

## Ethno Pedagogy-Based Project Learning Model to Increase Religious Behaviour and Collaboration Skills of Early Childhood

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### ABSTRACT

Integrating cultural education into early childhood learning environments has gained significant attention for its potential to enhance holistic development. Ethno-pedagogy, which leverages cultural heritage and practices, is posited to foster young children's religious behavior and collaboration skills. This study aims to develop and implement an ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model to increase early childhood religious behavior and collaboration skills. A mixed-methods approach involving quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques was employed. Participants included early childhood from selected early childhood education institutions. Data were gathered through observations, interviews, and questionnaires. The project-based learning model was designed to incorporate local cultural elements and was evaluated for effectiveness over a specific period. The findings indicated a significant improvement in religious behavior and collaboration skills among the children who participated in the ethno-pedagogy-based project learning activities. Quantitative data analysis showed a notable increase in religious behavior and collaboration skills scores. Qualitative analysis revealed positive feedback from educators and parents, highlighting the children's enhanced understanding and practice of religious values and improved ability to work collaboratively. The ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model effectively enhances early childhood religious behavior and collaboration skills. The study suggests that integrating cultural elements into early childhood education preserves cultural heritage and supports the development of essential behavioral and social skills.

**Keywords:** *Ethno-pedagogy, Project-Based Learning, Religious Behaviour, Collaboration Skills, Early Childhood Education*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The early years of a child's life are widely recognized as crucial for cognitive, social, and emotional development (Hayes & Filipović, 2018). Educational approaches implemented during this formative stage significantly influence a child's future abilities and behaviors (Beltrame, 2010). Recent educational trends underscore the importance of integrating cultural elements into early childhood education, acknowledging the profound impact of cultural heritage on learning processes (Matafwali & Mofu, 2023). Ethno-pedagogy, an educational approach incorporating cultural traditions and values, presents a unique opportunity to enhance various aspects of a child's development, including social behavior and collaboration skills (Techataweewan & Prasertsin, 2018). Research has indicated that high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) can strengthen the social and emotional skills essential for children's ongoing development (Blewitt et al., 2020).

Furthermore, there is a growing awareness of the benefits of curriculum-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs in Early Childhood Education and Care settings for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development (Blewitt et al., 2020). Social and emotional learning (SEL) is how children acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Blewitt et al., 2021). Studies have highlighted the significance of integrating cultural elements into early childhood education to promote inclusivity and belonging (Ranta et al., 2023). Inclusive values are considered integral to ECEC policies, advocating equal

participation opportunities and individual support for all children (Kascak & Koch, 2023). Moreover, incorporating cultural traditions and values through ethno-pedagogy can contribute to a more holistic approach to education, fostering a sense of identity and belonging among children from diverse backgrounds (Wang et al., 2022). Educators play a vital role in shaping the educational experiences of young children, with a focus on promoting positive development outcomes (Hayes et al., 2021). Common principles underpinning early childhood education emphasize early experiences, relationships, and quality learning opportunities in laying the foundation for positive child development (Hayes et al., 2021). By incorporating cultural elements and traditions into pedagogical practices, educators can create enriching learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of children (Buchanan et al., 2019; Rajab & Wright, 2020; Şen Akbulut & Hill, 2020).

Furthermore, integrating arts education into early childhood practices has been recognized as a valuable tool for promoting creativity and self-expression among young learners (Bautista et al., 2021). Music, in particular, has been highlighted as a highly emotive experience that can enhance social interactions and communication skills in early childhood education settings (Acker et al., 2022). By incorporating music and other art forms into educational practices, educators can create engaging and stimulating learning experiences that support children's holistic development (Acker & Nyland, 2024). Early childhood education is pivotal in laying the foundation for children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. By embracing educational approaches that integrate cultural elements, such as ethno-pedagogy, educators can create inclusive and enriching learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of young learners. Through a focus on social and emotional learning, arts education, and the promotion of cultural diversity, early childhood educators can nurture the holistic development of children and set them on a path toward a successful future.

