

# Dimensions of Early Childhood Character Education Based on Multiculturalism

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**Abstract**—This study examines the dimensions of early childhood character education based on multicultural relating to human relations. Research locations in the Central Java Province, especially the Ex Yogyakarta Residency. The research subjects were 451 children from 26 PAUD institutions. The research method used is quantitative. The analysis used is a confirmatory factor analysis. The results of the study obtained the dimensions of character relations of fellow relations consists of: aware of the rights and obligations of self and others; comply with legal and customary rules; appreciate the work and achievements of others; and polite behavior to fellow people. All these indicators contribute to children's attitudes or behaviors in building relationships. Based on the value of the biggest loading factor, it was obtained indicators of polite behavior to the most dominant people in multicultural-based early childhood character education.

**Keywords:** *character education, early childhood, multicultural, human relations*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Character building is one of the national education purposes. Article 1 of the 2003 National Education System Law states that among the objectives of national education is to develop the potential of students to have intelligence, personality, and noble character. Furthermore, in Article 3 it is stated that, the aim of national education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become responsible citizens [1], so there is a need for character education at every level of education.

Character education is a national movement that makes schools as agents to cultivate noble character values through learning and example [2]. In principle, character development is not included as a separate subject, but is integrated into subjects, self-development, and educational unit culture [3], further stating: (1) educators and educational units need to integrate values developed in character education into the existing curriculum, syllabus, (2) the principle of learning used in the development of character education seeks that students recognize and accept character values, as belonging to students and are responsible for the decisions taken, and (3) with this principle students learn through the process of thinking, behaving, and acting. So, these three processes are intended to develop the ability of students to carry out social activities and see themselves as social beings [3].

It is time for the preparation of an educational curriculum explored based on national culture, especially

local wisdom. Character education should be based on culture, namely the excavation of existing noble values. This view reveals the importance of cultural values to be integrated into the curriculum [4]. In the context of cultural diversity, there is a known multicultural concept. In multicultural culture, everyone can interact and transact even though each has a different cultural background [5].

Multicultural based character education is the right alternative answer to the problem of Indonesia because of a pluralistic nation such as diverse tribes, regional cultures, religions, and various other political aspects, as well as the geography of the largest archipelagic country [6]. Meanwhile, it has become the nature of the Indonesian people to be a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-indigenous, and multi-tradition nation [7]. Multicultural education is a process of cultivating life sincerely with respect and tolerance for cultural diversity living amid society, thus giving birth to moral persons [6].

Multicultural based character education at the early childhood level is very important. The educational values learned will make children behave well and have intellectual intelligence. Education for early childhood is an effort to stimulate, guide, nurture and provide learning activities that will produce children's abilities and skills. Education for early childhood is an education carried out for newborn children up to eight years [8]. In connection with this, early childhood education is held for children from birth to six years and is not a requirement to attend basic education [9].

Early childhood education is held before the level of basic education through formal, non-formal, and/or informal education. In the context of formal education can be in the form of kindergarten (TK), and Raudhatul Atrial (RA), and other forms of equal. While in the non-formal path can be in the form of a playgroup (KB) and Child Penitentiary (TPA), as well as other forms of learning, while informal education paths take the form of family education or education organized by the environment [10].

Still in the context of a variety of early childhood education, in ASEAN countries, for example in Philippines in the form of a childcare center under the auspices of the Family Development Program (FDP) which fosters children aged 0-3 years, and Early childhood Care Development (ECCD), this program done for 2 years starting at 7 years old. In Vietnam, it is childcare centers and kindergartens under the auspices of early childhood care and education (ECCE) [11], [12].

Early childhood education does not only fulfill human rights to get an education as early as possible through formal, non-formal and informal channels but also as a foundation for the growth and development of all children's potential. The goals of early childhood education are: (1) children are able to worship, know and believe in God's creation and love their fellow humans, (2) children are able to think logically, be critical, give reasons, solve problems and find causal relationships, and (3) children are able to recognize the natural environment, social environment, the role of society and respect social and cultural diversity and are able to develop self-concept, positive attitudes towards learning, self-control and a sense of belonging to More [8].

