

**A MODEL IN THE TRAINING OF CREATIVE THINKING TO INCREASE THE
COMPETENCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TUTORS (A Study of the
Program of Early Children Education in
Serang Regency, Banten Province)
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ABSTRACT

This study was based upon the development of the early childhood education program (PAUD) in which educators of PAUD (Early childhood education) have considerably increased quantitatively but they have been hindered by their quality and lack of competency. This research is aimed at learning, obtaining, analyzing and revealing the objective conditions of the PAUD tutors and then from the empirical and factual data, the creative thinking training model is made to be implemented and tested for its effectiveness.

The theoretical study employed a number of grand-theories related with the development of research problem, some of which are non formal education by Coombs (1971), Sudjana and Sutaryat (2000), the theory of training by Dugan Laird (1976), Creativity by Than Ai Girl (2004) and Hurlock (1999) and competency by Cunningham (1977). The method used in this study is research and development qualitatively and quantitatively in measuring the training effectiveness by noticing the existing changes in testing the model of training. Trial and error was conducted by using the quasi experimental pretest-posttest comparison group design. The data were collected by holding interviews, observation, documents study and questionnaires.

The research findings showed: 1) The model of creative thinking training was based on the training components which consisted of input, process, output and outcome which were also affected by the instrumental and environmental inputs. 2) The training implementation was made by attending a number of cases, some of which are: Process of need assessment, forming group, ice breaker, problem solving approach and decision making, technique of instruction through brainstorming, discussion, assignment and microteaching. 3) The testing model showed effective result with the indicators as follows: the score of the experimental class is higher than the controlled class with the same capability at the first stage of the training. The changes in learning process was started from grouping the students or the learning participants based on their ages, making the lesson units, using the PAUD generic curriculum, using more approaches on stimulating children to think, reducing the process of granting and explaining the material, and understanding the child evaluation process which are conducted by means of portfolio and observation.

The conclusion of this research is that the model creative thinking is proven effective in raising the PAUD educators competency so that this model of creative thinking training should be recommended to be an alternative model of training in improving the competence of PAUD educators.

A. Background

Globalization is a worldly process which will be a heavy challenge for us because, with globalization, the competition is opened widely, not only facing competition in the local scale, but it is heavier and more complex. Wikipedia website explained that *“Globalization is the increasing interconnection of people and places as a result of advances in transport, communication, and information technologies that causes political, economic, and cultural convergence”*. Globalization is the development of multi relationships of human beings and areas which cause similarities in the development of transportation, communication and information technology, and culture. Because of the complexity and tightness of competition, quality human resources are needed. As a description, the quality of Indonesia human resources – which is summarized in human development index – arose to 108th rank in year 2006, from 111th rank in year 2004, but it should trigger us to increase HDI again. Three components of the assessment are life expectancy, education and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Education is a major component that must be increased continually because we have learned from history and fact that all developed countries can develop rapidly because they really care about the quality and development of education.

The HDI which is more than 0.800 means that its human development is in the high level, the HDI which is between 0.500 and 0.799 means that its human development is in the intermediate level, and the HDI which is lower than 0.499 means that its human development is in the low level. Based on the classification, Indonesia is categorized as one of countries in the intermediate level. Although Indonesia rank of HDI is not stable, but it tends to increase each year when we view its indexes.

Indonesia has a national education system which consists of formal, non formal and informal education. Coombs in Sutaryat (2005:15) defined non formal education as every educational activity which is organized outside the standard school system, separated from or as an important part of a bigger activity, performed intentionally to serve certain students to achieve their aims of study. Paulston (1972) in Sudjana (2004: 29-32) explained that the character of non formal education consists of 15 dimensions, in which all dimensions are categorized into five categories, namely: program aims, time of execution, content of activity, learning process and program control. Besides, non formal education is not emphasized on its certificate, but on its applications in life.