Despite the growing recognition of ethno-pedagogy's potential benefits, there is limited empirical research on its implementation and effectiveness, particularly in early childhood settings. Moreover, there is a need to explore how ethno-pedagogy-based learning models can specifically address the development of religious behavior and collaboration skills in early childhood. This gap in the literature highlights the necessity for a structured investigation into the application of ethno-pedagogy in early childhood education. The primary objective of this study is to develop and implement an ethnic-pedagogy-based project learning model to increase religious behavior and collaboration skills in early childhood.

This research holds significant implications for both theory and practice. Theoretically, it contributes to the growing knowledge of ethno-pedagogy and its application in early childhood education. Practically, the study provides educators with a viable model for integrating cultural education into their curricula, potentially leading to more holistic and culturally responsive teaching practices. Enhancing religious behavior and collaboration skills in young children can improve social cohesion. The study focuses on early childhood in selected early childhood education institutions, specifically examining the impact of an ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model on religious behavior and collaboration skills. While the study provides valuable insights, it is limited by its scope to specific cultural contexts and educational settings. Future research may explore the model's applicability and effectiveness across diverse cultural backgrounds and larger populations.

## 2. METHODS

### *Design research*

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of the ethnic-pédagogie-based project learning model in enhancing religious behavior and collaboration skills in early childhood. The research design employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative elements like pre- and post-intervention assessments with qualitative components such as observations, interviews, and focus group discussions (ElSayary et al., 2022). By incorporating cultural elements into early childhood education, as highlighted in the literature (Fitzpatrick & Marie Halpenny, 2023), and utilizing project-based learning strategies (Stojanović et al., 2023), the study seeks to evaluate the impact of ethno-pédagogie on children's development comprehensively. Furthermore, the significance of arts education (Song & Park, 2018) and music (Chung, 2021) in environments in early childhood underscore the importance of holistic approaches that consider cultural diversity and creative expression in educational methodologies.

### *Participants*

The study involved early childhood. Specifically, those aged 5 to 6 were selected from various early childhood education institutions. A total of 60 children were chosen for the sample. These children were evenly divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group engaged in the Ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model, designed to incorporate cultural and religious elements into their education. In contrast, the control group continued with the standard curriculum without these enhancements. Additionally, the study included the participation of teachers and parents, who provided valuable insights and feedback on the children's progress and the overall effectiveness of the learning model.

### *Instruments*

- Observation Checklists: Systematically record the children's religious behavior and collaboration skills during classroom activities.

- Questionnaires: These were administered to teachers and parents to gather their perspectives on children's religious behavior and collaboration skills development.
- Interviews: Conducted with teachers and parents to obtain in-depth qualitative data on their experiences and observations of the children's progress.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Held with teachers to discuss the implementation process and gather qualitative data on the effectiveness of the learning model.

The instrument for measuring religious behavior and collaboration skills in this study was developed in an observation sheet with an instrument grid, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Religious Behavior Instrument Grid for Children Aged 5-6 Years**

No.	Aspect	Indicators	Item number	Item Total
1.	Maintaining a connection with the Creator/God	- Pray - Gratitude and appreciation	1 2,3	3
2.	Maintain relationships with other people.	- Honesty - Discipline - Tolerance	4,5 6,7 8	5
3.	Maintaining a connection with nature	- Care for the environment	9	1
4.	Share plans.	Delivering ideas Respecting other people's ideas	10 11	2
5.	Ability to work in a team	Responsibility Helping each other	12 13	2
6.	Communicate positively	Understanding information Conveying information	14 15	2
7.	Ability to solve problems	Finding solutions	16	1

### **Data Collection Techniques**

- Quantitative Data: Collected through structured observation checklists and standardized questionnaires administered before and after the intervention. The assessment criteria in this study used a Likert scale of 1-4 with the following categories: 1 means Not Yet Developing (NYB); 2 means Starting to Develop (SD); 3 means Developing According to Expectations (DE); 4 means Developing Very Well (DVW)
- Qualitative Data: Gathered through semi-structured interviews, FGDs, and field notes from classroom observations.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Use descriptive statistics to summarize the data. Apply inferential statistics, such as paired t-tests and ANOVA, to compare pre- and post-intervention scores and determine the statistical significance of changes in religious behavior and collaboration skills. Perform thematic analysis on the interview and FGD transcripts to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the effectiveness of the ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model. Triangulate qualitative findings with quantitative data to understand the study outcomes comprehensively.

