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School readiness as a central correlate of social confidence and family involvement across three Islamic preschools in Indonesia

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Abstract

Islamic early childhood education situates children's development within school and family relationships. This cross-sectional correlational study examined the relationships among school readiness, social confidence, and family involvement in 128 children aged 5–7 years from three Islamic preschools in Indonesia. Teacher ratings of 42 Preschool Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (PreBERS) items were scored using a locally adapted binary format (0 = No; 1 = Yes). Spearman correlations showed positive associations between school readiness and social confidence (ρ = .640), school readiness and family involvement (ρ = .509), and social confidence and family involvement (ρ = .484), all $p < .001$. In simultaneous regression, only school readiness had a significant unique association with social confidence (β = .514, $p < .001$; R^2 = .334). Total scores differed across schools ($H(2) = 19.13$, $p < .001$), but only the difference between Schools 2 and 1 remained significant after Bonferroni correction. Binary scoring and ceiling effects limit score interpretation.

Keywords: Islamic preschool; Early childhood education; School readiness; Social confidence; Family involvement.

Abstrak

Pendidikan anak usia dini Islam menempatkan perkembangan anak dalam hubungan antara sekolah dan keluarga. Penelitian korelasional potong lintang ini menganalisis hubungan antara kesiapan sekolah, kepercayaan diri sosial, dan keterlibatan keluarga pada 128 anak usia 5–7 tahun dari tiga prasekolah Islam di Indonesia. Penilaian guru terhadap 42 butir Preschool Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (PreBERS) menggunakan format biner hasil adaptasi lokal (0 = Tidak; 1 = Ya). Korelasi Spearman menunjukkan hubungan positif antara kesiapan sekolah dan kepercayaan diri sosial (ρ = 0,640), kesiapan sekolah dan keterlibatan keluarga (ρ = 0,509), serta kepercayaan diri sosial dan keterlibatan keluarga (ρ = 0,484), seluruhnya $p < 0,001$. Dalam regresi simultan, hanya kesiapan sekolah yang memiliki hubungan unik signifikan dengan kepercayaan diri sosial (β = 0,514; $p < 0,001$; R^2 = 0,334). Skor total berbeda antarsekolah ($H(2) = 19,13$; $p < 0,001$), tetapi setelah koreksi Bonferroni, hanya Sekolah 2 dan Sekolah 1 yang berbeda signifikan. Skala biner dan efek langit-langit membatasi interpretasi skor.

Kata Kunci: Prasekolah Islam; Pendidikan anak usia dini; Kesiapan sekolah; Kepercayaan diri sosial; Keterlibatan keluarga.

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Introduction

Social-emotional development is not a peripheral concern in early education; it is associated with school readiness and long-term well-being. Through a study of nearly 7,000 five-year-old children in England, Estonia, and the United States, the OECD (2020) identified cross-national differences in self-regulation and social-emotional skills, with Estonian children demonstrating stronger emotion recognition and prosocial skills. Jones et al. (2015) followed 753 children in the Fast Track project and found that teacher-rated prosocial skills in kindergarten were associated with on-time high school graduation (OR = 1.54) and college completion (OR = 2.00). Achenbach et al. (1987) reported an average correlation of 0.28 across different informants, compared with 0.60 for ratings provided by the same informant. Goodman (1997) evaluated the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) in 403 children and found that its scores correlated strongly with the Rutter questionnaire and performed comparably in distinguishing psychiatric-clinic patients from dental-clinic patients.

School readiness develops through children's ability to regulate attention, behavior, and emotional responses when facing learning demands. In a study of 141 children aged 3–5 from low-income families, Blair and Razza (2007) found that self-regulation accounted for variations in kindergarten mathematics and literacy skills after controlling for general intelligence, with inhibitory control emerging as an important correlate of both. Similarly, McClelland et al. (2007), studying 310 preschool children across 54 classrooms, found that behavioral regulation predicted early literacy, vocabulary, and mathematics skills, as well as their growth throughout the preschool year. Diamond (2013) identified inhibitory control, working memory, and cognitive flexibility as three core executive functions underlying self-control and attention. Raver (2002) further emphasized that emotional adjustment is an integral component of school readiness and can be supported through family-based interventions and early childhood education.

