

STRATEGY FOR INTRODUCING BASIC CALITUNG TO CHILDREN AGED 5-6 YEARS AT ALWAHIDA PAUD, MATARAM CITY IN THE 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

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ABSTRACTS	ARTICLE INFO
<p>This research is motivated by the pros and cons of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic learning at the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) level, as well as the implementation of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic in Alwahida PAUD, which is predominantly implemented using fun strategies. The purpose of this study was to determine the strategies and obstacles in introducing basic reading, writing, and arithmetic in grade B of Alwahida PAUD Mataram in the 2023/2024 academic year. This research is a descriptive qualitative study, with data sources from grade B teachers and the principal. Data collection techniques were observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques included data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. Data validity was achieved through increased diligence and data triangulation. The results of this study are: (1) The introduction of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic to children aged 5-6 years at Alwahida PAUD was implemented in grade B using five strategies: letter cards, quizzes, magazine assignments, writing in a boxed book, and attendance activities. (2) The implementation of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic at Alwahida Preschool (PAUD) encountered two obstacles: children's poor mood upon arrival at school, resulting in a lack of enthusiasm for participating in activities, and factors such as age and ability to absorb the material.</p>	<p>Article History: <i>Received: December 13rd 2025</i> <i>Revised: December 23rd 2025</i> <i>Published: December 2025</i></p> <p>Keywords: <i>Strategy, Obstacles, Introduction to Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, Early Childhood.</i></p>

INTRODUCTION

The pros and cons of implementing reading, writing, and arithmetic for preschool children (5-6 years old) remain a hot topic. The issue of reading, writing, and arithmetic, or calistung for short, is a unique phenomenon. This phenomenon has become increasingly hotly discussed among parents of preschool and elementary school children (SD) because they worry that their children will not be able to keep up with school if they are not equipped with reading, writing, and arithmetic skills from the start.

This concern is also driven by the selection requirements for entry into elementary schools or Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) at several popular institutions. Furthermore, the increasingly difficult elementary school subject matter is also a factor of concern for parents, leading to a focus on academic ability. Therefore, it's no surprise that many parents demand that their children learn to read, write, and count as early as possible.

These parental demands create opportunities for "forcing" children to read and write. Consequently, schools inevitably strive to boost children's abilities to demonstrate their ability to develop and advance their literacy skills. This strong effort tends to ignore the abilities and characteristics of early childhood, emphasizing the development of interests over abilities.

Ultimately, this situation has led Early Childhood Education Institutions to compete to provide or incorporate literacy and numeracy lessons for young children. Some have even made it a flagship program, attracting parents to enroll their children. Some early childhood education institutions have even implemented anticipatory measures to teach literacy and numeracy to young children through additional after-school learning programs (tutoring) or extracurricular activities.

During observations conducted at one early childhood education institution, researchers also observed children becoming bored during classroom activities, as teachers taught them to write simple sentences on the board and asked them to copy them in notebooks. On another occasion, at a different institution, researchers observed children being trained and accustomed to reading storybooks every morning upon arrival at school.

Interviews with parents from a well-known private early childhood education institution in Mataram City also revealed that their children were taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, including addition and subtraction, sentence construction, and answering questions posed by the teacher. Furthermore, there was homework to be done.

Therefore, parents need the assistance of private tutors to support their children's learning development. This is the reality in the field. The implementation of reading, writing, and arithmetic instruction that is not well-targeted, emphasizing achievement and not based on early childhood learning principles, leaves children stressed and bored.

Therefore, it is not excessive for the government to anticipate this by issuing a policy prohibiting reading and writing instruction in kindergarten. As reported by Republikas.co.id, the Director of Elementary School Development at the Ministry of Education and Culture, Wowon Widaryat, stated that his office has issued a regulation that elementary schools may not require reading, writing, and arithmetic skills as a prerequisite for elementary school entrance.

