

# The Meaning of Family Functioning on the Kindergarten Student's Breakfast Pattern

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## **Abstract---**

**Objective of research:** This research aims to find the meaning of family functioning related to kindergarten students from middle and lower economic environments group.

**Method of research:** Research I. Descriptive study about characteristics of parents, breakfast habits, and patterns of meeting children's nutritional needs. The subject of the research is 29 students. The age characteristic of the subject is 5-6 years old. The data collection method uses a questionnaire. Data analysis technique: descriptive statistics.

Research II. Case study and in-depth interviews. Participants: cadres, parents, headmaster, and health office staff. Data analysis technique: qualitative analysis.

**Results of the research:** Based on the descriptive statistics analysis, most of the characteristics of parents' work are laborers. Their education starts from elementary to secondary school level and their income is mostly under four million rupiah. The intake of vegetable and animal protein from the types of drinks and food consumed is estimated to still not meet the children's nutritional needs. In case study, the researcher found a description of the meaning of family functioning in the development of several themes that caused the provision of breakfast menus. The themes are permissive, discipline without knowledge, hand over parenting, and dependency on income. The development of the themes is influenced by the theme of care giving process and environmental involvement.

**Applications/Originality/Value:** The meaning of family functioning shows the importance of the care giving process and environmental involvement.

**Keywords---** The Meaning of Family Functioning, The Behavior of Choosing the Breakfast Menu, Environmental Involvement.

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## **I. BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH**

This research aims to get the meaning of family functioning related to giving breakfast menus. Breakfast is important for overall food quality and nutritional adequacy in school-age children (Chitra & Reddy, 2007). Some research found that children who care about breakfast tended to have a better nutritional profile than children who skipped breakfast (Rampersaud, Pereira, Girard, Adams, & Metz, 2005; Williams, 2007).'

The socialization process about health-related behavior occurs in the family. It is based on the beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of parents that they know most of the conditions of their children then it will affect children's health

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behaviors (Tinsley, 2003). Therefore, the family environment is important in influencing young people's eating habits (Crockett & Sims, 1995; Patrick & Nicklas, 2005; Shepherd et al., 2006; Story, Neumark-Sztainer, & French, 2002).

Skipping breakfast affects the children's cognition and learning process (Pollitt & Mathews, 1998). Skipping breakfast also associated with mental stress and impaired academic performance among adolescents (Lien, 2007). On the contrary, breakfast consumption improves the cognitive functions related to memory, test scores and attendance (Rampersaud et al., 2005). Then, the importance of the breakfast level is associated with its role in influencing individual learning processes.

One of the most important factors that also influence learning achievement is school readiness, especially for the first-grade students of elementary school level, (Pianta, Cox, & Snow, 2007; Duncan et al, 2007, Sabol & Pianta, 2012). In the beginning, the concept of school readiness covers a level of children's development to master a number of learning processes and skills. It is accompanied by maturity to integrate mastery in order to take education in school (Jensen, 1969; Li-Grining et al, 2010). Then, the school readiness concept change into more detailed concepts, included: 1) adaptive behavior in managing negative emotions such as anger and depression; 2) language and cognitive skills such as communication, reading, and writing, and knowing the environment; 3) self-help skills such as eating and drinking, toilet activities, working independently and asking for help from others; and 4) the availability of support from families such as getting support and pray, having an organized routine at home, and having a habit of reading at home (Hughes, Daly, Foley, White, & Devine, 2018).

One tangible form of parental support is to instill breakfast habits. Research proof that nutrition is an important role in supporting learning achievement not only in elementary school students who are in childhood age (Stroebelle, Mc Nally, Plog, Siegfried, and Hill, 2013), but also nutrition increase the value of bachelor student learning achievement at the college level (Hearst, Llapa, Grannon, Wang, Naney, Caspi, 2019). It takes extensive insight from parents to be able to provide balanced nutrition to children through quality breakfast (Van Ansem, Schrijvers, Rodenburg, and Van de Meehn, 2014). Children from the middle to lower socioeconomic environment can increase their attendance and academic achievement through a free breakfast program from school (Mhurchu, Gorton, Turley, Jiang, Michie, Maddison, Hattie, 2012).

