

The Role of Teachers in Using Educational Game Tools at Ar-Rahmat PAUD, Percut Sei Tuan District

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ABSTRAK

Keberadaan PAUD atau pendidikan pra sekolah semakin dibutuhkan di masyarakat. Hal ini terutama berlaku karena pertumbuhan penduduk yang semakin cepat saat ini, yang menyebabkan tuntutan untuk menyediakan institusi pendidikan terbaik bagi anak-anak. PAUD merupakan pendidikan yang diberikan kepada anak usia 0 hingga 6 tahun dalam membantu pertumbuhan dan perkembangannya untuk memasuki jenjang pendidikan sekolah dasar selanjutnya. Dalam hal ini guru memiliki peran yang sangat penting bagi anak, karena mereka berfungsi sebagai contoh atau teladan bagi anak. Dalam proses pembelajaran, gurulah yang dapat mengatur pembelajaran yang efektif dan menyesuaikannya dengan tahapan perkembangan anak. Proses pembelajaran akan menarik jika sumber dan media belajar digunakan dengan benar sesuai dengan rancangan pembelajaran. Adapun tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk mengetahui peran guru PAUD dalam penggunaan APE dan mengidentifikasi dampak penggunaan APE terhadap perkembangan anak di PAUD, serta mengetahui kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh guru PAUD saat menggunakan APE sebagai alat bantu pembelajaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dan melihat bagaimana guru PAUD menggunakan APE di lembaga pendidikan anak usia dini (khususnya di PAUD Ar-Rahmat). Teknik pengumpulan data yang dilakukan peneliti adalah dengan menggunakan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru PAUD sangat berperan penting dalam memilih, merancang, dan mengintegrasikan APE ke dalam proses pembelajaran, yang berdampak positif pada perkembangan anak.

Keyword: Game Edukasi; Proses Pembelajaran; Perkembangan Anak

ABSTRACT

The existence of PAUD or pre-school education is increasingly needed in society. This is especially true because of the current rapid population growth, which causes demands to provide the best educational institutions for children. PAUD is an education given to children aged 0 to 6 years in helping their growth and development to enter the next level of elementary school education. In this case, teachers have a very important role for children because they function as examples or role models for children. In the learning process, teachers are the ones who can organize effective learning and adjust it to the stages of child development. The learning process will be interesting if learning resources and media are used correctly according to the learning design. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of PAUD teachers in the use of APE and identify the impact of using APE on child development in PAUD, as well as to determine the difficulties faced by PAUD teachers when using APE as a learning aid. This study uses a qualitative approach, and looks at how PAUD teachers use APE in early childhood education institutions (especially in PAUD Ar-Rahmat). The data collection techniques used by researchers were by using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The results of the study show that PAUD teachers play a very important role in selecting, designing, and integrating APE into the learning process, which has a positive impact on child development.

Keyword: Educational Games; Learning Process; Child Development

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Early childhood education (PAUD) is defined in Permendikbud 146 article 1 as a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to 6 years and carried out through educational stimuli that help children's growth and development, so that children are ready to enter further school. As is known, this period is also known as the "golden age", where children's development is very fast and is the most significant period in the formation of children's character. Children's learning activities consist of various fun games that are tailored to children's talents, interests and abilities. However, these activities are directed and guided by the teacher. (Khaira & Yogyakarta, 2022).

Because teachers play a very important role in early childhood education apart from the family, that is, professional teachers are needed. Suyanto and Asep are of the opinion that a teacher's job is to teach, educate, guide, nurture and provide role models for their children in the future. Therefore, teachers' duties are not only to teach, they must also understand how to develop children's creativity. According to Masnipal, in PAUD/TK institutions, the key to the growth and development of children's creativity lies in the teacher, and the availability of facilities, media and a wealth of children's learning resources is the school's responsibility. Teachers must be able to build creatively oriented learning in the classroom. Teachers also help in growth and development. Because young children are curious, like to imagine, debate, explore and try new things. (Revelation, 2019).

According to Andang Ismail, educational games (APE) are very fun activities and educational tools that are useful for improving language skills, thinking and getting along with other people. APE also helps, strengthens and develops the child's limbs, and develops their personality. (Dewi, 2018). Another opinion, according to Fathul & Nailur, is that educational game tools are games that have elements of learning that are obtained from things that already exist, are inherent, and are part of the game itself. In addition, the game also stimulates the player's senses. Hearing, sight, sound (in terms of speaking and communication), writing, thinking power, cognitive balance, and motor skills (in terms of movement balance, strength, skill and dexterity), as well as social and spiritual wealth including character, nobility, love, compassion, ethics, honesty, manners and manners, healthy competition and sacrifice. (Anggraini et al., 2021).

