Home-School Interaction: Remodelling a Framework of Parents-Teachers Relationship for Supporting Students' Learning

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Abstract

Family and school are not separated social institution. Many parents view that it is schools and teachers which and who should be responsible for their children education. These views should be challenged by arising concern and awareness of parents and teachers of the importance of shared responsibility and cooperativeness. Parents are responsible for laying the basic/foundation of children's learning, basic values, moral education, and basic social learning. Teachers and schools bear responsibility for developing those basic education. During their learning at school, students have a chance to develop their social competence. School also can be environment where children are gradually learning to be adult learners. They can be adult learners through engaging in collaborative learning activities. Through this social learning, children can learn develop social concern and sensitivity. Moreover, they can develop their learning through experience.

Keywords: *social learning, experience, parent-teacher relationships, basic education, adult learning, parental role, role model, collaborative learning, cooperative learning.*

Family is the first and basic social environment for children to learn. Children begin to learn and grow from family. They learn their life value started from their family. What they get from family can be hold very strongly by children. Family may inspire, provide role model, encourage children to start learning from their surrounding before school time and internalize learning value and process through learning conditioning. In this period of children lifespan, parents, family, and other people around children are becoming teachers for them before their real teachers enter their life. Teaching and learning before school become the foundation of children's learning. Family prepares children to be ready for entering social world which they will encounter in their next lifespan and educate them for formal and more structured learning in their schools.

Children's learning develops from informal, largely depends on parents and close relatives, and more passive learning into formal, more independent with decreasing assistance from teachers, and more active learning. Within this transitional period, parents may play different position. They should be colleagues

of teachers at home. They should continue stimulating their children learning in more informal approaches and monitoring their learning development. Parents also should provide social support for their children when they experience unsatisfactory learning events during their learning process.

After children reach school age, they enter different stage of life. They should follow standard procedure of learning. They do not have parents at their side anymore, but they have to learn with their teachers. Moreover, they should socialize with their peer for both their social life and academic life. This is because children as students should learn from their wider social environment. They should know and make friends with other people outside their home or outside their safe comfort zone.

In this period of time, teachers in early children education play a significant role. They provide foundation for learning. This learning foundation forms students self-learning schema which will be used to assess and motivate themselves for their future learning process. Those teachers should educate children to expand their knowledge during their school time. Back to home, children are expected to continue their learning since they tend to have limited or less time at their schools than at home. Moreover, it is hoped that parents and home relatives (social surroundings) provide social and emotional support when children (students) return home from school.

This relation indicates that home and school should support each other. Teaching students within their school age is not only the main responsibility of teachers, but also parents. This study will explore how parents can be teachers for their children, how they can provide social and emotional support for their children, and how teachers may become parents for their students at schools. I limit the exploration on how transitioning (from school to college) students feel about how their parents and social environment have impacts on their learning and how their school (college) peers contribute to their learning. I focus the discussion on how college students feel about their parental and peer social support for their learning since college age is transitional period when students transform their learning from school (childhood) learning into adult learning. Learning does not occur at home or

school only, but it also takes place at both places. This study aims to stimulate parents and teachers awareness on the significance of home and school relationship since it supports continuation of students learning process from home to school and back, from school to home. This study also provides an insight into how parents and their social environment actually can help students learning from the perspective of students. It is expected that from their feeling, parents, teachers, and social environment of students can understand how they can help students to process their learning, not only from the dimension of cognition but also affection and behaviour. Moreover, it is significant to understand how students utilize their social environment to help their learning process. This study aims to explore two main problems: how are parents able to support their children learning process at home and school? and how are teachers capable of facilitating their students learning?

Theoretical Framework

There are several concepts which I use to analyse the collected data. I divide the theoretical foundation into three subsections. Those are role of parents in children's learning, role of teachers in students learning, and how peers bring some impacts on students (individuals) learning. I view the theoretical foundation of this study from the perspective of behavioural light.

Role of Parents (Family Social Environment) in Students' Learning

Social environment is wide, unlimited, and bounderless place for students to learn. They can learn various new things from their social environment. These new things can be constructive or even destructive. Thus, it tends to be difficult to monitor or assess students' learning on constructive and destructive aspects or contents of learning.

