

## **A CULTURE DAY PROGRAM: REALIZATION OF STRATEGY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTICULTURAL-BASED LEARNING IN TK EL MU'JIZAH MALANG IN COVID ERA**

**Risma Chulashotud Diana<sup>1</sup>, Khoirunnisa<sup>2</sup>, Zahid Zufar At Thaariq<sup>3</sup>, Anggit Prasetyo Nugroho<sup>4</sup>, Romi Mahendra<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1,3</sup>Educational Technology, Universitas Negeri Malang

<sup>2</sup>Early Childhood Teacher Education, Universitas Negeri Malang

<sup>4</sup>English Language Education, IAIN Fattahul Muluk Papua

<sup>5</sup>Arabic Language Education, Universitas Negeri Malang

E-mail: [rismachulashotuddiana@gmail.com](mailto:rismachulashotuddiana@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [khoirunnisa581997@gmail.com](mailto:khoirunnisa581997@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [zahidthoriq123@gmail.com](mailto:zahidthoriq123@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>, [anggitprasetyo72@gmail.com](mailto:anggitprasetyo72@gmail.com)<sup>4</sup>, [romisarab@gmail.com](mailto:romisarab@gmail.com)<sup>5</sup>

**Abstract:** Humans are God's creature which has various potentials. They are given five senses in their lives. This potential must be used appropriately as a provision in their life. To exploit all of our capabilities, inevitably, there must be a guide to make it runs according to the expectation. Socio-culture is the part of human life that is the closest to daily life; as a result, every human activity is inseparable from the socio-cultural elements. The form of education with cultural diversity is characterized by diversity in gender, ethnicity, race, culture, social strata, and religion as a form of response that the diversity in society. Diversity includes the scope of education, which is set in curriculum development and educational activities, specifically in the realm of early childhood education, which is known as multicultural education. Kindergarten, as a forum from one of multicultural education, existed in the 2000s aims to reach the children from all layers of society. The culture day program is a program that needs to be implemented in TK El-Mu'jizah with the aim that the children can recognize the diversity that exists in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** a culture day program, multicultural-based learning, kindergarten.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Covid-19 has provided various effects of change in multiple fields, specifically education. The government establishes policy to carry out online learning for all formal education programs so that the learning process keeps going on during the pandemic era. Thus, the policy becomes a big challenge for education practitioners in instilling educational character earlier.

Indonesia is facing a significant change in the life systems of society, nation, and state (Kusuma, 2013). Externally, globalization has begun to confront and challenge this country for years. The globalization era requires open attitudes towards the change of entire aspects of life, including differences, diversity, and cultural pluralism (Banks, 2014; Nadziroh, 2014). In the background of early childhood education, an attitude toward the differences, diversity, and cultural pluralism increasingly becomes essential issues for several reasons: (a) there is a diversity of social elements in the community, (b) there is a relationship that leads to the consequences of cultural

pluralism in the community, and (c) the early childhood education is expected to be able to grow and develop the achievements of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains which directed at the achievement of shared interests and national integration.

In early childhood education, there is intermingling among children with different backgrounds and cultural diversity, so that raises a multicultural society. A multicultural society is a society in which there is a growing diversity of cultures (Kinowska & Lim, 2017; Kymlicka, 2020; Sutarto, 2016). Thus, multicultural society is composed of various life and different value orientations. Cultural differences or diversity (pluralism) must be seen as a normal phenomenon so that it can be wisely recognized the group identities and acceptances of cultural differences which developed in the society as a blessing. We need awareness and understanding of the map of the world that every community has different experiences, cultures, desires, goals, and (Schumm, 2017; Sutarto, 2016). Every community has self-identity that is built up through a complex and unique linkage of race, ethnicity, social strata, language, religion, gender, ability and skills, and other cultural influences (Healey et al., 2018; Primecz et al., 2016; Sutarto, 2016).

Regarding the differences, diversity, and pluralism, as explained above, the early childhood education must be designed by considering a multicultural orientation, and future-oriented (Jannah, 2017; Joshee et al., 2016; Manning et al., 2017; Schachner et al., 2016). Surakhmad (1999) provides an essential and exciting list of paradigm changes or shifts, from past-oriented to the future-oriented, namely: (a) education that prioritizes the value of aristocratic feudal cultural life is transformed into an education that promotes the cultural value of democracy; (b) the transition of centralized management of education into the management of education based on community strengths; (c) the transition of educational attitudes that prioritizes uniformity into attitudes that respect uniformity; (d) the shift from the view that education is the implementation of the obligation into the view that education is to educate and bring to people on human rights; and (e) ]the transition from conformist educational attitudes into motivational, stimulating, appreciating creativity and innovation, dynamic, real and contextual.

