



The Implementation of Integrated Curriculum for Early Education (PAUD) in Mojokerto During Covid-19

Sutik^{1*}, Siti Masitoh², Andi Mariono³

¹Magister of Education Technology, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

^{2,3}Universitas Negeri Surabaya

sutik.19006@mhs.unesa.ac.id

*Corresponding Author: Sutik

Email: sutik.19006@mhs.unesa.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the implementation of an integrated curriculum for early childhood education (PAUD) in Mojokerto during COVID-19 pandemic. This research design uses descriptive qualitative to describe the implementation of the integrated curriculum at Mojokerto Kindergarten Early Childhood School with research subjects at Al-Amin Kindergarten and Dharma Wanita Kindergarten Mojokerto East Java. This research uses the method or observation technique, in-depth interviews and documentation. This research uses an interactive model Miles & Huberman which is carried out through 3 stages, consist of (1) data reduction, (2) data display or data presentation, (3) conclusion drawing or data verification. Based on the research results, an integrated curriculum in early childhood is required to achieve learning objectives as an effort to develop children's characteristics and their way of thinking that observe everything holistically. By this integrated curriculum, students are expected to have the ability to identify, collect, assess and use information around them in meaningful way. The Implementation of an integrated curriculum during COVID-19 pandemic carried out via online and offline.

Keyword: Integrated Curriculum, Early Childhood Education, Interactive Model

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood requires learning that can provide a complete (holistic) understanding, not only a piece of knowledge. Early childhood requires integrated learning, because children have not been able to digest partial or partial learning. Integrated learning for early childhood during the COVID-19 pandemic and after

the new normal requires teachers to be able to follow the acceleration of learning using electronic learning. Malik & Malik (2011) defines integration learning as file organization of teaching materials to bring the subjects together that usually taught separately. Integrated learning can be defined by organizing learning materials by uniting separate subjects into a sequence that does not need to separate the materials or subjects.

The integrated curriculum considered as appropriate to be implemented in early childhood learning. Integrated learning is not just about combining the contents of several subjects, but more broadly by combining various skills, attitudes, or other abilities so that learning is meaningful (Erwin Akib, 2020). Early childhood education is a scientific foundation for children to involve basic education which requires a curriculum, model or learning method that is related to the process of early childhood growth and development. The integrated curriculum is one of the options developed in early childhood learning.

The integrated curriculum presents an opportunity for early childhood to obtain an opportunity to connect their personal life experiences and the classroom content, their knowledge will develop become much more meaningful to them. Early childhood is able to make meaningful connections between various knowledge. By integrating curriculum in this integrated learning allows childhood to have many opportunities to understand why they need to know a certain skill or knowledge (Kevin, 2015)

Several authors report that early childhood in schools are focused and active in integrated manner. Engagement, motivation, an early childhood-centered approach, and gains critical thinking skills are all viable and valid reasons to use an integrated curriculum approach in classroom (Kevin, 2015). This research aims to describe the implementation of an integrated curriculum for early childhood education (PAUD) in Mojokerto during COVID-19 pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research design uses descriptive qualitative to describe the implementation of the integrated curriculum at Mojokerto Kindergarten Early Childhood School with research subjects at Al-Amin Kindergarten and Dharma Wanita Kindergarten Mojokerto East Java. This study uses the method or technique of observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. This research uses an interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 2014) which carried out through 3 stages, such as (1) data reduction, (2) data display or data presentation, (3) conclusion drawing or data verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Integrated Curriculum at Al-Amin Kindergarten The Aspect of Child-Centered Education

The implementation of the integrated curriculum carried out at TK Al-Amin Mojokerto is carried out with child-centered learning. Children are actively involved in learning. Based on the observations, it was found that the teacher did apperception and always direct the children to be curious and interested in teacher's learning media.

Based on the observations, it is found that teachers used Webbed-type integrated learning (cobwebs) by connecting a theme to another. On the other hand, Fogarty presents a continuum of views on what curriculum integration by presenting ten different ways of integrating curriculum (Fogarty, 1993). It can be observed that many experts define curriculum based on the observations of various processes about how teachers integrate curriculum.

Teachers are good at provoke children to understand the content conveyed by curriculum that creatively exploring questions related to the names of places, objects or activities, important events, problems or abstract concepts that will be instilled into children's understanding.

Bern & Erickson (2001) In the context of early childhood education, the implementation of an integrated curriculum is a product of learner-centered education emphasizing the importance of considering interests, culture, students need and learning styles in integrating curriculum elements. The integrated curriculum builds on a variety of conceptually similar disciplines by using themes or combining two related subject areas, emphasizes the relationship and interrelation of concepts and skills under a flexible time schedule.

The Aspects of providing direct experience to children

The implementation of integrated curriculum in kindergarten schools from the results of observations was carried out by inviting children directly into the real world during face-to-face learning progress by bring it around the school environment, during online classes the teacher sent electronic messages to parents in form of photos and videos about the themes that children will learn in.

The Aspects of sorting fields of study are not clear or vague

In integrated learning, curriculum integration can be interpreted as an approach based on early childhood problems by producing a curriculum mapping that allows the integration of learning content horizontally and vertically without visible separation among subjects. Every activity in integrating learning involve hands-on experience for children and provide various information or understandings their environment.

