

Aisiyah's Concept of Early Childhood Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the concept of early childhood education initiated by Aisiyah-Muhamadiyah. This research uses a qualitative method with a content analysis approach from the book Education for Children with Progress and Quality published by the Dikdasmen of Aisiyah Central Board in 2019. The results of the study: 1) The objectives of Aisiyah PAUD are faith, piety and noble character, 2) the theoretical basis of education is the religious pragmatic school inspired by Ibn Sina and Ibn Khaldun, 3) the learning process is adapted from Froubel-Sara Smilansky by utilising local wisdom, 4) the learning process uses centres by adapting the Iman and Taqwa centres with al-Islam ke-Muhamadiyah and ke-Aisiyahan.

INTRODUCTION

In order to welcome the Golden Indonesia 2045, all components of the nation need to be involved in preparing a reliable generation from an early age. One of the components of the nation that has great attention to education is the Muhammadiyah Organisation. With a progressive and quality curriculum, Muhammadiyah and all its autonomous organisations move to prepare a reliable generation from the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) to Higher Education (PT) level. So far, a progressive and quality curriculum is seen in basic education to higher education. Progressive and quality education is based on religious progressive education theory which is based on religion, as a source of educational philosophy and the roof is a three-dimensional educational theory, namely: intelligence, practice in social life (experience) and progress (Ali, 2016). Muhammadiyah's progressive education. Offers Islamic education that is universal, open, tolerant, and has concern for humanity. This concept encourages having a critical attitude towards the surrounding conditions and being able to read and respond to all forms of challenges in the future. One of the indicators of quality education is the existence of a parenting programme for parents (Fauziyah, 2020).

Muhammadiyah has the largest number of educational institutions at the PAUD level, which is managed by an autonomous organisation called Aisyiyah. Indonesian history records that the first PAUD established by the Indonesian nation was named Froubel Kindergarten 'Aisyiyah (FKA) on 21 August 1919 which later developed into Aisyiyah Bushanul Athfal Kindergarten (TK ABA). At its centenary in 2019, ABA kindergartens numbered 22,000 institutions spread across 34 provinces in Indonesia and abroad. ABA Kindergarten was established in Cairo, Egypt and Malaysia in 2010. The advantages of ABA Kindergarten graduates are: 1) a strong physique; 2) a social spirit; and 3) the practice of religious and moral values that are evident in daily behaviour (Chandrawaty, 2019). The character of moral and religious values is the main advantage. To achieve this profile of graduates, the Curriculum for Progressive and Quality Childhood Education is applied. In the last fifteen years, the development of ABA kindergartens has experienced a significant decline. This is the background for PP Aisyiyah to compile a guide to Quality and Progressive Childhood Education at the PAUD level as a reference for 'Aisyiyah PAUD teachers and activists. This book contains guidelines for a progressive and quality PAUD curriculum. There is still not much discussion about the PAUD curriculum in Indonesia based on the existence of the institution from the beginning to the present. This is what interests the author to research. It is hoped that this new curriculum can contribute to the development of ECD in Indonesia and improve the quality of ABA kindergartens in particular.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To look at the concept of early childhood education, the Ministry of Education and Culture Research, Technology and Higher Education (Kemendikbud Ristekdikti) through a tiered training programme has material

on the basic concepts of PAUD. The module explains that there are 4 things that need to be seen from the concept of PAUD, namely: 1) the view of the child, 2) the purpose of education, 3) the role of the teacher, and 4) the orientation of child education or the teacher.

The view of children can be seen from the definition of early childhood education based on state regulations. PAUD is the level of education before the level of basic education which is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to six years of age, which is done through providing educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter further education, both held in formal, non-formal, and informal channels. This definition is listed in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which discusses early childhood education listed in article 28 paragraph 1 to paragraph 5. The detailed information is: as follows: 1) early childhood education is held before the level of basic education; 2) early childhood education is held through formal, non-formal, and / or informal education pathways; 3) early childhood education in the formal education pathway in the form of kindergarten (TK), Raudatul Athfal (RA), or other equivalent forms; 4) non-formal early childhood education in the form of play groups (KB), daycare centres (TPA), or other equivalent forms; 5) informal early childhood education in the form of family education or education organised by da is a type of general formal PAUD under the Ministry of Education and Culture Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) and RA which is PAUD with Islamic religious characteristics under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag). There are three terms that include RA, namely: Raudhatul Athfal (RA), Busthanul Athfal (BA) and Tarbiyatul Athfal (TA).

