

## Parents' Investment in English Language Schooling: A Study at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau

<sup>1</sup>Abdullah Irfan, <sup>\*</sup>1Soni Mirizon, <sup>1</sup>Amrullah

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Sriwijaya, Indonesia

**\*Correspondence:**

smirizon@unsri.ac.id

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### Abstract

This qualitative study investigates the motivations of parents choosing English language education for their children at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, a school increasingly integrating English into its curriculum. Focusing on 34 independent parents who enrolled their children without expecting tangible incentives such as tuition fee reductions or housing provisions, the study explores the rationale behind these educational choices. Data were gathered through a combination of observations and one-to-one semi-standardized interviews, offering in-depth insights into parental perspectives. Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the findings, highlighting the parents' emphasis on language acquisition, particularly in enhancing their children's English proficiency. The results demonstrate that parents predominantly view enrollment at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau as an investment in their children's future language skills. This investment decision was found to be significantly influenced by the parents' unique characteristics, social roles, affiliations, and financial standing. The study concludes that the primary driving force behind these educational decisions is the desire to equip children with essential language skills in an increasingly globalized world rather than short-term benefits or financial incentives.

**Keywords:** English education, junior high school, language, natural school, parental investment

### INTRODUCTION

Parental investment encompasses a broad range of activities and emotional environments that shape a child's upbringing. While lacking a universally accepted definition, it fundamentally involves what parents do for their children (Gauthier, 2015). More specifically, Bradley and Corwyn (2004) describe parental investment in terms of resource allocation towards managing the risks and rewards in children's lives. This concept extends beyond financial expenditures on essentials like food and clothing to include indirect costs, such as utility bills, and qualitative aspects like time spent reading with children or organizing educational activities (Pailhé et al., 2019). In recent times, there

has been a notable increase in both the financial and temporal investments parents make in their children, as identified by [Bianchi et al. \(2004\)](#).

This trend of escalating parental investment is not limited to a single region but is evident across various countries, indicating a shift towards a new global norm ([Cornwell et al., 2019](#)). In Indonesia, this shift is reflected in the evolving educational expectations, now centered on fulfilling basic needs, developing a meaningful life, and achieving a dignified existence ([Agusniati, 2023](#)). With the rising financial capabilities of parents, there is a growing emphasis on the quality of education, which is seen as a key component in realizing educational objectives ([Azizah, 2018](#)). This emphasis notably includes enhancing students' English language proficiency. Consequently, the decision-making process regarding the selection of a school, such as opting for Sekolah Alam or Nature School, has become an integral part of this investment strategy for Indonesian parents.

Sekolah Alam, an established concept in Indonesian education, has been thriving for decades. According to the Indonesian National Nature School Network (JSAN), there are approximately seven such schools in South Sumatra, with hundreds more operating across the country. These schools adopt an outdoor learning environment, integrating practical experiences with theoretical knowledge, thereby fostering a closer connection between students and nature, as highlighted by [Siregar and Quimbo \(2016\)](#). The open-air classrooms of Sekolah Alam not only reduce electricity costs but also enrich the students' bond with the natural world. SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, a Junior High School, embodies this nature-focused philosophy. In its approach to English education, the school distinguishes itself from other local institutions, particularly public schools in Lubuklinggau.

Observations indicate that the school incorporates English in various aspects: beginning and concluding teaching sessions in English, including English on school signage and event banners, organizing English-centric events like speeches, poetry recitals, and storytelling, and serving as masters of ceremonies. The school also employs innovative teaching models, such as the spider web and fishbone models, interweaving English with other subjects. Moreover, students participate in external English Olympiads, enhancing their language skills. At the beginning of each academic year, these distinctive English language programs are presented to parents, making SMP Alam Lubuklinggau an attractive option for investing in their children's education. Such initiatives not only cater to the linguistic needs of students but also uphold their linguistic rights, as emphasized by [Fránquiz et al. \(2019\)](#)

In the realm of private education, exemplified by institutions like SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, it is common to encounter two distinct groups of parents: dependent and independent. Dependent parents typically rely on additional benefits from the school that extends beyond its officially advertised programs. These benefits may include reduced tuition fees, housing provisions, or other similar advantages, and sometimes, their choice of school is influenced by familial ties with the school's management. However, this study focuses on the group termed as 'independent parents.' These are individuals who enroll their children in the school without expecting or receiving the aforementioned benefits. Their decisions are primarily influenced by the information presented in the school's brochure and the details shared during formal meetings with the school's representatives.

