

THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS AS MEDIATORS IN BUILDING ASSOCIATIVE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS

Aulia Nursabrina

Department of Non Formal Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University, Banten-Indonesia
Email: 2221210067@untirta.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study is to determine the role of educators as moderators in building associative social interactions in early childhood education. The research method used in this research is *Literature Review Study* (SLR). The results of this study indicate that the role of educators as mediators in building social interactions is very important, and there are several roles of educators that must be carried out, namely as mediators and solution providers, fostering positive relationships between students, creating a pleasant learning environment, being able to communicate and interact, etc.

Keywords: Educator's Role; Mediator, Associative Social Interaction

INTRODUCTION

According to the 2022 Susenas survey, 66.48 percent of Indonesians will have accessed the internet in 2022, up from 62.10 percent in 2021. This high percentage also reflects the high use of smartphones. The intensive use of smartphones makes many people more accustomed to being alone and less interacting in person. Many activities that used to be done face-to-face are now shifting to digital formats, which has resulted in a decrease in awareness of the surrounding environment and social relationships. Seeing this fact, it is important to overcome these negative impacts early on by building positive social interactions in early childhood. According to (Suryana, 2013) early childhood is an individual figure as a sociocultural being who is undergoing a developmental process that is very fundamental for further life and has several characteristics. Early childhood is a child aged 0-6 years, at this age children are usually known as the *golden age*, this is because at this time it becomes an important foundation for child development in various aspects, including social, religious, moral, cognitive, language, physical, and motor. The development of these aspects will determine how the child will live in the future.

One of the important aspects to develop is social, which seeing the facts above is important to overcome early on, this is because social interaction is the key for children to learn about themselves and their surrounding environment. According to (Walgito, 2007) social interaction is a relationship between individuals and other individuals, one individual can affect another individual or vice versa, so there is a reciprocal relationship. In social interaction, there are two interactions, namely associative and dissociative social interactions. In this study, researchers used associative social interactions in the form of cooperation, accommodation, and assimilation. Through some of these social interactions they can develop various social skills such as communicating, negotiating, sharing and working together. In previous research shows that there is a relationship between the ability to interact socially with learning outcomes, which means that the better the ability to interact socially with students, the better the learning outcomes tend to be, and vice versa, the worse the ability to interact with students, the worse the learning outcomes tend to be. Seeing the results of this study, realizing the importance of building positive social interactions from an early age, even before children enter PAUD age when parents have an important role to build these positive interactions. Whereas when children have entered PAUD age, the important role in building social interactions is shifted to PAUD educators. According to Vygotsky, children can only learn by directly engaging in meaningful activities with smarter people. By interacting with others, learners improve their understanding and knowledge and help form an understanding of others.

In the educational environment, social interaction is very important, reinforced by the statement of the Minister of Education and Culture, Mr. Nadiem Anwar Makarim, who said "From this pandemic we learn that the main value in the learning process is social interaction and this cannot be replaced by any technology". Although social interaction is very important for early childhood development, there are still many children who have difficulty interacting in the PAUD environment. As there are still early childhood children who tend to be reluctant to separate from their mothers and prefer to be with their mothers constantly, in the sense of being reluctant to interact with their friends. In addition, there are also children who tend to have their own world, meaning that the child prefers to play alone, without wanting their belongings or toys to be disturbed by their friends. This phenomenon shows that some early childhood children still have difficulty in forming healthy social relationships. Not only that, some children are even traumatized because they have experienced unpleasant events while playing, such as being hurt by their friends. This underscores the importance of paying attention to children's social development at an early age and the role of educators to build healthy and appropriate social interactions, helping them to cope with these situations.

According to Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, early childhood education is a development effort for children from birth to six years of age. Early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from an early age. Through providing educational stimuli, the main goal is to help children's physical and spiritual growth and development so that they are ready to enter the further stages of basic education in their lives (Sudarna, 2014). In addition, the purpose of early childhood education is to provide experiences and stimulation that develop in an integrated and comprehensive manner with the intention that it can grow and develop healthily and optimally (Nur Chalimah, 2008).

