

**THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY  
IN SCHOOL READINESS: STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES  
ON THE TRANSITION FROM ECE TO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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**Abstract.** *The transition from early childhood education to primary school is a critical developmental phase that significantly influences children's success in formal learning environments. However, school readiness is often underestimated by parents, who may prioritize chronological age over developmental maturity. This study aims to explore the understanding and expectations of parents, early childhood education teachers, and primary school teachers regarding children's readiness for transition, and to compare perceptions among these stakeholders concerning readiness indicators and influencing factors. This study employed a qualitative collective case study design, in which data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants representing multiple educational settings. The findings show that while some children demonstrate readiness across cognitive, social-emotional, motor, language, and self care development domains, notable challenges persist both at the individual and systemic levels. Diverging perspectives were identified, particularly concerning ideal school entry age, psychological and developmental support, and the lack of communication between education levels. Educational psychology is positioned as a fundamental lens through which school readiness can be understood holistically—emphasizing not only developmental competencies but also the ecological and emotional support systems that shape successful transitions. These insights highlight the need for integrative transition strategies and cross-level collaboration to better support children's overall preparedness for primary education.*

**Keywords:** *School Readiness, Early Childhood Education, Primary school Transition, Stakeholder Perceptions.*

### **Introduction**

The transition of children from early childhood education to primary school is a crucial stage that significantly impacts their success in subsequent educational processes. However, in practice, school readiness has not yet become a main concern for many parents. A considerable number of parents encourage their children to enter

primary school based solely on age—such as when the child turns six or seven—without considering the child’s actual developmental readiness. Environmental pressures, such as the desire for the child not to be left behind, also frequently influence such decisions.

This phenomenon is supported by field findings from a primary school teacher in Mataram City, who reported that many first-grade students do not yet demonstrate adequate school readiness. Many of them are unfamiliar with letters and numbers, unable to read fluently, and struggle to follow simple instructions. This situation reveals a gap between parents’ assumptions of what constitutes being ready for school and the actual competencies children need to adapt both academically and socially within the primary school environment. The discrepancy between actual conditions in the field and the ideal theoretical concept of school readiness highlights an urgent need for further investigation.

School readiness is a multidimensional construct encompassing physical/motor, social-emotional, learning approaches, language, cognitive, and general knowledge domains (Snow & Van Hemel, 2008, citing NEGP, 1995). This multidimensional construct emphasizes that school readiness cannot be assessed solely based on age, but rather through a comprehensive evaluation of the child’s development across multiple domains.

In response to ongoing concerns about equitable access and developmental appropriateness in early education, the Indonesian government has implemented new regulations governing primary school admissions. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 3 of 2025, children may enroll in primary school at the age of seven, or as early as six years old by July 1 of the academic year. Furthermore, children as young as five years and six months may be admitted, provided they present a formal recommendation from a professional psychologist or, in the absence of such, an endorsement from a team of educators affirming their cognitive and emotional readiness for school (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2025).

Significantly, the regulation also removes academic requirements—such as the ability to read, write, and perform basic arithmetic—as formal conditions for school entry. This policy shift reflects a broader effort to discourage early academic pressure and recognize diverse developmental trajectories. However, despite these changes, educators continue to face challenges related to children’s varying levels of readiness, suggesting that policy implementation must be supported by improved collaboration among schools, families, and mental health professionals to ensure a smooth and inclusive transition to formal education.

This research aims to explore the understanding and expectations of key stakeholders—early childhood school teachers, primary school teachers, and parents—regarding children’s school readiness as they enter primary education. Through a qualitative case study approach, this study is expected to map stakeholders’ perceptions of the early childhood school to primary school transition and offer initial recommendations for more effective and developmentally appropriate transition strategies.

The main focus of this research is on the school readiness of early childhood learners as they transition into primary education, examined through various aspects of child development (cognitive, social-emotional, motor, language, and self care development), as well as stakeholder perceptions of school readiness, including strategies and practices implemented within both educational and family settings.

This study is designed to answer the following research questions: How do early childhood school teachers, primary school teachers, and parents describe children’s school readiness in terms of cognitive, social-emotional, motor, language, and self care development? What are the similarities and differences in perceptions among early childhood school teachers, primary school teachers, and parents regarding the indicators of school readiness and the factors that influence to primary school?