In the context of character values that must be instilled in early childhood, details the character values that must be built for early childhood including: honest; express the contents of the heart; not hurt each other; mutual help; return goods in their place; alternately speaking; give friends the opinion; queued; mutual respect; speak well and politely; listen to other people speak; modeling behavior, so that efforts to develop the character education dimension as a strategy for implementing multicultural based character education are very important to do in PAUD. The development of the principle of multicultural based character value education is integrative, compact, and consistent. Integrative means integrating multicultural character education into all programs and activities. *Kompak* means that all components of education have the same attitudes and views in implementing multicultural based character education. Consistent means that all components of education have consistent attitudes and views in implementing multicultural based character education in PAUD [13].

Planting these character values is a very difficult thing. Therefore, at the PAUD level, several main character values are selected which are summarized from the points of SKL PAUD (Ministry of Education Regulation Number 23 of 2010) and SK / KD (Ministry of Education Regulation Number 22 of 2010). Ministry of National Education 2010, Character Education in PAUD, Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education Management, Directorate of Middle School Development; The following are aspects of the main characters referred to and briefly described: (1) character values in relation to divinity, thoughts, words, and actions of a person who are pursued are always based on divine values and/or religious teachings, (2) character values in relation to oneself: honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love for the country, respect for achievement, friendship, peace of mind, love to read, caring for the environment, social care, responsibility, (3) character values in their relationship with others: be aware of the rights and obligations of themselves and others, comply with legal and customary rules, respect the work and achievements of others, polite behavior of fellow people, (4) character values related to the environment: attitudes and actions that always strive to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, always want to provide assistance to other people and communities who need, (5) national values: ways of thinking, insights that place the interests of the nation and state above the interests of

themselves and their groups; nationalist; respect diversity [3].

Issues that are not less important in early childhood education based on multicultural character are social aspects (relationships or interaction with others). A child will interact with other children if they have social abilities that are inside themselves. During the age of kindergarten, children can interact with other children in the playgroup, with other people around them, such as exploring the environment and making peer group ties [14].

Children have also been able to interact with their family members and with their teachers, with their friends and relatives well [15]. The social interaction is a range of new experiences for children in the social world situation they face [16]. Where around them some play, that's where they will join in playing together. There are negotiations and there are interactions between them quickly [17], and they're also how they learn friends, learn to solve problems [15], that's where the interaction between children is.

At the age of kindergarten, there were social changes. This is a characteristic that can be characterized in general normal children, and they have been able to learn to socialize themselves in cultural support. At this stage of development, they have also been able to interpret events as social structures and processes, standards and value formation processes. Early childhood social development in this case kindergarten children through play, means character education. In the context of this character, to be someone polite, honest, responsible, fair, and obedient to laws and rules [18].

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach. The design of this study examines the dimensions of early childhood character education based on multicultural education at the PAUD School. The research location is in the Central Java Province, especially the Ex Yogyakarta Residency. The research subjects are shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

City / Regency	PAUD School	Sample
Bantul	6 PAUD	118
Kolun Progo	1 PAUD	18
Gunung Kidul	7 PAUD	117
Sleman	5 PAUD	86
Kota Yogyakarta	7 PAUD	112
Total	26 PAUD	451

The dimensions of character education related to humans consist of: (1) being aware of the rights and responsibilities of others, (2) comply with legal and customary rules, (3) appreciation of the work and achievements of others, and (4) polite behavior to fellow people.

he instruments for collecting data uses a questionnaire sheet filled in by the teacher. The instrument was used to collect data on the dimensions of early childhood character education based on multicultural relating to human relations. The instrument contains 13 items that measure 4 indicators, namely HK: aware of the rights and obligations of self and others; AH: obey legal and customary rules; MH: respecting the work and achievements of others; and PS: polite behavior to fellow people.

Quantitative data obtained were analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a second-order approach. Using the LISREL 8.50 program, to facilitate the analysis process. The criteria used to state the model of fit board (model compatibility) there are three types of goodness of fit, namely absolute fit indices, incremental fit indices, and parsimonious [19], [20].

