

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN THE MBKM PROGRAM IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LEARNING

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**Abstract:** This research was motivated by the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program. Asistensi Mengajar is one of the program innovations designed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2021 to facilitate educational units, especially ECE institutions. This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of teaching assistants in Raudhatul Athfal Al-Izzah Serang-Banten. This research shows; (1) the application of the Asistensi Mengajar program, (2) the role of teaching assistants Asistensi Mengajar in improving the quality of learning, and (3) the influence faced by the program. The descriptive qualitative research method Miles and Huberman model was used. The subjects of this study were five teachers in grades A3, B1, B3, B6, and B7 with five teaching assistants students. The data were obtained through interviews, documentation, and observations which were processed for three months. The results of this study are; (1) the Asistensi Mengajar program provides new changes for learning, (2) there is an increase in children as long as teaching assistants are involved in the learning process, and (3) the impact it has is the difference in teacher parenting patterns with Teaching Assistant. This research implies that teachers and teaching assistants of the Asistensi Mengajar program must work together to support effective learning.

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**Keywords:** teaching assistants, the Asistensi Mengajar program, quality of learning, early childhood education

## A. Introduction

Learning is a human activity that involves devoting one's time and energy to science and information. Learners may immerse themselves in a dynamic process and internalize it into their daily actions. Early childhood education is an endeavor to nurture children from birth to the age of six. The teacher supports physical and psychological growth and development to assist children in preparing for future education. (Mania et al., 2019). Early childhood is a time of fast growth and development in a person's life. The early years are the golden years for children aged 0 to 5 years when their potential growth rises swiftly and matures. (Miftah Kusuma Dewi, 2021).

As educators, we must construct early children to achieve growth and development via religious education and moral ideals. In Indonesia, education is directed by four pillars: (1) Pancasila, (2) the 1945 Constitution, (3) the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, and (4) Unity in Diversity, which is consistent with the Qur'an and Hadith Foundation. This foundation offers a more solid and subjective justification. Of course, with the appropriate application for the child's age. The Raudhatul Athfal curriculum guidelines conform with the norms of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Number 792 (Kementrian Agama, 2018). The purpose of the instructor is to promote children's competence (skills, knowledge, and attitudes) through Islamic education and formal education that supports six components of development.

Teachers play an important role in early childhood education because they incorporate a variety of aspects such as parents, students, learning materials, lesson plans, learning methodologies, and learning assessments. The presence of a teacher who becomes the Center of the discourse defines the teacher as a professional in the classroom. The importance of teacher education in teaching roles is to improve teacher training and growth, either on their initiative or with the help of other stakeholders. Teaching assistants, who are appointed to assist teachers in the classroom, can be used to motivate other parties. Teaching Assistant (TA) is how Asistensi Mengajar is known in English, and it is usually instructive.

Teaching assistants (TA) play a critical role in the growth and development of students. This job is commonly used in a special school (Sekolah Luar Biasa) education units, as well known. Because of the significance of their presence, learning becomes more effective. This knowledge is realized as a result of the inadequate teaching competency of ECE teachers. This is not a talent that all Indonesian instructors possess (skill, knowledge, and attitude). Treatment and habituation are used to develop competence. According to Cooper, teacher competence is a fundamental skill that every educator must possess, which includes: (1) mastery of teaching materials, (2) management of learning programs, (3) management of classes, (5) use of media, (6) management of evaluation results, and (7) other supporting facilities. Unfortunately, many educational institutions do not require Teaching assistants since their knowledge, education, and abilities do not conform to the standards of the educational curriculum.

Based on the description above, the researcher thinks that the solution is that teachers and Teaching assistants cannot be underlined but can be bridged by generating cooperation and career possibilities for potential teachers who do not have certification or a bachelor's degree as an educator. Teachers can give training to Teaching assistants before they are hired. Learning with a Teaching assistant may be accomplished via practice, perseverance, and patience.

In the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, Indonesia has introduced significant innovations to the world of education, specifically the MBKM (Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka) program. The MBKM idea was developed to help students become acquainted with modern literacy in terms of technology, data, and human literacy. The key to this program, according to a study (Supriyadi, 2021), is "teachers," whose competence and comprehension to equate with the new education system necessitates interpretations that support each competency and lesson plan execution.

There are nine MBKM programs, according to the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Program guidebook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2020) and quoted by (Sopiansyah & Masrurroh, 2021), one of which

is “Asistensi Mengajar”, The Asistensi Mengajar program aims to provide opportunities for selected students to experience teaching. Direct experience in the field also sparks enthusiasm and skill in future educators who want to assist in enhancing education quality. In conjunction with trustworthy Education Unit Partners, the Asistensi Mengajar Program was created. The University selects students to contribute and create programs that will be implemented to improve the quality of learning in the educational unit. Teachers’ performance qualities are developed as part of efforts to improve the quality of learning. When it comes to increasing the quality of learning, it is important to consider not just the intake and output but also the process.