### **Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative approach using a collective case study design. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of

how teachers and parents from different school contexts perceive and support children's transition from early childhood education to primary school. A qualitative collective case study allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon across multiple, bounded cases—each representing a unique educational setting—while also identifying shared themes and variations in transition practices within real-life contexts.

The research was conducted in Mataram City during July 2025, involving three educational settings consisting of one early childhood school and two primary schools located in different subdistricts. To protect institutional confidentiality, the schools are referred to pseudonymously as early childhood school a, primary school b, and primary school c. Each site represents a distinct case within the broader inquiry into the transition from early childhood to primary education.

The boundaries of each case are defined by (a) the geographical and administrative scope of schools under the same city education system; (b) the transition period occurring within the 2024–2025 academic year; and (c) the direct involvement of key stakeholders—teachers and parents—who actively participate in preparing and supporting children's entry into primary school. The selection of sites followed a maximum variation sampling strategy to capture diversity across school types (public and private) and community backgrounds. These locations were also chosen based on their accessibility, willingness to participate, and relevance to the research focus on transition readiness and inter-level collaboration practices in early childhood education.

Participants in this collective case study consisted of four key informants representing different yet interconnected roles in the early school transition process: two first-grade primary school teachers, one early childhood education (ECE) teacher, and one parent of a child currently transitioning from early childhood education to primary school. Although the total number of participants was limited, the sample was selected purposively based on *information power* (Malterud et al., 2016), emphasizing

the depth and relevance of each participant's experience rather than numerical adequacy.

The first primary school teacher had over twenty years of experience as a first-grade homeroom teacher. Her extensive tenure provided longitudinal insight into generational differences among students—she has even taught the children of her former pupils—allowing for a deep understanding of developmental changes and shifting parental expectations over time. The second primary school teacher represented a younger generation of educators, with approximately ten years of experience teaching first grade. Her perspective offered a more contemporary understanding of instructional practices, developmental expectations, and the evolving nature of early learners in a digital era.

The early childhood education (ECE) teacher served as both the founder and principal of a local early childhood center while continuing to teach in the classroom. She also had a child currently enrolled in her school, granting her a multifaceted perspective as a leader, teacher, and parent. Meanwhile, the parent informant was an active community health volunteer (*kader kesehatan*) who was highly familiar with local parenting norms and children's developmental patterns. Her reflections provided socially and culturally grounded insights into readiness and adjustment among children in the local context.

Together, these participants contributed rich, contextually nuanced, and theoretically informed accounts of the transition process. Their diverse backgrounds and roles ensured data sufficiency and analytic depth, making the sample appropriate for a collective case study exploring the intersection of educational practices, parental involvement, and child readiness within the Mataram City context.

Primary data were obtained through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face with all participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure participants could communicate their views naturally and in detail. Interviews were carried out at locations preferred by the participants—either in their respective schools or at home—

to foster a comfortable and open atmosphere. With participants' consent, each session was audio-recorded, and the researcher also took field notes to capture contextual details, non-verbal expressions, and reflections during the interviews.

All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim by the researcher and rechecked twice for accuracy. To protect confidentiality, identifying information such as personal names, school names, and specific locations were replaced with pseudonyms. The interview questions were structured around five theoretical frameworks: School Readiness (Kagan & Britto, 2005; Snow & Van Hemel, 2008), Psychological Support in Transition (Fabian & Dunlop, 2007), Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), Child-Centered Curriculum (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009), and Transition Challenges (Dockett & Perry, 2007). These frameworks guided the exploration of cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of children's readiness, as well as the collaborative roles of teachers and parents in supporting early school transitions.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019): familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Manual coding was conducted by the main researcher, who systematically identified and grouped meaning units into categories and overarching themes. To enhance the credibility of findings, a peer debriefing process was carried out with a qualitative research colleague to review coding consistency and thematic alignment. The final themes were then refined through iterative comparison across participant groups, supported by direct quotations that exemplified the core meanings and variations in participants' perspectives.

The interview guide was thus designed to capture comprehensive perspectives from parents, early childhood education (ECE) teachers, and primary school teachers regarding children's readiness and experiences during the transition from early childhood education to primary school.

