

Learning Stimulation in PAUD Institutions to Optimize Early Childhood Development Of Indonesia and Malaysia

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Abstract

Keywords: Learning; Development; Early Childhood; This study aims to describe the differences in early childhood learning stimulation approaches between Indonesia (TK PKK Jalmak, Pamekasan) and Malaysia (Prasekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Sepat). This type of research is descriptive qualitative. By using descriptive qualitative method, the research involved teachers, principals, and early childhood as subjects. The results showed that learning stimulation in optimising early childhood development in Indonesia, focuses more on active learning and children's creativity, while in Malaysia, the approach focuses more on reading, writing and counting skills. In addition, TK PKK Jalmak emphasises freedom of learning and formative assessment, while Prasekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Sepat focuses on play.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran; Perkembangan; Anak Usia Dini; Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan perbedaan dalam pendekatan stimulasi pembelajaran anak usia dini antara Indonesia (TK PKK Jalmak, Pamekasan) dan Malaysia (Prasekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Sepat). Jenis penelitian ini adalah kualitatif deskriptif, yang melibatkan guru, kepala sekolah, dan anak usia dini sebagai subjek. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa stimulasi pembelajaran dalam mengoptimalkan perkembangan anak usia dini di Indonesia, lebih berfokus pada pembelajaran aktif dan kreativitas anak, sementara di Malaysia, pendekatan lebih menitikberatkan pada keterampilan membaca, menulis, dan berhitung. Selain itu, TK PKK Jalmak menekankan kebebasan belajar dan asesmen formatif, sementara Prasekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Sepat fokus pada permainan.

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1. Introduction

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) has a very important role in building the foundation for children's development from an early age. The PAUD approach in Indonesia and Malaysia has experienced developments that emphasize stimulating learning with the aim of achieving optimal early childhood development. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the methods and curricula used by PAUD institutions in these two countries to discover the factors that influence the effectiveness of learning stimulation and its impact on child development.

In Indonesia, the PAUD approach has undergone a transformation with the introduction of the Independent Learning Curriculum. This curriculum emphasizes individual needs and is centered on students, values and character formation (Wulandari et al., 2020). The Merdeka Belajar curriculum is competency-based and emphasizes formative assessments using portfolios, where teachers can assess each child's development in detail. This approach aims to provide each child with a more personalized learning experience and pay attention to their needs (Irawati & Haidar, 2023).

Previous research by (Nursarofah, 2022) highlighted the effectiveness of the Independent Learning Curriculum in improving the quality of early childhood education in Indonesia. The results of this research show that an approach that emphasizes student-centered learning has a positive impact on children's learning motivation and cognitive development. The same thing was also expressed in research results (Aji, 2023) which stated that there is a relationship between the Independent Curriculum and students' learning achievement, where the curriculum and learning system are fun to make students feel comfortable during the process so that it can improve students' achievements.

Meanwhile, in Malaysia, the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (KSPK) places the play approach as the main focus in stimulating early childhood learning. KSPK is designed to provide learning opportunities through free, safe and fun play. This approach aims to stimulate creative exploration, social interaction and the development of children's motor skills (Radzi et al., 2023). Research by (Marimuthu, 2016) evaluated the effectiveness of the play approach in KSPK on early childhood development in Malaysia. The research results showed that this approach was successful in significantly improving children's social, motor and cognitive skills.

Although the PAUD approaches in Indonesia and Malaysia have significant differences, both have the same goal, namely providing optimal learning experiences for early childhood development. However, there are a number of challenges that need to be overcome, including the quality of teaching, availability of resources, teacher

training, and adapting the curriculum to child development. Research by (Chrismanto et al., 2024) identified the quality of teaching and availability of resources as key factors influencing the effectiveness of learning stimulation in PAUD institutions in Indonesia. These findings indicate the need for increased investment in infrastructure and teacher training to improve the quality of early childhood education.

On the other hand, research conducted by (Zaidi & Othman, 2023) highlights the challenges in adapting the KSPK curriculum to child development in Malaysia. Although the play approach has been proven effective, ongoing adjustments are still needed to ensure the curriculum is relevant to child development and the latest developments in early childhood education. Based on the explanation above, this research aims to describe learning stimulation in PAUD institutions in optimizing early childhood development in Indonesia and Malaysia.