Children's social abilities develop through interactions with teachers, peers, and classroom experiences. Denham et al. (2013) studied 305 children aged 4.5 years in private childcare centers and Head Start programs and found that five patterns of emotional and behavioral responses to peer conflict predicted social competence, classroom adjustment, and academic readiness. In a longitudinal study following 179 children from kindergarten through eighth grade, Hamre and Pianta (2001) found that conflictual and dependent teacher–child relationships were associated with subsequent academic achievement and behavioral outcomes. Mashburn et al. (2008), examining 2,439 children in 671 classrooms across 11 states, demonstrated that teachers' instructional interactions predicted children's academic and language abilities, whereas emotional interactions predicted social skills. Durlak et al. (2011) synthesized 213 social and emotional learning programs involving 270,034 students

from kindergarten through high school and found improvements in social-emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors, alongside academic gains equivalent to an 11-percentile-point increase.

Families complement the school environment because children's home experiences are associated with self-regulation and adjustment. Through a meta-analysis of 39 studies comprising 307 effect sizes, Cosso et al. (2022) found that parental involvement programs produced moderate positive effects on children's academic and nonacademic outcomes from preschool through third grade; greater increases in parental involvement were also associated with larger improvements in child outcomes. In Indonesia, Pangestuti et al. (2019) evaluated a self-regulation assessment instrument involving 179 children aged 6–7 years. Its five-dimensional model was supported by confirmatory factor analysis and demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.899. In a quasi-experimental study involving 109 children aged 4–6 years, Risnawati et al. (2023) reported that theory-of-mind stimulation contributed 52.4% to the development of emotion regulation. These findings highlight the importance of family and school environments, as well as the need for child development assessments that are appropriate to local contexts.

Research on school readiness, social-emotional competence, and family involvement has developed along several strands. Blair and Razza (2007) and McClelland et al. (2007) demonstrated associations between self-regulation and early academic abilities, while Denham et al. (2013) showed that patterns of emotional and behavioral processing were associated with social competence and classroom adjustment. Regarding environmental influences, Mashburn et al. (2008) and Hamre and Pianta (2001) identified teacher–child interactions as factors associated with children's academic and social development. The meta-analysis by Cosso et al. (2022) also demonstrated the benefits of parental involvement programs for academic and nonacademic outcomes. However, these studies generally examined particular developmental dimensions or specific educational contexts. The interrelationships among school readiness, social confidence, and family-related indicators among children attending Islamic preschools in Indonesia have not yet been examined in an integrated manner.

Addressing this gap, the present study aims to examine the relationships among school readiness, social confidence, and family involvement in 128 children aged 5–7 years attending three Islamic preschools in Indonesia. The analysis seeks to determine the strength of associations among these variables, examine the unique associations of school readiness and family involvement with social confidence, and identify differences in scores and correlation patterns across the participating schools. This study is important because it brings together learning readiness, social functioning, and family-related indicators within a single analysis of children in Islamic