As explained above, when children have entered PAUD age, the role of building interaction shifts to the role of PAUD educators. Hearing the word educator must be someone who only teaches delivering lesson material. In fact, the role of educators is much broader than just teaching. According to (Uzer Usman, 2007) there are 6 roles of educators, namely; (1) educators as demonstrators, Through his role as a demonstrator, lecturer, or teacher, the teacher should always master the material or subject matter to be taught and always develop it in the sense of increasing his ability in terms of knowledge he has because this will greatly determine the learning outcomes achieved by students. (2) Educators as class managers, Teaching means conveying or transmitting knowledge and views (Ad. Rooijackers, 1990: 1). William Burton argues that teaching is defined as an effort to provide stimulus, guidance, direction, and encouragement to students so that the learning process occurs. In this case, the role of the teacher is very important in managing the class so that PBM can run well. (3) educator as a mediator, As a mediator the teacher should have sufficient knowledge and understanding of educational media because educational media is a communication tool to further streamline the teaching-learning process. (4) educator as a facilitator, As a facilitator the teacher should be able to seek learning resources that are useful and can support the achievement of goals and the teaching-learning process, whether in the form of sources, textbooks, magazines or newspapers. (5) educator as evaluator, Assessment needs to be carried out, because with assessment the teacher can find out the success of achieving goals, student mastery of lessons, and the accuracy or effectiveness of teaching methods. (6) educator as a motivator, In line with the shift in the meaning of learning from teacher-oriented learning (teacher oriented) to student-oriented learning (student oriented), the role of the teacher in the learning process has also shifted, one of which is strengthening the role of the teacher as a motivator.

In addition to Uzer Usman (2007) there are several other experts who discuss the role of educators, one of which is according to (Djamarah 2000) outlines the many roles played by educators, namely; (1) Corrector, this role requires educators to fully understand the problems in the educational process. As a corrector, the teacher must be able to distinguish which values are good and which values are bad. (2) Inspirator, as an inspirer, the teacher can provide good inspiration for the progress of students' learning. In this role the teacher is required to be a role model for students.

Teachers must be able to provide instructions (inspiration) on how to learn well. (3) Informant, as an informant the teacher must be able to provide information on the development of science and technology, in addition to a number of learning materials for each subject that has been programmed in the curriculum. Good and effective information is needed by students. (4) Organizers related to the management of the learning process. As an organizer, in this field the teacher has the activity of managing academic activities, compiling class/school rules, compiling lesson plans according to the academic calendar, and so on. (5) Motivator, able to encourage students to be passionate and active in learning. In an effort to provide motivation, teachers can analyze the motives behind students being lazy to learn and declining achievement at school. This action is important to determine strategic steps in motivating students. (6) Initiator, being the originator of ideas for progress in education and teaching. This includes the role of teacher initiative in learning and the role of teacher initiative in developing the learning climate at school. (7) Facilitator, required to be able to facilitate students in the teaching and learning process. Facilitating in this sense does not provide learning facilities in the form of infrastructure, but rather manages the available resources in such a way as to enable students to gain learning experiences that match their level of development. (8) Mentor, this role is important, because the presence of teachers in schools is to guide students to become moral and capable adults. Without a mentor, students will have difficulty in dealing with their own development. (9) Demonstrator, in educational interactions, not all learning materials can be understood by students. For subject matter that is difficult for students to understand, teachers must be creative to show students directly the abilities that must be learned. (10) Class Manager, can manage the class well, because the class is a place where all students and teachers gather in order to receive learning materials from the teacher. (11) Mediator, understands how students interact and respond to a situation. As a mediator, the teacher can be interpreted as an intermediary in the learning process of students. In discussions, the teacher can act as a mediator, as a traffic regulator for the course of the discussion. (12) Supervisor, in supervising learning, teachers must demonstrate the ability to offer alternative solutions to the problems found. (13) Evaluator, educators are at least faced with two important processes, first the process of measuring the learning success of students, secondly the teacher provides a judgment (value) which will be a benchmark for whether students are successful in the learning process or not successful.

In addition to the different views of the role of education above, it is also important to pay attention to how educators can apply these roles to build social interactions in the educational environment. The educational environment is included in the social environment which is one of the factors that influence the development of children. Because humans are social creatures who will need one another by interacting to achieve the desired common goal, the goal to be achieved is to influence each other so that social behavior is created. The formation of a person's social behavior is influenced by external and internal factors, one of which is the role of educators. The role of educators here is as mediators.

