

Enhancing Early Childhood Learning Quality: A Qualitative Study on Teachers' Strategies and Pedagogical Approaches in Indonesian Preschools

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ABSTRACT

Effective teaching strategies in early childhood education are essential for fostering both engagement and learning quality. However, there is a lack of focused research on how interactive methods specifically enhance young learners' comprehension and participation. This qualitative study employed a descriptive approach to examine teaching strategies used by early childhood educators. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers, classroom observations, and document analysis to gather comprehensive insights. Findings indicate that educators utilize a range of interactive strategies, including play-based learning, storytelling, singing, field trips, and demonstrations. These approaches not only improve children's understanding of subject matter but also encourage active engagement and enjoyment in the learning process. The study highlights the importance of integrating interactive pedagogies to create a stimulating educational environment. It underscores the practical benefits of these methods in promoting both cognitive and social development in young learners. The research recommends that educators systematically incorporate interactive strategies into their teaching practices. Additionally, policymakers are encouraged to support educational models that prioritize engaging and participatory learning experiences. Future studies should investigate the long-term effects of these strategies on children's developmental outcomes.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education represents the most crucial investment in shaping the future of individuals and society, serving as a bridge that connects children to better opportunities. According to Hanushek and Woessmann (2020a, 2020b, 2020c), investing in quality education not only enhances individual competencies but also significantly contributes to a nation's economic growth. Education lays the foundational framework by equipping children with both cognitive and non-cognitive skills essential for

navigating global challenges (Schleicher, 2018). Further, Heckman and Kautz (2013) emphasize that education fosters not only academic intelligence but also character development and resilience in adapting to change. Thus, ensuring equitable access and improving the quality of education should be prioritized to provide all children with equal opportunities to realize their full potential.

In the context of Indonesia, five critical challenges persist in the development of the education sector: enhancing educational quality, achieving equitable access, ensuring efficient management, strengthening the role of schools and communities, and promoting accountability. UNESCO (2021) asserts that improving educational quality largely depends on teacher competence, a relevant curriculum, and access to adequate technology and resources. However, disparities in access, especially in remote areas, remain a major hurdle due to limited infrastructure (Bank, 2020). Efficient management is also vital to guarantee optimal resource allocation that supports effective learning processes (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020b). Consequently, collaboration among government bodies, schools, and communities is essential to foster accountability, transparency, and sustainability in the education system. Addressing these challenges is crucial to enhancing human resource development, enabling individuals to adapt to cultural shifts and societal transformations, thereby ensuring long-term benefits for present and future generations.

Deming and Juran have emphasized that the failure to achieve high educational quality often stems from inadequate management commitment within the education system (Suarez, 1992). Key contributing factors include the implementation of an irrelevant curriculum, poorly maintained school infrastructure, and operational systems that fail to meet established educational standards. Additionally, the absence of clear work planning and the lack of access to essential information sources further hinder quality improvements. Fullan (2007) highlighted that ineffective planning significantly reduces the success rate of educational policy execution. Moreover, insufficient staff development and low motivation levels among educators pose serious obstacles. Darling-Hammond (2010) asserted that the quality of teaching directly influences student learning outcomes. Therefore, enhancing educational quality requires steadfast commitment from educational leaders, focusing on meticulous planning, provision of sufficient facilities, and ongoing professional development for educators.

Given these challenges, it is understandable to question the current state of early childhood education. This concern is compounded by the widespread lack of awareness regarding the critical role of early childhood education (PAUD) in supporting child development. As a result, a significant number of young children remain unenrolled in PAUD programs. In managing the quality of early childhood education, three core components are pivotal: quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. Observational research shows that teacher strategies are aligned with the *Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Harian* (RPPH). For example, teachers often guide children to line up and sing songs such as "Birds Fly," while simultaneously checking their physical cleanliness and teaching lessons about hygiene and discipline. Upon entering the classroom, children are welcomed individually with a hug from the teacher, fostering a sense of comfort, safety, and trust (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Fullan, 2007).

