



Training Reading, Writing and Counting Skills at Ra Asybaluna Sibuhuan

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of Calistung in Early Childhood is an important step in forming the basics of children's education. Teaching practice at RA Asybaluna where teachers can be an effective forum for introducing these basic concepts to children. This journal discusses the importance of introducing calistung to early childhood through the role of teachers in the teaching practice program at RA Asybaluna. The importance of introducing calistung at an early age lies in the child's ability to develop basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic. Calistung not only helps children prepare for formal education, but also builds self-confidence, creativity and problem-solving abilities. Teachers play a central role in teaching this foundation, in the face of the fast information era. The introduction of calistung in early childhood also helps children become better prepared to face academic challenges and contributes to the development of their overall potential. Therefore, the teaching practice program at Ra Asybaluna which prioritizes this approach will provide long-term benefits for early childhood development.

1. Introduction

The introduction of reading, writing and counting (calistung) is not allowed to be taught directly as learning to students in kindergarten. Many observers in the field of education spoke up. The test of reading, writing and counting (calistung) as well as hijaiyah letters for prospective elementary school students is considered by the Ministry of Education and Culture to be inappropriate and burdensome. When the test is implemented, children have already been taught reading, writing and counting in kindergarten. Reading ability is one of the basic skills that is very important in children's educational development, especially at an early age. Reading not only serves as a tool to obtain information, but is also key in children's cognitive, social and emotional development. Therefore, it is important to instil reading skills early on, one of which is through activities that are fun and in accordance with the child's developmental stage. One way that can be used to improve reading skills is through structured games, which can encourage children's interest and motivation to learn to read.

So it becomes quite challenging to teach children. The goal of education in general is to provide an environment that allows students to develop talents and abilities optimally. The development of these abilities requires conditions and stimulation that are in accordance with the needs of children so that their growth and development is achieved according to and even beyond their age. The purpose of the kindergarten learning activities programme is to help lay the foundation towards the development of attitudes, knowledge, skills and creativity needed by students in adjusting to their environment for further growth and development. In addition, some things to keep in mind that childhood is a sensitive period to receive various stimuli from the environment to support physical and spiritual development which also determines the success of

students following further education.

Children are a trust that must be safeguarded and directed to the best education. Inaccuracy in education can lead to disruption in the growth and development of children. Early childhood is a child who is at a golden age, because at an early age children are able to accommodate a variety of knowledge. If at that age the child does not get a lot of things or knowledge, then the golden age will pass just like that. In the early age range, children are known to experience the golden period, which is a time when children are sensitive to receive various stimuli. The sensitive period in each child is individual.

The sensitive period is the period of maturity of physical and psychological functions that are ready to respond to stimulation provided by the environment. This period is the first basic laying period for developing cognitive, psychomotor, language, socioemotional and spiritual abilities (R.R Aliyah. 2021). Games, whether done individually or in groups, are an effective method to introduce and train reading skills in early childhood. Through games, children not only learn in a fun way, but can also improve language skills, both in terms of listening, speaking, and understanding new vocabulary. Well-designed games can improve the ability to recognise letters, words, and the association between sounds and letters, all of which are important components in beginning reading.

In order to optimise children's growth and development, a child-centred learning approach is learning through play, learning that allows children to actively interact by exploring the learning that is considered the most appropriate for early childhood is the play model. Because the world of play is a child's world. Through children can learn many things, without the child realising and without feeling burdened. The child's childhood life has a great influence on the child's life in the future, thus the principle held by education personnel in kindergarten so that various kinds of education and efforts help children to be able to achieve life goals or child development. Because the world of children is the world of play, then in early childhood education institutions (Kindergarten) given lessons that can stimulate the soul of the child by playing. Games in kindergarten have an influence on the child's own personal development, the development of creative expression, the development of social aspects and others.

Through play, children can learn about rules, socialising, self-positioning, emotional management, tolerance, cooperation, giving in, sportsmanship, and other positive attitudes. It is very difficult to find a substitute for activities that are commensurate with play activities, including instructional activities in the classroom. For a child, play activities are much more effective in achieving goals than the instructional learning process in the classroom. Instructional activities have the scope of play. In the outline of the kindergarten learning programme, play is also a principle in kindergarten teaching, where play is the best way to develop students' abilities. Before attending school, play is a natural way for children to discover their environment, other people and themselves. In principle, play contains a sense of fun and is more concerned with the process than the end result (U.D Fauziah 2020).

The golden age is an important perception in early childhood. environment. Learning that provides a sense of security and learning that is able to bridge children to be able to adjust to the next developmental environment (Armanullah 2018). The above statement is increasingly convincing with the phenomenon of efforts to increase children's competition in reading writing and counting in early childhood in the design and as well as those carried out by parents and educational institutions. Many children are studying in preschool education at RA Asybaluna. These activities have even been followed by children since they were in level A of Kindergarten or since the age of 4 years. Calistung tutoring activities are widely followed by kindergarten children, even most kindergarten children follow the programme.