According to the opinion (Djamarah 2000), educators as mediators are how educators understand early childhood in interacting and responding to a situation and also become mediators in the learning process of students. PAud educators are considered the most correct by children and become a place where they complain about all difficulties. Educators become a safe sharing place for children. Therefore, educators must have the competence to solve children's problems when they complain. If there is a conflict between children, educators must find out the cause before resolving it, because with this strategy, honesty, courage, and responsibility can be embedded in early childhood.

In addition to the various views on the role of educators above, it is also important to understand how educators can apply these roles to build social interactions in the educational environment. The educational environment is part of the social environment that has a major influence on children's development. As social beings, humans need interactions with others to achieve common goals and shape social behavior.

A person's social behavior is influenced by external and internal factors, and one of the significant external factors is the role of educators. In this context, educators act as mediators. According to Djamarah (2000), educators as mediators must understand how early childhood interacts and responds to situations, as well as being mediators in their learning process. PAUD educators are often considered the most correct by children and become the place where they complain about all difficulties. Therefore, educators must be a safe sharing place for children. In addition, educators should have the competence to solve the problems that children face when they complain. For example, if there is a conflict between children, educators must find out the cause before resolving it. With this strategy, honesty, courage and responsibility can be instilled in early childhood.

Educators also need to foster positive relationships among learners, where they respect and value each other. This is important for shaping good social behavior and helping children develop their social skills. By paying attention to and implementing the educator's role as a mediator, we can help children develop healthy and positive social interactions early on. This will provide a strong foundation for them to grow into individuals who are able to interact well in their social environment and face future social challenges.

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 research method uses the *Literature Review Study* (SLR) method. SLR is an activity of collecting literature data references by reading, making notes, and processing research materials (Zen, 2008). The purpose of SLR is to obtain a strong foundation in building a new framework, so that the understanding obtained can be grouped based on the variety of understanding obtained (Kartiningrum, 2015).

The SLR research procedure includes several steps, which are as follows; (1) Exploring general ideas about research. (2) Affirming the focus of the research. (3) Organizing and compiling materials used in research (4) Searching and finding reading materials. (5) Rearrange the material to make it better. (6) Reviewing and making research notes (7) Reorganizing the revised materials. (8) Writing the research results.

This research has two main objectives. First, to introduce a new study on a particular topic. Secondly, for the purpose of the research project to broaden the horizons of the research topic by formulating a research problem, establishing appropriate theories and methods.

In this study, seven journal articles related to the role of educators as mediators and associative social interaction were used. These articles were then analyzed to gain a more in-depth and thorough understanding of the topic. This research is important because it helps to understand how educators can act as mediators in building positive social interactions in an educational setting. By conducting SLR, we can gather various views and findings from previous research, which can then be used to develop a more solid and innovative framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The following are some research results that highlight the role of educators as mediators in social interaction.

Table 1.

Research Results The Role of Educators as Mediators and Associative Social Interaction