There aren’t many research findings in Indonesia about the Asistensi Mengajar program; so far, only a few types of research have focused on teaching assistants in the field of early childhood, but it’s clear that the concept of Asistensi Mengajar is similar to the concept of an apprenticeship/teaching assistant. The difference is that Teaching assistants serve as educational reserves to improve teacher emergencies (sick leave and permits), whereas Asistensi Mengajar is placed deeper so they can plan their learning and evaluate children’s work and development. Of course, both have the same foundation, namely teachers, students, materials, and learning environments that are appropriate for the child’s age and development (Shofiyah, 2018). Outside of educational background and degrees, which are clearly different in terms of experience and abilities, each educational institution has rules and a clear vision, similar to the findings of the research (Karlsson et al., 2018), that teacher assistants must still have qualifications as teachers in schools. Institutions must consider the value of a teaching assistant.

Other research findings explain why there are so many teaching assistants in the United Kingdom. Teaching assistants are in great demand. According to this study, hiring teaching assistant services improves the quality of learning. Teaching assistants are highly esteemed and respected in Australia. Teaching assistants provide a direct instructional role in supporting and interacting with students, particularly those

who require additional instructor assistance and direction. (Cassim & Moen, 2020). The learning system implemented in Indonesia, which includes teaching assistants, will foster synergies between the workplace and institutions by including students as future teachers (Suraya, 2016).

Research by (Sosinsky & Gilliam, 2011) discovered an English study that demonstrated that the presence of teaching assistants helps enhance student and educators' attention throughout learning. The presence of teaching assistants can improve the efficacy of teaching and classroom management. However, neither teaching assistants nor experience has been proved to have a direct or indirect influence on student performance. The advantages of having a teaching assistant as a go-between in giving information to pupils with a lot of responsibilities (Mirzadeh et al., 2020). According to research (Novianti & Febrialismanto, 2020), a teacher's effectiveness is determined by their ability to understand the curriculum, their extensive knowledge, their enthusiastic and motivated students, their ability to observe students well and provide effective feedback, and their ability to assess student progress.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher wants to investigate how successful the Asistensi Mengajar Program activities are at Raudhatul Athfal Al-Izzah Serang-Banten in terms of carrying out the teaching and learning process. Examining the lesson plan's outcomes, the teaching assistant's performance, the learning process, and the development of the pupils. The article focuses on the following topics: (1) the application of the Asistensi Mengajar program to students, (2) the function of Asistensi Mengajar in increasing the quality of learning, and (3) the program's effect. Researchers are interested in conducting a research entitled "Effectiveness of Asistensi Mengajar in Improving Quality of Learning Through the MBKM Program" due to a lack of research on teaching assistants in Indonesia and curiosity about the impact produced by the Asistensi Mengajar MBKM program.

## B. Method

Descriptive qualitative research is used in this sort of study. A descriptive approach is used to understand events and issues by describing them in terms of what is and what happened in the study. This study took place in Raudhatul Athfal Al-Izzah Serang-Banten for three months, from September to November 2021. Purposive sampling was used to choose the research subjects, which the researcher did depending on the place where the Asistensi Mengajar Program was established. The research matrix shown in table 1 is as follows.

**Table 1.** Research Matrix

Research Focus	Research Subject	Primary Data
The effectiveness of improving learning through the performance of an Asistensi Mengajar	Teaching assistants	Observation
	Asistensi Mengajar	Interview
	Student	Documentation
		Field Notes

Table 1 shows the research matrix. The aim of the research is to enhance the quality of learning through the performance of Asistensi Mengajar, with five instructors and five students serving as teaching assistants as research subjects. The data accumulation approach was used using primary data (the results of Observations, Interviews, Documentation, and Field Notes; Logbook).

**Table 2.** Interview Technique

Purpose	Interview	Interview Focus
Teaching Assistant Performance, Learning Outcomes, Child development achievements	Semi-Structured Interview	Learning Planning, Learning Implementation, Assessment Evaluation, and MBKM Programs

Table 2 summarizes the interview approach. The goal of research interviews is to examine the performance outcomes of teaching assistants from the perspectives of educators and Asistensi Mengajar teaching assistants during field practice.

Using a semi-structured interview style in which informants are allowed to voice their thoughts, questions can be addressed freely by respondents without being connected to certain patterns.

**Table 3.** A Research Subject Guide

Research Subject Name	Position/Job	Hint (Code)
1. Mrs. Ratu Ratna K, S. Pd	Homeroom B6/Curriculum	T; RT
2. Mrs. Suhenah, S. Pd. I	Homeroom B7/BTQ & ECE	T; EN
3. Mrs. Fifat Safitri, S. Pd. AUD	Homeroom B3/Treasurer	T; PT
4. Mrs. Efah S, S. Pd. AUD	Homeroom B1/infrastructure	T; EV
5. Ms. Sri Kurniawati, S. Pd. I	Homeroom A3	T; SR
6. Ms. Annisaa Rofifah	Teaching Assistant B7	S; IC
7. Ms. Latifah Nur Restiningtyas	Teaching Assistant B6	S; LN
8. Ms. Nurfitriyani	Teaching Assistant A3	S; FT
9. Ms. Sri Sugianti	Teaching Assistant B1	S; UG
10. Ms. Anis Badrunnisa	Teaching Assistant B3	S; AN

