

Analysis of Teacher Readiness Transition from Early Childhood Education to Elementary School

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Abstract:

This research aims to analyze teacher readiness in facilitating students' transition from Early Childhood Education (PAUD) to State Elementary School (SDN) 01 Bulu in Jepara Regency. The transition from PAUD to elementary school is an important phase that influences children's early development in formal education, and teacher readiness in this process is a crucial factor in supporting students' adaptation and learning readiness. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews and documentation studies. Data analysis was carried out interactively with steps for data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show that teacher readiness in this transition still needs to be improved, especially in terms of pedagogical knowledge regarding the characteristics of early childhood, appropriate learning planning, and collaboration abilities between PAUD and elementary school teachers. Recommendations from this research include increasing training and workshops for teachers regarding learning techniques that support transitions, as well as collaborative efforts between educational institutions in optimizing student readiness in the early stages of basic education.

Keywords: Teacher readiness, PAUD – SD transition, Student adaptation

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Article Information

INTRODUCTION

The transition from Early Childhood Education (PAUD) to Primary School (SD) is an important stage in the academic and social development of children. In this process, the classroom teacher plays a key role in facilitating an effective and smooth transition. However, the readiness of teachers to facilitate this learning transition remains an issue that needs attention. Teachers who are not prepared to



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facilitate the transition process can hinder children's development and learning abilities. First-grade teachers play a crucial role in ensuring that children are ready to face the challenges at the primary school level (SD). In this research article, we will explore the strategies used by first-grade teachers to facilitate this transition (Susilahati et al., 2023).

This transition period not only affects academic aspects but also the social and emotional development of children. Therefore, learning readiness becomes a crucial factor that educators need to pay attention to(Susilahati et al., 2023). Classroom teachers play an important role as the key mediator in this process. They ensure that the transition runs smoothly and that children are able to adjust to their new learning environment. This study focuses on analyzing the learning readiness strategies implemented by classroom teachers at SD Negeri 01 Bulu, Jepara Regency, in facilitating the transition process from PAUD to SD. Teaching motivation not only encompasses cognitive aspects but also social and emotional aspects. Therefore, teachers need to have comprehensive and adaptive strategies to support children in facing this change (Denham et al., 2012).

Indicators of learning success for young children transitioning to primary school, which are often overlooked by parents or even considered unimportant, include religious awareness, social skills, and independence. This is because parents believe that these abilities will develop naturally in their children over time. While at the PAUD level, learning is integrated with play activities and focuses on child development, at the SD level, children are already expected to master early cognitive skills, with an emphasis on literacy and mathematics goals. As a result, there seems to be a gap in the learning readiness of young children when transitioning to primary school.

Meanwhile, not all children receive early childhood education. Moreover, children's development and academic abilities vary from one another, so their learning achievements when entering the early primary school grades cannot be generalized. This is supported by findings from research (Wulandari & Fachrani, 2023), that there is a need for meaningful learning conducted through the use of various play media, simplification of literacy and numeracy materials, as well as the involvement and collaboration of parents, teachers, and schools to ensure the PAUD-SD transition process goes as expected. Therefore, it is essential to provide socialization to parents about this program so that all related parties have the same understanding (Lestari, 2023).

Such as differences in the learning environment, teaching methods, and higher academic demands (Besi & Sakellariou, 2019). The hope is that understanding effective strategies will enable teachers to develop and implement better approaches to prepare children for entering primary school. The main objective of this research is to identify and analyze the various strategies used by

classroom teachers to enhance teacher readiness during the transition from PAUD to SD Negeri 01 Bulu. The results of this research are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of more effective educational practices and support a successful transition process for children in Jepara Regency (Ariyanto et al., 2023).

Identified and analyzed are the various strategies used by classroom teachers in preparing children for this transition period. With a deep understanding of effective learning readiness strategies, it is hoped that this will help teachers design and implement better and more structured approaches to prepare children for the primary education level (Pandesari, 2024). The main focus of this study is to examine teachers' understanding of the developmental characteristics of children during the transition period, as well as to assess their pedagogical competencies and readiness to accommodate the diverse needs of students. In addition, this research also explores the extent of teachers' skills in designing adaptive, flexible, and responsive learning strategies to support children's adaptation to a more structured learning environment in primary school.

