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# The Implications of Indoctrination on Children's Creativity: Perception and Analysis of the Collaboration between Teachers and Parents in Semarang City, Central Java, Indonesia

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research was to analyze the relationship between indoctrination and children's creativity. It was conducted qualitatively using the phenomenological approach for a period of 6 months. The samples used include 26 teachers, 118 children, and 80 parents while data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The results showed that children's creativity had a relationship with indoctrination and practice displayed.

**Keywords:** Children's Creativity, Indoctrination, Practice

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Identification of Problems

Children need trust and opportunity to be comfortable in expressing themselves during the learning process and this comfort serves as the capital, basis, and strength for their academic and non-academic readiness (O'Farrelly, et al., 2018). However, these attributes are often lacking in children despite their usefulness in the learning process which allows them to be valued, cared for, and provided with different opportunities (Bleses, et al., 2021). This means there is an urgent need to support the growth and development of children (Rahmadina, 2021) in order to significantly influence the achievement of their educational goals, specifically concerning the development of creativity. This can be achieved by comprehensively monitoring their potentials and maximizing

their creativity through the efforts of all parties directly or indirectly involved in their lives (Bulotsky-Shearer, 2012).

The indoctrination of children usually limits their potential because the use of force to make them understand a concept can reduce their ability to acquire the required knowledge. This closes their mind and stops them from learning further (Wareham, 2019). However, children can develop creativity through positive responses from their surroundings and this means indoctrination without focusing on the potential can hamper the development of this creativity. This is associated with their high curiosity and the absence of space and opportunity to develop their creativity.

A previous research established a relationship between indoctrination and education (Ojong & Enyimba, 2013) with indoctrination reported to often used to provide information and knowledge but required to focus more on the character and potential of children. This is due to the fact that children normally become depressed when forced to learn and this will hinder the development of their creativity.

It is important for teachers and parents to always implement indoctrination based on examples (Croce, 2019) to attract attention and aid the understanding of children. This is necessary because children need concrete practice or evidence to develop creativity. Meanwhile, the provision of opportunities is a form of appreciation for children and this motivates them to continue working towards developing and improving their potential. This is the main purpose of education which is designed to ensure humans become humane individuals (Sholehuddin, 2018) and this means indoctrination needs to be balanced with examples during its implementation for children.

The use of play activities such as clapping is one of the foundations to develop the creativity of children due to its ability to enhance their cognition (Fauziddin & Mufarizuddin, 2018) and this can be further used to serve as the trigger point to develop other aspects. Moreover, the cognition of children who have received this "reference" can be easily strengthened through the examples provided by teachers and parents, thereby making it easy to develop creativity.

It is also important for teachers and parents to synergize towards creating collective awareness required to strengthen the development of creativity in children. Moreover, the urgency of education for these children finds its accentuation point in the collectivity between parents and teachers which is required to generally provide the space to continue improving their quality of education (Baharuddin, 2018). This is necessary to ensure the achievement of the milestone required to move to the next level of their education.

The learning process for children needs to focus on the context and dimensions of praxis (Wardi, 2013). This is important because the provision of only theory usually leads to inexperience. Therefore, there is a need for parents and teachers to provide examples in order to satisfy the curiosity of children in building the gap between reality and their experience. This is in line with findings of a previous research that the development of children's creativity is more efficient when it is strengthened by habituation and example (Zafi, 2017). Moreover, example was reported to have a significant role in achieving successful learning (Paramadita, Rifa'i, & Suminar, 2018) and developing creativity. This is due to its ability to motivate children to continue to be enthusiastic about learning and the development of their creative ability.

Teachers and parents need to provide space for dialogue when the practical example provided is not understood by children. This is considered important to develop their creativity even when an indoctrination process is implemented (Tan, 2011). The dialogue or communication also creates openness with their teachers and parents, thereby establishing trust which has a fundamental effect on the development of creativity.

There is a need for simultaneous and continuous efforts towards facilitating the high curiosity of children in order to ensure they do not become apathetic and inferior which can affect the optimal development of their sense of creativity. This means the implementation of indoctrination needs to involve dialogue, explanation, habituation, and provision of examples (Merry, 2018) to avoid distrust in their parents and teachers.

