

Senin Bugar: Integration Of Motor Activities And Art Expression In Early Childhood Education (Case Study At Aluna Montessori School)

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Abstract: Motor and art activities are still rarely integrated in ECE activities, even though strengthening the integration of the two can enrich children's learning experiences. This study aims to examine the implementation of the "Senin Bugar" program as an integration of gross, fine motor activities and artistic expression in early childhood education at Aluna Montessori School. This program is implemented every Monday with a series of activities such as warm-up, gymnastics, gross motor, fine motor, to various expressive games and closed with a cool down. In this paper, the term "artistic expression" refers to performing arts activities, especially music and movement-based expressions such as singing, dancing, and rhythmic movement. The research was conducted for four months from September to December 2024, involving seven classes, 14 teachers, and a total of 105 children. The research method used a qualitative approach with a case study type. Data collection techniques included participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The results showed that "Senin Bugar" activities significantly contributed to the development of children's motor coordination and artistic expression, particularly through music and movement activities such as rhythmic gymnastics and expressive dance. The findings indicate that the integration of physical and artistic activities in weekly routines can be an effective approach in early childhood education.

Keywords: Senin Bugar, Physical Motor Development, Early Childhood Arts, Montessori

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a fundamental stage in the process of building children's character, intelligence and skills as a whole. Early childhood is often referred to as the golden age [1], the golden age of child development characterized by the ability to absorb information and experience optimally [2]. In this phase, every stimulus given will greatly affect the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of children in the future [3]. Therefore, the educational approach in early childhood needs to be designed holistically, fun, and in accordance with the needs of children's growth and development. In practice, activities that involve motor skills [4] both gross motor and fine motor [5] as well as art expression [6] learning has an important role and should be integrated into the learning process. This integration not only supports physical development and creativity, but also strengthens the contextual and meaningful learning process for children. In line with this spirit, the Government of Indonesia through the Regulation of the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2025 concerning ECE Graduate Competency Standards [7], stipulates that early childhood education should cover six main aspects of development, namely religious values and noble character, Pancasila values, physical motor, cognitive, language, and social-emotional [8]. Learning activities that combine physical activity and art are considered capable of stimulating all dimensions of development in an integrated manner. For example, gross motor activities can support body coordination and concentration [9], while artistic expressions such as music, rhythmic movements, and simple dance can foster creativity [10], communication, and control of children's emotions [11]. However, motor and art development are often separate activities. The integration of motor activities and artistic expression into structured and sustainable activities needs to be increased across various ECE units. In the field, there are still many institutions that tend to separate motor and art activities in the learning schedule, making them as stand-alone activities without any special continuity or connection. This phenomenon shows the

tendency of a fragmentary curriculum approach, which does not consider the principles of holistic learning in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood. [12]–[15]. In addition, scientific studies that discuss in depth the practice of implementing integrative programs that are consistent and based on national standards are also very limited. This condition emphasizes the importance of conducting research to explore how integrative activities between motor and art are implemented. [4] can be designed and implemented effectively, relevantly, and contextually [16]–[19] in the ECE environment to support optimal child development. In an effort to improve the effectiveness of learning in Early Childhood Education units, various innovations have begun to be developed by forward-looking educational institutions, considering that the institution is a forum for education. [10]. Some of them have started implementing the thematic approach [20]–[22] that integrates motor activity and artistic expression [5], [6] into a whole and meaningful learning activity. This approach not only aims to optimize children's physical development and creativity, but also to instill social and emotional values early on. [4], [23]. One of them is the “Senin Bugar” program at Aluna Montessori School. However, the application of integrative practices like this is still not the mainstream in ECE curriculum design, so it needs to be further studied for its effectiveness and implementation in the real context of education. Therefore, on this occasion the researcher will discuss Senin Bugar: the integration of motor activities and artistic expression in early childhood education, a case study at Aluna Montessori School. In the context of this study, artistic expression primarily refers to music-based movement and dance activities, which are designed to be developmentally appropriate and engaging for young children.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type, because researchers want to understand in depth how the implementation of Monday Bugar activities is carried out and affects the motor development and artistic expression of early childhood in the context of learning at Aluna Montessori School. The qualitative approach allows exploration of the process, meaning, and dynamics of activities in real and unmanipulated situations. [24], [25]. This research was conducted at Aluna Montessori School which has a regular program called Senin Bugar. The research subjects consisted of 105 children aged 5–6 years from seven classes, as well as 14 teachers who were directly involved in the activities. The research lasted for four months, from September to December 2024, with data collection activities carried out periodically every Monday, coinciding with the implementation of the program. Data collection techniques in this study included participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were conducted directly by researchers involved in children's activities, recording behavior, social interactions, and children's responses to motor and art activities. Interviews were conducted with seven classroom teachers and two program coordinators, using guidelines that had been validated by experts in the field of early childhood education to ensure the accuracy and feasibility of the instruments. In addition, documentation studies were conducted on various internal school documents, such as teacher activity journals, weekly learning plans, and child development reports. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes data reduction, thematic presentation of data, and conclusion drawing. [15], [26]. Data reduction was done to filter out relevant information, then arranged in a narrative format and categorized based on the type of activity such as gross motor, fine motor, and artistic expression. Conclusions were drawn inductively and reflectively by looking at patterns and linkages between activities and child development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the implementation of “Senin Bugar” activities implemented in early childhood education settings, and discuss its contribution to various aspects of child development. Through direct observation and systematic documentation, a comprehensive picture of how the activity is structured is obtained, from the preparation stage to the closing. In addition to showing the children's positive response to participating in fun physical activities, the discussion also explores the impact of the activities on improving gross and fine motor skills, strengthening artistic and emotional expression, and the active role of teachers in mentoring. All of these findings are then analyzed in relation to the ECE Graduate