From the category of time, non formal education is relative shorter, there is only a few of non formal educations which last longer than a year. Besides, the requirements to join the program are need, talent and opportunity. Non formal education is also emphasized on the present time and the use of time is not continually. Viewed from the category of program content, the curriculum is centered on the students' interest. Viewed from the category of learning process, the learning location is centered on the society and institution environment. The

curriculum is also connected with the life of students and society, the program structure is flexible, it is focused on the students and it is using available resources frugally. Meanwhile, viewed from the category of control, non formal education control is performed by the program executioner and students with a democratic approach.

There are two aims of early childhood education. The primary aim is to form quality Indonesian children who grow and develop in accordance with their levels of development so that they have optimal preparation to enter basic education and to live optimally in the adult phase. Meanwhile, the secondary aim is to help children achieving learning (academic) readiness in school. The primary object of early childhood education is children of 0–6 years old. In order to reach the primary object, the researcher needs to reach the secondary objects, namely: parents who have children of 0–6 years old, tutors and administrators of institutions of early childhood education, and societies which provide early childhood education. Institutions which are related with early childhood education program are central and local government institutions such as BPPLSP, BPKB, SKB, Educational Bureau and other bureaus, and private institutions such as NGO, Women Service Foundation, individuals and professional organizations, and industries.

Recently, only 28% of children (below 6 years old) receive education. They are educated in Children Under Five Years Old Daycares (9,6%), Kindergartens (6,5%), “Raudhatul Athfal” (1,4%), Playgroups (0,13%), Children Daycares (0,05%) and other places (9,9%). Unfortunately, the ratio of early childhood education centers and children is 1:86 (PNBAI 2004 by Fasli Djalal 2004). According to a review of early childhood education policy (UNESCO, 2005), there are several critical problems which are faced in the development of early childhood education. The first problem is participation. According to National Action Plan of PUS, in Indonesia, the coarse participation level of children of 0+ year old until 6+ years old in the service of early childhood education is 28% in year 2001. The second critical problem is investment. The amount of expenditures for education and caring of small children in National Education Ministry in year 2003 is only Rp. 123.72 billions, only 0.55% of education budget. Other critical problem which is faced by Indonesia is coordination. Naturally, early childhood education is closely related with sectors of children psychology, health and social. The heavy challenge in Indonesia is that National Education Ministry has two Directorates of PAUD, because of formal and non formal problems, which cause conflictive and separated distributions of service management, inspection, training and curriculum. Other effects of separated administration groups are the continuity of service is obstructed, children development is hindered and fund is wasted.

Another basic problem of early childhood education program is the supply of quality educators. Recently, only 6% of teachers of early childhood education have the similar qualification with children of Kindergarten and “Raudhatul Athfal” namely the Certificate of Second Diploma (DII) although the standard in developed countries requires educators in kindergartens or teachers of early childhood education undertook four years education in universities. The quality of educators of early childhood education really affects children development

and motivation in learning process so that the competency of educators of early childhood education must be a main program in the development. Whiddet and Hollyforde defined competencies as behaviors that an individual demonstrate when undertaking job relevant task effectively within a given organizational context. With various limitations of facilities and equipments of children learning and curriculum, we need the ability of creative thinking which can create a creative and fun learning environment in the early childhood education program. It is worsened by the limitation of quality of PAUD educators who generally do not have background of early childhood education. Therefore, training becomes an urgent need, especially the training of creative thinking. It is in accordance with Evans statement that an individual who can think creatively can be a creative doctor, a creative teacher and a creative entrepreneur who can develop his/her ability because an individual who can think creatively can view problems in a different perspective and then can solve the problems and can make decisions to solve the problems. It will be developed in-depth in the research.

B. Focus and Formulation of Problems

From the above description, we can see several basic problems that need attention, namely the limitation of early childhood education services especially in remote regions and quality and quantity of educators of small children. The recent early childhood education program is the program of education unit of non formal PAUD which is held once a week in which educators of early childhood education are volunteers who have different social, economic and educational backgrounds. The research will try to create a training model which is effective and efficient for educators of early childhood education who generally do not have background of early children education. The training model is focused on the development of mind patterns of educators of early childhood education to be more creative in preparing learning process, developing facilities and media, educative toys and curriculum exploration. It is strengthened by a research that the nurture pattern is determined by frame of reference which is owned by an individual, in which the frame of reference is a structure of assumptions and expectations which become a foundation for an individual in thinking and acting (Sugito 2008).

