

Family Support and Learning Achievement of Children with Intellectual Disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

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Abstract

Children with intellectual disabilities experience cognitive limitations that affect their learning achievement. Family support is believed to help children overcome learning challenges, although school factors and teaching methods also contribute. This study aimed to analyze the influence of family support on the learning achievement of children with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya. The research employed an analytic observational design with a cross-sectional approach involving 56 children selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a family support questionnaire and report card scores as indicators of learning achievement, and analyzed using the Chi-Square test. Findings revealed that most respondents received family support in the fair category (51.8%), while 48.2% were in the good category. Learning achievement was mostly categorized as good (94.6%), with only 5.4% categorized as not good. The Chi-Square test produced a p-value of 0.086 ($p > 0.05$), indicating no statistically significant relationship between family support and learning achievement. Although the statistical analysis revealed no significant relationship between family support and learning achievement, descriptive findings indicated that consistent family involvement plays an essential role in maintaining motivation and study discipline. The study concludes that collaboration between families and schools is crucial to optimize the academic development of children with intellectual disabilities.

Keywords: Family Support; Learning Achievement; Intellectual Disability; Special School

1. Introduction

Having a healthy and normally developing child is the hope of every parents. However, not all parents are granted such a circumstance. Some families are blessed with children with special needs, one of whom are children with intellectual disabilities. Children with intellectual disabilities experience limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior that affect their cognitive, social, and emotional functioning. This condition directly impacts their ability to understand and apply learning materials at school, thereby influencing their learning achievement. In the educational context, many parents assume that responsibility for their children's learning lies solely with teachers at school. In fact, the family plays a crucial role as the first environment that provides care, affection, and emotional support. Family support is believed to enhance motivation and independence in children, including those with intellectual disabilities, during the learning process. Globally, UNICEF estimated that around 240 million children and adolescents live with disabilities. In Indonesia, the number of children with special needs increased from 1.6 million in 2017 to approximately 2.2 million in 2021 [1], [2], [3]. In East Java Province, there are 34.196 students with special needs, with Surabaya recording the highest number, 4.164 children. Based on preliminary survey at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya, there are 65 students with special needs, most of whom are children with intellectual disabilities (mental retardation).

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Previous studies have shown that family involvement and support have a positive influence on children's academic performance. [4] reported that family participation in the educational process can improve the learning outcomes of children with intellectual disabilities, while [5] found that parental attention and emotional support significantly affect children's academic success. However, research specifically on disabilities in the context of special education remains limited. Family support, such as emotional, social, instrumental, and informational, is an essential factor in the development of children with intellectual disabilities. Families who actively provide assistance can help these children achieve their optimal potential in academics. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of family support on the academic achievement of children with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Field Sampling

This study is an analytic observational employing a cross-sectional approach, conducted to analyze the influence of family support on the learning achievement of children with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya. This approach was chosen because it allows for the depiction of the relationship between independent and dependent variables at a single point in time without any intervention toward the respondents.

2.2. Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of all 65 students at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya, encompassing elementary (SDLB), junior high (SMPLB), and senior high (SMALB) levels. Of these, 56 students met the inclusion criteria and were selected as the research sample. The inclusion criteria included children actively attending school and willing to participate as respondents. The exclusion criteria comprised children with multiple disabilities (e.g., intellectual disability combined with hearing impairment) and those without family members. Due to the limited population, the purposive sampling technique was employed, in which the researcher intentionally selected respondents possessing characteristics relevant to the study's objectives.

2.3. Data Collection Technique

The research was conducted at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya from May to June 2025. Data were collected from two sources: primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained using a structured questionnaire developed by [6], consisting of 22 items measuring four dimensions of family support, such as emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were given a clear explanation regarding the study's purpose and benefits, and written informed consent was obtained. Respondents were then asked to fill out the questionnaire independently and honestly without external pressure. Secondary data were obtained from students' report card averages for the latest academic semester. These grades were used to assess learning achievement, categorized as good if the score was above the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) and not good if below it. Family support levels were classified as good (76 – 100%), moderate (56 – 75%), and less (< 56%) [7].

