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Early childhood learning experience through outing class activities to the market as a contextual learning resource

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Abstract

This study aims to describe early childhood learning experiences through outing class activities to the market as a contextual learning resource. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with 20 children of group B of RA Al-Mutaqien Tasikmalaya Regency accompanied by four teachers. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study showed that outing class activities provide a direct learning experience through observing the market environment, getting to know various goods and buying and selling activities, interacting with the social environment, following rules, and exploring objects that attract children's attention. These activities also encourage children's curiosity and activeness in asking questions and communicating. Thus, the market can be used as a concrete contextual learning resource, close to children's lives, and supports the creation of meaningful learning experiences

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is an individual who is in a developmental stage that requires direct and meaningful learning experience (Hura & Mawikere, 2020). At this stage, children not only learn through explanations given by the teacher, but also through the process of observing, trying, asking questions, interacting, and exploring the environment around them(Nugraheni & Pamungkas, 2022). An environment that is close to everyday life can be an important part of the learning process because it gives children the opportunity to relate the knowledge gained at school with the experiences they encounter in real life (Robecca et al., 2020). Therefore, early childhood learning needs to provide enough space for children to interact directly with the environment.

One form of activity that can provide this experience is outing classes. Outing class activities provide opportunities for children to learn outside the school environment by visiting certain places related to learning themes (Rahmawati et al., 2020). Through these activities, children can gain experiences that cannot always be provided through learning in the classroom. Children can see objects directly, recognize the environment, conduct social interactions, and obtain various information based on what they find during activities (Zonalisa Fhatri, Dwi Haryanti, 2024). Thus, outing classes can be one of the activities that support experiential learning in early childhood.

One of the environments that can be used in outing class activities is the market. The market is an environment that is very close to children's daily lives and has various objects and activities that can be observed (Listiana, 2024). Children can see various types of vegetables, fruits, fish, food, and other daily needs. In addition, children can also observe the activities of sellers and buyers, the process of choosing goods, bargaining activities, the use of money, and interactions between people in the market. These various experiences can indirectly introduce children to the social environment and daily life activities.

However, the use of the surrounding environment as a learning resource has not always been the main part of early childhood learning activities. Learning often takes place more in the classroom using media that has been prepared by teachers (Fiatunnabilah, 2024). This condition can make children's experience of learning objects more limited, especially when the objects learned are actually available in the surrounding environment. In fact, learning that connects material with daily life experiences can help children understand things more concretely (Miterianifa & Mawarni, 2024).

Previous research shows that outing class activities have been widely used as a learning strategy to provide a direct learning experience to early childhood. Kurnianto, Syam, Katni, and Nurhakim (2024) (Kurnianto et al., 2024) in *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* through a study entitled "Model of Character Education for Early Childhood Eduwisata Ndalem Kerto through Outing Class Activities" found that outing class activities in the form of gardening, *fun learning*, interaction with livestock, and *fun cooking* can provide a fun learning experience while supporting the cultivation of early childhood character. Furthermore, Darmawan, Nurbaeti, Larasati, and Pramesti (2024) (Darmawan, 2024) in the Proceedings of the National Seminar on Non-Formal Education entitled "Improving Early Childhood Insight through Outing Class Learning Strategies in KB SKB Serang City" showed that outing classes to BPBD Banten Province can improve children's insight and experience through direct interaction with the environment and connect learning with real-life situations. Meanwhile, Rahmawati and Nazarullail (2020) (Rahmawati et al., 2020) in the PG-PAUD Trunojoyo Journal: Journal of Early Childhood Education and Learning through the article "Outing Class Learning Strategies to Improve Early Childhood Development Aspects" explained that outing classes can foster interest in learning, reduce boredom, and support various aspects of children's development through exploration and direct interaction with the environment.

Although the three studies both emphasized the importance of outing classes as learning outside the classroom that provides real experiences, previous research still focused on character education, insight building, learning strategies, and aspects of child development with locations such as edurista, BPBD, and the natural environment. Therefore, there is room for study to deepen children's learning experiences directly in social environments that are close to daily life, especially the market. This research is here to fill this space by examining the early childhood learning experience through outing class activities to the market as a contextual

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learning resource, so that learning is not only viewed from the benefits or results of its development, but also from how children observe the market environment, interact with others, get to know buying and selling activities, and build understanding through concrete experiences in daily life.