The purpose of education appears in one of the components of education, namely the curriculum. The presence of a quality curriculum is dynamic, namely in presentation, content and values developed based on the times. The curriculum is expected to answer the problems faced in his day. The curriculum comes from the Greek word *curir* which means runner and *curare* which means a place to race. The background of this term is from ancient Greece referring to physical sports which means the distance that must be travelled by the runner from the start line to the finish. Since its inception, ABA Kindergarten has used the most up-to-date curriculum of its day. Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, as the initiator of ABA Kindergarten, used the most popular approach of her day. In general, the curriculum concept is influenced by Muhammad Abduh's thoughts in line with Muhammadiyah in the 18th century, namely an integral curriculum that combines Islamic and general sciences.

At that time the Dutch were aggressively building early childhood education under the name Froebel School since the enactment of reciprocity politics. The Netherlands carried out a process of educational discrimination for European schools and indigenous schools. The indigenous schools referred to were the Indonesian nation and all adherents of Islam. The call to da'wah as a Muslim, and her love for Indonesia encouraged Nyai Walidah to open a children's recitation. This activity was carried out with her students who were

members of the Praja Wanita Students (SPW) under the name Froubel Kindergarten 'Aisyiyah (FKA) on 21th August 1919.

The basis for the establishment of FKA is threefold. The first is the practice of Surah An-Nisa 4 verse 9, which means: "Do not leave behind the dzurri'atan dli'afan (weak generation)." The weak generation in this verse is understood to be weak in faith, Islam, soul, body and knowledge. A strong generation will be able to carry out the task of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar. What is meant by a strong generation is a generation that is strong in faith, Islam, psychology, physical, mental and intellectual. To prepare this generation, early childhood education is a must. Second, Kyai Ahmad Dahlan's educational concept of the chess centre of education, namely: family, school, community and place of worship. The third is the process of secularisation of education carried out by the Dutch by establishing kindergartens since 1914 under the name Frobel School. At Frobel School, children are taught to play, read and write and religious education is eliminated. The value to be built is the separation of the lessons of the world and the hereafter. In addition, an elite perception was built by prioritising the noble class, journalists and Dutch descendants. Based on this data, it appears that the revival of Islamic education from the beginning had two spirits, namely Islamicity and nationality.

The role of teachers and the orientation of teachers is one of the components to see the concept of education. Early childhood education in Indonesia cannot be separated from its originator, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan. To prepare teachers for FKA, a girls' dormitory was established to teach about religion and womanhood. There are three main things that are taught: ethical values, religion and independence. The ethical values taught are: ngemong (guiding), welas asih (compassion) and sepi ing pamrih (sincerity). These three values were modelled directly by Nyai Ahmad Dahlan. In her daily life, Nyai Ahmad Dahlan fulfilled her role as wife, mother and teacher. The religious knowledge taught is the Qur'an, hadith, and other supporting books as well as practices for da'wah preparation. Girls are taught to be prayer leaders, give speeches, hold recitations, and manage organizations. While independence includes feminine skills such as housekeeping, organizing the house, cooking, sewing and parenting.

In line with the development of the current PAUD curriculum, which is based on child development, ABA Kindergarten has revamped its curriculum from classical to centre-based. The centre curriculum was adapted from the results of theoretical and practical studies from Creative School, Talahase, Florida, USA. This model is a combination of various models, namely Montessori, High Scope, and Regio Emilio. This model has been tested for 35 years. Like its predecessors, PP Aisyiyah adapted this model while still paying attention to the uniqueness of ABA Kindergarten, namely the integrative curriculum. The integration is on Islamic material that is integrated into 6 aspects of development, namely aspects of religious and moral values, physical motor, language, cognitive, social emotional and art.

In addition to the centre model, the characteristics of a progressive and quality curriculum are marked by the existence of a parenting programme. In

the Muhammadiyah education concept, there are three centres of education: family, mosque, school and community. Along with the implementation of the centre model, PP Aisyiyah also provides provisions for the parent programme.