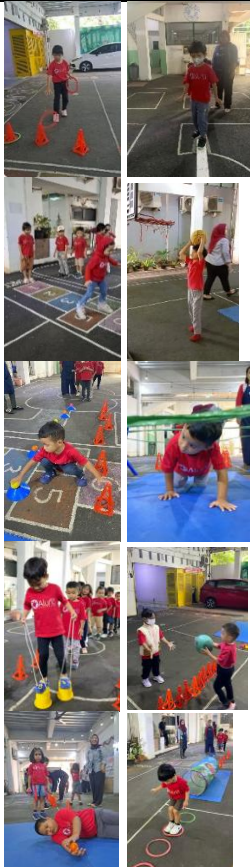
Competency Standards, so that it can be concluded that the “Senin Bugar” program is not only pedagogically relevant, but also effective in supporting children's holistic growth.

Implementation of the “Senin Bugar” Activity

The “Senin Bugar” activity starts right at 07.45. Children from each class take turns participating in this activity. Before the activity begins, the teacher is ready in the designated area and invites the children to gather. The teacher welcomes the children with a cheerful greeting and enthusiasm, creating a friendly, safe and fun initial atmosphere. [24]. After all the children have gathered, the teacher directs them to line up neatly and spread their arms to provide enough space for movement. This activity also teaches children awareness of personal space and group discipline. The teacher introduces that today's activity will be “Senin Bugar”, and immediately starts the warm-up session. The session starts with a light warm-up, including movements such as turning the head, rotating the shoulders, stretching the arms, and standing on one leg. These movements aim to develop gross motor coordination, balance, and body awareness. The teacher assists by modeling and giving positive encouragement so that children are confident in moving. Once the children's bodies are ready, the activity continues with more dynamic movements, such as jumping and running in place, while listening to cheerful music. Music plays an important role in stimulating positive emotions, and helps children develop rhythm and listening skills. Combined with movement and dance, these activities form the artistic component of the program. Two songs are played to accompany the gymnastics activities, with the teacher modeling the movements at the front. The children look excited, following the movements enthusiastically, showing that they learn through imitation and active participation. [12]. After gymnastics, the activity continues with motor games. The types of games vary and are changed every two weeks to maintain the children's enthusiasm. The games observed today involved jumping, rolling on the mat, and throwing and catching the ball. The children seemed to enjoy the whole series of games actively and happily, which is very appropriate for the early developmental stage. [27]. After the game session is over, the teacher again invites the children to gather and form rows. The children are directed to cool down. They are asked to stand quietly and give each other space to move. The cool down movement starts with raising the hands while inhaling, then exhaling while lowering the hands. Other movements include bowing, shaking hands down, rotating wrists and feet, and stretching to the right and left. To conclude, the teacher gives the children a brief conclusion and reflection on today's activity. The teacher explains that Monday Bugar activities are beneficial to maintain health, make the body stronger, and foster enthusiasm to start the day learning in class with a happy feeling.

Table 1 Senin Bugar Procedure

Stages	Time & Description	Activity	Purpose/Benefit	Documentation
Preparation	7:45 am. Children are gathered in the activity area. The teacher greets the children cheerfully and directs them to line up neatly and provide space for movement.		Create a positive atmosphere, mentally and physically prepare the child.	
Warm up	Simple movements: turning the head, shoulders, standing on one leg, small jumps, and running in place. Directly led by the teacher.		Activates the body's muscles, preventing injury during core activities.	