No.	Research Title and Research Year	Research Results
1.	The Role of Teachers as Mediators in Providing Sex Education to Early Childhood Children 4-6 Years of Age (Firza Nur Afifah, Dian Miranda, Annisa Amalia 2023)	The study found that educators act as mediators and solution providers when children have questions about sex education. As mediators, teachers help children understand sensitive topics. For example, teachers explain why children should not mention their genitals intentionally, both inside and outside the classroom. According to Sofan Amri (2013), "teachers can act as media providers and mediators in the learning process of students". In this study, it is explained that teachers play an important role as mediators in providing sex education to early childhood (4-6 years). This role is as follows introducing self-identity, setting boundaries, teaching behavioral norms, providing solutions and discussions, using creative methods. This research shows that the role of the teacher as a mediator is very important in providing appropriate sex education to early childhood. By being a wise and creative mediator, teachers can help children understand important concepts early on and shape behaviors that conform to social norms.
2.	The Role of Teachers in Instilling Social Care Character (Siti Khaerunnisa, 2020)	The study found a problem where children prefer to play gadgets alone rather than playing in the school yard with their friends. Even if the theme approached, it was only limited to being an audience because the child was engrossed in playing games and did not immediately want to lend his smartphone. In fact, at other times there are children who become angry when playing smartphones because they feel disturbed by the presence of their friends who are watching. This later causes children to have difficulty in social interaction. Seeing this problem, the educator acts as a mediator, namely being the mediator between children, because sometimes there are uncontrollable events, such as children who fight and do not want to forgive each other. This is where the role of educators as good and neutral mediators is needed. Educators must also have the ability to communicate and interact properly, because educators become intermediaries in the friendship relationships that children build. One way that educators can approach children is by encouraging them to shake hands and smile at each other. If children still look upset, educators can tell stories or sing about the consequences of hostility with friends, so that in this way the atmosphere will return to peace and cheerfulness in a short time.
3.	Patterns of social interaction between children and teachers, knowledge and social capital in improving social emotional intelligence (Muhammad Ja'far Shodiq and Subaidi Qomar, 2022)	This study is in the scope of a boarding school which consists of various ages. I took the age of 3-7 years with 20 students. In social interactions in Hasan's class, according to the researcher's observations, he showed a high caring attitude towards his friends. They naturally help each other without the need for direction from the educator. For example, when seeing an educator who has difficulty arranging puzzle pieces, other children immediately help solve it. The situation is different in the 12-14 year old Abdul Muthalib class, where students need to be given prior direction to help their friends. For example, in the activity of cleaning the classroom or lifting the study table,

		<p>educators must provide instructions so that children are willing to work together. The homeroom teacher also explained that children need to be given a stimulus so that they want to move to help. Many of them feel that they are adults or the biggest in the class, so they tend to be reluctant to help without direction. From this incident, it can be seen that the educator or mayor has played an important role with his knowledge and social skills. Educators are able to provide stimulation to children to be more sensitive and willing to help each other.</p>
4.	<p>The role of teachers as opinion leaders in overcoming moral degradation of students at SD Negeri Parunggalih in the Digital Era (Novia Herawati and Dewi Sri Andika Rusmana, 2022)</p>	<p>In the study, a problem was found, namely the behavior of students of SD Negeri Parunggalih experiencing moral decline. The bad behavior carried out, such as cheating, mocking, scribbling on the wall, not wearing uniforms, being unruly, littering, not listening when the teacher explains, saying rude words, fighting, and showing the middle finger to peers and elders. These examples of behavior are included in dissociative interactions. By seeing this problem, educators are someone who plays a role in overcoming this problem. One of his roles is the educator as a mediator.</p> <p>Educators as mediators or mediators when conflicts or problems occur in their students. As is the case with the students of SD Negeri Parunggalih, they behave badly such as mocking each other to say harsh words. This then causes conflicts such as fights. Educators are obliged to mediate problems that occur among students. Educators are required to be solutive by providing a fair solution for the students in conflict. Thus, educators are expected to have a wise and fair attitude.</p> <p>One of the teachers at SD Negeri Parunggalih at that time shared her experience. At that time, he was teaching a class, then his students were arguing and accusing each other because one of his students lost money. He then asked the students to close their eyes. When the students closed their eyes, he put the lost money in the students' uniform pockets. What the educator did was one of the solutions applied to mediate conflicts that occurred in students as one of his roles.</p> <p>Educators as mediators should not make hasty decisions. Educators must consider carefully wisely and fairly before making a decision. If it turns out that one of the parties is proven guilty. Then advise the student with good words without offending or hurting his feelings.</p>
5.	<p>The Role of Educators in Facilitating Early Childhood Emotional Development in the Play Group (KB) Bina Permata Insani Penajam District, East Kalimantan (Siti Aisyah, Muhaemin B. Suardi, 2023)</p>	<p>In this study it was found that educators as mediators became mediators in the teaching and learning process in connection with the implementation of the learning process must have the ability to choose, cooperate, act, seek educational media, and be able to become a medium (intermediary) in the relationship between students in the teaching and learning process. Based on the results of the interview, it also shows that the educator has carried out his duties as he acts as a mediator at KB Bina Permata Insani, namely by becoming a mediator in the teaching and learning activities of students. For example, intervening or offering a way out or solution if the conversation does not go well. Then, the educator shows and uses learning media for the smoothness of the teaching and learning process. In addition, educators as mediators also provide a learning environment, educators who determine which learning environment is suitable for the learning process.</p>
6.	<p>The Role of Principals, Teachers and Parents in Understanding Early</p>	<p>The study found that the role of educators is not only to convey knowledge, but also to help learners develop skills that they will</p>