Conceptually, the 'Aisyiyah ECD curriculum can be seen in the following diagram:

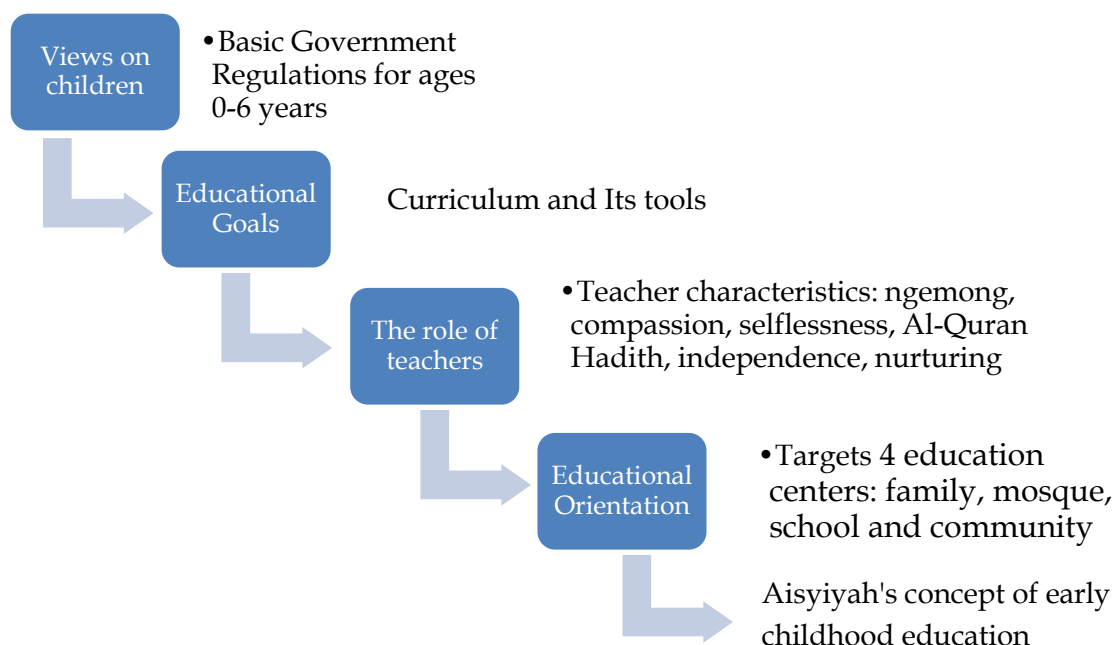


Figure 1: Concept of Progressive and Quality ECD Education

METHODOLOGY

The research method used is qualitative research with a phenomenological approach, which approaches the subjective experiences of various types and types of subjects encountered. The basis of analysis used is child development psychology. The data used consists of: 1) documents, namely: ABA Kindergarten Quality and Progress Curriculum Guidelines compiled by PP Aisyiyah, 100 years of ABA Kindergarten Book compiled by the Muhammadiyah Research Team, KTSP TK ABA 4 Tebet; 2) informants consisting of deputy teachers over 60 years old, graduates, local Aisyiyah administrators; 3) field TK ABA 4 Tebet as a National Level Pilot Kindergarten, TK ABA 1 Kauman Yogyakarta as the first institution established and still running today. Data were analysed using the educational theories of the salaf scholars (Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Qayyim and Ibn Khaldun) the development of child psychology and neuroscience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research on the concept of 'Aisyiyah PAUD are shown in the table below:

Table 1. concept of Aisyiyah PAUD

Scope of the Education	Data
Concept	Data
View of the child	Children aged 0-6 years who have potential that can be developed in accordance with the stages of development.
Education objectives	Forming Muslim children of faith, piety and reliability which is embodied in the curriculum (planning, learning materials and evaluation)
The role of the Teachers	Designers, supporters and assessors
Education orientation	A structured sakinah family development programme

Based on the scope of 'Aisyiyah's PAUD concept, which is also known as the quality and progressive early childhood education curriculum, in detail will be discussed in the following presentation:

Views on Children

In progressive and quality early childhood education, 'Aisyiyah's view on children starts with the term child, the age range and what education should be provided. The concept of the child can be seen from the choice of the origin of the word that was stated since the early establishment of PAUD institutions in 1919. 'Aisyiyah uses the word *athfal* to refer to the term child. Meanwhile, the term school is derived from the word *busthan*, which means garden. These two terms appear in the mention of PAUD institutions with the term *Busthanul Athfal 'Aisyiyah*, abbreviated as ABA. In terms of the term, Aisyiyah's meaning of child is all children who are born. This means that all babies born are called children. While the choice of the word garden gives the message that children need to be given space to grow and develop with full care. As befits a garden, order, care and beauty in balance are inseparable parts. Based on these two terms, progressive education views that children are all babies who are born and need to be developed in a planned, maintained manner, while still paying attention to beauty and balance.

