

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PUBLIC PRESCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN PERAK AND YOGYAKARTA

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SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PUBLIC PRESCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN
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LILY MULIANA BINTI MUSTAFA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop a preschool management framework. Preschool management is led by the principal who acts as the preschool manager, who plans the entire operation of a preschool. The first research question is to describe the similarities and differences in the laws and practices of Preschool Management in Malaysia and Indonesia. The second research question is to explore the participation of managers and government officials in Preschool Management practices during the implementation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) standards. The third research question is to investigate the function of managers in the government's Preschool Management practice. Finally, the fourth research question is to develop a 'Preschool - Manager Routine Task (PresMaRT)' framework as a management practice in preschool. Therefore, case studies were selected for both countries by using descriptive qualitative research. This process is through document analysis, observation, focus group discussion, semi-structured interviews, sampling process, interview question instrument, pilot study and data analysis using ATLAS.ti software version 9. This purposive sample involved 40 preschool managers during the focus group discussion session. Meanwhile, 8 preschool managers and 4 government officials from the district education office for semi-structured interviews for both countries; Malaysia and Indonesia. The results of the study found five sub-themes that occur from the theory of Management of Objectives; 1) implementing legislation, 2) financial management, 3) human resource management, 4) time management, and 5) performance management. The results of this research also include four sub themes: planning, organizing, leading and controlling which are known as POLC theory. Implications in this research may contribute towards the delivery of the latest information and ideas among researchers at the international level. In addition, principals can use the PresMaRT framework to achieve efficiency in management capabilities. Apart from that, policy makers should take into account the views of each stakeholder to ensure the effectiveness of preschool management. In conclusion, a high quality impact of management practices are the co-operation of preschool managers to carry out PAKK standards and the role of government officials who supervise preschools consistently under their responsibility.



KAJIAN PERBANDINGAN PENGURUSAN PRASEKOLAH DI PERAK DAN YOGYAKARTA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan membangunkan rangka kerja pengurusan prasekolah. Pengurusan prasekolah diketuai oleh guru besar yang berperanan sebagai pengurus prasekolah, iaitu merancang seluruh operasi perjalanan prasekolah. Soalan kajian pertama ialah menghuraikan persamaan dan perbezaan undang-undang dan dasar pelaksanaan Pengurusan Prasekolah di Malaysia dan Indonesia. Soalan kajian kedua adalah untuk meneroka penyertaan pengurus dan pegawai kerajaan dalam pelaksanaan Pengurusan Prasekolah semasa melaksanakan piawaian Pendidikan Awal Kanak-kanak (PAKK). Soalan kajian ketiga adalah untuk menyelidik fungsi pengurus dalam pelaksanaan Pengurusan Prasekolah di bawah pentadbiran kerajaan. Akhir sekali, soalan kajian keempat ialah membangunkan rangka kerja 'Preschool – Manager Routine Task (PresMaRT)' sebagai amalan pengurusan di prasekolah. Maka, kajian kes dipilih bagi kedua-dua buah negara dengan menggunakan kajian kualitatif deskriptif. Proses ini melalui analisis dokumen, pemerhatian, perbincangan kumpulan berfokus, temu bual separa berstruktur, proses persampelan, kajian rintis dan analisis data menggunakan perisian ATLAS.ti versi 9. Sampel bertujuan ini melibatkan 40 pengurus prasekolah untuk sesi perbincangan kumpulan berfokus, 8 pengurus prasekolah dan 4 orang pegawai kerajaan dari pejabat pendidikan daerah untuk temu bual separa berstruktur bagi kedua-dua buah negara; Malaysia dan Indonesia. Hasil kajian mendapati lima sub-tema yang berlaku daripada teori Pengurusan Mengikut Objektif: 1) melaksanakan perundangan, 2) pengurusan kewangan, 3) pengurusan sumber manusia, 4) pengurusan masa, dan 5) pengurusan prestasi. Hasil penyelidikan ini turut merangkumi empat sub-tema, iaitu perancangan, pengorganisasian, peneraju dan pengawalan yang dikenali sebagai teori POLC. Implikasi penyelidikan boleh menyumbang ke arah penyampaian maklumat dan idea terkini di kalangan penyelidik pada peringkat antarabangsa. Di samping itu, guru besar boleh menggunakan rangka kerja PresMaRT untuk mencapai kecekapan keupayaan pengurusan. Selain itu, penggubal dasar harus mengambil tindakan pandangan setiap pihak berkepentingan untuk memastikan keberkesanan pengurusan prasekolah. Kesimpulannya, impak amalan pengurusan yang berkualiti tinggi adalah kerjasama pengurus prasekolah untuk menjalankan piawaian PAKK dan peranan pegawai kerajaan yang konsisten menyelia prasekolah di bawah tanggungjawab mereka.

CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK	ii
DECLARATION OF THESIS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xvii
LIST OF FIGURES	xx
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Background	5
1.3 Problem Statement	9
1.4 Research Objectives	12
1.5 Research Questions	13
1.6 Conceptual Framework of Research	13
1.7 Significant of the Study	17

1.8	Limitations of Study	19
1.9	Operational Definition	20
1.9.1	National Preschool Quality (ECE) Standard	20
1.9.2	Standard PAUD	20
1.9.3	Manager	21
1.9.4	Preschool Management	21
1.9.5	Government Officials	22
1.9.6	Yogyakarta State Preschool	22
1.9.7	KEMAS (Community Development Department)	23
1.9.8	JPNIN (Department of National Unity and Integration)	23
1.9.9	JAIN (State Islamic Religious Department)	23
1.9.10	ABIM (Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia)	24
1.9.11	Management by Objectives	24
1.9.12	Management Functions	24
1.9.13	Management Style	25
1.9.14	Multiple Case Study	25
1.10	Chapter Summary	25
CHAPTER 2	LITERATURE REVIEW	27
2.1	Introduction	27
2.2	Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Malaysia	28
2.3	Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Indonesia	32