	<p>Childhood Social Emotional (Siti Nur Aisyah, Suyadi, Suharti, 2023)</p>	<p>apply in their daily lives in society. One concrete implementation of this role is the learners' ability to communicate and interact well with others. In addition, learners can gain various and valuable experiences and reflect on themselves.</p> <p>For example, an interview with Mrs. Dyah, a teacher, revealed the importance of an emotional approach in education. Ms. Dyah explained that when a child comes to school in a bad mood, the first step is to calm the child down. Once the child is calm, the teacher contacts the parents to find out what happened before the child left for school.</p> <p>In providing education and teaching to children, a teacher needs to have a special approach that can be accepted and understood by children. The goal is to make children feel calm and comfortable even if they are experiencing difficulties or are in a bad mood. In this way, the teacher helps create a learning environment that is conducive and supportive of the child's emotional development.</p> <p>Thus, the teacher's role as a mediator is not only limited to delivering subject matter, but also includes handling children's emotional and social aspects. Effective teachers can help children overcome problems, develop social skills and build self-confidence. All of these contribute to improving students' insights and experiences, ultimately helping them become better individuals who are ready to face various challenges in the future.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Analysis of the Role of Ips Teachers in Fostering Students' Social Attitudes at Smpi As-Shofiani Ahmadi (Ainun Habibah, and Eka Putri 2021)</p>	<p>This study found a problem that there has been a decline in students' social attitudes because learning activities are carried out online, so social interaction between students is limited. Coupled with a less supportive family environment, this further exacerbates the decline in students' social attitudes. Nevertheless, the role of teachers as mediators and facilitators is very important in monitoring and fostering students' social attitudes.</p> <p>Social studies teachers have a crucial role in fostering students' social attitudes at SMPi As-Shofiani Ahmadi. They must pay attention to the factors that become obstacles in fostering students' social attitudes, both from internal and external factors. In social studies learning, which emphasizes practical aspects, social studies teachers have a good opportunity to strengthen social interaction between students.</p> <p>Emphasis on social interaction in social studies learning can help teachers in fostering students' social attitudes. Through these social interactions, social studies teachers can observe and monitor the level of students' social attitudes. Factors such as heredity and the external environment, including family, school, peers, mass media, community and cultural environments, can influence students' social mentality. The role of educators as mediators must be able to create a learning environment conducive to students' social growth, as well as overcome various obstacles that may arise in fostering good social attitudes. Thus, it can help students develop positive social attitudes and build healthy social interactions.</p>

DISCUSSION

Entering the digital era, early childhood social interaction is increasingly threatened by the lack of outdoor play activities and the dominance of gadgets. This can result in less than optimal social and emotional development. The seven studies above have shown that the role of educators as mediators is very important in building early childhood social interactions. Educators act as mediators, facilitators, and solution providers when children have questions, experience conflicts, or show unwanted behavior.

Based on the results of the *Literature Review Study* that has been carried out by examining the role of educators as mediators in building associative interactions in early childhood education. The results showed a close relationship between the role of educators as mediators and early childhood social interactions. This is in accordance with Vygotsky's basic concept, children can only learn by directly engaging in meaningful activities with smarter people. By interacting with others, learners improve their understanding and knowledge and help form an understanding of others. This basic concept can be seen in the research "Patterns of social interaction between children and teachers, knowledge and social capital in improving social emotional intelligence (Muhammad Ja'far Shodiq and Subaidi Qomar, 2022)." In this study, it is proven that educators play a very important role by providing good stimuli so that students want to work together and interact with each other. The stimuli given can be in the form of giving wooden block games but together then after finishing the game is cleaned up in cooperation, or educators create a pleasant atmosphere that causes early childhood to interact with one another. Seeing the comparison between data and facts in the study proves that the existing theory and facts in the field are in harmony.