The final product of the research is expected can be a training model which can develop the creativity of educators of early childhood education and a creative, effective and efficient training curriculum or module by considering local potency. In order to be clear, problems are focused into several questions as follows:

- 1) How the model of creative thinking training increases the competency of educators of PAUD which eventually affects creative learning process in the class?
- 2) How the implementation of model of creative thinking training helps educators of PAUD develop their competency?
- 3) How the effectiveness of model of creative thinking training increases the competency of educators of PAUD which will affect creative learning process in the class?

C. Research Method

The research has used a qualitative approach with descriptive method and research and development procedure or R & D (Borg: 1983). The try-out of the model has used an experiment which is categorized into pre-experimental design group with the group control type of pretest and posttest design.

In practice, the research has used eight phases. According to Borg and Gall (1979:626), steps that must be performed in research and development are: (1) Researching and gathering information, (2) Planning a prototype of components that will be developed, (3) Developing the first prototype, (4) Performing limited experiments on the first model, (5) Revising the first model, (6) Performing experiments on the field, (7) Revising the product, and (8) Performing dissemination and distribution to various parties.

The research subjects are PAUD tutors who have homogeneous competency in experimental class and control class. The research subjects are different, customized with the research phases. The data collection and analysis are performed by using qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative method is used to measure learning result or output of training, while qualitative method is used to find out the post-training effects as a social reality in which its meaning can be acquired wholly.

D. Research Findings

1. The empirical condition on the field shows that various trainings generally are using the conventional approach with one-way communication and providing many materials to be memorized. The effect is that, when tutors return to the field, tutors are facing difficulties in understanding and applying them in the classes. The model of creative thinking training is developed by considering the need assessment and considering several components of training namely: a) Raw input. In this case, tutors of PAUD are raw input of training. Tutors of PAUD are representatives of PAUD institutions of every district of Serang Regency. 90% of PAUD tutors who participated in the training do not have background of early childhood education and they learned PAUD independently. Tutors of PAUD are separated into two classes, namely treatment class and control class. In the planning process, the researcher explores and identifies training needs through in-depth interview with administrators of HIMPAUDI and tutors of PAUD. b) Instrumental input. Instrumental input consists of media usages, namely usages of in focus, music, several used items, internet which is used to enrich materials that will be presented in training, techniques, training materials, learning sources, training site, several technical preparations, and use of problem solving and decision making approach in training process to stimulate the thinking process of PAUD tutors. c) Environmental input. Environmental input consists of PAUD tutors' cultural, educational, and economic background; government policy about PAUD; and PAUD institutions' supports such as HIMPAUDI and Forum PAUD. d) Training process is performed by filling the questionnaire instrument on the beginning of training as a pretest to find out PAUD tutors' knowledge about concepts and materials which are related with small children. After the training process, the participants receive another questionnaire which contains questions and statements which serves as posttest to find out the effectiveness of learning in the training. e) Output or final result.

Output of the training is PAUD tutors' competency is increased, especially pedagogic competency which is related with the ability of understanding the students or growth and development of small children.