2.4	Laws and policies in Malaysia on early childhood education	36
2.5	Laws and Policies in Indonesia on Early Childhood Education	37
2.6	Laws and Policies in Other Countries on Early Childhood Education	39
2.6.1	Preschool Standard in Australia	41
2.6.2	Preschool Standard in New Zealand	41
2.6.3	Preschool Standard in United Kingdom	42
2.6.4	Preschool Standard in Ireland	43
2.6.5	Preschool Standard in Norway	44
2.6.6	Summarization of International ECE Standards	45
2.7	Theoretical Framework	47
2.7.1	Management by Objectives	48
2.7.1.1	Define organizational objectives	49
2.7.1.2	Inform the employees about the organizational objectives	49
2.7.1.3	Involve the employees in determining the objectives	50
2.7.1.4	Monitoring the objectives	50
2.7.1.5	Evaluation and Feedback	50
2.8	Management by Functions	52
2.8.1	Planning	54
2.8.2	Organizing	55

2.8.3	Leading	56
2.8.4	Controlling	58
2.9	Comparative Study in Early Childhood Education Research	60
2.10	Chapter Summary	68

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 69

3.1	Introduction	69
3.2	The Setting of the Study	69
3.3	Research Design	73
3.4	Population and Sample	76
3.5	Instruments	80
3.6	Pilot Study	83
3.7	Data Collection Procedures	85
3.8	Triangulation Methods	91
3.8.1	Document Analysis	92
3.8.2	Focus Group Discussion	97
3.8.3	The Semi-Structured Interviews	98
3.8.4	Observations	99
3.8.5	Data Analysis by Using Software ATLAS.ti version 9	101
3.8.6	Establishing Trustworthiness, Credibility and Authenticity of The Data	107
3.9	Chapter Summary	108

CHAPTER 4	FINDINGS	109
4.1	Introduction	109
4.2	Research Question 1: What are the Similarities and Differences in the Laws and Policies of Preschool Management in Malaysia and Indonesia that guide the implementation of ECE standards?	110
4.2.1	Malaysian Laws on Preschool Management	111
4.2.1.1	Objective Indicators	114
4.2.1.2	Subjective Indicators	114
4.2.2	Indonesian Laws on Preschool Management	120
4.2.3	Summary of Findings	125
4.3	Research Question 2: How do the manager and government official participate in the Preschool Management practices while implementing the ECE standards?	127
4.3.1	Theme 1: Implementing Legislation	133
4.3.1.1	Malaysian Context	134
4.3.1.2	Indonesian Context	138
4.3.2	Theme 2: Financial Management	141
4.3.2.1	Malaysian Context	142
4.3.2.2	Indonesian Context	146
4.3.3	Theme 3: Human Resource Management	150
4.3.3.1	Malaysian Context	150
4.3.3.2	Indonesian Context	157
4.3.4	Theme 4: Time Management	162

4.3.4.1	Malaysian Context	163
4.3.4.2	Indonesian Context	165
4.3.5	Theme 5: Performance Management	167
4.3.5.1	Malaysian Context	167
4.3.5.2	Indonesian Context	172
4.4	Research Question Number 3: What are the functions of manager in the public Preschool Management?	174
4.4.1	Planning	175
4.4.1.1	Malaysian Context	175
4.4.1.2	Indonesian Context	177
4.4.2	Organizing	178
4.4.2.1	Malaysian Context	179
4.4.2.2	Indonesian Context	181
4.4.3	Leading	182
4.4.3.1	Malaysian Context	183
4.4.3.2	Indonesian Context	184
4.4.4	Controlling	185
4.4.4.1	Malaysian Context	185
4.4.4.2	Indonesian Context	186
4.5	Analyzing Data Using Software Atlas.ti (Version 9)	188
4.6	Summary of Findings	191

CHAPTER 5	THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PRESCHOOL MANAGER ROUTINE TASKS (PresMaRT) FRAMEWORK	195
5.1	Introduction	195
5.2	Summary of Views of Managers About Preschool Management Practices	196
5.3	Summary of Views of Managers' Tasks While Managing The Preschool	199
5.4	Summary of Qualities and Roles of Managers and Government Officials	200
5.5	Themes and Categories in This Study	202
5.6	Chapter Summary	203
CHAPTER 6	DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	204
6.1	Introduction	204
6.2	Discussion Question Number 1: The similarities and differences in the Laws and Policies of Preschool Management in Malaysia and Indonesia that guide the implementation of ECE standards.	205
6.2.1	Finding Number 1: The government of Malaysia and Indonesia have not made compulsory for children to register in the preschool institution	205
6.2.2	Finding Number 2: Following to the democratization of education for all involving children special needs to enroll them access the preschool education regardless of household income, ethnicity and living area	208
6.2.3	Finding Number 3: Comply with the National Preschool Quality Standard (Malaysia) and Standard PAUD (Indonesia) which set by the both government as an	209

accreditation system for Preschool Management

6.3	Discussion Question Number 2: Participation of managers and government official in the Preschool Management practices while implementing the ECE standards	211
6.3.1	Theme one: Managing by implementing legislation; Finding Number 4: Implementing legislation base on ministries quality standards	211
6.3.2	Theme two: Managing financial issues; Finding Number 5: Financial manual book as guidelines	213
6.3.3	Theme three: Managing people issues; Finding Number 6: Human Resource Management	214
6.3.4	Theme four: Managing time systematically; Finding Number 7: Time as guideline for managers and teachers	216
6.3.5	Theme five: Managing performance; Finding Number 8: Assessing performance through standard instrument	217
6.4	Discussion Question Number 3: The functions of manager in the public Preschool Management	218
6.4.1	Theme one: Setting objectives & planning activities; Finding Number 9: Planning for setting goals or direction of an organization	219
6.4.2	Theme two: Arranging Resources; Finding Number 10: Organizing as a continuity of planning process	220
6.4.3	Theme three: Being a role model & good leader; Finding Number 11: Leading as a motivation spirit	221