This research is located in Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group, Semarang. Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group are pre-schools for student who come from the middle to lower socioeconomic environment.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The role of the family in the children's school readiness is corresponding with Urie Bronnfenbrenner's review especially in the habit of having breakfast. Urie Bronnfenbrenner's review stated that children develop in a multilevel system. The children are the core of the multilevel system. All of the innate qualities and abilities of children are found in this core circle. The environment around the child is divided into 5 layers of circles (Ormrod, 2008).

The first layer is microsystem, includes environments that routinely deal with children, namely family, neighbors, and schools directly. The second layer is mesosystem, includes interactions between elements in the microsystem.

The third layer is exosystem, which includes environments that are not directly related to students but influences the lives of students such as friends from family, mass media and different legal institutions. The outermost layer is a macrosystem. It is a system of values, culture, and beliefs that colors a child's life. While the change in time that occurs during child growth is a chronosystem. This theory has a micro context from the child's daily life to the macro context of the global situation that occurs during the child's development. The multilevel system arrangement can be described through the following chart:

### **III. METHODS OF RESEARCH**

#### ***Research I. Descriptive study***

This descriptive study is to find the work and income characteristics of the parents. The researcher meets the headmaster and conveys the purpose of the study. This research aims to obtain a description of the breakfast patterns of preschoolers in Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group, Semarang. Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group are pre-schools for student who come from the middle to lower socioeconomic environment.

The population in this research is all Play Group students, Nirwana Kindergarten A and B in Semarang. The sample of this research is 29 students consisted of 13 Play Group students, 10 Kindergarten A students, and 6 Kindergarten B students. The gender of the sample is female and male. The majority of student's parents are laborers.

To collect the data, the researcher uses a questionnaire. The questionnaire form was prepared by Senanayake and Parakramadasa (2008). The researchers collecting data in groups or individually. The researchers interviewed the respondent's parents to fill the items of the questionnaire form. The questionnaire revealed the characteristics of parents, types of drinks and types of foods that are usually consumed, breakfast habits including the time of place and types of food, and also types of fruit that are usually consumed.

#### ***Research II. Case Study***

The researcher continue with case study to answer the question, "how does the family process of the lower middle economic group determine the right breakfast menu for their children?". The researcher continues the research with a case study to answer the research question. Researchers look for the description of the meaning of family functioning in determining kindergarten student's breakfast. The method used in a case study is in-depth interviews.

Participants in this case study are Posyandu cadres, Parents of students, headmaster of Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group, and Central Java Provincial Health Office Staff. All participants are residents of the Wonodri sub-district which is the domicile of Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group.

## IV. RESULT OF RESEARCH

### Research I. Descriptive Study

Table 1: Characteristics of parents

No.	Level of education	Types of parent's job	Types of parent's education	Parent's income	Total
1.	Kindergarten B	Labor = 10 Entrepreneur= 4	Primary school =3 Senior High School = 7 Junior high school = 1 Bachelor =1	a.600,000 – 1,200,000 /month = 3 b. <1,200,000 – 2,400,000/month = 1 c. <2,400,000 – 4,000,000/month = 1	6
2.	Kindergarten A	Labor = 10, Entrepreneur=3, Trader=2	Senior High School =7 Primary school =2 Junior high school = 1 Bachelor =6	a.<2,400,000-4,000,000/month = 3 b.<1,200,000-2,400,000/month = 3 c.600,000-1,200,000/month =2	10
3.	Play Group	Entrepreneur= 10 Labor = 2 Trader = 2	Senior High School =16 Junior high school = 5 Bachelor = 1	a.600,000-1,200,000/ month = 1 b.<1,200,000-2,400,000/month =6 c. <2,400,000-4,000,000/month = 2 d. >4,000,000/month = 1	13

Source: Processed researcher data

Characteristics of parents in table 1 show that the majority of parent's education is high school. The highest education of parents is a bachelor's degree. The lowest education of parents is an elementary school. The majority of parents work are laborers and entrepreneurs. The majority of parent's income is between <1,200,000-2,400,000/month. The lowest income of parents is 600,000-1,200,000.