2. Methode

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach (Moleong, 2014) with the aim of describing the phenomenon of learning stimulation in PAUD institutions, especially in optimizing early childhood development. The focus of this research is on the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten in Pamekasan, East Java, Indonesia, and the Tanjong Sepat National Preschool in Malaysia. The research subjects involved teachers, school principals and early childhood children at the two PAUD institutions. To collect data, several techniques were used, including non-participant observation, structured interviews with preschool teachers and school principals, as well as data collection through related documents.

Pre-research involved initial observations to understand the context and characteristics of PAUD institutions in both research locations. Observation and interview instruments were developed to support data collection. The research was carried out through structured observations that took place over a certain period and structured interviews with related parties.

Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative and descriptive approach. The results of interviews and observations were then transcribed, and document data analyzed to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of early childhood learning in PAUD institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia.

The validity of the data is tested through triangulation, namely by comparing and verifying data from various sources. This research aims to provide a deeper understanding of early childhood learning practices in PAUD institutions, with an emphasis on the differences between the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten and the Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of this research discuss the comparison of learning stimulation in optimizing early childhood development between Indonesia and Malaysia, with a focus on the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten

in Pamekasan, East Java, and the Tanjong Sepat National Preschool. The three main aspects discussed include planning, implementation and assessment of learning in both countries.

a. Early Childhood Learning Planning

PKK Jalmak Kindergarten in Indonesia implements the Independent Curriculum, launched by Nadiem Anwar Makarim, emphasizing children's freedom to learn. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten in Indonesia shows a tendency to give freedom to young children in the learning process. Early childhood development theory supports this approach, where freedom of thought and action during the learning process is recognized as essential in facilitating the child's integral development (Spodek & Saracho, 1999).

The developmental aspects accommodated in the Independent Curriculum include religious, moral, social emotional, physical motor, cognitive and language values. Child development theory emphasizes that a holistic approach like this is appropriate to the needs of young children who are experiencing a rapid and complex development phase (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 137 of 2014).

At the educational planning stage, the preparation of the Annual Program (PROTA), Semester Program (PROMES), Weekly Learning Implementation Plan (RPPM), and Teaching Modules are steps that are in accordance with curriculum principles and educational regulations (Nisa' et al., 2021). Teachers play an active role in adapting learning themes to the conditions of the school environment, providing a foundation for the development of good attitudes in children in accordance with the results of interviews with school principals who emphasized the importance of developing positive attitudes in children. Thus, the Independent Curriculum approach at PKK Jalmak Kindergarten is in accordance with the theory of early childhood development and describes strategic implementation to achieve children's integral development (Idhayani et al., 2023).

At Tanjong Sepat National Preschool, Malaysia, stimulation of early childhood development applies the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (KSPK) issued by the Malaysian Ministry of Education reflecting educational policies that focus on building 21st Century skills and High Level Thinking (KBAT) (Singh & Rashid, 2023). This curriculum has been adjusted through revisions in 2017 to ensure relevance to educational developments and the needs of early childhood children today.

The practical approach in emphasizing exposure to English is in accordance with modern educational theory which emphasizes the importance of language skills in a global context (Goh, 2019). The division of classes according to age ranges shows attention to differences in children's development at each age stage. This is in line with child development theory which recognizes the importance of understanding the needs and characteristics of development at each age phase (Piaget, 1976).

The existence of the guidebook "Preschool Management Guidelines" as a guide for implementing the curriculum indicates that there is a clear structure and rules in managing preschools. This is in accordance with previous research which highlights the importance of guidelines and regulations in improving the quality of preschool education (Donoghue et al., 2017). Teachers at Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool are directed to plan activities that are not only in line with the curriculum, but also fun. This approach can be linked to children's learning theory which emphasizes the importance of interesting and relevant activities to increase the attractiveness of learning (Roussou et al., 2008).

The implementation of the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (KSPK) at Tanjong Sepat National Preschool reflects a response to the dynamics of global educational development and the local needs of early childhood. A practical approach in emphasizing English language proficiency and dividing classes based on age ranges is a strategy that is relevant and appropriate to the development of early childhood education (And & Páez, 2007).