**Table 1: Interview Instrument Based on Theoretical Frameworks**

<b>Framework</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Definition / Scope</b>	<b>Sample Question</b>	<b>Interview</b>
School Readiness (Kagan & Britto, 2005; Snow & Van Hemel, 2008)	Cognitive Development	Ability to recognize symbols, use logic, retain info, follow instructions	How do you assess the child's cognitive readiness before entering primary school?	
	Social and Emotional Development	Ability to manage emotions, follow rules, cooperate, adjust	How do you assess the child's social and emotional readiness before entering primary school?	
	Motor Development	Fine and gross motor coordination for school tasks	Is the child's motor ability a concern when starting primary school?	
	Language Development	Expressive and receptive language skills	How does the child's language ability affect their learning readiness?	
	Self Care Development	Independence in daily routines and simple decisions	Have the children demonstrated independence during learning activities?	
Psychological Support in Transition (Fabian & Dunlop, 2007)	Orientation Activities	Programs to introduce children to school life	Does the school conduct orientation programs for newly enrolled students?	
	Light Thematic Learning	Use of familiar/play-based thematic approaches	Are the initial lessons delivered using light thematic approaches?	
	Parent Communication	Ongoing collaboration	How are parents involved in supporting children	

	n	between parents and teachers	during the transition to primary school?
Ecological Systems Theory(Bronfenbrenner, 1979)	early childhood and Primary Teacher Collaboration	Communication between early childhood and elementary teachers	Is there any communication or coordination between early childhood and primary school teachers regarding children's readiness?
	Parental Involvement	Active parental role in preparing children for school	In what ways are parents involved in preparing their children for school entry?
Child-Centered Curriculum(Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)	Child-Friendly Learning Environment	Welcoming, developmentally appropriate classroom design	How is your classroom designed to accommodate children who have just graduated from early childhood education?
Transition Challenges(Dockett & Perry, 2007)	Systemic Support Needs	Policy, training, and resources to support transition	What aspects of the education system need improvement to support the transition from early childhood to primary school?

This research was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles for qualitative research, emphasizing respect, informed consent, and confidentiality. All participants were informed of the research purpose, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. Written consent was obtained prior to each interview. Given the small number of participants and the interconnected nature of the educational community in Mataram City, particular care was taken to maintain confidentiality. To minimize the risk of identification, all participants and institutions were assigned general pseudonyms (e.g., *Teacher A*, *Teacher B*, *Parent 1*, *ECE Educator*) and specific contextual details such as school names, districts, and personal characteristics were omitted or generalized in the report. Audio recordings and transcripts were stored securely and accessible only to the researcher.

The researcher acknowledges her positionality as an academic in early childhood and educational psychology, which provided both insight and potential bias during data interpretation. To mitigate this, reflexive journaling was maintained throughout the research process to record assumptions, emotional responses, and interpretive decisions. Peer debriefing with a qualitative research colleague was also used to critically review analytical choices and ensure the interpretations were grounded in the data rather than personal perspective. These reflective and procedural measures contributed to the credibility, transparency, and ethical integrity of the study.

## **Results**

### **Children's Readiness in Facing the Transition from Early Childhood Education to Primary School.**

This section presents the findings of the field data collected through interviews with early childhood education (ECE) teachers, primary school teachers, and parents. The results are organized based on five key domains of school readiness that emerged during the data analysis: cognitive readiness, motor readiness, social-emotional readiness, language ability, and self care development. These domains reflect the multifaceted nature of children's preparedness to enter formal schooling.

The following sub-sections elaborate on how each domain of readiness is perceived and experienced by stakeholders, along with illustrative quotes from respondents. The findings also highlight the variations in readiness among children, as well as the differing expectations and practices across early childhood education centers and primary schools.

#### **Cognitive Readiness**

Cognitive readiness is a core component of school readiness, referring to a child's ability to recognize symbols (letters and numbers), engage in basic logical thinking, retain information, and follow instructions (Kagan & Britto, 2005; Snow & Van Hemel, 2008). The findings from this study reveal considerable variation in children's cognitive readiness upon entering primary school.

From the parent's perspective, readiness is often judged based on output skills like reading and basic arithmetic. However, some children still struggle, especially with writing tasks that require independent effort. This indicates that parental assessments may emphasize final outcomes without fully considering the underlying cognitive processes required for learning.

