

# The Importance of Multicultural Education in Early Childhood Education Programs

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to discuss further related to the importance of multicultural education in early childhood educators. Multicultural Education aims to make children have mutual respect and tolerance in society from various cultures in Indonesia. One of the most appropriate alternatives in implementing multicultural-based education is in early childhood education institutions, because early childhood is the most appropriate period in developing all aspects of child development and the formation of the best character for children. Therefore, this study examines further the importance of multicultural education in early childhood education. This research uses literature study research, using several research sources in the form of articles and journals that were previously researched. This study focuses on the importance of Multicultural Education in early childhood education. This is an important part for children because it can form good character and personality in the future. This is evidenced by the results of previous researchers that are relevant to the importance of Multicultural Education in early childhood education.

**Keywords:** *Multicultural Education, Early Childhood Education*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism is one way to build national unity and integrity in a country. This can be seen clearly from that the Indonesian nation is a nation that has various kinds of cultural diversity, therefore the Indonesian nation requires its people to be able to live in harmony and peace even though they have to live together. live close to each other [1].

Multiculturalism is one of the tools or vehicles that can increase the point of view of humans from one another and form a sense of humanity. Multiculturalism recognizes exalting differences in equality both individually and culturally. Multiculturalism's view of society have a culture that is generally accepted in society whose style is like a mosaic. The mosaic includes all the cultures of the smaller communities that make up the creation of the larger society, which has a culture like the mosaic.

Multicultural education is one alternative as a vehicle for learning to foster an attitude of tolerance, especially for early childhood. This multicultural education is an effort to interpret the meaning of culture at this time, but not only that culture is defined as regional, but also attitudes and behaviors or actions that must also be understood as differences that are respected as long as they do not deviate from the order

of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Multicultural education is the process of developing the attitudes and behavior of a person or group of people in an effort to mature humans through teaching efforts, providing training, processes, actions, and ways of educating others both in plurality and heterogeneity as well as humanistically, [2]. Early childhood education is very instrumental in anticipating or contributing or also in instilling religious and moral values in early childhood [3].

Multicultural education is a process by using internalizing students or multiculturalist characters in order to be able to appreciate various aspects of differences that exist in society with various variations and variations [4]. This multicultural education can also shape students into character. Multiculturalism through educational facilities by internalizing the intrinsic values that show the multiculturalist behavior [5]

Multicultural education is a culture of transformation through education that respects each other at various levels or differences within the boundaries of national unity between cultural groups, whether black, white, women, men or the oppressed. good. Therefore, an educational curriculum that can cover subjects such as tolerance, themes about ethnic/cultural differences, religion, language, discrimination, conflict resolution and mediation,

human rights, democracy or plurality, and community life as a whole is used.

Multicultural education has an important role in providing things that are potentially positive for the development of early childhood so that later it can create peace in the future. This multicultural-based education should be able to be developed in the school curriculum, besides that its implementation can also be carried out as one of the activities in the extra-curricular field or it can be a part of the school curriculum which will later be included in a special field for areas with high economy. This multicultural-based education will play an important role in implementing the use of reducing and resolving conflicts in social life more broadly. With the existence of multicultural-based education, it will change the mindset and shape the behavior of early childhood so that they become more open and understand and can appreciate the cultural diversity that surrounds them.

One alternative that can be used in implementing and channeling multiculturalism is through education. This is because education is an effective and most appropriate container or means in implementing the view of multiculturalism in life. Learning in the application of the view of multiculturalism is learning by understanding something real, introducing various cultures, and fostering mutual respect for the various differences that exist in society. Education then formalizes the perspective of multiculturalism so that it becomes multicultural education (Multicultural education [6]).

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a literature study research methodology or also called literature study, Harahap in (Larasani, et al. 2020) suggests that literature study is also called library research because to answer the research problem it is obtained through the results of library studies such as through books, encyclopedias, documents, magazines, dictionaries, journals and others.

In addition, according to [7] suggests that the study of literature is one way to find information and library research by examining journals and books, on the topic of a research that aims to get an article on a particular material. The steps that the researchers took in completing the results of this study were collecting reading sources, which became a reference source in this study in the form of articles and journals that were relevant to the importance of multicultural education in early childhood education.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Basically, multicultural education is a must in exploring and understanding the basic ideas that aim to enable students to give freedom and rights to every

basic part of society, race, ethnicity, religion and various levels of social class that exist by establishing justice and equality. . Strategies in the absence of multicultural values that can be done with education that can be applied to multicultural values education from an early age, namely from birth to the age of six years. Because early childhood is the most appropriate period in shaping the character and personality of children which will determine the personality in the future. As experts argue that children at an early age are the most appropriate period in developing each growth and development and this cannot be repeated in subsequent periods [8].

### **3.1 Multicultural Education for Early Childhood**

Providing planting and understanding of the attitude of multiculturalism needs to be done from an early age. The planting is of course through the development of multicultural awareness. Mutual respect and understanding of cultural diversity in society, gender and social classes is a form of multicultural awareness. In this way, it is possible to recognize and understand one's own culture, by designing programs and various related activities in an effort to provide understanding and introduction to other cultures while making children aware of the richness and nature of their own culture. By providing other cultural learning while still providing an understanding of the child's own culture, it can be easier to make it possible to respect each other and unite any differences to make similarities without anyone feeling lacking. of the strengths or weaknesses of one another.