educational settings. Such evidence is needed to broaden discussions of child development beyond academic achievement or any single aspect of social-emotional functioning. The findings are expected to provide an empirical basis for preschools and families to identify developmental dimensions most closely associated with children's social confidence and to develop more targeted educational support.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using secondary data analysis with a cross-sectional correlational design. The data consisted of teacher ratings of 139 children aged 4–7 years attending three Islamic preschools in Jakarta, Bogor, and South Tangerang, Indonesia. The dataset had previously been used in a descriptive study by Risnawati (2026). For the present study, 11 records of four-year-old children were excluded based on the eligibility criteria, resulting in a final sample of 128 children aged 5–7 years. The sample comprised 61 five-year-olds, 38 six-year-olds, and 29 seven-year-olds. By school, School 1 contributed 39 children, School 2 contributed 65, and School 3 contributed 24. Sex was recorded using codes 1 and 2, representing 71 and 57 children, respectively; however, the categories assigned to each code could not be verified because a codebook was unavailable. All three institutions served children from Muslim families. School identities were retained as numerical codes to maintain confidentiality, while the socioeconomic classifications of the schools were based solely on researcher-provided descriptions rather than individual measurements of household income.

The research instrument consisted of 42 items from the Preschool Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (PreBERS), covering four dimensions: Emotional Regulation (13 items), School Readiness (13 items), Social Confidence (9 items), and Family Involvement (7 items). PreBERS was developed to assess the behavioral and emotional strengths of young children across these four dimensions (Epstein et al., 2009). Its factor structure has been examined through psychometric analyses involving various early childhood populations (Cress, Synhorst, et al., 2012; Cress, Lambert, et al., 2016; Lambert et al., 2015). The dataset used in this study contained the original response codes 1 and 2. According to clarification provided by the research team, code 1 represented No, whereas code 2 represented Yes. All items were subsequently recoded as 0 = No and 1 = Yes. Each domain score was calculated by counting the number of Yes responses, yielding score ranges of 0–13 for Emotional Regulation and School Readiness, 0–9 for Social Confidence, and 0–7 for Family Involvement. The total score ranged from 0 to 42. Each domain score was verified against its constituent item responses. This dichotomous coding differs from the original PreBERS response format, which uses a 0–3 scale. Accordingly, the scores analyzed in this study represent counts of affirmative indicators based on teacher ratings, rather than standardized PreBERS scores or normative classifications. The Family Involvement dimension

reflects teachers' assessments of child- and family-related indicators, rather than direct measurements of parenting practices or parental religiosity.

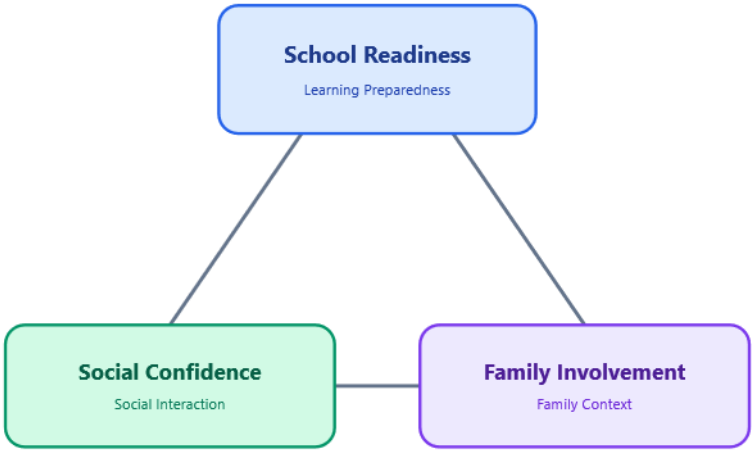

Figure 1. Model of the relationships among school readiness, social confidence, and family involvement.

Source: Prepared by the author (2026).

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and between-school comparisons. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, standard deviations, medians, and percentages of children attaining the maximum scores, were used to characterize score distributions. Associations among School Readiness, Social Confidence, and Family Involvement were examined using Spearman's rank-order correlation, while Pearson correlations were used as sensitivity analyses. Partial rank correlations were calculated by regressing the rank-transformed scores on age, coded sex, and school indicators, followed by correlating the resulting residuals. Multiple linear regression using the ordinary least squares (OLS) method was employed to examine the simultaneous associations of School Readiness and Family Involvement with Social Confidence, without including demographic or school variables as covariates. Differences in total scores across schools were examined using the Kruskal–Wallis test, followed by two-tailed Mann–Whitney U tests with Bonferroni correction for the three pairwise comparisons. Spearman correlations were also calculated separately for each school. Statistical significance was set at 0.05. The relationship framework among the three variables analyzed in this study is presented in Figure 1. All analyses were recalculated using child-level data after sample selection.