APE not only has many benefits for children's growth and development, but can also give children the opportunity to socialize with their surrounding environment. Educational game tools (APE) improve physical, language, cognitive and social aspects, this was stated by Cahyani. (Kusuma & Listiana, 2021). In conclusion, Montolalu once said that teachers have many roles. One of the teacher's roles is as a facilitator in an environment that can support learning media and involve teachers in helping children behave creatively. During the activity, the teacher must be able to meet all the children's needs. For example, teachers must provide all children's educational play equipment, if the teacher wants to play with children. This is what makes researchers interested in researching "The Role of Teachers in Using Educational Game Tools in Ar-Rahmat PAUD, Percut Sei Tuan District".

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research approach. Based on Creswell's opinion, in qualitative research, knowledge is obtained through interpretation of various opinions and input from all participants who are directly involved in the research, not just from the researcher's views. The data sources vary, such as observation notes, interview notes, individual experiences, and history. The data is descriptive, that is, the data is in the form of categorized symptoms or in other forms, such as photos, documents and field notes when the research was carried out. (Rukin, 2019).

Furthermore, in the book written by Mayang Sari Lubis, it is explained that photos are not only taken by researchers themselves, but can also be produced by other people. Because documentation is divided into 2 types, namely personal documents and official documents. (Lubis, 2018).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the interview about the role of teachers in using educational game tools at PAUD Ar-Rahmat, Percut Sei Tuan District for 2024-2025 are presented in the table. 1 below:

Tabel 1. Interview Recapitulation The Role Of The Teacher In The Use Of Educative Game Tools In Preschool Ar-Rahmat Percut Sei Tuan District Year 2024-2025

No	Teacher's Name	Information Obtained
1	Na'imah, S.Pd.	I often use educational game tools (APE) in the learning process in the classroom. There are many variations in making educational game tools, depending on what theme is being implemented at that time, such as introducing 4 syllables and making them depends on the level of difficulty, it can take time. 1-2 hours. The benefits of this educational game tool can increase children's enthusiasm for learning, starting from the child's motoric, sensory and emotional aspects, and the children's response is very active, enthusiastic and happy by using colorful educational game tools, so that there is an increase in enthusiasm for learning. children, and achieve the desired learning outcomes and in accordance with expectations. As for making educational game tools, I didn't experience any difficulties, but when dealing with children while using these educational game tools, some children understood and there were some children who didn't understand. My way of handling children while implementing this educational game tool is by inviting the children to sing and do ice breaking first. Even though there are still some children who still don't understand, thank God the average score has been achieved. My message and suggestion for PAUD teachers out there, we must use educational game tools (APE) so that children are active in learning and easily understand the lesson.
2	Nurhalimah Batubara	I always use educational game tools and the process of making them can take up to 3 hours and if the educational game tools are easy, it only takes 1 hour to complete. The activities I have done when using educational game tools are standard things, such as recognizing letters, numbers and colors. This will provide many benefits, such as children's learning becoming more creative and understanding the lessons I provide better. The children's response was very good, full of enthusiasm, and their curiosity was very high. Then there is an increase in children's learning, so that they master the learning given and increase their knowledge. There are almost no difficulties in making APE, there is no difficulty in introducing educational game tools, because I am used to using educational game tools and am used to handling children so it becomes easier, because from the start I taught, I have applied discipline to children, because discipline is the main thing, and previously I have also explained to the students about the learning that will be carried out. Even so, there are still children who experience difficulties in learning, because children's intelligence varies and children who experience these difficulties are often absent. My message and advice to other teachers is, let us together increase our creativity as teachers, so that our schools can be more advanced in the future.
3	Nazwa Afifah Siregar	I often use educational game tools. In making APE media it takes me 30 minutes if the APE is easy, but if it is difficult it can take up to 2 hours. The educational play tools I use include learning about myself, the environment, numbers, and colors in different languages. The benefits of the educational game tools that I use are that children will become more aware of the learning being carried out and their social emotions will be better maintained, children's creativity will also increase. The children's response was also very happy, enthusiastic, and kept the children from getting bored. There was an increase in learning after I carried out the lesson using this educational game tool, and the children also understood the lesson more easily. In making this educational game tool, I didn't find any difficulties, but getting the children to focus on the future was still less than optimal. The way I handle children is by asking them to sing or clap their hands. Even so, there are still some children who still experience difficulties in learning, this is because the children are still not focused on moving forward, but many also understand learning. My advice to other teachers is to always use this educational game tool, so that children become more creative.