Teachers also clean the yard, water, and room and implement cleanliness by teaching and directing children to throw trash in the trash can. In indoor teaching, children are taught according to RPPH and the method they play while learning, and they are involved in providing lessons (Kreft, 2018; Palila, 2018; Rachmat, 2021). Early childhood education is an important foundation in a child's intellectual, emotional, and social development. At this stage, the learning received by children greatly influences their ability to understand the subject matter in the future. Therefore, the quality of learning at this stage is crucial to be considered and improved (Barba-Martín, Bores-García, Hortigüela-Alcalá, & González-Calvo, 2020; Harris, 2000; Ismail, 1997). However, although early childhood education has begun to be noticed, there are still many challenges in the learning process that occur in the classroom. One of the main challenges is teaching the material in an interesting and enjoyable way for children so that they can receive lessons easily and with high enthusiasm. Many teachers still have difficulty in choosing and implementing the right strategies to achieve these goals.

This study aims to explore more deeply the strategies implemented by teachers in improving the quality of early childhood learning, and how these strategies can create a fun and effective learning

atmosphere. In this study, the main focus is on approaches that can help children understand the material in a more fun and comprehensive way.

With advancements in educational science and child psychology, a wide range of learning methods tailored for early childhood education has emerged and evolved. Approaches such as play-based learning, storytelling, singing, and experiential outdoor activities like field trips are increasingly acknowledged for their ability to enrich children's educational experiences and foster a more engaging learning environment. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these methods largely hinges on the ability of teachers to apply them thoughtfully, taking into account the diverse needs, abilities, and developmental characteristics of each child (Sluiter, 2005).

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to investigate the strategies utilized by teachers to enhance the quality of early childhood learning. Data collection techniques include interviews, direct observations, and documentation analysis, all aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of these strategies and their influence on the learning process at the early childhood education level.

The findings of this research are anticipated to contribute valuable insights into the development of more effective, engaging teaching strategies and serve as a practical reference for educators seeking to elevate the quality of early childhood learning. Specifically, this study aims to (1) examine the implementation of early childhood learning practices, (2) analyze the strategies employed by teachers at TK Negeri 5 to improve learning quality, and (3) identify the challenges teachers encounter in enhancing early childhood education.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to understand the meaning, experiences, and phenomena that occur in the context of early childhood education (Cresswell, 2009). Qualitative research is natural, where researchers act as the main instrument in collecting and analyzing data (Siyoto, 2015). The research was conducted at TK Negeri 5, Riau, an early childhood education institution that serves children aged 4-6 years from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. The school implements a play-based curriculum and emphasizes interactive learning methods. The institution has 10 teachers and accommodates approximately 80 students annually. The participants in this study consisted of 6 early childhood teachers and 12 students, selected through purposive sampling. The selection criteria for teachers included a minimum of five years of teaching experience in early childhood education, active involvement in designing and implementing learning strategies and willingness to participate in the study.

Meanwhile, student participants were selected based on their active engagement in classroom activities, ensuring diverse perspectives on learning experiences.

Data were collected using method triangulation, combining three primary techniques:

- a. In-depth Interviews: Conducted with 6 teachers and the school principal to explore their perspectives on teaching strategies, challenges, and the effectiveness of applied methods.
- b. Participatory Observation: Researchers observed classroom interactions for six weeks, focusing on communication patterns, teacher-student engagement, and the implementation of learning strategies.
- c. Documentation Analysis: Review the school's curriculum, lesson plans, student progress reports, and educational policies to support findings from interviews and observations.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), with the following steps: Data Transcription: Interviews and observation notes were transcribed verbatim, Data Coding: Identifying recurring patterns and keywords in the data. Theme Identification: Grouping coded data into key themes that emerged from the findings, and Interpretation and Contextualization: Linking the themes to existing literature and theoretical frameworks.

To strengthen data management and ensure reliability, NVivo 12 software was utilized to facilitate coding and thematic analysis. The validity and reliability of the findings were upheld by applying Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness criteria, which include triangulation, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, member checking, and peer debriefing. By incorporating these rigorous techniques, the study delivers a thorough and credible analysis of early childhood learning strategies, offering valuable insights for educators and policymakers alike.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Implementation of learning for children aged

In relation to thematic learning that has several sub-themes, teachers must be observant in conducting learning that is appropriate between themes and sub-themes. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by the class teacher, Mrs. "Teacher 1" as follows:

"For the implementation of learning, follow the SOP, the theme is the same as RPPH, Pay Attention to SOP"

It is a step-by-step that must be followed as a reference for carrying out activities with guidelines on the objectives in order to realize the vision and mission of the institution. SOP has stages or procedures that are standard and must be passed to complete a certain work process.

This SOP is intended so that all learning practices in each PAUD unit can be implemented optimally and with quality.