2.4. Data Analysis

All collected data were reviewed for completeness and accuracy, followed by data processing procedures including editing, coding, scoring, and tabulation. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 30.0 for Windows. Univariate analysis was used to describe respondent characteristics, levels of family support, and learning achievement of children. Bivariate analysis was performed using the Chi-Square test with a significance level of 0.05 to determine the relationship between family support and the learning achievement of children with intellectual disabilities.

2.5. Ethical Research

This research also adhered to ethical principles of midwifery research, encompassing three main aspects: informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. The principle of informed consent was implemented by obtaining written approval from respondents prior to questionnaire completion. Anonymity was ensured by omitting respondent names on data collection sheets and using identification codes instead. Confidentiality was maintained by safeguarding all obtained data and ensuring they were used solely for scientific purposes within this study.

3. Results

3.1. Overview of the Research Location

This study was conducted from May to June 2025 at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya, located at Ahmad Yani street number 222-A, Gayungan, Surabaya, Indonesia. The school operates under the Siswa Budhi TP PKK Foundation as a private institution and holds the National School Identification Number (NPSN) 20532420. Established on October 17, 2025 the school occupies an area of 96 m² and serves 65 students with various special needs, including intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, and autism spectrum disorders. SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya employs 10 teaching and administrative staff and implements an individualized learning system through Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) tailored to each student's abilities. The learning process emphasizes both academic and self-care skills through activities such as crafts and basic life skills training, including cooking. The relationship between teachers and parents is maintained through active communication and regular meetings to monitor each child's progress. In addition, the school collaborates with Puskesmas Gayungan (the local community health center), the Surabaya City Department of Education, and other educational institutions as part of its commitment to developing an inclusive education system that fosters the independence of children with special needs.

3.2. Respondent Characteristics

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

Characteristics	Category	N	%
<i>Child</i>			
Gender	Female	22	39.3
	Male	34	60.7
Education Level	Elementary (SDLB)	30	53.6
	Junior High (SMPLB)	10	17.9
	Senior High (SMALB)	16	28.6
<i>Father</i>			
Age (years)	19 – 35	3	5.4
	36 – 45	17	30.4
	46 – 55	21	37.5
	56 – 65	7	12.5
	Deceased	8	14.3
Occupation	Private Employee	34	60.7
	Entrepreneur	10	17.9
	Small Business Owner	1	1.8
	Laborer	2	3.6
	Civil Servant/Lecturer/Teacher	1	1.8
	Deceased	8	14.3
Education	Elementary/Equivalent	1	1.8
	Junior High/Equivalent	8	14.3
	Senior High/Equivalent	27	48.2
	Advanced Degree	2	3.6
	Bachelor's Degree	10	17.9

	Deceased	8	14.3
<i>Mother</i>			
Age (years)	19 – 35	6	10.7
	36 – 45	28	50.0
	46 – 55	20	35.7
	56 – 65	2	3.6
Occupation	Private Employee	15	26.8
	Entrepreneur	2	3.6
	Small Business Owner	0	0
	Housewife	36	64.3
	Civil Servant/Lecturer/Teacher	3	5.4
Education	Elementary/Equivalent	0	0
	Junior High/Equivalent	9	16.1
	Senior High/Equivalent	36	64.3
	Advanced Degree	1	1.8
	Bachelor's Degree	10	17.9

Based on (Table 1), the number of male students at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya was higher than that of females. Most students were enrolled at the elementary school level (SDLB), followed by senior high (SMALB) and junior high (SMPLB) levels. The mother's ages were predominantly in late adulthood, while the father's ages were mostly in early elderly age groups. Regarding occupation, the majority of fathers, worked as private employees, while most mothers were housewives. In terms of educational background, both fathers and mothers were largely high school graduates or equivalent, with a small proportion having pursued higher education.

3.3. Family Support

Table 2 Frequency Distribution of Family Support for Children with Intellectual Disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

Category of Family Support	N	%
Good	27	48.2
Moderate	29	51.8
Less	0	0
Total	56	100

As shown in (Table 2), more than half of the students at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya received moderate levels of family support. However, no students were identified as receiving less family support, indicating that all respondents experienced at least a moderate degree of support from their families.