The estimated reliability of the character assessment instrument for children of this age is done using composite reliability and construct reliability. The composite reliability estimation of character assessment instruments was analyzed using the Alpha formula from Cronbach as follows [21].

$$\alpha = \left( \frac{k}{k-1} \right) \left( 1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_i^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right) \tag{1}$$

Information:

$\alpha$  = instrument reliability coefficient  
 k = number of items statement

$\sigma_t^2$  = total score variance

$\sum \sigma_i^2$  = number of instrument variances

Estimation of composite reliability will use the SPSS 20 for windows program assistance. The criteria used as a reference to express a reliable character assessment instrument, referring to the opinion of Cortina [22], that if the alpha coefficient is 0.7 or greater, then the character assessment instrument is declared reliable. Construct reliability is estimated using the following formula [23].

$$\omega = \frac{\left( \sum_{i=1}^k \lambda_i \right)^2}{\left( \sum_{i=1}^k \lambda_i \right)^2 + \left( \sum_{i=1}^k \theta_{ii} \right)} \tag{2}$$

Information:

$\lambda$  = load factor

$\theta$  = unique variant of each item

$\omega$  = coefficient of construct reliability

The criteria used as a reference to express good construct reliability, referring to the opinion [19], that if the construct reliability coefficient must be equal to 0.6 or greater, it is said to meet good criteria.

### III. RESEARCH RESULTS

Data obtained from the study were analyzed by second-order confirmatory factor analysis. The analysis process is carried out twice, namely the initial analyst and reanalysis. The reanalysis process was carried out because in the initial analysis it was found that there were items that did not meet the criteria for loading factors (greater or equal to 0.5). The results of the initial analysis and reanalysis are explained as follows.

#### A. Initial analysis results

Based on the data obtained from the analysis carried out and obtained results as presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2. RESULTS OF CFA SECOND-ORDER ANALYSIS

No	Goodness of Fit	Cut of Value	Value	Decision
1	NFI	≥ 0.90	0.94	good
2	CFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	good
3	IFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	good
4	RFI	≥ 0.90	0.91	good
5	AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.90	good

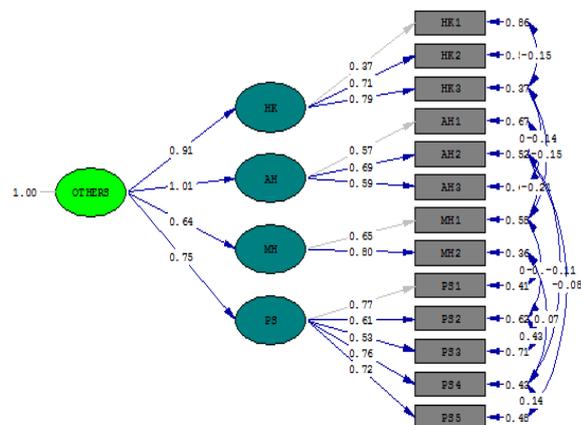
Based on Table 2, it appears that according to the requirements of goodness of fit on the type of incremental fit it has been fulfilled because the value obtained is following the required interval so that the obtained model is appropriate. Because the model that is in line with the character of multicultural early childhood education related to human relations in the residency of Yogyakarta consists of: being aware of the rights and responsibilities of others and themselves; comply with legal and customary rules; Award for works and achievements of others; and polite behavior to fellow people.

The dimensions of the relationship between children and fellow humans have thirteen items of statements. Based on the output of standardized factor loading, items HK2, HK3, AH1, AH2, AH3, MH1, MH2, PS1, PS2, PS3, PS4, and PS5 > 0.5, while HK1 = 0.37 < 0.5. This can be shown from the second-order CFA diagram based on the standard solution in Fig. 1 and the second-order CFA diagram based on the t-value in Fig. 2.

Based on loading factors and t-values, it appears that there is only one item, namely HK1, which is an item of an invalid HK indicator. This can be seen from the t-value smaller than the 1.96 t-table value so that 12 items contribute to each indicator of the child's relationship with each other.

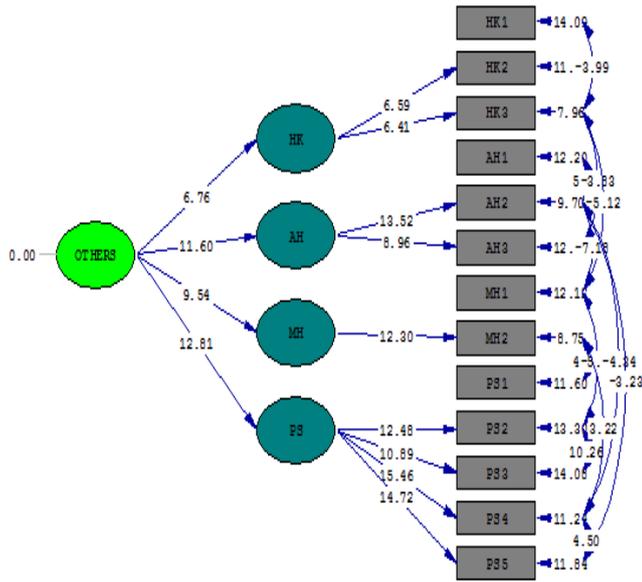
Besides, based on Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, the value of factor loading from the indicators HK, AH, MH, PS > 0.5 and t-value > 1.96, means that each indicator contributes to the dimensions of children's character education related to fellow relations.