In this situation, family serves essential role for children learning. As mentioned by Alexander (1997) family is a basic place for providing compulsory effective basis for children education. Moreover, what children experience socially

and emotionally during their childhood may have long term effect on their future growth (Liebert, Poulos, &Marmor, 1977). The concept of basic or compulsory in Alexander's (1977) concept and long term effect in Liebert, Poulos, and Marmor (1977) argument remind us that family is the foundation of effective lifelong learning for children.

For establishing strong learning foundation for children, parents should serve different parental roles. These parental functioning may range from modelling role, supporting, warming, securing, rewarding, punishing and managing emotion.

Parents (family) are the first teachers of their children. Children from their birth imitate the way their parents say, behave even feel. This indicates that family can strongly stimulate modeling learning. Human behavior is socially affected by other people or role model through modeling process (Bandura, 1977). This is in line with Lewis (2009) who argues that students learn behavioural pattern by observing and interacting with the members of family. This modeling process frequently occurs when parents show their children how to do things to avoid bad consequences (Bandura, 1977). This modeling process is not only limited to main content (material) of learning, but it is more focused on behavior learning. As mentioned by Patterson (1977), people prone to be agent of behavioural change. This indicates that children process social learning within family social environment through modeling process in which parents direct the behavior of children.

This behavioral directing or forming through modeling action should be supported by parental social and emotional reinforcement. Human, including children, act based on reward and punishment. All human behavior is acted based on intentions to get maximum rewards and minimum punishment (Skinner, 1953). This reward reinforces what the "liked" things to do, and punishment reminds children not to do those "disliked" things again. This emphasizes the important role of social environment since these rewards and punishments are part of social control. This social control stimulates children to learn from their social experience. Every child is "tabula rasa, an empty organism," who will fill their self with experiences (Dowley, 1989). Those who will help children to fill themselves are

social environments. This relates to socialization concept in learning. During this socialization process, children try to learn social rules (Dowley, 1989). Through this process, children learn new behaviour by gaining new experience and noting other people's behaviour (Bandura, 1971). Thus, there is close relationship between learning through modeling, social learning, learning reinforcement and socialization process. This is relevant to Bandura's (1977) concept:

> Children acquire most of their social concepts-the rules by which they live-from models whom they observe in the course of daily life, particularly parents, caregivers, teachers, and peers. Social learning theory [suggests] the models most likely to be imitated are individuals who are nurturant-warm, rewarding, and affectionate. Attachment also affects the process: the most significant or influential models are people to whom the child is emotionally tied

Parents are also expected to build and toughen children's inner strength. This means that parents should develop children's emotional capacity (power). Handling emotion should be performed along during children's entire life since during their learning, they may experience the ups and downs moments. As mentioned by Alexander (1997), parents are children's initial and most long-lasting teachers. Moreover, parents should harness children motivation strength to learn (Alexander, 1997). Because children know their family environment very early after birth, family members have a wide chance to fill children "tabula rasa" or "empty self" by inspiring certain feeling or inducing specific emotion. Goleman (1996) argues:

> "Family life is our first school for emotional learning; in this intimate cauldron we learn how to feel about ourselves and how others will react to our feelings...[It] operates not just through the things parents say and do directly with children, but also in the models they offer for handling their own feelings..." (pp. 189-90).

To be able to feel motivated, children should feel that they are capable. They should have self-perceived strength (Hammond & Gough, 2000). This feeling of capability should go from their outside world into their inner world. Secure base should be internalized by children to be able to learn in various different learning groups or communities (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008). Thus, emotion plays an important thing in children learning.

One of parental roles in emotional aspect is nurturing children how to calm down their ownselves. Well nurturing parents tend to be able to assist children how to overcome destructive emotions and create children with emotional strength, while parents who do not teach children how to calm down may create aggressive children (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008). What implies under children emotion nurture is helping children to see world in happy and positive light. When children are able to work this way, they can be feel safe. It is expected that when they feel safe and positive, they can learn well. As mentioned by Lantieri and Goleman (2008), children can be able to learn best when adult people around them teach them how to manage their anxiety and concentrate their attention. Thus, how parents nurture children emotion brings an impact on children's learning outcome.