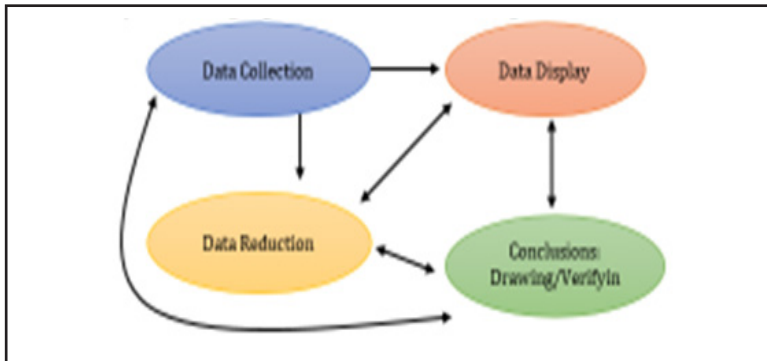
Table 3: Instructions for research subjects outline coding to aid in the identification of study outcomes based on interview data. (T) denotes a Teacher, (S) an teaching assistants Asistensi Mengajar Student, and the other initials denote the research subject’s name.

**Table 4.** Class Group Division

Age Group	Code: S (Class)	The Number of Students
A (4-5 years old)	FT (A3)	9
B (5-6 years old)	UG (B1)	10
	AN (B3)	10
	LT (B6)	9
	IC (B7)	9

Table 4 depicts the age group at RA Al-Izzah as a teaching assistant Asistensi Mengajar student research class, with group A comprising 1 class and group B totaling four classes, according to S (Student) instructions, with each class consisting of 9 to 10 students.

Following data gathering, data analysis was carried out by simplifying and categorizing the data. Albert Einstein advised “concentrate on the facts you observe, not the words,” continuing the inspection process by summarizing the facts discovered in the field (Huberman & Miles, 2012).



**Figure 1.** Developed Learning Activities

Miles and Huberman’s model data analysis includes data reduction, data display, and verification (Shidiq & Chori, 2019). The stages of research are described in Figure 1.

**Table 5.** Guidelines for determining criteria for each aspect of research

No.	Aspects	Criteria	
		Effective	In-effective
1.	Teaching Assistant as Substitute Teacher at RA Al-Izzah		
	The purpose of Teaching Assistants	Training objectives are understood in general and written through the guide-book.	The objectives of the training are generally understood but not written in the guide-book.
	Liveliness of participant	Active participants participate as teachers in compiling and designing as well as conducting teaching and learning activities.	Passive participants participate as teachers in compiling and designing as well as conducting teaching and learning activities.
	Teaching requirements	Carried out by the direction of the field supervisor, namely with these three stages.	Done without the direction of the field supervisor.
2.	Weekly and Daily Lesson Plans by Teaching Assistants at RA Al-Izzah		



Preparation of daily activity plans	Designed by the weekly activity plan and according to a predetermined theme	Designed without looking at the learning theme and school standards
Preparation of Weekly activity plans	Designed by the annual activity plan and according to a predetermined theme	Designed without looking at the learning theme and school standards
<b>3. Class Management by Teaching Assistant at RA Al-Izzah</b>		
Visibility	Teaching assistants can arrange blackboards, electronic media, books, and other displays to meet the needs of the students.	have not been able to manage the blackboard, electronic media, and books in class well
Accessibility	Teaching assistants can arrange the space in such a way that students can easily access it.	Have not been able to arrange classrooms in such a way that students find it difficult to gain access.
Distractibility	Teaching assistants help students focus by reducing distractions.	Teaching assistants struggle with student concentration.
Sitting position	Teaching assistants use a variety of sitting positions to keep students from becoming bored.	Teaching assistants rarely make changes in sitting positions that cause the child to try his or her sitting position.
Mastery of a class	Teacher assistants can foster an active classroom environment, as well as creative learning activities and a comfortable learning environment.	The teaching assistant is unable to maintain effective classroom control.

Smoothness	Teaching assistants can follow a lesson plan and teach systematically.	Learning is not done systematically
Witness	Teaching assistants are aware of every student's movement, whether it is a disruptive attitude or not.	Teaching assistants disregard student attitudes that obstruct learning.
Overlapping	Teaching assistants can softly interrupt.	Teaching assistants are unable to interrupt the learning process without halting it.
Transition	Teaching assistants can transition from each activity to the next.	During activities, teaching assistants have trouble transitioning.
4. Learning Methods and Media by Teaching Assistant at RA Al-Izzah		
Mastery of media for learning	Learning media is intended to entice students; however, teaching assistants can also develop media using electronic media to help students visualize concepts more clearly.	Learning media is designed without looking at probability and interactivity.
Mastery of methods for learning	Teaching assistants can carry out numerous learning strategies by drawing students' attention.	Teaching assistants do not apply various methods of teaching.
5. Learning Evaluation by Teacher Assistant at RA Al-Izzah		
Competence in assessing and evaluating learning	Teaching assistants are capable of assessing and evaluating students based on their progress and learning outcomes.	The assessment provided does not correspond to the child's performance.

