



Strategies for Enhancing Engagement and Self-Confidence of Introverted Early Childhood in Kindergarten

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Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi kesulitan yang dihadapi anak introvert dalam pembelajaran dan bermain serta mengeksplorasi strategi pembelajaran inklusif yang sesuai dengan karakteristik anak usia dini. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman, yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa anak introvert mengalami kesulitan dalam berkomunikasi, berpartisipasi dalam kerja kelompok, belajar dan bermain di lingkungan yang banyak anak-anak. Akan tetapi, penerapan strategi yang lebih fleksibel seperti diskusi kelompok kecil, penilaian berbasis proyek, serta pemanfaatan media digital, mampu meningkatkan partisipasi dan kenyamanan anak introvert dalam belajar dan bermain. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya peran guru dalam menerapkan strategi pembelajaran yang inklusif pada anak usia dini. Pendekatan inklusif yang adaptif tidak hanya mendukung aspek perkembangan anak usia dini, melainkan juga mendorong kepercayaan diri dan kemampuan sosial anak usia dini yang introvert.

Kata Kunci: *Anak Usia Dini, Introvert, Pembelajaran Inklusif, Taman Kanak-Kanak*

Abstract:

This research aims to identify the difficulties faced by introverted children in learning and playing, as well as to explore inclusive learning strategies that are suitable for the characteristics of early childhood. The method used is a qualitative approach with techniques of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis is conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that introverted children experience difficulties in communication, participating in group work, learning, and playing in environments with many children. However, the application of more flexible strategies such as small group discussions, project-based assessments, and the use of digital media can enhance the participation and comfort of introverted children in learning and playing. This research emphasizes the important role of teachers in implementing inclusive teaching strategies for early childhood. An adaptive inclusive approach not only supports the developmental aspects of early childhood but also encourages the self-confidence and social skills of introverted early childhood.

Keywords: Early Childhood, Introvert, Inclusive Learning, Kindergarten



Introduction

Early childhood is a phase where individuals are experiencing rapid development, both physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally (Astuti et al., 2023; Campbell & Speldewinde, 2022; Yukentin et al., 2017; Yulindrasari & Ujianti, 2018). In an educational environment, every child has different personality characteristics, one of which is introverted personality. Children with introverted personalities tend to feel more comfortable with individual activities rather than group activities, are more reserved in expressing feelings, and have a tendency to observe before participating in an activity. However, in an educational world that emphasizes social interaction, children with introverted personalities often face challenges in adapting to the school environment. Therefore, it is important to understand their characteristics and seek appropriate approaches so that the learning process can proceed optimally (Hamzah, 2015; Meriyati, 2015).

The introverted personality in early childhood is often misinterpreted as a sign of a lack of social skills or even seen as a form of inability to adapt to the environment (Afifah et al., 2016). In fact, being an introvert is not a deficiency but rather a variation of personality that has its own advantages. Introverted children tend to be more reflective, have high concentration abilities, and can understand concepts more deeply when given sufficient time and space (Aisyah, 2015; Condon & Ruth-Sahd, 2013). However, since the education system is generally designed more for children with extroverted personalities who are more active in social interactions, introverted children often receive less attention in the teaching methods applied. Therefore, there is a need to develop more inclusive learning strategies that support their needs (Octavia, 2021; Saputri et al., 2024).

In addition to the context of education, understanding the personality of introverts is also important in aspects of parenting and children's social development. Parents and educators need to collaborate in creating an environment that supports the growth of introverted children without forcing them to change into extroverts. A common misunderstanding is the assumption that introverted children should be encouraged to speak and interact more in groups to develop well (Trisnawarni & Yuniarta, 2021). In fact, a more appropriate approach is to respect their natural rhythm, provide opportunities to grow according to their comfort, and offer the necessary support to build their confidence in communicating and socializing.

