

Implementation of Play Methods in Developing Concentration Skills in Children at TKIP Ummul Mukminin

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Abstract: Early childhood is a crucial stage for children's growth and development. Through play, various aspects cognitive, social-emotional, physical-motor, language, moral, and spiritual develop significantly. Appropriate stimulation and attention can positively influence these developments. This study aims to explore the implementation of play-based methods to improve children's learning concentration at TKIP Ummul Mukminin, Katapang District, Bandung Regency. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews and direct field observations. The research focuses on how the play method is applied, along with its strengths and limitations in enhancing concentration. The findings reveal that children's concentration levels vary according to individual characteristics. However, after implementing the play method, most children showed improved concentration during learning activities. The establishment of classroom agreements and rules also contributed to a more conducive learning environment. Strengths observed include increased curiosity and enthusiasm, leading to optimal learning outcomes. On the other hand, challenges remain, such as classroom layout issues (minimal partitions causing distractions) and inconsistent parental discipline at home, which hinders the reinforcement of structured behavior in school.

Keywords: Playing methods, learning concentration, children

Abstrak: Masa anak usia dini merupakan tahap penting dalam proses tumbuh kembang anak. Melalui metode bermain, berbagai aspek perkembangan seperti kognitif, sosial-emosional, fisik-motorik, bahasa, moral, dan nilai agama dapat berkembang secara optimal. Stimulasi yang tepat dan perhatian yang konsisten memberikan dampak positif terhadap konsentrasi anak dalam proses pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana penerapan metode bermain dapat meningkatkan konsentrasi belajar anak di TKIP Ummul Mukminin, Kecamatan Katapang, Kabupaten Bandung. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara dan observasi langsung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan konsentrasi anak bervariasi sesuai dengan karakteristik individu masing-masing. Setelah metode bermain diterapkan, sebagian besar anak menunjukkan peningkatan konsentrasi saat kegiatan pembelajaran. Kesepakatan kelas yang berisi aturan bersama juga berperan dalam menciptakan suasana belajar yang kondusif. Kelebihan yang ditemukan mencakup meningkatnya rasa ingin tahu dan antusiasme anak. Namun, terdapat kendala seperti kondisi ruang kelas yang kurang ideal serta kurangnya konsistensi pola asuh antara sekolah dan rumah, khususnya terkait disiplin, yang berdampak pada kenyamanan anak dalam mengikuti aturan di sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Metode bermain, konsentrasi belajar, anak

Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in national development and human progress. It is essential for developing innate potential, both physically and spiritually, according to societal and cultural values (Ahmad Zuhdi et al., 2021). Education is a key factor in determining a nation's competitiveness, as it enhances the quality of human resources and produces highly competitive individuals (Laurensius Dihe Sanga & Wangdra, 2023). In diverse nations like Indonesia, Islamic education is particularly important for fostering maturity, independence, stability, and responsibility, which contribute to national unity (Saekan, 2017). The management of educational resources, especially human resources, is critical in implementing effective learning processes in schools (Widiansyah, 2018). These studies collectively emphasize that education is inseparable from human life and is vital for personal development, social cohesion, and national progress, aligning with the provisions of Indonesia's National Education System Law.

Early childhood education is crucial for children's development, focusing on ages 0-6 years (Saputra, 2019; Tanu, 2019). This period, known as the "golden age," is characterized by heightened sensitivity to environmental stimuli and rapid development across multiple domains (Yusuf et al., 2024; Fauzi, 2018). Educational activities during this time should provide stimulating experiences that foster physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth (Saputra, 2019; Fauzi, 2018). The learning approach should be holistic and integrated, addressing children's basic needs while nurturing their unique potential (Fauzi, 2018). Early education plays a vital role in shaping personality, intelligence, and social skills, laying the foundation for future learning and development (Tanu, 2019; Yusuf et al., 2024). Families, communities, and educational institutions all have important roles in supporting early childhood education through planned, stimulating activities that encourage exploration, observation, and experimentation (Tanu, 2019; Yusuf et al., 2024).

Early childhood education (ECE) plays a crucial role in shaping a child's character, cognitive abilities, and overall development (Ginting, 2024; Budiharjo, 2017). This period is considered a golden age for development, offering a unique opportunity to establish a strong foundation for future growth (Budiharjo, 2017). A holistic approach to ECE, integrating cognitive, emotional, and social aspects, is essential for optimal child development (Rodiah et al., 2024). ECE institutions provide structured environments where children can learn through play, develop interpersonal skills, and be introduced to various concepts in an age-appropriate manner (Alif et al., 2020). The importance of ECE extends beyond individual development, contributing significantly to improving the quality of human resources and national competitiveness (Budiharjo, 2017). By emphasizing value-oriented parenting, positive social interaction, and appropriate intellectual stimulation, ECE helps children become responsible, caring, and contributing members of society (Ginting, 2024). Education is the most important asset for children to prepare themselves for life. As stated in Hadith Number 1874 narrated by At-Tirmidzi from Jabir bin Samurah r.a:

وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ لَأَنْ يُؤَدِّبَ الرَّجُلُ وَلَدَهُ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَتَصَدَّقَ بِصَاعٍ

Nabi SAW bersabda: "Seseorang mendidik anaknya itu lebih baik baginya dari pada ia menshadaqahkan (setiap hari) satu sha." (HR At-Tirmidzi)

Providing a good education is a way to respect children, because with a good education,

children can learn to behave well. They will respect their parents, religion, their surroundings, and behave well wherever they are. Early childhood education focuses on play as a fun way to learn, such as running around, playing with real objects, experimenting, and gardening. Through play, children learn and gain valuable experiences.

Playing plays a very important role in children's growth and development, as this activity can enhance imagination, train gross and fine motor skills, and develop children's cognitive and social-emotional abilities for their future (Amiran, 2016). Learning through play can help improve children's concentration, especially since young children tend to have short attention spans, around 10-15 minutes, as explained by Hurlock. (Zaini, 2017). Playing as a channel for excess energy also provides satisfaction for children, because when children are interested in playing, their needs are met, making them more conducive and able to concentrate for long periods of time (Ismail, 2006).

Research indicates that concentration is crucial for effective learning in children. Chalidaziah (2018) found that early childhood learning concentration generally falls within good criteria, though some children exhibit doubtful or unready concentration levels for further education. To address concentration issues, various interventions have been explored. Chusnul Mualli et al. (2022) demonstrated that sensory-motor play management can stimulate and stabilize children's focus and concentration. Similarly, Dan Pembelajaran et al. (2023) reported an 80% increase in learning concentration among 4-5 year-olds through sensorimotor play, particularly in recognizing textures. For children with ADHD, Bagus Mahardika & Andi Andi Purnawan Putra (2023) found art therapy using doodle art to be effective in improving concentration across memory, attitude, and skill aspects. These studies collectively emphasize the importance of tailored approaches, such as play-based interventions, to enhance children's learning concentration and overall educational outcomes.

In Budyawati's (2022) study, it was shown that using the *Asyik* play model with *angklong* playing at *Tadika Puri Kindergarten* successfully increased children's interest in learning and concentration. In Hartanto's (2017) study, there were similarities in the implementation and supporting factors for concentration in early childhood. In Faridah's (2023) study, there was an increase in learning concentration through the ice-breaking method in class B at RA *Annihayah Bojongranca*. The data from the study on the learning concentration abilities of students in class B at RA *Annihayah Bojongranca* in cycle I was 49%, which is in the beginning stage of development (MB). Cycle II showed a significant increase, reaching 82%, which is in the very good stage of development (BSB). Thus, it can be concluded that the learning concentration of students can be improved through the ice-breaking method.

Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design, which aims to gain an in-depth understanding of children's concentration problems through a descriptive approach. In this qualitative study, the focus is on presenting a comprehensive and detailed description of the experiences and views of the informants, and it is conducted in a natural setting without any intervention from the researcher. This method allows researchers to explore and understand phenomena in depth from the perspective of the research subjects (Andani, 2010). In this study,

the methods of play and learning concentration in early childhood are described through the data and samples that have been collected.

Result and Discussion

Implementation of Play Methods in Developing Concentration Skills in Children at TKIP Ummul Mukminin

Based on an interview with one of the teachers at TKIP Ummul Mukminin, namely the teacher of Ibnu Sina class, it was found that each child's learning ability differs, thus requiring special strategies in teaching to ensure that children achieve optimal learning outcomes. This aligns with Chalidaziah's (2018) view that children's learning outcomes improve when all components of the learning process are well-fulfilled, one of which is concentration. With high concentration, children can achieve outstanding learning outcomes and a thorough understanding of all the material presented by the teacher.

The Montessori method is an effective approach in early childhood education, emphasizing children's unique learning styles and independence (Dwi Noviani et al., 2024). It is based on key principles such as the absorbent mind, sensitive periods, and learning through play (Suvidian Elytasari, 2017). Teachers implement strategies like providing structured freedom, using Montessori materials, and offering individualized guidance to foster children's independence (Tin Surtini et al., 2025). The method has been found to enhance decision-making, motor skills, and self-discipline in children (Tin Surtini et al., 2025). To maintain the quality of Montessori education, teacher supervision is crucial. This involves monitoring and evaluation activities conducted by accredited supervisors, focusing on the four pillar concepts and nine elements of the Montessori method (Alya Nur Fadhilah & Achmad Supriyanto, 2024). Effective supervision requires knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills to ensure proper implementation of the Montessori approach (Alya Nur Fadhilah & Achmad Supriyanto, 2024).