3.3.1. Descriptive Analysis of Family Support Components

Table 3 Statistical Description of Family Support by Type at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

Type of Family Support	N	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	df
Emotional Support	56	14	20	1007	17.98	1.6
Informational Support		17	24	1127	20.12	1.7
Instrumental Support		12	20	972	17.36	2

Appraisal Support		17	24	1141	20.38	2.3
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Based on (Table 3), the type of support most frequently received by students was appraisal support, followed by informational, emotional, and instrumental support. This indicates that families tend to provide positive reinforcement and appreciation as a primary form of support for children with intellectual disabilities.

3.4. Learning Achievement

Table 4 Statistical Description of Family Support by Type at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

Category of Learning Achievement	N	%
Good	53	94.6
Not Good	3	5.4
Total	56	100

As shown in (Table 4), almost all students with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya demonstrated good learning achievement. Only a small proportion of students (5.4%) were categorized as having not good learning achievement, indicating that the majority of students performed well academically despite their intellectual limitations.

3.5. Influence of Family Support on Learning Achievement

Table 5 The Influence of Family Support on the Learning Achievement of Children with Intellectual Disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

Family Support	Chi-Square Test			
	Learning Achievement		N	p-value
	Good	Not Good		
Good	27 (100%)	0 (0%)	27	0.086
Moderate	26 (89.7%)	3 (10.3%)	29	
Total	53	3	56	

As shown in (Table 5). all students who received good family support demonstrated good learning achievement. Among those with moderate family support, most also achieved good academic performance, although three students were classified as having not good learning achievement. Based on the results of the Chi-Square test, the obtained p-value was 0,086 ($p > 0,05$), indicating that there was no statistically significant influence between family support and the learning achievement of children with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya. The finding suggests that while family support appears to be associated with positive academic outcomes, it may not serve as a sole determinant of learning achievement. Other factors, such as teacher involvement, learning environment, and individual cognitive ability, may also contribute to student academic performance.

3.5.1. Analysis of the Most Influential Type of Family Support on Learning Achievement

Table 6 The Most Influential Type of Family Support on the Learning Achievement of Children with Intellectual Disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya

Type of Family Support	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Remarks
Emotional Support	2.473	0.871	Not Significant
Informational Support	2.130	0.952	Not Significant
Instrumental Support	24.443	0.001	Significant
Appraisal Support	6.844	0.445	Not Significant

As shown in (Table 6), among the four types of family support examined, only instrumental support demonstrated a significant relationship ($p < 0,05$) with the learning achievement of children with intellectual disabilities. This finding

indicates that instrumental support, which includes tangible assistance such as providing learning materials, helping with schoolwork, and facilitating the child's educational needs, plays a crucial role in improving academic performance. In contrast, emotional, informational, and appraisal supports did not show statistically significant effects, suggesting that while these forms of support are valuable for emotional well-being, practical and direct assistance from the family appears to have a stronger impact on students learning achievement in this context.

4. Discussion

4.1. Respondent Characteristics

The study found that most children with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya were male (60.7%), consistent with [1], which reported higher prevalence among boys due to biological and neurodevelopmental vulnerabilities. Similar findings by [8] also linked hormonal and genetic factors to this pattern. More than half of the respondents were at the elementary special education level (53.6%), indicating they are in the basic cognitive development phase. This supports Piaget's theory that children with intellectual disabilities require concrete learning stimuli and close adult guidance [9]. Most fathers were aged 46–55 and mothers 36–45, reflecting a middle-adulthood group facing social and economic responsibilities. Previous studies [10], [11] showed that this stage is often associated with higher stress levels, potentially affecting the quality of family support. In terms of education, most parents had secondary education (fathers 48.2%; mothers 64.3%), indicating adequate awareness of their children's needs. Although limited education may restrict effective learning support, consistent emotional involvement remains beneficial [12], [13]. Regarding occupation, most fathers were private employees (60.7%), while most mothers were housewives (64.3%), reflecting traditional role divisions. Maternal involvement has been shown to enhance motivation and confidence in children with special needs [14], though excessive work demands can reduce emotional interaction [15]. In summary, children's academic achievement is shaped not only by individual ability but also by family sociodemographic factors such as parental education, age, and caregiving roles. The study highlights that stay-at-home mothers contribute positively to learning support, while emotional consistency compensates for lower educational levels, emphasizing the vital role of family involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

