

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL READINESS IN VIEW OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS AT UMMUL HABIBAH PRESCHOOL AT KLAMBIR V KEBUN VILLAGE, DELI SERDANG REGENCY

Munisa¹, Rita Nofianti², Naya Rahma Andini³

^{1,2,3}Department of Early Childhood Islamic Education, Faculty of Islamic Religion and Humanities,
Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Medan-Indonesia

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Correspondence Address:

munisa@pancabudi.ac.id

Abstract:

School readiness is a crucial factor in a child's educational journey that impacts on their ability to adapt and succeed in a structured learning environment. This article aimed to analyze the school readiness of children aged 5-6 years at Ummul Habibah Preschool, Klambir V Kebun Village, Deli Serdang Regency. Factors that influenced this variation included family background, early childhood education experience and parental involvement. This article emphasized the importance of a comprehensive early childhood education program that covered all aspects of school readiness and suggested targeted interventions to support areas where children were underprepared. The article provides valuable insights for educators and policymakers in improving early childhood education strategies to ensure all children are prepared for the transition to formal schooling.

INTRODUCTION

School readiness is a concept that covers various aspects of children's development that must be prepared before they join formal education such as kindergarten. Kindergarten is the earliest level of formal education in Indonesia. Education for kindergarten children is expected to build children's love for the areas of development that are introduced to children (Rozana, et al, 2020). This readiness includes not only academic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic, but also social-emotional, physical and language skills. Children who have good school readiness tend to be more adaptable and show better academic achievement compared to those who are less prepared. This article shows that school readiness is a key predictor of children's academic success in primary school. Children who are ready to enter primary school exhibit good social skills, optimal health and active participation in school activities. In

contrast, underprepared children often have difficulty adapting, exhibit withdrawn behavior, or even experience stress and frustration in the school environment.

According to Thorndike's (2019) readiness theory, when a child is ready to act and given the opportunity to do so, they will feel satisfied. However, if the child is unprepared but forced to act, they will feel frustrated and dissatisfied. This shows the importance of considering children's readiness from various aspects before enrolling them in higher education. In Indonesia, awareness of the importance of school readiness still needs to be improved. Many parents assess children's readiness based on academic skills alone, such as reading and counting, without paying attention to the social-emotional and physical aspects of children. Observations at Ummul Habibah Preschool showed that many parents consider academic ability as the only indicator of school readiness, thus ignoring the importance of social-emotional and physical development.

According to Hurlock (2018), school readiness includes not only cognitive aspects but also emotional and social readiness. Children who have good emotional readiness are able to manage their emotions, cooperate with peers, and adjust to school rules. Social readiness is also important as it helps children build positive relationships with friends and teachers, and participate in group activities. Previous research by Lee et al. (2018) showed that children who attended early childhood education (ECE) programs had better school readiness compared to children who did not attend ECE. A comprehensive ECD program can help develop children's cognitive, social-emotional and physical skills in a balanced way, so they are better prepared to face the challenges of primary school.

In the context of Ummul Habibah Preschool, it is important to evaluate and improve the existing education program in order to prepare children as a whole. This includes improving the curriculum to focus not only on academic skills but also social-emotional and physical aspects. Thus, children will be better prepared to enter higher education and achieve academic success in the future. Some preschoolers face issues like not having the confidence to socialize with friends, so they only dare to interact with their closest pals; others fear speaking in front of others or voicing their opinions; others find it difficult to collaborate in groups; and still others lack confidence in their own work (Widya, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODS

This article used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This methodology was chosen because it allowed researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of children's school readiness from the perspective of those directly involved, such as teachers and parents. The parameters observed were in the form of analyzing the level of school readiness of children aged 5-6 years at Ummul Habibah Preschool. In addition, verbal interactions were conducted with parents and several informants to obtain information about the situation of children and parents. The research subjects were children aged 5-6 years at Ummul Habibah Preschool. In addition, educators and parents of these children also became research subjects to get a more maximum perspective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that most children in Ummul Habibah Preschool had adequate cognitive and language readiness. However, there were significant variations in children's social-emotional readiness and physical development. Some children demonstrated good social skills and were able to interact with peers and teachers, while others still needed support in managing their emotions.

1. Cognitive Readiness: Children demonstrated basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum and activities designed to improve cognitive skills have been well implemented.
2. Social-Emotional Readiness: Children were able to form positive relationships with peers and teachers and manage emotions well. This reflected the supportive teaching atmosphere at Ummul Habibah Preschool.
3. Physical Readiness: Children's fine and gross motor development was adequate. The preschool program integrated sufficient physical activities to support children's motor development.

Social development is usually intended as the development of children's behavior in adjusting to the rules that apply in the community where the child is. In the preschool period, children are required to be able to adjust to various people from various settings, namely family, school, and peers (Rahman & Kencana, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Analysis of school readiness of children aged 5-6 years at Ummul Habibah Preschool showed that most children were ready to join kindergarten, both in terms of cognitive, social-emotional, and physical aspects. However, additional interventions were needed to support children who were still less ready in some aspects. Parental involvement in the education process is very important to improve children's readiness. Ummul Habibah Preschool can continue to improve teaching programs and provide more focused support to ensure all children are ready for the challenges of formal education. The findings may also provide valuable guidance for other educational institutions looking to improve moral education in young children. With effective moral education, we can hope to shape a society that is more ethical, responsible and concerned about moral values that are important in social life (Khoirot & Harahap, 2023).

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