

# The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education: An Introduction

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In the last decade, the Indonesian government has become more aware of the importance of the development and education of the early years of children's lives. Long before Indonesia started its journey in providing quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) for all young children, the people of Reggio Emilia city had developed sound practice in ECE that was well-known all over the world for its quality. This paper presented a literature review and described the Reggio Emilia Approach to ECE. Several suggestions as to how to adapt this approach in Indonesia's early childhood services were also discussed.

*Keywords:* early childhood education, Reggio Emilia approach, Indonesia

Dalam dekade terakhir, pemerintah Indonesia makin menyadari akan pentingnya pendidikan pada tahun-tahun awal kehidupan anak-anak. Jauh sebelum Indonesia memulai perjalanannya dalam memberikan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) yang berkualitas untuk semua anak-anak, penduduk kota Reggio Emilia telah mengembangkan praktek PAUD yang terkenal berkualitas di seluruh dunia. Makalah ini menyajikan tinjauan literatur dan mendeskripsikan pendekatan PAUD Reggio Emilia. Beberapa saran mengenai bagaimana menyesuaikan pendekatan ini di Indonesia juga dibahas.

*Kata kunci:* pendidikan anak usia dini, Reggio Emilia approach, Indonesia

In the last decade, the Indonesian government has become more aware of the importance of the development and education of the early years of children's lives. In 2001, the Ministry of Education and Culture established a new directorate general dedicated to Early Childhood Education (ECE) (Hasan, Hyson, & Chang, 2013). This Early Childhood Education Directorate General of the Ministry of Education and Culture aimed to increase the participation rate of three to six year old children in ECE services from 28% in 2001 to 75% in 2015 (Directorate General of Out-of-School Education and Youth, 2004). In 2012, the gross participation rate for three to six year old children in ECE was 60.33% (Direktorat Pembinaan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2013). In addition to the participation rate, the Directorate General also strived to increase the quality of ECE services (Directorate General of Out-of-School Education and Youth, 2004). Long before Indonesia realized the importance of education and care in the early years and start its journey in providing quality ECE for all young children, the people of the city of Reggio

Emilia have developed sound practice in ECE that was well-known all over the world for its quality (Dodd-Nufrio, 2011; Jalongo, et al. (2004); Mawson, 2010; Walsh & Petty, 2007). The approach that the early childhood educators in this city use was known as the Reggio Emilia Approach. This paper summarized the key philosophy, theories, ideas, and practical implications of the Reggio Emilia Approach.

## Method

This paper is a study on the literatures that discuss Reggio Emilia Approach. The approach was an ECE approach that was well-known all over the world and has been used and adapted to suit the conditions of each country. Literatures used in this literature review paper were selected from the ones that described the Reggio Emilia Approach as practiced in the Reggio Emilia schools for young children in Italy and not ones that were practiced elsewhere. The primary key words used were "Reggio Emilia" and "Reggio Emilia Approach". Google Scholar and The University of Auckland library search engines were

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