For these independent parents, the choice of a school like SMP Alam Lubuklinggau may have deeper, more deliberate reasons. They often believe that an education in a

nature-centric environment, as advocated by Sekolah Alam, can significantly boost their children's creativity and learning outcomes. Sekolah Alam aims to provide a learning environment that is not only stimulating and entrepreneurial but also imbued with sustainable values (Siregar & Quimbo, 2016). This approach resonates with Jonassen's (1992) perspective on education, which emphasizes the importance of experiential learning that facilitates the construction of knowledge in real-world contexts. Additionally, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which asserts that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling, finds its application in the school's curriculum. By observing and emulating behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes seen in others, students at Sekolah Alam acquire skills and knowledge that are grounded in real-world experiences. This pedagogical strategy aligns with the principles of the school, providing a comprehensive framework for the holistic development of its students.

Previous research has extensively covered the concept of parental investment and the educational approach of Sekolah Alam. However, a notable gap emerges in the literature: there is a dearth of studies specifically examining parental investment in Sekolah Alam within the Indonesian context. This lack of focused research on the motivations and methods behind parents' decision to invest in these unique educational environments signifies an uncharted area of inquiry. Therefore, the primary aims of this study are twofold. First, to uncover the underlying rationales behind parents' decision to invest in their children's English education at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, a representative of Sekolah Alam in Indonesia. Second, to delve into the specific ways in which independent parents, those not swayed by additional benefits or familial ties to the school, commit resources towards their children's English education in this distinctive setting.

Given the unique characteristics of Sekolah Alam in Indonesia, it is hypothesized that parents have distinct, perhaps unconventional, reasons for choosing this educational path for their children. This study seeks to illuminate these reasons, offering insights into the dynamics of parental investment in an alternative educational model that prioritizes experiential and nature-based learning. Understanding these motivations and methods not only contributes to the broader discourse on parental investment in education but also offers a nuanced view of the choices made by parents in the context of Indonesia's evolving educational landscape.

## **METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology, focusing on the nuanced exploration and interpretation of parental investment in English education at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau. The qualitative approach is particularly suited to this research, as it allows for an in-depth analysis of complex social phenomena, aligning with the study's goal to understand the motivations and outcomes of parental decisions (Peterson, 2019). The primary focus is on examining the reasons behind parental investment and the resulting impact of these decisions.

Data collection commenced with detailed observations, which provided a foundational understanding of the environment and interactions within SMP Alam Lubuklinggau. These observations were crucial in identifying potential interview participants and in forming an overall picture of the school setting. The headmaster's guidance was instrumental in facilitating access to the research site and in identifying

relevant documentary resources. Essential documents, including a comprehensive list of participant names, addresses, and contact information, were gathered to support the research findings.

One-to-one semi-structured interviews were the principal method for data collection. This interview format was selected for its congruence with the natural communication patterns observed among parents, teachers, and school directors at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau. Semi-structured interviews offer the flexibility necessary to adapt to the spontaneous emergence of relevant topics during conversations (Ryan et al., 2016). This flexibility is further enhanced by the interviewer's ability to adjust the wording of questions, allowing for variations in language use to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of participants (Berg, 2009). The decision to use both formal and informal language in the interviews was driven by the varied occupational, familial, and educational backgrounds of the parent participants. This approach ensured that the interviews were accessible and relevant to all participants, facilitating rich, insightful data collection.

This study engaged 34 parents as participants. The emphasis on individual interviews also allowed for a nuanced understanding of each participant's unique viewpoint (Andersson & Öhlén, 2005). Furthermore, these settings facilitated the observation of non-verbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions, enriching the interviewer's comprehension of the participants' verbal expressions (Ryan et al., 2016). Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data, following the six-step process outlined by Creswell (2012). This began with the transcription of interview recordings, followed by a thorough examination of these transcripts to identify preliminary codes. Related codes were then grouped into categories, which were reviewed for consistency and adjusted as necessary. These categories subsequently informed the development of overarching themes. The final step involved correlating the analyzed data with the study's research questions and objectives.