Table 1. Linking Competence Development with Classroom Activities in Early Childhood Education

Competence	Activity
Development of an independent attitude	Children go to their classrooms
Behave in a healthy way	Wash your hands before and after doing activities
Developing fine motor activities	Paper folding activities in various shapes

In planning effective learning activities for early childhood education, aligning each activity with specific developmental competencies and clear objectives is essential. Establishing well-defined objectives ensures that the activities not only engage children but also support targeted skill development, such as fostering independence, encouraging healthy behaviors, and enhancing motor skills. The table below outlines selected activities, their corresponding competencies, and the objectives intended to be achieved through their implementation.

Table 2. Alignment of Competencies, Activities, and Objectives in Early Childhood Education

Competence	Activity	Objective
Development of an independent attitude	Children go to their own classrooms	Cultivating an independent attitude in children
Behave in a healthy way	Wash your hands before and after doing activities	Children can wash their hands for a healthy life
Development of fine motor skills	Paper folding activities in various shapes	Children develop fine motor skills

The sequence of steps to be taken for each type of routine and habitual activity. An SOP must be created for each activity's implementation. For example, it can be seen in the following section:

Table 3. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Guiding Children to Enter Their Own Classroom Independently

SOP for children to go to their own classroom
Set limits for parents to accompany their children
Teacher stands at the boundary of the child's delivery
Children say goodbye to their parents
Children greet the teacher who is waiting at the drop-off point
Child walks alone to classroom
The child takes off his shoes and puts them on the shoe rack.
Children put their bags in the bag storage area.

The 2013 curriculum for early childhood education uses thematic learning that is in accordance with the brain's working patterns. Thematic learning discusses one theme that will be used from various concepts and aspects of development. Determining the theme is very open. Early childhood education units can determine the theme that will be used in learning according to the characteristics of the child, the situation and conditions of the environment, and the readiness of teachers to manage activities. Determining the theme is not just easy to apply, but it is necessary to pay attention to several principles so that the learning that is carried out is more interesting and in-depth.

Then, it was reinforced by "Teacher 2" about how to implement learning that follows the RPPH itself. "We teach according to the lesson plan, we start with an opening in prayer, then have a conversation according to the theme so that the children are enthusiastic, then move on to the core learning, ask the children to sing according to the theme, at the end they ask questions about the lesson or activity that will be carried out, a song to go home, so that tomorrow they will come again, a prayer, and a final greeting."

The findings from this study highlight the necessity of adhering to standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure consistent, high-quality learning experiences. According to "Teacher 1," teachers must follow a step-by-step process, where each activity is conducted in accordance with the established guidelines to achieve the intended educational outcomes. This observation is consistent with research by (Hyoscyamina & Dewi, 2012), who assert that clear guidelines in early childhood education contribute significantly to the organization of learning activities and ensure that pedagogical practices meet developmental standards.

The importance of SOPs in early childhood education has been discussed in the context of promoting structured routines that enhance children's learning experiences (Hughes, 2011). The teachers' adherence to SOPs for everyday routines—such as guiding children to their classrooms or encouraging hygienic practices—ensures that the learning environment remains predictable and secure, which is crucial for young children's emotional and cognitive development (Jones, 2022).

Teacher competence emerged as a central theme in this study. Both "Teacher 1" and "Teacher 2" emphasized the importance of aligning the activities with developmental objectives. For instance, "Teacher 1" stressed that each activity, from the children's independent movements to their hygiene practices, is aligned with specific competencies aimed at fostering children's independence, health behaviors, and fine motor skills. Similarly, "Teacher 2" elaborated on the thematic teaching approach, where teachers follow the lesson plan closely, beginning with a prayer, followed by a thematic conversation, core learning activities, and closing rituals. This structure ensures that children remain engaged and that learning is holistic and interconnected, which has been shown to positively impact early childhood development (Phillips & Shonkoff, 2000).

Research by (Whitebook, 2003) supports the importance of structured routines and teacher preparedness in promoting developmentally appropriate practices. Their findings indicate that teachers who implement activities that align with children's developmental stages and interests are more likely to foster intrinsic motivation and positive learning outcomes.

The study further revealed that thematic learning is most effective when it is tailored to the children's developmental stages, characteristics, and environmental context. The 2013 curriculum in Indonesia emphasizes thematic learning, which aligns with the brain's natural working patterns by focusing on a single theme across multiple developmental domains. This approach resonates with (Piaget, 1952) theory of cognitive development, which emphasizes the importance of providing children with experiences that stimulate both their cognitive and emotional growth in an integrated manner.