### **C. Result and Discussion**

Teaching assistants recognize children's major developmental milestones and understand the importance of the first five years of life for a child's development. They know that each child's development and early learning usually takes place in a predictable and recognizable sequence, and they understand that children develop differently within and across each developmental domain. As they become more experienced, they can use that knowledge to collaborate with teachers to plan developmentally appropriate experiences and interactions with children. In addition, teaching assistants understand that each child has unique characteristics that affect development, and they can use their knowledge of the unique characteristics of the children in their classrooms to contribute relevant ideas when planning together with the teacher. They also have an early understanding of the concept of attachment and how it relates to a child's growth, development, and early learning. Lastly, teaching assistants believe that an inclusive environment benefits children with and without special needs, and they adhere to an inclusive philosophy where all children are valued as individuals.

Teaching assistants collaborated with teachers to develop meaningful curricula that promote positive development and learning for each child. They understand that the classroom curriculum is influenced by a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, children, their families, and society. Furthermore, teaching assistants are familiar with the learning objectives for each of the six domains/aspects of early learning, which include physical and motor development, social and emotional development, language development, religious development, cognitive development, and creative arts. They know that each domain has various components that are important to the curriculum, as reflected in the current literature. Teaching assistants also think about how children learn when they collaboratively plan with teachers. They understand that every child is unique and learns uniquely, and they know that play is the primary vehicle for learning in all

domains. They also understand that positive relationships with children, families, and teachers are fundamental to healthy development and learning. Teaching assistants can assist teachers in preparing and organizing classroom environments, materials, and daily schedules so that they support children's development and learning in all areas.

Teaching assistants can work as volunteers or for a modest fee. Having two adults in the room/ward means there is more support for children to experience free-play activities or participate in learning. It also means children will experience more interpersonal relationships, which will deepen their play experience and enhance their learning. However, the effective use of volunteers or teaching assistants requires guidance and supervision.

#### 1. Teaching Assistant as Substitute Teacher at RA Al-Izzah

Raudhatul Athfal Al-Izzah employs a curriculum that is a combination of curricula from the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag), JSIT, and the Al-Izzah Foundation. Using the hybrid learning approach, meaning learning the variation system under the provisions of the emergency curriculum number 2944 in 2021. Monday through Thursday face-to-face meetings (Offline) and every Friday utilizing the LAT-Learning At Home technique (Online); children's school hours vary. RA Al-Izzah only implemented two hours of schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are two sorts of learning hours: 08:00-10:00 and 09:00-11:00. Teaching assistants are not permitted to abandon the school curriculum or habituation during learning activities. Before beginning the teaching stage, the teaching assistant observes for two weeks in a predetermined class, is not permitted to participate during learning, and is only permitted to record important points and teacher patterns during learning, such as voice intonation and prayer sequences before and after learning. Table 4 shows an explanation of the division of class groups.

After two weeks of observation, the teaching assistant assists the teacher by assisting the BCT (Baca Tulis) reading and writing, BTQ (Baca Tulis Qur'an) recitation, and Morning Journal drawing and telling activities for two

weeks. This is recommended for every teaching assistant as self-habituation. With the classroom environment, children can also get used to the new teacher.

According to the findings of interviews with teachers in class A3, “at first, the children were afraid of the teaching assistant teacher, so they were not immediately told to teach, first observation continued to accompany before teaching, and even then there were still some children who were still afraid.” (T; SR). The preceding interview remark is consistent with the findings of an interview with a teacher in class B6, who indicated, “Usually, this is the stage, watching first, then accompanying the homeroom teacher, then teaching self afterward. Because it follows the same pattern as yesterday’s internships, so it’s the same; the difference may be the end outcome.” (T; RT)

Assistant teaching field practice six times in one month, after one month of observation and mentoring. Teaching assistants are in charge of developing the Weekly Lesson Plan, which is then dropped into the Daily Lesson Plan, as well as producing learning activities for BCCT (Beyond Center and Circle Time), including Beam Center, Preparatory Center, Natural material Center, and Imtaq Center, based on Themes and sub-themes RA Al-Izzah’s. Every educator’s fundamental competence is the preparation of Learning Planning, which includes phrases such as opening, core, and closure utilizing proper techniques, media, and approaches (Idhayani et al., 2020). Planning will be accomplished by assembling the objectives, actions to be carried out, and for whom the activities are carried out in writing. In this approach, learning can offer the curriculum’s desired outcomes (Safitri et al., 2020).

**Table 6.** Condition of Teaching Assistant as Substitute Teacher at RA Al-Izzah

No.	Aspect	Assessment Criteria	Evaluation Result	Estimate
1	The purpose of Teaching Assistants	Compiled jointly by the principal, lecturers, and field supervisors in writing.	Training objectives are understood in general and written through the guidebook.	Effective
2	Liveliness of participant	Actively involved in designing and compiling lesson plans as well as participation in teaching and learning.	Active participants participate as teachers in compiling and designing as well as conducting teaching and learning activities.	Effective
3	Teaching requirements	Carried out the stages of observation, mentoring, then teaching.	Carried out by the direction of the field supervisor, namely with these three stages.	Effective

In this aspect, teaching assistants of the Asistensi Mengajar program are said to be effective as a substitute for the main teacher at RA Al-Izzah in participation in 3 stages, namely observing, mentoring, and teaching. And the objectives given by the MBKM program are carried out by the existing guidebooks.