Gymnastics Together	Gymnastics is accompanied by two cheerful songs. The teacher models the movements in front, the children follow in unison.	Improve morale, concentration, and coordination of movements.	
Motor Games	Variations of gross motor games that are changed every two weeks, such as: jumping, rolling on the mat, throwing-catching the ball, treadmill, rubber play.	Develop gross motor skills, cooperation and creativity.	
Cooling	Children line up again. Light movements: inhale, bend over, shake hands, rotate wrists/legs, stretch body to the right and left.	Restores heart rate to normal, relaxation.	
Closure & Reflection	The teacher conveys the benefits of the activity: keeping healthy, strong body, happy heart. Children are given appreciation for their participation.	Providing an understanding of the value of health and the spirit of learning, strengthening children's motivation.	

The Monday Bugar activities implemented at the school showed effectiveness as an effort to habituate fun physical activities for children. The entire series of activities, from warm-up, gymnastics, motor games,

to cooling down, are structured and well guided by the teacher. Children seemed enthusiastic, actively participated, and were able to follow instructions throughout. This is in line with the view of [28], which states that early childhood is in the preoperational stage, where optimal learning occurs through direct experience and concrete activities. [29]. In addition, according to Maria Montessori's theory of child development, physical movement is an important part in the formation of children's coordination, self-control and concentration. By integrating regular and fun physical activities such as Monday Bugar, schools not only support children's physical development, but also hone their social, cognitive and emotional skills as a whole.

Contribution to Child Development

The "Senin Bugar" program is not only designed as a physical activity, but also has a significant contribution to the overall development of early childhood. Through a fun and structured approach, this activity is able to stimulate various aspects of children's growth, both in terms of physical, cognitive, social-emotional, and creative expression. In its implementation, this program provides opportunities for children to develop gross and fine motor skills in a balanced manner, express emotions and imagination, and improve communication and socialization skills. With the active involvement of teachers as mentors, every activity in Senin Bugar is designed to build a strong foundation of child development and support the achievement of age-appropriate competencies. This is in line with the holistic developmental theory of (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which emphasizes the importance of the environment and social interactions in children's development, as well as the views of (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). [32] of multiple intelligences, where bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal movements are part of the potential that can be developed early on. The following description will outline the program's contribution to three main aspects of child development: gross motor, fine motor, and artistic and emotional expression.

Gross Motor Enhancement

The gross motor activities integrated in the Monday Bugar program show a real contribution in improving children's physical aspects. One of the indicators observed is the improvement of body coordination. Children become better able to synchronize hand, foot and eye movements, especially when doing activities that require balance such as walking on a footbridge or jumping through obstacles. This ability develops gradually through structured and consistent practice every week. According to [33], [34], planned physical activity in early childhood not only improves basic physical abilities but also strengthens neurological connections related to movement control and focus.

In addition, children's balance and agility have improved significantly. Children who initially appeared hesitant and unstable during physical activities began to show more confidence. Their movements became steadier, and the ability to avoid obstacles or move quickly showed progress in reflexes and body control. This is in line with the opinion of [16], [35], [36] which states that gross motor development has a close relationship with cognitive and affective development, because through movement, children learn to control their bodies and build self-confidence and independence.

Large muscle strength also develops over time. Upper and lower body muscles are trained through challenging yet fun physical activities. Children appear to be more active and less tired during gymnastics sessions or motor games. Observations show that this program has a positive impact on children's physical endurance, as well as increasing their enthusiasm to be active in the school environment and outside of program time.

Fine Motor Improvement

The fine motor activities carried out in the Senin Bugar program contribute to children's accuracy and focus when performing tasks that require hand skills. Activities such as pinching small objects or origami using clothespins, arranging blocks according to patterns, and moving objects to specific containers train children to concentrate for longer periods of time. This supports the view that [1], [37]–[40], which emphasizes the importance of involving children's hands in the learning process because hands are children's main tool for exploring and understanding the world around them.

Hand-eye coordination is another aspect that develops significantly. Children are able to synchronize hand movements with what they see more precisely and efficiently. Their accuracy and speed in completing fine tasks also improved. Teachers gave clear instructions and provided positive feedback that

strengthened children's motivation, in accordance with the theory of [12], [41] Hand-eye coordination is another aspect that develops significantly. Children are able to synchronize hand movements with what they see more precisely and efficiently. Their accuracy and speed in completing fine tasks also improved. Teachers gave clear instructions and provided positive feedback that strengthened children's motivation, in accordance with the theory of this activity also fosters a sense of independence in children. Children are encouraged to try themselves first before asking the teacher for help. Teachers provide challenges gradually and adjust the level of difficulty based on the development of each child. Thus, each child is given the space to develop according to their capacity, without excessive pressure.