As for one understanding that plays a sudden role in providing an understanding of multicultural awareness, namely early childhood education (PAUD). When a child enters PAUD it doesn't mean it's not like a blank white paper without knowing anything about differences. However, actually the children have brought their own data banks which provide observations about the characteristics of people. Prejudice in general about a particular group of self-conceived theories about the reasons for the effects of diversity.

[9] suggests several ways that can be done in a planned manner in implementing multicultural education which is very important for early childhood, which can be done in the following ways:

Multicultural education should be seen as one of the educational programs, in the sense that it is not an activity of schooling or used as programs of formal schools. However, multicultural education should be carried out in a planned and structured way as one of the educational programs, in fact it should enter every area that has been prepared regarding the diversity of various cultures and in this case there should be efforts that must be made in avoiding every difference from the culture of each child, it is very necessary to instill

an attitude of mutual help and tolerance in each child. With the aim that education is not only with formal activities alone without the formation of behavior through touch on the child itself. So the application of learning in children must be considered in the psychosociological aspect, so that whatever has been planned can be carried out in accordance with the goals and expectations to be achieved.

Education with multiculturalism should be able to prevent a common view of culture as a group with each other. Therefore, each individual must have a level of competence from various languages, which is one way of understanding situations that make that understanding later appropriate. At the early childhood level, how to implement multicultural education can be done through providing an introduction to the types of cultural differences in general in Indonesian society, and building a sense of mutual respect and understanding in the absence of inferior culture and superior culture. Early childhood understands the pattern of every similarity in view, every difference that exists is from God which can cover every aspect that exists.

Promoting multicultural-based education at every school level in Indonesia, which aims to increase understanding of the various cultures that exist in Indonesia. About what culture will be embraced by someone it depends on a situation and at a certain time. Although there is a clear connection, there must be a mature distinction between the identities that will be held by individuals and clear social identities in the particular groups they occupy. For example, in an early childhood class, each of them must have their favorite food and some like the same food, some like different foods, the differences and similarities are used as justification. Teach them about understanding why one child likes that and the other child likes that. This will later create a positive picture for multicultural education in early childhood.

This education must not eliminate the element of multiculturalism, because it includes parts of education about science and religion, which in real life are basically multidimensional. Thus the children in understanding and living will be different so that behavior and behavior can be seen that respect and understand each other, so that it will create a culture of peace and serenity. How to improve a culture of peace in children's areas cannot be separated from the educational activities they have to get at school, at home, or in society. After that, Peace education should prioritize the differences in talents, interests of children, and also the different capacities of each child. Children must also be able to express themselves to develop in a culture of peace.

### ***3.2 The Importance of Multicultural Education for Early Childhood***

[9] defines multicultural education as previously explained as a reform movement that has replaced all components of education, including replacing the value of the nature of education, thus the procedures for compiling curriculum, designing procedures, determining teaching materials, determining organizational structure and in accordance with with government policies that can describe social and political interactions as a reality in society in Indonesia. In the element of early childhood education, multicultural education is very useful and it is only natural that it is developed from an early age, thus adding certain risks to development and peace in the future.

Its application can form national candidates who can recognize the differences and can also carry out life in the same direction to be able to instill good multicultural education values for early childhood, namely instilling the values of equality, democratic values, values of mutual tolerance, and values of providing justice. These pillars can result in the achievement of basic values that are so urgent that they are needed in realizing a good solution in the life of early childhood, it can also have consequences in the future.

### ***3.3 Principles of Multicultural Education***

[10] Multicultural education has the following principles:

- a. Multicultural education is a political movement that the goal is to be social for all citizens and society regardless of the existing background.
- b. Multicultural education has two elements, namely learning called classes and their institutions or schools between the two elements cannot be separated, because they are mutually comprehensive in creating good education.
- c. Multicultural education requires a change for the better in the field of education comprehensively with a critical analysis of the system in education.

From the critical analysis, the goal of multicultural education is obtained, namely the guarantee of opportunities so that all children can achieve good learning so as to produce maximum achievement in accordance with the abilities of each child. namely instilling the value of equality, the value of democracy, the value of mutual tolerance, and the value of providing justice, from these four pillars can result in the achievement of basic values that are so urgent that they are needed in realizing a good solution to the life of early childhood, it can also have consequences in the future. which will come.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Multicultural education is a process by using internalize students or multiculturalist characters in order to be able to appreciate various aspects of differences that exist in society with various variations and variations. There are still many reasons for the importance of implementing multicultural education in early childhood education, namely being able to form national candidates who can recognize the differences and can also carry out life in the same direction to be able to instill the values of good multicultural education for early childhood, namely the values of tolerance, democratic values, values. equality, and the value of justice. of the four values can result in the achievement of basic values and is very much needed in realizing conflict resolution in early childhood life, it can also have consequences in the future.

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