

SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW LEARNING COMMUNITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

One of the aims of early childhood education is to provide stimulation to children from birth to six years of age to facilitate children's growth and development, both mentally and physically, so that they are ready to continue their education. The main focus is optimizing children's potential, forming basic behavior and skills according to developmental stages, and preparing them for further education. The importance of the role of teachers who understand and develop children's potential is emphasized, with learning communities oriented towards a group vision to achieve academic goals. Communication in learning takes place in an environment that allows students to improve their knowledge and academic achievement. This research aims to examine literature reviews related to learning communities in early childhood education. This research uses the SLR (Systematic Literature Review) method, and the data taken was collected from 7 national journal articles via Google Scholar.

Keywords: *Early Childhood Education; Learning Communities*

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important aspects in the progress of the Indonesian nation is education. A country is said to be advanced if it has quality human resources (HR) that are able to compete in this era of globalization. With guidance and education, humans can explore and develop their potential from an early age. The first step in seeking knowledge that can be applied is through reading scientific discourse (Siregar, Darmawan, & Kusumawardani, 2021). Education aimed at early childhood is an effort to provide encouragement or stimulus to children from birth until they are six years old with the aim of assisting in the child's growth and development, both physically and psychologically, so that the child is ready to continue their education to the next level. According to Maghfiroh & Suryana in their research carried out in 2021, they believe that preschool education or early childhood education has an important role in developing, stimulating and optimizing the potential of early childhood so that they can develop basic behavior and abilities according to the stages of their development, so they are ready to move on to the next level of education. (Maghfiroh & Suryana, 2021). This is in line with the sentence contained in the research conducted by Aini. et.al., 2023 that "... early childhood is still said to be not strong and their attention is easily shifted to other things so that children need a process that must be carried out continuously to regulate their behavior, skills, abilities and thought patterns." The main aim of early childhood education is to maximize children's potential, forming basic behavior and abilities that are appropriate to their stage of development, so that they are ready to face further development. Therefore, teachers are needed who can understand and develop the potential of a child.

The ability to understand and develop student potential or pedagogic ability of a teacher becomes a benchmark for teacher qualifications in planning, implementing, and evaluating effective learning and helping and supporting students to achieve learning objectives. Therefore, the pedagogical ability of a teacher becomes a crucial factor in determining the quality of education provided to students. As explained by Lestari. et.al., 2022 in his article, mastering the characteristics of students from physical, moral, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual aspects is one indicator of pedagogic competence in ECCE teachers. In order for the quality of learning in schools to be better, teachers need to continuously improve their pedagogic abilities.

Various measures have been taken to improve the quality of teachers' pedagogic abilities, among others, by paying greater attention to teacher professional development, the use of educational technology, and curriculum renewal (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023). One of the efforts to improve teacher professionalism is to form a learning community.

The learning community according to Zhu & Baylen (2005) in Sekar and Kamarubian (2020), is a group consisting of several people who have interests and goals that tend to be academic. Learning communities focus on group goals by working together on a variety of understandings and experiences with educational goals. In the context of learning communication, it is explained that learning takes place in an environment where learners can improve their knowledge and academic achievement. This learning process takes place between members of the community who are peers. In addition, in this context too, there are no roles such as teacher, learner, tutor or other designations. This learning community can also create a dynamic where members teach each other without the traditional hierarchical structure that recognizes the roles of teacher and student. The learning community places its focus on student learning, fosters collaboration and collective responsibility, and is oriented towards student learning outcomes. These three focuses become greater in running learning communities (Dufout, 2020 in Ferayanti. *et.al.*, 2023).

