

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIOAN IN INDONESIA

Badia Perizade, Tatatng Suhery***

Abstract

In order to be able to accomplish the task as an early childhood educator, teachers must be trained in early childhood education program (PAUD). Therefore, a well-and-systematic program must be established. In line with the government policy regarding early childhood education, there have been some policies announced by the government starting from the act until technical procedures. Some regulations related to early childhood education is stated in Law No. 20/2003 regarding the system of national education, especially the regulations related to all level of education, starting from early childhood education up to higher education level. It is stated in the Act No. 28 that early childhood education can be done in formal, non formal, and informal format. The example of the formal early childhood education is kindergarten/Raudatul Athfal (TK/RA). Play group (KB), child care (TPA), or other similar level of educational format are the example of non formal early childhood education. Meanwhile, the informal format for early childhood education is through family education or other education conducted by the society.

Several strategic government documents underscore this commitment: the National Education System Act 20/2003; the National Plan of Action (Indonesia's Education for All plan); Presidential Regulation 7/2004 on National Medium-Term Planning for 2004–2009; and Government Regulation 19/2005 on National Standards of Education. These documents reinforce the important role played by the education sector in promoting early childhood services. Early childhood education and development programs prepare young children for primary school but also contribute to the government's national development vision of a peaceful, just, and democratic Indonesia (Sardjunani and Suryadi 2005). Early childhood education and development programs are designed to generate a synergy of good health, good nutrition, and appropriate cognitive stimulation for healthy development in the early years, which in turn is vital for achieving high levels of education and human capital formation later in life. The government has established early childhood education and development as a priority in the National Program for Indonesian Children (PNBAI) and the Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action. The PNBAI is a reference program for all government agencies involved in the welfare of children. It

*** Rector , University of Sriwijaya Palembang*

**Faculty Member of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Sriwijaya University Palembang Indonesia*

children enrolled in formal services, from 24.4 percent to 28.0 percent by 2009. The percentage of children aged 0 to 6 served by either formal or nonformal services is expected to increase from 20.3 percent to 31.8 percent during the same period ,

The Directorate General for Non Formal Education, through its Directorate of Early Childhood Education (PAUD), has the mandate to expand nonformal ECED services to children who are not being reached by formal programs. Since its creation, the PAUD has launched a variety of nonformal interventions geared to children aged 2 to 6 who are not targeted by formal services, with a particular focus on children aged 2 to 4. These include playgroups called *Kelompok Bermain* (KB), daycare centers known as *Taman Penitipan Anak* (TPA), and similar PAUD approaches called *Satuan Padu Sejenis*. The KB playgroups are center-based programs that focus on the socio-emotional stimulation of the young child through a “learning by playing” methodology. The MONE’s guidelines for playgroup programs recommend that services should be offered for a minimum of four hours per day, three times per week (MONE 2004), but in reality, the frequency and intensity, and thus the quality, of the services vary depending on the situation and condition of the center and community. In the TPA daycare facilities, the PAUD supports educational programs for children from 3 months to 6 years old (MONE). Through the so-called “similar PAUD” services, PAUD introduced an educational component to existing care services (*Posyandu* program/BKB), which will be discussed below. The government supports ECED services through an extensive system of “care services” that focus on the health and nutrition of younger children (infants and toddlers aged 0 to 3). Care services play an important role in supporting families in their efforts to nurture and educate their children. The coverage of care services is larger and more equitable than that of early childhood education services, but care services are delivered less frequently (on average, activities are conducted once a month). Unlike services delivered through the MONE, which focus on the educational component of early childhood development, the focus of care services is on health and nutrition and on education of parents. Three government agencies are involved in providing these services: the Ministry of Health, the Ministry for Women’s Empowerment, and the National Family Planning Board. The *Bina Keluarga Balita* (BKB) program, which is supported by the National Family Planning