Moreover, thematic learning allows for flexibility, enabling teachers to adapt the content to suit the needs of individual children. As "Teacher 1" noted, the theme should be chosen based on various factors, including the children's characteristics and the teacher's readiness. This principle of customization reflects (Vygotsky, 1978) concept of the zone of proximal development, where learning is most effective when it is neither too easy nor too difficult, but instead appropriately challenging for the child's current abilities.

3.2 Teachers' strategies for improving the quality of learning for early childhood

The findings reveal that one of the key strategies employed by teachers at TK Negeri 5 is fostering a fun, calm, and relaxed classroom atmosphere. According to Mrs. "Teacher 4," this involves creating an environment where learning feels enjoyable, integrating play-based activities that align with the thematic content, and maintaining a patient, sincere, and warm demeanor characterized by frequent smiles. Teachers are expected to be sensitive to classroom dynamics and skillfully read situations to ensure children remain engaged, attentive, and motivated to participate.

A primary strategy highlighted is the integration of learning through play, which captures children's interest and sustains their attention. Mrs. "Teacher 4" also emphasized the importance of providing experiential learning opportunities beyond the classroom. She suggested taking students to outdoor locations such as rice fields when traditional field trips, like visits to the zoo, are not feasible. Such activities allow children to interact directly with their environment, stimulating their curiosity and enthusiasm while breaking the monotony of indoor learning settings.

Additionally, the use of songs and storytelling emerged as essential components of the teaching strategy. As noted by another educator, Mrs. "Teacher 3," incorporating singing into daily routines is considered indispensable. It not only enhances the learning experience but also keeps the children emotionally engaged and attentive. Storytelling, combined with songs and other interactive methods, further supports the teachers' goal of creating an enriching, dynamic, and enjoyable learning environment.

Singing is an important part of a child's development. Kindergarten teachers also require children to be taught various songs; this is not to direct children to become singers, but to encourage them to be enthusiastic about singing because singing is one form of expressing what a child feels and thinks to touch something beautiful and melodious.

"The point is, if we look at the strategy, we look at the condition of the class or room, whether it is conducive or not if we apply it to tell stories or not, whether the child wants to sing a lot or not, whether they want to play but while learning or traveling, from the four points, of course we look at how it is implemented if the child asks to sing, then sing, if the child wants to listen to a story, then join in as long as it does not deviate from the core material in the RPPH," said "Teacher 2".

Things that teachers need to know are when they sing and how to develop children's singing activities. Before teachers teach children to sing, they need to know how to help them make singing a fun activity. This is important because children learn to speak and sing by imitating. Imitating what they hear and exporting it, then they express it in their own way. In that way, we can find some children who have the ability to catch the song given faster, and vice versa. We will find some children who are lazy to sing. This is not dangerous for children's development because it is the teacher's job to introduce children to singing as an easy and fun activity.

As observed in the statements of "Teacher 4" and "Teacher 2," a central strategy in early childhood education is creating a fun and relaxed classroom atmosphere. This strategy is crucial for establishing an environment where children feel comfortable, allowing them to engage actively with the learning process. According to (Piaget, 1952), a child's learning is deeply influenced by the environment in which they operate, and a stress-free, engaging atmosphere can foster curiosity and eagerness to learn.

Research has shown that when teachers create a warm and inviting classroom environment, it improves students' emotional well-being and enhances their cognitive development (Rathbun et al., 2019). This aligns with the teacher's approach of using calm, patient, and positive interactions to promote a welcoming learning environment, which helps reduce anxiety and increase children's willingness to participate (Ginsburg & Health, 2007).

The strategy of learning through play, as mentioned by "Teacher 4," is a cornerstone of early childhood pedagogy. Play-based learning has been widely recognized as an effective strategy to enhance children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasized the role of play in fostering children's social interactions and cognitive skills, as it provides opportunities for children to explore, problem-solve, and engage in imaginative scenarios.

This approach not only keeps children engaged but also nurtures their curiosity and creative thinking (Aulia, Ummah, & Samawi, 2019). By taking children on field trips, such as visits to rice fields, teachers can further stimulate children's curiosity and provide experiential learning that connects classroom concepts to the real world. Research by (Powell, Spencer, Clegg, & Wood, 2024) underscores that such activities enhance children's learning outcomes by bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experiences.

