

EDUCATING CHILDREN BY UNDERSTANDING THEIR DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract: *Children are figures that parents do the best for them. The most valuable thing given by parents to children is education. In educating and teaching children, especially elementary students, parents and teachers often find it difficult. Lack of motivation is the reason children are always first and foremost. To increase their motivation, parents and teachers need to understand the psychology of child development. Elementary school age children have different developmental psychology characteristics. These characteristics are classified into four points: physical, social, language, and cognitive. By understanding the characteristics of psychological development of children, parents and teachers must teach and educate children in accordance with their development and not do things that are unwanted by children. It was proved that any children of different ages have different developmental psychology. By understanding the psychology of their development, parents and teachers can teach and educate them easily knowing what can make children motivated and to obtain the best results in education, parents and teachers or schools to work together.*

Keywords: *education, children, elementary school students, developmental psychology*

INTRODUCTION

A child needs a guidance from many people around him. At school, teaching and educating students are teachers' duties. For having good quality, a teacher must have good competence and school also should take a part in giving facilities. However, childrens' learning activities do not just take place at schools, but also at home or family environment. The role of family, especially parents, strongly influences the growth and development of children. Parents are expected to guide and understand the child's soul, what is perceived by child, and the child's wants. Parents play a big role in teaching,

educating, guiding, and providing learning facilities. In addition, parents also must give the example for children to have good character and commendable behavior.

In general, parents whose children of primary school age or his teachers will give more attention for the progress and development of the children's learning. Parents often do intensive communication with teachers at the school to determine the child's development whether it is academic, psychology, or the morals and behavior of children. In addition, one of attention form parents to children is accompanying and guiding when they learn or study at home.

In guiding students or children to study, teacher or parents often find difficulties. One of those problems is low motivation. Students are reluctant to study. They usually deny to study by mentioning various reasons. On the other hand, teacher usually considers the learning result that they want, so he should have appropriate teaching method and learning activities (Fry, H, Steve Ketteridge and Stephanie Marshall, 2009: 91). By knowing this problem, parents and teacher should do the psychological approach. They should know what students want and like so they will have big willingness to study. To understand the students or children, parents or teacher should know the number of students' characteristics because it could also influence the effectiveness of the students' learning (Dunlosky, J., etc: 2013). For that reason, this article discusses about educating children by understanding their developmental psychology.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

Everyone has right to get education. It is the main and important thing in this life because someone can have better life if he has more knowledge and experience. And both knowledge and experience can be gotten by education. Before discussing more about education for children, it will be better if we know the definition of education first.

In Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary (1995: 134), it is mentioned that education is (1) training and instruction; (2) knowledge and character resulting from such training. And, educate is train the mind and character of somebody; teach. From those definitions, we can know that education is not just related to the intelligence quotient or IQ, but it also include the mind, character and behavior.

According to Result (2002: 1), education is a basic human right and a significant factor in the development of children, communities, and countries. Process in education involves facilitating learning or acquiring knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Education often takes place under the guidance of educators (teacher or parents) but students may also educate themselves. Education can be in formal or informal settings and any experience that has a formative effect on the way someone thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational.

In Indonesia, education is commonly and formally divided into some stages. They are (1) *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* (PAUD) or preschool, (2) *Taman Kanak-kanak* (TK) or kindergarten, (3) *Sekolah Dasar* (SD) or Elementary school, (4) *Sekolah Menengah Pertama* (SMP) or Junior High School, (5) *Sekolah Menengah Atas* (SMA) or Senior High School - *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan* (SMK) or Vocational School, and (6) University.

WHY IS EDUCATION SO IMPORTANT?

Child is everything for every parent. He becomes parents' expectation. Therefore, all parents in this world do hard work to give the special and precious things to their children. It is like Pablo Casals' wise words below:

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that will never be again. And what do we teach our children? We teach them that two and two make four and that Paris is the capital of France. When will we also teach them what they are?

