

ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL READINESS IN CHILDREN AGED 5-6 YEARS AT PAUD UMMUL HABIBAH IN KLAMBIR V KEBON VILLAGE, DELI SERDANG REGENCY

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Abstract: The readiness of children to begin formal schooling is a critical factor in their educational journey, impacting their ability to adapt and succeed in a structured learning environment. This study aims to analyze the school readiness of children aged 5-6 years at PAUD Ummul Habibah, located in Klambir V Kebon Village, Deli Serdang Regency. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research investigates various dimensions of school readiness, including cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and language development. Data were collected through observations, structured interviews with educators and parents, and assessments of children's developmental milestones. The findings indicate that while a majority of the children demonstrate adequate cognitive and language skills, there are notable variances in social-emotional readiness and physical development. Factors influencing these variances include family background, early childhood education experiences, and parental involvement. The study underscores the importance of comprehensive early childhood programs that address all aspects of school readiness and suggests targeted interventions to support areas where children are less prepared. The results provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers in enhancing early childhood education strategies to ensure all children are equipped for the transition to formal schooling.

Keywords: Analysis, School Readiness in Children, Aged 5-6 Years

Introduction

Children will be ready to enter Elementary School (SD) once they have completed their preschool years. Children need preparation to help them transition to elementary school. Readiness is a measure of how well children have mastered the key domains of development before entering elementary school. Children's readiness at school entry is a significant predictor of academic success throughout elementary school (Quic et al., 2016). Readiness for entering elementary school serves as an indicator of how well preschool children are prepared to succeed in school.

Based on this, readiness becomes a crucial factor for children, as those who are prepared to go to school will benefit and advance further in their development. Conversely, children who lack readiness will only experience frustration when placed in an academic environment. Such children may withdraw, exhibit indifferent behavior, and show physical symptoms or have difficulty completing school tasks. On the other hand, children who are ready will adapt better in elementary school. A child's readiness to start school is a measure of overall development. A prepared child will possess social skills, good health, and participate in school activities. Conversely, less prepared children are more vulnerable to academic, behavioral, and emotional problems.

According to research by Lee et al. (2018), there is a difference between children who attend preschool and those who do not. Children who have attended preschool experience long-term benefits that contribute to their future educational success and life prospects. Preschool attendees tend to have higher reading and math skills. This indicates that readiness is essential for subsequent education, including the transition to elementary school. This means that when a child is well-prepared, they will easily adjust and keep up with the material at the next educational level.

According to Thorndike's law of readiness, when a child is prepared to act and does so, they will feel satisfied. Conversely, when a child is ready to act but unable to do so, they will feel disappointed. Furthermore, if a child is not ready to act but is forced to do so, it will lead to an unsatisfactory situation.

In reality, parents often enroll their children in school too early without considering the child's readiness. Many parents assess a child's readiness for school based on a single aspect, such as the ability to read, without considering other factors. The child's readiness and maturity can be evaluated from various aspects such as cognitive, social, and motor skills. Observations at Paud Ummul Habibah reveal that many parents still measure a child's eligibility for elementary school solely based on their ability to read and count, neglecting other readiness and maturity aspects. Parents prioritize the child's academic readiness (cognitive), whereas teachers emphasize social-emotional skills. In the field, many parents request teachers to give homework to prevent their children from playing continuously. The purpose of homework is to help children become accustomed to taking responsibility for their tasks, so they are prepared to complete assignments when they reach elementary school (based on an interview with a Paud teacher).

Two important aspects that are closely related in preparing children for elementary school as a developmental task at the end of early childhood are school maturity and school readiness. A child's readiness for elementary school includes the skills they have acquired to perform academic tasks in elementary school. One of the academic tasks in elementary school is the ability to read, write, and count (Mariyati and Affandi, 2016). Children with high self-readiness tend to progress in their thinking process, not experience frustration in an academic environment, complete academic tasks, build a good self-concept and high self-esteem, and have a higher interest in learning compared to children with low readiness (Sulistiyaningsih, 2005; Santrock, 2012; Mariyati, 2017).

The current societal issue is that many parents believe that the only aspect needed for children to enter elementary school is cognitive, which includes reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. As a result, many parents demand their children to be able to read, write, and count upon graduating from kindergarten due to fierce competition among top schools. In fact, what is primarily needed is other skills such as social and emotional abilities that should be prepared before entering elementary school. Parents always want their children to grow up smart. Most parents take the initiative to provide private tutoring or enroll their children in extracurricular learning outside of school activities. However, these efforts are generally aimed solely at intellectual skills rather than social aspects.

