

RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN ATTENDING TASKA TO MEET THE ASPIRATIONS OF TODAY'S PARENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the implementation of a teaching and learning approach (PdP) for infants and toddlers at TASKA that is able to meet the aspirations of today's parents. This study was conducted using library research methods through analysis of journals, academic articles and reports related to early childhood education in Malaysia and internationally. The results show that approaches such as game-based learning (*play-based learning*), multisensory activities, and learning based on daily routines are the most used methods in PdP at TASKA. This approach is proven to support the holistic development of children that covers cognitive, emotional, social, and motor aspects, as well as being in line with the aspirations of parents who demand quality and safe early education. However, its implementation still faces challenges such as a lack of trained teachers, resource constraints, and the perception of parents who are still inclined to traditional academic approaches. This study suggests that the professional training of teachers be improved, facilities and facilities at TASKA be improved, and communication between teachers and parents be strengthened to ensure a more effective PdP. The results of this study are expected to be a guide to policy makers, TASKA managers, and educators in improving the quality of early childhood education in Malaysia.

Keywords: *Early childhood education, game-based learning, multisensory activities, parents' aspirations, teaching and learning approaches*

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) play an important role in the cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional development of children. In Malaysia, the education of infants and toddlers is carried out in Child Care Centers (TASKA) which are regulated by the Department of Social Welfare (JKM). TASKA is not just a care center, but an important institution to provide a meaningful early learning experience. The implementation of the teaching and learning approach (PdP) at TASKA is also a benchmark for parents' confidence in the quality of services offered (Rahmatullah, 2021).

Parents nowadays not only demand the safety and welfare of their children, but also hope that their children get a holistic learning

experience, qualified teachers, a child-friendly approach, as well as the use of relevant technology (Tang et al., 2022). Therefore, this study evaluates the PdP approach at TASKA and its relationship with the aspirations of today's parents.

Objectives of the study:

1. Identify the PdP approach that is commonly practiced at TASKA.
2. Evaluate the relationship between the approach and the aspirations of parents.
3. Suggest improvements.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a library research approach focusing on qualitative content analysis.

Data Collection Strategy

Data were gathered from peer-reviewed journals, academic articles, and reports related to early childhood education from 2010 to 2025. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and themes relevant to teaching and learning approaches, parental aspirations, and implementation challenges.

Data Analysis

Themes were analyzed based on three dimensions:

- (1) commonly practiced PdP approaches;
- (2) alignment with parents' aspirations; and
- (3) challenges and improvement strategies.

RESULTS

The analysis revealed that TASKAs in Malaysia predominantly employ play-based learning, multisensory approaches, and routine-based learning to support the holistic development of infants and toddlers. Play-based learning allows children to explore, observe, and interact with their surroundings. Fyffe (2024) reported its positive effects on language and social development, while Weisberg et al. (2021) emphasized guided play as an effective pedagogical strategy promoting deeper understanding.

Multisensory activities were identified as another essential component of PdP. Oh et al. (2024) found that sensory-rich activities improve neurological and emotional development, especially when facilitated by trained educators.

Routine-based learning—activities such as eating, washing hands, or napping—fosters self-discipline, emotional stability, and independence (Rahmatullah, 2021). However, implementation gaps remain due to insufficient teacher training, high teacher-child ratios, and parents' continued preference for early academic instruction.

DISCUSSION

The findings affirm that play-based and multisensory approaches align with parent's aspirations for holistic child development. Studies by Fyffe (2024) and Weisberg et al. (2021) reinforce that play-based learning enhances cognitive, linguistic, and social growth. However, the lack of trained educators limits consistent application of these methods (Rahmatullah, 2021).

Furthermore, disparities between urban and rural TASKAs create inconsistencies in quality. Tang et al. (2022) highlighted that limited resources and facilities hinder effective implementation. Additionally, many parents still associate quality education with early academic performance, leading to pressure on teachers to prioritize worksheets over play and exploration. Systemic challenges also exist due to divided governance—TASKA under the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development (KPWKM), and preschools under the Ministry of Education (KPM)—causing variations in curriculum and standards. Globalization and technology trends further influence parents' expectations, requiring educators to balance digital exposure with sensory-based learning. In summary, the successful implementation of PdP depends on collaboration among educators, parents, management, and government agencies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that PdP approaches such as play-based learning, multisensory experiences, and routine-based education effectively support infants' and toddlers' development while meeting parental aspirations. However, gaps persist between expectations and implementation. Improving teacher professional development, upgrading TASKA facilities, strengthening policies, and fostering parent-educator collaboration are vital to achieving quality early childhood education in Malaysia.

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DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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