We should say to each of them: do you know what you are? You are a marvel. You are unique. In all the years that have passed, there has never been another child like you . . .

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel.

Pablo's words above describes every parents' attitude and expectation to their children. They will do everything to realize their children's goals of life. One of them is giving the best education. Hopefully, they will be educated and experienced someday. Even, so many parents said that the most precious, expensive and eternal thing given to the children is education.

From the previous point, it is mentioned that education is a basic human right and a significant factor in the development of children, communities,

and countries. It means that education is very important factor for everyone in doing this life. And, by having good education, someone will be able to develop what he has easily and maximally.

Opening classroom doors to all children, especially girls, will help break the intergenerational chains of poverty because education is intrinsically linked to all development goals (Result: 2002: 1). It is also clear that by having good and higher education, a country will be free from poverty because the citizen or society are educated, automatically they are creative and solutive in facing the life problems.

ROLE OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS TO CHILD'S EDUCATION

Hara, S. R., and Burke, D.J. (1998) explained that in planning elementary school parent involvement program, parents should asked themselves, then representatives from various stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, community members) the questions below:

1. Are parents, in fact, welcomed in the school?
2. Can we measure with confidence the extent to which parents are involved in their children's education?
3. To what extent do parents volunteer their time in the school, and for what purposes?
4. Are community businesses and organizations invited to work with the school and, if so, in what ways?
5. Are parents capable of assisting teachers with instruction, and does this assistance enhance academic success?
6. Do present staff development programs provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively incorporate parents into their children's education?
7. To what extent should parents participate in instructional decisions?
8. Is "school climate" affected when parents are more directly involved?
9. Do parent involvement programs provide for increased access and equity for all students?

Discussions related to these questions establish the parent involvement outlined in Epstein's framework for building parental partnerships. Because Epstein's guide highlights the importance of designing integrated social

contexts which help children's academic development. Specifically, Epstein in Hara, S. R., and Burke, D.J. (1998) summarized six effective program characteristics and guidelines for building parent partnerships. They are:

1. parenting;
2. communicating;
3. volunteering;
4. learning at home;
5. decision making; and
6. collaboration with the community at large.

Then, she suggested further that teachers or schools should follow a five step implementation process below:

1. create an action team;
2. obtain funds and other support;
3. identify starting points;
4. develop a three-year plan; and
5. continue planning and working to improve the program.

CHILD DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Developmental psychology is one of psychology branches which discusses about developmental level, developmental stage, and developmental task and developmental law (Hidayati and Sri Purnami, 2008: 2). In teaching or educating children or elementary school students, parents or teacher will be helpful if they master and understand about the children's developmental psychology. For elementary school students, the *Centers for Disease Control* or the CDC (2015) divides Middle Childhood into two stages, 6–8 years and 9–11 years, and gives “developmental milestones for each stage.”

1. Middle Childhood (6-8)

Entering elementary school, children in this age group begin to think about the future and their “place in the world.” Working with other students and wanting their friendship and acceptance become more important. This leads to “more independence from parents and *family*.” As students, they develop the mental and verbal skills “to describe experiences and talk about thoughts and feelings”. They become less self-centered and show “more

concern for others”.

2. Middle Childhood (9-11)

For children ages 9–11 “friendships and peer relationships” increase in strength, complexity, and *importance*. This results in greater “peer pressure.” They grow even less dependent on their families and they are challenged academically. To meet this challenge, they increase their attention span and learn to see other points of view.

Meanwhile, in Psychoshare (2014), it is explained that the characteristics of the development of 7-11 year old children are different. Each age has four characteristics. They are physical, social, language, and cognitive. For the complete explanation, it is explained below.