The results of interviews with the principal of the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten confirmed that developing good attitudes is a top priority in learning. This is in line with the theory of early childhood development which emphasizes the importance of developing moral, social emotional and character aspects at that age (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 137 of 2014). The implementation of reading and writing learning using English at the Tanjong Sepat National Preschool, Malaysia, is consistent with the theory of international-based PAUD curriculum development which highlights the importance of introducing children to foreign languages from an early age (Rahman et al., 2023).

The differences in emphasis on the use of English in the curriculum between Indonesia and Malaysia, as explained in the research, provide information about the learning strategies and international orientation applied in the context of early childhood education in both countries. Stimulation of learning in optimizing early childhood development in these two countries, namely Indonesia and Malaysia, has interesting things and can provide different knowledge regarding habits and learning systems, both in terms of environment and themes that are often used to bring out children's creativity and stimulation for children. which can shape a child's character. Thus, there are 3 things discussed, starting from planning, implementation and assessment, which are in Indonesia and Malaysia.

b. The implementation of learning in Indonesia dan Malaysia

The implementation of learning at the Tanjong Sepat National Preschool, Malaysia, adopts the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (KSPK) implemented by the Malaysian Ministry of Education. In the 2017 implementation, this curriculum focuses on developing 21st Century skills and Higher Level Thinking (KBAT), with an emphasis on the use of English through a practical approach. The division of classes according to age and the rules for implementing the curriculum regulated by the guidebook "Preschool Management

Guidelines" reflect a commitment to structure and regulations in management.

When stimulating early childhood learning, there is 1 teacher and 1 helper who is responsible for learning and kitchen needs. The design of the classroom is integrated with the kitchen, showing attention to children's nutritional needs. Implementing learning at the Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool, Malaysia, teachers are faced with full responsibility for learning in the classroom, while helpers are responsible for activities outside the classroom, such as cooking and cleaning. Implementing nutritional needs through providing 4 healthy 5 perfect foods shows attention to children's physical well-being (Masnan et al., 2017).

Learning in Malaysia focuses on literacy and numeracy skills, where the use of learning tools such as worksheets and the integration of YouTube media as alternative learning sources are common methods (Harun et al., 2017). This emphasis is carried out using a group learning model, where children are divided into several groups with the aim of building language skills and cognitive skills (Daryati, 2023).

Meanwhile, learning at the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten, Indonesia, carries the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes the freedom of learning for early childhood. Class management is entirely handled by the homeroom teacher and accompanying teachers with a focus on developing children's good attitudes. The use of various learning methods (Firman & Anhusadar, 2022), such as singing, song movements, games and storytelling, helps create a fun and free learning environment (Andari & Wiguna, 2023).

In the perspective of early childhood learning theory, the approach used in Indonesia and Malaysia reflects learning principles that emphasize play activities, freedom of expression, and cognitive stimulation of children in accordance with early childhood development (Pranoto et al., 2020). However, the fundamental difference between the two lies in the use of digital learning media in Malaysia, such as YouTube and Smart TV media, which are integrated into daily learning activities. The use of digital media, such as smart TV and YouTube, is an innovative learning approach, in line with the development of gadgets and technology (Al-Rahmi et al., 2018). This reflects a response to technological advances and the need to integrate digital media in early childhood education (Hartati, 2017). Teachers realize the importance of filtering content to suit children's needs and providing examples first before children imitate.

Overall, both countries demonstrate a commitment to early childhood development through stimulating learning, in line with child development and the needs of the times. However, approaches and methods of implementing learning can vary, reflecting the cultural context and educational policies of each country. However, there are differences in approaches between Indonesia and Malaysia in early childhood learning. Learning in Indonesia, especially in the Merdeka curriculum, emphasizes children's freedom to learn and the use of various methods, such as singing, song movements, games and

storytelling. Meanwhile, in Malaysia, more use of worksheets and digital media integration.

c. Learning Assessment of Indonesia and Malaysia

The assessment system implemented at PKK Jalmak Kindergarten, Pamekasan, East Java, Indonesia, follows the assessment principles in the Independent Curriculum. Assessment is defined as a comprehensive series of activities to collect information needed to develop programs or services that suit individual needs (Ramatni et al., 2023). According to (Budiono & Hatip, 2023), there are two types of assessment, namely formative assessment and summative assessment.