## 2. Weekly and Daily Lesson Plans by Teaching Assistants at RA Al-Izzah

Weekly and daily lesson planning are skills that all educators in the education unit, particularly in ECE, must master. Attitudes, skills, and knowledge abilities are all included in the curriculum's instructional plans. The

teaching assistant creates the Weekly Lesson Plan based on RA Al-Izzah's topics and sub-themes. The teacher RA Al-Izzah has his Weekly Lesson Plan own, whereas the teaching assistants have their Weekly Lesson Plan own too. Guidelines for Weekly Lesson Plans During field practice, teaching assistants entirely replace the teacher. Weekly lesson plan guide Teaching assistant when field practice completely replaces teacher design.

Several teachers at RA Al-Izzah argued against the Weekly Lesson Plan, saying, "The Weekly Lesson Plan is good, it is appropriate, maybe it is lacking in the aspect of development because in one Center I see there can be two cognitive activities, even though they can be distinguished in different areas. However, because the teaching assistant students/teachers have followed the Weekly Lesson Plan from Al-Izzah, it is still suitable" (T; RT).

(T; EN) also stated, "Alhamdulillah, from what I observe, the Weekly Lesson Plan is adequate." Based on the findings of the interviews, it is possible to conclude that the Teaching Assistant is capable of creating an effective Weekly Lesson Plan. Table 8 contains a description of the Teaching Assistant's Weekly Lesson Plan.

The teaching assistant uses RA Al-Izzah's mold or template to create the Daily Lesson Plan. One of the teaching assistants remarked, "I think it would be preferable to utilize the form of the Daily lesson plan of RA Al-Izzah, that way, we can describe and implement it the same as the pattern of RA Al-Izzah" (S; LT). According to another interview result, "Daily lesson plan is easy, you just need to derive it from the weekly lesson plan, also because it uses the RA Al-Izzah model so Insyaa Allah it's great, the lack of indicator sentences when making the Daily lesson plan, after that I see it has developed and become better" (T; RT).

**Table 7.** Condition of weekly and daily lesson plans by Teaching Assistants at RA Al-Izzah

No.	Aspect	Assesment Criteria	Evaluation Result	Estimate
1.	Preparation of daily activity plans	Daily lesson plan designed by Asistesi Mengajar	Designed by the weekly activity plan and according to a predetermined theme	Effective
2.	Preparation of weekly activity plans	Weekly lesson plan designed by Asistesi Mengajar	Designed by the annual activity plan and according to a predetermined theme	Effective

According to the results in Table 7, the condition of instructional help in designing daily and weekly plans is working efficiently. Daily and weekly lesson plans are created based on the theme provided by RA Al-Izzah, and teaching assistants can build learning activities to aid in the teaching process.

**Table 8.** Weekly Lesson Plan, Theme/Sub-theme: Chicken/ Chicken Life Cycle by Teaching Assistant

Rationale	Sirah	Center	Activity Plan
As-Syuaara: 133	Prophet Ibrahim (As A Child)	Imtaq	1. "Chicken Life Cycle" Thematic Circle Time (Cog 3.10.3)
			2. Making Prayer Movements (Religious 3.1.1-4.1.1)
			3. Writing Arabic Words in Chicken (Language 3.12.11-4.12.11)
			4. Coloring Arabic Words Chicken (Art 3.15.3-4.15.3)
	Prophet Ibrahim (Search For God)	Preparations	1. Thematic Circle Time "Chicken Life Cycle" (Cog 3.10.3)



		2. Writing Chicken Life Cycle (Language 3.11.4-4.11.4)
		3. Gluing the Chicken Lifecycle (FM 3.3.5-4.3.5)
		4. Counting the number of eggs (Cog 3.6.8-4.6.8)
Prophet Ibrahim (Burned)	Beams	1. Thematic Circle Time "Chicken Life Cycle" (Cog 3.10.3)
		2. Making buildings from blocks (Cog 3.6.1-4.6.1)
		3. Arrange & Match Building Block Shapes (Cog 3.6.10-4.6.10)
		4. Draw the already made block building (Art 3.15.9-4.15.9)
Prophet Ibrahim (Burned)	Nature Materials	1. Thematic Circle Time "Chicken Life Cycle" (Cog 3.10.3)
		2. Making Sandwiches (FM 2.1.2, Language 4.5.1, SE 5.4.3)

### 3. Class Management by Teaching Assistant at RA Al-Izzah

Children learn with numerous seating patterns at RA Al-Izzah, including sitting in a circle on the carpeted floor, forming a line and facing each other, and circling on a chair. Children sitting on the carpeted floor are engaged in reading, opening activities, reading Siroh Rosul, Qur'an hour, and closing activities. This is in contrast to children seated on chairs who are engaged in Center activities, Morning Journals, Drinking, and Eating. Teachers at RA Al-Izzah Serang-Banten employ command terms like *Isti'dadan!* to get pupils to pay attention to their teachers while disciplining them. The children then respond with *Musta'iddan!*. If children argue or say hurtful things, the teacher at RA Al-Izzah uses disciplined sentences such as "is hitting a friend a good attitude?" with the explanation of the hadith-loving friends. This is to explain the meaning of the prohibition of anger in Islam and to remind students

how to love their friends according to Islamic teachings before instilling tolerance and forgiveness. Figure 2 shows an overview of the classroom setting when the teaching assistant is doing field practice.