Based on this description, this research focuses on early childhood learning experiences through outing class activities to the market as a source of contextual learning. The research is directed to see how children gain experience while in the market environment, what children observe and do, and how children's interaction with the environment can be part of the learning process. The results of the research are expected to provide an idea that the surrounding environment, including the market, can be used creatively by teachers as a concrete learning resource and close to children's lives. Thus, outing class activities are not only learning activities outside the classroom, but also opportunities for children to gain real experience through the social environment around them.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design that aims to describe early childhood learning experiences through outing class activities to the market as a contextual learning resource. The object of the research was group B children at RA Al-Mutaqien, Tasikmalaya Regency which amounted to 20 children, with activities accompanied by 4 teachers. All children who participated in the activity and the teachers involved were directly the target of the research. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. The research instrument was developed based on the focus of research on children's learning experiences during outing class activities, including children's ability to observe the market environment, get to know various goods and buying and selling activities, conduct social interactions, show curiosity, and follow rules during activities. Observations were carried out using guidelines for observing children's activities and responses, interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to accompanying teachers, while documentation was used to complete the data in the form of photos and activity notes. Data is analyzed interactively through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. The validity of the data is strengthened through triangulation of techniques by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation so that a more complete picture of the child's learning experience is obtained through outing class activities to the market.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of the study showed that the outing class activity to the market provided a concrete and diverse learning experience for group B children of RA Al-Mutaqien Tasikmalaya Regency. The activity was attended by 20 children accompanied by 4 teachers with the theme "My Environment" and the subtheme "Shopping Place Market". During the activity, children were invited to observe the market environment, get to know various types of goods sold, see the activities of traders and buyers, and observe the buying and selling process directly. Based on the results of the observations, children showed enthusiasm for the environment visited. Children were seen paying attention to various objects in the market and responding to questions and directions given by teachers. This experience showed that activities outside the classroom provided opportunities for children to obtain information through direct observation of the environment.

While in the market, children gain experience in getting to know various types of goods and activities in the market environment. Children can see firsthand various kinds of vegetables, fruits, food, and daily necessities that may have previously only been introduced through pictures or learning media in class. Children also observe the activities of traders in offering and arranging merchandise as well as buyers' activities when choosing and buying goods. This experience allows children to connect learning materials about the environment with the conditions they encounter in real life.

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Image 1. The child is holding his own choice of vegetable

Children's awareness of different varieties of fruits or vegetables becomes apparent when they ask their teacher questions such as, "Teacher, what kind of vegetable is this?", "Teacher, why are there so many of these for sale?", or "Teacher, why are some tomatoes red and others green?" Observations also show that the children are very active in engaging with the vendors, asking them questions like, "Ma'am, why are there so many different types and colors of chili peppers?"

The results of the observation also show that there is a child's experience in getting to know buying and selling activities in a simple way. Children observe the relationship between sellers and buyers and the process when goods are selected and paid. Some children show interest by paying attention to the transaction process and asking questions to the teacher about the goods and activities they see. Through this experience, children begin to know that the market is a meeting place for sellers and buyers to carry out buying and selling activities. The concept is obtained by children through real situations so that learning does not only come from the teacher's explanation.



Image 2. Children are paying attention to the buying and selling activities of tofu traders

Observations also show that the children are very enthusiastic and curious about buying and selling activities for instance, when they ask their teacher questions such as, "Why do we have to use money if we want to buy something?" and "Why do we get the items we want when we give money to a seller?"

In addition to cognitive experiences, outing class activities provide opportunities for children to interact and learn to follow the rules in the public environment. Children follow the teacher's directions, walk with groups, maintain order, and interact with friends and teachers during activities. The crowded market

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environment provides new experiences for children in adjusting to situations outside of school. Assistance from four teachers also helps maintain the regularity of activities while providing assistance when children need direction or explanation.



Image 3. The child is walking following the instructions of the teacher in front of him

The children are also very easy to manage when it comes to following the teacher's guidance. Observations show that they are able to follow the teacher's instructions—for instance, by queuing in an orderly manner. After making their purchases, they report back to the teacher, and once they have finished shopping, they sit together so that the teacher can easily keep an eye on them.

The next finding is the emergence of children's curiosity and activeness in exploring the environment. Various objects encountered directly provide stimulus for children to observe and ask questions. Children are not only recipients of information, but also show responses to things that attract their attention. Teachers play a role in directing children's attention through simple questions and explanations related to learning themes. Thus, outing class activities provide space for children to learn through the process of observing, asking questions, interacting, and finding information from the surrounding environment.



Image 4. children are asking the seller tofu

The observations also revealed the emergence of curiosity in the children, as evidenced by their exploration of the market while accompanied by their teacher, as well as questions such as, "Why are there so many things for sale here?" and "Why do so many people visit the market?"

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Overall, the results of the study show that outing class activities to the market provide learning experiences that include introduction to the environment, introduction of goods and buying and selling activities, social interaction, development of curiosity, and habituation of following rules. The market can be used as a concrete learning resource because it provides various objects and activities that are directly related to children's daily lives. These findings show that learning through the real environment can provide a more diverse experience than learning that only takes place in the classroom.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that outing class activities to the market provided concrete learning experiences to 20 children of group B of RA Al-Mutaqien Tasikmalaya Regency. Children had the opportunity to observe directly various objects and activities in the market environment, such as merchandise, traders, buyers, and buying and selling processes. This experience showed that learning activities did not only take place through the delivery of information by teachers, but also through direct interaction of children with the environment (Rahma & Maemonah, 2021). These findings are in line with research (Dermawan, 2024) which shows that outing class activities can provide new experiences and knowledge through direct interaction with children with the environment. Research (Sobari, 2023) also shows that outing classes can be used to introduce real conditions outside school while providing experience in children's communication, independence, and problem-solving.