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Sesjen Kemendikbud), Didik Suhardi, has also emphasized that character education should be prioritized in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) over reading and arithmetic (Calistung). However, this has not yet changed parents' perceptions. The ban on reading, writing, and arithmetic in PAUD institutions is adhered to solely as an effort to avoid government sanctions, rather than as a substantive measure to prevent textual learning that aligns with the principles of early childhood education.

Nani Husnaini, citing an interview with a RA principal in Mataram City, stated: "Reading and writing lessons are unavoidable because literacy is a prerequisite for elementary school entry. However, the government prohibits reading and writing, so we work around this by providing tutoring for children outside of school hours."

The real issue isn't whether early childhood literacy is permissible; the issue lies in the inappropriate implementation of literacy in classrooms, which emphasizes achievement and

is not based on the principles of early childhood education, leading to stress and boredom for children.

Essentially, developing early reading, writing, and arithmetic skills is crucial for early childhood, given that Early Childhood Education Institutions (ECEs) serve as a platform for preparing children for learning readiness upon entering further education. This is stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Furthermore, early childhood is considered the "Golden Age," a period of child development. Within the context of the early childhood curriculum, reading, writing, and arithmetic is often referred to as literacy and falls within the area of language development.

Therefore, it can be concluded that reading, writing, and arithmetic, within the context of literacy, can be introduced to children, particularly preschoolers aged 5-6. In this context, we can refer to it as introducing basic reading, writing, and arithmetic to early childhood. This should, of course, be done by considering the use of strategies and principles of early childhood learning, and adapting it to the child's developmental stage.

Based on this background, the researcher is interested in examining strategies for introducing basic reading, writing, and arithmetic to early childhood. From observations conducted at the Alwahida Preschool (PAUD) in Mataram, researchers found that introductory reading, writing, and arithmetic activities piqued the interest of early childhood learners. Teachers' patience and non-pressure attitudes also ensured that children mastered the material and completed assignments at their own pace.

The introduction to reading, writing, and arithmetic began when children entered Grade A and deepened when they entered Grade B, and was packaged in engaging activities. This motivated the researchers to choose the title "Strategies for Introducing Basic Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic to Children Aged 5-6 at the Alwahida Preschool (PAUD) in Mataram City."

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative research observes an object and then systematically and accurately describes the symptoms, facts, or events, appropriate to the specific school environment. This was presented in written form, images, or recordings. Therefore, this research was conducted objectively, and the data obtained must be certain and clear. Qualitative research is research used to examine natural conditions of objects, where the researcher serves as the key instrument, data collection techniques utilize triangulation, data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize generalization. This research is descriptive qualitative because it aims to find valid answers or information related to the problem being scientifically investigated. In this case, the researcher collected various data needed to describe the strategy for introducing basic reading, writing, and arithmetic to children aged 5-6 years at Alwahida Mataram Preschool and the obstacles faced by teachers in introducing basic reading, writing, and arithmetic at Alwahida Mataram Preschool.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

From the observations conducted by the researcher, no teacher obstacles were found related to media, learning atmosphere, or learning resources. Alwahida PAUD has a

comfortable environment and atmosphere. The conclusions from the observations, interviews, and documentation conducted by the researcher regarding teacher obstacles in introducing basic reading, writing, and arithmetic to children aged 5-6 at Alwahida PAUD are outlined in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1 Research Results Regarding Teacher Obstacles in Introducing Basic Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic To Children Aged 5-6 at Alwahida PAUD, Mataram City

NO	INDICATOR	OBSTACLES
1.	Children's Mood When Arriving at School	External Problems
2.	Children's Age and Ability Factors	External Problems

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted in class B of Alwahida Preschool, Mataram, it can be concluded that: 1. The introduction of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic to children aged 5-6 years at Alwahida Preschool was implemented in class B using five strategies: letter cards, quizzes, magazine assignments, writing in a boxed book, and attendance activities. 2. The implementation of the introduction of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic at Alwahida Preschool encountered two obstacles: the children's mood when arriving at school, which led to a lack of enthusiasm for participating in activities, and the children's age and ability to absorb the material.

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