Formative assessments are carried out during the learning process and aim to evaluate children's achievements directly. In contrast, summative assessments are carried out after learning is completed, usually at the end of the learning period. At PKK Jalmak Kindergarten, these two types of assessments are implemented to get a holistic picture of children's development in the learning process. In the assessment, there are four types of instruments used, namely checklists, anecdotal notes, photo series, and work results (Budiono & Hatip, 2023). These four instruments are used to make it easier for teachers to assess each child.

First, the checklist is used as an assessment instrument in the form of a list of developmental achievements, which requires teachers to create learning objectives listed in the RPPH or teaching module. Second, anecdotal notes refer to short notes made by teachers during lessons with children. This record covers various children's behavior in aspects of religious, moral, physical-motor, cognitive, social-emotional, language and Pancasila values. This reflects a holistic approach in assessing child development. Third, the results of work, such as handiwork, art, or children's displays in various forms, are clear evidence of children's understanding and creativity. Teachers need to pay attention to the details of the child's work, because the more detailed the teacher's attention to the work, the more information can be obtained to support the assessment of the child's development.

Checklists, anecdotal notes, photo series, and work results are assessment instruments that complement each other, providing a comprehensive picture of a child's development in various dimensions. The use of these instruments also reflects a balanced approach between quantitative and qualitative assessments to understand children's success in learning.

One concrete example of assessment at the PKK Jalmak Kindergarten is through the use of photo series. A photo series is a series of images that capture a child's behavior or performance over a certain period of time, complete with a concise description in the form of the child's words or short anecdotal notes. This allows teachers to monitor and record children's development in the context of real learning situations.

When carrying out assessments at the PKK Jalmak Pamekasan Kindergarten, East Java, there are several principles that are applied to ensure an effective and holistic assessment. The assessment is

directed at collecting information that covers various aspects of child development, such as religious, moral, physical motor, cognitive, social emotional, language and Pancasila values.

The principles of assessment at PKK Jalmak Kindergarten include: First, planning. Assessment begins with careful planning, including setting learning goals that include criteria for achieving the child's development. This is integrated with daily learning plans or teaching modules. Second, Data Collection. The data collection process was carried out both quantitatively and qualitatively. The use of instruments such as checklists, anecdotal notes, photo series, and work results allows teachers to get a comprehensive picture of children's achievements. Third, valuable results. The results of the assessment are aimed at obtaining valuable information regarding the child's development.

The teacher acts as a careful observer to record each child's progress, potential and needs. Fourth, Objective and Professional Decisions or Assessments. The results of the assessment are used to make objective and professional decisions or judgments. This assessment helps teachers determine the next learning program or strategy that suits the child's individual needs.

The importance of integrating aspects such as checklists, anecdotal notes, photo series, and work results reflects a balanced approach between formative and summative assessment. Formative assessments are carried out continuously during learning, while summative assessments are carried out after learning is completed to provide a final picture of the child's achievements. With these principles in place, PKK Jalmak Kindergarten aims to implement comprehensive assessments and focuses on the holistic development of children in an independent learning environment. This approach also supports efforts to provide appropriate responses to each child's individual needs and potential.

Anecdotal Notes

Name : Anam

Class : B2

Age : 5 tahun

| Place | Incident | Information |
|----------------|--|--|
| Di Dalam Kelas | When the core activities were finished, it was time to rest and wash their hands, Anam and her friends queued and took turns to wash their hands, then one of her friends didn't follow the agreement, and Anam immediately reprimanded her friend "Hey, why aren't you queuing? "This is not your part," said Anam. | The teacher gave appreciation to Ananda Anam for reminding and reprimanding her friend who did not follow the agreement, and the teacher also reprimanded her friend not to do that again. |

Achievement Analysis:

It has become a habit for Anam and the class to take turns and have to be patient in queuing to wash their hands before eating

Feedback:

The teacher explains to the children to be more patient in queuing and waiting their turn so that later the children can learn to be orderly and patient.

Assessment implemented at Preschool Kebangsaan Tanjong Sepat, Malaysia, refers to a series of methods used to collect information about student development and learning at the preschool level. Assessment in preschool is considered a fundamental process that plays a central role in the context of continuous learning and teaching. This assessment process is designed to provide a comprehensive picture of a child's progress and guide decision making regarding subsequent learning approaches.