To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data, the researchers implemented a rigorous validation process. Interviews, recorded with consent either via audio or video, were converted into digital formats for ease of analysis and review. Participants were given the opportunity to review these records, ensuring their statements were accurately captured and they were comfortable with the content. Any feedback received led to the production of a final draft, which was again reviewed by participants, allowing them to make final edits or deletions before publication. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. Participants were fully informed of their rights, including the voluntary nature of their involvement and their freedom to withdraw at any stage. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, with both the interview recordings and participants' identities kept secure and private.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

In analyzing the parental perspectives on the educational approach at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, a particularly illuminating comment was made by the mother of a seventh-grader. She expressed her concerns about how her daughter might adapt if placed in a different educational setting, given the child's unique needs. This statement underscores a significant aspect of parental decision-making regarding school selection - the suitability of the educational environment to the individual needs of their children. The mother's deep

gratitude towards the school's use of English in instruction is not merely about language proficiency. It represents a broader appreciation of how the school's pedagogical approach aligns with her child's learning style and requirements. She perceives this language-focused methodology as a pivotal factor that not only accommodates but actively supports her daughter's academic and personal growth.

*I have some concerns about how she might adapt if she were to attend a different school, given her unique needs. However, I'm truly grateful that the educators here predominantly use English in their instruction. This aspect of the school's approach gives me confidence in her ability to thrive in this learning environment.*

This aligns with the broader educational objective of Sekolah Alam, which emphasizes experiential learning and direct engagement with subject matter, as noted by Siregar and Quimbo (2016). The mother's acknowledgment that the English-medium instruction gives her confidence in her child's ability to thrive is indicative of a broader trust in the school's capacity to foster a nurturing and effective learning environment. This sentiment resonates with Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, emphasizing the importance of learning environments that are responsive to and reflective of the learners' needs. Consequently, this particular parental perspective provides valuable insight into how SMP Alam Lubuklinggau's unique educational approach meets and exceeds the expectations of parents who are deeply invested in their children's holistic development.

*"As a father of two seventh graders, my daughter expresses her thoughts poetically in English, which is unusual in our family. While my son is less expressive, I see potential in him for public speaking and language-based competitions. Their progress at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau has been promising, and I'm hopeful they'll continue to grow, especially in their English skills and confidence in public performances."*

The father's interview sheds light on his perspective on his children's English language development at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, underscoring a significant shift from the family's norm, where proficiency in English is not common. He observes unique traits in his children, particularly in his daughter's use of English for creative expression, as seen in her poetic writings. This marks a notable development, given their family's limited background in English. For his son, while he may not share the same level of expressiveness, the father envisions potential growth in public speaking and participation in language-based events. This expectation is grounded in the hope that, like his daughter, his son will benefit from the English-inclusive environment at the school, developing confidence and linguistic skills that stand out in their familial context.

Moreover, the parents of an 8th grader at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, who had been exposed to English learning from a young age, expressed their desire to continue nurturing this linguistic foundation. They emphasize their commitment to fostering multilingualism in their child, which they consider crucial for her educational journey, especially during the formative junior high years.

*"We've always encouraged our daughter to learn English, even before she started junior high. Our aim is to cultivate her multilingual abilities, ensuring she retains and further develops these skills throughout her time at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau."*

In addition, the mother of a 7th-grade student at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau shared her and her husband's decision-making process in choosing the school. They were drawn not only to the school's Islamic values but also to its strong English language program. Their primary goal was to ensure that their daughter's early experience with English could be effectively nurtured and expanded during her critical teenage years.

*"We chose SMP Alam Lubuklinggau for its Islamic ethos and its strong emphasis on English language education. We believe that this school is the right environment to continue and enhance our daughter's English skills, which she began developing at a young age. Our hope is that through a combination of the school's bilingual activities and the English-focused homework assignments, her proficiency in the language will be significantly boosted."*

Furthermore, the mother of an 8th-grade student at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau emphasized the value of English as a means to add complexity and depth to her son's educational experience. Recognizing his strong academic performance, she saw the English curriculum as an opportunity to present him with new challenges and prevent complacency in his studies.

