

Building a Quality Future: The Importance of Quality Early Childhood Education Services

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Abstract

The development of children between the ages of 3 and 6 has a long-term impact on the future of individuals and society as a whole. Scientific research has shown that children's brains develop rapidly at an early age. Therefore, quality early childhood education services are considered very important. The aim of this research is to find a prototype model of quality early childhood education services that can develop the overall competence of early childhood. The method used is library research, collecting data by searching for sources and reconstructing them from various sources such as books, journals and existing research. The results of the research show that quality educational services in early childhood play an important role, including the quality of teachers and educational staff, a curriculum adapted to children's needs, adequate facilities and infrastructure, and positive social interaction in the learning environment to build character and skills. and knowledge of children. They need to develop their potential holistically from an early age. Children who receive good educational services at an early age have an advantage in their individual future learning and in society as a whole.

1. Introduction

Early childhood education (PAUD) is one of the out-of-school education programs. The importance of early childhood education cannot be separated from the golden age of child development which requires positive stimulation to support holistic child development. Holistic development includes religious and moral values, physical and motor skills, cognitive, emotional, language and art. In this case, Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions are expected to be able to provide appropriate stimulation in every child's learning and playing activities so that children are able to grow optimally (Zoghara, 2021).

Today, in a complex modern era with various technological advances, most people are beginning to realize the importance of providing quality education services for children from an early age. Especially after the government through the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education and Community Education (Dirjen PAUD & Dikmas) and various related parties provided an understanding of the importance of providing quality education services from an early age. By providing quality services, it actually not only affects the institution providing early childhood education services in the future but also affects the growth and development of children (Anwar, 2017).

In line with the above statement, Zahid (2014) said that quality education services are a multidimensional concept that includes institutions, teaching and student learning outcomes.

Therefore, the quality of education becomes a benchmark in assessing the success of an educational institution in producing quality graduates. Efforts to improve the quality of early childhood education are not an easy matter.

2. Methods

The research method used is library research, collecting data by finding sources and reconstructing from different sources such as books, journals and existing research. The data collected in this study are qualitative data, such as data related to quality educational services in early childhood. Data collection in this study was carried out through library research, namely conducting a review of books, literature, notes, and various reports related to quality education services in early childhood. To collect data, researchers first observed the literature, namely direct observation to obtain related data. Then, the data collected was modified and examined, and then clarified again according to the data obtained.

3. Result and Discussion

Early childhood education (ECE) has an important role in supporting children's development, both in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The basic concept of quality PAUD is to have a learning environment that is safe, comfortable, and able to facilitate children to develop optimally. Quality PAUD is characterized by quality in the learning process and management of the PAUD unit. For example, quality in the learning process involves the continuity and diversity of learning activities, as well as the role of ECD teachers. While the quality of PAUD unit management involves effective leadership and good management strategies. Government regulations have stipulated that the quality of PAUD is determined by the quality of its services, not just the condition of its infrastructure and facilities. Although important, infrastructure aims to ensure a safe and comfortable learning environment for children.

The Roadmap for Quality ECD from 2020 to 2035 describes the quality ECD model as an ECD unit that has one foundation and four service elements. The foundation of ECD services is quality resources. Without competent educators and education personnel, learners will find it difficult to get good education services. This foundation is a strong basis for ensuring quality ECD services.

The main goal of learning in early childhood is to develop children's potential as optimally as possible. The principle of learning through play is used to achieve this goal. Early childhood education provides children with the basics of knowledge, attitudes and skills. The organization of PAUD education is tailored to the unique stage of early childhood development. The success of the education process at an early age becomes a strong foundation for further education.

However, there are still obstacles that hinder PAUD development in Indonesia. One of them is the lack of quality PAUD service units that can cover all early childhood. In addition, the qualifications and competencies of PAUD educators also need to be improved. To improve the quality of ECD services, it is necessary to optimize the potential of all parties involved in ECD. Professional organizations such as HIMPAUDI and IGTKI as well as PAUD forums can play a role in developing quality networks for the implementation and management of PAUD units. Universities can also contribute through the development of research, laboratories, training, and consulting centers for PAUD development. These optimization efforts will help improve the quality of PAUD in Indonesia.

Quality education starts at the early childhood education level, with attention to ECD participation rates. ECD participation rates are measured through three indicators: School Participation Rate (SPR), Gross Participation Rate (APK), and Pure Participation Rate (MPR). However, nationally there are still gaps in ECD participation rates, with some children not receiving ECD services and villages without ECD centers. The Ministry of Education and Culture has issued a regulation that every village must have an ECD center.

The development of education in Indonesia is very important in national development. Through quality education, quality and competitive human resources (HR) will be formed

(Sukendar, Usman, & Jabar, 2019). The quality of a country's human resources is reflected in the provision of education services ranging from early childhood education (PAUD) to higher education. The government has made various efforts to ensure the provision of quality PAUD. One such effort is to impose national standards for PAUD as stipulated in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 137 of 2014 on National PAUD Standards (Mulyasa, 2017). If these standards can be implemented properly, then quality ECD services can be realized. Quality ECD institutions have a significant role in achieving optimal development in children (Mukti & Hendrawan, 2018). Quality ECD services can be realized through optimal management of ECD provision. However, there are still many PAUD institutions that experience difficulties in organizing PAUD optimally. This is due to the limited managerial competence of PAUD managers. If PAUD services are not optimal, then learning and playing activities in PAUD will also be less than optimal. The teaching system also tends to ignore aspects of creativity and innovation (Risaldy, 2014).

4. Conclusion

Early Childhood Education (ECE) plays an important role in the development of children with the aim of maximizing their potential. Quality ECE is characterized by a safe, comfortable learning environment and a good learning and management process. The foundation of ECD services is quality resources, such as competent educators and educational staff. Although there are constraints to the development of PAUD in Indonesia, efforts to optimize the potential of all stakeholders and the role of professional organizations and universities can help improve the quality of PAUD. There are still gaps in PAUD participation rates, but the Ministry of Education and Culture has issued a regulation for every village to have a PAUD. Early childhood education plays an important role in national development and in improving the overall quality of educational services.

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