Based on analyst reliability obtained by the value of internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of more than 0.85 and the value of construct reliability ( $\omega$ ) more than 0.60.



Chi-Square=156.78, df=48, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.071

Fig. 1. CFA Second Order diagram based on Standardized Solution



Chi-Square=156.78, df=48, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.071

Fig. 2. CFA Second-Order diagram based on T-value

**B. Results of Reanalysis**

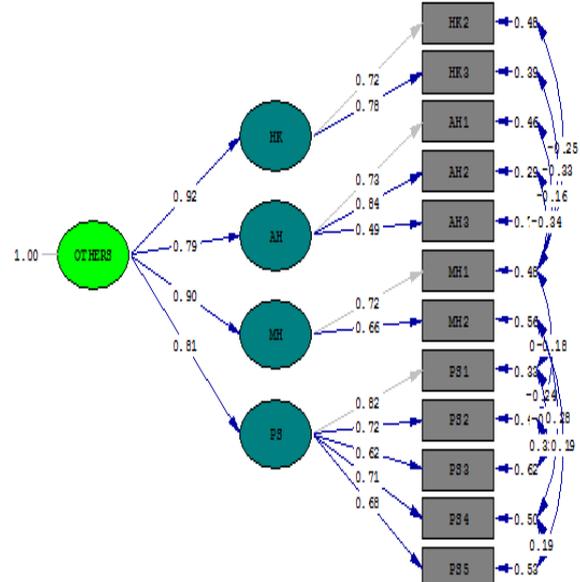
Reanalysis was carried out on data from 12 statements. Based on the data obtained, the analysis is carried out and results are obtained as presented in Table 3.

TABEL 3. RESULT OF ANALISIS CFA SECOND ORDER

No	Goodness of Fit	Cut of Value	Value	Decision
1	NFI	≥ 0.90	0.95	good
2	CFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	good
3	IFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	good
4	RFI	≥ 0.90	0.91	good
5	AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.90	good

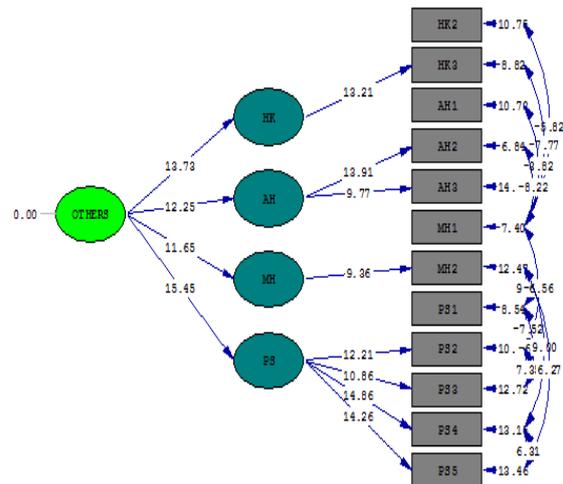
Based on Table 3, it appears that the overall requirements for the goodness of fit on the type of incremental fit have been fulfilled because the values obtained are in the required intervals, so it is said that the model obtained is fit. Because the model fit, the dimensions of early childhood education based on multicultural character related to human relations in the residency of Yogyakarta consists of: aware of the rights and obligations of self and others; comply with legal and customary rules; appreciate the work and achievements of others; and polite behavior to fellow people.

The dimensions of the relationship between children and fellow human beings have twelve statements. Based on the output of standardized factor loading, items HK2, HK3, AH1, AH2, AH3, MH1, MH2, PS1, PS2, PS3, PS4, and PS5 > 0.5 are obtained. This can be shown from the second-order CFA diagram based on the standard solution in Fig. 3 and the second-order CFA diagram based on the t-value in Fig. 4.



