

## **Parental Involvement in Schools: A Multi-site Study at Kuin Utara 4 and Sungai Jingah 4 Elementary Schools in Banjarmasin**



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**ABSTRACT:** This research was derived from the reality of public schools, where the majority of students coming from low-income and lower-middle-family backgrounds. However, they could manage parental involvement so that they are actively involved in various school programs. Thus, the focus of this research included: (1) planning for parental involvement in schools; (2) the implementation of parental involvement in schools; (3) evaluation of parental involvement in schools; and (4) obstacles encountered in parental involvement in schools. The researchers used a qualitative type of multi-site study. The data were collected through participant observation techniques, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The data analysis techniques used were individual data analysis techniques and cross-case analysis. Meanwhile, the validity of the data was checked by means of internal validation, external validation, reliability, and objectivity. The results of this study showed that: (1) participation planning was carried out at the beginning of the school year involving parents, principals, and teachers with funding sources for participation planning activities from *infaq* and dues with the stipulated period for one year; (2) the implementation of parental involvement includes participation in incidental, daily, weekly, monthly, semester, and yearly activities; (3) evaluation of parental involvement involving committees, principals, and teachers; (4) obstacles to parental involvement in schools included the assumption that schools are free, lack of support for the development of children's talent interests, the resolution process involves principals, teachers, committee administrators, overcome by approaching, providing understanding, and socialization. From the results of this study, it was concluded that the school has developed parental involvement in various school programs. It is especially advisable for principals to embrace and trust parents to be involved in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and resolution stages of obstacles. Thus, parents will feel more needed by the school and contribute their abilities in helping to improve the quality of education in schools both in the short and long term.

**KEYWORDS:** parental involvement, planning, implementation, evaluation, constraints

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a shared responsibility of the government, schools, and the community, especially the families of the students concerned. Involvement or participation in thinking about and providing assistance to the implementation of education in schools including the responsibility of students' parents/ guardians. The cooperative correlation between the school and parents has a great effect in the achievement of educational goals in the school. Teachers, students, and parents (communities) are educational partners (Setya, 2011). The achievement of quality education effectively and efficiently is strongly effected by the existence of good synergy between schools and the community (Nez, 2014). Therefore, according to Kruckeberg, there must be a harmonious correlation, otherwise the community will be reluctant to give their aspirations and communication is not well established so that there is no transparency and accurate information about the process of managing education in schools (Rusmana, et al., 2019).

The correlation between school and community is part of school management that must be developed so that synergy can be maintained properly. One of the factors causing synergy between schools and the community is the role of public relations that is lacking in organizations, and the public relations function is not properly placed in educational institutions. (Gilaninia, 2013). Management means the management or activity carried out by several people to achieve certain goals (Dutta & Chaudhry, 2021).

According to Miller, education management is a process of joint and educational activities by utilizing all existing facilities, both personal, material, and spiritual to achieve educational goals (Moulin-Stožek, 2020). This means that the concepts of leadership, human relations, decision making, people, means and cooperation are the scope of management (Ahmad, 2021). According to McGinn (1999), decentralization of education is defined as the delegation of power and authority in overcoming problems in the field of education, but it must still refer to the objectives of national education as part of efforts to achieve national goals. The decentralization of schools will be difficult to achieve independence in education management without good public relations management to encourage parental involvement (Lazwardi, 2018).

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According to Harlow Public Relations in special management and supporting, the process of coaching and maintenance between the community and the public includes a form of interaction activities in the form of communication, mutual understanding, and acceptance so that they both collaborate with each other. Management involvement in resolving various problems or conflicts assists management in following and utilizing effective changes. The main means of sound and ethical communication techniques is action as an early warning system in overcoming differences (Seitel, 2017). Participation means involvement. According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (2016), involvement is about participating in an activity; participation. In Soekarno's view, this participation is a correlation so that communication or joint activities occur in a certain social situation (Jurriëns, 2013).