Singing, as emphasized by "Teacher 3" and other educators in the study, is an integral part of early childhood education. Music and singing contribute to language development, emotional expression, and social skills. According to studies (Hennessy, 2007), singing helps children improve their vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and even emotional regulation by offering a fun and interactive way to practice speech and listening skills. Moreover, music provides an outlet for emotional expression and can be particularly beneficial for children who may struggle with verbal communication.

In the context of this study, the teachers emphasized the importance of making singing a fun and engaging activity rather than focusing solely on teaching technical skills. This aligns with the findings of (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2011), who suggest that music activities should be designed to foster creativity and enjoyment, not just musical competence. Teachers' awareness of children's varying responses to singing—whether they eagerly participate or need more encouragement—reflects a thoughtful approach to supporting individual learning styles and interests.

As noted by "Teacher 2," one of the key strategies in this study was balancing structured learning with the flexibility to respond to children's interests and needs. Teachers who observe their students and adapt activities based on the children's engagement and enthusiasm are able to create a more responsive and effective learning environment. This approach mirrors the concept of "scaffolding" proposed by (Vygotsky, 1978), where the teacher provides support based on the child's current level of development, gradually encouraging more independent learning.

This flexibility, allowing for spontaneous activities such as singing, storytelling, or even field trips, ensures that children's natural curiosity is nurtured while still maintaining alignment with the curriculum objectives (Phillips & Shonkoff, 2000). Furthermore, this adaptability is essential in maintaining children's engagement, as it allows teachers to tune into the specific needs and preferences of the children, enhancing their learning experiences.

3.3 Obstacles faced by teachers in improving the quality of learning for children aged

The findings indicate that one of the primary obstacles faced by teachers in early childhood education lies in managing the diverse characteristics and developmental stages of the children. As expressed by Mrs. "Teacher 4," a significant challenge arises from children who have not yet achieved independence in basic self-care activities, such as using the bathroom. She explained that when a child

requires assistance to go to the toilet, the teacher must temporarily pause the lesson, which disrupts the learning flow. This interruption not only demands considerable patience but also poses the risk of the teacher forgetting previously delivered material, potentially impacting the continuity and effectiveness of the lesson.

Preschool educators, particularly those teaching children aged 0 to 6 years, are required to exercise a high degree of patience and understanding. This developmental period, often referred to as the "golden age," is critical for providing foundational stimulation and education that will influence the child's future growth and learning trajectory. Teachers must convey their educational objectives clearly while accommodating each child's unique temperament and readiness.

Additionally, teachers reported encountering behavioral challenges among students, including shyness, attachment issues, and, notably, instances of dishonesty. Some children exhibit reluctance to separate from their parents, while others may display behaviors such as lying or mimicking inappropriate conduct. Mrs. "Teacher 4" noted that lying behavior is not inherent but is typically acquired through environmental influences and exposure to adult behavior. Children at this stage are highly impressionable, with strong memory retention, making them particularly susceptible to adopting negative behaviors modeled by those around them.

These findings underscore the importance of cultivating a supportive environment that prioritizes moral education from an early age. Teachers are tasked with instilling positive values, emphasizing respectful behavior toward elders, and reinforcing proper social interactions—such as speaking politely, greeting others, and showing consideration. Though seemingly simple, these practices help children feel valued and respected while laying the groundwork for their moral and character development.

Some children may be afraid of the new environment can also be a trigger for children not to want to be away from their parents in this condition is the child has excessive worry that he will be embarrassed at school. In this situation, children tend to be enthusiastic and diligent in going to school but when in the school environment show physical complaints such as headaches, stomachaches, vomiting, nausea and other complaints, this happens because of excessive anxiety which affects the child's physical condition. Then there is also another reason why children do not want to be left alone at school because there is trauma at school, maybe not all of the traumatic events are terrible, but there are some incidents that can indeed make children traumatized. For example, being hit by friends or being persecuted by teachers.

Children who like to be mischievous or disturb friends are children who are creative in interacting with other people or friends. It's just that children don't understand and are not yet able to measure that their creativity can actually cause discomfort to others.

Discussion

The observations and interviews conducted in this study emphasize that Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a holistic process aimed at fostering the physical, emotional, social, moral, spiritual, and cognitive development of children from birth to six years old. Providing appropriate stimulation in these domains is crucial to ensure children grow and develop optimally. Teachers play an essential role in facilitating this development, as they are not only responsible for delivering educational content but also for understanding the individual needs and developmental stages of each child. This deep understanding enables teachers to enrich their knowledge and translate it into meaningful learning experiences tailored to each student.