6.4.4	Theme four: Regular inspections and keep on improving; Finding Number 12: Controlling as a guidance towards achieving goals	222
6.5	Discussion Question Number 4: The Preschool Manager Routine Tasks (PresMaRT) Framework	223
6.5.1	The Stakeholders' Capacity	226
6.5.1.1	The Managers	227
6.5.1.2	Government Officials	228
6.6	Summary of the Study	229
6.7	Implications	230
6.7.1	Managers	230
6.7.2	Policy Makers and Preschools	231
6.7.3	Teachers	232
6.7.4	Researchers	233
6.8	Recommendations	233
6.8.1	For Department of Education and Policy Makers	234
6.8.2	For Preschools	235
6.8.3	For Teachers	235
6.8.4	For Parents	236
6.8.5	For Children	236
6.8.6	For Future Researchers	236
6.9	Conclusions	237

REFERENCES	241
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APPENDICES

261

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.		Page
1.1	Dimensions of ECE Standards in Malaysia and Indonesia	3
1.2	Summarization of Preschool Education System in Malaysia and Indonesia	7
1.3	Comparison of the number of classes according to agency from 2016 – 2018	9
2.1	Number of Preschools and Classes by Agencies in Malaysia	29
2.2	Number of Preschools by Agencies and State in Malaysia	30
2.3	Comparison of the number of classes according to agency from 2016 – 2018	31
2.4	Number of Preschools by State in Indonesia	34
2.5	Policy Context of ECEC for Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland and Norway	46
3.1	Summary of stakeholder-participants	76
3.2	Interview Catalogue in Malaysian sample	77
3.3	Focus Group and interview session in Malaysian sample	77
3.4	Interview Catalogue in Indonesian sample	78
3.5	Focus Group and interview session in Indonesian sample	79
3.6	Respondents' Profile	79

3.7	Interview Questions	81
3.8	Types of documentary analysis	94
3.9	Summary of documents analyzed according to variables	96
3.10	Applying the various stages of content analysis in ATLAS.ti	106
3.11	Establishing validity of research	107
4.1	Summary Description s of Malaysian Laws and Policies in ECCE	116
4.2	Similarities and Differences in Laws and Policies of Preschool Management in the Malaysia and Indonesia.	125
4.3	Observation Form (Malaysia)	127
4.4	Observation Form (Indonesia)	130
4.5	Themes, Categories and Codes	132
4.6	Number of public and private preschools from 2016 to 2018	135
4.7	Self-Assessment Instrument from Ministry of Education in Malaysia	137
4.8	Financial Resources of KEMAS preschool	143
4.9	Usage procedure of KEMAS preschool income	144
4.10	Type of financial reports used by KEMAS preschool	145
4.11	Financial standards in the Instrumen Akreditasi PAUD	146
4.12	Content of financial management in Malaysia and Indonesia	149
4.13	Instrumen Akreditasi PAUD related with human resource management in Indonesian preschool	159
4.14	Competencies of a head-school and teacher.	160

4.15	Comparative criteria of standards people managemen between Malaysia and Indonesia	161
4.16	Time matrix	162
4.17	Categorization program of KEMAS calendar	164
4.18	Workloads of preschool manager	166
4.19	Items description of KEMAS Preschool Management Monitoring Instrument	169
4.20	Relationship of grading, level and scoring percentage	171
4.21	Summarization of performance management in Malaysia and Indonesia	174
4.22	Emphasize of mission and vision between two ministries	177
4.23	Planning Activity of Instrumen Akreditasi PAUD	178
4.24	Activities related Controlling Process of Instrume Akreditasi PAUD:	187
4.25	Codes Category and Themes	191
5.1	Views of managers on practices management in public preschool	196
5.2	Qualities and Roles of Manager and Government officials	201
5.3	Themes for Research Question number 2 with descriptions and categorie	202
5.4	Themes for Research Question number 3 with descriptions and categories	202
5.5	PresMaRT Matrix	203

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.		Page
1.1	Conceptual Framework of Preschool Management Practices	16
2.1	The MBO process	51
2.2	Model of Management Core Functions as developed by Moloney and Pettersen (2017)	52
2.3	The Four- step Control Process	59
2.4	Model of the Four Functions of Management	60
3.1	Sample locations of TABIKA KEMAS in Perak	72
3.2	Sample locations of TK Negeri in Yogyakarta	72
3.3	Research Design by using Comparative Case Study	75
3.4	The Research process of this study	87
4.1	Financing responsibilities under decentralized education management	123
4.2	Composition of Public Education Spending, 2009	124
4.3	Average percentage of PK-SKPK Score according to Quality Dimension (2015-2018)	151
4.4	Qualification of preschool teachers based on agency	153
4.5	ECE Managers' Tasks	179

4.6	Organization chart of Early Childhood Education Unit in KEMAS Headquarters Putrajaya.	180
4.7	The four-step control process	185
4.8	The input and output process of using ATLAS.ti	189
4.9	Web cloud result analysis by ATLAS.ti version 9	189
4.10	Thematic content analysis by ATLAS.ti version 9	190
5.1	List of tasks for Manager in KEMAS preschool	199
5.2	List of tasks for Manager in Indonesia public preschool	200
6.1	Preschool Manager Routine Tasks (PresMaRT) Framework	225

LIST OF APPENDICES

- A Interview Questions With Translations
- B Document Analysis Themes & Codes To Interview Questions
- C1 Permit To Conduct Interview In Kemas Preschools, Perak, Malaysia
- C2 Official Article Related To Conduct Ece Research In Yogyakarta
Special Region, Indonesia
- D1 Sample Consent Letters For Ece Managers And Supervisors
- D2 Sample Consent Letter For Government Officials
- E1 Pictures Of Selected Participants (With Consents) In Malaysia
- E2 Pictures Of Selected Participants (With Consents) In Indonesia
- F1 Certificate Of Respondents To Be Ece Supervisor Of Kemas Preschool
In Malaysia
- F2 Certificate Of Respondents To Be Kep Sek (Principal) Of Tk Negeri In
Indonesia
- G1 Sample Of National Preschool Quality Standard As Self-Assessment
For Preschool In Malaysia
- G2 Sample Of Standard Paud Quality Instrument As Self-Assessment For
Preschool In Indonesia
- H1 Sample Transcriptions
- H2 Sample Transcriptions
- I Professional Background Of External Evaluators

J Sample Of Instrument Validation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) sector has become the priority list of national policy agendas across the globe (Neuman & Powers, 2021; Moloney & Pettersen, 2017; Moloney & Pope, 2013; Miller & Cable, 2011; Moss, 2010; Lobman & Ryan, 2007; Helterbran & Fennimore, 2004). The myriad factors turned as the essential national policy include an accelerated social change because of mothers involved in paid employment outside the home (Kurowska, 2020; Brennan & Adamson, 2014), and the impact of various longitudinal research in the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and New Zealand (NZ) which indicate that ECE is the most powerful investment a country can make (Powell, Thomason, & Jacobs, 2019; Moloney & Pettersen, 2017).