In solving problems in the decision termination process, it is necessary to involve every pioneer of education in the school such as the principal, administrative staff, teachers, parents, students, community, and community leaders (Ushansyah, 2017). The participation given by the public is worthy of many forms, such as: (1) material participation is the involvement of a crowd worthy of funding; (2) the participation of the mind is the contribution of everything that is given ideas and educational insights; (3) Energy/physical participation, participation this time is a worthy thing for those who have a lot of free time and is willing to involve because they have a sense of concern for helping the school; and (4) moral participation in the form of a positive public presumption or picture of the school (Samroh, 2017).

Partnership or cooperation between schools is carried out not only with private parties or other organizations, but also with parents. This shows that schools and parents must have a good correlation so that parental involvement in schools can run well and be directed (Halimah & Suriansyah, 2022). This opinion is also supported by Hajidah & Suriansyah (2022). The correlation between parents and schools is successful when there is mutual respect and trust. It can encourage and inspire children to use their skills and the school works with parents as partners. Therefore, establishing a partnership correlation with parents is very important.

Parental involvement also has a role in improving the student learning process. This is due to the parents who supported students to authorize students to participate in a series of activities at school, as well as as a motivator for students in the learning process (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017). According to Isbandi, parental involvement is the participation of parents in the process of identifying problems, selecting and making decisions on other ways to deal with and solve problems as well as the involvement of parents in the process on the evaluation of existing overhauls (Umboh et al., 2020). Parental involvement is the participation of parents in solving problems. In this case, parents actively design, implement and evaluate educational programs (Samantha & Almalik, 2019). Parental involvement is the participation of parents in a variety of activities, namely ideas, services, facilities, and skills. The school is an educational institution after the education of the (Martsiswati & Suryono, 2014) which is also part of the education center with several roles, including: (1) pioneer in partnership or the party that initiates the construction of the partnership, for example on the first day of school, the movement is represented by the homeroom teacher, as a bridge meeting with parents to discuss the school agenda; (2) the partnership facilitator as the one that carries out the creation of correlations between communities and schools, for example, in providing meeting among parents; and (3) partnership management as a forum for active balance control so that the correlation continues to run well and the better, by carrying out flashbacks of changes in parents' behavior in their correlation to support the child's educational process at home (Kemendikbud, 2016).

Epstein in its framework known as Epstein's Framework. There are six forms of parental involvement produced by his research, namely: (1) parenting, which is to provide a better understanding of child development, describing how the criteria for education and care at home are synergistic; (2) communicating, a series of communication activities carried out between school and home and vice versa about various kinds of school activities on the development shown by the child; (3) volunteering, granting or being able to complete a school program; (4) learning at home, the school holds meeting activities to both learn, the tasks given are certainly not directly but the process of working on each student's place from home; (5) decision-making, discussing various decision-making that involves the role of the community; and (6) collaborating with the community, namely by integrating community resources and services to strengthen the resilience of schools and students (Joy Caño et al., 2016).

Factor supporting actors of parental involvement in schools include factors derived from the parents themselves. First, parents' knowledge of the benefits of their involvement in their children's education as well as the positive impact it has had. This is an effort to convince parents that their knowledge of participation in school increases, which is why it is important for their involvement in children's education. Second, the perception of parents depends on the attitude shown by the teacher. Parents will participate and be effectively involved if their attendance feels valued by teachers and the school (Hornby, 2011). Third, the context of parents' lives is also one of the obstacles in the involvement of their children's education, it is caused by the level of education, type/ condition of work, experience of the past in the world of education, inferiority of parents, and other personal problems such as distance from home and culture (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

The second factor, namely the child factor can be based on the child's conditioning. The child's condition includes: (1) the child's age; (2) parental involvement decreases as the child's development progresses. Teachers will tend to involve parents on children whose learning ability is still low/ lacking. Meanwhile, on the other hand, if children who are considered capable of participating in learning activities well, will reduce the involvement of parents (Hornby, 2011). Third, the parent and teacher factors are related to opposing goals and perspectives and the fourth factor is social factors such as historical, demographic, political, and economic factors

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(Hornby, 2011). Public Relations as part of school management with the specifics of parental involvement has several processes including planning, implementation, and evaluation. In terms of planning, all long-term and short-term public relations programs need to be carefully and carefully planned (Nurdin, 2019). Planning of public relations activities in the form of strategic planning usually consists of the following elements: (a) objectives, (b) activities, (c) schedules, (d) resources needed, (e) implementation: activity steps and (f) evaluation tools for activities carried out. The assessment component has instructions for monitoring and knowing deviations from the target so that corrective action can begin (Taufiqurokman, 2008).