All the sources and tools associated with learning or education can be used to initiate indoctrination (Mutch, et al., 2018) but the process depends on the packaging abilities of teachers and parents. For example, an illustration can serve as a source of inspiration for children to continue learning and analyzing the things happening around them and this can be further used to develop and improve their creativity.

Indoctrination is also influenced by government policies (Diwana & Vartanova, 2020) as observed with the emphasis on the urgency of democratic education, religious moderation, or even subversion. This means parents and teachers need to work in line with these policies in selecting the appropriate indoctrination strategy that focuses on positive examples and habituation towards developing children's creativity. They also need to coordinate the response to the policies either through parenting activities or home visits.

Several methods can be used to develop creativity such as the synergy between teachers and parents as well as indoctrination with explanation and example. This is necessary because the implementation of indoctrination without good explanation, habituation, and example has the ability to create a pattern of brainwashing learning which can subsequently lead to one-way thinking and the willingness not to accept other people's opinions for children. This is further related to the characters of brainwashed bombers (Destiny, 2020). The interviews conducted with several parents in the nine schools studied in this research showed that none of them want their children to have one-way thinking, anti-criticism, closed-mindedness, or unstable emotions.

The collaboration of parents and teachers in the process of developing children's creativity is a very decisive factor. This is necessary because the explanations provided usually require children to analyze and this often aids their critical thinking ability and further provides an interesting impression (Hadley & Young, 2018) for them in the learning process. It is also pertinent to reiterate that children usually try to interpret surrounding events and this is a foothold in developing their creative ability.

It has been discovered that the involvement of parents in the education process has a significant influence on children's learning ability (Yulianti, Denessen, & Droop, 2019) and also assists teachers. This is observed from the fact that teachers only need to provide directions and brief explanations to parents on the activities to be conducted. This applies in their respective homes through active collaboration such that parents only need to reinforce the efforts of teachers when students are in their comfort zones.

Parents and teachers who are previously accustomed to or conducted indoctrination and children who already felt intimidated by this process need to participate in mentoring or project-based learning to "neutralize" the indoctrination (Khuana & Khuana, 2017). This strategy can be used to develop the creativity of these children with feelings of pleasure and enthusiasm. Project-based learning is interesting because it places trust in children and allows them to develop their thoughts and imagination freely to ensure optimal enhancement of their creativity.

Indoctrination paralyzes the thinking ability of children (Tan, 2004) and makes them accept anything without reflection. Therefore, the use of examples strengthened by habituation, explanation, and mentoring is expected to serve as the reference material for children. Moreover, there can be stagnation or ineffectiveness in the efforts of teachers and parents to develop the creativity of children due to the limited space allowed by the indoctrination for exploration and freedom of thought (Merry, 2005). This means there is a need to determine the best method to ensure effective and maximal results which can be achieved through cooperation, collaboration, and synergy between teachers and parents.

A previous research also showed that indoctrination makes children behave such animals (Schillo, 1997) because it forces them to accept things without reasoning or asking questions. Meanwhile, developing creativity requires having the opportunity to change, elaborate, and understand certain concepts. It is important to note that it is difficult for children to develop when they are pressured or not allowed and trusted to be creative. This is the reason restricted children are usually introverts and not always motivated to develop.

It has also been reported that the display of relevant habits and provision of examples can be used in relating theory with experience and this is very important to the education process (Carr & Thésée, 2017). This is

associated with the ability of this strategy to provide practical experience to children instead of imagining the concepts related to the theories being taught and this further aids the development of their creativity.

The fundamental responsibility of parents is to ensure that the mental development of children is not disturbed (Tan, 2004) and this is the reason they need to be notified about the events or lessons learned by their children at school. This simply means that there is a need for cooperation between teachers and parents to ensure a smooth learning process and avoid mental disturbance and shock for children.