## **3. RESULTS**

The ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model was implemented over 12 weeks, with weekly activities designed to incorporate local cultural and religious elements. Activities included storytelling sessions with cultural and spiritual themes, traditional games that required teamwork, and community involvement projects. Teachers reported that the children were highly engaged and enthusiastic about the activities, showing increased interest in learning about their cultural heritage. The results of the intervention can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. The results of the intervention**

	Pre-test Post-test Intervention			
	Z-statistic	Mean	Z-table	p-Value
Religious Behaviour Scores	-3.633	9.00	1.96	0.000
Collaboration Skills Scores	-3.630	9.00	1.96	0.000

Quantitative data analysis revealed a significant improvement in religious behavior among children in the experimental group compared to the control group. The pre-intervention assessment showed no significant difference between the two groups. However, post-intervention scores indicated a marked increase in religious behaviors such as praying participation, understanding spiritual stories, and demonstrating values like empathy and respect. Based on the analysis table above, it can be seen that the calculated z is -3.633, meaning that z with an absolute value of 3.633 from the z table of 1.96 means that the calculated z is greater than the table, while the p-value of the z value is 0.000, less than 0.05.

### ***Recurring Themes from Interviews and Focus Groups Discussion (FGDs)***

The qualitative analysis of interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) has unearthed three prominent themes: Increased Engagement, enhanced cultural understanding, and Positive Behavioural Changes. Collectively, these themes indicate the multifaceted impact of project-based learning (PBL) activities on children, their families, and the broader educational environment. Below is a detailed interpretation and exploration of each theme.

#### ***Increased Engagement***

Teachers observed that project-based learning activities significantly heightened students' engagement and motivation. This suggests that PBL effectively captures students' interest, making learning more interactive and relevant to their lives.

- **Active Learning Environment:** PBL encourages hands-on, experiential learning, which contrasts with traditional rote memorization methods. This shift likely fosters a more dynamic classroom atmosphere where students feel empowered to take initiative.
- **Intrinsic Motivation:** When students perceive learning activities as meaningful and connected to real-world scenarios, their intrinsic motivation increases. This intrinsic drive can lead to sustained interest and better retention of knowledge.
- **Collaborative Skills:** PBL often involves teamwork, which not only keeps students engaged but also helps them develop essential collaborative and communication skills. These skills are crucial for their future academic and professional endeavors.
- **Teacher's Role:** The increased engagement also reflects on teachers' ability to facilitate rather than dictate learning. By guiding students through projects, teachers can cater to diverse learning styles and paces, making education more inclusive.

Higher engagement levels can lead to improved academic performance, reduced absenteeism, and a more positive school climate. Educators and policymakers might consider integrating more PBL activities into curricula to harness these benefits.

#### ***Enhanced Cultural Understanding***

Both children and parents reported a deeper appreciation and understanding of their cultural and religious heritage as a result of the PBL activities. This indicates that the projects were likely designed to incorporate cultural elements, fostering a sense of identity and pride among students.

- **Curriculum Integration:** Integrating cultural and religious themes into projects allows students to explore their heritage in a structured yet creative manner. This approach can make learning more meaningful and personally relevant.
- **Community Involvement:** Projects that involve family and community members can strengthen the connection between school and home, reinforcing cultural values and traditions outside the classroom setting.
- **Critical Thinking:** Engaging with cultural topics encourages students to think critically about their heritage, understand its complexities, and appreciate diversity. This can lead to a more nuanced worldview and greater empathy towards others.
- **Identity Formation:** For children, especially those in multicultural societies, understanding their cultural background is pivotal in forming a strong personal identity. PBL provides a platform for self-exploration and affirmation of cultural identity.

Enhanced cultural understanding can contribute to greater social cohesion and respect for diversity within the school community. It also prepares students to navigate and contribute positively to a multicultural society. Educational programs

might prioritize culturally responsive PBL to continue fostering these outcomes.

#### Positive Behavioural Changes

Parents have observed notable improvements in their children's behavior at home, including increased empathy, cooperation, and respect for others. This suggests that the benefits of PBL extend beyond academic learning to social and emotional development.