According to early childhood education (ECE) teachers, most children entering primary school can recognize letters and numbers, but some—particularly younger children or those still in Kindergarten A—continue to face difficulties. These teachers expressed concern when parents insisted on enrolling children based solely on age, despite the lack of demonstrated learning readiness.

Primary school teachers affirmed these concerns. A small group of students in Grade 1 were still unable to read or recognize letters, requiring teachers to allocate additional support. Meanwhile, students who were more advanced received independent tasks. Despite overall improvements in student ability over the years, struggling learners remain a consistent presence in the classroom.

**Table 2: Cognitive Readiness and Respondents Perspective**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Parent</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Early Childhood Teacher</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2</b>
Cognitive Readiness	<i>“According to their preschool teacher, my child was ready to enter primary school. I also observed that my child could read fluently, even though there are still tasks they cannot do independently and I help at home—for example, writing. They still</i>	<i>“Most of the children in early childhood can recognize letters and numbers. However, a small portion still struggles with learning to read, write, and do arithmetic... The issue is that some parents still want their children to</i>	<i>“There is a small group in first grade who cannot read fluently or recognize letters... For those who are already capable, we usually give them tasks to complete while we call on the others who still cannot read.” (Primary school Teacher</i>	<i>“Among all the students, there’s a small group who cannot read fluently, but the majority already recognize letters and numbers... those who struggle academically are always there, and as a homeroom teacher, they are my focus.”</i>

<i>need a lot of enter primary 1, 2025)</i>	<i>practice.” (Parent, school just because they are of age.” (Early childhood education (ECE) teacher, 2025)</i>	<i>(Primary school Teacher 2, 2025)</i>
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**Social and Emotional Readiness**

Social and emotional development is a vital aspect of school readiness, involving a child's capacity to manage emotions, navigate social norms, express empathy, and build relationships. Based on the interviews, most parents perceived their children as socially capable and non-aggressive. However, there was an indication of passive behavior in conflict situations, suggesting the need to strengthen assertiveness alongside emotional regulation.

The early childhood education (ECE) teacher highlighted that while children are sociable through play, readiness was judged by their ability to reduce excessive play and increase focus—revealing a tension between play-based learning in preschool and formal classroom expectations in primary school.

Primary teachers acknowledged that most children could interact well with peers, although some exhibited social withdrawal or formed exclusive groups. Teachers responded by actively promoting inclusion and peer support, which aligns with best practices in transition and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks.

**Table 3 : Social and Emotional Readiness**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Parent</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Early childhood education (ECE) teacher</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2</b>
Social and Emotional Readiness	<i>“My child is able to socialize with friends and has never hurt others or gotten into fights.” (Parent, 2025)</i>	<i>“I see that they are ready to move up when they don’t play too much and can stay focused</i>	<i>“They’re able to play and get along with their friends, although some tend to form cliques or small groups.”</i>	<i>“They play normally with their friends.” (Primary school Teacher 2,</i>

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<p><i>“When mistreated in class.” (Early childhood education (ECE) teacher, 2025)</i></p> <p><i>by a friend, my child chooses not to fight back and just lets it go... even though I’ve told him it’s okay to fight back if someone hurts him.”</i></p> <p>(Parent, 2025)</p>	<p>(Primary school Teacher 1, 2025)</p> <p><i>“Some children isolate themselves and are afraid of others. I usually encourage the rest of the class to accompany them.”</i></p> <p>(Primary school Teacher 1, 2025)</p>
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### **Motor Readiness (Fine and Gross Motor Skills)**

Motor readiness is a key component of school readiness, encompassing both fine motor skills (e.g., cutting, writing, drawing) and gross motor skills (e.g., running, jumping, physical play), as emphasized by Kagan & Britto (2005) and Snow & Van Hemel (2008). These skills form the foundation for children’s participation in learning and social activities at school.

Findings from parents revealed that most children did not experience motor difficulties and were capable of performing tasks that required hand-eye coordination. This suggests that their motor development was on track for entry into primary education, having acquired the basic skills necessary for early academic activities.