In facing the challenges of transition, teachers' pedagogical competence is a key factor in creating a conducive learning environment, especially in providing special attention to children who need extra support during the adaptation process. Therefore, this study also evaluates to what extent teachers are able to design lesson plans that align with the developmental needs of children at this transition stage. Furthermore, this study seeks to identify the barriers teachers face in facilitating the transition of children from PAUD to SD and the solutions implemented to address these challenges. The results of this research are expected to strengthen teachers' competencies and motivation in supporting children's transition effectively, creating positive learning experiences, and optimizing children's development from an early age.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore teachers' willingness to facilitate the transition of children from PAUD to SD at SDN 01 Bulu, Jepara Regency. A case study method was chosen to gather in-depth information about teachers' experiences and perspectives. The research was conducted at SDN 01 Bulu, with research subjects being teachers who teach in grade 1. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers, direct observations using early classroom learning activities, and the analysis of documents such as lesson plans and class diaries (Yantoro et al., 2023). Data were analyzed using a thematic approach, which included data reduction, coding, and identifying key themes such as pedagogical readiness, teaching approaches, adaptation challenges, and the solutions used by teachers(Dr. Umar Sidiq, M.Ag Dr. Moh. Miftachul Choiri, 2019). The triangulation technique compares data from various sources to

ensure the validity of the information. To ensure the accuracy of the data, the researcher used triangulation techniques. The research sources compared data from interviews, observations, and documents to obtain accurate and complementary information. The researcher asked for confirmation from the research subjects regarding the interview and observation results to ensure that the data and interpretations aligned with the teachers' experiences. The researcher documented each stage of data collection and analysis to ensure the research process was transparent and its results could be accountable. By using this method, the study provides detailed insights into teachers' readiness to support the transition process of children from PAUD to SD and offers appropriate recommendations to develop the necessary competencies and support for teachers at SDN 01 Bulu, Jepara Regency.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research conducted at SD Negeri 01 Bulu in Jepara Regency, the observation results indicate that the school is ready for the transition process from PAUD to Primary School (SD), with various strategies already prepared by the teachers, especially the first-grade teachers. These strategies involve the teachers' readiness in handling the transition of children from PAUD to Primary School at SDN 01 Bulu, Jepara Regency, reflecting a variety of findings that highlight both the challenges and efforts made by the teachers. According to interviews with the involved teachers, the majority of them understand the importance of a smooth transition for the children's development. However, despite having this understanding, some teachers admit to difficulties in adjusting their teaching methods from the more structured environment of SD to the play-based learning environment of PAUD. This difference creates challenges for the teachers, especially the first-grade teachers, in shifting the mindset and approach of children who are used to informal activities to a more formal and organized learning system. (Susiana & Anwar, 2024).

Teachers' experiences in handling children, particularly first-grade teachers who are new to the primary school level, show that although most of them have been trained to manage transitions, they feel they are not fully prepared. This is due to the lack of specialized training on how to effectively support children transitioning from PAUD. Without a deeper understanding of early childhood psychology, the transition can become more challenging for both teachers and children who are adapting (Yantoro et al., 2023). Therefore, more structured training focused on managing the transition between these two educational levels is essential so that teachers can be better prepared and have more effective strategies in supporting children who have just entered primary school (Bersekolah et al., 2025).

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Curriculum flexibility to support the transition from kindergarten to primary school is an important approach to allow children to successfully adapt to changes in their environment, learning methods, and more structured academic demands. During this transition process, a flexible curriculum allows adjustments in teaching strategies, enabling students to adapt gradually without stress. One key aspect of curriculum flexibility is its holistic developmental approach, where learning focuses not only on cognitive development but also on social-emotional growth, motor skills, and children's independence. This is crucial because the psychological and emotional readiness of children at the early stage of primary school plays a major role in how well they adapt to their new learning environment. One way to achieve curriculum flexibility is by adopting teaching methods that retain play as a means of exploration and active learning. In PAUD, children are accustomed to learning through play, social interactions, and creative activities, which stimulate their natural development. Therefore, primary schools, especially in lower grades, still embrace a more inquiry-based and interactive learning approach so that children do not experience too many drastic changes. For example, continuing to integrate project-based learning, role-playing, and collaborative activities into the primary school curriculum can help children feel comfortable and more engaged in the learning process. This not only helps students gain a deeper understanding of academic concepts but also makes learning enjoyable and motivating.