Results and Discussion

Sample characteristics and score distribution

After excluding 11 records of children aged 4 years in accordance with the study eligibility criteria, the final analytical sample comprised 128 children aged 5–7 years. No missing data were identified across the PreBERS items among the included cases. The dichotomous scores (0–1) showed a tendency to cluster near the maximum

possible values. The mean number of endorsed items was 11.61 out of 13 for Emotional Regulation, 11.76 out of 13 for School Readiness, 8.41 out of 9 for Social Confidence, and 6.64 out of 7 for Family Involvement. Overall, the mean number of endorsed items was 38.41 (SD = 5.37) out of 42, with scores ranging from 17 to 42. Across the three domains included in the correlation analysis, the proportion of children attaining the maximum score ranged from 65.6% to 81.3% (Table 1 and Figure 2).

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for each PreBERS domain based on teacher ratings. Following recoding from No = 1 and Yes = 2 to No = 0 and Yes = 1, each domain score represented the number of items receiving an affirmative (Yes) response. Accordingly, the maximum possible score for each domain was determined by the number of items it contained. The reported statistics include the mean, standard deviation, median, and percentage of children attaining the maximum score.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for teacher-rated PreBERS dimensions (N = 128)

Dimension	**Number of items**	**Mean (SD)**	**Median**	**Maximum score attainment (%)**
Emotional Regulation	13	11.61 (2.38)	13	57.8
School Readiness	13	11.76 (2.39)	13	65.6
Social Confidence	9	8.41 (1.35)	9	71.9
Family Involvement	7	6.64 (0.90)	7	81.3
Total endorsed items	42	38.41 (5.37)	41	39.8

Source: Research dataset, analyzed by the author.

As shown in Table 1, all four domains had relatively high mean scores. School Readiness had a mean score of 11.76 out of 13 items, while Social Confidence had a mean score of 8.41 out of 9 items. The highest proportion of children attaining the maximum score was found in Family Involvement (81.3%), followed by Social Confidence (71.9%), School Readiness (65.6%), and Emotional Regulation (57.8%). For the total score, the median was 41 out of 42 items, while 39.8% of children attained the maximum score. This distribution indicates a tendency for scores to cluster at the upper boundary, suggesting a ceiling effect. Therefore, the scores should be interpreted as counts of indicators identified by teachers in the study sample, rather than as standardized PreBERS competency classifications.

To illustrate this pattern of score concentration more clearly, Figure 2 presents the percentage of children attaining the maximum score in each domain and across all 42 items. The visualization shows the proportion of children receiving affirmative ratings for every item within each domain and across the entire instrument.

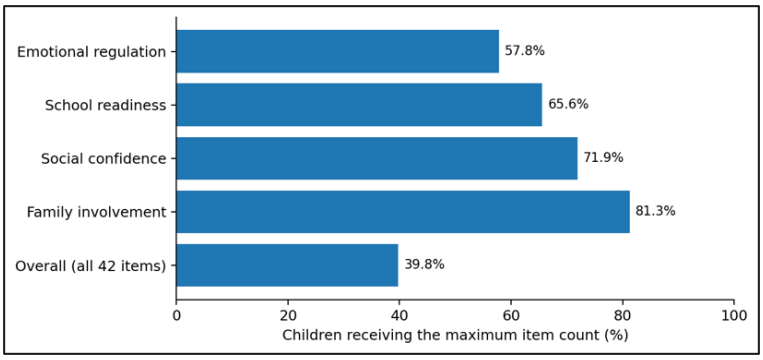

Figure 2. Percentage of children attaining the maximum score in each PreBERS dimension and in the total score.