Aisyah, dkk (Aisyah et al., 2008) stated that “Thematic learning is a learning approach based on main ideas or central ideas about children and their environment”. The theme that presented to the child should begin from the aspects that already familiar to the child and further; it begins from the simple to more complex. The use of themes to organize learning for children has been popular since John Dewey proposed a curriculum that is connected to real life experiences.

Flexible

During COVID-19 pandemic, integrated learning for early childhood is carried out flexibly by using existing resources, especially digital-based resources. Electronic learning by media, internet, budget, gadgets or other mobile technologies has been massively promoted to replace face-to-face learning in the current learning era. This learning process has been widely promoted to replace traditional offline learning during COVID-19 pandemic to sustain children's learning at home

The implementation of the integrated curriculum is flexible depends on the context, conditions and learning time of child. During pandemic, the implementation of this curriculum in learning using learning technology. In the world of education, early childhood education has used a lot of learning technology media as a resource (Rizkiani, 2012). Electronic technology has an important role in development, especially language development (Campbell et al., 2004). What it means by the development of language is children ability to communicate verbally and non-verbal. The use of Electronic learning, through audio media, computers, and internet, can arouse and stimulate development in early childhood (Mawson, 2013).

Implementation of the Integrated Curriculum at Dharma Wanita Kindergarten

The Aspect of Child-Centered Education

In the context of preschool education, the integrated curriculum is a product of learning-centered education emphasizing the importance of considering the interests, culture, needs of students and learning styles in integrating curriculum elements.

The integrated curriculum promotes child-centered learning

Children need help to connect the world of school within the wider community. It means that school curriculum contains activities which students gain knowledge that can be applied in real life. It is also important that curriculum files are relevant and responsive to the requirements of society. Students should make themselves as a part of the problem-solving process to improve their own society (Jamaris, 2009; Nadar, 2020). Through curriculum integration, every student become the member of community who contribute to and connect with their work outside the world.

The aspect of bring new experience to children

Based on the results of observations and interviews with school stake holders, it can be concluded that, the implementation of an integrated curriculum by providing direct experience to children learning by doing in their surrounding environment. Curriculum integration helps students to develop skills, retrieve information more quickly by organizing related concepts inside the themes. It helps children understand learning as a whole by figuring out the ideas, problems, and skills and connected everything to enrich the depth and breadth of learning.

The integrated curriculum provides direct experience in learning the implementation of integrated curriculum which carried out by children learning to obtain direct experience. Based on the observation results and in-depth interviews with teachers and parents of children, the implementation of integrated curriculum is carried out by dividing learning themes related to the environment around the children and the development which divided into several themes then delivered entirety to provide a meaningful learning concept for children.

It is because curriculum integration removes boundaries between lessons to help younger children make connections between disciplines, and help them to solve their own problems through research and critical thinking. It is also discussing the preferences of children with different learning styles and various learning conditions they are expected to (Fogarty, 1993).

The implementation of integrated curriculum is accommodatively and flexibly carried by learning through offline or online by utilizing mobile learning that can be done by kindergarten students accompanied by their parents at home.

The Aspects of sorting among fields of study are not clear or vague

Erickson (Berns & Erickson, 2001) refers to an integrated curriculum as multiple disciplines that share common conceptual focus. It uses the themes to organize content and activities, combines two related subject areas, emphasizes the relationship and interrelation of concepts also skills under a flexible time schedule.

On integrated curriculum, learning is carried out by connecting every subject. Learning that strictly separates the presentation of these subjects will only produce difficulties for each child because it will provide artificial learning experiences. Therefore, learning process in kindergarten should pay attention to the characteristics of children who will live learning experience as a unified whole. the package of learning should be designed appropriately because it will affect the meaningfulness of child's learning experience. Learning experiences that indicates the relationship between conceptual elements both within and between subjects will provide opportunities for effective and more meaningful learning.

The characteristics of child development have implications for educators in organizing curriculum or educational programs which will have implications for

planning, implementing, and evaluating appropriate educational programs (Trianto, 2011).

Flexible

The implementation of integrated curriculum is carried out with the same steps as learning in general, such as the opening followed by the main point of learning and closing. During pandemic the teacher conveys via WhatsApp or YouTube and during direct learning by doing classical learning then moving classes for certain themes and at the peak of theme directly visit to animal places such as, zoos, outbound and others.

Integrated learning carried out during this pandemic mostly done by electronic. Electronic-based learning in early childhood can help children to understand abstract and collaborative concepts in solving problems or questions given by the teacher in electronic learning-based. (Clements & Sarama, 2003; Plowman et al., 2010; Yelland, 2006) confirm that digital learning can help children to understand abstract concepts and engage them in collaborative learning, reasoning, and problem-solving activities.

CONCLUSION

The integrated curriculum as a concept is a learning approach that involves several subjects to provide meaningful learning experience for children. The integrated curriculum is expected to be a practice-oriented approach on learning that suits the children needs. An integrated curriculum will effectively help to create opportunities for students to observe and construct interrelated concepts. Thus, it provides opportunities for students to understand the complex problems that exist in the environment with a complete observation. By this integrated curriculum, students are expected to have the ability to identify, collect, assess and use information around them in meaningful way. It can be obtained not only through the provision of further knowledge to students but also through the opportunity to strengthen and apply it in different situations.

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