### *1.2. Evidence and Facts Supporting Research*

Children were discovered not to be provided with the space and opportunity to develop their creativity by teachers during the first 2 months of analysis, interviews, and observations and this made them depressed and uncomfortable during the learning process. The same trend was observed at home with their parents discovered to be less responsive, thereby making children feel unappreciated. Moreover, teachers and parents often give instructions reinforced with demands and threats, and this makes children to be intimidated and sad despite their potential to be effective under an appropriate learning and mentoring pattern.

This kind of indoctrination has been reported to be occurring in several places with complex patterns (Taylor, 2016) with the most prevalent discovered to be the use of one-way information. Another method observed involves limiting the opportunity to ask questions or not explain learning materials in detail. This means indoctrination limits the ability of children to develop, specifically in relation to the aspect of creativity and this needs to be stopped through the implementation of appropriate methods of imparting knowledge.

It is important to note that it is difficult to avoid indoctrination but this does not be the reason for its discontinuation (Habl, 2017) in conveying knowledge and developing creativity. There is a need for teachers and parents to establish an open, trusting, and synergistic relationship to remove the depression and burden from children and assist them in becoming more confident and eager to learn and work.

The purpose of education is to ensure the continuous improvement of children and this means they need to be provided with the opportunity and trust required to continue developing their potential. This can be achieved through the implementation of indoctrination with explanation. A previous research explained indoctrination has the method often used in the military world which does not provide much space for the elaboration of information (Juan, Haass & Pierskalla, 2021). The method is certainly inappropriate to be applied in the education process, specifically for early childhood, and this means children should be given maximum space to continue learning as well as to become independent, confident, and willing to work. This is necessary because children are able to develop their creative abilities when they are given the opportunity.

### *1.3. Theoretical Framework*

A developmental ecology approach from Urie Bronfenbrenner was applied in this research. The main argument is that children learn several things from their environment including the school, home, and places where they interact with their peers. According to Bronfenbrenner, children's development is influenced by microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The microsystem in this developmental ecology is a place where children live which includes the family (parents), school (teachers), peers, and play environment. The mesosystem is the relationship between several microsystems such as parents and teachers with the religious institutions in their environment. Meanwhile, the ecosystem is the involvement of experiences in the framework of environmental subsystems that do not have direct involvement but provide influence such as government policies. The macrosystem is a culture as well as a behavioral system that applies in society which is expected to influence the mindset and attitude of parents, teachers, and society with automatic effect on children, specifically in relation to their creativity. Furthermore, the chronosystem is a derivative of the macrosystem because it relates to the underlying structure, social developments, and other ongoing circumstances or events.

All these structures are interrelated in the process of early childhood development. For example, the family environment plays a role in the process of making children read and analyze events around them (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). The environment supports the pattern and development of children's creativity in line with the patterns formed by the environmental subsystem. One of the most important things in this ecological theory is that the assessment of children's development and creativity from any subsystem should be children-centered (Salsabila, 2018) and this means the focus of all learning activities is expected to be on children. Moreover, a friendly environment is defined as an environment that is inviting, comfortable, healthy, safe, supportive, challenging, and full of appreciation (Morisson, 2012).

The development of children's creativity is influenced by the environment, impulses, suggestions, social interactions, and stages of age. This means all these elements need to be considered in increasing and enhancing the creativity of children in early childhood. This can be achieved through certain programs or efforts with the family observed to have a primary role in the character and habit education of these children while the schools are the second educational environment (Teodorescu, 2008). However, the major problem is that all these efforts or programs are indoctrinating in nature and have the ability to cause confusion in early childhood experience when they are conducted without control. This is mainly due to the fact that indoctrination is associated with the influence and control of the mind and this limits the ability of children to develop their potential and creativity (Tan, 2011).

