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Implementation of Project-Based Play Activities in Early Childhood Character Stimulation

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Abstract: Educator-designed play activities focus only on academic skills, not specifically including character in learning objectives. This study aims to develop a project-based play activity program as a form of character stimulation in early childhood. This research was conducted with the development of a program of play activities and digital-based learning media for early childhood. This research uses an R and D approach consisting of two stages, namely: (1) the development stage and (2) the implementation stage in ECCE institutions in the East Jakarta area. The development plan was prepared based on analysis on 5 (five) ECCE institutions in the DKI Jakarta area. The stimulation program is designed by creating a theme design, a weekly activity program, and a daily activity design. Stimulation programs that have been designed by teachers can be a reference in developing character in early childhood. Character recognition is carried out through a variety of activities arranged by the teacher and the use of learning media that are in accordance with the interests and interests of children. The learning media used is also designed with the use of visual and digital-based media. Play activities are carried out through a project-based approach which is implemented through the project introduction stage, project implementation stage, and project completion stage. The development of early childhood frogs is currently the basis for the formation of Indonesia's superior generation. The results of the study resulted in a model for developing early childhood character stimulation programs based on project approaches developed according to field analysis to shape character in children, namely 1) Religious, 2) Independent, 3) Responsible, 4) Cooperation and Helpful, 5) Care for the Environment, and 7) Critical and Creative Reasoning.

Keyword: Character Stimulation, Curriculum, Early Childhood, Play Activities, Project Approach.

Abstrak: Aktivitas bermain yang dirancang oleh pendidik hanya berfokus pada keterampilan akademik, tanpa secara khusus memasukkan pembentukan karakter dalam tujuan pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan program kegiatan bermain berbasis proyek sebagai bentuk stimulasi karakter pada masa kanak-kanak. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan pengembangan program kegiatan bermain dan media pembelajaran berbasis digital untuk masa kanak-kanak. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan R dan D yang terdiri dari dua tahap, yaitu: (1) tahap pengembangan dan (2) tahap implementasi di lembaga ECCE di wilayah Jakarta Timur. Rencana pengembangan disusun berdasarkan analisis terhadap 5 (lima) lembaga PAUD di wilayah DKI Jakarta. Program stimulasi dirancang dengan membuat desain tema, program kegiatan mingguan, dan desain kegiatan harian. Program stimulasi yang telah dirancang oleh guru dapat menjadi acuan dalam pengembangan karakter pada masa kanak-kanak. Pengenalan karakter dilakukan melalui berbagai kegiatan yang disusun oleh guru dan penggunaan media pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan minat dan kebutuhan anak-anak. Media pembelajaran yang digunakan juga dirancang dengan memanfaatkan media visual dan digital. Aktivitas bermain dilakukan melalui pendekatan berbasis proyek yang dilaksanakan melalui tahap pengenalan proyek, tahap pelaksanaan proyek, dan tahap penyelesaian proyek. Pengembangan karakter anak usia dini saat ini menjadi dasar pembentukan generasi unggul Indonesia. Hasil penelitian menghasilkan model untuk mengembangkan program stimulasi karakter anak usia dini berdasarkan pendekatan proyek yang dikembangkan berdasarkan analisis lapangan untuk membentuk karakter pada anak, yaitu 1) Religius, 2) Mandiri, 3) Bertanggung Jawab, 4) Kerjasama dan Tulus, 5) Peduli Lingkungan, dan 7) Berpikir Kritis dan Kreatif.

Kata-kata Kunci: Aktivitas Bermain, Anak Usia Dini, Kurikulum, Pendekatan Proyek, Stimulasi Karakter.

INTRODUCTION

The development of potential possessed by children can be done from an early age. Children need to be given various stimulations to grow and develop optimally according to their needs and developmental achievements. The stimulation given to children certainly starts from the child's closest environment, namely the family and synergistically continued in the school environment and community. Efforts that can be made to achieve the goals of National Education in order to grow the next generation of the nation who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens certainly need to be prepared from an early age.

