



Parent's Perspectives: Collaborative Practice in Academic Services for Gifted Children

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Abstract: Collaboration between teachers and parents in academic services for gifted children is important. The role of parents in collaboration is still often not optimized. This research aims to describe parents' perspectives on the practice of collaborative academic services for gifted children from the aspects of parental roles, forms of collaboration, and challenges in collaboration. This research used a survey involving 14 parents who were members of the Parents Support Group for Gifted Children (PSGGC) Yogyakarta community with the criteria of having gifted children and having experience collaborating with teachers or school officials. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire that covered aspects of the role of parents, forms of collaboration carried out by parents, and challenges in implementation practice. Data were analyzed using a descriptive approach with percentage techniques. The research results show that parents play a significant role in meeting learning needs, assisting the learning process, and monitoring the development of gifted children. The most common form of communication is building communication forums intending to share information about the profile and condition of gifted children so that they get the right services. The challenge faced by parents is the limited understanding of teachers and qualified resources in the field of giftedness which has an impact on less than optimal academic services for gifted children. Therefore, collaboration from a parent's perspective can be a consideration in academic services for gifted children by increasing understanding of each other's roles, building communication forums, and mapping challenges that can be overcome collaboratively.

Keywords: academic services, forms of collaboration, gifted children

Perspektif Orang Tua: Praktik Kolaborasi dalam Layanan Akademik bagi Anak Berbakat

Abstrak: Kerjasama dalam layanan akademik bagi anak berbakat merupakan hal yang penting. Namun, keterlibatan orang tua masih sering kurang dioptimalkan. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mendeskripsikan perspektif orang tua dalam praktik kolaborasi layanan akademik bagi anak berbakat dari aspek peran orang tua, bentuk kolaborasi, dan tantangan dalam kolaborasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan survei dengan melibatkan 14 orang tua yang tergabung di komunitas PSGGC Yogyakarta dengan kriteria mempunyai anak berbakat dan mempunyai pengalaman kolaborasi dengan guru atau pihak sekolah. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kuesioner yang meliputi aspek peran orang tua, bentuk kolaborasi yang dilakukan oleh orang tua, dan tantangan dalam praktik pelaksanaannya. Data dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif dengan teknik persentase. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa orang tua sangat berperan dalam memenuhi kebutuhan belajar, mendampingi proses pembelajaran, dan memantau perkembangan anak berbakat. Bentuk komunikasi yang paling banyak dilakukan yaitu membangun forum komunikasi dengan tujuan untuk berbagi informasi mengenai profil dan kondisi anak berbakat sehingga mendapatkan layanan yang tepat. Tantangan yang dihadapi orang tua yaitu terbatasnya pemahaman guru dan sumber daya yang mumpuni dalam bidang keberbakatan yang berdampak pada kurang optimalnya layanan akademik bagi anak berbakat. Oleh karena itu, kolaborasi dari sudut pandang orang tua dapat menjadi pertimbangan dalam layanan akademik bagi anak berbakat dengan meningkatkan memahami peran masing-masing, membangun forum komunikasi dan memetakan tantangan yang dapat diatasi secara kolaboratif.

Kata Kunci: anak berbakat, bentuk kolaborasi, layanan akademik

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INTRODUCTION

Gifted children are individuals identified by professionally qualified persons who, based on exceptional abilities as capable of high achievement, require educational programs and services that differ from those typically provided by regular school programs to realize contributions to themselves and society (Smith et al., 2018). Children capable of high achievement include those who demonstrate achievement and/or potential in any of the following areas: general intellectual ability, specific academic talent, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, visual or performing arts, and psychomotor abilities (VanTassel-Baska, 2021). Furthermore, the definition of gifted students is based on Renzulli's three-circle conception of giftedness, which considers three characteristics of giftedness: above-average ability, creativity, and task commitment (Clark, 2013; Davis et al., 2014). Gifted children have above-average potential in one or more areas, such as intellectual intelligence, creativity, the arts, or other academic skills, and often demonstrate a deep interest and exceptional ability in a particular location from an early age. These characteristics make gifted children need a different educational approach and be tailored to their characteristics and learning needs so that the potential of gifted children can develop optimally (Suseno & Wahab, 2023).

Academic services for gifted children are a series of programs, strategies, and support specifically designed to meet the educational needs of gifted children that include academic and non-academic aspects such as social, emotional, and psychological aspects of children intending to ensure that gifted children can develop holistically and achieve their true potential (Semiawan, 1997). In the context of academic services for gifted children, collaborative practices play an important role. Collaboration as a choice between the parties involved (teachers and parents) is based on one goal, namely the division of responsibilities to reach agreement on certain matters such as learning achievement, resources, and development of trust (Collier et al., 2015; Cook & Friend, 2010; Lohmann et al., 2018). Collaboration involves various related parties, such as parents, teachers, educational specialists, psychologists, and other experts. With collaboration, the parties involved can identify the needs of gifted children more precisely, design appropriate programs, and provide coordinated and holistic support.