Source: Research dataset, analyzed by the author.

As shown in Figure 2, the concentration of scores at the upper boundary varied across the four domains. The highest proportion of children attaining the maximum score was observed in Family Involvement (81.3%), whereas the lowest was found in Emotional Regulation (57.8%). Across all 42 items, 39.8% of children received affirmative (Yes) ratings for every item. Thus, the score distributions at both the domain and overall levels indicate a substantial concentration at the maximum possible scores.

Associations among the three focal study domains

Spearman correlation analysis revealed positive associations among School Readiness, Social Confidence, and Family Involvement. School Readiness was positively associated with Social Confidence ($\rho = 0.640$, $p < 0.001$) and Family Involvement ($\rho = 0.509$, $p < 0.001$). Social Confidence was also positively associated with Family Involvement ($\rho = 0.484$, $p < 0.001$). All three associations remained positive after adjustment for age, coded sex, and school membership, with partial rank correlation coefficients of 0.592, 0.447, and 0.379, respectively (all $p < 0.001$).

To provide a more detailed account of the relationships among the three domains, Table 2 presents the Spearman correlations, partial rank correlations, and Pearson correlations. Spearman correlation was used as the primary analytical approach because the scores derived from dichotomous coding tended to cluster near the maximum values. Partial rank correlations were used to examine the associations among variables after accounting for age, coded sex, and school membership. Pearson correlations were also included as sensitivity analyses to compare the patterns of associations obtained using different correlation approaches.

Table 2. Correlations among PreBERS dimensions (N = 128)

Associations between variables		Spearman ρ	p	Partial rank correlation	Pearson r
School Confidence	Readiness–Social	0.640	< 0.001	0.592	0.564
School Involvement	Readiness–Family	0.509	< 0.001	0.447	0.376
Social Involvement	Confidence–Family	0.484	< 0.001	0.379	0.327

Source: Research dataset, reanalyzed by the author.

As shown in Table 2, the strongest association was found between School Readiness and Social Confidence, with a Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.640. The association between School Readiness and Family Involvement had a coefficient of 0.509, while the association between Social Confidence and Family Involvement had a coefficient of 0.484. All three associations were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). After adjustment for the measured characteristics, the strength of the associations decreased but remained positive. The corresponding partial rank correlation coefficients were 0.592, 0.447, and 0.379, respectively. Pearson correlation analysis also showed positive associations across all three pairs of variables, with coefficients of 0.564, 0.376, and 0.327, respectively. Overall, the three analytical approaches consistently indicated positive associations among School Readiness, Social Confidence, and Family Involvement.

Simultaneous regression analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the associations of School Readiness and Family Involvement with Social Confidence when both variables were entered simultaneously into the same model. The results showed that the regression model explained 33.4% of the variance in Social Confidence ($R^2 = 0.334$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.323$). The overall model was statistically significant ($F(2, 125) = 31.29$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that School Readiness and Family Involvement were jointly associated with Social Confidence.

To examine the contribution of each variable within the model, Table 3 presents the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), standard errors (SE), standardized regression coefficients (β), and significance values (p). Both independent variables were entered simultaneously, meaning that each coefficient represents the association of the respective predictor with Social Confidence while accounting for the other predictor.

Table 3. Multiple regression analysis of Social Confidence (N = 128)

Predictor variable	B	SE	Standardized β	p
School Readiness	0.292	0.045	0.514	< 0.001
Family Involvement	0.200	0.118	0.133	0.093

Source: Research dataset, analyzed by the Author.