Preschool is one of the education institution which continually growing in response to global and national higher demand. Therefore, government taking action by delivering policies in terms of ECE Standards. The ECE Standards include such as

the introduction of pedagogical and regulatory practices at the national and international level such as National Preschool Quality Standard (NPQS) in Malaysia, Standard 'PAUD' (Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini) in Indonesia and Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) in Australia, and Quality Framework for Evaluation and Improvement in Centre-based Early Childhood Services in New Zealand.

Furthermore, the management role of preschool manager is also evolving and increasingly complex. The ability to listen, and communicate well often originates in natural latent talents that are nurtured and eventually blossom through knowledge, training and experience (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017). As a result, this system education includes some guidelines for the preschool management to ensure the ECE standard may achieved.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference is the largest ECE conference in the world. Every year, thousands of teachers, program administrators, students, and researchers from hundreds of presentations sharing the latest trends and research in early childhood field (Rodd, 1996). It is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, from birth through age eight, in terms of ECE practice, policy, and research (NAEYC, 2018). Some countries decided to produce a set of standards which appropriate with their own countries' policy and cultures after receiving opinions and concepts from researchers in the conference.

In this study, researcher focusing the similarities and differences of ECE standard between two countries; Malaysia and Indonesia. Malaysia and Indonesia are situated on the Malay Archipelago historically, language, and education system which have a lot of similarity. Malay is one of the races in the family of a very broad ethnic group called as Malayo-Polynesian. The other tribes such as Javanese, Bugis, Sundanese, Maori, Hawaii, and Fiji. Thus, languages and cultures are not highly difference between both countries.

The management and organization of preschools must be carried out in accordance with national standards in order to achieve quality (Ministry of Education and Culture Regulations, 2014). Below are Table 1.1 summarized the descriptions between both countries in terms of ECE standard.

Table 1.1

Dimensions of ECE Standards in Malaysia and Indonesia

Country	Malaysia	Indonesia
Policy	National Preschool Quality Standard	Standard PAUD
List of dimensions	Focusing 5 dimensions: a) Governance; b) Teachers and Teaching Assistants; c) Curriculum; d) Parents or Guardians' Interaction; e) Health & nutrition safety.	Focusing 8 dimensions: a) Standards for Achieving Child Development Levels; b) Content Standard; c) Process Standard; d) Assessment Standard; e) Teachers' and Staff Standard; f) Facilities Standard; g) Administration Standard; h) Financial Standard.

Moreover, every policy has been revised and introduced purposely for the manager guides and practices. Manager is the crucial person who are providing the link between policy and practice. Moloney & Pettersen (2017) and Gammage (2008)

suggested, ‘the success of an organisation correlates with the quality of their manager and the management can help and hinder the quest for quality within settings’.

The management of a preschool occurs within an ecological framework. Manager involves within and between differing layers of the eco-system as they work with children, parents, and teachers within the micro-system. Then, manager also interacts with funders, mentors and other external agencies within the meso-system and with legislators within the macro-system.

The ECE standards of worldwide countries are purposely for achieving the objectives and increasing the quality of ECE for children and also the people who managing the institutions. Those people who operate the preschools are pertinent to plan, organize, lead and control the process of implementing the quality standards. It coincided with the time when the United Nations (UN) discussed the quality of ECE the fourth goal in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (UN, 2016).

Moreover, it declared that all girls and boys should be guaranteed to have a quality education and care in regard to primary school readiness (UN, 2016). As a result, the global education system has devoted special attention and investment of ECE to ensure a quality education for children by 2030 (Adriany & Saefullah, 2015).

Hence, the significant role of ECE manager is to emphasize provision of quality education, raising achievement and staff performance. ECE manager who sometimes called as manager will accepting and implementing government regulations which impact the working environment such as ECE standard. This ECE standard is a set of

statements as a guideline for every preschool to improve quality during the inspection by the officer from the Ministry of Education.

Both Malaysia and Indonesia government commits to ensure every child must be provided early education following the preschool standard practice by the manager in either public or private preschool. Thus, from this case study may help to explore the management practices of national preschool standard between Malaysia and Indonesia. As a result, the development of Preschool - Manager Routine Task (PresMaRT) framework will be contribute to support the implementation of ECE standards. This framework may become the supporting system to create preschool management practices for the manager.

1.2 Research Background

Management is related to human activities to utilize all available resources in an organization both human resources and material resources effectively and efficiently for the achievement of organizational goals. In this research, issues about management is focusing more on managers different daily tasks and a successful manager would need to possess management ability (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017). Lately, there is a trend toward prioritising education for children in the preschool environment by enhancing the policies and strategies (Tan, 2017), unfortunately little attention has been paid to the manager who are responsible towards preschool management (Parthenis & Fragoulis, 2020).

In the developed countries, most of the qualification for the manager position must graduated in the ECE certificate. As example in Australia, there is a national body which assists governments to monitor the qualification of managers. This explained how important the requirement of qualified managers who organize the preschool centres (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017). Thus, logically, some people naturally might think twice about taking on a manager job which is the relatively large variety of tasks involved in the management functions such as planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Managers should followed ECE policies and regulations stated by the government. In the meantime, a set of expectations from the staff members towards manager to commit tasks within department and each level of management. Process of management or management functions illustrated as crucial building blocks in the journey of desiring best implementation practices thus attaining quality achievement.

