
Demands for Early Childhood Education Teacher Competence in the Millennial Era

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Abstract

As the time goes by, people are triggered to participate in carrying out renewal and improvement in certain fields, including in education. Education is one of the important components in creating the qualified human resources. Since childhood, people study and learn with a variety of experiences every day. Education during the childhood is also called Early Childhood Education. The continuity of learning in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) has a major influence on the development of children towards adolescence to adulthood. As an educator, PAUD teacher must have good competence in teaching the students in the early childhood who are just beginning to enter the world of education. The rapid growth and use of information and communication technology can be used to maximize the learning process in early childhood; however, it should be adapted to the competencies that must be possessed by the teacher.

Keywords: Competence; Early Childhood; Early Childhood Education; Education; Teacher.

1. Introduction

Everyone, including a teacher, who has work responsibilities is demanded to be a professional human resource so that the works carried out will continue to run accordingly. Teacher is identical to teaching, educating, guiding, nurturing, and providing models for the students. In Indonesia, education is one of the important components that affect the quality of the country.

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Consequently, teachers need guidance to be effective in teaching and learning processes that will create a highly competitive nation. Teacher competence is needed in order to develop and demonstrate the behavior of education. It is not enough to just learn certain teaching skill, teachers need to merge and apply the interrelated skills and knowledge in real circumstances. In an effort to improve the quality of the country internally or externally in the eyes of the world, the Government has an important role in improving the quality of national education, including the implementation of an Early Childhood Education (PAUD/Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini) program. Learning is a lifelong activity. It is taken formally through education, such as: Early Childhood Education (PAUD), Elementary School (SD/Sekolah Dasar), Middle School (SMP/Sekolah Menengah Pertama), High School (SMA/Sekolah Menengah Atas), and University. Education is a bridge for humans to carry out life and it will have learning processes that teaches students to use the principle of education or learning theory that can help the success of students [8]. As the time goes by, human grows and develops. In the millennial era, technology shows very rapid development and has affected the learning process for the early childhood. In addition to traditional methods, teacher may take benefits of technology that can improve children's ability to be more advanced than those in the previous era. Teachers need to meet competitive demands to be able to teach their students. Guidance carried out by PAUD teachers is done by providing educational stimuli to help growth, physical and spiritual development in order children to have readiness to take further education. Authors in [9] suggest that education oriented to early childhood must be adjusted to the age level of the child, meaning that learning must be sought after, the abilities expected to be achieved, and learning activities that can motivate students to be done at their age. Efforts to initiate learning development in early childhood are focused on basic learning which includes growth, physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, language and communication. A research conducted by Baylor College of Medicine in [3] states that environment has an important role in the formation of optimal attitudes, personality, and development of children. Therefore, childhood aged 0 to 8 years is called the Golden Age which will only occur once in the development of human life, including brain growth through children's health, provision of adequate nutrition, and educational services. Teachers are required to develop their profession in educating the generation of the nation so that the students are able to achieve learning goals optimally. If teacher has low teaching competence, students will also be a low-quality generation. Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is one of the most basic levels of education to improve the nation's growth and development which is inseparable from the national education system policy. Teacher competence becomes an assessment in the national standard of education as a person in charge of managing learning processes. Demands as educators in providing quality learning can realize the implementation of education as a whole. The Indonesian government sets a standard that must be met by each teaching staff, regarding Governmental Regulation No. 19/2009 Article 22 which stipulates that educators must have academic qualifications and competencies as agents of learning, physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to realize national education goals. Competences as an agent of learning in primary and secondary education, as well as in Early Childhood Education (PAUD), include Pedagogical Competence, Personality Competence, Professional Competence, and Social Competence.

2. Discussion

The author in [2] argues that a job that is directly related to the needs of many people is teacher. Teacher determines the success or failure of efforts to improve quality and education innovation at the school level.

Teacher has an important role in developing the characters of the nation through personality and passion [4]. PAUD plays an important role in determining the history of subsequent child development since it is the basic foundation for a child's personality. Children who get an early education will improve their health and physical and mental well-being that have an impact on improving learning achievement, work ethic, productivity so that children are able to be independent and optimize their potential. The author in [11] has previously also conducted research on early childhood education teacher competence in the millennial era, particularly in the Pariangan District of Indonesia. The author in [11] showed that in the millennial period, the description of teachers' professional and pedagogical capabilities is already in the high category. However, the indicators of carrying out reflective, corrective, and innovative measures in increasing the quality of the early childhood development process and results must be improved once again. Understanding the characteristics of students is the main factor before determining the learning strategies, methods, and evaluation techniques in learning. These characteristics include student attitudes, student abilities in learning knowledge, and student learning styles. Therefore, teacher must be able to know the characteristics of students through teaching and learning interactions. The efforts to recognize and understand students are activities that take place continuously, because the needs of students are not permanent, it keeps changing in the stages of development. This success will form competencies as described by author in [5] as knowledge, skills, basic values reflected in the habit of thinking and acting. Therefore, to be PAUD teacher in the millennial era, some competencies must be possessed by educators. The Indonesian Government Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 16/2007 on Academic Qualification Standards and Teacher Competencies includes as follows.

