

RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, APPROACHES FOR INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN IN NURSERIES: MEETING THE ASPIRATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine the implementation of the teaching and learning approach (PdP) for infants and toddlers in Nursery and to assess the extent to which the approach meets the aspirations of today's parents. This study uses interviews with Nursery teachers and library research as the main source. Through interviews, the researcher obtained a real picture of daily PdP practices such as the play-while-learning approach, routine-based learning and child-centered activities. Library research also helps strengthen the findings by reviewing early education theories and policies such as the PERMATA National Curriculum and the views of local and international scholars. The results of the study show that the teachers at the nursery implement PdP which emphasizes the comprehensive development of children from emotional, cognitive, social and physical aspects. However, challenges such as time constraints, high number of teachers with children and lack of technological facilities were also identified. This study concludes that the implementation of PdP in Nursery is already on a good track but needs to be improved in terms of professional teacher training, the provision of interesting teaching aids as well as continuous cooperation between parents and Nursery management so that early childhood education continues to be relevant and of good quality.

Keywords: *Nursery, teaching and learning, babies and toddlers, play-while-learning approach, parents' aspirations, early childhood education, teacher interview, library research*

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood development is an important foundation for the formation of personality, thinking and long-lasting social skills. Nowadays, parents do not see Nursery as a care center but rather they expect this institution to function as an early education center capable of providing a meaningful learning experience for their children. Parents'

aspirations are increasing in line with the global challenge, which is that they want their children to be educated with modern, safe, fun and comprehensive methods from infancy. This study focuses on the implementation of the teaching and learning approach (PdP) in the Nursery. The focus is to examine whether the approach really meets the expectations of today's parents.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study was carried out through interviews with Nursery teachers and library research to achieve three main objectives. First, to identify the teaching and learning approach (PdP) that is often practiced

by teachers in nurturing babies and toddlers. Findings from teacher interviews provide a practical overview of daily PdP implementation while library research supports early childhood education theory and policy. Second, this study aims to examine the extent to which the approach used meets the aspirations of today's parents, including their hopes for the quality of children's development from cognitive, emotional, social, moral values and early exposure to technology. Finally, the third objective is to submit suitable improvement suggestions based on the teacher's views and literature findings. In this way, the report not only gives a picture of the actual situation of the Nursery but also relates it to previous policies and studies.

METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative design that combines semi-structured interview methods with library research. This approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of the implementation of the teaching and learning approach (PdP) for infants and toddlers in Nursery. The interview method allows the researcher to collect information directly from experienced teachers while the library study provides the theoretical basis and academic explanations that support the findings. This qualitative approach is appropriate to use because it can emphasize the understanding of real experiences and the natural context in the PdP process at the Nursery.

Participants

The sample of this study consists of a Nursery teacher who was selected through a purposive sampling method. The selected respondent is Miss Farah Najwa binti Ismail who is 32 years old and is an educator at Taska Sinar Intelek and has 11 years of experience in early childhood education. He is responsible for taking care of babies aged three months to three years and can provide a broad perspective on the implementation of PdP for that age group. His selection as a respondent was made based on his deep experience and direct involvement in the daily learning activities at the Nursery.

Data Collection Strategy

The main instrument in this study is a semi-structured interview constructed by the researcher to obtain information openly but still guided by the objectives of the study. Interviews are conducted face-to-face at the Nursery with a duration of approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Interview questions cover several key aspects including:

1. Teacher background and experience in early childhood education
2. The PdP approach used in activities with babies and toddlers
3. The role of PdP in the development of JERIS (physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social)
4. Parents' expectations of children's care and learning at Nursery
5. Challenges in implementing PdP and suggestions for improvement

Overall, library research was also carried out using various reference materials such as journals, articles and scholarly books related to the PdP approach in Nursery as well as parents' aspirations in early education.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study was conducted using thematic analysis approach based on information obtained from interview with a Nursery teacher as well as library study. This method was used to identify the main themes that emerged from the findings of the study related to the implementation of the teaching and learning approach (PdP) for babies and toddlers. The analysis was carried out qualitatively to gain a deep understanding of how teachers implement PdP that fits current needs and meets the expectations of today's parents.

The results of the analysis show that the approach play while learning is the basis for the implementation of PdP in Nursery. Teachers emphasize activities that involve games such as arranging blocks, recognizing colors and solving puzzles. These activities not only engage children's attention but also help them develop fine motor, cognitive and social skills. This approach is proven to be effective because it provides a learning

experience that is fun, meaningful and appropriate for the child's developmental level.

In addition, for the baby group, the teacher uses an approach multi-deria (sensors) to stimulate various aspects of their development. Babies are exposed to activities that involve touch, sound and sight such as touching sand or holding soft objects. This approach helps increase sensory sensitivity, encourages interaction with the environment and strengthens the baby's cognitive and emotional development.

Sensory-based activities also encourage natural learning and help babies learn about the world through hands-on experience.

The findings of the study also show that the implementation of this PdP supports development JERIS, namely physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social of children. Through physical activities such as pushing and arranging objects, children can improve movement coordination and muscle strength. From an emotional and social point of view, group activities give them the opportunity to learn to share, interact and control their own feelings. This forms the basis for building self-confidence and communication skills which are important in the early development of children.

Meanwhile, parents are seen to have high expectations for the teaching approach at the Nursery. They emphasize aspects safety, cleanliness and a fun learning environment. Teachers play an important role by ensuring that the learning environment is always safe, clean and conducive. In addition, teachers also share children's progress through photos, videos and activity reports so that parents can monitor their children's progress continuously. This effort shows the Nursery's commitment in maintaining trust and cooperation between parents and educators.