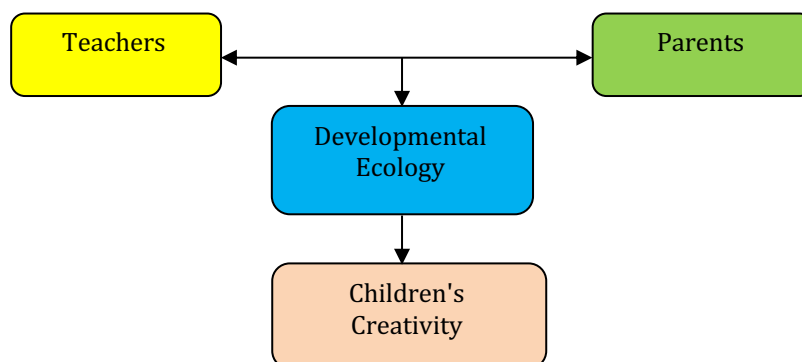


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework for the Development of Children's Creativity

#### 1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions were developed based on the facts and dynamics:

- a) What kind of creativity was developed?
- b) What is the relationship between indoctrination and children's creativity?
- c) What is the role of teachers and parents in children's creativity?

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Research Subjects and Their Characteristics

A total of 118 children, 26 teachers, and 80 parents were used as samples and they were interrelated using open and mutually reinforcing interactions.

### 2.2. Research Instruments

The instruments used include interviews and direct observation technically conducted independently and in groups.

### 2.3. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed through data reduction and display followed by conclusion and verification.

### 3. Result

#### 3.1. Creativity Developed

The creativity observed to be developed by children in Semarang includes (1) *meronce* (arranging things using a piece of string) with the specified model, (2) making shapes with plasticine, and (3) coloring pictures.

#### 3.2. Children's Response to the Indoctrination Provided

Children did not like all the activities provided both at school and home due to the attitudes of teachers and parents which involved providing directions without communicating with children first. This is indicated by the fact that only 12 out of 118 children were enthusiastic and only 2 of the 3 activities were conducted.

The experiences of children are in line with Bronfrenbenner's statements on microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem and this means teachers and parents need to observe the tendencies and characteristics of children while giving directions.

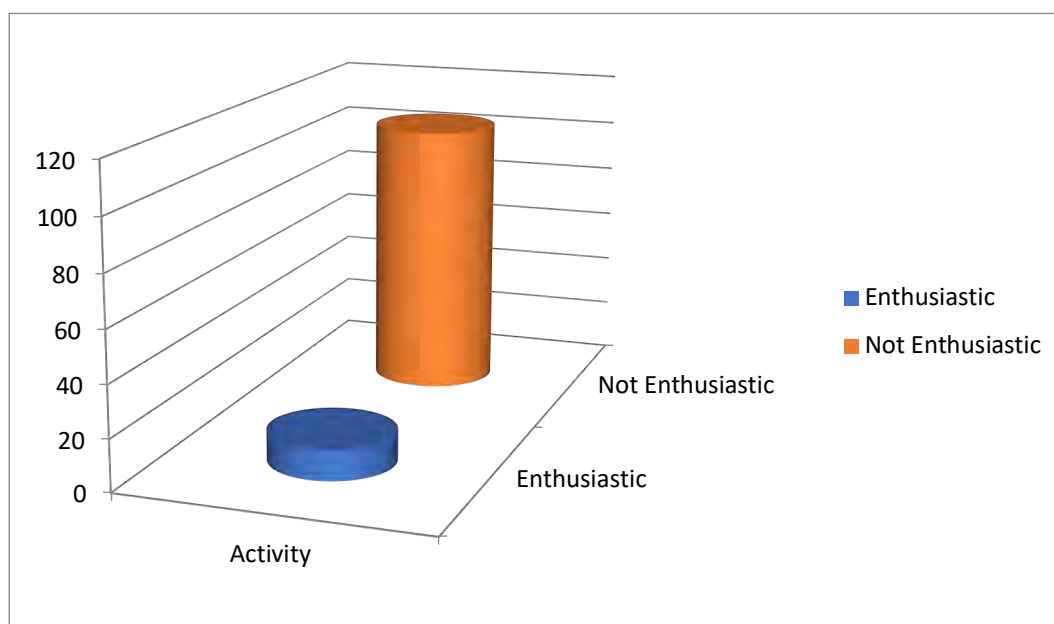


Figure 2: Graph of Activities Participated by Children

#### 3.3. Collaboration between Teachers and Parents to Reinforce the Learning Process

The reduction in children's enthusiasm to participate in the learning process made 26 teachers and 80 parents coordinate and form a large group and they discovered that the source of the problem was the implementation of indoctrination in one direction. Therefore, they started illustrating the activities and divided the class into 3 groups according to the being creativity developed.