As shown in Table 3, School Readiness was positively and significantly associated with Social Confidence (B = 0.292, SE = 0.045, β = 0.514, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that a one-item increase in the School Readiness score was associated with an increase of 0.292 items in the Social Confidence score, holding Family Involvement constant. In contrast, Family Involvement had a positive but statistically nonsignificant coefficient (B = 0.200, SE = 0.118, β = 0.133, $p = 0.093$). Thus, within this regression model, School Readiness showed a significant unique association with Social Confidence, whereas Family Involvement did not show a significant unique association after accounting for School Readiness. Overall, the model explained 33.4% of the variance in Social Confidence scores in the study sample.

Differences and associations across the three Islamic preschools

Comparisons of total PreBERS scores were conducted to describe variations in teachers' ratings of children's behavioral and emotional indicators across the three Islamic preschools included in the study. The Kruskal–Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference in the distribution of total scores among the three schools ($H(2) = 19.13$, $p < 0.001$). Descriptively, School 2 had the highest mean score (M = 39.86, SD = 4.25), followed by School 3 (M = 37.75, SD = 5.42) and School 1 (M = 36.41, SD = 6.34). To provide an overview of the number of participants, age composition, and total scores at each school, Table 4 presents the number of children, the distribution of children aged 5, 6, and 7 years, and the mean total PreBERS scores with their standard deviations. These characteristics provide context for interpreting variations in scores across schools. The scores represent the total number of indicators rated by teachers as present.

Table 4. Sample characteristics and total PreBERS scores by school (N = 128)

School	Number of children (n)	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Total score mean (SD)
School 1	39	17	2	20	36.41 (6.34)
School 2	65	29	27	9	39.86 (4.25)
School 3	24	15	9	0	37.75 (5.42)

Source: Research dataset, analyzed by the Author.

Pairwise comparisons using the Mann–Whitney test with Bonferroni correction showed that the difference between School 2 and School 1 remained statistically significant after correction (uncorrected $p < 0.001$; adjusted $p < 0.001$). In contrast, the

difference between School 2 and School 3 was no longer statistically significant after correction (uncorrected p = 0.047; adjusted p = 0.142), while the difference between School 1 and School 3 was also nonsignificant (uncorrected p = 0.230; adjusted p = 0.690). The age composition of the children varied across schools. School 1 had 20 children aged 7 years, whereas School 3 had no children in this age group. Because socioeconomic background was described only at the school level and was not measured for individual families, these score differences cannot be directly attributed to economic conditions, institutional characteristics, or particular educational practices. This pattern should therefore be interpreted with caution.

School-specific Spearman correlation analyses showed that the association between School Readiness and Social Confidence was positive and statistically significant in School 1 ($\rho = 0.524$, $p < 0.001$), School 2 ($\rho = 0.654$, $p < 0.001$), and School 3 ($\rho = 0.693$, $p < 0.001$). The association between School Readiness and Family Involvement was also positive and statistically significant in School 1 ($\rho = 0.599$, $p < 0.001$), School 2 ($\rho = 0.326$, $p = 0.008$), and School 3 ($\rho = 0.519$, $p = 0.009$). Meanwhile, the association between Social Confidence and Family Involvement was statistically significant in School 1 ($\rho = 0.520$, $p < 0.001$) and School 3 ($\rho = 0.596$, $p = 0.002$), but not in School 2 ($\rho = 0.153$, $p = 0.224$). Differences in statistical significance do not establish differences in correlation strength across schools, as no formal test of these differences was conducted.

Relationships among School Readiness, Social Confidence, and Family Involvement across Three Islamic Preschools

Early childhood development is best understood as an integration of readiness to engage in learning, the ability to establish social relationships, and experiences within the family. Among the 128 children aged 5–7 years from three Islamic preschools, all three dimensions were positively correlated. The strongest association was found between School Readiness and Social Confidence ($\rho = 0.640$), followed by School Readiness and Family Involvement ($\rho = 0.509$), and Social Confidence and Family Involvement ($\rho = 0.484$). This pattern positions School Readiness as a central dimension linking learning abilities and children's social functioning. Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2000) emphasize that children's competencies should be understood in relation to the home, school, peers, family, and broader environment. Blair and Raver (2015) explain that self-regulation enables children to engage in learning activities and provides a foundation for school adjustment. Thus, School Readiness is closely associated with children's social functioning and family context.