Therefore, quality preschools cannot be realized by an instant process but through a relatively long process whose control is carried out by qualified human resources especially managers, who entitle as ECE manager (Simaremare, Nasriah, & Anggraini, 2020). Sometimes managers are subject to ever changing roles, responsibilities, and expectations especially in the situation of covid-19 pandemic currently. One of the competencies that must be possessed by professional managers in order to plan preschool programs towards good quality is managerial ability.

Managerial ability is the ability of the manager in carrying out management functions in managing the school both human resources and other resources such as the ability to manage, coordinate and move school personnel towards achieving the goals set by the school organization (Simaremare et al., 2020). In pandemic, response to the



coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, 107 countries had implemented national school closures (Viner et al., 2020) and for Malaysia legislated on March 18, 2020. Hence, even communication through online, the instructions from the government should be carried out by the managers without fail.

Below are Table 1.2 summarized the descriptions between both countries in terms of preschool education system. As shown, both government of Malaysia and Indonesia have provided the National Philosophy of Early Childhood Education, National Preschool Quality Standard (NPQS) and National Standard Preschool Curriculum as a guidelines for each manager to increase the quality of management practices. Normally, every new ECE manager being responsible to attend the briefing from the Ministry of Education (MOE) officers who incharged ECE institutions to avoid any insufficient informations.

Table 1.2

Summarization of Preschool Education System in Malaysia and Indonesia

	Malaysia	Indonesia
National Philosophy of Early Childhood Education	To develop the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner to produce intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a belief in and devotion to God.	To enhance childrens' ability by refering the developmental milestone , introduce the childrens' world, increase childrens' socialization, educate childrens' discipline and give chances for the children their right to play.
National ECE Standards	Focusing 5 dimensions: a) Governance; b) Teachers and Teaching Assistants; c) Curriculum; d) Parents or Guardians' Interaction;	Focusing 8 dimensions: a) Standards for Achieving Child Development Levels; b) Content Standard; c) Process Standard; d) Assessment Standard;

(Continue)



Table 1.2 (*Continued*)

	Malaysia	Indonesia
	e) Health & nutrition safety.	e) Teachers' and Staff Standard; f) Facilities Standard; g) Administration Standard; h) Financial Standard.
National Standard Preschool Curriculum	Components of six development: a) communication; b) spirituality, attitudes, and values; c) humanity; d) grooming; e) physical development and aesthetics; f) science and technology.	Components of six development: a) ethics and religious values; b) sociality, sensitivity and autonomy; c) language ability; d) cognitive ability; e) physical ability; f) artistic ability.
Ministries who are responsible	a) Ministry of Education; b) Ministry of Rural and Regional; c) State of Islamic Religious Department; d) Ministry of National Unity and Integration	a) Ministry of Education and Culture b) Ministry of Religion
Types of Services	Preschools	Preschools
Age of children	Four until six years old	Four until six years old

Sources: <https://www.paud.id> & <http://smpk.moe.gov.my>

Hence, the position as a manager also required managerial skills and awareness regarding the essential of ECE standards to implement in preschool. It is meaningful when a good management of preschool satisfies the needs of the community. Educational environment plays a role in developing harmonious culture to prepare the society to embrace the development (Won & Adriany, 2020; Zazin, 2011) and increase the ECE quality standards.



1.3 Problem Statement

Preschool Management in Malaysia and Indonesia has been confronted with issues and challenges although there are still international demand for high quality delivery of Early Childhood Education (ECE). As example, there is still no consensus among previous theorists with regard to how management and manager should be defined. The responsibilities of the manager are multiple and possibly difficult to capture in a job description. Indeed, a weakly managed organisation even with a strong charismatic leader may face problems shortly after (Simić, 2020).

In the Malaysia context by referring to the Annual Report of Education Performance and Delivery Unit (2018), the total number of preschool classes increased to 51,725. The Table 1.3 explained the amount made up from 22,262 public preschools and 29,463 private preschools. The Ministry of Education's preschool classes rose by 71, and KEMAS's preschools dropped by 146. The reasons of KEMAS preschool decreased due to factors; lack of demand from the community, increased operating costs of building leases and changing the operation to a day care centre. Thus, this research help to find whether factors of managerial functions related with the lack of demand among community.

Table 1.3

Comparison of the number of classes according to agency from 2016 – 2018

Year	KPM	KEMAS	JPNIN	Private	Total
2016	9,202	11,179	1,781	27,689	49,851
2017	9,328	11,206	1,781	28,231	50,546
2018	9,399	11,082	1,781	29,463	51,725

Source: School Management Division and Private Division

Meanwhile, total of public preschools in Yogyakarta is 39 only which is very small quantity compare the private preschools which is 2097 as reported in the Yogyakarta Tourism Statistics 2018. The quantity of private preschool is range around 50 times more than public preschool. The government could not provide more facilities of preschool education for the community of Yogyakarta, so the private agencies supported the deficiency.

Unfortunately, each public preschool always fully occupied because most parents may send their children to an affordable preschool compare the private preschool. Thus, this research aimed to investigate the experiences of manager in the public preschool who need to cater staff more than 20 people and also student with more than 100 children for each centre.

Besides, the quality conditions of public schools in the previous research of Medan, Indonesia have not been satisfactory in accordance with the expectations and standards of PAUD. In a real practices situation, a manager may find him/ herself filling documents one minute and then handling children for meal preparation (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017). Thus, a pro-active principal wearing two hats simultaneously is very important in certain situation of preschool operations.

Lack of viewpoints of managers & principals as the leader of preschool might deliver inaccurate inputs/ opinions about the real practices during the daily management (Şengül & Özkan, 2021). The factors of personal problem occurred among principal seldomly discussed. The views from teachers or parents may not be the accurate solution towards issues that have been arise. Even there are still preschool principals



who do not have educational qualifications in accordance with the demands of the Teacher and Lecturer Law of 2005 (Simaremare, 2020). Moloney & Pettersen (2017) added that a manager needs to feel in the educator's shoes because managers have been there and they will know what they are trying to fix in the management. Typically management is defined in terms of overseeing processes that keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly (Goffin & Rous, 2015) which involved knowledge and skills related to staffing and project management as being crucial to the overall management function; planning, organizing, leading and controlling (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017).