Play Group students often consuming full cream milk and so they still obtain protein. Other foods consumed are still dominated by carbohydrates in the form of rice. The parent's understanding of the children's nutritional needs is still inadequate. It is because children consume fast food and lack of vegetable protein and vegetables.

Some of the kindergarten A students were found to have liked fast food like Indomie, nuggets, and sausages. Even so, some students were found never consumed fast food or rarely consume it. Type of beans that are consumed are fried peanuts, *tempe*, boiled peanuts, fried peanuts, and peanut shells. Cereals that are often consumed are Koko Crunch, Energen and Kellogg's.

Breakfast habits are still not comprehensive. Most students breakfast at home even though the breakfast they consume varies. For example fried rice, Soto, vegetables, and milk. A student never eats breakfast, but brings packaged milk and drinks it during breaks. Kindergarten A students mostly bring packed meal to school, wafers, jelly, sausages, or biscuits. The packed meal also includes rice and vegetables, shrimp, chicken, fish, and *tempe*. Most of the kindergarten A students still drink full cream milk regularly. In a day, the frequency of drinking milk for kindergarten A student is still quite a lot. Even so, there is a habit of drinking water and tea.

From this description it can be seen that the type of food consumed by Kindergarten A students is still dominated by carbohydrates, while the other nutritional needs seem insufficient

Consumption in Kindergarten B students is also still dominated by carbohydrates. There are still Kindergarten B students who have breakfast at home and some who have breakfast at school with fried rice. There are also students who have breakfast with indomie and lunch at school with biscuits. There are even students who eat indomie twice a day. There are also students who don't eat breakfast at home, but at school eat rice, meatballs, and soup. Based on the type of breakfast consumption of the students above, fulfilling carbohydrate needs is with fried rice and indomie.

Thus, it can be concluded that consumption for meeting the nutritional needs of Kindergarten B students is mainly with rice. As the frequency of full-cream milk decreases, consumption of tea, water and bottled water becomes more frequent. Furthermore, if full-cream milk is still given then the possibility of animal protein needs in children is still fulfilled. The new menu that has begun to be consumed by kindergarten B students is fast food, including indomie, burgers, sausages, KFC chicken, and fried noodles. The addition of fast food menus becomes less healthy for students because of the presence of additional substances such as coloring and flavoring.

## ***Research II. Case Study***

The results of the descriptive study above indicate that children are not being met for proper nutrition. These results affect the meaning of family functioning related to the provision of breakfast menus. The description of the meaning of family functioning can be seen in the development of several themes. The development of several themes causes the decision making of the breakfast menu, namely permissiveness, discipline without knowledge, hand over parenting and dependency on income.

### ***1. Permissive themes are found in the following statements***

“My child will request a food menu, he will ask for spinach or soup. My child always requests food menus, otherwise, he won't eat.” (W SMT, 31-32)

“My child rarely eats breakfast, usually only eats dinner”. (W, Ort N, 154-156)

“Usually, when they just wake up, they are brought lunch to replace dinner. W Tt, 19-20)

The statement from the parents above shows the tendency of parents to simply obey their children's desires, as long as their children want to eat and be happy. Their children's food requests are must be obeyed because their children only want to eat when they requesting, even if the food does not meet the children's nutritional needs.

### ***2. The hand over parenting theme are found in the following statements***

“Vegetable. Anyway, as far as I know when I am working. *Alhamdulillah*, if it is with his grandfather, my child eats easily.” (W SMT, 28).

“The one who takes care of (my child) is his grandfather. So I do not know.” (W SMT, 22).

“Yes. If (my child) told to choose, my child would choose his grandfather. If my child is asked, ‘If your mother works, will you choose your aunt or Mrs. Sugi?’ My son will definitely answer Mrs. Sugi. Sometimes I do not lock my house, I usually put the key above the door.” (W Ot N, 295-297)

The statement from the parents above shows the role of parents is transferred to their closest person as a caregiver, such as his grandmother or neighbor. This theme makes the mother assign all decision-making processes to the caregiver. The mother will assign the selection of her child's food to the caregiver.

