

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRACTICAL LIFE SKILL ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE THE INDEPENDENCE OF 3-4 YEAR OLD CHILDREN: AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY AT THE ANGGREK KINDERGARTEN

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of Practical Life Skill activities in increasing the independence of children aged 3-4 years at KB Anggrek Tegalsono. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach with 17 children as research subjects in October 2025. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results showed that Practical Life Skill activities implemented in the learning routine had a positive influence on the development of children's independence. Most children showed development in the Starting to Develop (MB) and Developing According to Expectations (BSH) categories, especially in the ability to put on shoes, tidy up toys, pour water, and clean up the table after the activity. Consistent habituation factors and gradual teacher guidance play an important role in encouraging children to be independent. Thus, Practical Life Skill activities are effectively implemented as a learning strategy to foster independence in early childhood, with ongoing support from teachers and parents.

Keywords: Practical Life Skills, Children's Independence, Early Childhood Education, Habituation

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a crucial stage in a child's overall development. During this period, children enter a "golden age," where physical, cognitive, language, socio-emotional, and moral development are developing rapidly (Sukatin et al., 2023). One aspect of development that requires special attention is independence. Independence reflects a child's ability to manage themselves, make simple decisions, and carry out various activities without relying on others for help. Children who demonstrate strong independence tend to be self-confident, able to adapt to new environments, and ready to face the next stage of their education (Kadi & Hariyanti, 2023).

Independence is not a skill that appears suddenly, but develops through a process of habituation carried out consistently in the family and school environment (Syarif, 2023). At the age of 3-4 years, children are at a developmental stage where curiosity and the urge to try things on their own are very strong. Children begin to show attitudes of wanting to choose, try, and complete tasks in their own way. However, if at this stage adults often take over children's tasks for reasons of practicality or neatness, the process of developing independence can be hampered (Rismawanti et al., 2024). Children become accustomed to relying on adult assistance and lack the confidence to complete simple tasks.

In the context of early childhood education (PAUD) institutions, fostering independence is one of the learning objectives outlined in the PAUD curriculum. Teachers are expected to not only impart academic knowledge but also to familiarize children with activities that enable them to



develop initiative, responsibility, and self-management skills. However, many learning activities focus too much on the end result, rather than the process, thus depriving children of the opportunity to learn through direct experience (Febriantini & Salsabila, 2025) .

One approach that can be applied to foster independence in early childhood is Practical Life Skills activities . Practical Life Skills are activities related to daily life and can be performed by children according to their physical and psychological developmental stage (Pawestri et al., 2024) . These activities include activities such as pouring water, scooping ingredients, tidying up play equipment, putting on shoes, setting the table, cleaning the table, and even buttoning clothes. These activities provide opportunities for children to directly practice daily life activities that are beneficial to them (Wijayanti et al., 2019) .

Through Practical Life Skills activities, children are not only trained to perform activities independently, but also develop fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, concentration span , and the ability to control body movements (Badriyah & Fidesrinur, 2023) . Children learn to be careful when pouring water, meticulous when tidying up tools, and patient when having to try repeatedly until successful. These activities also strengthen a sense of responsibility and self-confidence. When children successfully complete a task independently, they will feel a sense of pride and satisfaction, which strengthens their internal motivation to try other things independently.

This concept aligns with Piaget's Constructivism theory, which states that children learn through direct experience and interaction with their environment (Arafah et al., 2023) . Furthermore, Vygotsky emphasized the importance of scaffolding , which involves providing assistance tailored to a child's needs (Salsabila & Muqowim, 2024) . In Practical Life Skills activities, the teacher acts as a facilitator, providing examples, guidance, and encouragement, rather than taking over the child's tasks.

Based on initial observations at the Anggrek Kindergarten, it was found that some children still demonstrated low levels of independence in performing simple activities. Some children still asked teachers for help putting on shoes, feeding themselves, or tidying up play equipment. Furthermore, some children appeared to lack confidence when asked to try an activity without assistance. This suggests that independence stimulation needs to be provided in a structured and continuous manner (Fatah et al., 2025) .

