

## **RAISING KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

**Titi Chandrawati**  
(FKIP-Universitas Terbuka)

### **INTRODUCTION (All Chapters, Subsections, and Subsections of TNR 11pt font)**

Every year the people of Jakarta and its surroundings as well as people in various regions in Indonesia often experience major floods. There are also areas that have experienced landslides. Another problem is the disposal of factory waste or garbage. The problem in this country is that many people throw garbage into the river and into the sea. This fact shows the lack of public awareness of environmental problems. Therefore, the researcher wanted to instill and develop community insights about environmental literacy. According to Kusumaningrum (2018), environmental literacy is a person's awareness to maintain environmental balance. This awareness can also be interpreted as an attitude of environmental literacy, which is a condition where a person not only has knowledge about the environment but also has a responsive attitude and is able to provide solutions to environmental problems. Early childhood is the golden generation or part of society who need to be equipped with environmental literacy skills from a young age so that these abilities are carried into adulthood (Siregar, Meilani, Purwanto, 2021).

Siregar, Meilani and Purwanto (2021) wrote in their article that environmental education needs to be given to students, even from an early age, so that the environmental balance is maintained. However, there are current challenges in educating the community and children to be more sensitive to environmental issues such as the lack of environmental education from parents of children, also the community is still not aware of environmental problems. Therefore, environmental education must be carried out more intensively through religious education, schools etc. In educating a community, especially early childhood education, schools must cooperate with parents and the surrounding community. Moreover, to instill children's awareness to love the environment requiring support from the child's own parents ([http://dlh.jabarpov.go.id/index.php/jasa/k2-categories-2/item/62-pentingnya-environmental education](http://dlh.jabarpov.go.id/index.php/jasa/k2-categories-2/item/62-pentingnya-environmental%20education)). According to Prihanta et al (2021, <https://e-journal.lp3kamandanu.com/index.php/nuras/article/view/60> & Kusumaningrum & Muslihasari, 2020) there is an alternative way to reduce children or students' lack of environmental consciousness that is helping students to implement environmental literacy skills.

The environmental literacy skills can be implemented by giving direct practice in the school area to give students some direct learning experiences such as observing the environment, coming and enjoying some gardens, planting some flowers or trees and cleaning the school or their environment, and also cleaning the area, where the garbage should be thrown to the rubbish bin.

This research focus on kindergarten children since children in their early age are in their golden age. Kindergarten children have many room and capabilities to learn and to absorb many knowledge and many skills. To be a good Indonesians,

children have to learn about many literacies that can make them a good Indonesians. One literacy that has to be learned by Indonesians is environmental literacy. The literacy is very important since we as Indonesians have to protect and save our environment and to keep our environment clean and healthy. If many Indonesian are not aware and not having some knowledge about preserving our own environment then the country will be destroyed and it will have many problems related with a worse environment such as having a polluted and air can make our society which started by our children losing their own identity, losing their own ethics and many good qualities that should be inherited from older or elderly people (Harususilo,2019).

Environmental literacy is an attitude and consciousness to protect the environment. Conscious attitude can also be interpreted as literacy environment, where the students can have knowledge about the environment but also they are taught how to be responsive and capable to care about their own environmental issues. Students as part of a society should be prepared as they are our next generation and they are agent of change in our society (Kusumaningrum,2018). It is the reason why it is necessary for the students especially from the early age to be taught with environmental literacy skills. And in kindergarten one strategy is by dialoguing with children about how to keep our environment clean and healthy.

Dialogue from Freire according to Desstya et al (2017) is a form of learning that can stimulate the students' critical thinking. This dialoging can also be used as a form of transformative learning in building self reflection, meaning making and raising early students critical thinking (Rahmawati. 2019)

Based on what stated in the background, the researcher tried to emphasize early childhood educators such as the kindergarten teachers to introduce and to teach and to familiarize their early students to raise kindergarten children awareness and knowledge about environmental education. To develop early childhood environmental literacy skills, environmental learning activities for children from an early age need to be planned, prepared and implemented with an approach that is appropriate to the development of early childhood mindsets, including using dialogue. Based on some of the results of these studies, the researcher carried out activities to increase awareness and knowledge of kindergarten children with dialogue. The purpose of this research is to develop early childhood awareness to care for their environment using dialogue.