*"I view English as a pivotal tool in providing a more challenging and enriching educational experience for my son. Given his commendable academic achievements, introducing an additional layer of complexity through English studies ensures that he remains engaged and doesn't coast through his education."*

Another parent highlighted a perceived gap in the bilingual curriculum of public schools in Lubuklinggau, which influenced their decision to enroll their child at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau. They expressed a need for more diverse and comprehensive educational approaches, particularly in bilingual education, which they felt was lacking in public schools.

*"I find the bilingual curriculum in public schools here to be somewhat lacking. In my view, my children require a more varied and thorough educational approach, especially in terms of language studies. This is why I believe SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, with its more robust and diverse curriculum, is a better fit for their educational needs."*

The decision of parents to choose SMP Alam Lubuklinggau for their children's education was influenced by several key factors: the school's integration of English into its curriculum, the provision of numerous opportunities for students to participate in activities and performances centered around English, the emphasis on promoting multilingualism, the introduction of additional academic challenges to stimulate student engagement, and the offer of a more expansive and diverse bilingual curriculum compared to that of local public schools.

One parent fondly described their daughter's growing affinity for the English language, evidenced by her active engagement and enjoyment in roles such as a master of ceremony. This enthusiasm spills over into her personal time at home, where she immerses herself in English culture through music and films:

*"She absolutely loves taking on the role of a master of ceremony. At home, she's always listening to English songs and watching English movies. It's wonderful to see her so engaged with the language in both formal and informal settings."*

Similarly, another mother shared insights into her 7th-grade daughter's use of English, particularly in relation to her artistic hobbies. The mother expressed pleasant surprise at her daughter's ability to independently explore and access diverse artistic resources online, all in English:

*"My daughter has a passion for drawing and painting. She's also keen on using English, which has opened up a new world for her. I was amazed to find that she's been accessing painting resources from international websites. It's impressive how she's navigating these platforms in English."*

These responses highlight how the students are not only learning English as an academic subject but are also integrating it into their personal interests and daily activities, enhancing their cultural exposure and practical language skills. Moreover, the father of 8<sup>th</sup> grade states:

*"My daughter often practices her English at home by conversing with her older sister, who is also a student at the same school in the 9th grade. It's become a regular part of their interaction, which is great for enhancing her spoken English skills."*

This statement underlines how the school's influence extends beyond the classroom, encouraging students to engage in English conversation in their home environment, thereby reinforcing their language learning in a practical, everyday context. Furthermore, a father of an 8th-grade student at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau shared his observations of his daughter's growing proficiency and comfort with using English at home, reflecting the school's emphasis on multilingualism:

*"In our family gatherings in the evening, my daughter often recounts her school day, and I've noticed her increasingly incorporating English expressions into her stories. It's fascinating to see how she naturally uses the language she's been learning; I've observed that she's developed a fondness for reading texts in English. Since beginning her English training at school, she finds it easier and more enjoyable to read in English, which is a significant improvement. Furthermore, my daughter has started to use English more frequently in her conversations at home, bit by bit. It's become a part of her regular communication with me and her siblings."*

Additionally, parents expressed a sense of pride and happiness in observing their children's growing confidence, particularly in their learning and participation in various events and competitions, including those related to English:

*"I've noticed a significant boost in my child's confidence in both learning and participating in events or competitions, especially since he started getting involved in language-focused activities at school."*

Some parents also highlighted their children's developing metalinguistic awareness, an ability to think about and understand language use:

"It's fascinating to see my child drawing connections between Bahasa Indonesia and English words with similar meanings. For example, he pointed out how 'Lippo Plaza' is referred to in English, but in Bahasa Indonesia, it's 'Pasar Lippo.' He also questioned why 'Watervang,' which is a dam, is commonly called a 'waterfall' in English. These observations show his growing understanding of language nuances."

The cumulative successes of parental investment in SMP Alam Lubuklinggau were evident in several areas: students using English outside of the classroom, increased confidence in learning and participating in English events or competitions, heightened metalinguistic awareness, and overall improvements in language and academic development. These outcomes underscore the significant impact of the school's language program on students' educational and personal growth.