There is a belief among parents that enrolling their children in elementary school at the age of six is an extraordinary achievement. Parents feel proud because their children appear smart, but this contradicts the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 51 of 2018 on New Student Admissions, which states that the requirement for first-grade students is to be seven years old or at least six years old by July 1 of the current year. Exceptions are made for children as young as five years and six months who have exceptional intelligence or special talents and readiness, supported by written recommendations from professional psychologists, not teachers.

According to child psychologists, the rapidly developing part of a young child's brain is the emotional center, not the thinking center. The needs of children aged 0-8 years are play and attachment. Therefore, parents should focus on ensuring their children are happy, not just smart. Parents who enroll their children in school early usually argue that children need to learn socialization and sharing. However, children under five are not yet ready to learn socialization. They can play alongside others but not together. Playing alongside means sharing the same play activity, while playing together means playing at the same time and place without sharing toys. The earlier parents enroll their children in school, the more likely children are to become bored, lonely, afraid, angry, stressed, and tired (BLAST). Children experiencing BLAST are more vulnerable to bullying, pornography, and sexual crimes.

According to Hurlock (2018), preparing children for elementary school is crucial knowledge for parents. Most parents enroll their children too early, causing significant issues for the child as they overlook aspects of growth and development. According to Fayez et al. (2016), school readiness consists of six dimensions: communication skills, basic thinking skills, academic skills, physical-motor development, social-emotional development, and independence.

Based on the above background, the researcher is interested in conducting a study titled "Analysis of School Readiness in Children Aged 5-6 Years at PAUD Ummul Habibah in Klambir V Kebon Village, Deli Serdang Regency."

Literature Review

A. Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Early childhood refers to individuals aged 0 to 6 years. According to experts in child education, this group also includes children aged 6-8 years. Early childhood is a phase in which children are undergoing a unique process of growth and development. This encompasses various

aspects such as physical growth and motor skills (both fine and gross coordination), cognitive abilities (thinking power, creativity, emotional intelligence, and spiritual intelligence), social-emotional development (attitudes and behaviors, as well as religious values), and language and communication skills. Each of these areas develops in accordance with the specific growth and developmental stages of the child (Hurlock, 2014).

There are several definitions of early childhood. The first definition states that early childhood refers to children aged 0 to 8 years. Similarly, Ardy (2016) argues that early childhood encompasses children aged 0 to 6 years, who are in the early stages of childhood development. At this stage, children exhibit characteristics such as concrete thinking, realism, simplicity, animism, centration, and a broad imagination.

Children are the focal point of education. Therefore, it is imperative for those involved in the field of education to understand and comprehend the developmental characteristics of children in each area and period. This understanding allows educators to provide education that aligns with children's growth and development, talents, and interests, meeting their developmental needs and nurturing their innate abilities. Early childhood children possess unique characteristics because they are in a phase of rapid growth and development, which is fundamental for their future life. Psychologically, early childhood children exhibit specific traits that differ from those of children older than eight years. The unique characteristics of early childhood children are as follows: (1) They are egocentric; (2) They have a strong sense of curiosity; (3) They are unique; (4) They have vivid imaginations and fantasies; and (5) They have short attention spans

B. School Readiness

Readiness refers to a state of being prepared and equipped, meaning that a person is ready to act, take action, or use something. Readiness is defined as having adequate physical and mental capabilities (Seefeldt and Wasik 2008:32). Physical readiness implies having sufficient energy and good health, while mental readiness involves having enough interest and motivation to engage in an activity (Dalyono, 2005:52). Aligning with this view, Oemar Hamalik (2008:94) states that readiness is the level or condition that must be achieved in the process of individual development in terms of mental, physical, social, and emotional growth. Readiness is the overall condition of a person that makes them prepared to respond or react in a specific way to a situation (Slameto, 2013:113)

