

Parents' Perspectives and Decisions toward Homeschooling for Early Childhood (A Study at Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community)

Azka Nuhla^{1✉}, Joko Sutarto² & Emmy Budiartati²

¹ Raudhatul An Nidham 2 Kalisari, Sayung, Demak, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

² Non-formal Education, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Article Info

History Articles

Received:
November 2019
Accepted:
December 2019
Published:
Maret 2020

Keywords:
charlotte mason,
early childhood education,
homeschooling

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.15294/jpe.v9i2.36179>

Abstract

The objective of the research is investigating parents' perspectives and decisions toward homeschooling at Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community (KCMI). The subject of the research is three parents who have children aged 4-6 years joining at KCMI. Qualitative phenomenology is selected as the research method. The data collecting techniques are interview, observation, and documentation. The data analyzing technique employ Miles and Huberman's concept, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The results reveal that: The reason of parents in choosing homeschooling varies. First, the difference between the concept of ideal education in the family and the system of educational institutions in Indonesia. Second, the dissatisfaction with the practice of early childhood education in the formal institution. Third, stimulating from reading books and articles on the internet about proper children's education, then reflecting it on education in Indonesia. Three parents choose KCMI as a place to develop and apply Charlotte Mason's thoughts or philosophy about ideal child and education which is in line with the family principles.

© 2020 Universitas Negeri Semarang

✉ Correspondence address:

Kalisari, RT.01/RW.03 Sayung, Krajan Selatan, Kalisari,
Demak, Jawa Tengah, 59563
E-mail: hanifaisal29@gmail.com

[p-ISSN 2252-6404](#)

[e-ISSN 2502-4515](#)

INTRODUCTION

Education is a school and educated children are children who go to school. Such beliefs becomes a stereotype of society in Indonesia. As a result, many schools bring out the complexity of problems in the world of education.

National Commission for Child Protection (KPAI), as reported by Kompas daily, explains that the most dominant cases among children in 2019 are bullying, violence, sexual crimes, cyber-crime, and radicalism. It was 67% of the case occurs in elementary school level in the form of violence and bullying. However, all ages are vulnerable to become a subject of violence and bullying. It actually occurs not only in elementary school, but also in kindergarten, junior high school, and senior high school.

Besides bullying, the basic problem of early childhood education (PAUD) is the existence of early childhood education practices in formal institutions that are not in line with children's development. It only emphasizes the academic field of children. They are required to learn scholastically by emphasizing the ability to read, write and count (*calistung*) (Choiriyah, 2015).

Adilistiono (2010) explains that school has complex problems. School is considered an unfair educational institution in serving children's learning needs by ignoring their uniqueness. Furthermore, homeschooling appears because of the dissatisfaction with the implementation of formal education as above. Homeschooling is an informal education pathway as the best alternative for the sake of escaping children from the existence of formal education problems. Boyer (2002) argues that if families cannot accept formal education (school) regulations, then homeschooling can be a solution.

Nowadays, homeschooling is increasingly in demand among parents in Indonesia. It is applied not only by elementary school children till senior high school students, but also by early childhood children. According to the National Education System Number 20 of 2003, early childhood is a child aged 0-6 years. The government regulations states that the children's

age for kindergarten (TK) and Islamic kindergarten (Raudhatul Athfal/RA) is likely 4-6 years. Then the limitation of early childhood in this study is 4-6 years old children.

Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) as quoted from www.tirto.id, 11,000 school-aged children in Indonesia take homeschooling education in 2015. Unfortunately, the increasing number of homeschooling practices is not in line with the existence of research in this field.

Therefore, this research is crucial to conduct. It is intended to enrich the treasury of journal studies and research in Indonesia for educational practitioners. Besides, the wider community can access this research as a restoration of insight that early childhood education in Indonesia is not only in the form of formal education, such as kindergarten and Islamic kindergarten, but also informal education in the form of homeschooling.

The government gives community the authority to choose the best education path for children. As stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning National Education System Article 27 Paragraph 1 explains that education in Indonesia is carried out formally, non-formally, and informally. Formal form of early childhood education (PAUD) is TK, RA, or other equivalent forms; non-formal form of PAUD is KB, TPA; Informal form of PAUD is family education or education organized by the environment such as homeschooling.