outlines broad goals for a 15-year period, including extending early childhood education services to poor children, enhancing the quality of the information system, and improving the quality of ECED services. The first goal of the EFA National Plan of Action is to increase child survival and child development and to encourage parents to recognize the importance of child development. The EFA targets include increasing participation in early education services for children aged 0 to 6 from 28 to 75 percent, increasing care services for children aged 0 to 6 from 37 to 85 percent, increasing the number of private providers of ECED, and improving the quality of services. The National Education System Act 20 of 2003 provides the basis for the expansion of early childhood education services in Indonesia. The law is ambiguous regarding the status of early childhood education services within the education system itself. The law recognizes early childhood education and development as a stage preceding basic education, but ECED services are not part of the formal education system, so participation is not compulsory. The law explains that ECED services can be formal, nonformal, or informal (as defined in article 28 of the law). Formal services are the responsibility of the Directorate General for Management of Primary and Secondary Education (DGMPSE), and nonformal services the responsibility of the Directorate General for Non Formal Education (DGNFE). Care services delivered through the parent education and the nutrition program are considered to be informal services.

The National Medium-Term Planning 2004–2009 (RENSTRA) stipulates that one of the development priorities for the education sector is the equitable expansion of access to high-quality ECED services. The RENSTRA is a key planning document for the education sector that outlines policy directions for five years, from 2004 to 2009. The document identifies four policy guidelines: to expand education services and provide more equitable access; to increase the quality of services; to increase the relevance of education to national development; and to strengthen education management and efficiency. With respect to early childhood education and development services, the RENSTRA calls for expanding access to services with equality, improving the quality, and strengthening governance and accountability. For children aged 4 to 6, the plan envisions an increase in the proportion of children who are enrolled in nonformal services, from 10.0 percent in 2005 to 19.8 percent by 2009, and an increase in the proportion of

Board (BKKBN), is the oldest care program. The program was initiated in the early 1980s in an effort to empower women. The BKB program offers group sessions in parental education once a month to groups of about 15 mothers with their children. BKKBN estimates that in 2003 there were 89,000 active BKB groups in Indonesia. Each group is led by a cadre, a volunteer mother from the community, usually the wife of the village head, who has received some pre-service training. At the moment, the BKB groups receive only limited support from BKKBN, and most of the groups are not functioning effectively. In the past, BKB leaders have not received any form of training, and the materials that are available are out of date. Despite the dwindling of government support to the program, there is potential to use the lessons of the BKB experience in educating mothers in parenting skills in the context of other nonformal and formal programs. The Posyandu program is Indonesia's national community-based nutrition program.

Improvement of human resources quality should begin from a very early age (0 – 6 years) and, if necessary, from the womb, so that children can grow and develop optimally and in turns ready for primary education and the subsequent stages in their life. Improvement of human resources quality should also go hand in hand with the improvement in the quality of care and educational services, which include the availability of qualified and competent personnel, fund, facilities and infrastructure, and a management system that fits the minimal standard services. Efforts to improve the quality of very-young-children care and education have long been made by the Indonesian people and government. Various policies have been issued (e.g. government Regulations, and other regulations) to provide opportunities for parents, the community, and organizations to organize various care and educational programs for very young children. Health, nutritional, and educational services for very young children, including guidance and counseling for parents and the community, and training programs for the members of the community who are directly involved in the management of the program, have also been carried out. KB, or Playgroup, caters for children ages 2 - 6 years. But in urban areas, KB tends to refer to the junior classes for 2 and 4 year olds in the TK or RA, that place emphasis on playing activities. In disadvantaged areas where there are no TK or RA, KB is simply the name of a half-day service catering for children ages 2 - 6 years.

TPA, or Childcare Centre, caters for children ages 3 months to 6 years while their parents (especially mothers) are working. Set up near the parents' workplaces, TPA is originally a childcare service for working mothers. But in urban areas, it has increasingly incorporated educational activities, catering for the "edu-care" needs of high-income working mothers, while in rural areas, the childminding function still dominates.