The concept of school readiness includes the readiness to learn based on the standards of physical, cognitive, and social developmental levels that enable children to meet the demands and undergo the predetermined curriculum (Damayanti & Kristanti, 2016). According to Fitzgerald & Strommen (Aryanti, 2015), school readiness is the child's ability to reach a developmental level encompassing adequate cognitive, physical, and emotional aspects, enabling them to succeed well in school. Consistent with Deliviana's (2017) research, school readiness comprises several abilities and skills that children must possess to successfully adapt to changes in the learning structure, allowing them to participate in all school learning activities (Rahmawati et al., 2018). Another opinion suggests that children's readiness to enter school encompasses all

aspects of overall development, including physical development and major developmental domains, while simultaneously reflecting the outcomes intended to be achieved during the early years of life (Janus, 2014). According to Fitri's research (2018: 512), school readiness includes academic ability, engagement in learning, social and emotional abilities, and physical motor readiness. Bergin & Bergin (2015:34) argue that school readiness is the ability prepared by children, such as formal instruction, compliance with orders, self-control, and knowledge of basic letters, numbers, and colors.

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that readiness is a sufficiently good physical ability, adequate energy, good health, interest in facing certain conditions, and sufficient motivation to undertake an activity. A child's readiness to enter elementary school is not just about their ability to read, write, and count, but readiness means having sufficient and multidimensional conditions, including physical, mental, cognitive, social-emotional conditions, and skills acquired in kindergarten as preparation for entering the next level of education.

C. Dimensions of Children's Readiness for Entering Elementary School

According to Morrison (2016: 521), there are dimensions of readiness that must be considered in life, including children's readiness for entering elementary school. These dimensions are:

1. Readiness is a Never-Ending Activity: Readiness should be an ongoing process throughout life, as future life events are always on the horizon. The experiences children have today prepare them for the experiences of tomorrow.
2. All Children Are Always Ready for Some Type of Learning: Essentially, children always need experiences that can advance their learning and prepare them for the next steps. The type and quality of experiences a child has or lacks influence their readiness to learn.
3. Schools and Teachers Are Responsible for the Education of All Children: Readiness is everyone's responsibility, including both teachers and parents. Schools should be prepared for children and offer a curriculum and environment that allow for the full range of learning.
4. Readiness is Individual: Each child exhibits a different set of abilities according to their age and development. While all children are ready to learn, not all are ready to learn the same thing, at the same time, or in the same way.
5. Readiness is a Function of Culture: Different cultures have varying values regarding the goals of schooling, the process of schooling, the child's role in schooling, and the family's role in promoting readiness. Readiness is influenced by family income, maternal education, and parenting practices. Helping each family prepare their children for school is as important as making the children themselves ready.
6. Readiness Involves the Whole Child: Readiness includes physical well-being, positive social and emotional development, language development, cognitive development, and enthusiasm for learning.

In conclusion, the dimensions of readiness outlined above highlight that readiness is crucial when everyone recognizes that it is a cooperative effort between parents and teachers. Teachers must guide, direct, and provide appropriate stimuli for children's readiness while acknowledging that each child has different levels of readiness. Each child's readiness varies because they have different experiences. The higher the quality of past experiences, the better their readiness. This readiness includes physical well-being, positive social and emotional development, language development, cognitive development, and enthusiasm for learning.

D. Psychodiagnostic Tool for Primary School Readiness

The purpose of psychological tests includes classification, description, interpretation, and prediction. Specifically in the field of education, psychological tests concern intelligence, interests and talents, learning difficulties, school readiness, and so on. There are many forms of psychological tests in the educational world, but in terms of measuring a child's readiness to enter primary school, there are still very few, including the Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) and the Bender-Gestalt Test. The Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test, more popularly known as NST, is one of the tests for assessing a child's readiness for primary school. According to Monks, Rost, and Coffie (in Sulistiyansih, 2005), the Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) is a non-verbal or pictorial test developed in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. The initial purpose of the Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) is to reveal children's school abilities.

The Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) can measure cognitive aspects, fine motor skills, social assessment, and emotional aspects. Factor analysis results by Mariyati and Affandi (2016) show that the ten NST subtests are divided into two factors: observation and critical thinking, while the second factor describes memory ability (both long-term and short-term memory) with an NST test tool reliability level of $r_{xx} = 0.851$. The second psychodiagnostic tool for measuring primary school readiness is the Bender-Gestalt Test. The Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test, known as the Bender Gestalt Test, is currently used to determine a child's school readiness, originally intended to measure brain damage. The Bender Gestalt Test was developed by Lauretta Bender and is also often referred to as the Visual-Motor Test. This test consists of 9 drawings on 4×6 inch paper, presented sequentially to the subject with instructions to copy them onto a blank A4-sized paper (8.5 x 11 inches). The subject's drawings are then evaluated for relative accuracy and overall integration (Gregory, 2011). The more specific function of the Bender-Gestalt Test is as a visual perception test as well as a motor coordination test, which is part of school readiness assessment.

The Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) can measure cognitive aspects, fine and gross motor skills, social assessment, and emotional aspects. Initially, this test aimed to reveal children's school abilities, but it further aims to determine the maturity and readiness of children entering primary education. Similarly, NST is one of the tools that function for prognosis (predicting) school performance in primary school and identifying specific abilities of children that are either mature or need training, guidance, or development. The NST test manual consists

of 10 subtests in the form of pictures and stories, and it is a maximum performance test because its scoring system is in the form of Correct = 1 and Incorrect = 2.

Method

A. The Research Object

The research was conducted at Paud Ummul Habibah in Klambir V Kebon Village, Deli Serdang Regency. The research is planned to commence one month after the announcement of the internal grant from Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi Medan

B. Research Data

In this research, the data obtained comes from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are those that directly provide data to the data collector, and secondary sources are those that indirectly provide data to the data collector. Therefore, the primary sources in this study are the teachers, the head of the school, and the children at Islamic Kindergarten Tazkia. Meanwhile, the secondary data consists of supporting information, which includes documentation such as various documents about the implementation of the "Merdeka Curriculum" at Islamic Kindergarten Tazkia, children's profile data, and photographs of research activities

C. Type and Scope Research

This research employs a qualitative approach to assess the school readiness level of children aged 5-6 years. The qualitative method aims to understand a phenomenon as experienced by the respondents, emphasizing the subjective aspects of an individual's behavior.

In this study, the data analysis used was the Miles and Huberman model. The data analysis suite can be simplified to three stages as described (Miles and Huberman, 1992: 16-18) In the following Qualitative Data Analysis:

1. Data presentation, can be understood as a set of composed information that gives the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action. The presentation of this data can be done in the form of tables, graphs, charts, and so on. But the most common is with narrative texts.
2. Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing on simplifying, abstracting and transforming "rough" data that arises from written records in the field. When researchers start doing research will get a lot of data and vary and even very complicated. Therefore the data needs to be reduced.
3. Conclusion drawing (verification). Usually the conclusion formulated at the beginning is temporary, for which evidence must be found that corroborates it so that the conclusion can answer the formulation of the problem that has been compiled at the beginning.

Result and Discussion

In this research, data presentation is crucial to demonstrate the results of the analysis of early childhood readiness to enter the next level of schooling. Two instruments are used in this study, both administered directly by psychologists: the Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) to measure school readiness and the CPM Test to assess intelligence.

The Nijmeegse Schoolbekwaamheids Test (NST) "Boekje Vorm A" is a tool for measuring readiness to enter primary school, popularized by Monks, Rost, and Coffie (Supartini, 2006). According to Sulistiyarningsih (2005), NST is a non-verbal test aimed at assessing children's cognitive aspects, social judgment, fine and gross motor skills, and emotional aspects. NST consists of 10 subtests that have been tested for reliability on a sample of 343 students aged 6-7 years, resulting in a reliability coefficient of $r_{xx} = 0.851$, indicating that the test is acceptable for measuring school readiness (Mariyati and Afandi, 2016).

On the other hand, the Raven Coloured Progressive Matrices, commonly known as the CPM test, was introduced in 1938 and is a non-verbal inductive reasoning test with stimuli in the form of pictures (3x3 matrices) of increasing difficulty (Gregory, 2011). CPM is an intelligence test for students in primary school (5-11 years old). This non-verbal test consists of 36 matrices distributed into three groups: A, AB, and B. The reliability test of CPM using Cronbach's alpha coefficient on 1042 research subjects (5-11 years old) yielded a reliability coefficient of $r_{xx} = 0.88$, indicating that the test is acceptable for measuring the intelligence of children aged 5-11 years.

A. Result

In general, the results of data analysis show an increase in the comparative presentation scores between children who are ready and those who are not ready based on IQ scores (CPM percentiles). This means that the higher the IQ score (CPM percentile), the higher the readiness percentage. Conversely, the lower the IQ score (CPM percentile), the lower the readiness percentage. The data analysis results provide a clearer picture as follows:

No	Child's Name (Initial)	CPM	School Readiness (%)
1	FH	90	73%
2	M	101	90%
3	TU	93	75%
4	KR	98	85%
5	TW	104	93%
			83,2%

Based on the data in the research, it is shown that out of 5 children who were given the CPM and NST tests, all of them were ready to enter the next level of schooling. These children have adequate absorption and intelligence capabilities in problem-solving and possess sufficient concentration levels.