1. Characteristics of the development of 7 year old children

a. Physical

Physical characteristics of 7 year old children are like below:

1. Have limited view
2. Work with the head on the table
3. Hold pencil (on the tip)
4. Able to write neatly
5. Sometimes tense
6. Like a predetermined space
7. Often feel hurted, can be real or pretended

b. Social

Social characteristics of 7 year old children are like below:

1. Like to be alone and closed.
2. Require a continuous reinforcement (safe and orderly)
3. Sometimes moody, sad, sulky, embarrassed.
4. Feel that there are a lot of people who love them (change)
5. Trust in teachers to help them
6. Sensitive to the other people feeling
7. Sometimes they like to complain
8. Do not like to make mistakes
9. Have strong likes and dislikes
10. Maintain the table tidiness and environment

c. Language

Language characteristics of 7 year old children are like below:

1. Become good listener

2. Become exact speaker
 3. Like the dialogue/pair conversation
 4. Have fast vocabulary development
 5. Interested to find the words' translation or meaning
 6. Like to give or make little note
 7. Interested
- d. Cognitive
- Cognitive characteristics of 7 year old children are like below:
1. Like to repeat the lesson
 2. Need the activity ends clearly (complete with the duty)
 3. Like to work step by step
 4. Like to work alone
 5. Like if something read by someone for them
 6. Like to erase (want to be perfect)
 7. Want to find how something works

2. The characteristics of the development of 8 year old children

a. Physic

Physical characteristics of 8 year old children are like below:

1. Do everything fast (in hurry)
2. Full of energy
3. Need to release energy physically (activity outside of room)
4. Sometimes little bit strange
5. Have limited concentration
6. Have strong eye-shot, whether it is near or far

b. Social

Social characteristics of 8 year old children are like below:

1. So kind, full of humor
2. Like to cooperate
3. Tend to be wrong in predicting their own ability
4. Be hold out; make reason fast when they makes mistakes
5. Like the activity done by their peers
6. Have problem with regulation and constraint or limitation
7. Have more playing group than when they are 7 years old

c. Language

Language characteristics of 8 year old children are like below:

1. Speak actively

2. Listen but full of idea so they can not always remember what is said to them
 3. Bombastic when they speaks
 4. Like to explain the idea
 5. Have fast vocabulary development
- d. Cognitive
- Cognitive characteristics of 8 year old children are like below:
1. Like group activity
 2. Like to make something
 3. Like to work hard
 4. Start to be skillful in basic skill
 5. Start to feel and know their skill
 6. Have better work in doing concrete thing
3. The characteristics of the development of 9 year old children
- a. Physic
- Physical characteristics of 9 year old children are like below:
1. Have better development of movement coordination
 2. Have challenge to do physical activity as strong as possible (tend to force)
 3. Often hurted
 4. Beef more about their body
 5. Show the anxiety by biting their nails or lips and twisting their hair
- b. Social
- Physical characteristics of 9 year old children are like below:
1. Competitive
 2. Self aware
 3. Not patient
 4. Often feel worry
 5. Open space with other people
 6. Often beef about problem
 7. Look the adult unconsistently (as control)
 8. Critical
 9. Often angry (his emotion is often changed)
 10. Individualistic
- c. Language

Language characteristics of 9 year old children are like below:

1. Use descriptive words
2. Like to play words, language and information
3. Baby language often appears
4. Use bombastic words
5. Like to use more negative words, like: 'I do not like it', 'I can not', 'bored'
6. Like to make a joke about sloppiness/slovenliness
7. Mix languages when they speaks

d. Cognitive

Cognitive characteristics of 9 year old children are like below:

1. Like to do/make something and evaluate himself
2. Start to recognize wider world
3. Little bit imaginative
4. Curious intelectually
5. Able to adapt with various condition

4. The characteristics of the development of 10 year old children

a. Physic

Physical characteristics of 10 year old children are like below:

1. The muscles are developed
2. Need time to go outside of room and physical challenge
3. Handwriting tends not to be neat (if it is compared when he is 9 years old)
4. Snacks and rest time help his growth

b. Language

Language characteristics of 10 year old children are like below:

1. Good listener
2. Read more
3. Expressive, active to speak and like to explain

c. Social

Social characteristics of 10 year old children are like below:

1. Cooperate and compete
2. Friendly and happy

d. Cognitive

Cognitive characteristics of 10 year old children are like below:



1. Memory is productive enough
 2. Ability about abstract things starts to be developed
 3. Like the logic regulation and other things
 4. Classify and gather everything he likes (then arranges them)
 5. Can concentrate well, can read in relative short time
 6. Become person who is able to solve problems well
 7. Proud of academic result
5. The characteristics of the development of 11 year old children
- a. Physic

Physical characteristics of 11 year old children are like below:

 1. Improve the appetite, activity and talking
 2. Puberty for girls
 3. Stable movement and less time for taking a rest
 4. Often get flu and sometimes ears infection
 5. Needs dequate rest
 6. Less to use physical strength
 7. Have good motoric skills
 - b. Social

Social characteristics of 11 year old children are like below:

 1. Be sensitive, emotionally unstable
 2. Have opposite opinions
 3. Like to be outside the home
 4. Always follow their heart, rugged and less concerned
 5. Like to argue
 6. Difficult to make decisions
 7. Understand his condition
 8. Emotional
 9. Easy to join or leave his group
 - c. Language

Language characteristics of 11 year old children are like below:

 1. Glad to talk (in call)
 2. Always impulsive, speaks before thinking
 3. Rough talk
 4. Likes to argue and debate
 5. Appreciative in humor
 6. Adopts an adult language

d. Cognitive

Cognitive characteristics of 11 year old children are like below:

1. Like new tasks and experience to reflect or fix the next task
2. Able to think abstract thing
3. Proficient to give reasons
4. Able to develop and modify the rules
5. Focus on talent development and viewing the world from a variety of terms
6. Like to argue

6. The characteristics of the development of 12 year old children

a. Physical

Social characteristics of 12 year old children are like below:

1. Have high energy
2. Take a lot of rest
3. Encouragement of growth as signs of puberty
4. Eating is a very overlooked (morning snack at school)
5. Physical education is needed

b. Social

Social characteristics of 12 year old children are like below:

1. Start to look his adult personality
2. Can provide more plausible reason
3. Enthusiastic and not shy
4. Initiative for its own activities
5. Empathy
6. Care for him and very understanding
7. Can make a real purpose in a short time
8. Emerging his security and safety
9. Peers is more important than the teacher

c. Language

Language characteristics of 12 year old children are like below:

1. Appear roughness (sarcasm)
2. Have double meanings, plays words, jokes according to their ability
3. Fun chatting with adults or peers
4. Have and use their own peer language

d. Cognitive



Cognitive characteristics of 12 year old children are like below:

1. Have better ability to understand abstract things
2. Have ability in certain skills / specific area
3. Able to see both sides of an argument
4. Very interested in new things about politic and social justice
5. Examine and learning previous skills to improve the discipline of the organization

From the detail of characteristics of elementary school students' developmental psychology above, we know that they have different characterist in every phase. By knowing this, parents and teacher must understand their change so they will not be confused or curious about children's attitude.

EDUCATING CHILDREN BY UNDERSTANDING THEIR DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

This point discusses about the way how to teach and educate the children or elementary school students. The ways below are based on the children's characteristics of developmental psychology discussed in the previous point.

1. Seven year old children

According to the physical characteristics above, their ability starts to develop so the parents and and teacher should give more attention and guidance to them. Parents and teacher should give more explanation or story so the children will have broader point of view; tell about how to work and sit well; tell and give example how to hold pencil well; always support to write neatly so they have good handwriting; teach them to relax; and understand students' condition, whether it is real or pretended. Socially, parents and teacher should understand 7 year old children's mood and characters if they like to be alone and closed; give continuous reinforcement (safe and orderly); help in everything because the children trust in parents and teacher; and give appropriate direction because they do not want to make mistakes.

