



# Strategic Management Workshop for Early Childhood Teachers in the Era of Independent Curriculum

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## ABSTRACT

The transformation of Indonesian education through the Merdeka Curriculum has the consequence of the need to strengthen the competence of educators, including Early Childhood Education (ECED) teachers. Teachers are no longer just teachers, but also learning leaders who are required to be able to manage the learning process strategically. This strategic management workshop was organized as a form of community service to equip PAUD teachers with understanding and skills in developing, implementing, and evaluating learning in a planned and adaptive manner. The results of the activity show an increase in teacher competence in applying strategic management principles according to the characteristics of early childhood and the demands of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Keywords: Workshop, Management, Strategic

## INTRODUCTION

Childhood Education (PAUD) has a very crucial role in forming the foundation of character, intelligence, and social and emotional attitudes of children from an early age. Early childhood is a golden age that will not be repeated, so the quality of education at this level determines the success of education at the next level. Therefore, the existence of PAUD teachers as the spearhead in the implementation of early childhood education services is very important. Along with the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, the national education paradigm has experienced a significant shift towards learning that is more flexible, enjoyable, and in line with the needs and potential of individual children. This curriculum emphasizes the importance of differentiated approaches, formative assessment, and project and play based learning. In the context of PAUD, this approach requires teachers to be able to design learning that is not only thematic and holistic, but also adaptive to the uniqueness of each child's development. Therefore, managerial competence is needed in planning, managing, and evaluating the learning process strategically and measurably. Strategic learning management skills are very important, because teachers are expected to be able to set clear learning objectives, choose the right strategies and media, and reflect on the learning process that has taken place. Unfortunately, the reality in the field shows that most PAUD teachers still do not fully understand the managerial principles in the context of learning. Many teachers are still oriented towards technical routines without careful planning and without a clear monitoring strategy. This is certainly a serious challenge in realizing the educational transformation expected by the Independent

Curriculum. Therefore, the implementation of a strategic learning management workshop for PAUD teachers is a strategic step in strengthening the capacity and professionalism of educators. Through this workshop, teachers not only gain theoretical understanding, but are also trained to apply the principles of learning management

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directly, starting from the preparation of RPPM and RPPH, selecting methods that are appropriate to the characteristics of the child, to formative evaluations that are diagnostic and constructive. Thus, this workshop is expected to be able to answer real needs in the field and support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum effectively and sustainably in PAUD units.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

Activities for PAUD teachers in the Merdeka Curriculum era were held for two consecutive days, with implementation times starting from morning to evening. This workshop is designed using a participatory and practical approach, which emphasizes the active involvement of participants in the entire series of activities. The participatory approach was chosen to ensure that PAUD teachers as participants were not only passive recipients of the material, but also played an active role in discussions, simulations, and completing tasks based on real experiences. Thus, the workshop not only functions as a means of transferring knowledge, but also becomes a collaborative space for sharing good practices between teachers. Meanwhile, a practical approach is applied by providing as much space as possible for participants to directly practice the skills needed in planning and implementing learning based on the Independent Curriculum. Participants are involved in activities to prepare learning planning documents (RPPM and RPPH), analyze real cases in the field, and reflect on the learning practices they have carried out in their respective units. During the activity, the facilitator provides intensive guidance and assistance, and opens up a two-way dialogue space. This workshop activity is also enriched with case studies, group discussions, learning simulations, and pre-test and post-test evaluations, so that the entire process takes place comprehensively and applicatively. With this method, it is hoped that there will be an increase in the understanding and skills of PAUD teachers in managing strategic, responsive learning, and in accordance with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum.

## **HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN**

Activities for PAUD teachers in the Independent Curriculum era have provided a number of important achievements that have a positive impact on increasing the professional capacity of educators. The achievements of this activity can be detailed as follows: 1) Increased Understanding of the Structure and Principles of the Independent Curriculum After attending the workshop, PAUD teachers showed a significant increase in understanding of the basic framework of the Independent Curriculum, including core competencies, learning outcomes (CP), learning objectives (TP), as well as the principles of differentiation, project-based learning, and formative assessment. This understanding is a strong foundation for teachers in developing more adaptive and contextual learning. 2) Ability to Prepare Strategic Learning Plans, through practice and simulations during the activity, workshop participants were able to prepare RPPM and RPPH that were structured and in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. The planning document was prepared by considering the developmental needs, interests, and unique potential of each child, so that learning becomes more meaningful, enjoyable, and child-oriented. 3) Formation of the PAUD Teacher Communication and Collaboration Forum Group discussion activities and sharing of experiences during the workshop encouraged the formation of a communication forum between PAUD teachers from various institutions. This forum is a place to share best practices, discuss learning challenges, and establish cross-institutional collaboration for sustainable professional development. 4) Increasing Teacher Motivation to Learn and Innovate This workshop also succeeded in increasing teacher motivation and enthusiasm in developing themselves as professional educators. Many participants expressed their intention to continue learning, take further training, and try to implement play-based

and project-based learning innovations in their classes. The drive to transform into teachers who are reflective and adaptive to curriculum changes is one indicator of the success of the activity.



**Figure 1.** Discussion Activities Regarding Strategic Management of Teachers

Overall, this activity provides capacity building for PAUD teachers not only in terms of knowledge, but also in terms of attitudes, skills, and professional networks. These achievements are expected to have a direct impact on improving the quality of learning in each participant's PAUD unit.



**Figure 2** Workshop Activity Participants

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Workshop for PAUD Teachers in the Independent Curriculum Era provides a significant contribution in improving the professional capacity of PAUD teachers, especially in terms of strategic learning planning, implementation, and evaluation. Through a participatory and practical approach, teachers not only gain a theoretical understanding of the principles of the Independent Curriculum, but are also able to translate them into systematic, flexible, and child-centered learning practices. This activity equips participants with the skills to compile learning documents (RPPM and RPPH), implement project-based and play-based learning, and use formative assessments to support optimal

child development. Furthermore, this workshop also encourages the creation of a reflective and collaborative culture between educators, which is an important foundation in improving the quality of early childhood education services in a sustainable manner. Nevertheless, the results of this workshop indicate that further support is urgently needed. Therefore, similar activities need to be continued in the form of intensive mentoring, further training, or the formation of PAUD teacher learning communities. This mentoring is important so that teachers get space for practice, reinforcement, and continuous evaluation in implementing the Independent Curriculum effectively in their respective educational units. With the continuation of this program, it is hoped that PAUD teachers will be increasingly able to transform into adaptive, creative learning facilitators who are on the side of children's needs, so that early childhood education can become a strong foundation in building a superior and characterful future generation.

### Conflict of Interests

The authors declared that no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and publication of this article.

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