## Discussion

### Identity and Ideology

This study investigated the motivations behind parents choosing SMP Alam Lubuklinggau for their children's education, focusing on how various elements influenced their decision-making process. Central to this investigation was the understanding that the unique characteristics, affiliations, and social roles of the families played a significant role in their school selection. Additionally, the parents' existing resources, such as material wealth, social networks, and language skills, were also considered important factors.

Parents prioritizing multilingualism in their children's education often have heightened expectations and a critical eye toward their children's English language learning. For these parents, selecting a school like SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, which emphasizes language activities, is a strategic decision. It reinforces their commitment to enhancing family language proficiency and fostering their children's connection and identity with broader, more diverse communities (Dagenais, 2003). Furthermore, in a global context where foreign language proficiency is increasingly valued (Collett, 2019), these parents recognize the importance of preparing their children to interact and collaborate with a diverse, multilingual group of individuals in future academic and professional settings (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

This perspective aligns with the idea of 'imagined communities' as described by Kanno and Norton (2003). Parents are investing in their children's multilingual education not just for immediate community integration but for future opportunities in broader, global communities. Reinforcing this view, Ryan (2020) highlights that parents understand the long-term benefits of bilingual education, seeing it as a sustained investment that could lead to superior educational and career opportunities for their children.

In the classroom, the implementation of English as the primary language of instruction, or at least in the opening and closing of classes, has been a critical aspect. This approach has led some parents to observe an increased investment and interest in the English language among their children compared to other schools they have attended. This observation is in line with Ballinger's (2017) findings that students in such language-focused environments tend to show greater interest in the target language. This heightened interest in English among students is also anticipated to influence and be supported by their parents, reflecting a mutual reinforcement of language learning within the family.



In addition, it was observed that some of the parents, including those in prominent positions like a headmaster of a major school, a civil engineer owning a building company, and a local parliament member, enrolled their children at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau with the hope of securing a prosperous future for them. A key aspect of this aspiration was proficiency in a language other than Bahasa Indonesia, primarily English. The parents recognized that mastery of a foreign language could provide their children with broader educational and professional opportunities, making them more skilled and competitive in a global context. This understanding aligns with [Ryan's \(2020\)](#) observation on the long-term benefits of bilingual education and the sustained nature of investment in language learning. Parents emphasized the external motivations for choosing the school, such as enhanced opportunities for higher education and future employment, projecting their children into their envisioned 'imagined communities.'

Part of belonging to these 'imagined communities' involves not just language proficiency but also cultural assimilation. As children learn a foreign language, they often simultaneously absorb cultural elements from countries where that language is spoken. This phenomenon can have varying implications. For instance, [Bears and de Jong \(2008\)](#) noted that while students from Spanish-speaking households in the United States valued their Spanish heritage, learning a foreign language at school sometimes risked distancing them from their local cultural roots, especially at the secondary level. A similar dynamic could occur at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, where students engaging extensively with English outside the classroom may gradually become more attuned to the cultural norms associated with English-speaking countries. Signs of this cultural shift are already evident in the new habits parents have observed, such as their children's increased consumption of English media, including songs and movies, their use of English for gathering information, and their interest in writing English short stories. This shift suggests an ongoing process of cultural adaptation alongside linguistic proficiency.

Furthermore, parents highlighted the role of SMP Alam Lubuklinggau's bilingual program in fostering their children's metalinguistic awareness, an emerging skill that [Bialystok et al. \(2014\)](#) have identified as critical in language development. This awareness goes beyond mere language proficiency, encompassing an understanding of how language functions. In addition to metalinguistic skills, parents observed improvements in their children's literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional development, echoing findings by [Ryan \(2020\)](#). These advancements were not limited to English but were evident across various academic subjects.

The study found that students often felt a sense of pride in their ability to speak multiple languages, and this was accompanied by a heightened interest in the culture associated with the foreign language they were learning. This aligns with [Ryan's \(2020\)](#) observation of students' growing interest in foreign language heritage. [Block and Vidaurre \(2019\)](#) also noted that students in dual language programs typically develop more positive attitudes towards bi- and multiculturalism than their counterparts in conventional education programs. However, some parents noted that their children seemed more inclined towards English, sometimes at the expense of the local language, a phenomenon observed in bilingual programs ([Babino & Stewart, 2016](#)).

