship between EPT provision and early reading ability when controlling for parental attention. This suggests that despite the positive intentions behind providing educational play tools, their actual impact might be detrimental when not adequately integrated with parental involvement. This finding is particularly relevant in the context of early childhood education, as it underscores the importance of a balanced approach where parental attention works synergistically with educational resources. The **significance tests** of the regression coefficients and ANOVA also reinforce the idea that the combination of parental attention and EPT provision plays a critical role in shaping early literacy development. However, the results also suggest that further investigation is needed to explore the underlying causes of the negative impact of EPT provision and to identify other factors that may influence early reading ability.

The results of the analysis show that parental attention has a significant positive effect on early childhood reading skills (p-value = 0.000, t = 3.821). This shows that the higher the parental attention, the better the child's early reading skills. This finding is in line with the research of Holisoh et al. (2022) which states that active parental involvement in assisting children to read or providing literacy guidance can significantly improve children's reading skills. In addition, Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory supports these results by emphasizing the importance of social interaction, including communication between parents and children, as a foundation for children's early literacy development.

Conversely, the results of the analysis show that the provision of EPT has a significant negative effect on early reading skills (p-value = 0.006, t = -2.860). This negative relationship indicates that the provision of EPT that is not accompanied by parental guidance or involvement can reduce the effectiveness of literacy learning in children. Research by Lisa et al. (2020) also found that independent use of EPT by children without adequate guidance is often ineffective in improving literacy skills. Therefore, although EPT is a good tool, parental guidance remains an important factor in ensuring effective use of EPT.

Regression tests showed that the combination of parental attention and provision of EPT had a significant effect on children's early reading ability (p-value = 0.000, F = 10.729). The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.257) showed that 25.7% of the variability in children's early reading ability could be explained by parental attention and provision of EPT. The remaining 74.3% was influenced by other factors outside the model, such as the social environment, teaching methods, or the child's

individual abilities. These results support Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological approach, which states that child development is influenced by various interacting environmental factors, including the active role of parents and learning aids.

Partial analysis showed that the correlation between parental attention and early reading ability remained significant even with the control of the provision of ECE variable (p-value = 0.000, R = 0.437). This indicates that parental attention is an important factor that directly supports children's literacy skills, even when the use of ECE is controlled. Research by Ulya & Lilawati (2023) emphasized that parental attention provides a sense of emotional security that helps children be more confident in exploring the world of literacy.

In contrast, the correlation between the provision of ECE and early reading ability, by controlling the variable of parental attention, remained significant but was negative (p-value = 0.003, R = -0.341). This negative relationship indicates that without parental guidance, the use of ECE is less effective in improving children's reading ability. Research by Nugraheni (2018) stated that ECE used without supervision often does not have an optimal impact on children's literacy development.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the synergy between parental attention and the use of ECE is an ideal combination in supporting early literacy skills in early childhood. Parents who actively accompany their children in learning using EPT can create a more effective and enjoyable learning atmosphere. In addition, this approach also strengthens the emotional relationship between parents and children, which is an important basis for holistic child development. This collaboration supports research by Isnaeni et al. (2022) which shows that the combination of parental attention and interactive learning media can increase literacy effectiveness by up to 30% better than traditional approaches.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the significant relationship between parental attention and the provision of Educational Play Tools (EPT) with early reading skills in children aged 4-5 years. Parental involvement, particularly through active learning support, creates an environment that fosters the development of early literacy. Such engagement enhances children's cognitive and linguistic abilities, providing the necessary foundation for later academic success. Educational Play Tools, which offer an interactive and enjoyable learning experience, complement parental efforts by making learning more engaging and effective.

The findings emphasize the importance of a synergistic relationship between parental attention and the use of Educational Play Tools. Parents who actively participate in their children's learning activities create a supportive atmosphere that contributes to their literacy development. By utilizing Educational Play Tools, children are provided with opportunities to engage with learning in a fun and dynamic way, further enhancing their readiness for formal education. Thus, both factors play a crucial role in promoting early literacy skills.

In light of these results, it is recommended that parents increase their involvement in their children's educational activities, providing appropriate Educational Play Tools that match their developmental needs. Moreover, educational policymakers and institutions should prioritize the availability of high-quality

Educational Play Tools to ensure equitable access for all children, regardless of socio-economic background. This approach would help bridge educational gaps, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to develop essential early literacy skills that form the basis for their future learning journey.

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