In a Kindergarten environment, the challenges faced by introverted children can manifest in various forms. They may feel pressured in situations that require active participation in front of the class, such as presentations or group discussions. Additionally, they tend to be more sensitive to their surroundings, including noise and excessive stimulation, which can hinder their focus on learning. Therefore, teachers need to consider ways to create a more conducive learning environment for introverted children, such as providing quieter areas for study, giving them opportunities to express their opinions in writing before speaking in public, and accommodating their preferences for working independently or in smaller, more comfortable groups (Coplan & Arbeau, 2008; Murdoko, 2017).

Success in supporting introverted children in an educational environment also greatly depends on the patterns of interaction they experience at home (Siroj et al., 2023). Parents who understand their child's personality will be better able to provide the necessary support, such as by avoiding excessive pressure to be more social, allowing the child to enjoy alone time without feeling guilty, and helping them develop social skills in a way that



suits their personality. A combination of the right approach at home and at school will help introverted children feel more valued and accepted, allowing them to grow with confidence and contribute according to their potential (Farantika & Hafni, 2025; Herdiyana & Miftahudin, 2024; Tripon, 2024).

In addition to the approaches applied by educators and parents, it is also important to consider how introverted children can be empowered to understand and accept their own personalities. Often, children with introverted personalities feel different from their more active and expressive peers, which may lead them to feel less confident or even experience social pressure to change. Therefore, it is essential to instill the understanding that every personality has its own strengths and challenges, as well as equip children with strategies to manage social interactions in a way that is comfortable for them (Coplan & Armer, 2005; Fitriana & Suhendro, 2022).

Inclusive education that values personality diversity will help create a more balanced learning environment for all children (Taher, 2023). By applying strategies that are appropriate for a more adaptive and supportive learning experience for introverted children. Through this approach, introverted children can not only better develop their academic potential but also feel more accepted and appreciated in their social environment. Overall, this study aims to explore the methods teachers can use to enhance the learning experiences of young children with introverted personalities. By understanding their characteristics, developing more suitable learning strategies, and involving the roles of parents and teachers in creating a supportive environment, it is hoped that this research can make a meaningful contribution to the world of education.

Method

This research uses qualitative methods to understand the characteristics of early childhood children with introverted personalities and the appropriate learning strategies. The subjects of the study are early childhood children at the Harapan Tunas Kindergarten in Tuban, with a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation involving children, teachers, and parents. Observations were conducted to observe the interactions and responses of children during teaching and learning activities, while interviews aimed to explore the perspectives of teachers and parents regarding the behaviors and needs of introverted children. Documentation includes academic records and the development of the children. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model (2020), which encompasses data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this research will be used to design more inclusive and effective learning strategies to enhance the learning experience of introverted children in the classroom.

Results and Discussion

Introverted Personality Characteristics in Early Childhood: A Preliminary Exploration

Based on the results of observations, it shows that introverted early childhood children tend to be quiet, prefer to play alone, and are reluctant to participate in group discussions. They show difficulty in expressing opinions verbally and often appear insecure when interacting with peers (Hakim, 2017). Interviews with teachers revealed that some introverted children require a different approach to learning, as methods that heavily rely on discussion or group work often make children uncomfortable. Parents also stated that



their children feel more at ease in quiet situations and need more time to adapt to social environments.

Based on these findings, the initial strategy applied in the learning process is the provision of individual assignments that allow introverted children to express themselves without pressure from their peers. The teacher also begins to organize the classroom environment to be more conducive, for example by providing reflection time before asking children to speak in front of the class and using a more interactive storytelling method while still considering the comfort of introverted children. Introverted children often face challenges in interacting with their friends and participating actively in class activities, especially in educational environments that prioritize verbal participation and large group interactions. The introverted nature, which tends to be more comfortable with solitary activities or interactions in small groups, makes it harder for them to adapt to conventional learning methods that require direct involvement in front of the class (Amalia & Husna, 2019). Therefore, it is important for educators to design more inclusive learning strategies that cater to the needs of introverted children to encourage their engagement and enhance their self-confidence in the learning context.