Furthermore, in the process of implementing parental involvement in schools, according to Smith in Iriantara (2013) can be stated in the implementation of this program, namely (1) scheduling of programs/activities; (2) the budget provided for running the program, and (3) the responsibility for the implementation of the program. All public relations programs and implementation must be evaluated. If there are flaws and errors, they are further corrected together. There are two factors of evaluating public relations in the context of parental involvement, namely the effectiveness and efficiency of its implementation. Its effectiveness, namely how much goals have been successfully achieved, for example in dealing with problems, the extent of the community's role in terms of involvement, whether there is an understanding of the development of their children in school, whether they have shown attention to school achievement, and whether they are willing to provide input for school construction. Then, efficiency is how much potential it has been properly used for public relations activities. This evaluation is carried out during the process of the activity or at the end of the program to see the extent of its success (Wati, 2015).

The results of the evaluation carried out can be used as a source of information by (1) increasing understanding in the form of communication between team members creating meaningfulness about what is being done; (2) developing activities without realizing trust building, and (3) supporting the development of human resources and organizational units because fellow team members during the implementation of activities must have a process of thinking and interacting (Ariyanti & Prasetyo, 2021). Public Relations supports the achievement of more productive and efficient cooperation, as well as fulfilling common interests, through planned activities (Sriramesh, 2009) of the institutions it represents (Nurjanah et al., 2017).

The above explanation reinforces that the correlation between parents and education managers must be maintained properly. Schools belong to the commons and will be more advanced and develop rapidly towards quality improvement if there is work between related parties. Self-reliance efforts as described above have been carried out by Kuin Utara 4 and Sungai Jingah 4 Elementary Schools Banjarmasin, positioned in the suburbs, located in the B-accredited school environment but in terms of achieving the quality of education these two schools are classified as superior schools. Both are public schools accredited A. These schools are the schools that actively organized or participated in activities both internally and externally. Achievements in various fields of competition are also often achieved and even have been able to compete at the national level in one of the competition fields.

### METHOD

This research utilized a qualitative research This qualitative research was a study conducted in natural conditions (setting). The reasons for using this qualitative research included: (1) when finding double reality data, this research was easier to adjust; (2) the presentation of the nature of the correlation between the researchers and the informant was carried out directly; (3) it appeared to be more adaptive and sharper on the effect on the patterns of value encountered. The other reason is because it is descriptive so that the results of the study were described based on the evidence that has been obtained. The research setting chosen were Kuin Utara 4 and Sungai Jingah 4 Elementary Schools Banjarmasin. The sampling was done using snowball sampling technique. The data collection technique used in this study was participant observation where the researchers observed the behavior of parties whose data was needed to support the research, in-depth interview, and documentation. The reason for using this technique is because the approach used was qualitative. The data analysis techniques used were individual case data analysis and cross-case data analysis. Data analysis in a single site is a data analysis of each school that was used as a research case study, namely Kuin Utara 4 and Sungai Jingah 4 Elementary Schools Banjarmasin.

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on the results of data analysis, this study showed that:

#### Focus 1

Planning for parental involvement in schools was carried out at the beginning of the school year involving parents as school committees, principals, and teachers with funding sources for participation planning activities from *infaq* and dues and the stipulated period is one year.

#### Focus 2

The implementation of parental involvement includes participation in incidental activities (competitions from sponsors/ brands, scout competitions, death, sickness, and disaster assistance), daily (learning activities), weekly (*infaq* and extracurricular raising),

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monthly (devotional work and gymnastics with parents), semester (distribution of report cards and giving gifts to loyal students), and annual (6th grade graduation ceremony, commemoration of holidays, scheduled races).

### Focus 3

Evaluation of parental involvement in both schools involves committees/ parents, principals and teachers. Everything that was planned then carried out needed to be evaluated so that things lacking can be coped in the shortcoming time. Also, good things can be a benchmark to be modeled and improved again in the implementation of similar subsequent activities.