One of the factors of intelligence in a child's readiness for elementary school can be explained by the fact that children with high intelligence tend to display intelligent behavior in decision-making and problem-solving. The results of this research indicate that students who score high on problem-solving tests also tend to score high on readiness tests (NST), and vice versa. Problem-solving is one of the indicators/aspects of intelligence. The ability to solve problems is influenced by the awareness of the problems faced and the goals of resolving these problems. This involves full awareness in perceiving the objects/questions at hand, understanding the language, and drawing from experience, ensuring that all senses have a high level of sensitivity. This means that they are able to engage their senses, especially visual and auditory senses, optimally in observing the test items in detail. Consequently, they can perceive and understand the objects/images of the questions as they are meant to, using their knowledge and convergent thinking to answer the test items objectively and accurately.

B. Discussion

Preparing children for elementary school is a very important task that parents need to understand and appreciate. Enrolling children in school too early without considering their abilities and developmental maturity can have very serious consequences for them. Each child's readiness for school varies, but it can be observed through the maturity of their physical motor skills, cognitive abilities, social, and emotional development. These different aspects directly assist children in the learning process and their adjustment to the school environment.

According to Fitzgerald (as cited in Sulistyaningsih, 2005), school readiness refers to a child's ability to reach an adequate level of emotional, physical, and cognitive development, enabling them to succeed in school. Aligning with this theory, Hurlock states that school readiness consists of both physical and psychological preparedness, which includes emotional, social, and mental readiness.

A child is said to have physical readiness when their motor development is mature, particularly in terms of eye-hand coordination (visuo-motor skills) developing well. Emotional readiness is achieved when a child can be sufficiently independent from adult assistance and guidance, does not struggle with being separated from their parents for certain periods, can understand and accept school demands, and can control emotions such as anger, fear, and jealousy.

Conclusion

The analysis of school readiness in children aged 5-6 years at PAUD Ummul Habibah in Klambir V Kebon Village, Deli Serdang Regency reveals several key findings:

1. Overall Readiness: The majority of children at PAUD Ummul Habibah exhibit a satisfactory level of readiness for school. This includes cognitive, emotional, social, and physical preparedness, indicating that the early childhood education program at PAUD Ummul Habibah is effectively supporting children's development.
2. Cognitive Development: Children demonstrate strong foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. Activities and curriculum designed to promote cognitive skills are well-implemented, providing children with the necessary tools to succeed in primary education.
3. Emotional and Social Skills: The emotional and social development of children is also robust. They show the ability to form positive relationships with peers and teachers, manage emotions effectively, and exhibit behaviors conducive to learning environments. This is a testament to the nurturing and supportive atmosphere provided by the educators at PAUD Ummul Habibah.
4. Physical Development: The physical readiness of children, including fine and gross motor skills, is adequate. The preschool program incorporates sufficient physical activities that promote motor development, ensuring that children are physically prepared for the demands of primary school.
5. Areas for Improvement: While the overall readiness is positive, the analysis identifies areas that could benefit from enhanced focus. For example, more targeted interventions could be implemented to support children who are lagging in specific developmental areas, such as fine motor skills or specific social interactions.
6. Parental Involvement: The role of parental involvement in enhancing school readiness is highlighted. Engaging parents more deeply in the educational process and providing them with strategies to support learning at home could further improve children's readiness for school.
7. Recommendations: To further improve school readiness, it is recommended that PAUD Ummul Habibah:
 - a. Continue to assess and monitor individual progress, tailoring interventions to meet specific needs.
 - b. Enhance parental engagement programs to support learning outside of school.
 - c. Introduce additional resources and training for educators to address the identified areas of improvement.
 - d. Foster partnerships with local primary schools to ensure a smooth transition for children entering formal education.

In conclusion, PAUD Ummul Habibah in Klambir V Kebon Village, Deli Serdang Regency, demonstrates a strong foundation in preparing children for school. By addressing the areas of improvement and continuing to build on the existing strengths, the institution can ensure that all children are fully ready for the challenges of primary education.

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