Teaching assistants, based on observations, can effectively manage and arrange pupils. Learning is hampered when pupils do not listen to the teaching assistant due to differences in the teacher's routines and intonations. As one of the teaching assistants put it;

“At first, the children thought I was a friend, not a teacher; they seemed more relaxed and courageous; it was a little difficult for me to discipline the children, perhaps because of the different speech patterns; however, over time, the children began to understand that I was a teacher and responded well to me by appreciating me” (S; FT).

Different things were expressed by teacher RA Al-Izzah “I see the Teaching assistant teacher can master and manage the class well, I have given the understanding that the Teaching assistant teacher is the same as me, and the children understand that, when I let the children go with teaching assistant teachers, teachers and children become closer. Children sometimes prefer to find a Teaching assistant than I. Teaching assistants have also observed and accompanied for a month, Insyaa Allah, it will be effective” (T; PT).



**Figure 2.** Classroom Situation with Teaching assistant

Figure 2 depicts the ambiance of the Teaching Assistance class during the application of BCT classical learning, namely the introduction of hijaiyah letters utilizing the Arabic language ledger. Based on observations, teaching assistants can urge students to pay attention throughout the explanation; youngsters are pleased when teaching assistants employ the “take turns” approach of pointing one by one. Classroom management, according to Nugraha, is the act of coordinating and integrating duties and work so that they are accomplished successfully and efficiently (Nugraha, 2018).

Table 9. Condition of Class Management by Teaching Assistant at RA Al-Izzah

No.	Aspect	Assessment Criteria	Evaluation Result	Estimate
1.	Visibility	Classroom environments that allow kids to see clearly.	Teaching assistants can arrange blackboards, electronic media, books, and other displays to meet the needs of the students.	Effective
2.	Accessibility	Students can quickly access a user-friendly class design.	Teaching assistants can arrange the space in such a way that students can easily access it.	Effective
3.	Distractibility	Classroom environments that minimize potential disruptions to student focus.	Teaching assistants help students focus by reducing distractions.	Effective

4.	Sitting position	Rotation and modification of seating position are performed regularly.	Teaching assistants use a variety of sitting positions to keep students from becoming bored.	Effective
5.	Mastery of a class	A favorable teaching and learning environment.	Teacher assistants can foster an active classroom environment, as well as creative learning activities and a comfortable learning environment.	Effective
6.	Smoothness	Learning is carried out systematically.	Teaching assistants can follow a lesson plan and teach systematically.	Effective
7.	Witness	Be aware of student conduct.	Teaching assistants are aware of every student's movement, whether it is a disruptive attitude or not.	Effective
8.	Overlapping	The ability to interrupt without halting learning	Teaching assistants are unable to interrupt the learning process without halting it.	Ineffective

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9.	Transition	The type of activity is changed from one to another by changing the parameters.	Teaching assistants can transition from each activity to the next.	Effective
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According to the information obtained from the study of aspects of classroom management conditions in table 9, classroom management by teaching assistants has been widely effective; however, in the case of class interruptions, teaching assistants have not been able to implement it properly because the class conditions are so active in asking.

#### 4. Learning Methods and Media by Teaching Assistant at RA Al-Izzah

Children may be introduced to a new arena of enjoyable education by using creative learning methods and media in early childhood education. Children’s capacity to behave creatively must be fostered throughout early childhood education. RA Al-Izzah employs a variety of learning methods and media, including habituation, narrative, questions and answers, and tasks. This is done to help the educators comprehend the child’s conduct better. The learning methods and media used are tailored to the material provided. Children are taught habits in every such as arriving on time, taking care of the classroom and school environment by tossing waste in its proper location, placing bags in their proper location, and praying before and after meals. Children’s habits can help them develop a disciplined personality (Panzilion et al., 2021).

Learning media are also tailored to the theme/subtheme, establishing a direct link between the theme and the child’s growth as a result of his or her increasing interest. The chicken theme, for example, states clearly what sort of bird it is. For learning media, RA Al-Izzah uses Beam, puzzles, workbooks, natural materials containing seeds, and many more media are employed. RA Al-Izzah has too already created a learning system that includes

computers, YouTube, and Powerpoint presentations. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (Fred Rogers Center, 2012) proclaims that media technology may be an effective tool when utilized to promote learning objectives rather than as a useless pastime and when it is used in a way that allows adults and students to exchange eye contact (Dore & Dynia, 2020). According to Vygotsky's (1997) definition, which was used by (Edwards, 2016), implicit and explicit interactive media may be built with new ideas and concepts that promote children's learning experiences.