The learning approach applied to introverted children must consider their characteristic traits, such as the tendency to listen more than to speak, and the preference for working independently or in small groups (Ulwiyah, 2020). In addressing these challenges, it is important for teachers to create spaces that support introverted children to thrive without feeling pressured. One effective way to achieve this is by designing individual project-based learning. Project-based learning provides an opportunity for introverted children to showcase their skills and creativity in a way that does not require direct verbal involvement in front of the class.

This method is applied by giving individual assignments that allow children to create presentations in various formats. This flexible format includes drawing, writing, or recording audio, which gives introverted children the freedom to choose the medium they are most comfortable with to express their ideas. This has been shown to boost their confidence, as they can express their thoughts without having to speak in front of the class, which can often make them feel anxious or pressured. However, even though this method boosts self-confidence, several introverted children still show a tendency to avoid direct interaction, especially in situations involving large groups. Therefore, it is important for teachers to recognize the needs of each child and adjust learning strategies accordingly to provide maximal support.

In addition to project-based learning, teachers also implement paired discussion methods as an alternative to large group discussions (Hartono et al., 2019). Paired discussions allow introverted children to speak more comfortably with one friend before speaking in front of a larger group. This approach gives them the opportunity to develop their thoughts first in a safer and more supportive environment. Paired discussions provide an opportunity for introverted children to hear other people's perspectives, hone their speaking abilities in a more controlled situation, and boost their self-confidence in social interactions.

The observations showed that introverted children who participated in pair discussions felt more comfortable and less stressed. They began to actively participate in this small discussion and felt more confident to speak in front of their peers in larger groups. Furthermore, interactions in pair discussions can create stronger and deeper social relationships, which are important for the social skill development of introverted children.



In an effort to continue supporting the engagement of introverted children, teachers reward the efforts made by these children in communicating, not just the final outcome. This approach shifts the focus from extrinsic achievements, such as obtaining high grades or creating perfect presentations, to valuing the learning process itself. In this way, introverted children feel more appreciated in the learning process in the classroom.

Teachers also adopt a more sensitive approach to the emotional needs of introverted children. Recognition is given not only to children who can speak in front of the class, but also to those who demonstrate an effort to interact and express themselves, even in a more personal or indirect way. This approach not only boosts the self-confidence of introverted children but also encourages them to take risks in communicating and interacting with their peers.

Learning Challenges for Introverted Children in Kindergarten

Although the implemented strategy shows positive results, the main challenge in the method used by teachers is maintaining a balance between providing enough space for introverted children to develop without making them feel isolated from their peers (Kartini et al., 2020). Introverted children need to be given time and space to work in their own comfort, but on the other hand, they also need to be encouraged to interact with their friends to avoid isolation.

To address this challenge, teachers began to design more flexible group activities. These group activities provide an opportunity for introverted children to participate in a way that is more comfortable for them. For example, they can be given the role of a note-taker in discussions or asked to present the group's work through other media instead of speaking directly in front of the class. In this way, introverted children can still contribute to group activities, but in a manner that does not require them to perform in front of the class, which could trigger their social anxiety (Hamzah, 2015; Taha et al., 2025).

In addition to tailored learning strategies, support from teachers and parents is also very important in boosting the confidence of introverted children (Robert et al., 2022). Teachers who are sensitive to the needs of introverted children can create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment, allowing these children to feel accepted and valued. Furthermore, support from parents in the form of positive encouragement and attention to the social and academic development of the child also plays a significant role in enhancing their confidence.

In an effort to enhance the engagement and self-confidence of introverted children in classroom learning, flexible and inclusive strategies are essential. Project-based learning methods, pair discussions, and recognition of the efforts made by introverted children are some effective ways to increase their participation in class activities. Although challenges remain, support from teachers and parents, along with appropriate adjustments in teaching methods, can help introverted children overcome their barriers and thrive optimally in an educational environment. Therefore, it is important for educators to continue striving to create a learning environment that supports all personality types, including introverted children, so that they can reach their academic potential to the fullest.