However, the implementation of the PdP also faces some challenges, especially in terms of different children's behavior and emotions. Some people cry easily, get bored quickly or refuse to participate in activities. This situation requires teachers to be more creative and flexible in choosing appropriate teaching methods. Teachers also need to adjust activities according to individual needs so that

every child can learn in a positive and pleasant atmosphere.

Based on the teacher's experience, some suggestions for improvement presented to improve the effectiveness of PdP. Among them is to hold periodic meetings between teachers and parents at least every three months to discuss the child's development. The teacher also suggested that learning activities be diversified to attract children's interest and encourage their active involvement. The findings of the library study also support this proposal by emphasizing the importance of two-way communication and close collaboration between parents and teachers in strengthening the quality of early childhood education.

Overall, the data analysis shows that the play-while-learning approach and multi-sensory activities are very effective in supporting the overall development of infants and toddlers. This approach not only helps their physical, emotional and social development, but also fulfills the aspirations of parents who want safe, fun and quality care and learning at Nursery.

FINDINGS

In order to get a real picture of the implementation of the teaching and learning approach (PdP) at the Nursery, the researcher conducted an interview with an experienced teacher from the Sinar Intelek Nursery, Ms. Farah Najwa binti Ismail who is 32 years old. She has 11 years of experience in the field of early childhood education and is currently responsible for caring for babies aged between three months and 3 years. With extensive experience, he provides a deep insight into the implementation of PdP in Nursery and the needs of today's parents for their children's early education.

According to Cik Farah, the main approach used in the learning session is playing while learning which is a method that allows children to explore their world naturally. Activities such as arranging blocks, playing puzzles and separating objects by

color are used to stimulate logical thinking, creativity and hand-eye coordination skills. For babies, a multi-sensory approach is often implemented to activate the sense of touch, sight and hearing. He exemplified the use of materials such as sand for tactile sensory activities and sounding objects to stimulate the sense of hearing.

The interview results also show that this approach directly supports children's JERIS development (physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social). Through daily activities carried out, children can express various emotions such as happy, angry or sad in a more controlled way. At the same time, activities such as stacking blocks and playing with sand help hone fine motor and gross motor skills that are important for the physical development of children aged one to three. Cikgu Farah emphasized that the activities carried out are not just for entertainment but also to form basic skills that become the basis for formal learning later.

When asked about the expectations of parents, he stated that most parents emphasize the safety aspect and close care of their children while in Nursery. Therefore, he always ensures that the learning and playing areas are clean, safe and monitors every movement of the children to avoid accidents. In terms of hygiene, the care of babies and children is done carefully including food preparation, room cleanliness and daily health monitoring.

Ms. Farah Najwa also thinks that the PdP approach practiced at the Nursery is now successful in meeting parents' expectations. Every activity carried out with children will be recorded in the form of pictures and videos then sent to parents as a daily progress report. Through this method, parents can see for themselves the positive changes and involvement of their children in learning activities. He added that parents usually feel happy and satisfied when they see their children enjoying learning with their peers.

However, he also admitted that there are some

challenges faced in teaching for babies and toddlers. Among them are different children's behavior such as tantrums, refusing to participate in activities or throwing toys. For babies, volatile emotions such as prolonged crying can disrupt the smoothness of the learning session. This challenge requires a high level of patience and class management skills from the teacher.

As a measure for improvement, Miss Farah suggested that the Nursery management hold a meeting with parents every three months to discuss the children's development in more detail. He also suggested that learning activities be diversified so that babies and children do not get bored easily and get more fun learning experiences. According to him, continuous cooperation between teachers and parents is the main key to ensure that each child receives balanced developmental attention and support.

DISCUSSION

The results of interviews with Nursery teachers found that the play-while-learning approach is the main method practiced because it helps babies and toddlers learn through direct experience. The teacher explained that activities such as arranging blocks, singing, telling stories and sensory games can stimulate children's cognitive and social development. Library research confirms that this approach is in line with early development theories such as Piaget and Vygotsky who emphasize learning through interaction and experience. However, the teachers who were interviewed also expressed some challenges including time constraints to give individual attention because the number of teachers to children is quite high. In addition, the lack of creative teaching aids and technological equipment is an obstacle to diversifying activities. This finding coincides with the highlights of the literature which shows that the success of early childhood education is greatly influenced by the quality of teachers, the environment, as well as educational technology support.

From the parents' perspective, the teacher

explained that many expect Nursery to provide not just basic care but also planned early education. This aspiration is in line with reports in the literature that emphasize the need for balanced learning combining value development, early literacy, as well as 21st century skills. Therefore, this study confirms that even though the PdP approach in Nursery has met most of the parents' needs, improvements in terms of teacher training and the use of digital technology still need attention.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the combination of teacher interview methods and library research provides a comprehensive overview of the implementation of PdP in Nursery. The interviewed teachers emphasized that the child-centered approach, especially play while learning, is very suitable for babies and toddlers because it stimulates their natural development. At the same time, the referenced literature reinforces the finding that the approach is proven to be effective in building children's cognitive, emotional and social foundations.

However, the results of the study also show that there are challenges such as teaching staff constraints, limited facilities, as well as the gap between parents' expectations and the nursery's actual capabilities. Therefore, the conclusion of this study affirms that PdP in Nursery needs to be constantly updated through teacher training, parental support and the use of modern teaching aids. With continuous efforts, Nursery is able to meet the aspirations of today's parents as well as provide a conducive environment for the early development of children.

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DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nurul Ain does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this manuscript and has disclosed no affiliations other than those noted above.

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