Managers must be aware of the entire scale of legislation that applies to ECEC management (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017). Education decentralization policy is considered as a management issue because of the overall administrative decentralization decision without extensive consultation involving education stakeholders (Kadar, Wahab, & Fatonah, 2020). Ultimately, the roles of a high performing ECEC centre lies with the manager (Lillemyr, 2009). Manager may choose the relevant assessment procedures and measure performance within every angle of the centre.

Management can be considered as a wider and more comprehensive concept. Namely, regardless of the differences between theoreticians in terms of how to define management, according to the most current definitions, management is perceived as a process that includes planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. (Simić, 2020). The head of the preschool education institution has had an important actor in making success in developing institutions (Kadar, Wahab, & Fatonah, 2020).



Significantly, providing affordable childcare options is essential to accommodate the needs of low-income parents. Government of Malaysia and Indonesia have taken actions by implementing ECE regulations to ensure ECEC be the priority of national program. Thus, this research is to propose a Preschool Management framework focusing public preschool by comparing two countries; Malaysia and Indonesia.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study compared the Preschool Management (PM) of Malaysia and Indonesia considering that they both belong to South East Asian countries meaning to collect ideas and sharing together towards achieving quality education in the early childhood education. Bench mark from each other's culture of excellence in education, Malaysia and Indonesia have an opportunity to learn from the real practices of PM and how they tackle challenges and issues along the journey.

The aim of the research was to propose a preschool management framework based on the components of PM under study that deal with the descriptive analysis of implementing legislation, financial management, human resource management, time management, and performance management. Research objectives are formed and shown as below:

1. Describe the similarities and differences in the laws and policies of Preschool Management practices in Malaysia and Indonesia that guide the implementation of the ECE standards.

2. Explore the participation of managers and government officials in the Preschool Management practices while implementing the ECE standards.
3. Investigate the functions of manager in the public Preschool Management practices.
4. Develop a Preschool - Manager Routine Tasks (PresMaRT) framework.

1.5 Research Questions

From the research, these are the research questions formulated and required to be answered:

1. What are the similarities and differences in the laws and policies of Preschool Management practices in Malaysia and Indonesia that guide the implementation of the ECE standards?
2. How do the managers and government official participate in the Preschool Management while implementing the ECE standards?
3. How the managers function in the public Preschool Management?
4. What Preschool Management framework can be developed for the managers in Malaysia and Indonesia based on the study conducted?

1.6 Conceptual Framework of Research

This research is to compare the preschool management practices between Malaysia and Indonesia. The framework of the study is anchored on management theories as it



involves the descriptive assessment as a way of comparing preschool management while implementing the ECE standards.

One of the theory which driven into this research is Drucker (1954) Management by Objectives. Management by objective as a systematic management technique dependant on organizational objectives to achieve measurable and demonstrable results. Consequently, the objectives become the operation framework as well as the blue print which provide the foundation for achieving useful and practical outputs.

Administrators get benefits on the stated preschool objectives attain positive results in applying management by objectives technique. Furthermore, Tochukwu, Nwafor-Orizu, & Okolo (2019) agreed that management by objectives as a contribution approach to the activities involved in planning, organizing directing and control the execution of work. Meanwhile, it promotes efficient use of existing resources, efficiency and effectiveness of preschool administration.

Management by objective when employed in education could improve learning, make the curriculum relevant and lower the rate of drop-out in schools. Besides, it leads to a visible improvement in the standard of education especially at the preschool level (Lloyd & Aho, 2020) supported that through MBO the preschool system improves. MBO theory helps research to deal with real and actual problems that require finding specific solutions (Khader and Ridha, 2021). Second theory is management functions activities which are contained in the managerial process. Previous researcher, McNamara (2009) stated that there are five basic elements in management which





proposed by Henri Fayol over 90 years ago i.e, planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. Meanwhile, Husna, Usman, & Novianto, (2020) pointed out that there are four principles in management, including planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling.

Previously, a study being discussed regarding Ikatan Guru Raudhatul Athfal, or what so-called by IGRA in East Kalimantan. IGRA is a professional organizations for Early Childhood Education who plays a vital role in the development of early childhood education. The research is aimed to figure out challenges faced by IGRA in relation to principles of organizational management i.e, planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, or what so-called by POLC (Rukiyah, Kadir, & Ulfah; 2021).



Therefore, the combinations of management objectives and management functions are the foundation of this research. Besides, comparative analysis of preschool management between two countries; Malaysia and Indonesia may deliver benefits regarding how principals implement ECE standards in the preschool. These standards included in the rules and regulations of each respectful countries.

The similarities and differences of ECE standards between both countries; Malaysia and Indonesia and how the selected preschool being managed by the experiences manager may provide new solutions from the problems arise. The ECE standards being identified as a quality dimensions for measuring preschool management self-assessment purposes.



The dimensions of ECE standards from both countries; Malaysia and Indonesia may be different. Each dimension has its own aim or objective regarding how to managing preschool base on the legislation documented by the Ministry of Education. In addition, this research may explain the similarities and differences of procedure and documentation while implementing the ECE standards.