Another parental role is helping children in their social adjustment process. As children grow, they will meet school peers, teachers and other member of communities. Being able to adapt to this different social community is vital for children social learning. As mentioned by Wise (2003) how parents nurture their children causes an effect on how children will adapt to their social environment. There are several classifications of parenting style based on two variables: acceptance-support and control, which may affect children's social competence (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Baumrind, 1991). They are authoritative parenting which is caharacterized by high on control and low on acceptance, permissive parenting which is high on warmth and low on control, and neglectful parenting which is low on control and acceptance (Avenevoli, Sessa, & Steinberg, 1999). Several researches conducted by Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, and Dornbusch (1991) and Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan (2002) find that successful children in the area of social capacity, academic outcome, and appropriate behaviour tend to be the outcome of authoritative parenting style.

The importance of family role is described by the following figure.
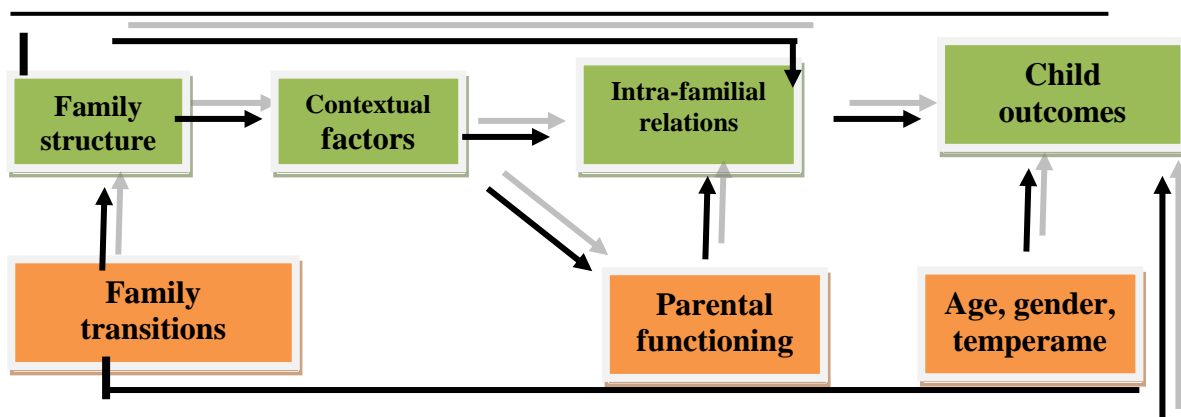
Figure 1. Mediation and moderation of the relationship between family structure and child outcomes (Weis, 2003).

Another role of parent is parental role of involvement and supervision. Well-cared children by their parents will become children exhibiting prosocial and socially approaved behaviour. Children who are lack of parental involvement and supervision tend to display troubled behaviour (Loeber&Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986). Parental supervision involves how parents monitor their children, while parental involvement refers to how parents engage in parent-children interaction and parental accessibility in which children have free access to communicate (interact) with their parents (Wise, 2003). Moreover, children's academic performance can be improved when parents engage in their school (learning) activity (Wise, 2003). This implies that parental functioning is important for establishing effective strong foundation for children (students), but this does not mean diminish the importance of parents-teachers relationships since both of those components should work together.

Another role of parents is longlife learning motivation. Early education (learning) in family is right (suitable) place for generating and strengthening learning motivation. During the progressive periods of education, parents and family can affect children's motivation (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011). This type of motivation is different from school motivation. As argued by Wright (2005), motivation which is generated out-of-school emerges more natural and fun, while motivation which grows during learning in school is more based on particular need. In school, people cannot learn what they are interested in, but they should study what they have to (Wright, 2005). Motivation resulted from early childhood education becomes a

mediation from childhood learning into school learning (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011). This childhood early education motivation can be generated by parents by adopting these following ways:

1. Developmentally appropriate timing of achievement demands/pressure
2. High confidence in one's children's abilities
3. A supportive effective family climate
4. Highly motivated role models