Given these conditions, the implementation of Practical Life Skills activities is seen as an appropriate step to be implemented at KB Anggrek. These activities are simple, easily integrated into school routines, and relevant to the developmental needs of children aged 3–4 years. Furthermore, these activities do not require complicated tools and materials, so they can be implemented in a variety of learning environments. The implementation of these activities also provides children with the opportunity to experience a natural learning process through habituation, repetition, and light guidance from teachers. Thus, Practical Life Skills is not merely a part of play activities, but a structured pedagogical strategy to gradually develop independence. Through these activities, children are expected to be able to build self-confidence, responsibility, and the ability to carry out daily activities more independently. Therefore, this study focuses on how Practical Life Skills activities are implemented in learning and how these activities can help increase the independence of children aged 3–4 years at KB Anggrek.

METHODS



This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach because the research focuses on describing the process of implementing Practical Life Skill activities and the development of children's independence during the activities as they are without any manipulation or specific treatment. This approach is in accordance with the research objective, namely to understand and describe phenomena in depth based on real conditions in the learning environment (Susanto et al., 2025).

This research was conducted at KB Anggrek Tegalsono, Tegalsono District, Probolinggo Regency, in October 2025 during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The research subjects consisted of 17 children aged 3–4 years who participated in learning activities in the playgroup. The selection of subjects was carried out purposively, namely selecting subjects relevant to the focus of the research, namely children who are at the stage of basic independence development and actively participate in learning activities. In addition to children, class teachers also served as important informants to provide explanations regarding the implementation of Practical Life Skill activities in the classroom.

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. Direct observations were made to observe children's independent behavior during the activities, such as the ability to put on their own shoes, tidy up play equipment, pour water, and other daily life activities. Observations used observation sheets compiled based on indicators of early childhood independence. Interviews were conducted with teachers using semi-structured techniques to obtain information related to learning objectives, teacher strategies, and children's responses to the activities. Documentation such as activity photos, child development notes, and learning tools (RPPH) were used to strengthen the data.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher himself as the data collector and analyst. In addition, supporting instruments included an independent observation sheet. Interview guidelines and field notes were used to obtain structured and consistent data.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on important information related to the implementation of Practical Life Skill activities and changes in children's independent behavior. Data presentation was carried out in the form of narrative descriptions. Furthermore, conclusions were drawn to determine the development of children's independence after participating in the activities. To maintain data validity, this study used triangulation techniques, namely comparing data from observations, interviews, and documentation. Researchers also conducted member checks with class teachers to ensure that the collected data corresponded to real conditions in the field (Berliani et al., 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on observations conducted during *the Practical Life Skills program* in October 2025 at the Anggrek Tegalsono Kindergarten, the development of independence in children aged 3–4 years showed significant improvement. Children began to demonstrate the ability to perform several simple activities independently, such as putting on shoes, tidying up play equipment, pouring water, and tidying up the table after playing. The development of children's independence was measured



using a developmental achievement rubric with four categories: Not Yet Developing (BB), Starting to Develop (MB), Developing as Expected (BSH), and Developing Very Well (BSB).

Table 1. Development of Independence of Children Aged 3–4 Years at the Anggrek Tegalsono Kindergarten

No	Child's Initials	Wearing shoes	Tidying Up Toys	Pouring Water	Cleaning the Table	Dominant Category
1	SERLI	MB	MB	MB	MB	MB
2	FIRA	BSH	MB	MB	BSH	BSH
3	Aisyah	MB	BB	MB	MB	MB
4	APRIL	BSB	BSH	BSH	BSH	BSH
5	LIDIYA	MB	MB	MB	MB	MB
6	SYAHRUL	MB	MB	BSH	MB	MB
7	WISE	BSH	MB	MB	BSH	BSH
8	ABYAN	BB	MB	MB	MB	MB
9	AKIEV	MB	MB	MB	MB	MB
10	ATA	BSH	BSH	MB	BSH	BSH
11	FAQIH	BSB	BSH	BSH	BSB	BSB
12	INDRA	MB	MB	MB	BSH	MB
13	FIKRI	BB	MB	MB	MB	MB
14	RISK	BSH	MB	BSH	BSH	BSH
15	YUBI	MB	MB	MB	MB	MB
16	ALDI	BB	BB	MB	MB	MB
17	AHMAD	BSH	BSH	BSH	BSH	BSH

Development Summary;

1. BSB : 2 children
2. BSH: 6 children
3. MB: 7 children
4. BB: 2 children

Based on this data, the majority of children are in the Beginning to Develop (MB) and Developing as Expected (BSH) categories. This indicates that Practical Life Skills activities have a positive impact on children's independence development, although some children are still in the Not Yet Developing (BB) category and require more intensive support.

