

LEARNING MATURITY OF CHILDREN AGED 6-7 YEARS IN THE POST COVID 19 ERA

Rosyi Damayani T. Maningtyas¹, Suryadi², Juwita Kumalasari²
{rosyi.damayani.fip@um.ac.id1, suryadi.fip@um.ac.id2, jkumalasari09@gmail.com}

Departemen PGPAUD Universitas Negeri Malang¹, Departemen PGPAUD
Universitas Negeri Malang², TK Al Madina³

Abstract. The purpose of this research is to find out the maturity of learning attitudes in 6-7 years old children. This study was held in the post covid era to find out the effect pandemic era influence children's development. This is a quantitative research using the survey method. This study collected observational data from 55 teachers and 55 classrooms. The data was collected through a questionnaire that was online distributed via google form. The data of this study analyze by using percentage analysis techniques to describe the data. The results of this study showed that an average of 74% of the approximately 1000 children aged 6-7 years who were observed showed maturity in learning attitudes. This is shown by the percentage of children who can complete assignments well as much as 75%, the percentage of children who can concentrate while doing activities as much as 77%, and the percentage of children who have the enthusiasm to achieve as much as 72%.

Keywords: Children; Learning maturity; post covid Era.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic period is a time that is a challenge for everyone. The existence of a policy to limit the physical interaction of the entire community in order to prevent the transmission of the Covid 19 virus has succeeded in changing the order of life of a society that has been stable. The pandemic period is a difficult time for all levels of society (E. W. B. H. Marpaung, L. Andrian, & S. A. Putri, 2020). Humans seem to be forced to get out of their comfort zone and adapt again in harmony with new situations and habits. How come? During the pandemic, the entire half of society was forced to stay in their respective homes. They cannot carry out their social activities physically but must do them virtually. Starting from a ban on traveling, and working, to boarding for children. Practically in the end all planning activities at home (Kemenker RI, 2020). All social activities are carried out virtually by utilizing technology. The pandemic has been running for almost a year, with the situation not getting better but instead getting worse. As reported by Bisnis.com, it is known that as of January 16, 2021, the City of Malang has reached 2925 positive cases of covid, with 1295 people showing symptoms of illness, and 1630 others showing no symptoms or known as OTG. As many as 278 residents of the city of Malang have died as a result of this pandemic so the city of Malang is still classified as a red zone (C. Peni Widarti & Anam). From all walks of life, one of the most difficult conditions for adjusting to a pandemic is early childhood. this is related to the developmental characteristics of children who tend to play and interact with their peers (R. H. Syah). The survey results of the researchers showed that most parents complained

about the difficulty of understanding their children to keep their distance from other people, not carelessly touch objects in public places, to get into the habit of washing hands (F. N. Arifa, 2020). The existence of a policy to 'just stay at home since a few months ago has more or less become a stressor for early childhood and everyone (A. Tabi'in, 2020). This stressor is not only caused by restricted children leaving the house but also caused by the stress felt by mothers, especially mothers who work from home. Often working mothers who are WFH (Work from Home) experience an increased workload at home because they have to guide their courageous children to school which in turn has an impact on mothers' emotional stability (R. D. Wiresti, 2020).

From an educational point of view, the presence of an epidemic during early childhood undergoing a developmental process, which is a form of difficulty for children. the tendency of early childhood to learn through social interaction and habituation, making learning activities from home difficult to say is effective (M. D. Pancawati, 2020). Even though PAUD institutions, both kindergartens, and other institutions, have provided guidance on learning activities from home, children often have their own choices regarding the activities they want to do. Not a few parents complain about the difficulty of conditioning their children to learn or carry out activities at school (F. N. Arifa, 2020).

In the 2020/2021 school year, children aged 6-7 generally sit in group B, which means that in the following school year these children will enter the elementary school level. This means that children in the 7- year- age group need to understand readiness abilities. Readiness to enter the elementary school stage is one of the targets of the learning activities in PAUD institutions at the Kindergarten (TK) stage (M. A. Moreno, 2013). The ability to be ready to enter the basic stages of school requires maturity in all aspects of development. However, as we all know, the pandemic that has been going on for the past year has caused the development of children in the 6-7-year-old age group to become very diverse. Therefore, it takes a clear portrait of how the desire for school readiness or readiness prepares children aged 6-7 years in Malang.

Based on the description above, this study intends to find out how school readiness abilities are achieved for children aged 6-7 years who will enter the elementary school period in the 2021/2022 academic year. This knowledge will be useful to find out the extent to which the pandemic has an impact on school readiness for children in the 6-7 year age group. The quality of human resources is a priceless treasure of a nation. Mapping the description of the condition of the quality of human resources is an important first step to determining the next step.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach to the type of research using survey methods. The data in this study were obtained through observations made by 55 teachers on 1336 students aged 6-7 years spread across elementary schools in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The focus of observation is aimed at the emergence of indicators of the development of children's learning attitudes which include curiosity about new things, the ability to complete assignments, the ability to focus on activities, and achievement motivation. Each teacher makes observations in his class and counts the number of children who achieve indicators of the development of learning attitudes using the Check List instrument.