Figure 2. Parenting Factors Shaping Student Motivation (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 30)

Parent-Teacher Relationship

To enhance children's learning outcome, parents should build coopeartive and collaborative relationship with teachers (schools). Families are the partners of teachers (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). The relationships between parents and family should not be based on the role relationship only, but also the quality of relationship (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). This relationship quality can act as the signal for children academic success in the future (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Thus, parents should be active in supporting or facilitating their children learning not only at home, but also at schools. Parents also should not only delegate education responsibility fully on teacher's (school's) shoulders and vice versa. This is as argued by Christenson and Sheridan (2001), as follows:

"Parents may not be included in school policy decisions and may be quite unaware of how school functions. They may feel disconnected when excluded from decisions with respect to their children, and some cases, they may questions the agendas of educators. Over time, parents come to rely on educators and blame them when their child is experiencing difficulty. When this happens, educators may form negative attitudes toward specific parents. In fact, what may have happened is that educators did not use parents as a helpful resource; educators simply never sought parent advice or disregarded parent input in their problem solving. The solutions developed by educators for families perceived as a misfit by parents."

To be able to actively engage with their children, parents should understand what school teaches their children. Parents should communicate and interact with their children school and their teachers. Family and school should not work

separately each other. They should cooperate and collaborate (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). This cooperation and collaboration should not based on obligation, but it should be grounded on parents and school personnel awareness (Chistenson, Rounds, & Franklin, 1992). Parents and school should be able to grow children's (students') identity through several ways, which include appreciation, belonging, confidence, competencies, and contribution (Elias, Bryan, Patrikakou, & Weissberg, n.d). Eventhough parents and teachers have different academic roles, they should build constructive relationships by developing multiple perspective (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). This means that both of them should understand each other ways of thinking. It is essential to view children learning process by using perspective taking (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Furthermore, Christenson and Sheridan (2001) provide more detail perspectives besed on their own self-perception on what and how parents and teachers may function or play their role, as follows:

Parents	Educators
• are concerned with their child's individual progress and needs	• must focus on whole class or group
• are concerned with what their children is learning	• have knowledge of what the child has mastered
• have a perspective of how far the child has come	• are concerned with present development of the child
• have an emotional involvement with their child	• are able to distance themselves from the child; more rational-cognitive approach
• want to have their child approached and taught as an individual	• look for one best method or way to work with all children

Figure 3. Differing perspectives of parents and educators
(Christenson & Sheridan, 2001)

It is expected that parents care about children education at home and extend children's school learning at home. The success of parent-teacher partnerships depends greatly on agreeableness on values and roles between parents and teachers (Keyes, 2002). Moreover, there are three other factors which affect the quality of parent-teacher relationships, which include the fitting cultures and values of parents and teachers, working forces of family and schools, and parent's and teacher's

perspective on their roles (Keyes, 2002). Both of them should support and facilitate children's learning process based on their roles.

Features	Learning in School	Learning out of School
Transfer of learning	Decontextualized	Has 'real' context
Source of learning	Second-hand	Is first-hand
Learner motivation	Needs motivating	Does not need motivating
Relative difficulty	Can be 'difficult'	Tends to be 'naturally' and 'enjoyably
Social conditions	Tends to be individualistic	Is cooperative/shared
Assessment	Assessed by others	Self-assessed
Formality	Formal structure (time and space)	Few structures (not usually time-bound)

Figure 4. Learning in and out of school (Resnick 1987, in Watkins et., al., 1996, cited in Wright, 2005)