Judging from the age range of children from birth to puberty. The age of puberty is marked by signs of physical changes that can be seen physically, namely menstruation for women and *ihtilam* for men. In Sharia, puberty means that he is able to accept individual and social responsibilities. The average age of puberty is between 8-12 years old. So the age range of children is 0-8/12 years old. The PAUD age range set by law is 0-6 years. With this data, it shows that the age range of children in progressive and quality child education is longer. This range is the same as Montessori, which gives a child age limit of 0-8 years.

What education needs to be developed in this age range? In general, education is directed towards preparation for puberty. During this period,

children need strong preparation in the form of independence, starting from purification, prayer, reading the Qur'an, behaviour towards themselves and others. Things that strengthen morals and faith are trained and grown at this time. PAUD should be the foundation of spiritual intelligence supported by other intelligence. In this span, the development of the physical (body) and soul (spirit) occurs. Consequently, education needs to pay attention to these two things. In its implementation, the age of 0-6 years is involved in the role of the family with the *sakinah* family programme. For ages above 6 years, basic education, both elementary and *diniyah*, is involved.

From the explanation, it can be concluded that the view of children in progressive and quality children's education holds that every child has potential that can be developed (nature) which is carried out in a balanced manner, namely physical and mental based on the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. The range of children is infants to puberty. The education needed is the strengthening of *akidah* and *akhlak al karimah* in the education process at school and parenting in the family in a planned and maintained manner. Children are prepared to be the heirs of the message, therefore it is necessary to be involved in *da'wah* activities.

Education Objectives

The goal of progressive and quality children's education is to form Muslim human beings who have faith and piety, have noble character, are capable, believe in themselves, are disciplined, responsible, love their country, advance and develop knowledge and skills, do charity towards the realisation of a just and prosperous main society that is blessed by Allah SWT and produce reliable human resources. Some of the keywords of this goal are: 1) to be a Muslim human being, 2) to have faith, piety and noble character, 3) to be capable, confident, disciplined and responsible, 4) to love the country, 5) to be skilled and knowledgeable, 6) to have a just and prosperous society, and 7) to be reliable.

To achieve these goals, a set of activities is needed, starting from planning, materials, learning processes and evaluation. The series of activities is summarised in one term curriculum. In the progressive and quality early childhood education initiated by 'Aisyiyah, the curriculum is prepared with the following process: 1) goal setting by looking at the minimum standards of competence set by the government adapted to Islamic learning for early childhood. 'Aisyiyah develops standards of achievement in stages from six aspects of development, namely religious and moral values, physical motor skills, cognitive, language, social-emotional and art. These six aspects of development are grouped in ranges of 0-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-9 months, 9-12 months, 12-18 months, 18-24 months, 2-3 years, 3-4 years, 4-5 years, 5-6 years. Of the 6 aspects of development compiled by PP 'Aisyiyah for physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional and artistic competencies follow the ministry standards. For religious and moral values competencies, PP 'Aisyiyah determined the details.

Achieving this goal requires a directed and planned learning process. 'Aisyiyah chose the centre system as the learning model in PAUD. The selection of this model is based on several advantages, namely: 1) building children's knowledge independently, 2) the role of teachers as designers, supporters, and assessors of activities, 3) the learning process is individualised so that it has the opportunity to provide optimal services, 4) assessment based on detailed and measurable stages of development, 5) structured learning, 6) each child gets active, creative support and dares to express ideas, 7) detailed and measurable stages of play development and 8) flexible application according to school conditions.

The centre model in Indonesia has been adapted to the conditions of Indonesian society and has been chosen by the Indonesian government from 2004 from the Creative School based in Florida, USA. Judging from the journey of 'Aisyiyah, which always uses the latest model in the learning process by adapting. At the beginning of its establishment, it used the model that developed at that time, namely Froebel. 'Aisyiyah as a driver of education has shown its consistency in using the latest models that are developing by means of adaptation. This step can be seen from two sides, namely practicality and sustainability. In terms of practicality, this method makes it easier for mass educational institutions. However, in terms of sustainability, this method is less rooted because there is no basic framework so that it can be developed according to the demands of the times. This seems to be the main reason why ABA kindergartens are not as far-reaching as their contemporaries, such as Montessori.