Posyandu, or Integrated Service Post, was originally a community health centre where pregnant or breastfeeding mothers came to receive health care (e.g., supplementary nutrients, immunisation, etc.) for themselves and for their young children. It has now evolved into a comprehensive service centre for mothers where they come twice a month, not only to receive health care, but also to learn about parenting. Recently there have been efforts to incorporate a service for children who accompany their mothers to the centres.

The initial purpose of BKB, or Mother's Programme, was to provide mothers with information on parenting skills – how to nurture and supervise the physical, emotional and intellectual development of young children. BKB is now delivered jointly with Posyandu, reinforcing the latter's parenting function. Both Posyandu and BKB are delivered by trained volunteers.

EFA objective for early childhood care and education: The Government's EFA Plan on early childhood includes the following objectives: (1) increasing the participation rate of children ages 0-6 years in care services from 37% in 2001 to 85% in 2015; (2) increasing the participation rate of children ages 0-6 years in education services from 28% in 2001 to 75% in 2015; (3) improving the quality of early childhood services; and (4) increasing the number of private partners in the provision of early childhood care and education.

Parenting education: Parents are another group of actors whose importance in the care and education of young children was highlighted by the PADU Directorate. Posyandu, initially a health service for mothers and young children, evolved into an integrated early childhood service which mothers visited not only for health care but also for information on providing early educational stimulation to their children. Although Posyandu should not be included in data concerning the child's participation in care services – a standing issue to be

corrected – it clearly reflects the Government's perspective and intent in considering parents and families as an important vector for early childhood care and education.

The fact that the same qualifications are required in Indonesia for educational early childhood services as for primary school teachers is encouraging, as this indicates that early childhood is recognised as being equal in importance as primary education. But whether this is a realistic aim in terms of meeting the demand for early childhood personnel in the country is another question.

At the moment, only 6% of early childhood teachers have this level of qualification. Even at the primary education level, only 30% of the teachers have D2 level diplomas. But according to the EFA Plan, the enrolment rate in educational early childhood services will surge from the current 8% to 47% in the next ten years. It may be unrealistic to expect these expanded services to be fully staffed with teachers who have the currently required qualifications.

One way of balancing the desired with the feasible would be to revive the intermediary cadre that formerly existed in Indonesia's education system for TK teacher assistants, who were required to have an SLTA level diploma with an early childhood specialisation. Since 51% of the current TK workforce has this level of qualification, this is clearly feasible. Moreover, when teamed up with fully trained teachers, teacher assistants can help deliver quality services.

Early childhood care and education in Indonesia has made significant progress in recent years. Among others, the PADU Directorate's decision to streamline grassroots services and integrate services for mothers with those for children deserves special mention. It has enabled many young Indonesian children to access basic care and education services to ensure their healthy development. Even though this has not helped much to increase enrolment statistics, which focus on formal services, this is an achievement of great importance; and Posyandu, BKB, and many other variations of these services (e.g., Taman Posyandu) deserve continuing support. Integration of services – health services with education services, services for mothers with those for children – should continue to be the government strategy to expand equitable access to services of basic quality, especially among younger children. It is in fact a still much-needed approach, considering the

country's relatively high malnutrition rate of young children and high maternal mortality rate.

Early Childhood Care Services and Education Programs Access a) Care Services • POSYANDU (Integrated Health Services Center) Health and nutrition services for children are provided both by the government through the "PUSKESMAS" (Community Health Center) and by the community through the "POSYANDU" (Integrated Health Services Center). POSYANDU is a welfare means for mother and child that functions as a center providing an integrated service of health and nutrition, especially for expecting mothers and children aged 0-5 years. POSYANDU is an activity from the community, for the community, and by the community with supervision from a medical personnel. POSYANDU activities are aimed at supporting the healthy growth and development of children in general. It is a monthly activity which includes weighing and distribution of vitamins and supplementary foods.