2. Implementation of Model of creative thinking training

- (1) Implementation of model of creative thinking training is started from the process of need assessment because, based on the previous research result, training programs which are not started with need assessment cannot answer problems that are faced by PAUD tutors on the field. Need assessment is a foundation in determining materials, media, techniques, and approaches which will be given. It will provide bigger influence and effect to PAUD tutors because they feel that they are involved and needed in the execution of training program.
- (2) Forming groups and then transform them into work teams is performed to solve problems, duties, and discussions. Comparing and grouping is done as an effort to increase the intensity of communication between participants and committee. The forming of work teams is done to stimulate PAUD tutors to think because healthy communication can smooth out transfer of knowledge and transfer of value between participants and educators with students. Through the forming of work teams, PAUD tutors are directed to learn and to share experiences, knowledge, and horizons together to form learning individuals which leads to learning society.
- (3) Paying attention to tutors' learning style so that the process of understanding and learning can be absorbed optimally. The learning style is based on Laird research result which explains that the biggest captive power is from senses of vision, hearing, touch, smell, and feel. Then, in the training process, lighting, room setting and audio setting must be considered carefully in order to reach optimal aims of training.
- (4) Ice Breaking is used when the participants start to loose their concentration. Ice breaker is used through games and singing a song together while moving their bodies to smooth out the flow of blood and eventually they can refocus on the discussed materials.
- (5) Problem solving and decision making approach is used to stimulate PAUD tutors in viewing a problem which is faced on the field, problem finding, fact finding, then analyzing and trying to find alternative solutions that can be made and eventually making a decision in choosing one of alternative solutions. Decision making is done to decide how she/he will implement her/his creativity. Decision making is a cognitive process in choosing several alternatives. The product of decision making is a final choice; the output can be in forms of an action, an opinion, an idea or a view. Decision making happened on the domain of individual and group. The type of decision consists of program decision and non program decision and then, in the training process, the researcher must set an atmosphere that can encourage groups to think creatively through brainstorming and other free activities

which need spontaneity so that every group member participates in solving a problem.

- (6) Escorting is done after the training to strengthen and to direct PAUD tutors through annual meetings which are held by HIMPAUDI. Besides, escorting is also aimed to ease the tutors when they found problems on the field, whether technical problems or conceptual implementation problems. The researcher acts as the facilitator and connector of involved parties to provide information about empiric conditions on the field.

3. Effectiveness and Meaning of Training Model

From experiments, it is found that the model of creative thinking training is proven effective in increasing learning results. Therefore, the researcher recommends the training model to be used and exploited to develop and increase PAUD tutors' competency. The effectiveness is shown by quantitative test which shows that t -empiric is bigger than t -table so that zero hypothesis is rejected and receives hypothesis that the class which receives treatment has learning result score which is bigger than the control class. Meanwhile, from qualitative evaluation result, it is seen that there are several important changes, especially PAUD tutors' pedagogic competency, as follows:

(a) The change of PAUD tutors' knowledge which affect tutors' attitude in classifying the students. In the beginning, all age groups are in one class. After the training, age groups are classified into small classes so that PAUD tutors are easier in presenting learning materials.

(b) The knowledge about the significance of curriculum role in learning process encourages tutors to own generic curriculum, then the researcher facilitates it by cooperating with HIMAPAUDI to provide a curriculum for PAUD tutors who do not have a generic curriculum guide.

(c) The proportion of rote materials is reduced and tutors provide more stimulation for children to think creatively and try to use understanding approach for the discussed theme. Materials of reading, writing and counting are still given but tutors use more interesting and fun techniques. It affects children perception about learning concept that can stimulate children creativity.

(d) Tutors are more opened in accepting differences and tolerating children when they made mistakes as a process. Besides, tutors also experience a change: from cowards who are afraid to present their opinions, ideas or thoughts into courageous persons who are brave to present their opinions, ideas or thoughts.

(e) The change of children evaluation concept. In the beginning, PAUD tutors believe evaluation concept as a process of testing children memory of materials which are received in playgroup. PAUD tutors now are committed not to test children, but use portfolio although they have not understand it wholly in the implementation domain.

(f) Understanding about the important role of daily, weekly and monthly learning lessons as a guide of learning activities so that tutors are more ready and firm in preparing learning process. Learning plan is a part of curriculum

implementation to achieve competency that must be mastered by learners systematically and continually based on the themes. It will strengthen the preparation of learning preparation such as media, techniques, materials, songs and activities that are related with certain theme.