4.2. Family Support for Children with Intellectual Disabilities

The findings revealed that most families provided support within the "good" (48.2%) and "moderate" (51.8%) categories, with no families categorized as "less." This indicates the presence of awareness and commitment among families in supporting children with intellectual disabilities such as emotionally, socially, and instrumentally. This condition reinforces [16] who stated that family support serves as a form of adaptation to a child's intellectual limitations, where emotional and social support form the foundation for creating an inclusive home environment. These results are consistent [17] who found that family support significantly influences the independence and quality of life of children with intellectual disabilities. Family support encompasses four main dimensions such as emotional, informational, appraisal, and instrumental, that complement one another in helping children adapt to their environment. Furthermore, [18] emphasized that family support directly contributes to the development of self-care abilities in children with special needs. This study concludes that families at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya generally demonstrate positive forms of support, although the intensity varies. Factors such as parental knowledge of the child's needs, education level, and psychological conditions influence the variation in support provided. Consistent with [19], a family's experience in caring for a child with a disability shapes the sensitivity and effectiveness of the support given. The novelty of this study lies in its context: the absence of families in the "less" category indicates that families at SLB Siswa Budhi have achieved a high level of social awareness regarding the needs of children with disabilities. This represents a strong potential that can be enhanced through collaboration between schools and health professionals in family assistance programs. Such initiatives are expected to strengthen instrumental aspects, such as at-home learning guidance and the development of adaptive skills.

4.2.1. Forms of Family Support for Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Descriptive analysis showed that appraisal support had the highest mean score, followed by informational, emotional, and instrumental support. The high level of appraisal support indicates that parents frequently acknowledge and praise their children's efforts. This finding aligns with [20], who stated that verbal appreciation reinforces learning motivation among children with special needs, even though its effect on academic performance may not be direct. Informational support ranked second, indicating that most parents attempted to provide guidance and direction; however, children with intellectual disabilities often face challenges in comprehending abstract messages. This supports the findings of [21], who explained that children with intellectual disabilities respond better to concrete and visual information than to verbal explanations alone. Emotional support also emerged as a dominant form of support. Parents tend to provide affection, attention, and a sense of security for their children, which contributes to emotional stability. [22] emphasized

that emotional support enhances self-confidence and adaptive abilities in children with special needs, although its impact may not be directly reflected in academic performance. Conversely, instrumental support had the lowest mean score, suggesting that tangible assistance such as accompanying children during study sessions or providing educational resources, remains limited. Yet, this form of support is the most influential on academic achievement. [23] found that direct parental involvement in the learning process significantly improves concentration and academic performance in children with special needs. Argumentatively, these results indicate that family support among SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya parents remains predominantly verbal-emotional rather than *behaviourally engaged*. The novelty of this finding lies in the pattern of support that focuses more on affection and recognition than on tangible assistance. Therefore, future family intervention programs should emphasize strengthening instrumental support to better address the educational needs of children with intellectual disabilities.

4.3. Learning Achievement within the Special Education Context

The study found that most students (94.6%) achieved “good” learning outcomes, with only 5.4% not meeting the minimum competency criteria. This reflects the effectiveness of individualized teaching strategies implemented by teachers at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya. This finding supports [24], who argued that academic success among children with special needs is largely determined by adaptive teaching methods and the active role of teachers rather than external factors. The learning environment also plays a crucial role. [25] found that a conducive environment, teacher support, and adaptive learning approaches enhance students’ self-confidence and cognitive abilities. This is evident at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya, where individualized learning is consistently applied, allowing students to learn at their own pace and according to their abilities. [26] emphasized that academic achievement among children with intellectual disabilities is affected by the synergy between family support and the school’s teaching strategies. The novelty of this finding lies in the high proportion of positive learning outcomes despite the variability in family support. This implies that school interventions at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya effectively compensate for differences in home-based support. It reinforces the notion that collaboration among teachers, families, and students is the key to educational success for children with intellectual disabilities.