We can start building character in children through the school environment since children are in ECCE institutions. Early childhood education is one way to stimulate children's potential. In Chapter I article 1 paragraph 14 it is stated that Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to the age of six years which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter further education. This explains that the purpose of Early Childhood Education is to develop various potentials of children from an early age as preparation for life and being able to adapt to their environment as well as preparation for children's lives as adults.

Stimulation for character building can certainly be obtained by children in a unique way of learning that will provide meaningful experiences for children. In an effort to develop the potential and attitudes of children, children need to be given freedom and opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills in their own way. Early childhood learns by observing, imitating, experimenting, and exploring the surrounding environment.

Quality character needs to be cultivated from an early age so that children get used to behaving positively. Failure to cultivate a good personality at an early age will form a problematic person in adulthood. Instilling character in children can be done by providing meaningful experiences through introducing new concepts and knowledge in depth through learning activities. Learning activities for children should be carried out in a fun atmosphere and able to make children interested in doing various play activities.

Positive characters that are expected to be stimulated in early childhood are certainly done through the process of example and habituation. The character formed in children is directed in accordance with the values and norms that exist in their environment. Character is defined as the characteristics possessed by individuals related to quality (mental or moral), morals (ethics), one's identity to work together both in the family, society, nation and state. Forms of positive character that can be stimulated in children are religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the country, respect for achievements, friendly or communicative, love of peace, love of reading, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility.

In an effort to develop and form various positive characters in children, teachers in schools today must have learning strategies and design appropriate stimulation for children. The stimulation given must be adjusted to the age characteristics of each child. The stimulation provided must be integrated with each other, so that the stimulation provided by the school is appropriate and can develop optimally in children. The form of stimulation in play activities at school can be designed by educators through routine activities, habituation, and planning and using a fun learning approach for children.

Schools and teachers basically have to play an active role to help develop various skills possessed by children. A child-

centered approach can be an option for teachers to stimulate children's social skills. Children also need to be given opportunities to interact and explore a lot in their environment. Teachers can actually design a variety of play activities to improve skills in children. Previous research has been conducted and shows that social skills can be improved with a project approach (N. Pratiwi, 2014) and can be designed through various play activities and media use carried out both online and offline (N. Pratiwi, 2020). Both studies underlie this research so that educators better understand the form of character that can be stimulated through various activities.

LIBRARY SURVEY

1. Early Childhood Character Education

Character building to create the golden generation of the Indonesian nation can certainly be started from an early age. Character in children can be introduced and taught through various activities in the form of example and habituation. Character is defined as the characteristic of each individual in the form of positive character that can be accepted in society. Moral and personality education in an effort to build character is not specifically taught but can be applied in everyday life (Mulyadi, 2019). Character stimulation in early childhood can be done by designing a variety of fun activities.

The form of stimulation for the formation of children's character is delivered using a variety of varied methods. Educators in schools can design activity programs with children's interests and interests in mind. The use of diverse methods and interesting activities can increase positive character in children such as respecting others, being honest, responsible, and fair (Olao et al., 2021). Therefore, the development of a planned play activity program accompanied by varied methods and interesting learning media can stimulate the emergence of positive character in children.

2. Project Approach-based Play Activities

In learning for early childhood, play activities are designed with attention to children as learning centers. The project approach provides opportunities for children to freely explore, conduct in-depth investigations, think critically, and work in groups (Farida &; Rasyid, 2019; Venugopal, 2016). The experience and knowledge gained from project-based play activities will imprint and continue to be remembered by children. This can motivate children to develop themselves continuously.

The project-based learning approach also provides opportunities to foster new knowledge, attitudes, and skills in children, especially in aspects of social development (Farida &; Rasyid, 2019). Project-based learning also provides opportunities for children to choose various activities and focus on studying a material in depth (Dzubow, 1996; Rahman et al., 2012). Project learning activities can improve aspects of social and cognitive development in children. This certainly can have a good impact on forming positive character in children.