Standard Competence of Early Education Teacher

Similar to other educational services in any educational levels, services provided by early childhood teacher can also be considered as professional services. This is because teachers of early childhood education should also be able to take nonroutine decision in their daily activities. This is in line with the Academic Transcription of Professional Teacher Education (Ditjen Dikti, 2006) which stated that the work of Professional Teachers should always be based on comprehensive academic competence as to why they perceive it as a science-based art. Meanwhile, an educator can also be perceived as an expert who always does a reflection of what have been done and plans on what will be done as part of a long consequences of any decisions taken (informed responsiveness) either for the child as an individual or part of the society where he or she lives, which should be based on an appropriate academic consideration (Ditjen Dikti, 2006). It implies that in providing the service, a teacher of early childhood education must consider several aspects, such as why (normative reference), how (procedural reference), and when (contextual reference) in any decision and action that he or she makes.

Both academic and professional competence is achieved through an educational

program called a pre-service training which is arranged systematically and well-prepared. The coverage of the expected academic competence related to the teacher's task and effort is described comprehensively as a teacher's competence. Academic competence can be achieved through an academic program with some credit semesters in a certain semester, while professional competence can be achieved through contextual application of related academic competence in one or two semester at the end of the program.

Academic Competence of Early Childhood Education Teacher

Based on the description, the criteria of professional competence of early childhood education teacher are as follow: having an in depth understanding toward children, understanding children development (being able to know and identify the children's needs, the potential, and the problems), being able to do learning activities which can stimulate children's development comprehensively as a complete individual (children educational and learning perception, development area); having an ongoing habit of professional development.

After fulfilling the academic competence requirements through an integrated pre-service teacher training education program with minimum of 144 credit semesters, the prospective teachers do the field work activities in some play groups/TPA (child care) or kindergarten. During the field work, the prospective teachers apply the academic competence which has been fulfilled in a more authentic context at a play group/TPA for 1 semester which is worth of 18 credit semesters. If the participants can fulfill all the requirements, they can pass the program and deserve to get the certificate of professional teachers of early childhood education.

Early Childhood Education Study Program

As part of the implementation of the Act, the government has announced the Act No. 19/2005 regarding the standard of national education and the Act No. 14/2005 regarding the teachers and lecturers in which the qualification of the early childhood education teacher is at least D-IV or S1 along with the teaching qualification. Those who has got their S1 qualification as well as their teaching qualification must follow the competence examination to get the teacher certification. Along with the act, the

government has also announced the regulations regarding the early childhood teachers' task and work load (Ditjen Dikti, 2006). The regulation basically describes the concept development of early childhood education, early childhood teacher education, child optimum potential development, and facilities development.

The purpose of the Undergraduate Program of Early Childhood Teacher Education (S-1 PG PAUD)

The program is intended to provide teachers with S-1 qualification especially those who have early childhood teaching competence either as the teacher for play group (KB) or kindergarten (TK/RA), or both.

The Standard Competence of the Graduates

It is required that the graduates become experts who can provide professional services in terms of : (1) being a full and professional early childhood teacher with the capacity of having (2) academic competence as an early childhood teacher, and (3) professional competence of early childhood teacher.

Professional Competence of Early Childhood Teacher

Professional competence of early childhood teacher is the competence in applying the academic competence in an authentic situation at play group or child care (KB/TPA) and kindergarten (TK/RA). This competence can be observed in the ways of managing the appropriate design of the activities based on the certain situation (situational decision) or being able to do some changes in doing some activities based on the condition of the situation (transactional decision).

Equipped with the academic competence obtained through the integrated pre-service teacher training program with the minimum of 144 credit semesters, the early childhood teacher competence is developed through the field work program conducted at play group (KB), kindergarten (TK/RA) or both based on the major chosen. During the process of teaching and learning, the prospective teachers of early childhood education apply the academic competence obtained in a more authentic context at KB/TPA and TK/RA to develop their professional competence in one semester of 18 credit semester.