2.1 Pedagogical Competence

Pedagogical competence is an ability of teacher to understand the early childhood and manage participatory learning [7]. Author in [10] describes the components of the pedagogical competence of Early Childhood Education Teachers.

1. Understanding the Early Childhood

If educators understand the early childhood as students, the indicator that can be utilized is to utilize the principles of cognitive development to introduce education to children.

2. Designing Learning Processes

Designing learning processes includes understanding the foundation of education for the benefit of learning [6]. Indicators that can create learning designs are determining learning strategies based on the character of early childhood and applying pedagogical principles.

3. Carrying out Learning Processes

In carrying out learning processes to implement conducive learning can be done by setting the background of learning using the pedagogical principles.

4. Evaluation of Learning Processes

Teachers carry out evaluations of students (early childhood) learning processes during the learning process.

The evaluation results will be used to determine the level of completeness of learning and the improvement of the quality of learning in early childhood.

5. Developing Early Childhood

Early childhood who just knows the world of education must be developed continuously to actualize the various potentials that they have. The sub-competence owned is to facilitate early childhood with the development of various provisions and potential possessed.

2.2 Personality Competence

Personality competence is a personal ability that reflects a wise, stable, mature, noble personality as a role model for students. Author in [10] describes the components of Early Childhood Education Teacher Personality competencies as follows.

1. Steady and Stable Personality

Teachers should have a steady and stable personality by acting based on legal norms and social norms, having consistency in acting in accordance with the norms, and being proud of being an early childhood educator. Early childhood is very vulnerable and in a 'golden age', they will have a new 'role model' in their attitude; thus, the personality of PAUD teachers is very important.

2. Adult and Wise Personality

PAUD teachers have an adult and wise personality so that the indicators shown are in accordance with their independence in acting and have a work ethic as teachers.

3. Authoritative Personality

In providing learning to students, an adult personality will create positive behaviours for early childhood to behave pleasantly.

4. Noble Moral Personality

Embedding the soul and religious norms is one of the important components in instilling habituation in students. Therefore, an honest, sincere, helpful personality needs to be taught so that the teacher is also a role model for his/her students.

2.3 Social Competence

Social competence is the ability of early childhood education teachers as a ‘role model’ to be proficient in communicating to early childhood, fellow educators, education staff, parents or guardians, and the surrounding community. PAUD teachers should have these social competences to understand and respect differences and have the ability to manage problems. PAUD teachers must also collaborate harmoniously with colleagues, principals, and other school community [1]. In addition, PAUD teachers are able to build a compact and dynamic team work and carry out effective communication so that the conditions created in the school are comfortable and enjoyable.

2.4 Professional Competence

In their jobs, teachers should have ability, expertise, and basic skills as educators in carrying out their duties in a real way. Professional ability has essential indicators, namely: understanding the teaching materials for early childhood education and understanding the structure and scientific concepts of early childhood learning relationships. In practice, the four teacher competencies have an entity. Teachers, especially PAUD teachers, must have skills in several areas such as how to open lessons, motivate students, manage the classes, and learn the strategies. The ability to master the teaching materials is an integral part of the teaching and learning processes. Indicators of these competencies refer to the Indonesian Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 16/2007 as seen in the Table 1.

Table 1: Early childhood teacher competences

No.	Competences	Indicators
1.	Pedagogical Competence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding the characteristics of early childhood students from various aspects such as physical, intellectual, socio-emotional, moral, and social background aspects. 2. Identifying early childhood students in various learning development fields. 3. Identifying early childhood students in various fields of development. 4. Understanding various learning theories and learning principles related to various fields of development. 5. Applying various approaches, strategies, approaches, methods, and learning while playing techniques that are holistic, authentic, meaningful and related to the various scope of development in Early Childhood Education. 6. Understanding the curriculum principles and determining educational development goals. 7. Choosing material for educational development activities, learning while playing activities that are in line with the development goals. 8. Arranging semester, weekly and daily plans in various development activities in kindergarten/PAUD. 9. Developing indicators and assessment instruments. 10. Understanding the principles of planning educative and fun development activities. 11. Developing a complete component of educational activities both in the classroom and outdoor activities. 12. Creating a playful, inclusive and democratic atmosphere game. 13. Using media and learning resources that are in accordance with the approach to learning while playing. 14. Implementing stages of children games in the development activities in kindergarten/PAUD. 15. Utilizing information and communication technology to improve student development quality.