Strengthening Artistic and Emotional Expression

Expressive activities such as free movement, rhythmic dancing, and musical play in Senin Bugar are an important tool. Imaginative play such as free dancing or imitating animal movements allows children to show self-expression in a fun and pressure-free way. This approach is in line with Erikson's theory [42]–[44], which states that at the initiative versus guilt stage (ages 3-6 years), children need to be given space to take initiative and express themselves in order to develop emotionally and socially healthily. These forms of expression are specifically designed to introduce children to the basic elements of performing arts, such as tempo, rhythm, body control, and expressive gestures through dance and music. Selain self-expression, children's communication skills also develop through this activity. Children use new vocabulary they learn from teachers or friends when describing their movements or feelings. The verbal and nonverbal interactions that occur during the activity foster language skills and improve the ability to convey ideas and opinions in a simple yet clear manner. Social interaction is also strengthened through group games such as mountain treadmill or rubber play. Children learn to take turns, share roles and solve challenges together. This activity is an effective learning medium in building empathy, cooperation and understanding of social rules. View [12], [41] The importance of social interaction in children's cognitive development supports this practice, as children learn a lot through collaboration and dialog with adults and peers.

Teacher's Role in Mentoring

Teachers have a very strategic role in the successful implementation of the Senin Bugar program. Based on the results of interviews and direct observation, it is known that the teacher not only acts as a facilitator, but also as a model in performing each movement. The teacher demonstrates the movements first clearly and attractively, so that children can easily understand and imitate. This modeling process is very helpful, especially for children who are still learning to recognize body movements. This is in accordance with the social-cognitive theory of [25], [45], [46], which emphasizes the importance of observational learning, where children learn by imitating the behavior of adults who model them. In addition, teachers actively provide positive reinforcement through verbal praise, hugs, and nonverbal symbols such as thumbs up. This positive feedback has been shown to be effective in increasing children's intrinsic motivation, as explained by Skinner [26], [47], [48] In operant conditioning theory, behaviors that are followed by positive reinforcement tend to be repeated. Children who are initially shy or reluctant to participate gradually become more open and active in physical and expressive activities because they feel valued and accepted. In practice, teachers also apply inclusive strategies by adjusting the difficulty level of activities based on the needs of each child. This approach is in line with the principle of differentiated instruction, where teachers adjust the learning process to suit each child's readiness, interest and learning style. For children with developmental barriers, teachers provide simpler versions of activities or provide assistance in performing activities. This strategy is in line with the principle of equity in early childhood education expressed by [49], that every child has the right to access learning that is meaningful and appropriate to their needs. All children are invited to participate without discrimination, and every small and large achievement is valued. Teachers also record children's progress in a daily journal and discuss it regularly with the coordinator, so there is a continuous cycle of reflection and improvement to improve the quality of the program.

Conformity with ECE Graduate Competency Standards

The Senin Bugar program has proven to have a high relevance to the ECE Graduate Competency Standards according to Permendikdasmen No. 10 of 2025. In the physical-motor dimension, structured

and routine activities support the development of children's gross and fine motor skills, as stated in Article 5 paragraph (3) letter c. Children are able to show real development in strength, coordination and control of essential body movements at an early age. This supports the theory of [50], [51], which states that children's physical development takes place gradually and can be stimulated through activities that are appropriate to their age stage. On the other hand, the program also contributes to the social-emotional dimension. Through group interaction in physical activities and expressive play, children learn about empathy, cooperation and tolerance. Erikson [42]–[44] emphasizes that early childhood is at the developmental stage of initiative versus guilt, where they need to be given the opportunity to take initiative in a supportive social environment in order to build self-confidence and social responsibility. Teachers actively incorporate moral and religious values in activities, such as honesty, patience and helping, which are integrated in a context that is applicable to children's daily lives. It also supports cognitive, language and creativity dimensions. Children are trained to follow instructions, strategize in games, and express ideas and emotions through movement and verbal communication. This supports the theory of [12], [41], especially in the concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD), where children can reach higher levels of development through guidance from adults and peers. Thus, *Senin Bugar* is a learning practice that is not only fun and active, but also in line with efforts to produce ECE graduates who are physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually intact.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the “*Senin Bugar*” program in ECE units has proven to be effective as a means of habituating physical activities that are both fun and educational for early childhood. Activities are designed in a structured manner. Covering warm-up, gymnastics, motor games, and cooling down, it contributes significantly to children's gross and fine motor development, as well as supporting social-emotional aspects and artistic expression, particularly in the form of music and dance-based movement activities. Children show high enthusiasm, improved movement coordination, physical strength, and group interaction skills. The role of the teacher as a facilitator, model, and positive reinforcement provider is crucial to the success of this program. In addition, this activity is in accordance with the ECE Graduate Competency Standards based on Permendikdasmen No. 10 of 2025, as it supports the integrated development of physical, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and religious values and noble character. Thus, “*Senin Bugar*” can be recommended as a holistic and applicable learning practice to improve the quality of early childhood education.

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