The learning community has the potential to be a place where members can improve themselves in interacting with others, acquiring new knowledge, developing skills, increasing self-confidence, and expanding social networks with others, as explained by Sekar and Kamarubiani in their 2020 article also quoted by Titihalawa, *et.al.*, in his article published in 2023. A culture of reflective dialogue, mutual trust, active collaboration based on the spirit of togetherness, care and openness is something that needs to be considered in building a learning community (Affandi, *et.al.*, 2019 in Titihalawa, *et.al.*, 2023). In addition, contributions from both parents of learners, learners themselves and facilitators can provide learning community success in early childhood education. The learning community consisting of families, schools, communities and external parties is a system to carry out the function of control mechanisms in learning process activities (Mardiyah, *et.al.*, 2020).

Many efforts have been made to maximize the activities of this learning community, one of which is by utilizing the Platform Merdeka Mengajar or PMM application, which has been developed by the ministry of education. Learning platforms are one of the networks and resources that are very efficient in their use in the context of learning in the digital era and are connected to one another, this is explained by Siemen, 2004 in research Priyanti, *et. al.*, 2023. which has been launched by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia. The Merdeka Mengajar application is one of the platforms designed to assist teachers in implementing the independent curriculum that has been created by the government, the creation of this independent teaching platform aims to provide opportunities for teachers to develop existing skills in themselves to teach, learn, and create. The Merdeka Mengajar application consists of several menus including the introduction of the independent curriculum, student assessment, teaching tools, independent training, community, search for sharing inspiration such as learning videos, proof of work and many more uses of this independent teaching platform. In addition, there are features on how to search for teaching devices, download teaching modules, upload teaching modules / proof of work, create new folders and add teaching modules to folders, using offline access (Riti, *et. al.*, 2022). Learning through PMM also emphasizes adult learning approaches, which can build independence, autonomy (Hiryanto, 2017 in Priyanti, *et. al.*, 2023) and encourage increased self-regulation, control and direct their own behavior even better (Waddington, 2023 in Priyanti, *et. al.*, 2023). Platform Merdeka Mengajar is a thought that provides a place for teachers to do some very important things in learning development. The independent teaching platform allows teachers to learn and share information about learning resources with fellow teachers. This also means that it can make it easier for teachers to access a variety of learning materials, references, and other resources that teachers can use in the learning process in the classroom. In addition, teachers can also share experiences and knowledge with fellow teachers, enriching collaboration and information exchange among the educational community. Teachers can use this platform to access the latest teaching methods, strategies, and educational technologies that they can implement in their classrooms. This can help increase learning effectiveness and create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment for students.

So as to improve pedagogic skills in teachers and teacher professional development and overall quality of education. According to (Prianti, 2022, in Srianita *et al*, 2023) explained that the need for an Independent Teaching Platform is important for every teacher to support learning activities. One of the factors improving the quality of education is the existence of this Merdeka Mengajar Platform. This PMM platform has features contained in the Merdeka Mengajar Platform that can make teachers a professional educator, one of which is helping them find open devices in accordance with new learning paradigms and providing clear information about the ability and learning development of students. This has been explained by Darnita *et al.*, 2022 in Hasmawaty's research. *et.al.*, 2023. Seeing the importance of learning communities in early childhood education.

The Indonesian government has recognized the existence of alternative education or what is known as equality education as stated in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, while it is explicitly stated that equality education is part of a program rather than a non-formal education pathway (Mutaqim, 2022).

Education in the current era faces quite a complex situation along with adjustments changes simultaneously with technological disruption. Then those changes has implications for the learning process which usually uses a learning approach oriented towards the transfer of knowledge into learning by constructing experience learners. Learning carried out in alternative education such as equality education currently held by the PKBM unit does not show good climatic conditions and learning outcome orientation (Rosmilawati, 2023).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology to methodically investigate the idea of learning communities in Early Childhood Learning (ECCE). The practice of collecting information from various literature sources, including books and journals, to compare the findings of a study with other research is known as literature study research (Nowell *et al.*, 2014 Kholifah *et al.*, 2023). Gaining a thorough understanding of learning community theory within the framework of early childhood education is its main goal. This literature review uses a thorough synthesis of several previous studies addressing learning communities in early childhood education. The information used in this study is secondary, derived from research findings and not direct observation. In addition to searching for additional relevant references, the purpose of this search procedure is to find related sources that answer the research question (RQ). Google Scholar was used to find more than 910 articles. After that, the articles were narrowed down to 600 article names relevant to the year criteria. Further filtering is then carried out using abstract analysis to find out the application of digital transformation topics based on the name of the article. As a result, only seven works were deemed eligible for the topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the results of research from seven articles on learning communities in early childhood learning can be described in the table below

Table 1 results of a review of learning community journals in early childhood learning.