The strong association between School Readiness and Social Confidence underscores that the ability to engage in learning goes hand in hand with the ability to manage social interactions. Denham (2006) explains that teachers recognize school readiness through positive emotional expression, enthusiasm, and children's ability to regulate

their emotions and behavior; social-emotional competence also encompasses emotional knowledge and social problem-solving. In an empirical study of 275 four-year-old children, Denham et al. (2012) identified three profiles: at-risk, socially competent/expressive, and regulated-competent. These groups differed in learning motivation, classroom participation, school adjustment, and indicators of academic achievement. The findings of the present study are consistent with this argument: children who demonstrate greater School Readiness also tend to show greater Social Confidence. Therefore, Social Confidence is not merely an additional attribute but an integral part of children's readiness to participate actively in classroom learning experiences and build relationships with peers and teachers.

Family Involvement was also associated with School Readiness ($\rho = 0.509$), and this association remained evident after statistical adjustment (partial $r = 0.447$). In a meta-analysis of 448 studies involving 480,830 families, Barger et al. (2019) found positive associations between parental involvement and children's academic ($r = 0.13–0.23$), social ($r = 0.12$), and emotional adjustment ($r = 0.17$). Barnett et al. (2020) showed that early childhood education practices aimed at engaging parents were associated with parental involvement at home and at school. The frequency of home involvement served as a pathway linking institutional practices with academic readiness, while the quality of home learning activities consistently predicted children's readiness. These findings reinforce the role of the family as an environment that supports School Readiness. In the present study, however, Family Involvement was measured through teachers' ratings of family-related indicators rather than through direct assessments of learning activities or parental participation.

The positive association between Social Confidence and Family Involvement ($\rho = 0.484$; partial $r = 0.379$) indicates that the family-related indicators rated by teachers were associated with children's social interaction abilities. In a study involving 307 kindergarten children from low-income families and their primary caregivers, McWayne et al. (2004) found that home-based learning activities, regular direct contact with schools, and fewer barriers to involvement were associated with more positive child engagement with peers, adults, and learning activities. Their findings illustrate how family experiences and family–school relationships are associated with the quality of children's social participation. In the present study, Family Involvement is a relevant dimension for understanding Social Confidence, although its indicators did not directly measure parent–school communication, learning support, or children's interaction patterns at home. Thus, these findings underscore the importance of considering children's social development alongside their family context.

The regression analysis identified School Readiness as the variable with the strongest unique association with Social Confidence. When School Readiness and Family Involvement were entered simultaneously, only School Readiness retained a

statistically significant association ($\beta = 0.514$, $p < 0.001$), whereas the coefficient for Family Involvement was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.133$, $p = 0.093$). The model explained 33.4% of the variance in Social Confidence ($R^2 = 0.334$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.323$) and was statistically significant overall ($F(2, 125) = 31.29$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that School Readiness made a clearer statistical contribution when both dimensions were examined together. The bivariate association involving Family Involvement remains meaningful as a pattern of correlation, but it did not explain a statistically significant proportion of unique variance after accounting for School Readiness. The remaining 66.6% of the variance in Social Confidence was not explained by this model, indicating that other developmental and environmental factors warrant further investigation.

Total PreBERS scores differed significantly across the three preschools ($H(2) = 19.13$, $p < 0.001$). School 2 had the highest mean score (39.86), followed by School 3 (37.75) and School 1 (36.41). Post hoc tests showed that only the difference between School 2 and School 1 remained significant after Bonferroni correction. The age composition was also uneven: School 1 had 20 children aged seven years, whereas School 3 had no children in this age group. Therefore, scores across schools should not be interpreted as rankings of institutional quality; participant composition and educational experiences must also be considered. Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2000) emphasize that children's competencies develop through relationships with the home, school, peers, and broader environment. Qusyairi et al. (2026) describe Muslim family practices—including worship, greetings, adab (proper conduct), prophetic stories, emotional role modeling, and community participation—as ways of habituating and modeling values. This framework highlights contextual aspects that merit direct investigation.