Recognizing the potential for imbalance between English and local cultural interests, the school has undertaken efforts to celebrate local culture. This is crucial as

[Purkarthofer \(2017\)](#) asserts that while parents can influence their children's language interests, they cannot fully control them. To foster a balance between English and local heritage, SMP Alam Lubuklinggau organizes local cultural festivals. These events feature local art performances, food and drink stands showcasing regional cuisine, and dioramas representing students' hometowns. Additionally, the school continually instills Islamic values through activities such as Islamic drama performances and delivering taqiyah (religious talks) afternoon prayers. These initiatives ensure that while students embrace English and its associated cultures, they also remain connected to and proud of their local and religious heritage.

Moreover, it was evident that the parents were generally satisfied with the programs offered by SMP Alam Lubuklinggau for their children, exhibiting minimal complaints or grievances. A significant factor contributing to this positive reception is the school's adherence to three fundamental principles in curriculum implementation: involvement, engagement, and information, as outlined by [Olivos and Lucero \(2018\)](#). These principles ensure that the parents feel included and valued in the educational process, fostering a sense of collaboration and mutual respect between the school and the families.

Additionally, the study observed a tendency linked to the school's targeted demographic, primarily consisting of independent parents from a specific socio-economic status. This focused approach to its market can lead to a power imbalance in overseeing and guiding the school's program, as discussed by [Freire et al. \(2016\)](#). Such an imbalance may arise from the school tailoring its offerings and communications to meet the expectations and needs of this particular group of parents, potentially leading to differing levels of engagement or influence among the parent community. This aspect underscores the importance of maintaining an equitable and inclusive approach in educational settings, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued in the development and execution of school programs.

## Capital

[Kanno and Norton \(2003\)](#) defined the term physical capital, that which refers to the time and energy that parents need to invest to fulfill their vision about their children. In the context of this study, parents also had physical capital, which was the time and energy that parents invested to fulfill their vision, in this case, multilingualism for their children, in order to gain access to their imagined future communities. Parents acknowledged that the more invested they were, the more successful their children would be at learning or improving English as [Slavkov \(2016\)](#) described for children raised in multilingual households, the likelihood of having the number of languages understood and the number of languages spoken was tied to factors that implied a high degree of effort and time investment on the part of the parents. In SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, parents were happy when they saw their children being actively involved in an event held by the school or representing the school at an event outside the school. This could be seen from how, if it can be concluded, every parent shared the moments on their social media account with a happy and proud description of what their children did. Then, they also seemed to seek the information from the school's or teacher's social media account. Here, technology serves as a mediating tool that can provide access to imagined communities ([Kanno & Norton, 2003](#)).

Besides, they even served their children extra multilingual access through the internet, both for doing the homework the teacher gave and just satisfy the children's interest in any content in English. Through this process, the language learning experience becomes more enjoyable for the learner (Curdt-Christiansen & Wang, 2018). However, because of their lack of linguistic capital in English, the parents who all put English as a foreign language might not locate the resources perfectly relatable.

Then, Ryan (2020) defined the type of capital that parents discussed to the greatest extent, which was linguistic capital, which she closely linked to issues surrounding social capital. Parents might rarely discuss linguistic capital as it relates to English. Indeed, Choi et al. (2018) also found a similar case in which parents did not raise any concerns regarding their children's English development, which may reflect the parents' levels of English proficiency and the lack of available data on the children's English proficiency. Therefore, the school should be very actively communicating each student's development in multilingual competency and should be consistent and persistent in adopting the multilingual program in order to reduce the discrepancy. Then, the use of English should be increased little by little at school in order to increase the student's fluency. A program appeared in other countries called Dual Language Immersion (DLI), where the students had a major challenge to actively communicate with each other with a certain second or foreign language daily (Lao, 2004). Therefore, the struggle might only be to maintain or develop the platform for foreign language use in the face of local language dominance outside the class.

The parents, who are Indonesian, deplored the limited opportunities for their children to practice or be exposed to English outside of school. "Families alone cannot produce multilingual speakers and multicultural individuals" (Christiansen & Lanza, 2018). This issue was all the more salient when parents lacked proficiency in English, which the writer believed was the fact. Based on many talks with parents, parents in households where the local language was spoken reported similar issues pointing to the level of isolation parents face when fostering in their children the development of a language other than the dominant language of society. This is a big project for the school to be developed.

