



The Role of the Andragogical Approach in Improving Parents Educational Competence in Early Childhood Education in the Modern Era

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Abstract

Early childhood education is closely linked to the role of parents as the first and most influential educators in a child's life. Furthermore, many parents lack the knowledge, skills, and readiness to optimally fulfill this educational role. Therefore, the andragogical approach, a learning method specifically designed for adults, emerges as a potential solution. This study aims to examine the role of the andragogical approach in enhancing parents' educational competence in early childhood education. This study employed a qualitative literature study method, in which the authors examined various theoretical concepts regarding andragogy and related them to the conditions and challenges faced by parents today. The analysis showed that the andragogical approach provides a more relevant and contextual learning experience for parents. Furthermore, this approach encourages active involvement, reflection, and strengthening intrinsic motivation in learning. The application of andragogical principles in parent training has resulted in improved parenting quality, enhanced educational interactions within the family environment, and more effective and sustainable support for children's character development.

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INTRODUCTION

Technological advances and rapid social changes have profoundly impacted various aspects of life, including early childhood education practices. Today, the responsibility for education is no longer limited to formal institutions but has become the primary responsibility of families, particularly parents, as children's first and most influential educators.

The family environment plays a crucial role in shaping the foundation of a child's development, encompassing cognitive, social-emotional, and character-building aspects. Therefore, parental involvement in early childhood education is a

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key determinant of optimal child development (Fitri et al., 2023).

Furthermore, from a global perspective, attention to the role of families in early childhood education is growing as awareness grows that children's early learning experiences largely occur within the home environment.

A UNESCO report confirms that the quality of interactions between parents and children significantly influences a child's readiness to learn at the next level. A responsive and stimulating family environment will help children develop optimally, both cognitively and socially-emotionally (U.N.E.S.C.O., 2022). This demonstrates that the success of early childhood education is inextricably linked to the quality of parental involvement in the daily educational process.

In line with this, studies in the field of Early Childhood Education confirm that early childhood is a crucial period, often referred to as the golden age, during which children's brain development is rapid and highly sensitive to various stimuli (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2021). At this stage, parents' role is not only as caregivers but also as primary facilitators, determining the direction of their child's development.

A lack of parental understanding in providing appropriate stimulation can impact children's development in various aspects. However, the reality on the ground shows that not all parents are sufficiently prepared to carry out this educational role. Most parents still face limitations in understanding their children's developmental stages, providing appropriate stimulation, and establishing effective communication during parenting.

Furthermore, the increasingly complex pressures of modern life, such as busy work schedules and limited time, also hinder parents from participating fully in their children's education (Yahya et al., 2024). This phenomenon reflects that parents' role as educators is not yet fully supported by adequate competencies.

Furthermore, the development of digital technology also shapes parenting patterns within families. The increasing use of gadgets is often seen as a quick solution to accompany children, but without proper management, it has the potential to harm children's social and emotional development.

Face-to-face interaction between parents and children is also decreasing, resulting in less than optimal natural learning processes within the family (Rahaju, 2017). This situation further emphasizes the urgency of parental educational competence in facing the challenges of children's education in the contemporary era.

Furthermore, changes in family life patterns in the modern era also affect the quality of interactions between parents and children. Parents today face the demands of dual roles between work and domestic responsibilities, which often result in reduced quality time with their children. In this context, parents' ability to manage these roles in a balanced manner is crucial for optimal family education (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020).

In addition to these aspects, the quality of parent-child interactions is also influenced by the parents' ability to respond appropriately to the child's needs. Warm, consistent, and caring interactions will help children develop a sense of security and the ability to manage their emotions from an early age. Conversely, a lack of stimulation and involvement can lead to developmental delays, particularly in social-emotional and language development (Bornstein, 2019).

From a developmental psychology perspective, parental involvement is closely related to the formation of attachment between children and parents. John Bowlby's theory explains that a strong emotional connection will form the foundation for a child's future development of self-confidence and social skills (Bowlby, 1988). Thus, parents' educational role extends beyond academics to the development of a child's overall psychological foundation.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that parental involvement has a substantial impact on the success of early childhood education. However, strategies for improving parental competence are still dominated by conventional, one-way learning methods that fail to consider the characteristics of parents as adult learners (Budiwan, 2019). Yet, as adults, parents have different experiences, needs, and learning motivations than children. In this situation, an andragogical approach emerges as the right choice.

Andragogy is a learning method specifically designed for adults, emphasizing experience as the primary source of learning, contextual needs, and active involvement during the learning process (Knowles, 1970). Through this approach, parents not only receive information but also actively reflect on their experiences and seek solutions to challenges in educating their children.

The andragogical approach is becoming increasingly relevant because it bridges parents learning needs with the parenting challenges they face. Furthermore, the rapid flow of digital information demands that parents possess strong literacy skills to sort through parenting-related information.

In recent years, attention has increased on strengthening the role of parents in early childhood education, particularly in the context of rapid and complex social change. Recent research shows that high-quality parental involvement not only impacts children's academic performance but also contributes to the development of emotional regulation, social skills, and readiness for formal learning environments (Sari et al., 2022). This confirms that parents' role cannot be positioned as complementary, but rather as a primary factor in shaping children's early learning experiences.