The results of the observations indicate that introverted children are becoming more confident in participating in classroom activities. Some of them have shown improvement in communication, although at varying degrees. Teachers also reported that introverted children feel more comfortable expressing their opinions when given the opportunity to write down their thoughts before speaking. One effective strategy implemented by teachers



is the use of visual and digital media as learning tools (Umar et al., 2021). Introverted children find it easier to express themselves through images, short videos, or even voice recordings compared to speaking directly in front of the class. Additionally, the use of more flexible learning spaces, such as reading areas or reflection corners, also helps introverted children feel more comfortable in class. Teachers and parents report positive changes in the way introverted children interact with their surroundings. Several children who initially were reluctant to speak in class are starting to show courage to ask questions or express their opinions in smaller forums. Parents are also observing an increase in their children's social skills outside of the school environment.

However, there are still challenges in ensuring that all introverted children receive the attention that meets their needs. Several children still need more time to adjust, while others are beginning to show interest in interacting but still require further support. Therefore, teachers need to continue the strategies that have been successful while remaining flexible in adjusting their teaching methods according to each child's development. This research also shows that a flexible approach that takes into account the individual needs of children is essential in early childhood education. With an inclusive learning environment and diverse strategies, introverted children can thrive optimally (Saihu, 2022). Therefore, the results of this study are expected to serve as a foundation for the development of more inclusive and adaptive learning methods in the future.

The personality of early childhood is an important factor that influences how they interact, learn, and develop in an educational environment. Children with introverted personalities often face challenges in adapting to common learning methods applied in schools, especially those based on intense social interaction. Introverted children tend to have characteristics that differ from extroverted children in terms of social interaction and how they absorb information. They are more comfortable in quiet situations, tend to think more before speaking, and enjoy individual activities more than group work. In the context of education, these characteristics often make them seem shy or less active, even though they actually have good thinking abilities and can thrive with the right learning methods.

Introverted children have a unique learning style that differs from extroverted children, especially in terms of social interaction and information processing. They are more comfortable working in a quiet environment and tend to process information deeply before expressing their opinions. In an educational system that demands active participation in class discussions and presentations, introverted children often feel marginalized due to their tendency to think more before speaking. However, they have good academic potential and can make meaningful contributions if given the space to develop according to their characteristics. This research aims to understand the challenges faced by introverted children in the classroom and to develop more inclusive learning strategies to support their development.

One of the main challenges faced by introverted children in class is the lack of participation in group activities (Yanti et al., 2018). They tend to be more comfortable working alone or in small groups compared to large groups. When they are forced to participate in discussions involving many people, they often feel stressed and end up withdrawing from interactions. In this study, it was found that introverted children are more likely to participate if given the opportunity to speak in a smaller and more comfortable environment. Teachers who provide flexibility in teaching methods, such as allowing them to work in small groups or individually before participating in large discussions, can help boost their confidence.



In addition, difficulties in expressing opinions verbally also pose a major obstacle for introverted children. They need more time to process information before articulating it, which often makes them appear passive in class discussions. It's not that they don't have opinions, but they prefer to think first before speaking. By allowing them time to think independently before discussing with partners and eventually sharing with the larger group, they feel more comfortable expressing their views. This strategy provides an opportunity for introverted children to gradually develop their speaking skills without feeling pressured.

The next challenge is the lack of self-confidence in public speaking. Many introverted children experience anxiety when they have to speak in front of the class, whether in the form of presentations or group discussions (Ulwiyah, 2020). They prefer to express their thoughts through writing, drawing, or other media rather than speaking directly. This study found that by providing alternatives in presenting opinions, such as using video-based presentations or written discussions, introverted children can become more confident in participating. The use of technology in learning, such as online discussion forums or video recordings, allows them to express their thoughts without the pressure of speaking directly in front of the class.