The first, second, and third groups consisted of 35, 35, and 36 teachers and parents, respectively, following children to perform the learning activities provided. They also communicated with children with full intimacy and in a relaxed mood and provided mutual support directly witnessed by children. This open communication and beautiful collaboration made children believe they were fully supported by their teachers and parents and this made them feel comfortable.

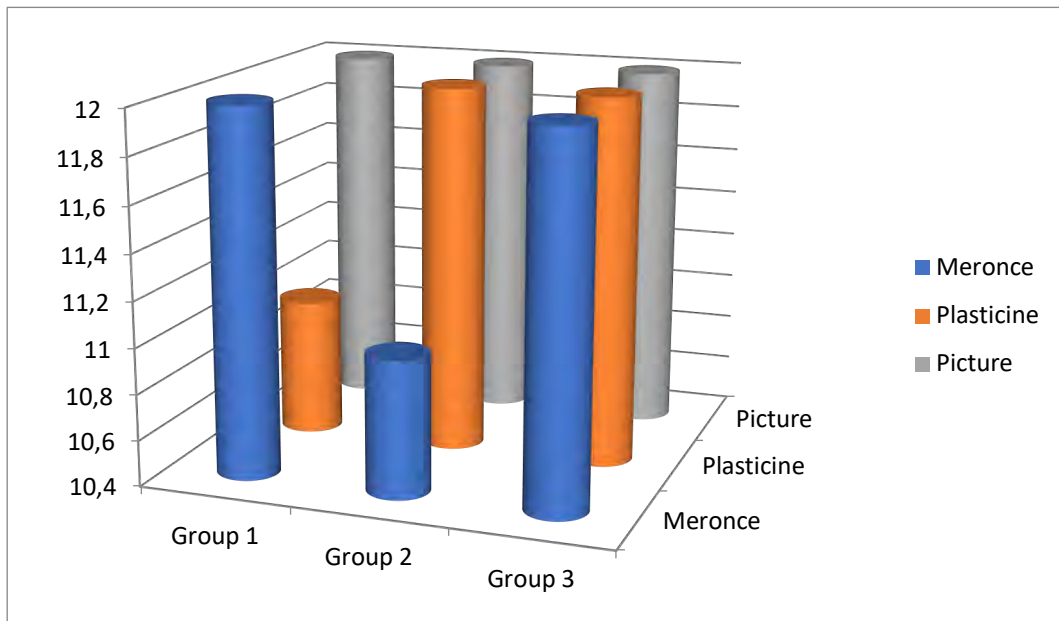


Figure 3: Groups Consisting of Teachers and Parents

3.4. Increasing children’s creativity through example-based indoctrination

The findings showed that all 118 children were able to complete the activities with good results after teachers and parents collaborated to direct, mentor, and provide examples for them. Another incredible observation was that 110 children told their teachers and parents they have the ability to perform other activities such as the arrangement of decorations, putting puzzles together, and making simple shapes from blocks. The enthusiasm was observed both in the school and home and this is the first step in developing children's creativity through these activities.