Children's experience in observing various goods in the market shows that the surrounding environment can function as a concrete learning resource (Christin Yekesinta Limbong, 2024). Children can see firsthand various types of vegetables, fruits, food, and daily necessities that could previously be introduced through classroom learning media. Through these experiences, children have the opportunity to observe the characteristics of objects, compare objects, and obtain information based on their own experiences (Alfadhilah, 2025). This finding is in accordance with a study that explains that environment-based contextual learning emphasizes children's direct involvement with the environment as a learning resource. This approach provides space for children to gain experiences related to the real environment. The physical environment has the potential as a source of early childhood learning, although its use has not always been carried out optimally (Fitriani & Rachmawati, 2025).

The activity of observing the buying and selling process also provides an experience for children to get to know social life and simple economic activities (Anggraini, 2023). Children can see the relationship between sellers and buyers, the process of choosing goods, and payment activities. This experience is a form of contextual learning because children gain understanding through situations that are close to daily life. This finding is related to research (Apipah et al., 2023) regarding early childhood visits to shopping centers in Tasikmalaya. The research shows that visits to shopping environments can be used as outing class activities and provide space for children to develop social skills through experiences in the surrounding environment.

In addition to getting to know the environment and buying and selling activities, the results of the study show that activities in the market provide opportunities for children to have social interactions. Children follow the teacher's direction, interact with friends, and observe the activities of people in the market environment. This situation provides experience for children to apply social behavior in a real context. This finding is strengthened by research (Fauziyyah & Pratiwi, 2026) which found that outing class activities can provide experience on social aspects, interaction with the environment, independence, curiosity, and children's responsibility. Thus, outing class activities to the market not only provide experiences related to knowledge, but also provide opportunities for children to learn to adapt behavior to social environments that are different from the school environment.

The emergence of children's curiosity during activities is also an important part of the learning experience. When in the market, children encounter various objects and situations that can attract attention and encourage them to observe, ask questions, and communicate with teachers. This process shows that the real environment can provide a stimulus for children to explore (Ulum, 2024). Nature and environment-based learning also emphasizes the importance of children's direct involvement in the environment as part of

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contextual learning (Limbong, 2025), for example, explaining that open-environment learning provides opportunities for children to recognize, observe, and understand various phenomena through meaningful learning experiences.

The findings of this study also show that the market has the potential to be a multidimensional learning resource. In one activity, children can gain experience with the environment, objects, professions, buying and selling activities, communication, social interaction, and rules when in public spaces. This strengthens the view that learning resources for early childhood are not limited to the media provided in the classroom. An environment that is close to the child's life can be used as a learning resource if the teacher is able to connect it with learning goals. Environment-based contextual learning in PAUD is an alternative to learning practices that are too conventional and do not provide opportunities for children to interact with the real environment (Tanesib et al., 2026).

These findings complement the research of Kurnianto et al. (2024) which focuses on character education through eduwetasat activities, Darmawan et al. (2024) which emphasizes increasing children's insight through visits to BPBD, and Rahmawati and Nazarullail (2020) who discuss outing class strategies to support various aspects of child development. The specific contribution of this research lies in the use of traditional markets as a source of contextual learning to explore children's experiences in recognizing the diversity of merchandise, observing buying and selling transactions, and showing curiosity through spontaneous questions. Thus, this study expands the discussion of outing classes by highlighting learning experiences that arise from the daily socio-economic environment, not only from educational activities, institutional visits, or nature exploration. However, this contribution is an expansion of the focus of the study, not evidence that this activity is more effective than the outing class model studied previously.

Thus, the outing class activity to the market at RA Al-Mutaqien, Tasikmalaya Regency shows that children's learning experiences can be built through direct interaction with the environment close to their lives. The market is not only positioned as a place to do shopping activities, but as a learning space that allows children to observe, explore, communicate, and gain direct social experiences. These findings reinforce previous research on the benefits of outing classes, but place special emphasis on children's learning experiences when the market is used as a contextual learning resource. Thus, the use of the surrounding environment through outing class activities can be an alternative for PAUD teachers to provide more concrete, contextual, and meaningful learning for children.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the outing class activity to the market in group B children of RA Al-Mutaqien Tasikmalaya Regency provided a concrete, meaningful, and close learning experience to children's daily lives. Through this activity, 20 children had the opportunity to observe the market environment directly, get to know various types of goods, understand simple buying and selling activities, and interact with teachers, friends, and the surrounding social environment. This activity also encourages children's curiosity through observing, asking questions, and exploring various objects found during the visit. Thus, the market not only functions as a shopping place, but can be used as a contextual learning resource that provides a variety of experiences for children's knowledge and social development. Outing class activities to the real environment can be an alternative learning for PAUD teachers to present a more concrete learning process and in accordance with children's life experiences.

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