For those who chose two majors (KB/TPA dan TK/RA), their PPL credit become 36 units which should be done in 2 semesters. The field work is done at the eligible KB/TPA or TK/RA. Those who are successful are deserved to get teacher certification certificate through competence examination.

The Length and the study Work Load of the Undergraduate Program of Early Childhood Teacher Program (S-1 PG PAUD)

The early childhood teacher program is conducted in two stages, academic education and professional education. Academic education has study work load with the minimum unit of 144 credit semesters and minimum of 8 semesters. After finishing this stage, the graduates will get the sarjana of education degree. The professional education will be fulfilled in 1 semester with the study workload of 18 credit semesters for those who choose 1 major and 2 semesters for those who choose 2 majors with the workload of 36 credit semesters.

Major Program

To equip the graduates with the professional competence as play group or kindergarten teacher, or both KB and TK/RA, there will be program majoring based on the prospective teachers' needs, such as KB, TK/RA, KB and TK/RA (for both) major. The major program can be chosen based on the interest and the ability of the students after they accomplish all the study workload together.

Field Work Program

The development of professional competence of the early childhood education teacher is obtained through field work program (PPL) as the way to provide the opportunity for the undergraduate students of S-1 PG PAUD to apply the knowledge, skill, attitude, and value obtained from all of the subjects into the life and the teaching and learning process in KB or TK/RA. The students who choose KB major do the PPL at KB while those who choose TK/RA do the PPL at TK/RA. PPL is done in several stages and systematically under the advisory of lecturer and teacher in charge.

Students

The students of the S-1 PG PAUD are those who graduated from SMA or similar level of education or those who are from D-1 PGTK. The announcement of the legal act regarding the establishment S-1 PG PAUD program brought some implication that those higher education institutions which run the educational program either D2 PGTK, S1 PAUD, and S1 PGTK is instructed to do some adjustment as needed.

In order to understand the importance of having S1 PG-PAUD program, it is important to direct the standard competence of the graduates (SKL) into a comprehensive understanding for the prospective teachers/educators regarding the paradigm, purpose and the process of education and learning of early childhood.

Referring to the legal act of 1945 verse 31 which states “every citizen has the right to get education” and legal act of RI No. 20 verse 3 in 2003 regarding the national educational system which states that the function and the purpose of national education: “the function of national education is to develop the ability and the character of the nation as an effort to educate the people, with the purpose of developing the potential of the learners in order to be religious, have good attitude, healthy, knowledgeable, skillful, creative, independent, and democratic as well as responsible people; meanwhile according to national education department, the further description of the purpose of early childhood education is “to help to develop all potential and ability of the physical, intellectual, emotion, moral, and religion optimally in a conducive, democratic, and competitive educational environment. “

Early childhood teacher competence in Indonesia

Nowadays, there have been not many early childhood teachers with S-1 qualification. Most of the care giver at the child care center and play group had SMA qualification only. Actually, it is important that the care giver has at least undergraduate qualification for early childhood education. Furthermore, most of the teachers do not have the capability to be a teacher and educator. Some parents might say that, if it is only to teach how to sing and introduce letter, numbers, and many else, everyone can do it. However, it is not easy to teach those kinds of things to the children under five years old. We need some standard methods to be implemented to children to make them learn

through playing. Unfortunately, there have been not many PAUD institutions which have this kind of teaching method.

There are 87.3% of the early childhood education teachers (PAUD) in Indonesia have not met the standard of competence. There was only 12.7% teachers have S-1 or D-4 qualification which is fulfilled the requirement of PAUD regulation. This is in line with Ir. Alhidayati Aziz, M.Si, Kasi PAUD for Formal Subdit PAUD Direktorat PTK PAUDNI, in International seminar "Early Childhood for a Better Nation". She said that until now most of teachers of early childhood education had SMP or SMA qualification only. Even in most of remote areas, many of them were only holding SD qualification. "Based on the data from Kemdikbud, the number of formal kindergarten teachers in Indonesia are 252.639 and the Non formal are 300.000"; 12.7% of them who hold S-1/D-4 and teach for PAUD at play groups and kindergarten (TK) do not have early childhood education background. "

Therefore, in order to improve the competence of the teachers, Kemendikbud do some basic, advanced, and skillful education and training for early childhood education teachers. In 2011, there had been 17 training sessions and followed by 90 other sessions for 604.000 early childhood teachers in 2012.