### Focus 4

Obstacles to parental involvement in the school included the assumption that schools are free, lack of support for the development of children's talents, the settlement process involves principals, teachers, and committee administrators. These were overcome by approaching, providing understanding, and socialization.

Based on the findings above, a model of parental involvement in Schools can be described in Figure 2.

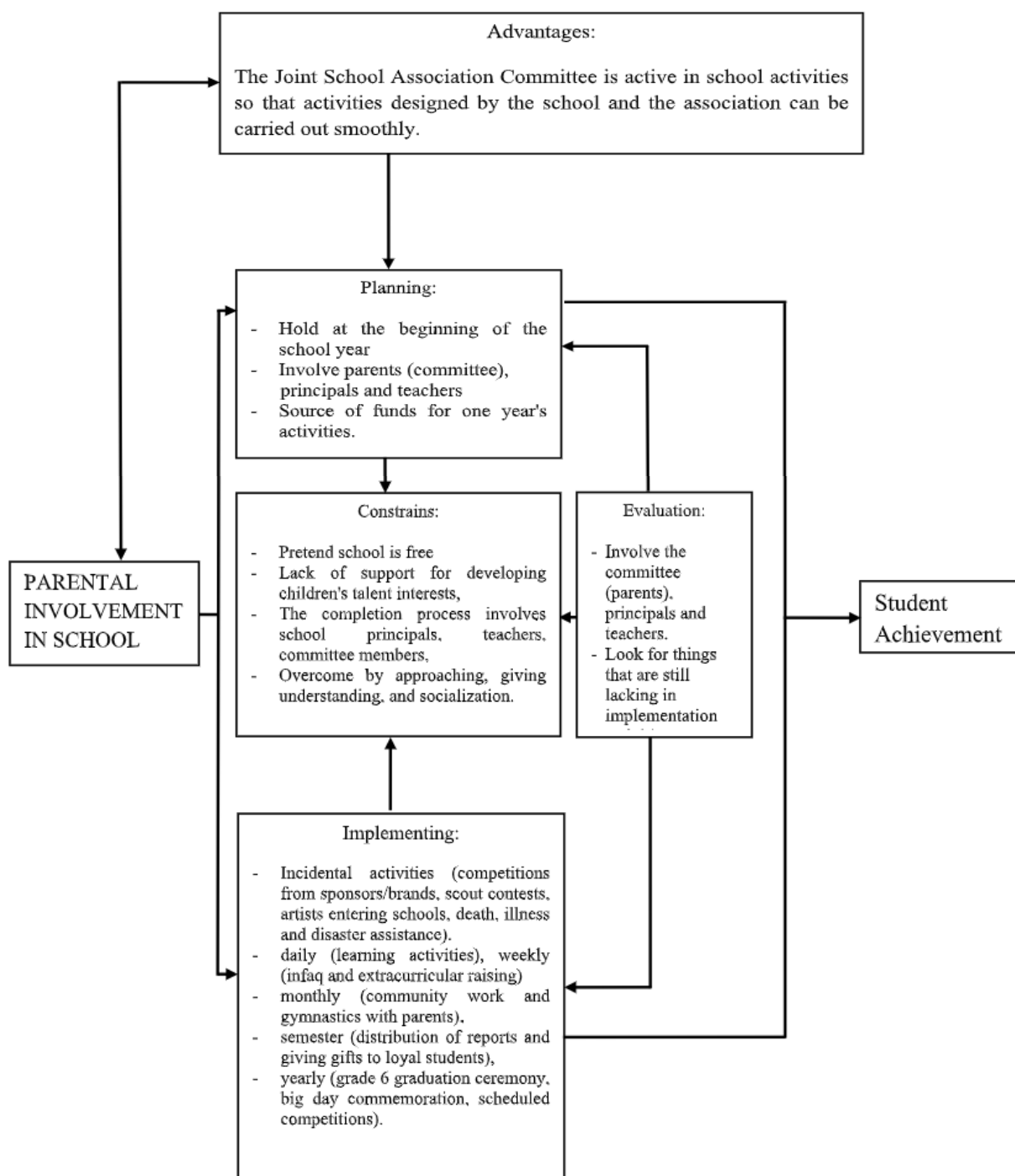


Figure 2. Flow of Parental Involvement in Schools

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. Planning for Parental Involvement in Schools**

Planning, like building, is the design. A design has conceptualized the type of building that will be constructed, the location, the desired building materials, the source of material costs and the origin of skilled salaries. This comparison applies to planning. Without thorough planning in advance, the implementation phase will be less successful, if not ineffective (Yulianti & Umar, 2022). Similarly, there must be a strategy to determine the initiatives that will be introduced the following school year for parent involvement.