There are several homeschooling methods in the world. A model that is widely used by homeschooling practitioners in Indonesia is Charlotte Mason. Charlotte Mason is a female philosopher focus on children and education in the 18th century. Charlotte's thoughts are still used as guidance by homeschoolers who implement the Charlotte Mason method or Living books throughout the world.

Through Facebook's online media, the researchers find a homeschooling community in Semarang studying and developing Charlotte Mason's educational philosophy as a process of internalizing Charlotte's ideological values in her parents who then practice it with their children.

The community is named the Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community (KCMI).

The objective of this study is to investigate parents' perspectives towards homeschooling and the reasons to decide it as a child's educational platform at Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community.

METHODS

The research method is qualitative phenomenology. Creswell expresses phenomenology as a scientific method that is describing or revealing the concept meaning of individuals towards various life experiences or phenomena (Hasbiansyah, 2005). So this research discusses the phenomenon or concept of homeschooling based on the experience of parents at Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community.

The chosen homeschooling is community homeschooling. The research site is in Semarang, Central Java because Semarang is the first root of the Charlotte Mason community in Indonesia. The data are collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. In analyzing the data, the researchers employ Miles and Huberman's concept including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions.

The subjects in this study are selected purposively (purposive sampling), namely three homeschooling practitioners who have children aged 4-6 years and joined at KCMI. The name of the informants is not written explicitly but uses code in the form of informant 1 (N.1), informant 2 (N.2), and informant 3 (N.3).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Educational Philosophy of Charlotte Mason

Charlotte Mason was born in 1842 and died on January 16, 1923, at the age of 81 years. His father is a merchant, and his family lives in Liverpool, England. He was an orphan at the age of 16 years and had to earn his living (Smith, 2000). Charlotte Mason is an educator.

During 15 years of teaching experience, Charlotte compiled her own educational concepts which were later published in six book volumes: *Home Education, Parents and Children, School Education, Ourselves, Formation of Character, dan Towards A Philosophy of Education* (Kristi, 2016).

The emphasis of the Charlotte Mason educational method is character and rich in science. According to her, the function of education is to form good habits and also develop noble ideas of children (Kristi, 2003).

Charlotte explains that the output or the result of education is a noble character that continues to grow throughout life until approaching a perfect human being. Charlotte calls it as Magnanimous. The way Charlotte Mason shapes children's characters is through habit training. Charlotte said:

"teaching positive habits is one of the few effective tools that we can use in the education of our children".

To achieve this goal, children cannot learn on their own without the role of parents. Parents need to improve the quality of themselves together with children to be a noble person. Parents cannot think of children as blank paper that can be written or shaped at will. The first point of his educational philosophy written in the Home Education volume 1 is (Mason, 2003):

"Children are born person"

Charlotte believes that a child is a whole person. Naturally, children already have their desire to learn without parental intervention, so the child knows a lot of things he learned without realizing it. For the amount of knowledge that has been absorbed by children, they need adult guidance to direct good things from bad things as early as possible. The second item is (Mason, 2003):

"They are not born either good or bad, but with possibilities for good and evil".

Children as whole people have good and bad potential from birth. His background and life journey are the determinants in choosing a good or bad path.

Charlotte Mason's educational motto is atmosphere, discipline, and life means. Educators must apply these three things in educating children, namely the natural environment of children (nature), training good habits, and exploring the alive concepts and ideas.

In the official website of Charlotte Mason, www.amblesideonline.org, it is mentioned that learning for children aged 0-6 years is the development of character values to help children find their world. Charlotte also emphasizes the cognitive development of children so that children have a lot of noble knowledge or ideas through reading storybooks and also learning in nature, not through drilling exercises to read and count academically.

Charlotte Mason's educational approach is Principle-centered-parenting. The relationship between parents and children is not determined by them, yet natural laws, universal laws, and God's laws (truth) (Kristi, 2016). Charlotte explains the ethics between parents and children are:

“The principles of authority on the one hand, and obedience on the other, are natural, necessary and fundamental”.

Parents cannot force the child to obey all his commands, but parents still have higher authority than children so that children must obey their parents. Children's obedience to parents is not based on fear, but an obligation. Meanwhile, the commands from parents to children must contain the truth. So the Charlotte Mason educational approach is neither children centered nor parents centered.

Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community

The Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community is a learning space for homeschooling and non-homeschooling practitioners in Indonesia who use the Charlotte

Mason method as a reference or basis for children's learning.