The learning environment also plays a significant role in the development of introverted children. Discomfort in crowded environments often hinders them in learning. Classrooms that are too noisy or filled with visual and auditory stimuli can make it difficult for them to concentrate and feel quickly fatigued. This research found that introverted children learn more effectively when they are in a calm and structured environment. A more flexible classroom arrangement, such as providing quiet corners for students who need time to work independently, can help them feel more comfortable in learning. Additionally, teachers who understand these needs can help alleviate the social pressure they feel by providing opportunities for them to learn in a more supportive atmosphere.

Inclusive Learning in Kindergarten: Solutions for Introverted Children

From this research, it was found that more inclusive learning strategies can help introverted children develop optimally. Teachers who provide flexibility in learning methods, such as allowing students to choose the way to participate that suits them best, can enhance the involvement of introverted children in the learning process. In addition, giving them the opportunity to work in small groups before participating in large discussions, as well as providing alternatives in expressing opinions, has been proven effective in helping them feel more comfortable in learning. Thus, a more adaptive learning system can help introverted children showcase their best potential without having to change their natural characteristics.

The role of teachers in creating an inclusive learning environment is also very important. Teachers are not only tasked with being facilitators of learning but also as companions who understand the characteristics of each student. In this research, it was found that teachers who are more sensitive to the needs of introverted children tend to create a more supportive environment for them. Teachers who do not force introverted children to speak in front of the class before they are ready, provide time for them to think before answering questions, and create a more flexible classroom atmosphere, can help them develop better. Therefore, training for teachers on how to support children with various personality types is essential to make the learning process more effective and inclusive (Silda et al., 2023; Warming, 2011; Widat & Lailiyah, 2025).



In this study, several learning strategies were applied aimed at creating a more inclusive learning environment for introverted children. *First*, offer opportunities for self-expression through various methods. Introverted children often feel more comfortable expressing themselves through writing, drawing, or digital media rather than speaking directly in front of the class. Therefore, in this study, children were given the freedom to express their opinions in various ways, such as keeping a daily journal, drawing, or recording their voices for presentations. As a result, introverted children felt more comfortable in conveying their thoughts and more confident in contributing to the class.

Second, implement methods involving small groups or discussions. To address the fears of introverted children in speaking in front of large groups, methods of paired discussion or small group discussions are applied in class. In this way, children can communicate more easily without feeling pressured by the large number of participants. Teachers also encourage children to start discussions with friends they trust before speaking in larger groups. *Third*, creating a calmer classroom environment. This is because introverted children can learn and play in a calm atmosphere; teachers strive to create a more flexible learning zone, such as providing a special area for reading or working independently. The classroom setting is also arranged in such a way that it is not too noisy or filled with distractions. This helps introverted children focus better on their studies and feel more comfortable in class.

Fourth, provide children with opportunities for reflection before discussion. One of the main barriers for introverted children in class discussions is that they need time to think before speaking. Therefore, in this study, a reflection method was implemented before discussions where children were given a few minutes to think on their own before sharing their opinions with a small group. As a result, introverted children became more active in discussions because they had enough time to process information before expressing it. *Fifth*, using digital media as a support tool for inclusive learning. The use of technology in learning has also proven effective in supporting introverted children. In this study, children were given the opportunity to express their ideas through short videos, podcasts, or slide presentations. In this way, they can still contribute in class without having to speak directly in public. Teachers also utilize digital media to provide more interactive learning materials, allowing introverted children to learn more comfortably (Astuti et al., 2022; Hamzah et al., 2023; Oktavia et al., 2024; Ulfah et al., 2021).

Research Implications in the Context of Early Childhood Education

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that introverted children can thrive in educational environments if provided with learning methods that suit their characteristics. With more flexible strategies, a more inclusive classroom environment, and support from teachers and parents, introverted children can become more confident and active in their learning process. The implications of this research for early childhood education are very important, especially in understanding and addressing the needs of introverted children in the classroom. Introverted children often face difficulties in adapting to an educational system that demands more verbal participation and group work (Siroj et al., 2023). Therefore, a more flexible learning strategy is needed so that they can develop according to their characteristics. Teachers and educators need to understand that the diversity of students' personalities requires different approaches in the learning process.



