

# A Successful Career In Early Childhood Education: A Focus On Personal Values Of Childcare Trainees.

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- **Abstract:** Early childhood education is a non-formal education for children under the age of six. In Malaysia, Taska and Tadika are two types of childcare centers that provide early childhood education for young children whose ages range from one to four and from four and six, respectively. The main aim of such centers is to prepare such small children with basic knowledge before receiving a formal education as a first-grader in the primary schools. Premised in this context, this paper discusses the findings of a study that focused on childcare trainees' personal values in building a career in early childhood education. This study used the convergent parallel mixed method involving a survey and interviews, in which 1497 and 159 respondents were selected, respectively. In this study, the researchers used purposive sampling to select a sample of the population of Taska and Tadika operators and teachers and the officers of relevant agencies. The research instruments of this study consisted of a survey questionnaire and interview protocols. The survey questionnaire contained two main parts (K1 and K2), with the first (K1) being used to elicit information from teachers of Taska and Tadika centers and the second (K2) to gather information from operators, supervisors, and principals of such centers. The interview protocols used in this study comprised two parts (M1 and M2). The first (M1) and the second (M2) were used to elicit information from the teachers and the operators, supervisors, and principals of such centers, respectively. Findings from qualitative data showed that childcare trainees had strong personal values by being respectful of their students, affectionate in taking care of children, and punctual in conducting their teaching lessons. Collectively, such traits can make these future teachers a good role model that students can emulate. More importantly, such strong personal values are extremely important to meet the strong demand for competent, caring childminders and early childhood education teachers, which has lately been made more urgent in view of the proliferation of childcare centers over the nation.
- **Keywords:** childhood education teachers, relevant agencies, relevant agencies