This community is first formed by Ellen Kristi. Previously, Charlotte Mason is often mentioned in writing about homeschooling as a method, but a group or organization that apply Charlotte Mason's educational philosophy in Indonesia do not exist.

Her background in establishing the Charlotte Mason community in Indonesia is began with his concern for education in Indonesia today. Based on her experience with her husband as a school product, as well as her observations, it is still relevant to conclude that education in school usually focuses on academic material such as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, etc. School always favors the cognitive aspects of children. This is not in line with his family's vision and mission.

Ellen and her husband want to provide education for their children more than just the development of cognitive aspects. They expect appropriate education for children; education that can develop all aspects and potentials of children; education that not only prioritizes cognitive intelligence but also provides noble value as a human.

In 2007, Ellen searches information and learn more about homeschooling. She finds the appropriate concept of education through reading and searching for in-depth information about all the methods of education that have been applied by several homeschoolers: Unschooling, Classical Education, Montessori, Waldorf, Eclectic, and Charlotte Mason (Simatupang, 2013). After comparing everything, she is interested in Charlotte Mason's homeschooling.

Ellen spreads the philosophy of Charlotte Mason through social media, Mailing list, and then migrates to Facebook in 2010 by writing CM thoughts from just one paragraph every day. So it does not burden the readers. The more followers and readers in Indonesia, the more she writes paragraphs. As a result, she makes a book about Charlotte Mason's educational philosophy.

The Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community in Semarang is formed in 2016. After KCMI in Semarang city is formed, other KCMI

are formed in several cities in Indonesia; Semarang, South Jakarta, South Tangerang, Bogor, East Java, and Balikpapan. There are currently 23 members of homeschooling practitioners in the Charlotte Mason Indonesia community, Semarang.

Parents' Perspectives on Homeschooling

The word perspective according to Indonesia Dictionary (KBBI) is the point of view; view. In a simple, perspective can be interpreted by the view. Perspective is a kind of paradigm or theory. Every perspective is true and reflects reality (Sikumbang, 2017). So the purpose of perspective here is to know the meaning of homeschooling based on the parents' perspective who educates their children in homeschooling from an early age.

“How do you define homeschooling?”

N.1 explains that homeschooling is learning with children at home. Studying at home does not mean moving school hours to home, but rather doing activities based on children's daily needs.

Likewise, Ray (2016) explains that homeschooling is a form of informal education led by parents and home-based. Homeschooling children's learning activities are very flexible following the goals to be achieved by a family, because homeschooling does not depend on public schools managed by the government or certain private institutions.

N.2 says that homeschooling is a process of growing as a family. That is, father, mother, and child learn together to improve themselves. Not only children but also parents still need to learn with children to become good and quality parents for children's education.

N.3 reveals that homeschooling is family based education. This means that all learning systems are the responsibility of parents. The commitment of both parents is needed so that the implementation of homeschooling is successful and goes well.

The three informants explain different perspectives on the meaning of homeschooling.

The difference arises due to homeschooling learning practice for each family varies. It cannot be equated because learning is adjusted to conditions at home, family, and especially the child's condition or character.

So the advantages of homeschooling are the learning process is very flexible and family-based. The relationship between children and parents is very harmonious. Children and parents always learn together, complete joint assignments about materials that are liked by children and sometimes determined by parents. When parents do not know something, parents also try to find out together, this shows that parents are not the people who know everything best. They learn from each other. Parents always improve their quality for the sake of children's education.

Parents believe that children as learning creatures are not infrequently left to play with their friends without the parents' assistance. They believe children can accommodate knowledge independently and can control the atmosphere in the surrounding environment to be positive, bring noble values that have been developed in the family. This is called miserly in activities. Parents often apply this method to train children to make their own decisions. Train the way of the reason and the way of the will to achieve free will.

Homeschooling education at an early age (0-6 years old) is a very strategic choice in the process of children's education because the age range is often called the golden age. It is an important growth period for children who need the involvement of parents and family. As a result, homeschooling learning activities are very flexible; it takes a high commitment by parents (Razi, 2016) as the main responsible for implementing education.

Parents' Decision in choosing Homeschooling at KCM

Harrison in Muhdi, Nurkolis, Widodo (2017) argue that decision-making is the process of evaluating various alternatives related to individual or organizational goals. George states that decision-making is a process of selecting the best alternative from several alternatives

systematically to be followed up (used) as a way of solving problems (Anwar, 2014).