According to Djamarah's theory (2000) the role of educators as mediators, namely understanding how students interact and respond to a situation. As a mediator, the teacher can be interpreted as an intermediary in the learning process of students. In discussions, the teacher can act as an intermediary, as a traffic regulator for the course of the discussion. However, after researchers reviewed several journals, many found the role of educators as mediators in social interactions, one example is in the research "patterns of social interaction between children and teachers, knowledge and social capital in improving social emotional intelligence (Muhammad Ja'far Shodiq and Subaidi Qomar, 2022)". The role of educators as mediators must have good social knowledge and skills. Educators also not only provide direction, but educators as mediators play a role in creating an environment that encourages children to help each other and work together. In the research "The Role of Teachers in Instilling Social Care Character (Siti Khaerunnisa, 2020)". It was found that the role of educators as mediators must have the ability to communicate and interact properly, because educators become intermediaries in the friendship relationships that children build.

The research "The Role of Principals, Teachers and Parents in Understanding Early Childhood Social Emotions (Siti Nur Aisyah, Suyadi, Suharti, 2023)". Explains how he understands the emotionality of early childhood by calming the child. After the child calms down, the teacher contacts the parents to find out what happened before the child left for school. The role is included in the mediator, why? because the educator becomes a liaison between parents and children when the child is in a bad mood. So that with the role carried out the educator can think about how to further change the child's mood, so that the child also in the school environment wants to interact with his peers. In addition, in the research "Analysis of the Role of Ips Teachers in Fostering Students' Social Attitudes at Smpi As-Shofiani Ahmadi (Ainun Habibah, and Eka Putri 2021)". The role of educators as mediators is to create a positive classroom or school environment for interaction and must be good at building how the children can interact. From the many journals, this study found several important findings on the role of educators as mediators, namely:

1. The educator acts as a mediator and solution provider when children have questions.

In research on sex education in early childhood, teachers act as wise arbiters when children have questions about sensitive topics. For example, when children ask about their body parts, teachers explain in a way that is appropriate and easy to understand. Teachers help children understand why they should not intentionally mention their genitals, both inside and outside the classroom. In this way, teachers help children understand boundaries and social norms early on.

2. Educators need to foster positive relationships among learners, where they respect and appreciate each other.

It is important for educators to foster positive relationships among children. In a study conducted by Siti Khaerunnisa, it was found that many children prefer playing gadgets rather than playing with their friends. This causes them difficulties in social interaction. Teachers should act as mediators to help children interact with each other and resolve conflicts that may occur. For example, if a child is angry because they are disturbed while playing gadgets, the teacher can help resolve the problem in a kind and fair way. The teacher can invite the children to shake hands and smile, or tell a story about the consequences of hostility with friends.

3. Educators must have the ability to communicate and interact well.

Teachers must have good communication and interaction skills. This is important because the teacher mediates the friendships that the children build. In a study conducted by Muhammad Ja'far Shodiq and Subaidi Qomar, it was found that in Islamic boarding schools, children aged 3-7 years naturally help each other without the need for direction from educators. However, children aged 12-14 years old need to be given direction first to help their friends. Teachers should be able to provide a good stimulus so that children are willing to help each other and work together. For example, by providing games that are done together, children can learn to collaborate and help each other.

4. Educators must be able to provide stimulation either in the form of providing games so that children can be more sensitive to the surrounding environment and want to help each other.

Teachers should be able to provide stimuli that make children more sensitive to the surrounding environment and willing to help each other. For example, in a study on the role of teachers in instilling the character of social care, it was found that children prefer to play gadgets alone. Teachers should be able to create a fun atmosphere and encourage children to interact with each other. For example, by providing games that require cooperation, children will learn to help each other and work together.

5. Educators must create a learning environment conducive to early childhood social growth, as well as overcome various obstacles that may arise in fostering good social attitudes.

Educators must create a learning environment that is conducive to early childhood social growth. In the research at Bina Permata Insani Playgroup, it was found that teachers act as mediators in teaching and learning activities. Teachers must be able to create a comfortable atmosphere and support children to interact well. For example, if there is a conflict between children, the teacher can step in to offer solutions and create a peaceful atmosphere. In this way, children will feel comfortable and find it easier to interact with each other.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, it can be concluded that the role of educators as mediators is very important in building early childhood social interactions. Educators need to have adequate skills and knowledge to carry out this role effectively. Therefore, it is necessary to train and develop educators' competencies on an ongoing basis so that they can play an optimal role in helping children build positive social interactions.

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