Discussion

The research results show that the Practical Life Skills activities implemented at the Anggrek Tegalsono Kindergarten significantly contributed to increasing the independence of children aged 3–4 years. Based on observations, most children were in the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) and Starting to Develop (MB) categories. This condition indicates that children have had the opportunity to practice performing daily activities independently, such as putting on shoes, tidying



up play equipment, pouring water, and clearing the table after completing the activity. These activities provide meaningful learning experiences that are directly related to children's daily lives.

These findings align with Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which emphasizes that children learn through concrete activities (*learning by doing*) and direct interaction with their environment (Rosidah, 2018). Children aged 3–4 years are in the preoperational stage, where the most effective learning is through direct experience, rather than verbal explanation. Therefore, Practical Life Skills activities are an appropriate means of providing concrete experiences that can help children develop conceptual understanding as well as fine and gross motor skills (Raihana, 2025).

Furthermore, this learning practice supports Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept, which states that children develop optimally when guided with appropriate support, rather than when left unsupervised or over-assisted (Sari, 2018). In this activity, teachers provide scaffolding in the form of examples, encouragement, and light guidance, then gradually reduce assistance as children become more independent. This approach has been shown to help increase children's self-confidence and sense of responsibility (Mustofa, 2023).

Increasing independence is also influenced by consistent practice. Montessori emphasized that independence can grow through continuous practice in a supportive and structured environment. When children perform the same activities every day, these activities transform from skills into habits. Children who are accustomed to being given opportunities to try, even if they are not perfect, will develop more quickly than children who are accustomed to being helped. However, research findings indicate that two children are still in the Not Developing (BB) category. This may be caused by overprotective parenting at home or being accustomed to being served, resulting in children lacking the confidence to try things on their own (Rahman et al., 2022). Therefore, the success of developing independence depends not only on the school but also requires collaboration between teachers and parents.

Thus, Practical Life Skill activities have proven effective in supporting the development of children's independence, but maximum success requires consistent practice and support from the family environment so that the development achieved at school can be maintained and increased.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted on the implementation of Practical Life Skills activities to increase the independence of children aged 3-4 years at KB Anggrek Tegalsono in October 2025, it can be concluded that this activity can have a positive influence on the development of children's independence. Through simple activities such as putting on shoes, tidying up play equipment, pouring water, and cleaning up the table after the activity, children have the opportunity to learn to carry out daily activities independently.

Observations show that most children are in the "Starting to Develop" (MB) and "Developing as Expected" (BSH) categories, indicating that Practical Life Skills activities significantly contribute to fostering children's independence. Consistent habituation, scaffolding from teachers, and opportunities for children to try repeatedly are all significant factors in fostering this independence.



However, some children are still in the Not Yet Developing (BB) category. This condition indicates that family environmental factors, parenting styles, and a child's self-confidence also influence the development of independence. Therefore, the success of increasing a child's independence depends not only on learning at school but also requires support and cooperation from parents at home. Overall, the implementation of Practical Life Skills activities is effective and worthy of continuation and development as a learning strategy to support the growth of independence in early childhood.

Suggestion

Based on the research findings, the authors recommend that Practical Life Skills activities be implemented sustainably in the learning routine at Anggrek Tegalsono Kindergarten. Teachers are expected to continue providing opportunities for children to carry out daily activities independently through gradual guidance, so that children can build self-confidence and responsibility for assigned tasks. In addition, parents are also expected to provide support by getting children used to doing simple activities at home, such as dressing themselves, tidying up toys, and helping set the dinner table, so that the habit of independence developed at school can be consistently continued in the family environment. Early childhood education institutions can make Practical Life Skills activities an integrated habituation program, as well as provide a conducive learning environment and facilities that support children to practice independence. Furthermore, future researchers are advised to expand this research by examining other factors that influence children's independence, such as family parenting patterns, play environments, or individual character differences, so that research on early childhood independence can be more comprehensive.

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