This implies that children's learning process should occur both in school and out-of-school. Teachers have primary responsibility for facilitating students' learning process in school, while parents are mainly responsible for supervising children's learning out of the school. Figure 3 below shows the characteristics of how learning in and out of school proceed, which can be used by parents and teachers to fit their roles and functions in facilitating students' learning. The relationships between teacher and parent for facilitating students' learning is affected by several factors as follows:
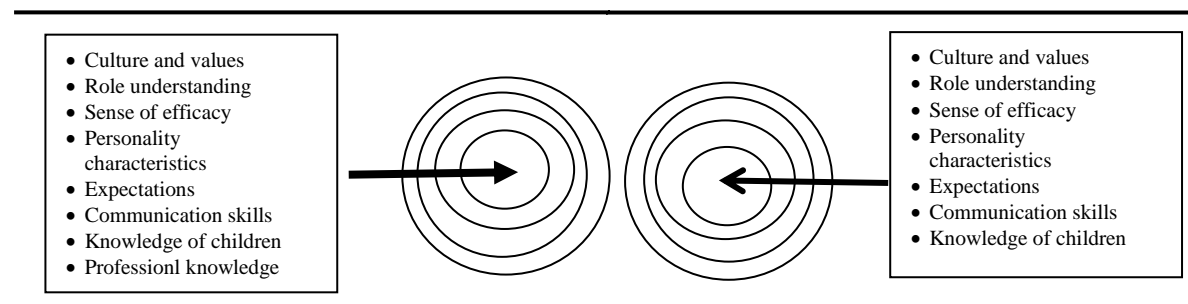
Figure 5. Ecology of the Teacher and Ecology of the Parent

The interaction between teachers and parents is not limited to only actively involving parents in school program, but also helping students learn at home by assisting parents create condusive learning environment at home. Davis (2000) identifies some methods to build relationship between parents and teachers/school: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community. In building relationship between teachers and parents, Allbright, Weissberg, Dusenbury (2011) emphasize the significance role of communication by suggesting several types of communication: child-centred communication, constructive communication, clear and concrete guidelines and strategies, continual, on going communication, and two-way communication. The need of increasing parental involvement for supporting learning outside classroom is relevant to the need of experiential learning. Learning only inside classroom is never enough. This is because classroom is only a limited space. It is not rich of real context, while outside classroom is real. This is relevant as Ofsted (2008) states, as follows:

> "the first-hand experiences of learning outside the classroom can help to make subjects more vivid and interesting for pupils and enhance their understanding. It can also contribute significantly to pupils' personal, social and emotional development..."(p.7)

> "Learning outside the classroom in colleges is frequently integral to courses and indeed, very often, a key course requirement. Some further education courses cannot meet the qualification's specifications without residential visits. For example, uniformed public services courses require students to attend military establishments, police training centres and outward bound centres. Several programmes cannot work effectively without visits and residential programmes where students are exposed to wider, relevant or vocational environments; gain practical experience; or demonstrate and develop leadership and management skills, such as working in teams, communication and problem-solving."(p.17).

Teachers' Roles

Similar to parents, teachers, especially young child teachers, play a vital role in children's (students') learning. Teachers should be able to fulfill parents' role at school. This is as conveyed by Spodek (1972, cited in Gordon & Browne, 1989) as follows:

> ...(the teacher) functions as lecturer, story teller, group discussion leader, traffic director, mediators of conflicts, psychological diagnostician, custodian, assigner of academic work, and file clerk (p. 132).

Furthermore, Honig (1979, cited in Gordon & Browne, 1989) specifies more roles of teachers, as follows:

> "The creative genius of a teacher is in the ability to find ways to interact with each child according to that child's needs, to stretch an attention span, motivate a child to persist at a task, or povide opportunity to experiment with materials, actively and autonomously (p. 133).

The excerpt shows that teachers today should accomplish various tasks, from educating to administrating and parenting. This parenting role is reflected by teachers' function in providing psychological diagnostician. Teachers should provide psychological comfort for their students. This means that teachers should give emotional support and warmth which are usually given by parents. This is as argued by Watkins et., al. (1996, cited in Wright, 2005) who believe that parents have emotional ties with their children. Moreover, teachers should also be motivational (McLoughlin & Luca, 2000). The except also indicates that teachers should pay attention to the individual dimensions of their students since each student has his own characteristics. Watkins et., al. (1996, cited in Wright, 2005) mention that children need to be cared individually. This implies that teachers should assess their students individually.