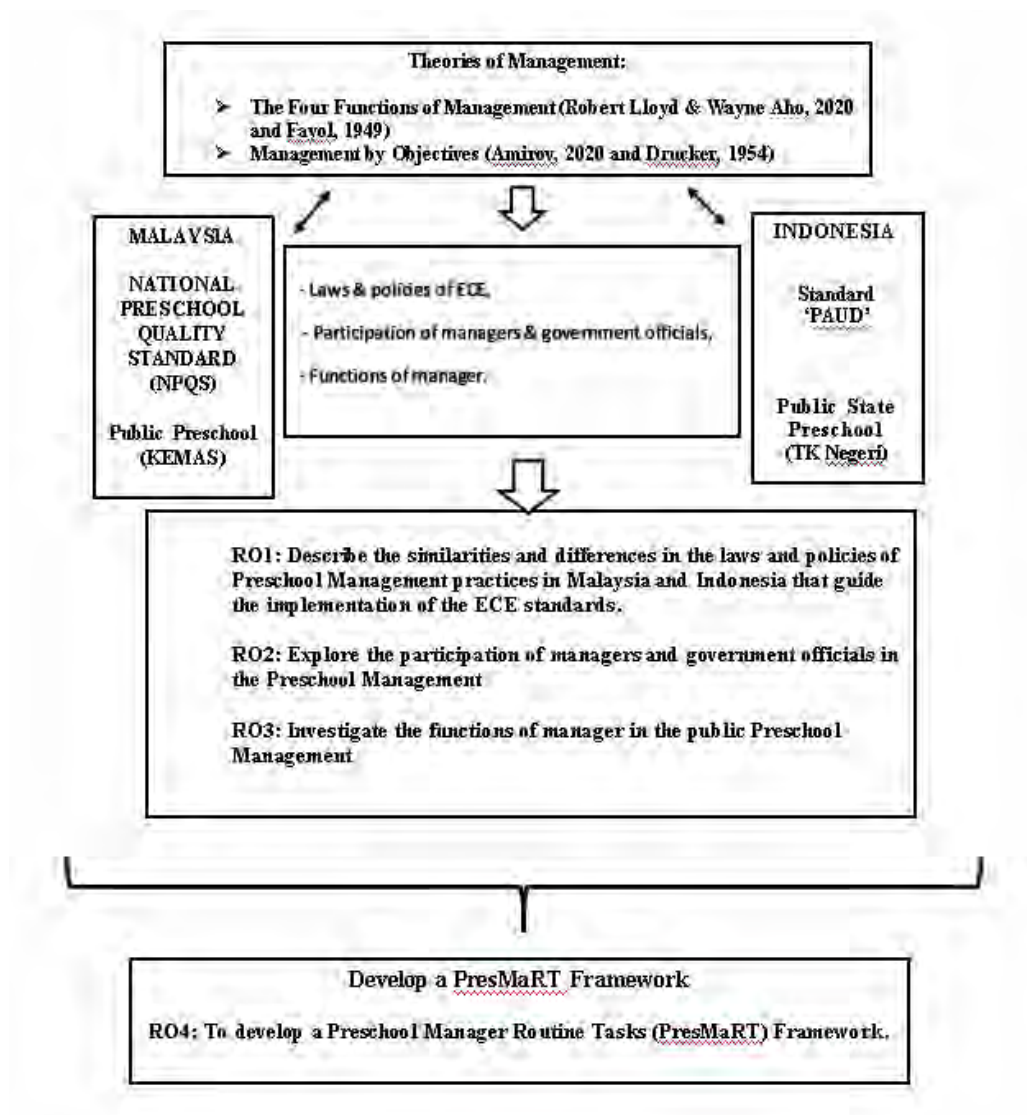


Figure 1.1. Conceptual Framework of Preschool Management Practices

1.7 Significant of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate preschool management practices by ECE manager in both Asean countries; Malaysia and Indonesia towards identifying a PresMaRT framework. This section proves the contribution of the study in the field of preschool management and ECE manager practices. The development of a framework suitable for Malaysian and Indonesian manager in the Early Childhood Education institutions generally.

Previously, research regarding management had to organize multiple complex processes for increasingly large industries. Henri Fayol, a Frenchman, is credited with developing the management concepts of planning, organizing, coordination, command, and control (Lloyd & Aho, 2020; Fayol, 1949), which were the founder of today's four basic management principles of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Just as important, the preschool education institutions must be professionally managed and provide satisfaction for the community as users of educational services (Kadar, Wahab, & Fatonah, 2020; Supriadi, 2014).

The main objective of the public preschool establishment is to prepare an early education for the children within the nearby community. Therefore, to improve the education quality, schools must become professional educational institutions, be managed as professionals, leads by professional school managers, and be supported by expert teachers as well. Quality reinforcement is the highest priority in education policy as stated in ECE standard (Kadar, Wahab, & Fatonah, 2020; Suryadi, 2014).

Furthermore, the research among South-east Asean countries, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia may help to enhance the understandings and co-operation regarding the emergence of early childhood leaders nowadays. The culture between two countries are also not highly differences. In terms of historical provision, preschools were conducted by volunteered teachers in a way of informal approach with emphasizing head teacher as a teacher with caring roles not as managerial roles (Preston, 2013).

Specifically, manager or ECE manager will be more motivated to follow the quality standard if there is a structured framework on how managers should implement ECE standard. The simple guidelines and routine monitoring from the government officials of Ministry of Education will provide readiness to fulfill the requirement of competent ECE managers (McNamara, 1999). Moreover, this situation may increase the awareness towards the responsibility of implementing the ECE standard.

Finally, the main result of this study is to develop the framework of a Preschool Manager Routine Tasks (PresMaRT), which will support the preschool manager quality. ECE Manager may evaluate themselves which is very important because if one understands where one 'is' currently then they may consider what professional development opportunities are going to be most beneficial (Moloney & Pettersen, 2017; Moyles, 2006).

1.8 Limitations of Study

Even though, this study has accomplished its objective, there still some unavoidable limitations. First, this study was limited to a purposive sample of preschool managers and government officials in both countries; Malaysia and Indonesia. These respondents may not accurately represent all the stakeholders with differing socio-economic status, family background, and regional culture (Halls, 1973).

Second, the setting was limited to Perak for Malaysia and Yogyakarta for Indonesia. The total land area of 20,976 square kilometres, Perak become the second largest Malaysian state on the Malay Peninsula. Meanwhile, Yogyakarta City land area of 32,500 square kilometres. This both land area are not very far gap between each other, thus help researcher to compare wisely how the decentralization of tasks given to all the managers from the MOE headquarters. In addition, researcher cannot reach all preschools to investigate neither in whole Malaysia nor the entire Indonesia.