Related to the language characteristics, parents and teacher should give best strategy to teach 7 year old children because they starts to be good listener and exact speaker and give best facilities to support their interest. For cognitive, parents and teacher should guide and support them because in this phase, they like to repeat the lesson, work alone and step by step, erase (want to be perfect), like if something read by someone for them

and want to find how something works. In this phase, the children need the activity ends clearly (complete with the duty) so it is so great if teacher gives them review and assignment so they can develop themselves more.

2. Eight year old children

According to the physical characteristics of 8 year old children mentioned in the previous point, parents and teacher should support and facilitate them well because they like to do everything fast (in hurry), full of energy and need to release energy physically (activity outside of room). Moreover, they should get more attention and direction from parents and teacher because sometimes they are little bit strange and have limited concentration. Then, socially, parents and teacher must teach or direct them related to the real life; friendship, cooperation, socialisation, regulation, etc. because they do not like with the regulation and constraints or limitation. It means, parents and teacher should not give tight regulation to them.

According to language characteristics, parents and teacher of 8 year old children should give more guidance related to how to speak or express idea well because in this phase, they have good vocabulary development and start to speak actively. On the other hand, parents and teacher also should remind or drill them so they will have good memorization because in this age, they can not always remember what is said to them. For cognitive, parents and teacher need to direct them to do the useful things because in this age, they like group activity, make something, work hard and start to be skillful in basic skill and have better work in doing concrete thing.

3. Nine year old children

Based on the physical characteristics of 9 year old children, parents and teacher should understand and direct them because they have better development of movement coordination; direct and facilitate them with physical activity (for example raise their motivation to do the sport that they like) because they have challenge to do physical activity as strong as possible (tend to force); understand their feeling or mood because they are often hurted; support them with their talent, ability or skill because they often beef more about their body; and share about how to solve the problems in this life because they often show the anxiety by biting their nails or lips and twisting their hair.

Socially, parents and teacher should understand their condition, especially their feeling because in this age, they are more sensitive, so easy

to be angry. For that reason, parents and teacher must make them calm and critical, but under control. Then, parents and teacher always must ask them to share each other with them or with their friends and tell that having friend to share can help them. It must be done because they like to be individualistic.

Then, according to language characteristics of 9 year old children, parents and teacher must guide them more, especially related to their language because they have better language than before; direct them to use language (which one is positive and which one is negative). For cognitive, parents and teacher must teach them how to evaluate everything and recognize the world because they have high curiosity about this world. Then, parents and teacher also must teach them how to adapt with various conditions.

4. Ten year old children

Physically, parents and teacher of 10 year old children must give direction to choose the appropriate sport or explore their talent. In this age, their handwritings tend not to be neat (if it is compared when he is 9 years old) so they can be directed to type using computer. And, parents and teacher must give explanation about kind of snacks which should be enjoyed and not should be enjoyed; and ask them to have enough rest time because it helps their growth. For language development, parents and teacher should not be bored to give direction to develop their ability and skill because they become good listener who like to speak or express idea and read more.

Then, parents and teacher also must educate the children how to have good cooperation and fair competition; and should educate them how to be selective in having friends or partner. They are friendly and happy in this phase, so hopefully they will not have wrong environment. And, for their cognitive development, parents and teacher must know and understand that they are responsible to their life so parents and teacher can give them responsibilities. Then, parents and teacher should also direct them in selecting or buying something (by explaining which one is the important one) because they like to gather everything. Moreover, parents and teacher should teach more knowledge and experience because they can think logically and understand abstract or imaginative things. In this phase, they also understand that academic result is one of the pride

so parents and teacher must teach them to manage how to have good academic result and how not to be arrogant.

5. Eleven year old children

Physically, in this age, the children often get flu and sensitive with various diseases so parents and teacher should understand about the kinds of diseases and how to treat it. And, parents and teacher must give explanation about the body characteristics or growth, menstruation, sex education, etc. because they start to be mature and in puberty phase. For social development, parents and teacher must understand that in this phase, they have opposite opinions and tend to be emotional and sensitive so parents and teacher must pay more attention about what where, how and with whom they go or do something.