### ***3. The discipline without knowledge themes are found in the following statements***

“I used to bring rice and side dishes, sometimes sausages, or nugget. Sometimes it runs out, and sometimes it does not. I do not know. Maybe my child bored with that menu. Then I provide bread, Tango, Beng-Beng.” (W Sr., 45-46)

“At the age of 2 years, Indomie was introduced (to my child). So until now he just says noodles, noodles, and noodles again.”(W Sr, 53-54)

“The main influence is parenting. So the caregiver

has a big role. For example, the mother works, then the child is handed over to her grandmother. The mother must give knowledge or transfer knowledge to her grandmother. For example, mornings are given a menu of rice, eggs, vegetables, and other side dishes. The maid has also been prepared with a menu that the child must eat .” (W Rf, 24-27)

The statement above shows that caregivers provide breakfast menus for children without accompanied by knowledge about nutrition. The decision making process is also more determined by the situation. That way it is necessary to transfer knowledge from the mother to the caregiver.

### ***4. The dependency on income themes are found in the following statements***

“Yes. For me, I work for anything.If someone has an event then invited to help, then I will help him. So there is no permanent job. As long as can get the money, I will do it.” (W Ort N, 307-309).

“The knowledge of the parents will affect the child's feeding patterns, as well as the child's health. Now, even if in the health service program now it leads to the family. For example his mother. Usually, a children's breakfast habit is largely determined by the caregiver.” (W Rf, 12-15)

“But it also influences the family's income. His father. His father for example, how much expenses should he spend on children or family. What percentage of expenditure for food and for other needs also affects.” (W Rf, 27-30). The statement above shows that a family's income becomes a determining factor in the process of choosing a breakfast menu. Mothers and caregivers are very dependent on the amount of the budget in providing breakfast. The budget for providing breakfast should be considered compared to other needs.

The development of themes in the provision of breakfast menus is influenced by the theme of nurturing and environmental involvement..

### ***5. The parenting process themes are found in the following statements***

“If the child is still under a teenager like an infant. What really determines the infant's food is parents or those who care for the child. But if the child has reached adulthood, maybe a teenager and above, the parent factor can

also be a factor providing the child's food. But it can also be that the child can accept the knowledge in which foods he should eat, which are not good to eat." (W Rf, 56-59)

"maybe it's a factor of lack of knowledge. What kind of nutrition a young child, such knowledge may not be owned by the mother or caregiver. Caregiver is very decisive. Also maybe time. Parents want something practical, so the important thing is that their children are full. Finally, only carbohydrate sources are given. For example instant noodles. Fried noodles and rice. The important thing is that children love to eat, not to the nutritional needs." (W Rf, 33-39)

"had breakfast at home, school hours began at 7:30 and he had breakfast, I gave him breakfast while putting on his pants." (W Sr, 23)

Based on the statement above it was found that the breakfast menu selection process occurred in the parenting process. The role of caregivers who have knowledge about nutrition is very necessary. The process of transferring knowledge from mother to caregiver is needed. Budget planning for a nutritious breakfast menu needs to be done. Obstacles are clearly seen, from the time of giving breakfast to the ability and knowledge of caregivers about nutrition. That causes caregivers tend to provide a practical breakfast without considering the needs of children.

#### ***6. The environmental involvement themes are found in the following statements***

"First, knowledge. Then, ability. That's important. Also the effects of advertising on TV. The community must be selective in accepting advertising. Maybe fast food advertisements and so on that do not necessarily meet nutritional needs. So the community must also be selective. That is the task of the health worker who provides knowledge through PKK, Dasa Wisma, Posyandu. That can be tucked in at events that can be found in the community." (W Rf, 50-54).