Early childhood education (ECE) teachers also confirmed that the majority of children did not show signs of motor delays. However, one case involved a child with a physical disability affecting motor performance. In response, the teacher collaborated with the parents and provided a recommendation to enroll the child in a special education school. This highlights the critical role of early childhood education (ECE) teachers in early identification and appropriate referral of children with special needs, aligning with Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1979), which places teachers as part of the microsystem supporting the child’s development.

Primary school teachers observed that children generally demonstrated good motor readiness, particularly in physical education. However, some children with low

motivation—often due to shyness or lack of confidence—were less engaged in physical activities. Another teacher noted that children showed high enthusiasm when engaging in outdoor play, reinforcing the importance of free movement and active play in early childhood education.

**Table 4 : Motor Readiness**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Parent</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Early childhood education (ECE) teacher</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2</b>
<b>Motor Readiness</b>	<i>“My child can already cut and paste and has no problems related to motor skills.”</i> (Parent, 2025)	<i>“We didn’t find any motor problems, but one of our students has a physical disability, which affects their motor skills. We have communicated this well with the parents and provided a recommendation to enroll the child in a special needs school (SLB).”</i> (Early childhood education (ECE) teacher, 2025)	<i>“There were no motor problems. In fact, the children did very well in sports. Although, there are some individual cases where shy children are not motivated to participate in physical activities.”</i> (Primary school Teacher 1, 2025)	<i>“They really enjoy physical activities, especially when playing outside the classroom.”</i> (Primary school Teacher 2, 2025)

### **Language Ability**

Language ability is a fundamental aspect of school readiness, as emphasized by Kagan & Britto (2005) and Snow & Van Hemel (2008). It encompasses both receptive and expressive language skills—enabling children to understand instructions, express thoughts and feelings, and participate in social interactions and formal learning. Strong language development lays the groundwork for active engagement and academic success.

Based on parental reports, most children demonstrated adequate language readiness. They were perceived as capable of expressing ideas, recounting events,

asking questions, and sharing their opinions. These observations indicate well-developed two-way communication, which supports children’s participation in classroom dialogue and peer interaction.

Early childhood education (ECE) teachers noted variation in children's verbal skills. While some children were fluent and confident speakers, others showed limited verbal expression, often influenced by shyness. This highlights the role of individual personality traits in verbal performance, especially in unfamiliar environments. Teachers are therefore responsible for cultivating a psychologically safe classroom that encourages children to communicate more confidently.

At the primary school level, first-grade teachers also observed that emotional readiness influenced children’s verbal communication. Children who were shy or emotionally dependent on their parents sometimes showed reluctance to speak or cried when approached. This underscores the interconnectedness of language development with emotional and self care development.

In addition, language screening was identified as a routine activity in the initial weeks of first grade. Teachers often used simple questioning to assess verbal responsiveness and to detect potential developmental delays. However, in some cases, teachers encountered children with suspected special needs without prior notification from families or early childhood education (ECE) teachers. This points to a communication gap between early education settings and primary schools.

**Table 5: Language Ability and Respondents Perspective**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Parent</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Early childhood education (ECE) teacher</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2</b>
Language Ability	“My child can already tell me about anything; they can even	“Some of our students can speak fluently, but others are less	“Some of our students are shy, and when we try to talk to them, they cry. This is usually	“I always ask my first-grade students basic questions, like their name or their parents' names.

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ask questions and share their opinions with me.” (Parent, 2025)	verbal, for instance, due to shyness.” (Early childhood education (ECE) teacher, 2025)	related to a lack of independence—for example, they don’t want to be left alone at school without their parents.” (Primary school Teacher 1, 2025)	This helps me check whether the child has any developmental issues... I’ve encountered cases where a child seems to have special needs, but I was never informed by the parents or the Early childhood education (ECE) teachers.” (Primary school Teacher 2, 2025)
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### Self Care Development

Self care development is regarded as a critical aspect of school readiness. From the parent’s perspective, independence is a central consideration when deciding the appropriate time for school enrollment. One parent stated that the ability of their child to complete daily tasks independently—such as staying at school without parental assistance or returning home on their own.

Early childhood education (ECE) teachers reported that fostering self care development is a core part of their transition preparation process. They ensure that children can perform basic routines independently, such as using the toilet, washing hands, and preparing for classroom activities before graduating to primary school. This reflects that early education institutions are supporting the development of both technical and emotional independence among children.