Furthermore, curriculum flexibility is also reflected in the adjustment of learning objectives that are tailored to the readiness and needs of each student. Since children have different developmental levels, it is important for teachers to provide space for differentiated learning rather than adhering to uniform guidelines. At the early stage of primary school, the focus is not immediately on strict academic achievement, but on strengthening basic skills such as communication, socialization, independence, and the development of self-confidence to participate in the learning process. This approach does not impose overly high academic expectations on children at the beginning of their school life, but rather guides them to gradually enhance their thinking and learning abilities in a more natural and developmentally appropriate way.

Besides the role of teachers, curriculum flexibility also provides space for parental involvement in supporting the children's transition process. Schools can organize orientation programs or consultation sessions with parents to provide an understanding of how they can support their children during this transition period. Parents can also be invited to participate in school activities that involve the children, helping them feel more connected to the new environment their child is facing. Parental support is crucial in providing a sense of security and selfconfidence to children during the transition, as children tend to feel more prepared when they receive encouragement and motivation from those closest to them.

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Finally, the success of implementing a flexible curriculum to support the transition from PAUD to SD will also greatly depend on continuous evaluation. Teachers must conduct regular formative assessments to monitor the progress of each student and adjust the learning strategies that are most suitable for them. These assessments are not limited to academic aspects alone but also include social-emotional aspects, communication skills, and the child's independence in the learning process within the new environment. With an approach based on the needs and development of the child, a flexible curriculum is key to a smoother and more enjoyable transition experience, helping children become ready to learn in primary school. The results of the research conducted at SD Negeri 01 Bulu in Jepara Regency show that the school is ready for the transition process from PAUD to Primary School (SD), with various strategies already prepared by the teachers, especially the first-grade teachers, which include.

The Readiness of First-Grade Teachers in the Early Stage of the Transition from PAUD to Primary School (SD) for Students.

At SD Negeri 01 Bulu, Jepara Regency, the preparation of the first-grade teacher in welcoming PAUD students transitioning to Primary School (SD) begins with a deep understanding of the developmental stages of children and the differences in learning patterns between PAUD and Primary School. The first-grade teacher prepares a very welcoming and friendly classroom environment with the goal of reducing anxiety and helping children feel safe. The first-grade teacher also ensures that the learning materials provided are not too heavy or difficult but are adjusted to the abilities of children who have just transitioned from PAUD. Additionally, the first-grade teacher coordinates with PAUD educators to obtain information related to each child's characteristics and needs to facilitate a smoother transition. The implementation of a fun and play-based approach becomes part of the preparation so that children remain enthusiastic about learning in the more structured environment of primary school. According to Slameto, readiness describes the overall state of the teacher's ability to react or respond to a situation in a certain way. Furthermore, according to Suharsim Alikunto, preparation is a competence, and an effective teacher is one who has sufficient preparation to lay the foundation for initial readiness as a teacher.

Peters also argues that teachers have duties and responsibilities as educators, administrators, and classroom managers (Afifatun Nisak & Yuliastuti, 2022). In this case, teacher training refers to the transfer of general reactions and attitude skills. This includes the mindset, skills, and attitudes that one needs to have and prepare to carry out specific tasks. In primary and secondary education, teachers are described as professionals whose main role is to teach, guide, train, and evaluate students. Thus, teacher readiness can be interpreted as the condition of a teacher who is socially and emotionally competent and capable of teaching.(Ansumanti,

2022). Septiana and Hanafi state that the new curriculum is an independent education curriculum, which requires both teachers and students to be prepared, including adapting to technology.

To be a good teacher, one must be digitally literate, including mastering the four pillars of digital literacy (Ayu Rizki Septiana & Moh. Hanafi, 2022). Current learning is closely related to digital literacy, as all educational materials provided by the government are available in digital format on the Merdeka Mengajar app and the Ministry of Education and Culture's website. Teachers with the right digital skills must learn a lot to prepare for delivering the independent curriculum. Additionally, community-based activities help teachers prepare for new challenges in the independent curriculum. More community-based digital literacy services are needed to prepare teachers to implement their own curriculum.

Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

Minister Nadhim Makarim desires an independent education that adapts to the needs of the times and has instructed the introduction of a curriculum for independent learning (Anridzo et al., 2022). The implementation of this unique curriculum is more flexible compared to the previous curriculum. For example, schools are given full freedom to determine the development of textbooks and teaching materials. The benefit of applying this independent curriculum is that it allows teachers to develop creative and unique teaching methods. By implementing the curriculum independently in first grade, students are given the freedom to study the material on their own. You can teach it in sequence or randomly, depending on which parts need to be learned first (Aprima & Sari, 2022).

According to Nurwiatin, the teacher's ability to effectively implement the curriculum regulations set by the government will be crucial for the successful application of those regulations (Nurwiatin, 2022). The perspectives and interpretations of teachers have varying impacts on implementation. The quality of education can be influenced, either positively or negatively, by changes in the curriculum. Children can learn and grow with the support of school administrators, teachers, faculty, students, and even the school itself. The lessons taught by teachers must be easy for students to understand, and the students themselves must be highly qualified so that they are motivated and enthusiastic about learning. Each lesson teaches students creative and critical problem-solving skills. School principals need to maintain good relationships with their superiors and subordinates, but they also need to pay attention to the quality of both teachers and students.

Development of learning in the form of an integrated system or learning plan consists of several interconnected components. The plan for implementing the independent curriculum at SD Bulu 01 begins with an initial evaluation. Based on the interview results, the principal explained that when introducing independent learning, they first conduct an initial assessment to determine the students'

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understanding. Learning activities need to consider the processes of planning, implementation, and evaluation. This plan is the first step in preparing for effective implementation. After the learning activities, an evaluation is conducted to determine whether the learning outcomes were successful.

The separate curriculum is being implemented gradually to give teachers, school principals, and the Department of Education more time to learn. Every aspect of the education system needs to adapt to changes in the curriculum framework. For this approach to have the desired impact, the improvement of Indonesia's educational standards needs to be managed carefully. The autonomous curriculum provides teachers with the freedom to adjust the curriculum. Educational modules are available that are tailored to the circumstances, characteristics, and needs of the students (Ahmad, 2024). This learning approach allows teachers to assist students according to their specific needs and enables schools to use various teaching methods, freeing students from the requirement to excel in all areas (Romadhon et al., 2023).

Difficulties faced by first-grade teachers at SDN 01 Bulu

First-grade teachers at SDN 01 Bulu, Jepara Regency, face several difficulties in managing the transition of children from PAUD to elementary school. One of the main challenges is the difference in teaching approaches, where children from PAUD are accustomed to more flexible, play-based learning, while in elementary school, they have to start following a more structured routine (Maulani & Mutiara, 2023). This often causes children to struggle with adjusting to the more formal schedules and activities, such as following more complex instructions or completing individual tasks. Additionally, some children also show difficulties in managing their emotions, such as anxiety or fear of the new environment. Teachers also have to deal with differences in the pace of children's learning abilities, as some children may already be ready to engage with basic academic lessons, while others still require a more gentle and in-depth approach.

Additionally, first-grade teachers at SDN 01 Bulu also face challenges in building children's concentration and endurance during longer class hours. In PAUD, children are accustomed to shorter, more varied activities, while in elementary school, they are required to focus longer on one lesson. This often leads to children's inability to maintain attention for extended periods, which affects the effectiveness of learning. Furthermore, differences in the levels of social and emotional readiness among children in interacting with their classmates also pose barriers. Some children may already be independent enough to collaborate in groups, while others still feel anxious or struggle to adapt to the more complex social dynamics in elementary school.

Teachers need to carefully identify the individual needs of each child and provide extra attention to those who require additional support in these socialemotional aspects (Hanifah & Euis Kurniati, 2024). These challenges require teachers to have flexibility in their approach and classroom management, as well as the skills to handle the highly diverse dynamics within the classroom.

Strategies or Approaches Prepared and Applied by Teachers at SDN 01 Bulu to Address the Transition from PAUD to Elementary School

To address these challenges, the teachers at SDN 01 Bulu implement various strategies designed to accommodate the needs of children transitioning to elementary school. One of the main approaches used is play-based learning, where enjoyable activities such as educational games and group work are integrated into the learning process to help keep the children engaged and prevent them from feeling overwhelmed. Teachers also use differentiated instruction, paying special attention to children who require different approaches based on their readiness. Additionally, the teachers provide positive reinforcement through praise and small rewards for every achievement, in order to build the children's self-confidence and motivation. The use of engaging teaching aids and interactive learning media is also part of the strategy to introduce basic academic material in a more interesting and enjoyable way (Rahmawati & Kurniawati, 2024).