- **Social Skills Development:** PBL often involves collaborative tasks that require communication, negotiation, and teamwork. These interactions help children develop essential social skills that translate into better behavior at home and in other social settings.
- **Empathy and Understanding:** Working on projects that involve diverse perspectives or community issues can cultivate empathy. Understanding different viewpoints and the impact of one's actions on others fosters a more compassionate and respectful attitude.
- **Responsibility and Accountability:** PBL assigns specific roles and responsibilities within projects, teaching children to be accountable for their contributions. This sense of responsibility can carry over into their personal lives, promoting more considerate and respectful behavior.
- **Self-Regulation:** Managing project timelines and overcoming challenges within a project helps children develop self-regulation skills. These skills are essential for controlling impulses, managing emotions, and maintaining respectful interactions.

Positive behavioral changes enhance the overall family dynamic and contribute to the holistic development of children. Schools and educators might leverage PBL not only for academic purposes but also as a tool for fostering desirable social and emotional traits. Additionally, involving parents in the PBL process can reinforce these positive behaviors at home.

The recurring themes of Increased Engagement, Enhanced Cultural Understanding, and Positive Behavioural Changes highlight the comprehensive impact of project-based learning on students and their communities. PBL appears to be an effective pedagogical approach that not only enhances academic outcomes but also fosters essential life skills and cultural appreciation.

#### Recommendations

- **Curriculum Design:** Integrate more PBL activities that are culturally relevant and socially engaging to sustain and amplify these positive outcomes.
- **Teacher Training:** Equip educators with the skills and resources needed to design and facilitate effective PBL experiences.
- **Community Involvement:** Encourage collaboration between schools, families, and community organizations to support and extend the benefits of PBL beyond the classroom.
- **Continuous Evaluation:** Implement ongoing assessments to monitor the impact of PBL on student engagement, cultural understanding, and behavioral development, allowing for iterative improvements.

By embracing these recommendations, educational institutions can continue to harness the strengths of project-based learning, ensuring that students are not only academically proficient but also culturally aware and socially responsible individuals.

## 4. DISCUSSION

### *Relationship between Ethno-pedagogy and Religious Behaviour Improvement*

The integration of ethno-pedagogy into project-based learning has been shown to significantly impact the enhancement of cultural and religious awareness in early childhood. Ethno-pedagogy involves integrating cultural and religious elements into educational activities, allowing children to connect with their heritage meaningfully, leading to a deeper understanding and practice of cultural and religious values (Haatainen & Aksela, 2021). This approach aligns with project-based learning, a student-driven pedagogical method centered around defined projects (Wright et al., 2023). By incorporating cultural and religious elements into project-based learning activities, children are engaged in the learning process and develop a strong connection to their cultural and religious identities, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding of their heritage (Parwoto et al., 2024). Research indicates that project-based learning models when emphasizing creativity and collaboration, can significantly enhance children's critical thinking skills and independence as learners (Damjanovic & Ward, 2023). Through collaborative project-based activities that include cultural and religious elements, children are encouraged to think creatively and work with their peers, fostering a sense of community and shared learning experiences. This collaborative approach is crucial for promoting a deeper understanding of cultural and religious values among children (Kewalramani et al., 2020).



Moreover, incorporating ethno-pedagogy into project-based learning provides a platform for multidimensional and multimodal interactions, enabling children to engage with cultural and religious concepts in diverse ways (Julianne McGuire et al., 2018). This multi-layered approach enhances children's understanding of their cultural heritage and promotes holistic development through various modes of interaction and expression. Integrating cultural and religious elements into project-based activities exposes children to a rich learning environment catering to different learning styles and preferences, ensuring a comprehensive educational experience (Ayu et al., 2024). In early childhood education, project-based learning approaches have been found to contribute to long-term academic and social development among children (Attfield, 2022). When combined with ethno-pedagogy, project-based learning becomes a powerful tool for promoting cultural and religious awareness among young learners. By immersing children in hands-on projects incorporating cultural and spiritual elements, educators can create meaningful learning experiences resonating with children's identities and beliefs, ultimately leading to a deeper connection to their cultural heritage (Pardon et al., 2023).