This is in line with Piaget's opinion (in Nurul, 2021), who reviewed play from the perspective of human cognitive development that goes beyond certain stages. According to Piaget, the role of practice through play is very important because newly acquired skills will quickly disappear if they are not practised. The development of play is related to a person's cognitive development. Therefore, a child's level of intelligence will influence their play activities. When children engage in play activities, they will explore. It is this exploration that will enable children to gain various knowledge, skills, and values from the play activities they engage in.

Playing methods can help children improve their imagination, fine and gross motor skills, social skills, cognitive skills, and emotional skills through guided and directed play. This is in line with Vygotsky's (in Syaputra, 2021) opinion that play has a direct role in a child's cognitive development. Initially, children are unable to think abstractly because, for them, meaning and objects are intertwined. As a result, children cannot think about an object without seeing the actual object.

Play activities are crucial for developing children's self-regulation, social-emotional intelligence, and creativity. Through play, children learn to inhibit impulsive behavior, follow rules, and engage in verbal self-regulation (Savina, 2014). Play promotes the development of social-emotional skills like honesty, independence, responsibility, and cooperation (Astuti et al., 2019). Traditional games have been shown to significantly improve self-control in children aged

9-12, with a module-based approach demonstrating high effectiveness (Liswantiani et al., 2024). Creativity, an innate potential in all children, can be nurtured through play activities, leading to the development of innovative thinking (Sari, 2017). Play allows children to create games independently, fostering self-control, language use, attention, memory, and peer cooperation. By facilitating play with various media, adults can encourage children to explore and discover new things on their own, supporting their overall development (Sari, 2017; Astuti et al., 2019).

This is in line with Bruner's (in Apriyani, 2021) opinion that play is a means of developing creativity. In play, what is more important for children is the meaning of play and not the end result. When playing, children do not think about the goals to be achieved, so they are able to experiment by combining various new and "unusual" behaviours. By trying out several new behaviours, children can use their experiences to solve problems in their daily lives.

Based on this, the researcher analysed the interview data using Nvivo 12 software. One of the features in Nvivo 12 software for displaying text visually is Word Frequency Query. This feature helps researchers find the frequency of interesting and informative words. Based on the results of this feature in Figure 3.1, the word "child" dominated the participants' conversations with a frequency of 4.44% of the total data, followed by the words "play" and "method."

Figure. 1
The Most Frequently Occurring Word



Through the Word Frequency Query feature, we can see that the meaning of the word anak is a gift to be grateful for. Playing and children are inseparable. Children engage in play, and children's activities always involve play.

Communication at TKIP Ummul Mukminin has been running effectively. The existence of a communication book between teachers and parents helps the school to build cooperation in terms of education, parenting, and child protection, as the book provides information on children's growth and development both at school and at home. Children who have difficulty concentrating may also be influenced by busy parents, leading them to spend excessive time playing gadgets at home without regard for time.

This is in line with Supinatun's (2021) opinion that difficulty concentrating is influenced by many distractions and worries, wanting to do something else, feeling tired, feeling hungry, and the sophistication of modern technology such as computers, mobile phones, the internet, and toys that can distract children's concentration, such as PlayStation and video games.

During the observation period from 20 May to 31 May 2024, teachers at TKIP Ummul Mukminin understood and mastered all the material on play methods and how to apply them to

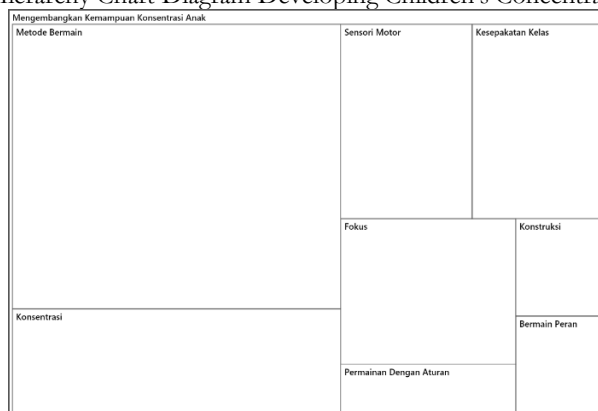
children, with the main objective of developing children's concentration. To achieve this objective, Teachers use play-based methods in their teaching, such as sensorimotor activities, construction, role-playing, and games with rules. These activities are carried out so that children can focus and concentrate on the activities and obey the class rules that have been agreed upon together.

This is in line with Hurlock's (1978) opinion that playing is a very important activity for children's growth and development because it can increase imagination, train gross and fine motor skills, and train children's cognitive and social-emotional skills for their future. Learning through play can increase children's concentration.

Similarly, Supinatun (2021) argues that efforts to develop a child's concentration and memory in learning at school are influenced by the teacher's skills in teaching children at school. Considering that learning at school is learning through play, a teacher must have mature skills. The skills that teachers must have in the teaching and learning process are learning strategies, learning models, learning media, and learning methods.