		16. Understanding procedures for assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes.
		17. Using information from the results of assessment and evaluation to determine learning mastery.
		18. Using information from the result of assessment and evaluation to design remedial and enrichment programs.
		19. Communicating the results of assessment and evaluation to the students' parents or guardians.
2.	Personality Competence	1. Showing respect to the students without distinguishing their beliefs, ethnicity, and gender based on their area of origin or customs.
		2. Acting in accordance with religious norms that adhere to the laws and social norms that apply in the community or country of Indonesia.
		3. Showing firm, honest and humane behaviours.
		4. Showing behaviours that reflect piety and noble character.
		5. Showing positive behaviours that can be imitated by students and members of the surrounding community.
		6. Presenting oneself as a steady and stable person.
		7. Showing oneself as an adult, wise, and authoritative person.
		8. Showing the work ethic and high responsibility.
		9. Working independently and professionally.
		10. Being proud to be a teacher and confident in carrying out the duties as an educator.
		11. Understanding and applying the teacher professional code of ethics.
		12. Implementing the behaviours which are in accordance with the teacher professional code of ethics.
3.	Social Competence	1. Being inclusive and objective towards students, peers, and the surrounding environment in carrying out learning.
		2. Not showing discriminatory towards students, peers, and the surrounding environment because of differences in religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, and family background.
		3. Communicating with colleagues and the community in a good, polite, and empathetic way.
		4. Involving the students' parents and the community in learning programs to overcome the learning difficulties that the students face.
		5. Adapting to the workplace environment in order to increase effectiveness as an educator, including understanding the local language.
		6. Implementing various programs in the work environment to improve the quality of education in the concerned area.
		7. Communicating with colleagues, the scientific profession, and other scientific communities that can improve the quality of education.
		8. Communicating the results of learning innovations to the professional community in oral or written form.
4.	Professional Competence	1. Mastering the basic concepts of mathematics, science, language, social knowledge, religion, art, physical education, health and nutrition in each field of early childhood student development.
		2. Mastering the use of various game tools to develop physical, cognitive, social emotional aspects, moral, socio-cultural, and language learning in Early Childhood students.
		3. Mastering various children's games.
		4. Understanding the children ability in kindergarten/PAUD levels in each field of student development.
		5. Understanding children's progress in each field of student development.
		6. Understanding the objectives in each development activity.
		7. Choosing the appropriate material in the field of development for the level of student development.
		8. Processing material creatively in the field of development which is in accordance with the level of student development.
		9. Reflecting self-performance continuously.
		10. Using the results of reflection in order to increase professionalism.
		11. Conducting classroom action research to improve the professionalism.

12. Utilizing the information and communication technology in communicating with others.
 13. Utilizing the information and communication technology for self-development.
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Another demand that Early Childhood Education teachers needs to fulfil is that teachers should hold an educator certificate, instead of only holding the Bachelor (S1) or Diploma IV (D4) certificate. Based on the government regulations, teachers must demonstrate the ability of reflection to improve the quality of learning, use the results of reflection to improve the quality of learning in subjects, and develop their professionalism at work. A good teacher can lead the students into a better future. The teacher is able to lead students to learning to know, learning to do, and learning to be. Through quality learning, it is expected to create useful human beings for the country and the nation.

3. Conclusions

Education is one of the important components to create people with knowledge, social skills, personality, or other fields. Human beings learn starting from the early childhood in an education program for early childhood, PAUD. PAUD plays an important role in the development of childhood. Thus, teacher competence plays an important role to develop and demonstrate the behaviour of education. In addition to learn certain teaching skills, they have to merge and implement interrelated skills and knowledge in the real contexts. Competencies that Early Childhood Education teachers must have include pedagogical competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence. With these four competencies, they are expected to be able to make students continue to learn and be motivated to be achievers. Teachers who are able to master these competencies combined with the utilization of information and communication technologies will have the potential to create quality learning for students.

4. Recommendation

This study discusses the demands of teacher competence as educators in providing quality learning to students. To become a competent PAUD teacher in the Millennial Era, it takes effort and hard work to fulfill pedagogically, personality, social, and professional competencies. In addition, following the rhythm of the development and growth of students as well as tireless enthusiasm and motivation in fulfilling the hopes and dreams of students is also important. PAUD teachers also need to follow and master the development of information and communication technology and be able to adapt to the situation and conditions of the environment in which they work and the surrounding community.

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