Furthermore, integrating Ethno-pedagogy into project-based learning aligns with the principles of inclusive education, where diverse cultural perspectives are valued and incorporated into the learning process. Recognizing and celebrating cultural and religious diversity through educational activities exposes children to various perspectives and beliefs, fostering respect and understanding for different cultures. This inclusive educational approach promotes cultural awareness and cultivates empathy and tolerance among children, contributing to the development of well-rounded individuals who appreciate and embrace diversity. Integrating ethno-pedagogy into project-based learning models significantly enhances cultural and religious awareness in early childhood. By incorporating cultural and religious elements into educational activities, children can connect with their heritage meaningfully, leading to a deeper understanding and practice of cultural and spiritual values. This approach fosters cultural awareness and appreciation and promotes critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration among young learners, ultimately contributing to their holistic development and sense of identity.

The success of this integration can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, using culturally relevant stories and activities allowed children to connect their learning experiences with their everyday lives and traditions. This connection is crucial in early childhood, where experiential and contextual learning plays a significant role in cognitive and emotional development. Secondly, community and family involvement in the learning process reinforced the cultural and religious teachings, providing a consistent and supportive environment for the children. Combining school and home influences, this holistic approach was pivotal in enhancing the children's religious behavior.

### ***Relationship between Project-Based Learning and Collaboration Skills***

The project-based learning approach has been found to effectively foster collaboration skills among children by engaging them in group activities that require teamwork and problem-solving. Through active participation in hands-on projects, children have ample opportunities to practice and refine their collaboration abilities (Insorio & Librada, 2021). This pedagogical approach emphasizes the importance of children learning through collaboration with their peers and adults, allowing them to contribute to and influence their learning as active participants in the educational process (Gómez-García et al., 2022). Research suggests that project-based learning, an academic practice for over a century, remains a relevant pedagogy that promotes children's education and collaborative investigative projects (Johansson, 2019). By immersing children in collaborative project-based activities, educators can create a conducive environment for children to develop essential social skills and work together towards common goals. This approach aligns with constructivist theory, which emphasizes critical strategies to help children cultivate creative thinking abilities and independence as learners through active learning tools and peer collaboration (Lu et al., 2022).

Furthermore, integrating project-based learning with collaborative approaches aligns with the principles of inclusive education, where diverse perspectives are valued and incorporated into the learning process (Bascopé et al., 2019). By engaging children in collaborative project-based activities, educators can create a learning environment that fosters respect for individual differences and promotes teamwork and cooperation among children. This inclusive educational approach enhances children's collaboration skills and cultivates empathy and understanding of diverse perspectives, contributing to their overall social and emotional development (Ng et al., 2022). The project-based learning approach effectively fosters collaboration skills among children by providing them with opportunities to engage in group activities that promote teamwork and problem-solving. Through active participation in hands-on projects, children can develop essential social skills and refine their ability to work collaboratively with their peers. Educators can create a supportive learning environment that nurtures children's collaboration abilities and prepares them for future success in a cooperative and interconnected world by integrating collaborative elements into project-based learning activities.

In the context of this study, the project activities were designed to require collective effort, thereby providing ample opportunities for children to practice and enhance their collaboration skills. For example, traditional games and community projects necessitated cooperation and shared responsibilities, allowing children to experience the benefits of working together towards a common goal. The improvement in collaboration skills observed in the experimental group highlights the effectiveness of PBL in fostering social competencies critical for future academic and personal success.

### ***Factors Influencing the Implementation of the Learning Model***

The importance of teacher training and ongoing support for the effective execution of learning models is highlighted in the literature. Equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate pedagogical approaches such as ethnopadagogy and project-based learning into their teaching practices is crucial (Niemi et al., 2024). Professional development sessions and resources are vital in preparing teachers to successfully implement these models and address any challenges that may arise during the process. Emphasizes the significance of teacher development in preparing for future education during teacher training (Waljinah et al., 2020). Project-based learning (PBL) is a student-driven, teacher-facilitated pedagogical approach that organizes learning around clearly defined projects (Haatainen & Aksela, 2021). Providing ongoing technical support to teachers is crucial as ICTs continuously develop, potentially outpacing teachers' familiarity with the technologies (Mavuru et al., 2024). Communities of practice serve as a launchpad for social justice planning in early childhood education, providing teachers with the necessary time, space, and support to facilitate discussions on challenging topics (Tang, 2023). Positive feedback from teachers and guardians further supports the findings on teaching kindness and compassion to enhance young children's prosocial skills in an inclusive ECEC setting (Walton & Darkes-Sutcliffe, 2023).