Planning also requires ideas, suggestions, and involvement from diverse stakeholders to ensure that the designed programs have been as thoroughly considered as feasible. Also, the source of funds that will be utilized to finance various initiatives must be discussed in advance so that implementation is not impeded. Kaufan in Adams et al., (2013) argued that teachers, students, parents, and the community work well together to enhance the quality of education (Adams et al., 2013). As an educational partner, schools and parents must be involved in educational programs from the stage of conception to evaluation and completion if barriers arise.

The school and the community, particularly the parents, must be included in planning since, according to Rachmadi in Suharyadi (2016), the definition of public relations involves communication activities. Any tendency or failure in communication and evaluation and consideration with all possibilities to change the nature, approach/ emphasis at each level of wisdom will be more easily overcome by equality in listening to public opinion and sensitivity in interpreting it, as well as promoting wisdom with the intention of confirming comprehension and acceptance.

Thus, the community's expectations for school education and school-designed programs can be effectively conveyed so that the goals between schools and the community are relevant, aligned and can be accomplished with optimal support from both parties, namely schools and parents. The aforementioned ideas propose that research propositions can be incorporated into the creation of public relations theories regarding parental engagement in schools, with a focus on parental involvement planning. The research demonstrated that parental involvement planning in schools conducted at the beginning of the school year increases parents' participation in program planning/ design activities, and that participation planning involving parents (committees), principals, and teachers encourages the presence of innovative ideas, aligns goals, and fosters shared responsibility for agreed-upon programs. The source of funds from *infaq* and dues facilitates the future implementation of the program and fosters a sense of charitable sincerity and the spirit of mutual cooperation, with a set period of one year allowing the realization of mature, structured, organized programs and a long period of time allowing for longer preparation so that the implementation of the program runs effectively and efficiently. The final findings of the study are also relevant to the aforementioned theories and hypotheses, as they demonstrate that participation planning is conducted at the beginning of the school year by parents (committees), principals, and teachers, with funding sources for participation planning activities coming from *infaq* and dues for a one-year period.

### **B. Implementing the Parental Involvement in Schools**

After the school program was planned, the next stage was the implementation of the program (Cross et al., 2010). At the planning stage, parents were involved in the preparation of the program, so in the implementation it is certain that parents were involved (Olibie, 2014). In other words, parents inevitably participate in the implementation of the program.

The research proposition stated that: The more activities, be it incidental, daily, weekly, monthly, semester, or yearly activities that are carried out, the more parents would participate in school.

In public relations theory, the objectives of developing public relations implementation are in terms of school interests, including: (1) maintaining the sustainability of the school; (2) the school concerned shall improve the quality of education; (3) streamlining instructional learning; (4) in the process of developing and implementing school programs, support and assistance from the community are needed (Hasanah, 2017). Parental involvement is the main goal of public relations management, especially to obtain the support and assistance from the community that is needed in the development and implementation of school programs. Without community participation, all school programs would be very difficult to implement, scheduled programs such as daily, weekly, monthly, semester, and yearly activities, especially incidental activities.

Moreover, it also mentioned the essential objectives of public relations, including: (1) for the public to provide feedback on the various things taken by the institution; (2) to have high public accountability should demonstrate transparency in the management of educational institutions; and (3) to obtain real support from the community for the sustainability of educational institutions (Setya, 2011). These two opinions have very clearly stated that community participation, in this case parents of students is needed in the sustainability of the school. The more school activities carried out the more parental involvement is needed in the implementation of the program. Parental involvement is one of the main factors for the successful implementation of all activities in schools.