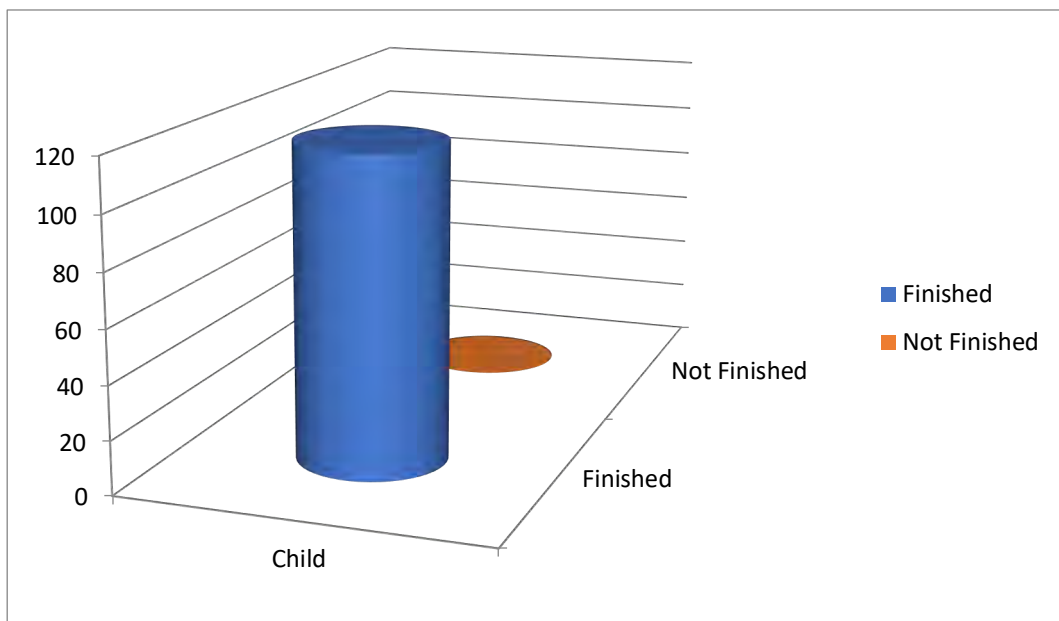


Figure 4: Increasing Children's Creativity in Performing Activities



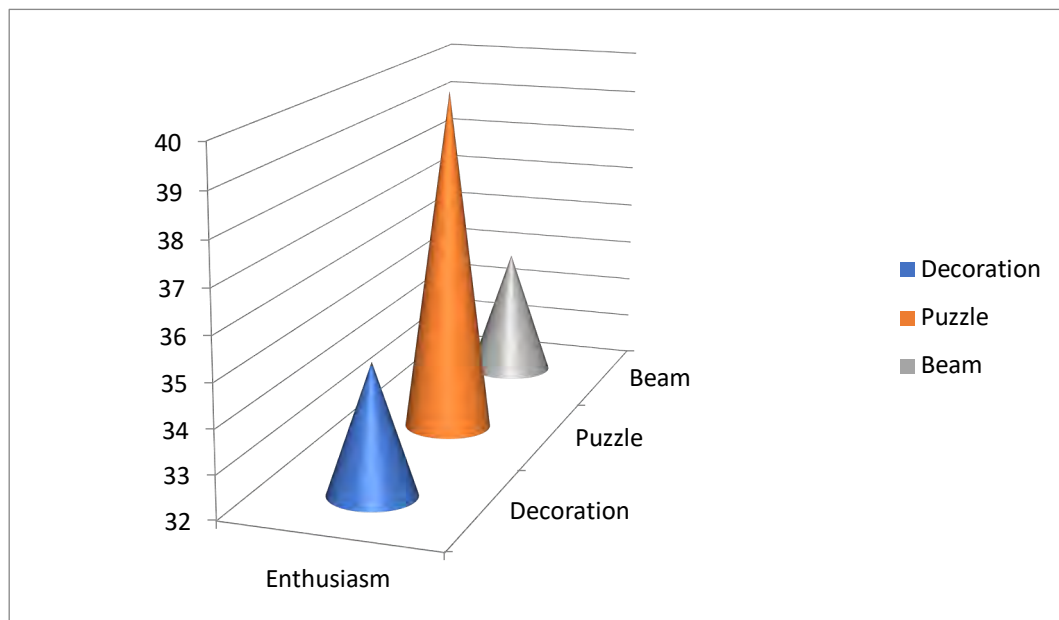


Figure 5: Children's Enthusiasm to Perform Other Activities

#### 4. Discussion

The good interactions between parents and teachers were observed to have provided benefits to children in developing their creativity. This was indicated by the emotional presence in the form of the quality, open, and communicative interactions made with children (Burchinal, 2010). The effort to set an example also made the indoctrination to be fun and attractive to students. Moreover, it is important to give children assignments according to their character and potential in order to make the indoctrination more improved and interesting as well as to develop their creativity.