In contrast, Primary school Teacher 1 noted that while most students demonstrate independence, there are exceptions. Each year, there tends to be at least one child who struggles to separate from their parents, requiring up to a year to feel comfortable in the school setting. This emotional dependence can delay learning

engagement and hinder peer interaction, revealing a gap between expected and actual readiness.

Meanwhile, Primary school Teacher 2 observed that independence is no longer a major concern among new students. Children tend to adapt easily during the transition phase. However, behavioral issues tend to emerge in later grades, when younger children begin imitating the less disciplined behavior of older peers. This raises concerns about maintaining the positive self care habits developed in Early Childhood education as children progress through the school system.

**Table 6: Self Care Development and Respondents Perspective**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Parent</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Early childhood education (ECE) teacher</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2</b>
Self Care Development	“When it comes to independence, that's the main thing I consider before enrolling my child in elementary school. I make sure they can complete tasks on their own, stay at school without me, or go home if I can't pick them up. So far, I believe my child will be more mature at the age of 7.” (Parent, 2025)	“From our side, we ensure that our students are independent before they graduate and enter primary school. For example, going to the toilet independently, washing hands, preparing for learning, and so on.” (Early childhood education (ECE) teacher, 2025)	“Most children here are already independent, but every year there's at least one child who can't be left by their parents. It can take up to a year before they're comfortable being left alone. This clearly affects their learning and social interaction with peers.” (Primary school Teacher 1, 2025)	“It's rare now to find children who can't be left alone. At our school, children usually adapt well. But the problem arises when they move up to higher grades—they start becoming more difficult to manage. I'm worried it's due to the influence of older students.” (Primary school

### **School Transition: Communication Between Teachers and Parents**

In the context of school transition, communication between teachers and parents emerged as a crucial factor in providing social and emotional support for children. According to Fabian and Dunlop (2007), a successful transition requires synergy between the home and school environments, where two-way and open communication ensures that children's needs are addressed promptly and effectively.

From the parent's perspective, communication with the Early childhood education (ECE) teacher is frequent and influential in decision-making, although the final decision remains with the parent. One parent shared that although the teacher advised early enrollment, they still opted to enroll their child at age seven, indicating that parental values and perceptions play a significant role in interpreting professional input.

The Early childhood education (ECE) teacher confirmed the importance of daily interactions with parents, especially during drop-off and pick-up times. However, she also noted challenges when parents deny the presence of developmental concerns. She described a case in which the child's issue was initially rejected by the parents but later confirmed by a pediatrician, resulting in the child being referred to a special school. This reflects the complex dynamics of trust, communication, and resistance that early educators often navigate.

Primary school Teacher 1 emphasized the continuation of communication with parents despite logistical barriers, primarily through digital platforms like WhatsApp. Nonetheless, she expressed concern over parental inattentiveness, citing a child who shared that their parents were often preoccupied with mobile phones rather than supporting learning at home.

Primary school Teacher 2 highlighted the dual nature of her relationship with students and parents. On one hand, she expressed a deep emotional bond with

students, describing them as her own children or grandchildren due to her long tenure at the school. On the other hand, she clarified the boundaries of her role, reminding students that responsibility at home lies with their parents, not the teacher.

**Table 7: Communication Between Teachers and Parents and Respondents Perspective**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Parent</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Early childhood education (ECE) teacher</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1</b>	<b>Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2</b>
Communication Between Teachers and Parents	“I often communicate with the Early childhood education (ECE) teacher. The teacher suggested that my child should enter primary school before the age of 7, but I still chose to enroll them at the age of 7.” (Parent, 2025)	“I often communicate with parents, especially when they drop off or pick up their children. But there are always some parents who deny it when I tell them their child has a problem. Eventually, the issue was confirmed and the child had to be referred to a special school upon recommendation from a pediatrician.” (Early childhood education (ECE) teacher, 2025)	“We still communicate even if the parents are busy. Usually through WhatsApp.” “There’s a child who said their parents were busy playing on their phones and rarely accompanied them in studying.” (Primary school Teacher 1, 2025)	“We ask parents who are open to discussion to help guide their children’s learning at home.” “I treat my students like my own children or grandchildren. I’ve been teaching since their parents went to school here.” “I remind them that I am a teacher. It is the parents who should take responsibility at home.” (Primary school Teacher 2, 2025)

## Psychological Support During The Transition From Early Childhood Education To Primary School

In the framework of psychological support during the transition from Early Childhood education to primary school, orientation activities emerge as a vital strategy to foster children's emotional readiness and adaptation. As Fabian and Dunlop (2007) highlight, when children are given the opportunity to experience the primary school environment beforehand, it can help boost their sense of security, confidence, and eagerness to learn.