Chi-Square=131.87, df=38, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.074

Fig.3. CFA Second-Order diagram based on Standardized Solution



Chi-Square=131.87, df=38, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.074

Fig. 4. CFA Second-Order diagram based on T-value

Based on loading factors and t-values, it appears that only all items are valid. This can be seen from the t-value greater than the 1.96 t-table value, so that it can be said that the 12 statement items contribute to each indicator of the child's relationship with others. Besides, based on Fig. 3 and Fig. 4, the value of loading factors from the indicators HK, AH, MH, PS > 0.5 and the t-value > 1.96, means that each indicator contributes to the dimensions of children's character education related to fellow relations. Based on analyst reliability obtained by the value of internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of more than 0.88 and the value of construct reliability ( $\omega$ ) more than 0.60.

#### IV. DISCUSSIONS

Education in early childhood is a very important initial process (the golden age) that must be a concern and responsibility in the family environment, especially both parents. Early childhood education is held before the level of basic education through formal, non-formal, and/or informal education [10]. One of the goals is for children to be able to worship, know and believe in God's creation and love their fellow humans [8]. For this goal to be achieved, it needs to be implemented in the character education of multicultural early childhood.

Based on the results of this study, it was found that early childhood character education is related to human relations in Central Jawa, especially in the Ex Yogyakarta Residency, it can be said to be successful. The dimensions of fellow human relations include: (1) being aware of the rights and obligations of self and others; (2) comply with legal and customary rules; (3) respect for the work and achievements of others; and (4) polite behavior towards fellow people. This shows that character education in the especially the Ex Yogyakarta Residency, including in Bantul, Kulon Progo, Gunung Kidul, Sleman and the City of Yogyakarta, is following government programs to strengthen character education as stated in the Republic of Indonesia Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017.

Strengthening character education is a very difficult thing. Therefore, at the PAUD level, several main character values are selected which are summarized from the points of SKL PAUD (Ministry of Education Regulation Number 23 of 2010) and SK / KD (Ministry of Education Regulation Number 22 of 2010). Ministry of National Education 2010, Character Education in PAUD, Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education Management, Directorate of Middle School Development.

Based on the results of the study (the results of the reanalysis) it was found that the dominant indicator based on the value of loading the biggest factor was the indicator of polite behavior towards fellow people (PS). These results illustrate that character education that has been held through formal education, such as kindergarten (TK), and the rhetoric of the Raudhatul Atrial (RA) in the Yogyakarta presidency has had a good impact on the development of the character of early childhood, where they have been able to appreciate and behaving or being polite to others, but not seeing differences in ethnicity, customs, culture, and religion.

Multicultural character education is the right solution in the process of early childhood education in Indonesia. The Indonesian nation is a pluralistic nation such as a variety of tribes, regional cultures, religions, and various other political aspects, as well as geographical conditions [6]. Besides, the character education of early childhood in the Ex Yogyakarta Residency is seen as something strategic in the step of squeezing superior and strong future generations. Therefore, early childhood education pays attention to the potential of children to be developed as optimally as possible, cheerful, caring and loving, patient and sincere. The development of the potential of early childhood must also pay attention to the social conditions, culture, beliefs, and beliefs, religion and values that apply in the community environment in the Yogyakarta residency.

The results of this study also show that early childhood in the Ex Yogyakarta Residency has developed good attitudes or behaviors that are aware of the rights and obligations of themselves and others; comply with legal and customary rules, and appreciate the work and achievements of others, so that character education. Based on the value of the smallest loading factor, the indicators comply with legal and customary rules that need to be improved in the process of character education for early childhood in PAUD institutions. The development of good behavior will potentially continue to develop in a positive direction.

Through multicultural character education, the kindergarten educators in the Ex Yogyakarta Residency must be able to encourage and condition children's social and emotional attitudes. A child will interact with other children if they have social abilities that are inside themselves. During the age of kindergarten, children can interact with other children in the playgroup, with others around them [14]. Besides, early childhood educators must be able to integrate cultural values into the curriculum.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of data analysis, and the discussion can be concluded as follows,

1. The dimensions of character education for early childhood based on multicultural aspects relating to fellow relations in the Ex Yogyakarta Residency consist of: being aware of the rights and obligations of self and others; comply with legal and customary rules; appreciate the work and achievements of others; and polite behavior to fellow people.
2. Besides, polite behavior towards fellow people is a dominant factor (indicator) developing in early childhood at the Ex Yogyakarta Residency.
3. On the contrary, obeying the rules of law and custom is a less dominant factor (indicator) that develops in early childhood at the Ex Yogyakarta Residency

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