Researchers and years of research	Journal	Research Results
Medira Ferayanti, Hairun Nissa, Sri Kurnianingsih, Rezqie Irfan, & Hertana Patria, 2023	Learning Community Optimization Guide	Learning communities are a form of learning transformation that provides space for teachers and education staff to develop together in improving student achievement. Through collaboration and commitment within it, the learning community encourages a focus on learning and results in better student

		learning outcomes. The learning community in schools in particular plays an important role in improving the quality of learning with a student-oriented inquiry cycle approach, starting from initial reflection to evaluation of implementation results
Rofiqotul Khusna, Nita Priyanti, 2023	The Influence of Learning Communities on Teachers' Pedagogic Abilities at the Bekasi Kindergarten NSIN Association	The learning community is closely related to pedagogic abilities. The variable "Learning community" had a positive effect of 0.296 on pedagogic ability according to the same regression coefficient. These findings highlight how important the role of learning communities is in improving teachers' pedagogic abilities in maximizing the teaching methods they apply. By participating in learning communities, teachers are expected to exchange ideas and interact with peers, share experiences, and learn best practices, which ultimately helps them improve the quality of their teaching. The conclusion of the study confirms that the learning community has a very significant impact, especially in terms of the development of teachers' pedagogic abilities.
Lulu Hamdian Affandi, Made Sutajaya, Wayan Suka, 2022.	Actualization of the value of vacancies in the teachings of Tri Hita Karana)there is the development of professional learning communities for teachers.	The values of solidarity as a whole are closely connected with the principles and essential elements of the professional learning community. For example, the value of compassion is reflected in the principle of mutual empathy and trust. The principles of innovation and the courage to take risks, problem solutions, and feedback are included in the value of developing thinking skills. While the principle of respect for diversity and human dignity is included in the value of appreciation. The principle of recognition and commitment to shared responsibility and openness is included in the recognition of diversity. The principles of social recognition, commitment to a common vision, and collaboration to achieve common goals are included in the value of complementation of roles and status. These values are an important foundation for the implementation of the principles of professional learning communities, which are reflected in mutually supportive components, such as supportive and cooperative leadership, shared vision and values, learning and application in shared learning, supportive environments, and the process of sharing

		personal experiences.
Siti Nofita Widiyatul H, Indah Ayu Lestari, Holifatus Sakdiyah, Wardatus Soleha, Syifatullaely, Finadatul Wahidah, 2020.	Strengthening learning management for ECCE teachers in building early childhood psychological resilience.	The most important assets to improve in the Teacher Community contained in PAUD KB Mawar 2 Kemiri Village, Panti District, Jember Regency consider that the most important assets to improve are individuals who have learning management competencies, but have not been able to apply them optimally and cannot be said to be able to develop their creativity to make APE Innovative. In addition, these assets have a major impact on the quality of management of learning activities and the learning environment that can be fun and supportive. The result of the service carried out in the PAUD KB Mawar 2 Teacher Community, Delima Hamlet, Kemiri Village, Panti District, Jember Regency is to improve the quality of teachers in managing learning for children's psychological development.
Hasmawaty, Muliati, Muhammad Yusri Bachtiar, 2023.	Optimization of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM) application through the ECCE cluster community.	From the mentoring efforts on the Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) application, it was found that 99% of Principals and Kindergarten Teachers who have learning accounts have used the PMM application, with 75% of them having logged in and taken advantage of the available features. To increase the use of PMM applications in concrete actions, it is recommended that ECCE institutions in Ujung and Soreang sub-districts continue mentoring activities in the form of guidance and training.
Rira Meuthia, 2023	Learning Community Assistance Strategy in the Utilization of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform for the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum.	One strategy to support the Learning Community in using the Merdeka Mengajar Platform to assist in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is to be able to conduct: a) Training on the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, b) provide Facilitators, c) provide Mentors to assist the Learning Community, e) accompany the Learning Community in each Education Unit, and f) hold Learning Community webinars. The impact of the strategy in supporting the learning community is the increasing use of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, assistance to teachers in the use of the independent curriculum, the increasingly widespread formation of learning communities in each education unit, and several schools that regularly hold sharing classes. Each school or each educational