From the parent's perspective, however, there appears to be a gap in communication and implementation. One parent admitted that they had never participated in any introduction program during their child's Early Childhood education. This suggests that not all schools consistently offer or communicate orientation initiatives, which can result in unequal preparation for school entry.

In contrast, the Early childhood education (ECE) teacher described proactive efforts to prepare children, including two-week academic enrichment and school visits. These transition practices not only aim to strengthen children's basic literacy and numeracy but also allow them to familiarize themselves with the new environment and interact with older students.

Primary school teachers expressed mixed experiences. One reported that their school did not run any orientation programs, indicating a lack of coordinated transition policy. Meanwhile, the other teacher welcomed children from early childhood institutions and described positive interactions, noting that both teachers and students enjoyed the shared experiences.

**Table 8: Orientation Activities and Early Experiences in the Transition from Early Childhood Education to Primary School**

Domain	Respondent Perspective: Parent	Respondent Perspective: Early childhood education (ECE) teacher	Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 1	Respondent Perspective: Primary school Teacher 2
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Orientation Activities in Transition	“I have never participated in a school introduction program from Early Childhood education here.”	“We usually provide enrichment before our students graduate from Early Childhood education. Typically, we spend 2 weeks intensively teaching literacy and numeracy so that our students are more prepared for learning in primary school.” “We also organize school introduction programs by taking our students to visit primary schools so they can explore the environment and join the first-grade class. They are usually very enthusiastic and happy to join lessons with the older students.”	“There is no such program in our school.”	“Yes, Early Childhood students came to us and joined the first-grade class. They were very happy and I was happy too, seeing them excited to participate in class.”
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### **Discussion**

This study explored how key stakeholders—parents, early childhood education (ECE) teachers, and primary school teachers—perceive children's readiness to transition from early childhood education to formal schooling. Using the lens of educational psychology, the findings reinforce that school readiness is not simply a matter of chronological age, but rather a multifaceted developmental process. This includes growth in cognitive, social-emotional, motor, language, and self care development, all of which require supportive environments and coordinated efforts across educational levels.

In the cognitive domain, findings show a mismatch between parents' optimism about their children's abilities and the observations of teachers. While many parents assume early literacy or numeracy equates to readiness, educators note that several children struggle with structured academic tasks once they enter school. This supports the view of Kagan & Britto (2005) and Pianta & Kraft-Sayre (2003) that school readiness also involves learning motivation and the ability to adapt to formal instruction. These results emphasize the need for differentiated instruction in early grades and suggest that age alone should not determine school entry; instead, a child's overall developmental readiness must be considered (Snow & Van Hemel, 2008; González-Moreira et al., 2024). Strengthening parents' understanding of cognitive development and enhancing collaboration between early childhood and primary teachers is therefore essential (Dockett & Perry, 2007; Fabian & Dunlop, 2007).

In terms of social-emotional development, although many children are capable of interacting with peers, challenges such as shyness, exclusion, and emotional dependency were observed. These findings echo Ladd et al. (2006), who argue that emotional regulation and positive peer relationships are crucial for successful school transitions. Teachers' experiences point to the importance of providing structured psychological support during this period, as emphasized in the SEL framework (CASEL, 2020). Furthermore, programs that build children's emotional adaptability, assertiveness, and empathy—such as friendship-based or SEL interventions—are proven to enhance school adjustment and psychological well-being (Chen & Wang, 2023; Güzel & Koçyiğit, 2025).

Regarding motor development, most children displayed appropriate fine and gross motor skills. However, a few cases of physical challenges or low motivation highlight the need for inclusive and supportive environments. These findings are in line with ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and studies that emphasize the strong link between motor competence and academic performance, including executive function and numeracy skills (Jones et al., 2021; Hudson & Willoughby, 2021). Implementing child-centered, play-based learning (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)

can support motor development while also fostering other domains of readiness.