Furthermore, recent research in the field of Family Education emphasizes that the success of early childhood education is significantly influenced by the quality of parenting practices implemented at home. Adaptive, responsive, and child-centered parenting practices have been shown to improve the quality of interactions and strengthen emotional bonds between parents and children (Pratiwi & Handayani, 2023). Conversely, inconsistent and poorly directed parenting practices can hinder a child's development, particularly in areas of independence and social skills.

Amidst the rapid development of digital technology, the challenges facing parents are also increasingly complex. Children today grow up in environments saturated with digital media exposure, requiring appropriate guidance to ensure optimal benefits from technology use. Recent studies have shown that active parental involvement in guiding children's technology use can improve the quality of children's learning experiences and minimize the negative impacts of excessive device use (urniawan et al., 2024). Therefore, parental competence in understanding and managing technology use is a crucial part of the educational role in the modern era.

In this context, the andragogy approach is increasingly relevant for implementation in parent education programs. This approach emphasizes not only knowledge transfer but also a reflective and experiential learning process. Recent research shows that andragogy-based training programs can significantly increase parent engagement because the material presented is more aligned with the real needs they face in their daily lives (Hidayat et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the andragogical approach also encourages the formation of learning communities among parents, where they can share experiences, discuss issues, and find joint solutions to problems. This process not only enriches knowledge but also strengthens social support among parents, ultimately positively impacting the quality of childcare (Rahman & Aziz, 2021). Thus, the application of the andragogical approach is not only oriented towards the individual but also builds a broader learning ecosystem within the community. Not all circulating information has a strong scientific basis, so a learning approach that can develop parents critical

thinking skills is necessary (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020).

Through a participatory and reflective learning process, parents can develop a deeper understanding and practical skills in effectively raising their children. Several studies confirm that the andragogical approach is effective in improving adult competency in various domains, such as job training, community education, and personal development (Yahya et al., 2024).

This approach can stimulate learning motivation, active participation, and the ability to apply knowledge in daily routines. However, research specifically addressing the application of andragogy to improve parental educational competency in early childhood education is still very limited. Most existing studies focus more on the role of parents in general or on training programs that have not fully adopted adult learning principles.

In essence, there remains a gap between the concept of andragogy as an adult learning approach and its implementation in parenting, particularly early childhood education in the modern era (Nofrizal et al., 2025). Therefore, more in-depth research is needed to understand how to effectively implement andragogy to improve parents' educational competencies.

Furthermore, obstacles to andragogy implementation should be anticipated, such as time constraints, low learning motivation, and unequal access to learning resources. This situation demands flexible, contextual learning designs that align with parents' needs so that andragogy can be optimally implemented (Irfan et al., 2025).

Furthermore, strengthening parents' educational competencies is also part of a long-term investment in human resource development. Education that begins in the family will shape character, learning habits, and values that will influence children's future lives. Therefore, developing parenting education programs based on appropriate approaches is a necessity that cannot be ignored.

Therefore, this approach is not merely an abstract theory but is capable of producing concrete impacts in family education practices. Based on the above description, this research is relevant in filling the gap in the literature regarding the application of andragogy in parenting education.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of andragogy in improving parents' educational competence in early childhood education in the modern era. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of adult education concepts and serve as a reference in developing more effective, relevant, and sustainable parent training programs.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach in the form of library research, intended to deeply examine the role of the andragogical approach in strengthening parents' educational competence in early childhood education. This approach was chosen because the study places greater emphasis on analyzing concepts, theories, and previous research findings relevant to the topic discussed.

Research data were collected from various scientific literature sources, such as books, national and international journals, and educational policy documents related to andragogy, the role of parents, and early childhood education. Overall, this study utilized approximately 16 references published between 2015 and 2025. Source selection was conducted purposively, taking into account the relevance and credibility of the sources to the research focus.

In addition, several classic theories, such as Knowles' concept of andragogy, remain as conceptual foundations due to their strong relevance in adult education studies. The data analysis technique applied content analysis with a descriptive-qualitative approach.

The analysis process was carried out through several stages: grouping the literature by theme, understanding the content in depth, identifying key concepts, and compiling a synthesis to explain the role of the andragogical approach in strengthening parents educational competence. Data validity is maintained through source triangulation, namely by comparing information from various different references to obtain a more objective and comprehensive understanding.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The andragogical approach plays a crucial role in strengthening parents' educational competencies, particularly in the contemporary realm of early childhood education. This phenomenon stems from the fundamental characteristics of andragogy, which positions adults as active learners with experiences, needs, and motivations that differ from those of children. In this context, parents are no longer merely recipients of information but individuals with the potential to develop through reflection on their parenting experiences (Sameto et al., 2025).

Conceptually, andragogy opens up opportunities for parents to recognize that the learning process need not be formal and rigid, but can be flexible and contextual. When parents face daily realities like managing unruly children's behavior, regulating technology use, or designing home learning activities, this approach facilitates connecting those experiences with new knowledge (Silva & Siahaan, 2024).