At each school, the association between School Readiness and Social Confidence was positive and statistically significant ($\rho = 0.524$, 0.654, and 0.693, respectively). The association between School Readiness and Family Involvement was also positive and statistically significant across all three schools ($\rho = 0.599$, 0.326, and 0.519, respectively). In contrast, the association between Social Confidence and Family Involvement was statistically significant in School 1 ($\rho = 0.520$) and School 3 ($\rho = 0.596$), but not in School 2 ($\rho = 0.153$). This pattern underscores School Readiness as the most consistent relational hub across the three institutions, as it was consistently associated with both Social Confidence and family-related indicators. By contrast, the direct association between Family Involvement and Social Confidence appeared more variable. Differences in statistical significance do not, however, establish differences in correlation strength across schools. This consistency indicates that the associations of School Readiness with social functioning and family-related indicators were evident not only in the pooled analysis but also within each institution.

The strength of these conclusions depends on the quality of the measurements. Epstein et al. (2009) evaluated the PreBERS with 1,471 children, identified a four-factor structure, and reported subscale and total-score consistency coefficients ranging from 0.838 to 0.983. Cress et al. (2016) confirmed the four-factor model and tested a bifactor model among children participating in Head Start. However, neither study validated the conversion of PreBERS responses into binary choices. Terwee et al. (2007) define a ceiling effect as occurring when more than 15% of respondents achieve the highest possible score; the subscales (57.8–81.3%) and total score (39.8%) exceeded this threshold. In a meta-analysis of 341 studies, De Los Reyes et al. (2015) found average cross-informant agreement of r = 0.25 for internalizing problems and r = 0.30 for externalizing problems. Podsakoff et al. (2003) describe how the use of the same source and measurement method can produce common method bias. Because all dimensions in the present study were rated by teachers, future research should validate the adapted scale and incorporate parent reports and direct observations.

Conclusion

School Readiness emerged as the most central dimension in the relationships among children's social-emotional development indicators across the three Islamic preschools examined. The strongest association was found between School Readiness and Social Confidence ($\rho = 0.640$), and this association remained strong after adjusting for child and school characteristics (partial r = 0.592). In the simultaneous analysis, School Readiness was also the only variable with a statistically significant unique association with Social Confidence ($\beta = 0.514$, $p < 0.001$), whereas Family Involvement did not show a significant unique contribution ($p = 0.093$). These findings underscore that children's readiness to enter an educational environment is associated not only with their ability to engage in learning but also with their capacity to establish social interactions. Family Involvement was also associated with both dimensions, suggesting that children's development should be understood through the interplay of individual abilities, family experiences, and educational environments. This pattern of associations was also evident across all three schools, although some variation in scores and correlation strengths was observed between institutions.

This study makes an empirical contribution by demonstrating the associations among School Readiness, Social Confidence, and family-related indicators in young children attending Islamic preschools in Indonesia, while also identifying variations in these patterns across schools. However, interpretation of the findings is limited by the use of a binary scale that differs from the original PreBERS response format, ceiling effects, the assessment of all dimensions by teachers, and a cross-sectional design that cannot establish causal relationships. In addition, Family Involvement was not measured through direct parent reports, while religious practices and the quality of Islamic education were not included as study variables. Future research should examine the

validity of the adapted instrument, involve both teachers and parents as sources of assessment, and complement these measures with direct observations and longitudinal designs. Direct measurement of family socioeconomic characteristics, parenting practices, and Islamic educational values and activities is also needed to provide a deeper understanding of the relationships between child development and the family and Islamic preschool environments.

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