## **METHOD**

This study was using an action research with case study method since it was conducted in the kindergartens which called TK Negeri Pembina in Serpong in August 2022. The reason for choosing this school was because: firstly, the researcher knew the principal of the kindergarten and secondly, the principal was willing to help the researcher. Therefore, the researcher could ask the teachers in the kindergarten to help in implementing the study.

The study was using these steps as follow:

developing the plan, learning the books which related with environmental problems, such as introducing about garbage and environmental problems in Indonesia to early children

approaching the kindergarten students and asking a permission to do the study introducing and giving two books to the teachers who agreed to help the researcher

the teachers tried to read the two books before they had to read the books preparing various things to carry out research on dialogue about the books' content to early childhood together with the teacher including preparing the tools for doing some activities after reading and dialoging with their early students Implementation in the class, reading the books, dialoging with the students, taking pictures and taking notes concerning the implementation interviewing the teachers to know what she learnt from implementing dialogue with students to talk about the content of the book evaluating the activity and developing the conclusion

Research questions of the study were:

“What are the use of dialogue to raise kindergarten children awareness and knowledge about environmental education?”

Here are some photos about reading the books and dialoging with early students. The books that were read by the teachers were 1. Causes of flooding and 2. Why there is a lot of garbage





From the photos it is shown that the teachers showed and read the books to their students. The students were listening to their teachers. It seemed that the students were attracted to the books and to the way their teachers told the stories. After reading the books then the teachers were asking questions to stimulate students thinking such as What is it that you see from the book?, Why there is flooding?, What should we do to avoid the flood? Why we produce garbage, Why we should put the garbage in the rubbish bin what should we do to the garbage? Do you like living in a place with many garbage? What happened with a place that have many garbage? The teachers also let the students to ask questions to help the students understood the content of the books.

## **DISCUSSION**

From reading the book about environment and by dialoging with the students the researcher noted that the students learned some knowledge about the cause of the flood and about how to keep the environments clean and to avoid flooding by throwing the garbage to the rubbish bin. The teachers also give some advices to the students for always throw the garbage to the rubbish bin and to help their parents and the teachers to keep their place clean.

The researcher observed that some students seemed interested in reading the books by themselves. After reading and dialoging with the students, the teachers

give some activities which following the content of the books such as to make a picture about rubbish bin and making a pot for planting flowers from some plastic bottles. This activities were a kind of activity to help the students make meaning of what they have learned from reading and dialoging with their teachers. By making picture about rubbish bin and by making a flower pot from recycle plastic bottles the students also learned about how to reduce their garbage and to keep their environment clean.

Results indicated that both the kindergarten teachers and their students gain more knowledge and more awareness about environmental education by doing dialoging approach. And many of the early students were firstly learn about environmental problems such as the cause of flood and who produce garbage in their classrooms under their teacher guidances. It is hoped that after learning about a problem in environmental issues the kindergarten children in their early years as the successors of this nation are expected to fortify themselves to protect and maintain their own environment.

According Patrisiana, Dike, and Cahyadi Wibowo (2020) environmental literacy skills can be measured based on criteria for literacy components environment, namely: a. Knowledge, b. Cognitive skills, c. Attitude. Here, from the observation the researcher found that the students and also the teachers gained some knowledge about the content of the books and then, the knowledge brought some cognitive skills about preserving the environment and it is hoped this cognitive skills will affect to the students and to the teachers to have some habits of reducing their garbage and try to keep the environment clean. Therefore, it is hoped the knowledge will raise the students' and their teachers' awareness in preserving and caring to their environment.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the study the researcher can conclude that the use of dialogue can raise kindergarten children awareness and knowledge about environmental education. The dialogue about environmental education could be learned by early students after the teachers read the books and the teachers asked the early students about the content of the two books.

Early students and also the teacher found out that learning environmental education and environmental literacy is not difficult but the teacher should always aware and try to introduce their early students with caring the environment.

It is hoped that by raising and having knowledge about environmental education could help the successors of Indonesia to care with their own environment.

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