Children also need to be given the autonomy to perform things in their way (Frick, 2020) with teachers and parents providing assistance and guidance to effectively maintain their potential and create a foundation to make them creative. This is necessary because the provision of assistance was observed to have led to a positive attitude towards children and this is very important to their development (Utami, 2021). It is important to note that negative attitudes towards children such as not appreciating their efforts can limit their creativity.

The attitudes of parents also have an impact on the development of their children (Hoicka, 2016). The anger in parents can be imitated by children through the reflection of temperamental attitudes and the laziness in a parent can also be exhibited in children as indicated by their willingness to be served without any effort from them. Moreover, laziness at home has the ability to make children dependent on others and develop a habit of blaming others. The same trend also applies to teachers such that when they only order their students to do several things without providing an example and direct practice, resulting students have a high tendency to become lazy at completing such tasks.

The quality of teachers and parents and the relationships they build with children have a significant impact on children's development (Hernandez, 2017). This is due to the fact that children become more serious, intense, and focused attention when they have a good relationship with the trainers and this is manifested in their openness and responsiveness which are required in developing creativity.

The programs and activities designed also need to be directed towards allowing children to have the spirit and willingness to be creative and work according to their potential and character. Moreover, parents and teachers need to collaborate (Weiland, 2018) to ensure there is "learning" assistance at home using the same or similar models and strategies used by teachers at school. This collaboration can strengthen children's perception that everyone has the capacity to perform a task as indicated by the actions of their teachers and parents.

Children provided with opportunity and trust usually have the ability to continue making efforts towards learning and developing their creativity (Lea, 2014). The trust provides additional energy and this normally leads to extraordinary performance with teachers and parents required to only provide direction and assistance.

Teachers interested in the development of children's creativity are expected to make efforts towards strengthening the appropriate policies and this can be implemented through a collaboration with parents in order to ensure the same frequency in educating and assisting children. This is necessary because it has been reported that policies concerning learning patterns and systems normally influence learning activities (Vitiello, 2019) and this can be further enhanced through the attitude and professionalism of teachers and the quality of parents. Moreover, the ignorance of parents concerning the substance of the policies does not justify forcing children to develop particular creativity (Walker, 2011) because coercion usually leads to depression.

An environment prepared for learning needs to focus on ensuring the safety and comfort of children in order to ensure they are motivated to continue learning and developing their creativity. This is due to the fact that a comfortable environment is directly or indirectly a form of appreciation and support for children which motivates them to become creative in earnest. This is in line with previous findings that motivation and support normally aid the continuous development of quality (Wang, 2021) in creativity and other abilities such as mathematics, language, art, or social skills. Therefore, support from parents and teachers is very important for the continuous development of creativity for children.

The activities prepared by teachers and strengthened through a conducive environment increase the eagerness of children to learn. This means the implementation of indoctrination with role-playing activities balanced with supportive environmental conditions as well as the enjoyable and comfortable emotional conditions of other children can improve the process of extracting messages or lessons from these activities. This agrees with the opinion of White (2021) that children learn to understand and develop their knowledge when they are engaged in role-play (White, 2021). The explanations provided by teachers on the "role" played by children is only an addition because they are and have learned through these activities.

The consistent application of indoctrination combined with example, habituation, and sincerity serves as the foundation for children to learn several lessons from what they see, hear, and feel. The beauty of everything encountered becomes an additional reference in developing creativity. Moreover, role-playing activities allow children to be free and allow the role selected to be embedded in the course of their lives. This is observed to be supported by previous findings that consistent learning provides reinforcement for children to continue learning and working (Wijns, 2021) and this makes them happy and excited to be themselves as well as to develop their creativity.

## 5. Conclusion

Indoctrination has an adverse effect on the development and growth of children by making them stiff, depressed, and uncomfortable. However, it has the ability to motivate children towards developing their creativity when combined with good examples and supported by the collaboration between teachers and parents. This is necessary because teachers and parents are the closest parties to children and the positive impulses received interacting with them are expected to provide a strong basis and foothold in developing their creativity.

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