The urgency or importance of collaboration in academic services for children with special needs including gifted children is increasingly felt considering the current conditions where educational challenges are increasingly complex and diverse (Griffin, 2014; Hernandez, 2013; Lohmann et al., 2018; Suprihatin et al., 2024). With collaboration, the potential of gifted children can be maximized, so that they can develop optimally and make a positive contribution to society and the nation. A research explains that it suggests collaboration with various parties to provide effective academic services for gifted children (Makel et al., 2020). One of the parties that plays a key role in this collaborative practice is parents (Ishartiwi et al., 2024). Parents have a deep understanding of their children, including their needs, interests, and potential. Parental involvement in collaboration helps ensure that the educational program designed follows the child's needs and receives consistent support in the home and school environments (Lockhart & Mun, 2020; Lohmann et al., 2018). Thus, the role of parents is not only important but also irreplaceable in efforts to provide effective academic services for gifted children.

Gifted children have extraordinary potential to achieve high academic achievement. However, in practice, the development of their potential is often not optimal due to various factors such as lack of understanding of their needs, lack of adequate resources, and lack of coordination between various related parties. In this context, collaborative practices in academic services for gifted children become very important. Collaboration between parents, teachers, educational

specialists, and other experts has great potential to provide holistic and sustainable support for the academic development of gifted children. Its significance lies in the potential to identify and respond to the individual needs of gifted children more effectively, thus enabling them to achieve their true academic potential. With good collaboration, an educational environment will be formed that supports, motivates, and empowers gifted children to develop optimally in an academic environment. Therefore, understanding and implementing collaborative practices in academic services for gifted children become very important in efforts to improve the quality of education and ensure that every gifted child can achieve academic success in accordance with their potential.

METHOD

This study uses a survey approach to describe the form of collaboration in providing academic services for gifted children (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Following the survey research procedure, the stages of this study include designing data collection instruments; determining respondents based on population representation; collecting data from respondents; analyzing data; and presenting research findings (Fowler, 2014). 14 respondents were sampled from the parent community in Yogyakarta called the Parents Support Group for Gifted Children (PSGGC) as a forum for sharing and learning about giftedness, and open to practitioners, academics, and stakeholders who care about the existence and current issues of gifted children. Respondents were selected purposively with the consideration of parents who have children diagnosed as gifted and have experience in collaboration with teachers. Respondents filled out an open-ended questionnaire via Google Form consisting of 12 points of statements and questions related to parents' opinions on collaborative practices in academic services for gifted children. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted to deepen or explore information. Based on the data collection, respondent characteristics are described based on demographics, including 1) parental role; 2) age; 3) educational background; 4) occupation; and 5) length of collaboration. Respondent demographic data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent demographics

Variable	Group	f	%
Parent's position	Mother	13	92.9
	Father	1	7.1
Age (year)	31-40	6	42.9
	41-50	6	42.9
	>51	2	14.2
Educational Background	Diploma	1	7.1
	Bachelor's degree	9	64.3
	Master's degree	4	28.6
Occupation	Educator	4	28.6
	Entrepreneur	5	35.7
	Home-based work	5	35.7
Collaboration Period (year)	< 1	4	28.6
	1-3	5	35.7
	3-5	4	28.6
	> 5	1	7.1

Table 1 shows the demographics of respondents consisting of the role of parents in the family as father or mother, with the majority percentage of around 92% of respondents acting as mothers. The average age of respondents is in the range of 31 to 50 years. Most respondents have completed higher education with the largest percentage of around 64% with a bachelor's degree. From the employment variable, respondents have a variety of jobs including educators, entrepreneurs, and home-based workers. Respondents have experience collaborating with teachers for a period ranging from 1 to 5 years.

The data of this study focuses on the form of collaboration carried out by parents and teachers in academic services for gifted children and obstacles in the practice of collaboration. The research instrument in the form of an open questionnaire covers three aspects of the focus of the research including the role of parents, forms of collaboration, and challenges faced. Filling out the instrument was done online by considering the flexibility of parents' time. Data validation was carried out through random interviews to check the questionnaire answers. The descriptive-quantitative method with percentage techniques was applied in data analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The analysis began by grouping the questionnaire answers according to the two research focuses and sorting similar answers for each focus. Then the frequency was calculated in percentages. The form of most activities carried out by parents was used as the basis for determining the results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show the role of parents in collaboration, forms of collaborative practices between teachers and parents, and obstacles in collaboration based on the parents' perspectives. The research data are classified by percentage. Table 2 is the result of the study related to the role of parents.