During the learning process, the teaching assistant uses the methods of conversing, asking questions, and telling stories. The media applied were also designed by themselves, such as worksheets and other educational game tools. There is a slight difference where Teacher RA Al-Izzah argues against the outcomes of learning material created by the teaching assistant;

"I don't think it's innovative enough; you shouldn't have to follow RA Al-Izzah's model. If you make your own model, the newer the media, the more interested children are. But beyond this innovation issues, Alhamdulillah learning has been conveyed to children" (T; SR).

Different things were stated by RA Al-Izzah teacher regarding the application of the learning method; "Alhamdulillah, it is beneficial that teaching assistant teachers are capable of asking and answering questions, maintaining eye contact, and telling a story. The media utilized is also sufficient to arouse children's interest" (T; PT)

The opinion of one of the teaching assistants regarding the learning methods and media that have been applied stated: "We follow the technique used by the educators at RA Al-Izzah, we had observed yesterday, for the media, we attempt to match the kid's skills, don't want to be too tough for the child, but still design based on the child's growth" (S; UG). Another thing was said stated by (S; LT): "I was given the mandate to build Thematic Circle Time learning material in the Center in the form of PowerPoints that would be used in the teaching process in a class by all teachers at RA Al-Izzah."

The teaching assistant follows the teacher’s manner in applying the learning method. Teaching Assistants also incorporate PowerPoint technology into learning activities. The media employed do not vary, yet they nevertheless have an impact on children’s development. More than merely employing the narrative approach, this program stimulates children’s interest.

**Table 10.** Condition of Learning Methods and Media by Teaching Assistant at RA Al-Izzah

No.	Aspect	Assessment Criteria	Evaluation Result	Estimate
1.	Mastery of media for learning	The material that is utilized to assist students in having fun while learning	Learning media is intended to entice students; however, teaching assistants can also develop media using electronic media to help students visualize concepts more clearly.	Effective
2.	Mastery of methods for learning	The learning methodology is implemented in a variety of ways.	Teaching assistants can carry out numerous learning strategies by drawing students’ attention.	Effective

Table 10 demonstrates that the media and methods used by teaching assistants have helped deliver media that supports active and creative learning as well as a variety of ways so that students are interested in learning.

#### 5. Learning Evaluation by Teacher Assistant at RA Al-Izzah

Evaluating children’s work is an important element of the collaborative learning process between students and teachers. According to a study (Saifulloh & Darwis, 2020), schools link emotions and understanding between teachers and parents, watch and monitor child development assessments, and ideas based on child

development while evaluating children at the school. Maryani, Kristiana contends that the purpose of the evaluation is not to observe the kid's outcome but to see how the youngster conducts the activity. Every day, the teacher conducts the evaluation procedure, which is then examined based on the fundamental talents discovered, resulting in a final report (Maryani, 2020).

Rating Scales, Anecdotal Notes, and Progress Records are the three forms of assessments used by RA Al-Izzah Serang-Banten. After class and center activities ended, assessments were conducted. Children's gross motor abilities, Siroh Rosul, and memory of prayers, hadiths, and short letters were all examined in class. Meanwhile, children's work is evaluated in center activities like writing, cutting, pasting, counting, reading, and being creative.

Teaching assistants at RA Al-Izzah manage children's learning results, which can aid teachers in improving children's development outcomes. Using a rating scale, 1 for not developed (BB; *Belum Berkembang*), 2 for beginning to develop (MB; *Mulai Berkembang*), 3 for developing as expected (BSH; *Berkembang Sesuai Harapan*), and 4 for developing very well (BSB; *Berkembang Sangat Baik*). According to what want to assess, Anecdotal Notes to monitor children's behavior during learning, and Development Records to see the development of children's work such as blocks and meronce, this type of assessment is used to measure the results of motor, cognitive, language, religious and moral development, social emotion, and art. One of a teacher at RA Al-Izzah provided the aforementioned statement firsthand;

"That's right, and the teaching assistant teacher assesses the children's learning outcomes themselves after the teaching activity is over, which will be given to me for the final assessment data. It is very helpful. I believe they understand how to assess a child's development because they have studied in lectures, too, so sometimes I like to ask, "Was this kid able to do gross motor skills?" He later answered, "yes, he's starting to jump because he can't move with one leg. He still has two legs ."Because they have been



able to assess their progress, I assume the teaching assistant teacher already understands how to make evaluations and reduce them to the types of assessments that have been planned in the daily lesson plan” (T; SR).

The teaching assistant’s evaluation or assessment is appropriate and appears to be capable of producing apparent student development results. The results of the teaching assistant assessment of the conditions of the learning evaluation (Table 11) have been effective.