		unit has independent curriculum principles that have been applied in the learning process, including the application of different learning, initial assessment, positive culture, and reflection and feedback. In 2023/2024 the number of teachers involved in self-training and the number of schools choosing to be independent will increase
Queen Yunita Sekar, Nik3 Kamarubiani, 2020.	Learning communities as a means of learning and self-development.	Research has found that why students join learning communities includes their interests, learning materials, and relevance to their careers. In addition, the learning community also acts as a place for personal growth, such as building social relationships, acquiring new knowledge, developing skills, increasing self-confidence, and expanding networks.

Discussion

Learning communities are a form of learning transformation that provides space for teachers and education staff to develop together in improving student achievement. Through collaboration and commitment within it, the learning community encourages a focus on learning and results in better student learning outcomes. Learning communities in schools in particular play an important role in improving the quality of learning with a student-oriented inquiry cycle approach, starting from initial reflection to evaluation of implementation results. With this learning community in early childhood education, ECCE teachers can share tips and tricks related to learning methods and effective learning strategies that can be used in learning in ECCE which of course aims to improve the quality of teaching, especially in early childhood education.

Learning communities play a very important role in improving teachers' skills in developing their teaching methods. Through participation in learning communities, teachers can brainstorm with peers, share information and experiences, and learn the best ways to learn in the classroom, ultimately helping them improve the quality of their teaching. The learning community has a significant positive influence on pedagogic ability with a regression coefficient of 0.296, this shows that the variable means, the higher the participation in the community, the greater the likelihood of pedagogic improvement in teachers, (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023).

Learning communities also have a key role to play in changing the paradigm of learning in schools. Through collaboration and commitment within the learning community, the focus on learning can be increased, which can ultimately lead to better student learning outcomes. In schools, learning communities play an important role in improving the quality of learning carried out by teachers through application. A student-centered inquiry cycle approach. The principles of professional learning communities are based on solidarity values, such as empathy, innovation, respect, recognition, and complementation of roles and status, which form the basis for the development of learning communities. Solidarity values, such as compassion, respect, recognition of diversity, and complementation of roles and status, play an important role in supporting the learning community.

These values are an important foundation for the implementation of the principles of professional learning communities, which are reflected in mutually supportive and collaborative components, shared values and visions, shared learning and application of learning, supportive environments, and shared experiences. Supportive leadership ensures support and collaboration among members to achieve common goals, while shared values and vision help direct shared efforts in education and learning. Shared learning is the main focus, where community members learn from each other and develop both personally and professionally. In addition, the process of sharing personal experiences between members is also a great means to multiply the learning experience together. This learning community can assist teachers in improving and developing more quality and effective ways of teaching overall.

Until now, the implementation of learning communities still has many obstacles in managing or implementing learning community activities that have not been optimally carried out. However, the Ministry of Education still continues to support and optimize learning community activities at each level of education as well as at the early childhood education level. This can be seen by the creation of an independent teaching platform that can facilitate teachers in operating learning community activities as well as implementing an independent curriculum. The support provided to the learning community in utilizing PMM to implement the Independent Curriculum has shown positive results, which include increasing the use of applications, assistance in implementing the curriculum, active formation of learning communities in various schools, and the implementation of regular sharing classes. The principles of the Independent Curriculum have also been integrated into the learning process in educational units, which include different learning strategies to meet student needs, application of different learning, initial assessment, positive culture, and reflection and feedback.