Based on this, the coding results also produced themes about developing children's concentration skills using the hierarchy chart feature of Nvivo 12 software.

Figure. 2
Hierarchy Chart Diagram Developing Children's Concentration Skills



After reviewing the research results, theories, and data analysis using the NVivo application, it can be concluded that the play-based method used at TKIP Ummul Mukminin to develop children's learning concentration skills is appropriate for their age group..

Advantages and Disadvantages of Concentration Abilities in Children at TKIP Ummul Mukminin

Teachers' stimulation in presenting various games to children in the classroom is very innovative, resulting in children who are quite creative in producing various works at school. Teachers always have new activities, and young children have a high level of curiosity, so they can focus and concentrate when the teacher is speaking in front of them. This aligns with Khotimah's (2020) view that there is one crucial element needed in learning that can determine an individual's success: concentration. If students have good concentration while learning, they will be able to pay attention and absorb all the key points of the lesson.

Teachers' teaching skills have a significant influence on children's learning outcomes, and it has been observed that when teachers apply play-based methods aimed at developing children's

concentration skills and are successful, children's learning concentration skills improve significantly. This aligns with Syahla's (2024) view that efforts to develop a child's concentration and memory in school learning are also influenced by teachers' skills in delivering instruction to children at school. Given that learning in school involves learning through play, a teacher must possess well-developed skills. The skills teachers must possess in the teaching-learning process include learning strategies, learning models, learning media, and learning methods.

The large number of students and the noise from here and there echoing throughout the classroom, with only partition walls separating the classrooms, allowing sound to travel between them, is one of the factors that makes it difficult for children to concentrate, in addition to other distractions. When considering factors within the children themselves, such as their lack of readiness to receive lessons, follow rules, and other factors, this aligns with Supinatun's (2021) view that a child's ability to concentrate is influenced by two factors: internal and external. Internal factors are those that arise within the child. For example, their lack of readiness to receive lessons, physical condition, and psychological condition. External factors are factors or influences originating from outside the individual. For example, loud noises from the TV or radio and other distracting sounds.

Cooperation between teachers and parents is very important. Children must feel comfortable when they are with their teachers at school. In addition to stimulating children, teachers must also be able to guide and motivate them. Although sometimes teachers are faced with children who are quite active in class. Children's lack of concentration at school is always communicated to their parents so that they can work together to apply rules through play. This aligns with Manurung's (2019) view that concentration in children aged 5-6 years is a state where children can focus their thoughts on performing or completing tasks assigned by their teacher in class. For children aged 5-6 years, a lack of concentration can be observed in how they behave at school.

It is common to see preschoolers unable to sit still in class, given that most activities for children of this age involve physical movement and play. It is quite difficult for them to sit still for long periods of time and concentrate. Every child is equipped with abundant energy to keep moving around. For example, running around the classroom, disturbing their friends who are studying, and being absorbed in their own activities. However, preschool children, especially those aged 5-6 years, can be taught to sit still while receiving instruction. However, this introduction must be done gradually. We cannot force children to sit still immediately or prevent them from moving around in the classroom. In addition to being an extra responsibility for teachers to provide extra attention to their students, as creative and innovative substitutes for parents at school, teachers must be able to manage this situation. One way to do this is by implementing various methods that can help children develop their concentration.

When at school, children are accustomed to following various class rules that have been established together, known as class agreements. These rules must be obeyed by all, and if not, there will be consequences for the children. All of this is done to create a conducive atmosphere in the classroom so that children can concentrate and achieve good learning outcomes. This is in line with Chalidaziah's (2018) opinion that children's learning outcomes will improve if all components of learning are fulfilled properly, one of which is concentration in learning. With high learning concentration, children will be able to achieve outstanding learning outcomes and a thorough understanding of all the material provided by the teacher. Therefore, the researcher

can conclude that the advantages and disadvantages of the play-based method implemented at TKIP Ummul Mukminin are consistent with the theories of various experts previously mentioned.

Conclusion

Education is the most important asset. Early childhood education is oriented towards play activities. Play is a very important activity for children's growth and development. The implementation of play methods in developing children's learning concentration skills at TKIP Ummul Mukminin shows that most of them have developed well. Out of 15 children, 13 were able to concentrate for a sufficiently long period of time, while 2 had shorter concentration spans. The advantage of children's concentration abilities at this kindergarten is that they are highly enthusiastic in participating in learning activities in a conducive environment. As for the weaknesses in the children's learning concentration abilities at this kindergarten, this is due to the classroom being partitioned only by cabinets, resulting in sounds from various corners, as well as a lack of cooperation from some parents in enforcing discipline on their children, leading to inconsistencies in rules that make the children feel uncomfortable when rules are enforced at school.

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