There are three approaches to decide according to Allison, including rational, psychological, and political models (Latifa, 2010). Researchers asked informants about their decision in choosing homeschooling:

“Why did you decide to choose homeschooling as alternative for your child?”

N.1 uses a psychological approach to explain the decision homeschool which is due to his experience and dissatisfaction with the implementation of PAUD in the formal path.

Based on observations in several areas around it, kindergarten nowadays cannot provide the maximum growth and development needs of children. All children get the same treatment. Education in kindergarten limits children's creativity and cognitive development. It also emphasizes on cognitive aspects. She finds that the social and moral interactions of children in formal education are not good.

“I want better education for my child; I seem to be able to provide qualified learning than the formal school does”.

Wisarja and Sudarsana (2017) suggest that in particular, education in Indonesia experiences degradation of references or guidance in the context of teaching and learning. The curriculum doesn't give students room for movement. Besides, the curriculum seems to be not clear.

The discrepancies in his expectations for early childhood education in the formal pathway led to a sense to provide better learning according to her. Besides, the responsibility as a parent is an urgent reason, she chooses to educate her children at home.

Bran & Szeman (2017) shows that homeschooling is considered as a better alternative education than formal education because it has a useful time for the family, a more pleasant learning atmosphere, learning from a positive environment, and children learn according to topics of interest.

These results are also supported by the National Household Education Survey (NHES) in America that the reasons of parents in choosing homeschooling education are (1) the school environment, (2) dissatisfaction with academic teaching in formal education, and (3) homeschooling provides moral teaching (National Center of Education Statistics, 2014, Walters, Daves, 2016). Religious learning through homeschooling also influences academic ability (DeWitt, Alias, Jamaludin, 2015).

N.2 uses a rational or ideological approach in explaining the reason he decided to educate his child in homeschooling because of the mismatch between the educational practices in Indonesia today and the ideology of education believed in his family.

According to N2, education must produce children who are rich in science and also have noble character. The two things cannot be separated. He has not found a school at an early age that implements these educational goals.

“The purpose of education in Indonesia nowadays is a modern industrialist. The child is expected to meet the demands of the job according to the profession that has been chosen. Education today is deliberately prepares children to compete with others occupying the highest positions in certain companies or institutions. In summary, the ultimate goal of education nowadays is materialism; it means that children are prepared to enter the world of industry to find work that is considered “decent” or to make a lot of money”.

The difference in ideology about education is the reason of N2 deciding to educate his 4 years child at home (homeschooling). Parents can teach educational values according to the educational idealism that families expect from an early age.

N.3 tells that reading a lot of books and searching about children's education from the internet stimulate her to be interested in homeschooling. Then she is enlightened with the motto of house inspiration. She explains:

“It seems cool to be able to learn anytime, from anyone, and anywhere without being limited by time

space. Then we also reflect on our past school days, a lot of time is wasted. Now maybe it can't be applied, or it doesn't suit our life, however it maybe suits in other people's life. We finally decide to take homeschooling".

If it traced deeper from the background of each parent as a practitioner of homeschooling, parents' awareness of children's education is the reason in choosing homeschooling, instead of parents' educational background. Previously, none of them concern in the field of education and homeschooling.

N.1 studies in Industrial Engineering and Psychology, bar tending, chef. N.2 is a Bachelor of Laws and Masters in Philosophy, N.3 is a bachelor of Agricultural Industrial Technology Department (S.T.P). All the three are well aware of the importance of education after being given the mandate from God, namely children, then formulate education independently according to the educational goals to be achieved.

Homeschooling is also chosen by parents on account of costs. The practice of homeschooling education is recognized as being more economical than formal education. This consideration of the cost does not mean that the income of each family is small. The cost factor as a consideration for parents since the cost saving guarantees the quality of education obtained by children, rather than the amount of costs for formal educational institutions which is not comparable to what children get as well as what is lost from their childhood

N.1's profession is a teacher of science at Shine (Non Government Organisation). N.2 is an activist of pluralism at EIN Institute and a seminar speaker on education and children. N.3 initially works at PTPN IX for engineering, now deciding to focus on educating children at home.

The long journey of life, especially after having children makes each parent realize that children's education is very important. Child is a gift and a mandate from God to serve God himself or also to society. So the knowledge for them must be qualified and delivered in an appropriate manner, besides they must have noble character.