The above discussion also indicates that teachers should play functions, both as educators and parents. They should interact with their students inside and outside classroom. In the classroom, teachers should be clasrrom managers and supervisors, create safe and affectionate class athmosphere, provide role model, induce positive mood and emotion to their children, and plan lesson (Gordon & Browne, 1989). Outside classroom, teachers should interact not only with their students, but also people around students, such as parents or other teachers and keep students records (Gordon & Browne, 1989). McLoughin and Luca (2000) outline tutors' roles, which can be used to refer teachers functions, into three main functions: regulative, affective, and cognitive. Regulative roles allow students to perform self learning assessment, affective functions encourage teachers to motivate and support students, and cognitive roles allow teachers to transfer information and facilitate information gathering process (McLoughin & Luca, 2000). Thus, today's teachers should play

multi functions and switch from teachers as educators into teachers as parents and vice versa.
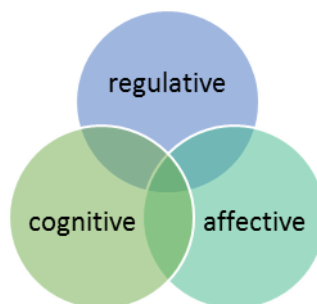
Figure 6. Three supportive roles for online tutors (McLoughlin & Luca, 2000)

Remodelling Concept on Teacher-Parent Relationship

In this discussion, I propose a model representing relationship between teachers and parents. This model is built on my understanding on home-school interaction. I view that there should be inter-relationship among children, parents, teachers/schools, and community to facilitate students' learning.
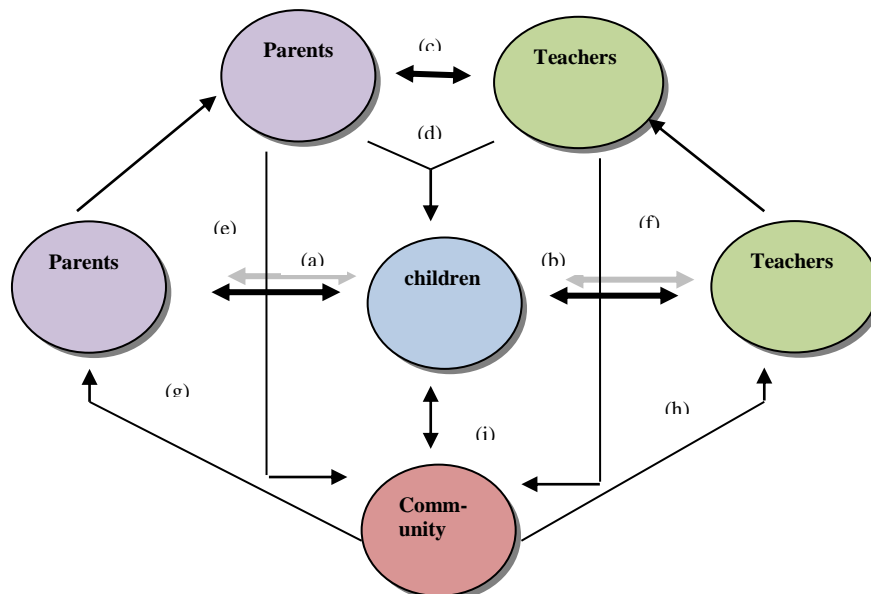
Figure 7. Remodelling the Concept of Teachers-Parents Relationship

The above model shows that to facilitate children/students learning, there should be harmonious relationship between children and parents *(a)*, children and their teachers *(b)*. This relationship and communication should also be supported with two-way communication *(c)*. This two-way communication should involve children's will *(d)*. Parents *(e)* and teachers *(f)* should also build relationships to give children opportunity to learn by experience (through society). The community (potential learning place) should also build relationship with parents *(g)* and teachers *(h)*. Children and community should also develop social interaction *(i)*.