Third, the data from document analysis and interview was very limited. This researcher started with document analysis, literature and limited between the years of 2015- 2021. In addition, the spread of virus covid-19 in both countries increase the limitation of research. Some of the data being explained by the respondent through the online communications such as zoom meeting and google meet apps. Discussion online focuses on management in public preschool, roles of the ECE manager, and ECE standard applied in the preschool.

1.9 Operational Definition

This operational definition depends to the context of the study. The definition will help to understand the knowledge regarding the management practices in both countries, Malaysia and Indonesia.

1.9.1 National Preschool Quality (ECE) Standard

The ECE Standard is to provide the measurement standard for early childhood education quality. Every document standard must be verified by the Ministry of Education (MOE). Malaysia and Indonesia have ECE quality standard with various dimensions. The enforcement usually done by the officers from the department of preschool of MOE.

1.9.2 Standard PAUD

PAUD in Bahasa is Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini and Standard PAUD is defined as a National Standards which describe the criteria regarding the management and implementation of ECE in all jurisdictions of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. The management and organization of kindergartens must be carried out in accordance with PAUD national standards in order to realize quality of preschool management (Simaremare, A., Nasriah, D. S., & Anggraini, E. S. , 2020).



1.9.3 Manager

In Malaysia context, KEMAS officer who is managing the ECE affairs designated as ECE Supervisor Officer (KEMAS, 2019). Even each KEMAS preschool has a teacher to manage the classroom management, and financial report but ECE Supervisor Officer is the main manager who will responsible towards the validation of ECE quality standards via the online instrument. The quantity of manager for every state is base on the quantity of parliament. Thus, ECE Supervisor Officer may responsible to manage more than one preschools, depends the location of parliament.

Meanwhile, Indonesian defined principal in preschools with eight functions of duties such as: educator, manager, administrator, manager, leader, innovator, motivator and entrepreneurship (Permendikbud, 2014). Hence, manager term is widely used for clarify the duties of principal. Both countries used the term manager as the person who is responsible towards managing people such ad teachers and administration staff and other resources involved in the preschool.

1.9.4 Preschool Management

Management is an attempt to identify the cause of the problem in an organization and analyze the effectiveness of the individual so that the goal can be achieved. According to Armstrong & Taylor (2020) that management is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals. This is in the opinion of Vélez, Lorenzo, & Garrido, (2017) who said that this calls for competent management, which involves clarity in decision-





making and coherence in order to adopt the most valuable actions to encourage transformation of the centres and the development of projects for improvement.

1.9.5 Government Officials

Government official is the person in charge being appointed as the representative of Ministry of Education from both countries to supervise the process of preschool standard implementation in the public and even in private preschool. Quality kindergarten is the hope of all elements of society and government. Quality schools cannot be realized by an instant process but through a relatively long process whose control is carried out by qualified principals and also government officers appointed as the assessor (Simaremare, A., Nasriah, D. S., & Anggraini, E. S., 2020).

1.9.6 Yogyakarta State Preschool

Preschool education in Indonesia is covered under PAUD (*Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*. Early Age Education) that covers *Taman Bermain* (playgroup) and *Taman Kanak-Kanak* (preschool, abbreviated TK). PAUD is under direct supervision and coverage of Directorate of Early Age Education Development (*Direktorat Pengembangan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*). While this level of education is not compulsory, it is aimed to prepare children for primary schooling.



1.9.7 KEMAS (Community Development Department)

The early childhood education programme monitored by Community Development Department (KEMAS) is familiar as Taman Bimbingan Kanak-Kanak (Tabika). ‘Tabika’ is a public preschool programme that contains early childhood education for children aged between 4 to 6 years old under Ministry of Rural and Regional.

1.9.8 JPNIN (Department of National Unity and Integration)

The early childhood education programme supervised by Department of National Unity and Integration (JPNIN) is well-known as ‘Tadika Perpaduan’. It is a public preschool programme that provides early childhood education environment for children aged between 4 to 6 years old under Ministry of Prime Minister.

1.9.9 JAIN (State Islamic Religious Department)

The early childhood education programme managed by State Islamic Religious Department (JAIN) is widely known as ‘TASKI’. It is an Islamic public preschool programme that provides early education program for Muslim children aged between 4 to 6 years old under the State Government.

1.9.10 ABIM (Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia)

The early childhood education programme organised by ABIM or widely known as Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia is familiar as 'TASKI'. It is a private preschool programme that provides early childhood education program for children aged between 4 to 6 years old under non-government organizations ABIM.

1.9.11 Management by Objectives

Management by objectives (MBO) is a classical method of management. The author who popularised the idea of MBO was an American guru of management, Drucker.

According to Drucker (Drucker, 2008) managing business means managing by objectives. It is worth adding that the author acknowledges organisation's activity as teamwork (Hoffmann-Burdzińska, Kinga & Flak, Olaf., 2016).

1.9.12 Management Functions

The four basic management functions that make up the management process are described in the following sections: Planning, Organizing, Leading, Controlling. Fayol's original categories of management were planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. Commanding and coordinating eventually merged into leading.

1.9.13 Management Style

A manager who wants to be a good manager must choose a management style that suits him and the atmosphere that surrounds him so that he can match the situation. A good manager is a manager who handles the design and construction of the team that surrounds him, and he must also handle his organizational processes in order to achieve the desired goals. Management style is a recurring set of behaviors that occur in response to specific situations (Najar, Boushara., 2020).

1.9.14 Multiple Case Study

An exploration of a “bounded system” or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. This bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied - a program, an event, an activity, or individuals (Patton, 2015; Creswell, 1999).

1.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, a good management practices of ECE standard is very crucial to the person who are supervising in any preschool even Malaysia or Indonesia. The comparative study from these two different countries may help to reveal the similarities and differences of ECE standard. In the mean time, this research may produce reasons why both government had different standard dimensions and some were similar. The

following chapter is to explain the history of preschool in Malaysia and Indonesia, the practices of ECE standard globally and locally, theory of comparative study, theory of management, and the theoretical framework produce from this research.