Potentially, TK ABA could develop as a model with some refinements, especially in relation to Islamic learning. For faith learning, Froebel's learning principles have been used, namely connectedness, play and playing outside. The same is done for Quranic learning. In the learning process that is memorisation is done by modelling (*talaqqi*) while for understanding it is done by telling stories with play activities. For example, when explaining the meaning of Surah Al-Fiil, the teacher draws an elephant and then takes the children outside to dramatise the attack on the Kaaba by Abrahah's troops. Then the children acted as Allah's army by carrying small stones made of paper. The children seemed to enjoy it and the imagination process developed with the strengthening of faith about Allah's guardianship of the temple.

Role of the Teacher

Teachers are the key to success in the education process. The role of the teacher is a determining factor in the success of the educational process. As stated in the Islamic view of children and the purpose of education, the main role of teachers is to carry out the mandate to maintain the child's nature. To achieve this role, Al-Ghazali requires the following criteria for teachers: 1) love children (*compassion*), accept children as they are and be fair; 2) love their duties (*ngemong*) that being a teacher is one way of emulating the Prophet PBUH. as murabbai; 3) have sufficient knowledge. A teacher needs to have sufficient basic knowledge of Islam and the stages of child development in the Quran, 4) abstain from despicable attitudes (*sepi ing pamrih*) such as cursing, speaking

harshly and lying. The teacher must have sincerity; 5) not reproach knowledge that has not been understood; 6) pay attention to the child's level of capture, related to this task the teacher needs to have competence in observing child development and 7) convey easily and simply.

In progressive and quality children's education there are three roles that teachers must have, namely: designer, supporter and assessor. Designer means that teachers need to make initial observations about the conditions of students and the learning environment. From the results of these observations, the teacher designs a number of activities according to the needs of the children. Support means that the teacher provides support during the learning process. Support is in the form of open-ended questions that allow children to express their creative ideas. In addition, support can also be in the form of a choice of various activities so that children can determine their learning process independently. This support process will develop children's reasoning and train children to be disciplined, responsible and respectful. When children are learning, the teacher records their development according to the stages of play. This is when the teacher acts as an assessor. This is the role of the teacher in this model.

From the role of teachers developed by 'Aisyiyah, there is a significant role development. Initially, the centre of learning was the teacher because of the classical learning model. This method was quite effective in its time because children's concentration could be maintained. With the process of development of play and technology accelerating, children's concentration is diminishing. This condition encourages teachers to become a companion who can explore the potential of children by interacting a lot. This process is a challenge in ABA kindergartens, especially in institutions dominated by senior teachers. In institutions dominated by young children, or seniors who have a strong learning power, the role of the teacher can be done optimally.

Education Orientation

The educational orientation referred to in this component includes who is doing the education. In the concept of progressive child education, there are three centres of education that work together, namely family, school and community. At the beginning of its establishment, the ABA Kindergarten was oriented towards the chess centres of education, namely family, mosque, school and community. Currently, some ABA kindergartens are located in mosques. In institutions that are not located in mosques, the chess centre of education can be used as an orientation. What needs to be considered in the education of children with progress and quality, the orientation to the chess centre of education or the tri centre of education is very conditional.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of the research on progressive and quality children's education compiled by PP 'Aisyiyah for early childhood education is seen from four points of view, namely: children's views, goals, the role of teachers and educational orientation. From the child's point of view, 'Aisyiyah sees children

as the most effective da'wah subjects to provide Islamic learning to families. Therefore, children must be developed in a balanced way physically and mentally, given basic Islamic education, namely belief, worship, morals and muamalah. Educational goals are integrated between government goals and Islamic education in early childhood. The process of Islamic education is adapted to the stages of development of both the material and the method of delivery using the latest approaches. The role of teachers is that of designers, assistants and assessors with attention to Islamic manners. For schools outside the mosque, the orientation of education is on the tri-centre of education, namely the family, school, mosque and community. This is necessary in accordance with the function of education as part of da'wah to the community and problem solver.

FURTHER STUDY

This research can only reflect a small picture of the research themes discussed. This research is still wide open for development, especially with an Indonesian background. The ECD curriculum that has been conducted in Indonesia provides a lot of inspiration and needs to be expressed in research. The results of this research are only a few of the ECD curriculum treasures that have developed in Indonesia. The curriculum is based on Indonesian culture, Indonesia's natural potential, and the introduction of Indonesian figures for children. Researchers hope that there will be more diverse ECD curriculum research to strengthen early childhood education in Indonesia.

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