One of the significant challenges identified in this study involves managing the diverse range of children's behaviors and developmental readiness. As highlighted by "Teacher 4," one common obstacle is the need to assist children who have not yet achieved independence in basic self-care tasks, such as using the bathroom. Interruptions to attend to these needs can disrupt the flow of lessons and affect the overall learning process. Such scenarios are typical in early childhood settings, where

children's emerging self-regulation skills require considerable patience and flexibility from educators (Berk, 2013).

In addition to developmental readiness, individual behavioral differences present another layer of complexity. Research by Ginsburg and Heath (2007) supports these findings, noting that characteristics such as shyness, separation anxiety, and varying levels of independence pose significant challenges for teachers. Addressing these differences requires teachers to build strong, supportive relationships with students, fostering a secure learning environment where children feel comfortable and engaged (Pianta & Hamre, 2009).

Particularly noteworthy is the emergence of behaviors such as lying, as reported by "Teacher 4." This behavior is not inherent but rather a learned response influenced by the child's environment and interactions with adults. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) suggest that such behaviors may develop as coping mechanisms or adaptations to external stimuli. Teachers must model honesty and carefully guide children's moral development during this formative period.

Separation anxiety, another challenge highlighted by teachers, is a well-documented phenomenon in early childhood education. Kagan (1984) observed that young children often exhibit distress when separated from primary caregivers, leading to emotional and even physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches. Recognizing and addressing these signs is essential to supporting children emotionally and facilitating smoother transitions into the classroom environment.

The findings also underscore the critical role of moral education in early childhood learning. Teachers, as noted by "Teacher 4," are responsible for instilling fundamental social values, such as respectful behavior, polite communication, and positive interactions with adults. Research by Ginsburg and Heath (2007), Kagan (1984), and O'Sullivan and Ring (2022) confirms that moral and social development during early childhood lays the groundwork for future interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence.

Moreover, teachers must be attuned to various temperaments and behaviors, including those that may initially appear mischievous or disruptive. Studies by Cohen and Weaver (2005), Richards (2005), and Westwood and Westwood (2008) suggest that such behaviors often reflect natural curiosity and creativity. Instead of viewing them as problematic, teachers should provide appropriate guidance and structure to channel these behaviors constructively, enhancing the child's social and cognitive growth.

Ultimately, the role of teachers in early childhood education is indispensable. They are tasked with creating an environment that nurtures the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of each child. As highlighted in the findings, teachers must possess a deep understanding of child development, recognizing that each child progresses at their own pace and exhibits unique characteristics. Phillips and Shonkoff (2000) stress the importance of providing developmentally appropriate stimulation during these formative years, as early experiences have long-lasting effects on a child's learning and behavior. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development, where teachers offer support and guidance to help children achieve tasks they cannot yet perform independently but can accomplish with appropriate assistance.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has successfully explored the strategies and approaches used by teachers to enhance the quality of early childhood education. The findings highlight that interactive and engaging methods—such as learning through play, storytelling, singing, field trips, and demonstrations—significantly contribute to improving children's understanding and enjoyment of the learning process. These strategies foster a fun and stimulating learning environment, supporting children's cognitive, emotional, and social development.

Despite these benefits, several challenges were identified, including the diverse characteristics of children, difficulties in maintaining classroom discipline, and logistical constraints in implementing innovative teaching strategies. To overcome these obstacles, it is essential to develop structured teacher

training modules that focus on classroom management, inclusive teaching techniques, and creative learning strategies. Additionally, increasing investment in early childhood education infrastructure, such as well-equipped classrooms, child-friendly learning materials, and outdoor learning spaces, will further support the effective implementation of these strategies. Strengthening collaboration between teachers, parents, and policymakers through regular workshops, parent-teacher meetings, and policy dialogues is also necessary to align educational approaches with children's developmental needs.

Future research should explore the long-term impact of interactive teaching strategies on children's academic performance and personal development beyond early childhood education. Furthermore, studies on the effectiveness of digital learning tools in early childhood settings are needed, particularly in response to the growing integration of technology in education. Comparative research on early childhood education policies in different regions could also provide insights into best practices that can be adapted to various educational contexts. Through continuous research and policy development, early childhood education can evolve in ways that ensure young learners receive high-quality educational experiences that support their holistic growth.

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