E. Conclusion and Recommendation

1. Conclusion

- a. Model of creative thinking training is developed by considering training components such as input, process, output, instrumental input, environmental input and outcome.
- b. Implementation of model of creative thinking training is considering learning step of problem solving in which tutors are faced with problems. In the decision making, tutors are demanded to find solutions for a problem and making a decision by choosing an alternative solution from the solutions. Meanwhile, learning principle includes group forming, learning style, ice breaking and post-training escorting.
- c. Model of creative thinking training empirically is effective in increasing PAUD tutors' competency. It is shown by tutors' change of behaviors after they receive in-depth knowledge about children. Some changes are as follows: a) grouping children based on their ages, b) using curriculum of PAUD, c) reducing rote materials, d) tutors of PAUD are more opened in viewing children development, e) giving a new meaning to the concept of children evaluation, and f) using SKH in learning process in the class.

2. Recommendation

- a. For researchers who will research in the same field, you should sharpen and broaden the coverage horizon. Firstly, model of creative thinking training is adequate as a model of training which is effective in increasing competency that has been validated conceptually and empirically, but research experiment is still limited by target group of non formal PAUD tutors and the cycle of experiment. Therefore, wider coverage of experiment is needed; coverage which includes formal and non formal PAUD tutors. Secondly, in relation with the focus of increase which is still limited on the increase of pedagogic competency, the competency variable can be enlarged into personal, social, and professional competency. The increase of all elements of competency will need media and training forms that need longer time. Thirdly, in order to strengthen PAUD tutors position, PAUD tutors must prove their existence to get attention and priority in terms of facilities, welfare increase, and opportunities to receive scholarships like formal educators which are managed professionally. Fourthly, the resulted model of training cannot be generalized to all parties, but it can be applied to groups which have similar characters of culture, environment and social condition of PAUD

tutors. Finally, the model of creative thinking training is the first step to create creative PAUD tutors and eventually can create creative and productive behaviors that will create creative products that can increase the competency of PAUD tutors wholly and integrally in all aspects of life.

- b. For all practitioners, you should strengthen coordination and cooperation with institutions such as BKB, Forum PAUD, HIMPAUDI, IGRA, IGTKI and other educators organizations in order to unite the steps so that administratively and operationally you are more focused on the shared aim, namely developing and providing optimal stimulus in the golden age of children as a foundation for the next growth and development and as a foundation to participate in the next education phase so that they become quality and competitive human resources.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Promovendus was born on the small city of Cianjur on February 13th 1981. She was the 8th children of eight siblings of a couple of husband and wife, namely H.RM. Faqih (RIP) who worked as a Quran teacher in his own Islamic school and Hj. Siti Maemunah who works as a household wife and runs a Quran recitation in a mosque.

She finished her elementary education on MI Manarulhuda in 1993, then continued it to SMPN I Cianjur, continued it to SMUN I Cianjur and graduated in 1999. With support from her family and teacher, she tried to participate in the program of Local Quality Seed Tracking (PBUD) for the major of PLS FIP UNY and graduated in 2003 with cum laude title and received an opportunity in her Alma Mater in the same year. With BPPS scholarship from DIKTI in year 2005, she deepened her PLS study on Post Graduate School of Indonesia University of Education (SPS UPI) and finished it with cum laude title in year 2007. In the same year, she joined the doctorate program of PLS UPI.

In the last semester, when she was an undergraduate, she worked as a tutor of PAUD in Salman Al-Farisi Jogjakarta for about two years. After that, she received an opportunity to dedicate in PLS FIP UNY. During his dedication, the researcher had received Young Lecturer Research Grant from the Faculty, Research Grant from DIKTI, worked as the Secretary Staff in PLS Due Like Project, Treasurer of PLS Life Skill Project, Founding Operational Staff of PAUD Laboratory and Faculty Kindergarten. In the social life, she involved in Educational Foundation of Salman Al-Farisi. She fulfilled various trainings and seminars such as PAUD Educators Training in Serang Regency Banten and International Conference on Education for All (ICEFA) 2009.

She met and married with Sunardi, an alumnus of Geodesy of UGM and blessed with three sons, namely M. Fathi Shalahuddin Azfar, M. Faqih Shalahuddin Akmal, and M. Farhan Shalahuddin Azzam, who are born in Bandung when she participated in magisterial education and finished her doctoral program.