4.4. Examining the Relationship Between Family Support and Learning Achievement

The Chi-Square Test produced a p-value of 0.086 ($p > 0.05$), indicating no statistically significant relationship between family support and learning achievement among children with intellectual disabilities. However, empirical results still suggest a positive tendency: all children with “good” family support (100%) demonstrated “good” learning achievement. This finding aligns with [27], who found that family support enhances self-confidence and learning motivation among children with disabilities through emotional and psychological presence. Differences from [28], who reported a significant relationship between family involvement and academic achievement, may be explained by contextual factors. At SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya, the highly individualized and intensive learning system makes school factors more dominant in determining learning outcomes. This finding supports [29], who argued that adaptive teaching strategies have a stronger effect on academic performance than family support alone. The results also indicate that external factors such as teaching methods, child characteristics, and school environment may act as mediators between family support and learning achievement. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, which posits that child development is shaped by the simultaneous interaction between family, school, and community systems. The novelty of this finding lies in identifying a non-significant statistical relationship that remains practically significant. Hence, family support remains essential as a motivational and affective factor in the learning process of children with intellectual disabilities. These results open opportunities for future research employing multivariate approaches and larger samples to more comprehensively control for other influencing variables.

4.4.1. The Effect of Family Support Types on Learning Achievement

Further analysis showed that only instrumental support had a significant relationship with learning achievement ($p < 0.001$). This highlights that tangible support such as helping children study, providing educational resources, and offering direct supervision is the most effective form of support for children with intellectual disabilities. [30] also found that instrumental support directly enhances academic outcomes in children with special needs, as it is practical and tailored to their cognitive limitations. Conversely, emotional, informational, and appraisal support showed no significant relationships ($p > 0.05$). These findings corroborate [31], who explained that verbal and emotional support has greater effects on psychological well-being than on academic performance. This reinforces the need for families to not only provide moral encouragement but also engage directly in their children’s learning activities. The novelty of this result lies in emphasizing the strategic importance of instrumental support within the context of intellectual disability, where learning processes require physical engagement and direct guidance. This approach could serve as a foundation for developing family-based learning intervention models at home.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed that family support for children with intellectual disabilities at SLB Siswa Budhi Surabaya was generally categorized as “moderate,” with no families falling into the “less” category. This indicates that most families provided sufficient emotional and practical assistance to their children, although the intensity of support varied. Furthermore, the academic achievement of these children was predominantly in the “good” category, suggesting that individualized learning approaches and consistent teacher guidance effectively supported their educational progress. However, statistical analysis showed no significant relationship between family support and academic achievement, implying that school-based factors such as teaching strategies and classroom interventions, may play a more dominant role in influencing learning outcomes.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

This study has limitations in terms of its relatively small sample size (56 respondents) and the use of non-probability sampling techniques, which restrict the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, variables such as the severity of intellectual disability, teacher support, and children’s psychological conditions were not examined in depth. Nonetheless, the study provides important empirical insights into the relationship between family support and learning achievement among children with intellectual disabilities in a special school context. The novelty of this research lies in identifying a fully positive distribution of family support and the absence of “less” categories, a finding rarely reported in similar studies. These results provide a foundation for future studies emphasizing collaborative family-school interventions aimed at enhancing the academic performance of children with special needs.

Statement of Ethical Approval

This study did not involve any form of intervention with participants and was therefore considered to pose minimal risk. Nonetheless, the researcher carefully anticipated and addressed potential minor risks prior to data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participants after they were provided with a clear explanation of the study’s purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of participation. The possible risks identified included a slight loss of time and temporary disruption of the participants’ daily activities during the data collection process.

Statement of Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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