Finally, the writer thinks that consistency and persistence in adopting the multilingual program might still be a long and windy way for the school. Ryan (2020) also emphasized that even heritage learners of the target language in her study had limited opportunities to practice it in their homes and communities, whereas the first language continually permeates their lives both in school and outside of school. However, the Korean heritage learners who appeared in Choi et al.'s (2018) research were more likely to have high levels of proficiency if they were exposed to Korean in a variety of spaces (i.e., at home, at school, and in their communities), the background of the students and the parents were completely different from the ones appeared in this study. However, Ee (2016) previously found that children, and even parents, had greater motivation to study the heritage of the target language.

It was obtained that the school represented the only space where learners are exposed to English languages formally. Therefore, the school might have to design some programs so that the students have opportunities to practice foreign languages, including English, at home and in the broader community. In other words, multilingual habits can exist for a better process in reaching the big goals. Again, this raises interesting questions

regarding the expectations for the children's multilingual development. What Hoff (2006) questioned that, given the importance of environmental support to language development, how the students in the programs can attain high levels of proficiency in the partner language if the contexts in which this language is used are limited.

Finally, the researchers believe that it was a very big obstacle that parents did not expect the school or even the district themselves to be a place for investing in the students' English learning experience outside of school. Systematic solutions should be designed (e.g., the after-school English homework club, etc.) so that parents do not act alone and only based on their own initiative. Moreover, parents do not have the same levels of capital (cultural, linguistic, economic, etc.) to enhance their children's foreign language learning experience (Ryan, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

Parents had various motivations for enrolling their children in SMP Alam Lubuklinggau. A primary motivator was the use of English as the language of instruction, which they believed would enhance their children's language skills and academic opportunities. Additionally, parents were attracted to the school's dynamic teaching and learning environment, which encourages active student participation in school events. Fostering multilingualism during the crucial junior high period was another key factor for parents. For some, the challenge that English presents in the curriculum was seen as a way to enhance the overall school experience for their children. Practical considerations also played a role in choosing SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, such as familial connections with the school's staff, siblings already attending the school, proximity to home, and affordable costs compared to other private schools in the area. Additionally, parents perceived the curriculum at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau to be superior to that of public schools in the town.

The successes of parental investment in SMP Alam Lubuklinggau are evident in several areas. Students were observed using English not only in class but also outside school settings, indicating increased confidence in engaging in various activities and competitions. There was a noticeable improvement in metalinguistic awareness, language development (both in English and Bahasa Indonesia), academic performance across various subjects, and social development. These positive outcomes have led parents to express feelings of pride and happiness, further affirming their decision to invest in their children's education at this school. Most notably, the improvements in students' social development were highlighted by many parents as a significant benefit of the program. This aspect, along with the academic and linguistic advancements, underscores the overall success of the investment in SMP Alam Lubuklinggau, not just in terms of educational achievement but also in holistic development.

In this study, it was revealed that parents with a background in English education held higher expectations and were more critical of their children's English education at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau. These parents, often professionals in various sectors, harbored aspirations for their children to surpass their own achievements. They recognized that their investment, particularly in English language education, was crucial for their children's future success. However, these parents also faced challenges, particularly in terms of linguistic capital, which heightened their expectations from the school. Given this scenario, it becomes imperative for SMP Alam Lubuklinggau to actively communicate each student's

progress in bilingual or multilingual competencies. The school is tasked with not only consistently implementing the multilingual program but also creating opportunities for students to practice foreign languages, including English, both at home and in broader community settings. This approach suggests the need for systematic solutions like after-school English homework clubs to support parents and students. Such initiatives would alleviate the pressure on parents to solely drive their children's language learning.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that not all parents possess the same levels of capital—be it cultural, linguistic, or economic—to support their children's language learning journey. The school's role, therefore, extends to bridging these gaps and ensuring equitable language learning opportunities for all students, irrespective of their parents' varying abilities and resources. This comprehensive approach is essential for a well-rounded and inclusive language education program at SMP Alam Lubuklinggau.

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