For language development, most children demonstrated basic verbal skills, yet some showed reluctance to communicate—either due to emotional immaturity or undiagnosed special needs. This suggests that beyond language skills, emotional security and personality traits significantly influence verbal engagement during the transition. This aligns with research showing that emotionally mature children tend to exhibit better communication and classroom participation (Potmesilova & Potmesil, 2021; Jones et al., 2021).

The self care development domain presented generally positive results, with most children capable of managing routines independently. However, instances of emotional dependence and separation anxiety—especially among younger students—remain concerns. Some parents delayed school entry to allow for greater maturity, which supports the view that readiness involves both psychosocial and behavioral dimensions, not just age (Dockett & Perry, 2007). These findings further highlight the relevance of child-centered educational models that encourage autonomy and emotional growth (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

In terms of psychological support during transition, the study found that orientation programs are inconsistently implemented. While some early childhood programs introduced school visits and adaptation activities, others lacked formal transition systems altogether. Research has shown that structured, collaborative transition programs improve children's emotional and academic adjustment (Szydlo & Farnsworth, 2023; LoCasale Crouch et al., 2008), while Dockett & Perry (2007) stress the need for ongoing, personalized transition planning.

When examining communication between parents and teachers, the study reveals both commitment and barriers. Teachers often struggle to engage busy parents, and some parents deny developmental concerns, limiting shared responsibility for children's growth. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the family and school are interconnected systems; when these work in harmony, children receive more consistent support. Furthermore, strong family-school communication, as proposed by the SEL

framework (CASEL, 2020) and supported by Sheridan et al. (2019) and Weiss et al. (2010), enhances emotional regulation, learning confidence, and independence. However, this requires formal mechanisms beyond casual exchanges, including structured consultation and information-sharing systems (Domina, 2005).

Finally, a critical issue identified was the lack of systematic collaboration between early childhood and primary institutions. Teachers reported no transfer of developmental records or coordinated planning between the two levels. As a result, valuable insights into children's strengths and challenges are often lost. This reflects a missed opportunity for educational scaffolding and undermines continuity in learning experiences. Moreover, some primary schools substitute structured orientation with general moral instruction, which—while valuable—does not fully meet developmental needs (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of viewing school readiness through a psychological lens that integrates developmental milestones, emotional wellbeing, and collaborative systems. To support smoother transitions, stakeholders must adopt holistic, developmentally appropriate, and child-centered approaches that are supported by consistent policy and inter-level coordination.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study concludes that school readiness in the early childhood education to primary school transition remains a multifaceted issue, with notable discrepancies in perceptions and expectations among parents, early childhood education (ECE) teachers, and primary school teachers. While some children exhibit readiness in one or more domains, others struggle with cognitive, emotional, or behavioral aspects that hamper their adaptation to primary school.

The absence of structured collaboration between early childhood education (ECE) teachers, and primary school teachers, the lack of readiness assessment documents, and limited orientation programs have compounded the challenges in the transition process. Psychological and instructional adjustments are often left to primary school

teachers, who must identify and accommodate diverse needs without prior developmental background.

This recommendation to Institutional coordination develop a transition protocol that includes transfer of student development records and communication between early childhood education (ECE) teachers, and primary school teachers. Screening and early detection is implement early screening mechanisms at the end of early childhood education to identify children with learning difficulties or special needs. Parent education is provide awareness programs for parents regarding comprehensive readiness indicators beyond age or academic skills. Curriculum alignment is adjust the early primary education curriculum to be more developmentally appropriate and child-centered in its early weeks. Further research: future studies should expand to different regions and include longitudinal tracking to assess the long-term effects of transition readiness on academic outcomes.

### **Limitations**

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small and limited to participants from a single city, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Second, the data were collected solely through semi-structured interviews without triangulation with other sources such as classroom observations or document analysis. This may influence the depth and breadth of the insights obtained. Finally, as the researcher is also an educator in early childhood education, reflexive awareness was maintained throughout the process to minimize potential bias; however, researcher positionality may still have influenced interpretation. Future studies could expand the sample, include multiple regions, and employ mixed methods to strengthen the robustness of the findings.

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