Table 2. The role of parents in collaboration

Parent's roles	f	%
Facilitator	8	57.2
Informant	4	28.6
Advocator	2	14.2

Based on the table regarding the role of parents above, most parents (57.2%) have an important role in facilitating the academic service needs of gifted children. The role of parents as facilitators includes fulfilling learning needs, assisting the learning process, and monitoring the learning development of gifted children, and communicating it regularly so that there is optimal synergy between school and home development. This is under the research results that parents have a significant role in facilitating academic services for gifted children, especially with accompanying obstacles, in developing their potential through self-development (Pamungkas et al., 2023). Parents also play a role in understanding indicators of giftedness and the challenges they experience, making it easier to support academic programs provided by the school (Tai & Phillipson, 2012).

With a percentage of 28.6% as informants, parents provide education to people involved such as teachers regarding the concept of giftedness, accompanying obstacles, learning needs, case studies, the PGSCC community, and other educational information. Exchange of information is an important part of parent-teacher collaboration, such as learning obstacles experienced by gifted children and solutions to overcome them (Mavi et al., 2022). With 14.2% as advocates, parents have a role in ensuring that gifted children receive proper education rights. The role of parents in advocacy is supported by the results of a study which revealed that advocacy carried out by parents to support the academic success of gifted children through planning and approval of gifted programs and parental involvement in children's development at school (Jolly, 2018).

Table 3. Forms of collaborative practices

Forms of collaboration	f	%
Communication forum	8	57.2
Academic program development	4	28.6
Extracurricular or after-school activities	2	14.2

Based on the table above, it is known that parents most often collaborate through conversation, which is around 57.2% of all interactions. The form of cooperation in the communication forum is to inform the child's condition academically, such as the child's learning experience at previous schools through school history and documents from parents to the principal, class teacher, and/or subject teacher, so that there is a common understanding of the child's condition. In addition, parents share information about the profile of gifted children such as interests and talents, then the school assists in optimizing these interests and talents. The form of communication is not only one-way from parents to teachers, but teachers also communicate the obstacles of gifted children at school so that two-way communication is established to solve problems together. There are also parents who use a personal approach from the teacher's perspective regarding gifted children, and there is further education from parents about gifted children from the evidence of assessment, giftedness books, and information on socialization or seminars. These findings are supported by research results that parents form communication forums such as counseling sessions to provide various information regarding the condition of gifted children, share experiences, and strategies in maximizing their abilities which can provide support for teachers in academic services at school (Fleith & Guimarães, 2006).

With a percentage of 28.6%, the form of collaboration in developing academic programs includes differentiating curriculum and teaching according to the child's intellectual potential. One of them is the flexibility of time in learning, such as gifted children can explore certain reading materials after completing assignments in class, and product flexibility such as children who are proficient in English to convey their learning outcomes in English. Another example of developing an academic program is the provision of special classes for gifted children who are separate from their peers. Finally, with a percentage of 14.2%, the form of cooperation in after-school activities includes accommodating student interests such as scientific work and accommodating preparation for participating in competitions outside of school. The results of the study also showed that the gifted children's curriculum is designed with higher/advanced content, assignments with a high level of difficulty, and multidisciplinary learning, and this is part of the collaboration of various parties in developing academic service programs for gifted children (Shaunessy-Dedrick, 2018).

Table 4. Obstacles in collaboration

Obstacles	f	%
Understanding	4	28.6
Human resources in schools	4	28.6
Rigid curriculum	3	21.5
The lack of involved stakeholders	2	14.2
Time	1	7.1

Based on the table above regarding the obstacles encountered in implementing collaboration, most parents (57.2%) stated that understanding and human resources (HR) in schools were the biggest challenges in establishing cooperation in academic services for gifted children. Parents explained that teachers have pedagogical competence in general teaching, but not

in the education of children with special needs, especially gifted children. This has an impact on services that are less accommodating for gifted children so that they get bored easily and tend not to be motivated to participate in classroom learning. In addition, human resources in schools that master the field of gifted children are also limited. A study conducted highlighted the challenges in collaboration between parents and teachers for intellectually gifted children who emphasized a lack of understanding and lack of information sharing (Minnie et al., 2022).

With a percentage of 21.5%, some parents think that the curriculum used in schools is too rigid and does not adapt to the needs of gifted children. Challenges related to a rigid curriculum will limit gifted children in developing their potential (Tsai, 2007). In addition, limited time for collaboration and involvement of other parties is a challenge for some parents, around 21.3%. A study revealed that parents and teachers face challenges in managing time for collaboration, which hinders effective academic services for gifted children (Kamińska, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Gifted children have extraordinary potential to achieve high academic achievement. However, in reality, the development of this potential is often less than optimal. One factor in this optimization is collaboration between parents and teachers. In this study, the perspective of parents can reveal aspects of the role of parents, forms of collaboration, and challenges in collaboration in academic services for gifted children. Research shows that parents have a very important role in meeting learning needs, supporting the learning process, and monitoring the development of gifted children. The most common form of communication is the creation of a communication forum that aims to exchange information about the profile and condition of gifted children so that gifted children get appropriate services. The challenge for parents is that teachers and quality resources have limited knowledge about giftedness, resulting in less-than-optimal academic performance for gifted children.

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