Thus, learning becomes more meaningful because it is grounded in lived reality. Regarding parents' educational competence, analysis reveals that andragogy contributes not only to increased knowledge but also to the transformation of attitudes and behaviors in educating children.

Parents who participate in andragogy-based learning tend to be more aware of the urgency of their role as primary educators in the family. They no longer leave educational responsibilities entirely to formal institutions, but instead begin to proactively create a learning environment that supports their children's development at home.

This finding aligns with research that suggests parental involvement has a strong influence on the success of early childhood development (Zali, 2013). Furthermore, in the modern era characterized by the development of digital technology, parents' educational competencies are increasingly complex. Parents need not only to understand their children's development but also to be adept at filtering information and influences from the digital world.

In this regard, andragogy equips parents with critical and reflective learning skills, enabling more informed decisions about child support. The participatory learning process allows for discussion, sharing of experiences, and the discovery of solutions tailored to individual circumstances (Yahya et al., 2024). The application of andragogical principles in parent training emphasizes that the relevance of the material is crucial for successful learning.

Material tailored to parents' real needs, such as managing children's emotions, developing learning habits, and using technology wisely, has been shown to be easier to digest and apply in everyday life (Trakšelys, 2010). Furthermore, experience as a learning resource has a positive impact because parents feel valued and fully involved in the process.

This contrasts with conventional approaches, which are one-way and lack active participation. In terms of learning motivation, andragogy demonstrates substantial influence. Parents who engage in relevant and meaningful learning typically have higher intrinsic motivation for continued learning (Putri & Suryana, 2022). They participate in training not merely as an obligation, but as a necessity to improve the quality of parenting.

This process ultimately fosters a lifelong learning attitude, which is essential for addressing the dynamics of children's future development (Muchtar & Yanuarsari, 2017). Furthermore, studies confirm that andragogy comprehensively enriches various aspects of parents' educational competencies. In the affective aspect, parents are more sensitive to their children's emotional needs and are able to build warm and supportive relationships.

In the communication aspect, they are more adept at dialogic interactions while respecting their children's opinions. Meanwhile, in the practical aspect, parents are more skilled at developing simple yet meaningful learning activities at home (Rahmat & Mirnawati, 2021). This change reflects that andragogy is not focused on knowledge transfer, but rather on developing applicable attitudes and skills. In practice, the application of andragogy in parent training has yielded positive outcomes (Putri & Eliza, 2022).

Community-based programs, for example, provide a platform for collaborative learning through discussion, reflection, and hands-on practice. Evaluations show that participants experienced increased understanding and positive changes in parenting patterns (Wardani, 2024).

This phenomenon demonstrates that experiential learning and social interaction are more impactful than lecture methods. Compared to conventional approaches, andragogy excels in flexibility and relevance. Conventional instructional approaches often fail to address parents' actual needs, making them difficult to implement daily. Conversely, andragogy allows for adaptation of the learning process to individual circumstances, resulting in more applicable and lasting learning (Rahmat & Mirnawati, 2021).

However, implementing this approach is not without challenges. Time constraints, busy work schedules, and a lack of training awareness are major barriers to parent education programs. Furthermore, variations in educational background and access to learning resources influence effectiveness (Lestari & Handayani, 2013). This situation underscores the need for a more adaptive and inclusive andragogy implementation strategy. Therefore, systematic steps are needed to develop andragogy-based parent training programs.

The program must be designed to consider time flexibility, accessible media, and community involvement as a collective learning space. Therefore, andragogy is not merely a theoretical concept but can be implemented to enrich parents' educational competencies. Overall, this study confirms the significant potential of andragogy in strengthening parents' role as early childhood educators in the modern era (Mahyuddin et al., 2022).

Through relevant, participatory, and experience-based learning, parents can build essential educational competencies for optimal child development. With adequate support, this approach has the potential to become a reliable strategy for improving the quality of early childhood education within families.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the andragogical approach plays a crucial role in enhancing parents' educational competence in early childhood education in the modern era. This approach can address the needs of parents as adult learners through a learning process that emphasizes experience, relevance to everyday life, and active involvement in understanding and solving parenting problems.

Through the application of andragogical principles, parents not only gain new knowledge regarding their children's education but also experience changes in their thinking, attitudes, and behaviors. Parents become more aware of their role as primary educators, more confident in making decisions, and better able to build

positive relationships with their children.

Furthermore, they demonstrate improvements in their communication skills, manage their children's behavior, and create a learning environment that supports optimal child development. This approach also contributes to developing parenting patterns that are more adaptive to current developments, particularly in facing the increasingly complex challenges of digital technology.

Parents become more discerning in utilizing technology as a learning tool, not just as a means of entertainment. Thus, parents' educational competence impacts not only the quality of parenting but also the child's overall development, including cognitive, social-emotional, and character development.

Therefore, the andragogical approach can be used as an effective strategy in developing parenting education programs. Support from various parties, such as educational institutions, the community, and the government, is needed to implement this approach more broadly and sustainably. With this synergy, it is hoped that the role of parents as primary educators can be further optimized, thereby supporting the realization of better quality early childhood education in the future.

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