Furthermore, it is also emphasized that public relations in schools are grouped in various fields, namely: (1) routinely coordinating between the principal / school and parents; (2) if there is a problem that lies with the student, be it a personal problem, the school and the health party collaborate with school counseling to obtain interest and kinship; (3) cooperate with the school; (4)

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cooperate with the surrounding community (community leaders); (5) cooperate with the local government; (6) establish communication and friendship with alumni; (7) work with universities to communicate how education is progressing; (8) build correlations with a warm and harmonious community environment; and (9) invite cooperation between the school and the canteen (Sandhiya et al., 2020).

According to the preceding opinion, there are numerous areas of public relations cooperation, including cooperation with all school inhabitants. The residents of the school in question are students and student-supporting parents. Encourage parental participation in educational activities in schools is the most desired manner of interaction with parents (Sumarsono et al., 2016). The absence of a particular reference to the type of participation suggests that the part content is anticipated to assist the implementation of activities in the form of ideas, energy, cash, infrastructure, or other supporting facilities. The aforementioned ideas propose that research propositions can be incorporated into the creation of public relations theories regarding parental engagement in schools, particularly for the implementation of parental involvement. According to the research hypothesis, the amount of activities conducted in schools, including incidental, daily, weekly, monthly, semester, and annual events, demonstrates the high level of parental involvement in schools. In the research proposal, there is a direct comparison between the number of activities conducted and the number of parent involvement in schools.

The final findings of the study support the research hypothesis, namely the implementation of parental involvement, which includes participation in incidental activities (competitions from sponsors/brands, scout competitions, artists entering school, death, sickness, and disaster assistance), daily (learning activities), weekly (raising *infaq* and extracurriculars), monthly (devotional work and gymnastics with parents), and semester (distribution of report cards and gifting), among others (6th grade graduation events, anniversary of holidays, scheduled races).

### C. Evaluation of Parental Involvement in Schools

Like those of the planning stage, the evaluation stage requires the participation of those who participated in planning and implementation (De Araujo & Bramwell, 1999). The objective is to report on the accountability of the completed activities as well as efforts to determine what kind of follow-up will occur after the completion of the activities. The research proposition demonstrates that committees (parents), principals, and teachers are involved in the evaluation of parental involvement.

Moreover, public relations management has the following theoretical functions, among others: (1) in the delivery of communication directly and indirectly, able to operate as a mediator between the institution's head and internal parties; (2) in publishing-related activities, able to support and assist educational institutions. In this context, school and community collaboration acts as an information manager for internal and external parties, such as the delivery of important information to press agencies and promotional parties; (3) educational institutions can create a positive image; (4) educational institutions and communities are able to collaborate in their participation in problem solving; and (5) able to explain school policies as public relations that act as mediators to assist the principal. Public relations contributes to resolving a problem when it arises (Terglav et al., 2016).

The two functions of public relations management that Nasution in Seitel (2017) described above indicate that the principal, teachers, and committees at both Kuin Utara 4 and Sungai Jingah 4 Elementary Schools are involved in the program evaluation. This demonstrates the importance of field data to established ideas. The fifth role demonstrates that the function of public relations management is to act as a mediator, i.e., to create a place for school and parent discussions. Mutual participation in evaluating this program (Seitel, 2017).

There are two factors to consider when evaluating public relations: (1) effectiveness, or the degree to which goals have been successfully attained, such as in dealing with problems; (2) the extent of the community's involvement in terms of understanding the development of their children in school, paying attention to school achievement, and being willing to provide input for school development; etc. (2) its efficacy, i.e. the extent to which it has been utilized effectively for public relations efforts. This evaluation is conducted during the activity or at the conclusion of the program to assess its success (Anugerah & Saleh, 2022).