Then, for language development, parents and teacher should give good example, especially the use of language because they adopt the adult language and like to debate or argue. Then, for cognitive, parents and teacher should evaluate and give direction so they can focus on talent development and viewing the world from a variety of terms. In this phase, they can develop and modify the rules so it will be better if parents and teacher direct them to have their own schedule or rules for their daily life.

6. Twelve year old children

For physical development, parents and teacher should give physical education so they can be directed to the appropriate talent or goal of life. Parents and teacher should consider about their high energy and growth. Next is social development. For 12 year old children, parents and teacher teach them about their personalty, empathy, security and safety. If parents and teacher can not give big influence, they should ask the children's friends or peers to help because peers are so influential.

For language development, parents and teacher must teach the appropriate or polite language because in this phase, the children like to use the sarcasm and have their own peer language. Then, for cognitive, parents and teacher can explain them about the TV program, magazine, book or the other media that are suitable with their interest. By doing it, hopefully they can explore their skill and develop their ability well and fast.

In addition, Cowley (2011: 217) mentions that there are seven key strategies and techniques to manage students' effective attitude or behaviour.

They are so useful for elementary school. Those seven key strategies and techniques are: (1) knowing the way how to get the children's attention, (2) understanding how to defend the children's attention, (3) studying the way how to give clear instruction, (4) doing 'transfer' not 'reaction', (5) doing observation, (6) giving attention to the whole class, and (7) being creative in giving reward.

Related to give command, Syafei (2006: 47) explains that parents and teachers should not directly hope and get the result. He said that the important thing is how obey the parents and teachers' advice, suggestion and command because it is impossible if elementary school students able to present the perfect result. Then, if we know that the children's result is not perfect yet, we should help them to complete it.

In educating children by understanding their developmental psychology, parents and teacher also should know whether its impact has influence positively to the children or students' self efficacy or not. Self efficacy involves life aspect. One of them is academic development. It is related to learning ability at school. Belief of academic success will help and lead students to reach academic success well. They will motivate themselves to do assignment with full hope or positive expectation. This positive expectation gives strength to hold out when they face big problem and always try to find the solution. They will feel happy to study although they find difficulties. Moreover, they will feel happy if they can do everything with full of responsibility. The construct of academic success feeling can be explained below:

Table 1. The construct of academic success feeling (Naqiyah in Sulthon, 2014: 258)

No	Indicator	High	Low
1	Ability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interested in subjects 2. Diligent to find information 3. Tend to choose the program 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not interested in subject 2. Lazy to find information 3. Tend to deny and avoid the program

2	Performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Believe that he can finish the study 2. Make education planning 3. Study based on his own willingness 4. Spend much time 5. Face the challenge 6. Have a lot of idea to solve the problem 7. Change the failed strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doubt with his own ability 2. Do not have education planning 3. Do not study 4. Have little time 5. Have little idea 6. Just focus on one strategy
3	Persistence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brave to be failed 2. Raise up after failure 3. Try to reach or realize the purpose 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Afraid to be failed 2. Can not control himself after being failed 3. Do not care with failed purpose

CONCLUSION

Educating children is the parents' obligation and getting education is the children's right. For that reason, parents must give the best education to them whether it is formal or informal. In formal context, students usually get guidance from teacher at school. In teaching and educating them, parents and teacher often find the difficulties. One main reason is the lack of students' motivation, especially for elementary school students or 6-12 year old students. Sometimes they are so difficult to handle. To solve the problem, teacher and parents should use psychological approach. The way they should do is understanding the elementary school students' developmental psychology. Those children characteristics of developmental psychology are divided into four points. They are physical, social, language and cognitive. By understanding those characteristics of developmental psychology, parents and teacher must teach and educate based on their development and do not do everything which is not wanted by the children. By understanding and apply it, parents and teacher can teach and educate them easily because they know what make children motivated. And, for getting the best result, parents and teacher must cooperate each other.

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