Continued support to the learning community in adopting PMM to implement the Independent Curriculum has brought positive results, including increased application usage, assistance in curriculum implementation, establishment of active learning communities in various schools, and regular organization of sharing classes. The principles of the Independent Curriculum have also been integrated into the learning process in the education unit, including differentiated learning, early assessment, positive cultural development, and continuous reflection and feedback.

There are several strategies to assist the learning community and the use of the independent teaching platform for application to the independent curriculum. This strategy includes several steps, among others, training on independent teaching platforms in each district, the formation of facilitators in each district. The use of the independent platform for teaching PMM in learning communities is one of them carried out by PAUD in Ujung District and Soreang District. From the data that has been obtained, as many as 99% of school principals and kindergarten teachers who already have learning accounts and have used the PMM application (Platform Merdeka Mengajar). Of these, as many as 75% have logged in and utilized the features contained in the PMM. This explains that the adoption of PMM applications is quite high among school principals and kindergarten teachers, but there is still room to increase active use. For this reason, mentoring activities are still needed, such as training and guidance, especially aimed at ECCE institutions in Ujung sub-district and Soreang sub-district, so as to help PMM application users understand the features available and how to operate them actively and can be utilized in learning in ECCE, so that learning can improve the effectiveness of education at the ECCE level in the area.

With continuous mentoring efforts and a strong commitment to improve the quality of education through learning communities and technologies such as PMM, it is expected that there will be significant changes in student learning practices and achievement. Through collaboration between teachers, education staff, and other relevant parties, the vision to create an inclusive, innovative, and student-focused learning environment is expected to be better achieved. By continuously providing support and strengthening commitment in improving the quality of education through learning communities and the use of technology such as PMM, it is hoped that there will be meaningful changes in the way learning is carried out and student learning outcomes.

Seeing the importance of the learning community in improving the pedagogic and professional quality of teachers, especially students of the faculty of teacher training and education, it is appropriate to study the learning community. Besides being useful in the future, the learning community also has an important role in student life. Many students join learning communities for a variety of reasons, including an interest in the subject matter, increased understanding of the subject matter and being able to exchange ideas with other members, relevance to the career they want to pursue, and as a means for personal development. In addition to gaining new knowledge and improving their skills, the learning community also plays a role in building social networks or relationships, it is very useful and an important asset for students when they are in the world of work, by actively participating in the learning community, students can hone social skills, leadership, and collaboration which are skills that must be possessed in the world of work, In addition, the benefits of the learning community as well as a means to increase self-confidence in students and gain support in academic and non-academic fields can also be an added value.

CONCLUSIONS

Learning communities play an important role in the transformation of learning, enabling teachers and education staff to thrive together in improving student achievement through collaboration and commitment. At the school level, the learning community uses a student-oriented inquiry cycle approach, starting from initial reflection to evaluation of implementation results, which specifically plays a role in improving the quality of learning. Learning communities also provide a space for ECCE teachers to share tips and tricks related to effective learning methods and learning strategies, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching in early childhood education. Participation in learning communities also enhances teachers' ability to develop their teaching methods, supported by research showing the positive influence of learning communities on teachers' pedagogic abilities. In addition, the learning community also plays a role in changing the paradigm of learning in schools by focusing on better learning through solidarity values, such as empathy, innovation, appreciation, and recognition.

Although still experiencing problems in management, the Ministry of Education continues to support and optimize learning community activities at all levels of education. This support includes through the Merdeka Mengajar platform to implement the Merdeka Curriculum, which has shown positive results in increasing the use of applications and actively forming learning communities. With continuous mentoring efforts and strong commitment, it is expected that there will be significant changes in student learning practices and achievement. In addition, the learning community also provides great benefits for students in personal development, social skills, and preparation for the world of work, making it an important asset in preparing students for the future.

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