### D. Constraints of Parental Involvement in Schools

Constraints are something that causes the ineffectiveness and efficiency of both the process and the results of what is aspired to (Groop et al., 2010). Therefore, obstacles must be followed up as soon as possible so as not to cause bigger problems. Obstacles must be overcome immediately so that the road to achieving the goal becomes smooth again. In terms of people's participation in schools, constraints take many forms and can be from anywhere they come from. Obstacles can be narrow-mindedness, funds, and so on. Obstacles can come from the school or from the parents (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

The research proposition shows that: all obstacles to parental involvement such as a narrow understanding of free schools, lack of support for the development of children's talent interests can be overcome by approaching, understanding, and socializing, as well as the process of resolving obstacles regarding parental involvement by involving principals, teachers, and committee administrators encouraging the emergence of effective and efficient solutions (Baker et al., 2016). In terms of theory, Kruckeberg mentioned that schools and communities must establish harmonious correlations (Setya, 2011). Reluctant from the community in giving their aspirations if there is no good correlation between the school and the community. Moreover, the impact is that accurate

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and transparent information about the management and process of education that occurs in schools will be difficult for them to get, eventually a gap arises between the 2 interconnected stakeholders as education customers. As a result, communication is not running well (Judge, 2019).

Communication factors are among the most important in addressing obstacles in schools, especially obstacles related to parties, for example schools and parents (Alawamleh et al., 2022). Communication must continue to be well fostered so that school programs can be deeply understood by parents so that narrow thoughts can be minimized. Communication becomes an effective way to explain everything to parents so that they can easily understand. If they already understand, then it is easy for them to determine the steps to participate.

Obstacles can occur due to several factors. One of them is the lack of infrastructure and communication between schools and the community, which eventually two-way communication is not established. Some efforts in overcoming these obstacles are building positive opinions in the community through several activities that involve the community and achievements realized by students so as to foster community cooperation with the school (Indriani et al., 2018). So, communication is absolutely necessary in overcoming obstacles in parental involvement in schools. Parents can submit suggestions and opinions about the programs that will be implemented thanks to communication. Parents become aware and understand about a program also thanks to communication.

Then in terms of solving the obstacles faced, it will be more effective and efficient if solved together. The same weight is carried, the same light is carried. Since the school program is a responsibility between the school and the community (parents), if there are obstacles related to it, it should be solved together, namely involving the school and parents (Prinsloo & Reid, 2015). The more heads, the more contributions of thought and other forms of contribution in solving the obstacles encountered. As the theories mentioned in the planning, implementation, and evaluation section of the parent program, the urgency of the involvement of these parties is the same in terms of resolving the constraints of parental involvement.

The theories outlined above suggest that research propositions can be used in the development of public relations theories about parental involvement in schools in particular on the focus of constraints on parental involvement in schools. What is shown in the research proposition is that all obstacles to parental involvement such as a narrow understanding of free schools, lack of support for the development of children's talent interests can be overcome by approaching, understanding, and socializing, and the process of solving obstacles regarding parental involvement by involving principals, teachers, and committee administrators encourages the emergence of effective and efficient solutions. The final findings of the study show relevance to the propositions mentioned above, namely the implementation of parental involvement in schools, including the assumption of free schools, lack of support for the development of children's talent interests, the settlement process involving principals, teachers, committee administrators, overcome by approaching, providing understanding, and socialization.

### CONCLUSION

From the findings in the study conducted at Kuin Utara 4 and Sungai Jingah 4 Elementary Schools about parental involvement in schools, the following points are drawn. (1) The first one is parental involvement of planning in schools was carried out at the beginning of the school year involving parents/guardians (committees), principals, teachers and school staff with funding sources for participation planning activities from *infaq* and dues and the stipulated period is one year; (2) The second is the implementation of parental involvement in schools between parents and the school included participation in incidental activities (competitions from sponsors/ brands, scout competitions, assistance for death, illness, and disaster), daily (learning activities), weekly (*infaq* and extracurricular fundraising), monthly (devotional work and gymnastics with people old), semester (distribution of report cards and awarding of prizes to loyal students), and annual (6th grade graduation events, anniversary of holidays, scheduled competitions); (3) Then, evaluation of parental involvement in the schools with the school involving the committee (parents), principals, and teachers; (4) The last is obstacles to parental involvement in schools obtained after evaluating participation between parents and schools included the assumption that schools are free, lack of support for the development of children's talent interests, the settlement process involves the principal, teachers, committee administrators, overcome by approaching, providing understanding, and socialization.

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