One of the recommendations from this study is to adapt teaching methods to the individual needs of students. Each child has a unique learning style, and introverted children are more comfortable with methods that allow them to work alone or in small groups. Teachers can implement strategies such as pair discussions before group discussions so that introverted children have time to think before speaking. This way, they will be more confident in expressing their opinions. In addition, teachers also need to create an inclusive learning environment. A classroom environment that supports the development of all personality types will ensure that every student feels valued and comfortable in the learning process. One way to do this is by reducing pressure in public speaking activities. For example, teachers can provide options for introverted students to express their thoughts through writing, video presentations, or small group discussions first before speaking in front of the class.

Technology can also serve as an effective learning aid for introverted children. This study found that the use of digital media such as online discussion forums, learning videos, and recorded presentations helps introverted children express their opinions without feeling anxious about speaking in public. Technology allows them to remain actively engaged without having to be in situations that make them uncomfortable. Assessment strategies also need to be adjusted so that they do not solely rely on verbal interaction assessments. Introverted children may not be very active in speaking in class, but they often have a deep understanding of the material being studied. Project-based assessments, essays, or written reports can be a more suitable alternative for them (Hamzah & Suratman, 2023; K & Nia Fatmawati, 2023; Sit et al., 2024).

Thus, they can still demonstrate their abilities without always having to engage in open class discussions. Support from teachers and parents also plays a crucial role in the development of introverted children. Teachers who understand the character of introverted children can help them feel more comfortable and confident in learning. Parents also need to provide support by not forcing their children to always socialize in an extroverted manner, but rather by helping them find comfortable ways to communicate and interact with their surroundings. From the results of this research, it was found that introverted children can thrive in an educational environment if provided with teaching methods that are suitable for their characteristics. With more flexible strategies, a more inclusive classroom environment, and support from teachers and parents, introverted children can become more confident and active in their learning process. This proves that the diversity of students' personalities should not be an obstacle to their academic development.

Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to pay more attention to the needs of introverted children in the learning system. The curriculum and teaching strategies should be more inclusive, not only oriented towards extroverted children who are active in speaking, but also providing space for introverted children to develop in their own way. With a more inclusive approach, all students can reach their academic potential without feeling burdened by demands that do not align with their character. Overall, this study emphasizes that introverted children have great potential to develop if provided with the right environment and learning methods. Teachers, parents, and the education system as a whole must work together to create a learning space that values the diversity of students' personalities. This way, introverted children can feel more appreciated, more confident, and more able to contribute in the educational world without having to change the natural character of early childhood.



Conclusion

This research shows that children with introverted personalities have different learning needs compared to extroverted children, particularly in terms of social interaction, learning styles, and comfort in educational environments. An inclusive learning approach that takes these characteristics into account has proven to enhance the participation, self-confidence, and social skills of introverted children. Methods such as small group discussions, the use of digital media, and individual reflection-based approaches before group discussions are effective in providing a more comfortable space for expression. A calm and flexible learning environment also helps reduce anxiety and social pressure, allowing them to be more focused and confident in the learning and play process.

The role of the teacher is very important in creating a supportive classroom environment. A teacher who understands the character of introverted children can provide appropriate support without forcing them to conform to the learning styles of the majority. The results of this study emphasize the importance of an adaptive and personalized learning. This study is limited to a small scale and was conducted in the context of one Kindergarten. Variables such as the influence of family environment, age, and cultural background of children have not been analyzed thoroughly. It is recommended that further research be conducted on a wider population with a mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative), and involving various levels of education and socio-cultural contexts. It is recommended that further research be conducted on a wider population with a mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative), and involving various levels of education and socio-cultural contexts. approach to ensure that all children, including introverted ones, can thrive optimally.

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