"Yes, sometimes the neighbor, this side takes care of it. Sometimes children cry. If the door is closed there are no parents. Even though his aunt was there. But yes not so close, the next-door neighbor who must have heard crying. The first is not necessarily heard. Because the neighbor in front of the house is rather crazy. So the child continues to cry. Then contacted his father, 'This is your child like a missing person. Nobody is at home.' Sometimes Mrs. Dwi offered to occupy my house. That hasn't been said yet, so it's not good." (W N, 300-307)

"You see, the child is left behind by the cooperation of parents. In that house, my child is usually with his grandmother... Yes, taken care of. But it is not completely taken care of like his mother." (W Sgr, 25-27)

"In Nirwana Kindergarten and Play Group, there are already programs that are related to health. One of them is once a month measurement of body weight, height, providing healthy food, and tooth-brushing activities. *Alhamdulillah*, children are enthusiastic." (W Tt, 6-11)

"Teachers convey information about balanced nutrition schemes to parents and students... Carbohydrates in the form of rice, bread, corn, protein in the form of side dishes have both vegetable and animal origin ie vegetables, sugar and milk given in a balanced way." (W Tt, 34-37)

The statement from the parents above shows that the environment involvement towards the parenting process is quite large. The environment also becomes caregiver for children when mom has to leave home to work. Beside, the

environment is a source of information to monitor children's development, including teachers in Play Group and kindergarten. Health workers who enter forums in the community are part of the environment that provides useful information about health such as Posyandu, PKK, Dasa Wisma. The environment also has limitations in terms of knowledge about children's nutritional needs.

## V. DISCUSSION

Program Indonesia Sehat is one of the programs of the 5th Nawa Cita Agenda. This program is to improve the quality of life of Indonesian people. This program is supported by other sector programs, like Program Indonesia Pintar, Program Indonesia Kerja, and Program Indonesia Sejahtera. The family approach is one way for the Puskesmas to increase the reach of targets and bring health service access closer to the working area by visiting families. Thus, the family approach becomes the main target in the approach of implementing the Healthy Indonesia program. <https://www.depkes.go.id/article/view/17070700004/program-indonesia-sehat-dengan-pendekatan-keluarga.html>

Eamon. M. K. (2001) found the characteristic of child with poverty. The characteristic is Lower Caloric Intake, vitamin and mineral deficiencies and physical indicators of undernutrition such as comparisons to national standards of height for age, weight for height and rate of weight gain, also are found more frequently among poor children .

Related to learning, Theoma U. Iruka et.al (2019) found that children in a rural country experience diversity in the ecological system that can affect their opportunities for learning. In particular, there is a range of levels of family poverty, access to early education, family-school involvement, available community resources, and cultural diversity in this rural community .

The results of this study indicate that the dynamics of the meaning of family functioning in school readiness for children especially in the breakfast menu are in accordance with Urie Bronfenbrenner's review that children develop in a multi-layered system. From the results of this study it was found that children as the core in multilevel systems. All innate characteristics and abilities of children are seen in the core circle. Play group and kindergarten children are in the process of growth and development, so they are more influenced by the adults around them.

The environment around the children that occurs in the first layer is called the microsystem. The microsystem includes environments that routinely deal with children directly, such as family, neighbors, and schools. Children are provided breakfast menu is the result of interaction between children and parents. The abilities and knowledge of parents about nutrition will interact with children's nutritional needs. Neighbors are the community that becomes caregivers when their parents work. Neighbors provide breakfast menus for children voluntarily. In this situation, the children receive all the food given. The neighbors do not know exactly the children's nutritional needs. Also, the schools are sources of information for children and parents about the children's nutritional needs.

The second layer is called mesosystem which includes interactions between families, neighbors, and schools in preparing the microsystem. At the research location, interactions that occur between families, neighbors and schools have been attempted to be integrated in an activity, such as health counseling at Nirwana Kindergarten by the local Puskesmas. Health counseling was attended by cadres, parents, and local community leaders. In addition, a health

presentation on helminthiasis was held at Nirwana Kindergarten, which was attended by cadres and parents of students.

The third layer is exosystem, an environment that is not directly related to students but influences students' lives. The mass media that displays snacks advertisements that eventually become children's favorite snacks, even though the food or drink does not meet the nutritional needs of children, but instead adds flavoring substances, etc..

The outermost layer is the macrosystem. The macrosystem is a system of values, culture, and beliefs which colors the lives of children. The population in the Wonodri Sendang area is quite diverse in terms of religion. Nevertheless, Islamic life has developed widely. The recitation program and prayer has become a routine activity. Islamic values have been instilled since childhood such as teachings about Allah who likes cleanliness.

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