**Table 11.** Condition of Learning Evaluation by Teacher Assistant at RA Al-Izzah

No.	Aspect	Assessment Criteria	Evaluation Result	Estimate
1.	Competence in assessing and evaluating learning	Evaluated several elements of child development	Teaching assistants are capable of assessing and evaluating students based on their progress and learning outcomes.	Effective

## 6. The Effect of Teacher Assistants on Students

There were 47 students in this study; 9 children in group A and 38 in group B. Based on observations, the children had close relationships with teaching assistants. Some of their children do not distinguish between teachers and teaching assistants. The learning outcomes applied by teaching assistants and teachers have slight differences, namely in terms of communication with learning materials. In some of the activities carried out by the teacher, the teacher is not able to give orders that children can understand. During center activities, some children do not follow the instructions of the teaching assistant, so the results are The child’s development needs a little help.

Another problem situation is the activities of reciting the Koran, memorizing hadith, short prayers, and siroh prophets. What happens is that children have different curiosities. They are easy to joke about, cool to play alone,

and not paying attention or screaming. The problem here is the method taught by the teaching assistant. Or is it because the child understands that teaching assistants are not teachers and they shouldn't obey?

As explained in the first paragraph of this sub-chapter, some children do not discriminate. In line with the results of the interview stated by the class A3 (T; SR) teacher, "I see the children are the same. There is no difference in their attitude when learning, even though the teacher is not the same." The teaching assistant (S; AN) said the same statement: "it's the same, it feels like the children are no different when I teach or the Mrs pipit (T; PT) teaches."

However, there is a difference of opinion stated by one of the teaching assistants: "I feel when I teach children they don't respect me. This is in the early days of practice, yes. Then, after I apply the playing method in every small activity, such as attendance, I try to call their names. In this way, the children are enthusiastic about learning with me" (S; LT). It can be concluded that the problem lies in the learning method, not the child's understanding of the status of the teacher.

#### 7. Functions, Strengths, and Weaknesses of the MBKM Program Teaching Assistant

In 2021, the Asistensi Mengajar Program was launched for the first time. In a roundabout way, the teaching assistant at RA Al-Izzah is paving the way for the future Teaching Assistance program. Researchers discovered that there were advantages and drawbacks to this program in terms of increasing the quality of learning at the RA Al-Izzah School.

The teacher (T; RT) stated that during the COVID-19 Pandemic, internship activities were conducted online for three weeks and just one week of field practice, as opposed to the Asistensi Mengajar program, which was conducted offline for three months of field practice. During this epidemic, this distinction is advantageous for the Teaching Assistance MBKM program.

Teachers at RA Al-Izzah consider this program useful because it can help the time and activities of teachers at

school. It was said directly by the teacher at RA Al-Izzah that teaching assistants provided a lot of assistance in the teaching process in the classroom. When the teacher is unable to attend due to permission or illness, a teaching assistant replaces the teacher's position. Put yourself under the supervision of parents, such as helping to supervise children during the Hajj rituals, which are carried out outside of school without parents, and helping provide information to parents of children in class groups with the WhatsApp application.

There was an increase in the development and behavior of children while the teaching assistant was teaching in class. This was immediately expressed by one of the teachers who said, "All treatments, Insyaa Allah, have an effect, starting from small things first. Like In the morning, the journal activities develop children's language. Increased by giving different emotions by the accompanying teacher. When memorizing short letters from unknown to known, it is because of the accompanying teacher's assistant's guidance. That means it's good, right?" (T; EV).

The weakness of the teaching assistant is in the difference in the teaching styles of the teacher and the teaching assistant. This can cause inequality between the teacher and the teaching assistant. For example, based on the results of observations in terms of providing an understanding of the nine pillars character, the method used by the teacher is more impressive than the teaching pattern of teaching assistant pillars. Differences in tone of voice or length and short of the Al-Qur'an, skills in dealing with children who have tantrums, and an understanding of the story of the prophet's Sirah that is not conveyed to children when the teaching assistant explains it.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Based on the criteria outlined in table 5, the conclusion is that the MBKM program teaching assistance is beneficial in improving learning at RA Al-Izzah. The researcher found that the Megajar Assistance program provided changes in the quality of learning. The treatment and rules applied were

more relaxed and flexible compared to classroom teachers. There was an increase in children. They managed to memorize short letters that they had never mastered with the help of their parents at home and in other activities. The learning that is applied uses themes and activities that the child has never done before. The impact on the child is the difference in the teaching patterns of the teacher and teaching assistant. This has an impact too on the teacher's performance to restore the habits that were applied with the previous class teacher. This research has implications for teachers and teaching assistants that cooperation is the goal of improving the quality of learning to support effective learning.

Teaching assistants have successfully used their abilities to create the atmosphere of a teacher by having a positive impact on the creation of effective learning outcomes. The performance of teaching assistants in designing weekly lesson plans, daily lesson plans, and activity plans has shown that a teaching assistant student can improve learning and create a new atmosphere for children. The results of the evaluation carried out are factual and objective. Although there are differences in learning outcomes between teachers and teaching assistants, this somehow can distinguish the professionalism of teachers and teaching assistants. It can be concluded that teaching assistance at RA Al-Izzah Serang-Banten has been effective in improving children's learning through the Teaching Assistance MBKM program.

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