The interaction/relationship between all agents should be focused on both cognitive, social and emotional dimensions of students. This means that teachers, parents, and community should be work together to develop children's/students' cognition and behaviour. They should facilitate children/students to perform cognitive and affective learning. As mentioned by Krathwohl (1964), "affective learning is demonstrated by behaviours indicating attitudes of awareness, interest, attention, concern, and responsibility, ability to listen and respond in interactions with others, and ability to demonstrate those attitudinal characteristics or values which are appropriate to the test situation and the field of study." Thus, it is significant to remodel what parents, teachers, and community should communicate and educate, and what learning children/students should be facilitated.
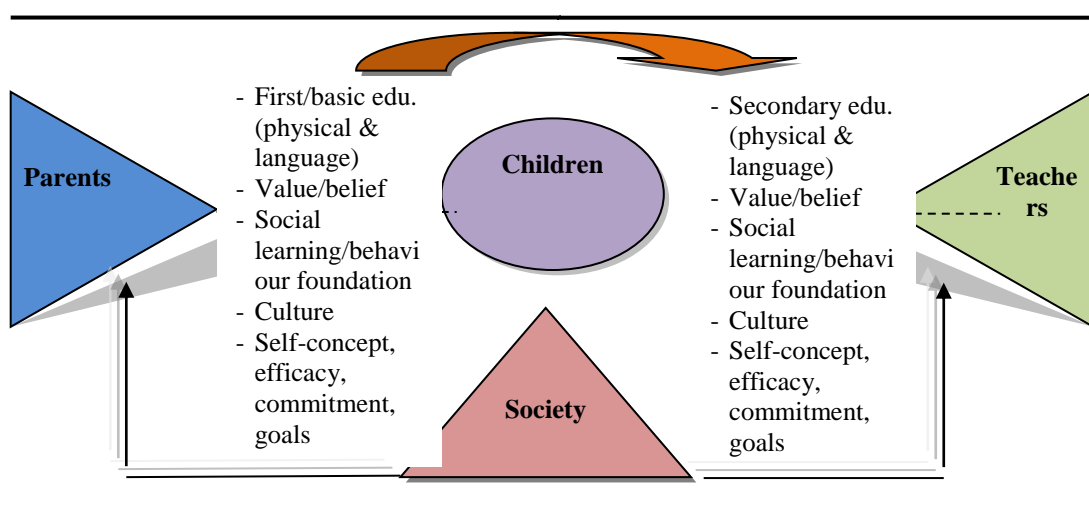

Figure 8. Children Education

The above figure shows that parents and teachers/schools have shared responsibility for supporting students learning. Parents play a role of laying the foundation of first/basic eduction, especially language and basic values. Parents also tend to transfer the foundation for children social learning, even though it is still in limited area (around the family environment). Children also learn culture and build their social concept, efficacy, commitment, and goals gradually from family. When children enter their school age, they start developing their basic learning from family. Teachers play a role of facilitating children's language development, further cognitive competence, self concept and social learning development. Different from social learning within family, social learning in school can be wider since children have opportunity to play with and learn from their school peers.

This wider chance of social learning is frequently facilitated by collaborative learning in classroom. As mentioned by Johnson, Johnson and Stanne (2000), cooperative learning requires students to work together. Cooperative learning in school can facilitate students to have social care, sensitivity, prosocial behavior, and egocentrism reduction. During this cooperative learning in school, children can broaden their social experience. Moreover, social learning through direct experience can increase academic performance (Bandura, 1971). This also implies that for children, school is a learning place for becoming adult learners. Adult learners are characterized by performing active learning through doing and applying, performing primary and recency studying by learning best from first and final experiences, engaging in multisense learning, and practicing and repetiting (Australian Government, Department of Health and Ageing, 2009). Thus, the transformation of students from children to adult learner is determined by their learning process. School facilitate students to be adult learners through participatory learning process. This process includes reflecting, summarizing, sharing knowledge, teaching, and receiving feedback (Vandenbers, n.d).

Conclusion

Family learning lays the foundation for children's school learning. This entails that parental role, style, and teaching in children early education determine the learning development of children. In this situation, parents are not only parents, but they are also the educators of their children, especially within the affective domain. When children enter their school age, parents should not stop their parental and home educators functioning, but they should build relationship with teachers. Teachers at school are the representatives of parents. They should play double role of educators and parents. The teacher's parental role at school implies that teachers should perform humanistic behaviours since they should pay attention to their students as holistic learners. The holistic learners are learners who have cognitive and affective dimensions. This is quite similar to parents' role since parents will try to understand their children deeply into their psychological states.

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