From the results of interviews with the three teachers above, it is clear that all teachers have used educational game tools well. This shows that teachers at PAUD Ar-Rahmat have been able to utilize it during the learning process. By using educational game tools, teachers have improved 6 aspects of children's development, namely religious and moral values, physical motoric, cognitive, language, social emotional and artistic. Researchers also saw directly (when carrying out observations) that several teachers had used APE during the learning process. It can be seen from the picture of teacher and student activities in using APE



Figure 1. Teaching practice

It can be concluded that the teacher's role in using educational game tools in the learning process is carried out in various ways. Utilizing educational game tools in the learning process requires teacher creativity, patience and tenacity in developing six aspects of child development, so as to support children's growth and development optimally. One indicator that teachers can use APE during the learning process is that they are able to use it during the learning process. However, some students lack focus in learning. Overall, it has gone well, but there are some shortcomings. Several journal articles and books have explained the meaning of educational game tools, the benefits of educational game tools, and the role of teachers in early childhood learning. More details are explained one by one below

A. *Meaning of educational game tools*

The definition of games is the same as the definition of educational game tools. Games have many purposes, and although each game performs a different function, they can also help children develop more than one aspect of development, and have cultural value. (Suyadi & Selvi, 2019).

Educational game tools are all types of games that function as a means or tool to illustrate material, stimulate aspects of children's development and skills, create fun, or provide educational value. Toys are used in play, and children unconsciously gain knowledge and understanding, as well as real-life learning experiences. (Mirta Haryani, 2020). The early childhood education system relies on developmentally focused learning. This is meaningful learning, supported by a supportive environment, and focused on the child's developmental needs. (Fasha & Hibana, 2023). At this age, children must remain involved in play activities, because they cannot be pulled out of their own world, namely play. Learning media is also very important for PAUD, because with the right media, the basic concept of learning while playing can be applied. This educational game tool (APE) is the term and is used to describe the media used in PAUD.

Effective use of APE can improve children's learning process, and make their learning interesting, effective and enjoyable. These gaming tools must also be easily accessible. (Muasmara et al., 2021). Educational game tools are used with the aim of supporting early childhood learning and have the following characteristics: 1). Adapted to the child's age and always carefully designed to meet the age range of early childhood. 2). APE is usually created to improve cognitive aspects that can help children practice critical thinking, which functions to develop various aspects of early childhood development. 3. There are various ways to use APE. 4. Safe to use. 5. Can encourage children to be active and creative. 6. Be constructive. (Rahma, 2017).

Don't forget, the games played by children should be fun and easy for children to understand, make them happy, and make children interact with their peers and the people around them. Children's games have become commonplace all over the world. Playing for children is like working for adults. Some children play appropriately, but others engage in "fairly dangerous" games like they did when they were children. This is where the role of educators is in guiding play towards the growth and development of children into good and complete human beings. (Abidin, 2023).

B. *Benefits of Educational Game Tools*

Educational play tools can provide a great opportunity for children to engage with a subject, while also helping to turn abstract concepts into concrete ones. Because APE answers children's play and educational

needs, the educational play equipment used in early childhood must be truly understood by PAUD teachers. This is due to the important role of teachers in the early childhood learning process. Promote children's development in all aspects. (Fasha & Hibana, 2023).

Rahmawati explained that educational games help children develop harmonious communicative relationships with their surrounding environment. This educational game allows children to communicate and interact with each other, thereby helping children's social and emotional development. (Rakhmawati, 2022).

The use of educational games also has a positive impact on various aspects of children's growth and development, including increasing children's independence and self-confidence in their overall personality, fostering children's creativity, increasing self-confidence, developing language skills, and developing fine and gross motor skills. (Andriani, 2021). Almost the same as the statement above, namely that one child's development that can be improved through educational play equipment is motor skills. According to Pura and Asnawati, motor skills are all movements that can be felt throughout the body. (Pura & Asnawati, 2019).

C. The Role of Teachers in Early Childhood Learning

Muhammad Anwar believes that the role of teachers is very important in the teaching and learning process. Among other things, teachers can function as a link between knowledge and their students, with the ability to make difficult things easy for children to understand. They can also act as mentors for children to develop better understanding and behavior. They can also function as game changers to make things more cheerful, and they can also serve as models that children can emulate, both verbally and behaviorally.

Another teacher's role is as a motivator. Children will see everything their teacher does and says all the time. Every thing can be used as an example by children, especially what the teacher says that makes them enthusiastic. This teacher's words will always be remembered by children. Because children are always considered white paper that can be colored according to the teacher's wishes, the teacher's role here is to change children's thinking.

In the final role of the teacher, the teacher must act as a manager who can manage children and the surrounding environment better. Teachers must become better at learning and personal behavior, which will impact their students. (Lailatul Mufriadah & Mufarochah, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

In using APE, the role of PAUD teachers is very important to support children's development. PAUD teachers act as designers, facilitators and evaluators who can help children learn in a fun and effective way. However, problems such as limited time and resources must be handled by the school as best as possible

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