"Why did you decide to join Charlotte Mason Indonesia Community?"

When researchers ask about their decision to join KCMI, the 3 informants explain that KCMI bring out fresh ideas for parents, especially those who have early age children. KCMI is a place to sharing, motivate to others, learn the principles and ideal educational goals in their families, namely being wise human beings and virtuous, being a noble character human, and having broad scientific insight (Magnanimous).

The way to educate a child towards magnanimous is also explained by Charlotte Mason. So that parents should join to know and learn the ways to educate children according to Charlotte. This opportunity can also be used as parents to develop their quality through joint learning in the community.

CONCLUSION

Homeschooling based on the parents' perspective who have an early age children at KCMI is a shared learning process between parents and children to jointly improve the quality of self.

The reason of parents in choosing homeschooling varies. First, the difference between the concept of ideal education in the family and the system of educational institutions in Indonesia. Second, the dissatisfaction with the practice of early childhood education in the formal institution. Third, stimulating from reading books and articles on the internet about proper children's education, then reflecting it on education in Indonesia.

Based on the different starting point of the parents' background in choosing homeschooling, the motivation is actually the same, that is, they want to provide the best education for their children who are still at an early age.

The reasons of the three parents for joining KCMI are the same, sharing, motivating each other, namely the compatibility of the parents' education principle in his family with the educational philosophy of Charlotte Mason.

Charlotte Mason's educational philosophy formulates education originated from the nature of a child to become a human being with noble character and knowledgeable, charlotte calls it magnanimous.

REFERENCES

- Adilistiono. (2012). Homeschooling As An Alternative Education. *Ragam. Journal of Humanities Development*. 10 (1). 17-21.
- Anwar, H. (2014). Decision-Making Process to Develop Madrasa Quality. *Nadwa: Journal of Islamic Education*. 8 (1). 38-56
- Boyer, A. R. W. (2002). Exploring Homeschooling. *International Journal of Early Childhood Education*. 34 (2). 19-29.
- Bran, C. N. (2017). The Specific of Homeschooling Educational Education Alternative. *Journal Plus Education*. 17 (1). 250-260.
- Choiriyah. (2015). Evaluation of Homeschooling Group Programs for Children Aged 5-6 Years. *Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 9 (2). 201-216.
- Hasbiansyah, O. (2008). Phenomenology Approach: Introduction to Research Practices in Social Sciences and Communication. *Mediator*. 9 (1). 163-180.
- Jamaludin, K.A & Alias & Norlida & DeWitt & Dorothy. (2015). Research and Trends in the Studies of Homeschooling Practices: A Review on Selected Journals. *Tojet: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*. 14 (3). 111-119.
- Kristi, E. (2016). *A Thinking Love*. Semarang: Ein Institute.
- Latifa, A. (2010) Application of Decision-Making Models in Fertility Behavior. *Indonesian Institute of Sciences*. 5 (1). 55-73
- Muhdi & Nurkolis & Widodo (2017). Decision-Making Techniques in Determining the Secondary Education Management Model. *Journal of Educational Management*. 4 (2). 135-145.
- Petrik, M. (2016). Educated People and Homeschooling at www.tirto.id
- Ray, B. (2017). A Review of research on Homeschooling and what might educators learn?. *DOSSIÊ: Homeschooling e O Direito à Educação*. 28 (2). 85-103.
- Razi, A. (2016). Homeschooling: An Alternative Education in Indonesia. *Homeschooling: an Alternative Education in Indonesia. International Journal of the Islamic Archipelago*. 4 (2). 75-85.
- Sikumbang, A. T. (2017). Communication Theory (Approach, Analysis and Perspective Framework). *Journal of Analytica Islamica*. 6 (1). 77-84.
- Simatupang, D. (2013). Homeschooling Learning Methods For Early Childhood. *Journal of Community Service*. 19 (72). 1-6
- Smith, J. C. (2000). *Charlotte Mason: An Introductory Analysis of Her Educational Theories and Practices*. Dissertation. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
- Walters, L. & Daves, D. P. (2016). Homeschooling Approach: How Do Parents Decide. *National Home Education Research Institute*. 32 (2). 1-9
- Wisarja & Sudarsana. (2017). Critical Reflections on the Ideology of Educational Conservatism and Liberalism Towards a New Paradigm of Education. *Journal of Education Research and Evaluation*. 1 (4). 283-291.