Active participation and support from parents and the community are crucial for the success of educational models. Parents can engage with project activities and reinforce cultural and religious teachings at home, enhancing children's learning experiences (Khoo et al., 2023). Community involvement, such as inviting local cultural practitioners and organizing community-based projects, enriches the learning process by providing real-world applications of cultural knowledge (Buono, 2022). Involving parents and the community creates a collaborative learning environment that extends beyond the classroom, promoting a holistic approach to education (Nordén & Avery, 2020). This engagement fosters a sense of belonging, strengthens cultural connections, and enhances the overall educational experience for children by bridging the gap between school, home, and the community.

Integrating culturally relevant content in educational activities has been acknowledged as a significant factor in enhancing the relatability and meaningfulness of learning experiences for children. By incorporating local traditions, stories, and practices into the curriculum, children can better understand the value and relevance of their cultural heritage in their daily lives (Wang et al., 2022). This cultural relevance boosts engagement and cultivates a deeper appreciation and comprehension of children's cultural and religious identities (Díaz, 2023). The involvement of parents and the community in educational initiatives is essential for the success of such models. Parents are encouraged to participate in project activities and reinforce cultural and religious teachings at home, strengthening the connection between school and home environments (J McGuire et al., 2018; O'Regan et al., 2023). Community engagement, such as involving local cultural practitioners and organizing community-based projects, enriches the learning experience by offering real-world applications of cultural knowledge and fostering a sense of belonging and cultural pride among children (Abril & Peinado, 2023). The collaborative efforts of educators, parents, and the community in integrating culturally relevant content into educational practices establish a comprehensive and inclusive learning environment that nurtures children's cultural identities and enhances their understanding of diverse cultural perspectives. By embracing cultural diversity and integrating it into educational activities, children are exposed to a rich tapestry of traditions and develop respect, empathy, and appreciation for different cultures, laying a strong foundation for their holistic development and intercultural competence.

### ***Implications for Practice and Policy***

The findings of this study have important implications for educational practice and policy. For educators, the study provides a viable model for integrating cultural education into early childhood curricula, demonstrating the potential benefits for children's behavioral and social development. Policymakers should consider the value of ethno-pedagogy and PBL in early childhood education and support initiatives that promote cultural and religious education in schools. Additionally, teacher training programs should include modules on ethno-pedagogy and PBL to prepare educators for implementing these approaches effectively.

### ***Limitations and Future Research***

While the study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The research was conducted in a specific cultural context, and the findings may not be generalizable to all settings. To validate its effectiveness, future research should explore applying the ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model to diverse cultural backgrounds and larger populations. Additionally, long-term studies are needed to assess the sustained impact of the model on children's development.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This study set out to develop and implement an ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model to enhance religious behavior and collaboration skills among dini-age children. The findings demonstrate that this approach significantly improves religious behavior and collaboration skills, underscoring the effectiveness of integrating cultural and spiritual elements into early childhood education. The quantitative data revealed a statistically significant increase in religious behavior and collaboration skills among children in the experimental group compared to the control group. Qualitative feedback from teachers and parents corroborated these findings, highlighting increased engagement, a deeper understanding of cultural

heritage, and positive behavioral changes in the children.

The success of the ethno-pedagogy-based project learning model can be attributed to its culturally relevant content, active parental and community involvement, and the comprehensive training and support provided to teachers. These factors created a holistic and supportive learning environment instrumental in achieving the study's objectives. This study contributes to the growing literature on ethno-pedagogy and project-based learning, providing empirical evidence of their benefits in early childhood education. It supports that culturally responsive teaching practices can significantly enhance children's behavioral and social development. The study offers educators a practical framework for integrating ethno-pedagogy and PBL into early childhood curricula. Educators can create more engaging and meaningful educational experiences for young children by incorporating local cultural and religious elements into learning activities. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also promotes the development of essential life skills.

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