3. Digital Media in Learning

The use of learning media in school activities has an important role as a means for educators to deliver material appropriately. Students will also feel more interested when teachers use various media in delivering material (Alelaimat et al., 2020). The development of learning media that is adjusted to technological advances can also be presented in the stimulation of early childhood character formation.

The presence of digital-based learning media at this time can be the right choice for educators in an effort to provide stimulation for children. Digital media that can be used for early childhood can be in the form of digital books, learning videos, digital posters, and interactive video games that are appropriate for the child's age (Nurani &; Pratiwi, 2020). The use of digital media can support learning activities for children both online and offline.

RESEARCH METHODS

The implementation of research on the development of Play and Digital Media Activity Programs based on project approaches for the stimulation of character building in early childhood is research and development (Research and Development). R an D research is carried

out to develop curriculum models or programs. Seels and Richey (1994), development research is defined as a systematic study to design, develop, and evaluate programs, processes, and learning outcomes that must meet the criteria of consistency and effectiveness internally. In the first stage of this research is the Analysis and validation stage to strengthen the development of play activity programs through analysis of the needs of stimulation programs for children's character building.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The implementation of first-year research is in the form of developing a stimulation program for early childhood character recognition. The development of this model was prepared according to the results of the needs analysis of ECCE institutions in an effort to provide stimulation for character recognition. The results of the analysis from ECCE institutions in the East Jakarta area related to the preparation of character stimulation programs in early childhood can be illustrated in the following table :

No	Stages of Activities	Implementation
1	Determination of Learning Topics	Selection of learning materials according to children's interests and interests, developed in the theme of the activity
2	Weekly Plan Making	Contains a variety of activities that will be carried out in one week, developed according to the theme of the activity
3	Daily Plan Making	Contains a variety of activities carried out in one day, consisting of 2-3 choices of play activities carried out by children with teachers

Based on the findings of the field, researchers designed a program to develop play activities for early childhood character stimulation based on a project approach. Play activity programs are defined as a variety of activities designed to support children's growth and development in accordance with learning references and learning objectives. Play activities for early childhood must be able to develop a variety of ideas, imagination, and creativity, as well as a variety of attitudes and skills. Development of learning activities and media for the stimulation of children's character.

The play activity program designed in this study will lead to the introduction of the child's character:

Table of Early Childhood Character Recognition in the Digital Age Through Project-Based Play

No	Developed characters	Choice of Themes and Activities
1	Religius	Material on "Solar System" and Project Activities on "Celestial Bodies of God's Creation"
2	independently	Material on "My Needs" and Project Activities on "My Homemade Bread and Milk"
3	Responsible	Material on "My Needs" and Project Activities on "I'm a Healthy Child"
4	Collaboration and Help	Material on "Vegetables and Fruits" and Project Activities on "My Favorite Vegetables""
5	Care for the Environment	Material on "The Universe" and Project Activities on "Caring for the Earth where I live"
6	Critical and Creative	Material on "Vegetables and Fruits" and Project Activities on "My Favorite Fruit"

The character recognition will be carried out through a variety of activities that will be arranged by the teacher and the use of learning media that are in accordance with the interests and interests of children. The learning media used will also be designed with digital-based use. Play activities that have been designed will be carried out through a project-based approach that is implemented through the project introduction stage, project implementation stage, and project completion stage.

CONCLUSION

In the first year of research, namely conducting program analysis as a design for the development of stimulation programs and media for early childhood character building. The development plan was prepared based on analysis on 5 (five) ECCE institutions in the DKI Jakarta area.

The results of the first year research resulted in a model for the development of early childhood character stimulation programs developed according to field analysis to shape character in children, namely 1) Religious, 2) Independent, 3) Responsible, 4) Cooperation and Helpfulness, 5) Care for the Environment, and 6) Critical and Creative Reasoning. The stimulation program is designed by creating a theme design, a weekly activity program, and a daily activity design. Stimulation programs that have been designed by teachers can be a reference in developing character in early childhood. The development of early childhood frogs is currently the basis for the formation of

Indonesia's superior generation.

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