The research was conducted in five districts in the city of Malang, namely Blimbing, Lowokwaru, Sukun, Kedungkandang, and Klojen Districts. In the Blimbing sub-district, there were 14 elementary school classes observed with a total of 353 children aged 6-7 years. In the District. Lowokwaru sub-district is the most populous sub-district in Malang city, in this study a sample of 13 classrooms was observed with a total of 301 children. Kedungkandang sub-district is the widest sub-district in Malang city, samples were taken from this area as many as 189 children were obtained from observing 8 grade 1 elementary school students. 241 samples were obtained by observing 10 grade 1 elementary school in the Klojen sub-district. Observations of 252 samples in the Sukun sub-district were carried out by 10 teachers in 10 classes of junior high schools. Thus the total sample that was successfully obtained in this study was 1336 children aged 6-7 years.

Data analysis in this study used presentation analysis where researchers used descriptive statistical analysis to describe data on the number of children who achieved optimal development in the post-covid era.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of a survey conducted on 55 teachers, it was found that an average of 74% of students who were observed had a fairly good learning attitude. Learning attitude is measured based on three indicators, namely: 1) ability to complete tasks well, 2) ability to focus attention, 3) motivation for achievement and 4) children's ability to show curiosity about new things. In detail the achievements of each indicator can be described clearly in table 1.

Table 1. Achievement of Learning Attitude Indicators

Learning attitude indicator	Percentage of children who reach the indicator
Shows curiosity in new things	75%
Ability to complete tasks	75%
Ability to focus	77%
motivation for achievements	72%

The Results of This Study Can be Described in Figure 1.

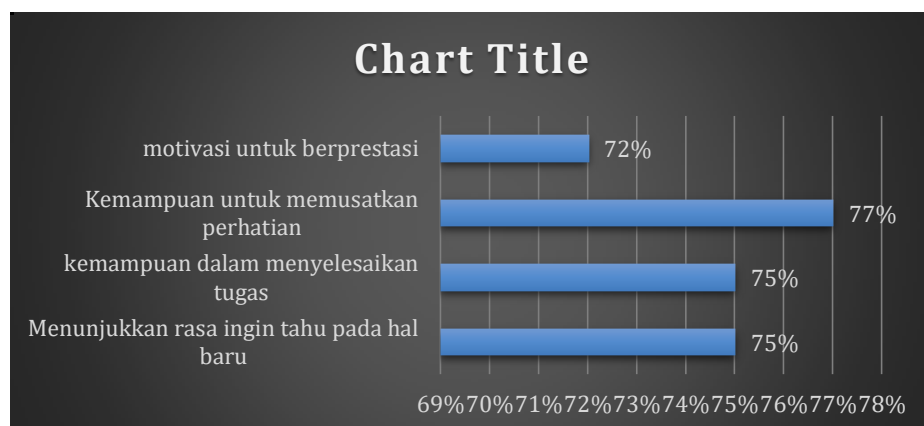


Fig. 1. Percentage of Children Who Reach the Indicator

The ability to complete this task was achieved by a total of 1005 children out of a total of 1336 children who were observed so that the percentage reached 75%. This means that more than half of the students in each class achieve this ability even though they have been through distance learning for a long time. The ability to focus attention was successfully achieved by 1025 children out of 1336 children who were observed by their respective class teachers. This causes the percentage of achievement to be 77%. This ability is the ability that most early-age students achieve, especially in the aspect of learning attitudes, even after they have gone through the pandemic. The development of achievement motivation grew well in 958 children from 1336 children who were observed in 55 study classes. This makes the percentage reach 72%. The development of achievement motivation in early childhood is the indicator that children achieve the least after going through a period of learning at home. The ability of children to show curiosity about new things was also achieved by 75% of the 1336 children studied. More than half of the children observed succeeded in demonstrating this ability when carrying out limited face-to-face learning at school.

Learning attitude is a person's ability to be able to organize himself in the learning process which includes the ability to complete tasks, the ability to focus attention, and the motivation to excel. Hyson stated that learning attitudes are defined as tendencies that children will carry out in dealing with learning situations (M. Hyson et. al). Another term that can adequately explain the meaning of the term learning attitude is what we call learning style. According to (P. Gail Williams et al, 2019), learning attitude is part of one of the indicators of a child's learning readiness. The maturity of the learning attitude is shown by the child's enthusiasm when learning, the child's curiosity about learning, temperament (how children perceive the subject), culture, and values. Learning attitudes play an important role in the potential of children's learning completeness at school. This is because learning attitudes refer to a child's capacity to deal with learning situations, a situation that children will definitely face when they enter elementary school.

The development of learning attitudes is shown by the child's tendency to show curiosity about new things. These characteristics really need to be mastered by children so that children can feel an interest in learning activities. Curiosity will lead children to focus on studying what needs to be learned at school. Without curiosity, children will perceive learning activities at school as boring, unimportant, and a waste of their time. Children will withdraw from learning activities, which will take them farther from the development of their expected abilities. Curiosity will also stimulate the development of critical thinking skills and problem-solving. These two abilities are high-level thinking skills that are very valuable for children who grow up in the 21st century. It is necessary to ensure that every child's curiosity is always developing because this aspect is the driving force in learning motivation.