2. Method

This teaching practice aims to make it easier for early childhood to understand the concept of calistung by providing basic skills to produce children's understanding in the development of cognitive and physical motor aspects through the method of learning while playing. Teaching practice activities at RA Asybaluna, Barumun District, Padang Lawas Regency, since 6 November 2024. The implementation method that occurs in this practice is the direct teaching method. Teaching activities begin with opening activities, core activities, and closing activities. This study uses an integrated quantitative and qualitative approach in an effort to improve reading, writing, and counting skills in early childhood. The methods used involved data collection through observation, tests, and interviews.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the implementation of teaching practice activities at RA Asybaluna, a series of learning activities are carried out to improve the understanding of reading, writing, and counting (calistung) in early childhood groups. A series of activities to improve children's understanding of calistung are carried out through direct practice by teaching or explaining and evaluating children. There are several methods including: giving assignments is done every day, teachers tend to use worksheets when learning activities in the classroom. Children are asked to do the tasks on the worksheets given by the teacher and then collected on the same day. Usually, the tasks regarding calistung learning are thickening numbers, writing number names, and thickening words.

Secondly, habituation, a method of habituation that is carried out when lining up in front of the class while counting in order, counting friends who are present, and those who are absent. Additional tutoring method activities, the tutoring method is expected to help children 'to learn more about calistung and also be able to learn while playing, telling stories, and socialising with friends outside of school hours. The next stage is evaluation, through calistung learning, the goals at RA Asybaluna have been achieved, it can be seen from the responses and accompanying results such as children feeling happy when given reading, writing, and counting learning materials with various fun methods. in supporting calistung learning (Sufa 2020).

Third, writing activities can be seen during teaching practice at RA Asybaluna sibuhuan. Writing activities are more often done on children's worksheets. In addition to the worksheet, children also write on the writing paper. At the beginning of the activity, children are asked to write their own names neatly, the activity is done simultaneously and directed by the teacher. For the introduction of letters, using letter cards, colourful embossed letters. Third counting is one of the calistung learning activities at RA Asybaluna sibuhuan. Counting can certainly be done when children are in the classroom or outside the classroom. The counting activity that is done repeatedly is when the children march in front of the class. When entering the class, each child mentions their row number while high-fiving the teacher. Inside the classroom, children count the children who are present and absent. Outside the classroom, children play cricket with numbers while mentioning the numbers they step on.

In addition, the results of calistung learning provided are that early childhood children can understand and distinguish numbers and letters so that in terms of reading, writing, and counting most of them are fluent. In the implementation of calistung learning can run well, the material that can be accepted by children and the methods used are well received by children. Reading ability is a basic skill that is very important for children's cognitive development. Based on the results of the study, students who had participated in the reading training programme showed significant improvement in the aspects of reading fluency and text comprehension. The programme uses a letter- and syllable-based approach, which is proven to be effective for introducing basic reading concepts. In addition, regular reading activities also help children to be more confident in using their reading skills. The continuous reading programme has a positive impact on their reading comprehension skills, as well as expanding their vocabulary.

In terms of numeracy skills, this research integrates basic maths concepts with a more fun approach, such as through number games and counting exercises in everyday life. The children involved in the counting training experienced an improvement in understanding basic maths concepts, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The use of visual media such as pictures and counting aids also accelerated the process of students' understanding of the material taught. The improvement in learning outcomes can be seen in the children's ability to solve simple maths problems correctly and quickly. The use of an interactive and fun approach proved very effective in increasing children's motivation to learn. Activities designed to introduce the three skills simultaneously develop their cognitive abilities in a broader context. The involvement of parents in assisting children is also an important factor in the success of this programme.

After carrying out teaching practice at RA Asybaluna sibuhuan, efforts to improve early childhood understanding through private lessons in calistung were carried out. Calistung is a learning of reading, writing, and counting for starters. The first is reading, reading activities can be seen in routine activities every day storybook reading activities are carried out before learning begins, carried out for 10 minutes. For incidental reading activities, every child who has finished

doing the tasks given by the teacher is then directed to read storybooks and play with the available APE.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of calistung learning in RA Asybaluna starts from teaching practice, the target of calistung learning is students. These components combine and influence each other in achieving the success of learning objectives. Calistung learning materials include reading, writing, and counting materials. The material is implemented with a learning method, namely, the method while playing. Based on the results of the research, children's response to calistung learning at RA Asybaruna is very good, students are enthusiastic in participating in every calistung learning so that students quickly understand. This activity by student teaching practice is very helpful for students to get used to learning more actively to read, write, and count. Overall, structured training to improve reading, writing and counting skills has a positive impact on children's development. Through the right method, which is based on a fun and applicable approach, children's basic skills can develop optimally. Therefore, it is important to continue integrating such training programmes in teaching and learning activities at the primary education level to support children's better cognitive development.

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