The assessment methods used daily consist of several techniques, with a systematic documentation approach. Examples of assessment records include a variety of instruments, such as checklists, rating scales, anecdotal records, continuous records, time samples, and event samples. This approach reflects an effort to holistically understand children's development in various learning contexts.

The importance of diverse assessment methods provides flexibility for educators to choose instruments that best suit the child's needs and characteristics. Checklists can include a variety of developmental indicators, rating scales provide an understanding of a child's level of achievement, while anecdotal records provide a brief account of a child's behavior and responses in specific situations.

One concrete example of assessment implemented at the Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool, Malaysia, includes the use of these instruments to describe children's achievements and progress in various aspects of development, including social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language aspects. This approach reflects a commitment to comprehensive and in-depth evaluation to support children's optimal development from an early age.

The Example of Countinously Record

| | |
|--|--|
| Name: Asri Bin Yusron Age: 5 years Date: 24.8.2023 | |
| Teacher: Moh Ismail Time: 11:00 AM Item: Prayer Rules | |
| Attention | Review |
| Asri was still in the room taking ablution, other students had already filled the front row. Cikgu Mohd asked the students to stand upright to offer a beautiful prayer and moved to a friend in the front row to allow him to be in the front row. Cikgu Mohd rebuked Asri's actions "Earlier Asri was slow in taking ablution..., if we were slow, we would have to enter the back row which was still empty. "Next time, if you want to be in | Not understanding the orderly rules for holding congregational prayers |

| | |
|--|--|
| the front row, please take your ablution quickly," Amin said, "He was playing with water earlier, Cikgu." Asri withdrew to the back row. | |
|--|--|

The assessment implemented at the Tanjong Sepat National Preschool, Malaysia, shows special characteristics involving a process, informal, natural, diagnostic and ongoing approach. These characteristics reflect an approach that respects children's natural development, provides continuous assessment, and is comprehensive and in-depth. This is in accordance with previous research findings which emphasize the characteristics of assessment at the National Preschool level.

Assessment at the preschool level has clear objectives and principles that teachers must pay attention to. The objectives of the assessment include tracking the child's growth and development according to age stage, identifying the child's intelligence and potential, as well as understanding the child's learning strengths and weaknesses. Meanwhile, the principles for implementing assessments include cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects, are carried out according to predetermined objectives, are sustainable throughout the school period, and utilize valid methods and are in accordance with scientific principles.

The results of research by (Suryana et al., 2018) highlight the differences in learning evaluation approaches at the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) level. Evaluation in PAUD is more descriptive in nature based on assessment criteria, does not produce quantitative data, and reflects the child's developmental achievements in accordance with established development level standards. In this context, the assessment at the Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool, Malaysia, which was also qualitative descriptive in nature, can be linked to similar findings in the use of description as an evaluation medium at the preschool level in Indonesia and Malaysia.

There are several stages of the assessment process that must be followed, from planning to reporting. This process includes designing the assessment, creating instruments and achievement standards, implementing the assessment by paying attention to the child's behavior and work results, recording, data analysis and reporting. This process shows alignment with previous research findings and supports the concept of continuous assessment that covers all aspects of a child's development.

Overall, the results of this research provide an overview of the alignment between assessment practices at the Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool, Malaysia, with previous research findings, especially in the context of the qualitative descriptive approach that is characteristic of learning evaluation at the PAUD level in Indonesia and Malaysia.

4. Conclusion

This research compares early childhood learning stimulation approaches between Indonesia and Malaysia with a focus on the PKK Jalmak

Kindergarten in Pamekasan, East Java, and the Tanjong Sepat Kebangsaan Preschool. Comparison involves aspects of planning, implementation and assessment of learning. PKK Jalmak Kindergarten in Indonesia applies the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes children's freedom to learn, in accordance with the theory of early childhood development. Meanwhile, Tanjong Sepat National Preschool in Malaysia implements the National Preschool Standard Curriculum with a focus on 21st Century skills and High Level Thinking. Despite differences in implementation approaches, both demonstrate a commitment to stimulating early childhood development. Learning assessment in both countries also reflects a balanced approach between quantitative and qualitative assessment, in line with previous research findings in the PAUD context in Indonesia and Malaysia.

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