In addition to curiosity, the development of learning attitudes can also be seen in the child's ability to complete the tasks assigned to him. This ability is very important to be demonstrated by children who will enter the elementary school level. The ability to complete tasks shows a child's social-emotional maturity in dealing with situations and challenges in learning and learning activities. There are many individual characteristics that will participate in maturity when children successfully demonstrate the ability to complete tasks consistently. Automatically the child will also hone the character of never giving up, persistence, and

diligence. The ability to complete tasks well also shows the quality of the sense of responsibility possessed by children. Individuals with good quality of responsibility are certain individuals who are expected to develop in the community because their presence will not be a burden to others and will even have the potential to lighten the burden together. The growing sense of responsibility as children complete their tasks properly will increase children's accessibility to the social world. This is because the social environment will welcome the presence of individuals who have a responsible character. Individuals and social will be able to grow side by side and reinforce each other with these characteristics.

The third indicator of the learning attitude variable is the ability to focus attention. This ability is a key ability for children to gain success in learning. Success in learning will increase children's motivation to learn more things and acquire various abilities. Therefore the ability to focus attention is a very important ability for children who are going to or are undergoing a period of education in elementary school. Through the ability to focus children's attention will be able to complete daily tasks both in the academic field and in other areas of life. The development of the ability to focus attention will have a variety of positive effects on oneself, including the ability for children to absorb information optimally, and strengthen memory so that the process of recalling information in the brain becomes easier.

The development of learning attitudes is also marked by the development of motivation for achievement. The development of this ability also shows the child's readiness to enter the world of academics and scholasticism. Achievement motivation according to Erick. Erickson naturally develops in the psycho-social aspects of children when children enter the world of school. In his theory, Erickson stated that during school years children face developmental challenges in the form of industry vs. inferiority. In this period, children personally begin to compare themselves with others so children begin to need to have self-competence. This situation ultimately fosters enthusiasm or motivation to excel in children. The existence of competencies that are owned as self-advantages makes children more confident to develop themselves so that children will grow into individuals with good quality.

Based on the results of observations made on 1336 children aged 6-7 years, it is known that an average of 75% of these children have a good development of learning attitudes. This is quite a question mark because for the previous 2 years these children were in a pandemic period where they learned to use distance learning models. Many sources predict that the pandemic has caused learning loss in the development of students (P. Engzell, A. Frey and M.D. Verhagen, 2021). This certainly worries the wider community, especially the parents of children who will be preparing to enter the elementary school level, where to enter the elementary school level for pre-school-aged children, these children need to reach the developmental maturity of school readiness. One aspect of the development of school readiness is a learning attitude characterized by a curiosity about new things, the ability to complete assigned tasks, the ability to focus attention, and achievement motivation. The occurrence of a pandemic for 2 years will certainly raise concerns about learning loss in early childhood which will have an impact on children's unpreparedness to enter elementary school. However, this concern seems to be unfounded, considering that the results of this study showed that approximately 75% of the children who were the subjects of the study showed well-developed learning attitudes. This shows that only 25% of children aged 6-7 years have difficulties in developing learning attitudes. According to researchers, this number is not a large number to worry about. This is because the number of children who reach maturity in this aspect of development is still far more than the number of children whose development is not yet optimal. This phenomenon can occur because at the age of 6-7 years children have

reached maturity for the development of academic aspects. Naturally, children will be interested in learning and acquiring competence. This is in accordance with the theory of psychosocial development presented by Erik H. Erickson which states that at the age of 6 years, children begin to enter the industrial phase where they begin to build their competence. If the child does not do this, then the child will fall into feelings of inferiority and inferiority. This is not a good thing for the future development of children (O. Y. H. Yusuf and L. O. A. S. Al Amin, 2020).

On the other hand, the achievement of maturity of 75% of children aged 6-7 years is also influenced by the arrival of the child's sensitivity to aspects of learning attitudes. Montessori (M. Khaironi, 2018) states that in development there are periods of strengthening sensitivity, where each period of sensitivity will bring up new interests and skills. Age 6-7 years is a period of sensitivity to academic abilities such as reading, writing, following rules, learning new things, completing assignments, practicing certain skills, and socializing. It is this sensitive period that ultimately makes children able to achieve readiness for school even though the child had experienced limitations in participating in learning at school for 2 years due to the pandemic period.

The two factors above have a significant impact on the readiness of children to go to school in the post-covid era. Even though during a pandemic, children were hampered from getting stimulation about learning attitudes, because children can return to school right at their sensitive period for learning, children can immediately catch up with delays in the development of their learning attitudes. The results can be seen together, more than half of the number of children observed managed to achieve age-appropriate development.

CONCLUSION

The maturity of the learning attitude of children aged 6-7 years in the post-covid era in Malang is developing quite well. this is indicated by the number of children who have developed learning attitudes that are in accordance with developmental tasks at the age of up to 75 percent. This can be because at the age of 6-7 years children are in a period of weeks towards the development of learning attitudes which in turn prevent children from the threat of learning loss which is much worried about by various educational observers and the community.

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