In 2004, there was 12.7 million (27%) of APK-PAUD followed by 15.1 million (50.6%) in 2008. It was expected that in 2009, the number of APK-PAUD would reach 15.3 million (53.6%). Based on this condition, the government had set up the plan for the next 5 years that the number of the APK-PAUD will reach 21.3 million (72.6%). Gradually, the expected number is shown in the following table.

Target for Early Childhood Education in Indonesia in 2010 - 2014

Target	Targetted Year of Achievement				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Estimated number of children at the age of 0-6 th	30,18 million	30,2 million	30,3 million	30,35 million	30,4 million
PAUD Target (Formal & Nonformal)	17,4 million	18,7 million (61,8%)	19,9 million (65,7%)	21 million (69,3%)	22,1 million (72,6%)

	(57,8%)				
Formal PAUD Target	5,8 million (19,3%)	5,85 million (19,37%)	5,9 million (19,5%)	5,95 million (19,6%)	6 million (19,7%)
Nonformal PAUD Target	11,6 million (38,5%)	12,85 million (42,43%)	14 million (46,2%)	15,05 million (49,7%)	16,1 million (52,9%)

Indonesia is still lack of 15.000 institutions of early childhood education (PAUD) in order to fulfill the target of the PAUD estimated number of participation in 2004 which was 75% (Dirjen PAUDNI Kemdikbud). The APK PAUD had just reached 34%. Therefore, there should be more effort to reach the target. That is why PAUDNI keeps encouraging the local government, especially Bupati and the Mayor to accelerate the development of PAUD institutions, one PAUD in one village.

Nowadays, the service for the early childhood education for the children at the age of 0-6 years old can only cover 15 out of 30 million children. "Half of the others who cannot have the access become the homework either for the centre or local government. However, it is not easy to reach the target of estimated number of participation which was 75% in 2014. This is because we need more adequate facilities for early childhood education. In addition, the problem also occur related to the teacher of early childhood education—there are not many teachers who have had S-1 qualification; most of the care givers for the child care only hold SMA qualification. Meanwhile, it is expected that they have at least undergraduate qualification for early childhood education.

REFERENCES

Bappenas (2006). *Studi Kebijakan: Pengembangan Anak Usia Dini Yang Holistik dan Terintegrasi*. Jakarta: Bappenas.

Republic of Indonesia, 2003. National Standars of Education in Indonesia,

Government Regulation No 20/2003

_____, 2005. **National Standards of Education in Indonesia**, Government Regulation No 19/2005

_____, 2005. **Law on Teachers and Lectures No 14/2005**

Sardjunani, N., and A. Suryadi. 2005. "Public-Private Financing Schemes for Early Child Education Services: Lessons Learnt from Indonesia." Paper presented at symposium on Early Child Development: A Priority for Sustained Economic Growth and Equity, Washington, DC, September 28.

UNESCO. 2003. **Indonesia's Education for All National Plan for Action 2003–2015**. http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/efa/IndonesiaNatlPlan.pdf.

_____. 2004. "Background Report of Indonesia." Directorate General for Non Formal Education, Ministry of National Education, Jakarta. Submitted to UNESCO/OECD Early Childhood Policy Review Project, Paris.

_____. 2005. "Policy Review Report: Early Childhood Care and Education in Indonesia." Early Childhood and Family Policy Series 10–2005, Section for Early Childhood and Inclusive Education, Division of Basic Education, UNESCO Education Sector, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001385/138522e.pdf>.