Furthermore, the teachers at SDN 01 Bulu, Jepara, also involve parents in the transition process by holding regular meetings to discuss the children's development and provide practical suggestions so that parents can support learning at home. Good communication between the school and parents is expected to create synergy that accelerates the children's adaptation to the elementary school environment. In addition, a character-based approach is also implemented to help children understand the importance of values such as discipline, cooperation, and responsibility. Through the habituation of positive behaviors, such as mutual respect, following rules, and developing independent attitudes, teachers aim to form a strong character in children to face academic and social challenges at school. This effort is hoped to make the transition from PAUD to SD smoother and minimize stress and confusion. Success in this approach depends on the consistency of the teachers in implementing the strategies that have been carefully prepared, as well as support from the school and family environment.

How Teachers Help Children Adjust to a New Social Environment in Primary School (SD) at SDN 01 Bulu

The first-grade teachers at SDN 01 Bulu, Jepara, pay great attention to the importance of children's social adaptation to their new environment in primary school. To help children adjust, the teachers create an inclusive and welcoming classroom atmosphere where every child feels valued and accepted. The teachers

facilitate group activities and games that promote cooperation, getting to know each other, and building self-confidence. With this approach, children are encouraged to share, work together in group tasks, and interact with their peers. Teachers also provide space for children to express their feelings, allowing them to talk about any anxiety or concerns they may have. In addition, the teacher collaborates with parents to ensure ongoing support at home and to learn more about the child's social needs, which helps the teacher create a better experience at school (Herawati et al., 2025). Through this approach, children are able to adjust more easily to their new social environment and feel more comfortable interacting with their peers and teachers in elementary school.

In addition, teachers also integrate activities that teach social values, such as empathy, respect for differences, and effective communication skills. Through moral stories or class discussions, children are encouraged to understand the importance of valuing friends, resolving conflicts constructively, and learning to collaborate in diversity. In this regard, teachers not only play the role of academic instructors but also serve as promoters of building strong social character in children. To support the holistic social development of children, teachers also provide opportunities for children to participate in extracurricular activities that strengthen relationships among students, such as group practices and group games. (Fitri & Neviyarni, 2024). Thus, students not only adapt to the academic environment but also to the overall school culture. Through this comprehensive approach, it is hoped that each child will successfully navigate the transition process, feel accepted, and develop social skills that will support their long-term success.

CONCLUSION

The transition from early childhood education (PAUD) to elementary school (SD) should be an enjoyable process for preschool children, providing them with a smooth shift from kindergarten to Phase A or primary school in PAUD facilities. This process should eliminate the need for entrance tests for children. A gender-neutral approach would be followed by a two-week induction phase involving teachers and students, students and teachers, classmates, and the school environment. The aim is to equip children with basic learning skills.

The recommendations from this study suggest that the transition from PAUD to SD in all school settings should be made as comfortable as possible to provide students with a sense of security and protection. The transition from kindergarten to elementary school is strongly supported by both parents and teachers. The goal of this transition is to develop basic skills in children. Reading, writing, and arithmetic should be taught as necessary skills, but children should not be forced to master these skills immediately.

After realizing the goals of the program, the consensus emerged to eliminate reading, writing, and math tests as prerequisites for entering elementary school, and instead focus on a school orientation phase that introduces children to their new school environment. The aim of this transition is to improve the quality of the school environment and its community. However, parents and teachers still do not fully understand how the transition process is implemented. Teachers prepare for the PAUD-SD transition by planning their curriculum according to the applicable technological standards. The role of the environment in the PAUD-SD transition provides deeper insight into how different environmental factors influence children's adaptation and development. This environment includes the microenvironment (family, school, playground), meso-environment (interactions between micro-environments), exosystem, and macro-system (norms, policies, external factors) that shape children's transition experiences. The environment plays a crucial role in the success of this process. The success of the program depends on the available skills and knowledge, emphasizing the need for a holistic educational approach that utilizes the environment as a facilitator for a smoother educational transition.

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