The revolution framework offered by Surakhmad above clearly shows the complexity of changes in educational paradigms. The shift of paradigm in education should be done, including non-formal education. As a consequence, it requires a philosophical orientation of multicultural learning so that learning acquisition is not just for survival, but it is more competitive in challenging the globalization era.

## **METHODS**

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach to describe a program called “Culture Day,” which was pursued in the implementation of multicultural-based learning at TK El-Mu’jizah Malang. Then, the data would be collected and described as a depiction of the analysis result

(Sugiyono, 2019). This study used observation, interview, and documentation to collect the data. The subjects of this study were the headmaster and the teachers. The reason for selecting the subjects was those people could represent the object of this study. To analyze the data of this study, the researchers begun with gathering all of the collected data. Then, data reduction was carried out by clarifying and discarding unnecessary data. The final step was concluding as an attempt to find the meaning of the presented data.

## **DISCUSSION**

Learning is a process of teaching and learning activities to achieve learning goals and competencies that have been determined (Ibrahim, 1985; Kuswandi et al., 2018; Surahman et al., 2019). Teachers' activities provided some learning materials to the students with the aim of the students to gain knowledge and motivation to learn (Thaariq, Kuswandi, et al., 2019). Learning is the teachers' effort to affect the students to be able to receive knowledge. In the teaching and learning process, the teachers have to consider teaching media that they can use in their teaching to help the students achieve the goals. Thus, what should we consider in the teaching and learning process are the objectives of learning, materials, methods, media, and evaluation of learning (Miarso, 2004; Thaariq et al., 2019)

Multiculturalism is an alternative expression of cultural diversity (Iwai, 2017; Kamp et al., 2018; Rosyada, 2014; Talukder, 2019). Parekh (2008) states that "cultural diversity occurs with the existence of various kinds of human beings who have understood themselves, cultural diversity has solid foundations." It is in line with Siti Imzanah, quoted in Masngud (2010) that "multicultural comes from the word of multi which means more than one and culture means the customs of a particular people or social group, then it can be concluded that multicultural implies that there is a recognition of the people's dignity who live in their communities along with their unique cultures." Acep Fauzil Fajri also has a similar opinion, as cited in Masngud (2010), that multiculturalism is a recognition of the diversity of emerged religious identities, race, and ethnicity. Cultural identities such as religion and ethnicity arise as a politics of emphasizing individualism and ignoring the community.

Culture is a mindset and pattern of habits, values, language, and ideas possessed by humans (Diayuningsih & Suyanto, 2014; Hoffman & Verdooren, 2019; Ng et al., 2011; Sharifian, 2017). Humans carry values, norms, habits, and beliefs which are learned from home (Inglehart et al., 1998; Lefrancois, 2019; National Academies of Sciences, 2018). According to Banks et al. (2001), "culture is conceptualized as a dynamic and complex process of construction; its invisible and implicit characteristics are emphasized." James A Bank explains that culture is conceptualized from the strengths that belong to a group of people and processes in a complex manner for the way of life of

the people, it is invisible, and it must be adhered to strictly (Banks, 2006, 2014, 2015; Banks et al., 2001).

Bullivant (1993) reveals a similar opinion in Banks et al. (2001: 8) “culture as a group’s program for survival in and adaptation to its environment.” The cultural program consists of knowledge, concepts, and values shared by group members through systems of communication. Culture also consists of shared beliefs, symbols, and interpretations within a human group”. Bullivant defines culture as a group’s plan for life and adaptation in the environment. Culture consists of the knowledge, concepts, and values of a group that is connected as a communication system. Culture also contains beliefs, symbols, and views of a group of people. It is in line with Parekh (2008:166) who says:

“individual is culturally embedded in the body and shaped deeply by the cultural community, due to human creativity, geographical conditions, historical experience, and so forth. Different societies develop systems of sense, ways of looking at the world, ideals of excellence, innate behavior, and different morality and social life”.

Multicultural education eliminates discrimination and provides education without discrimination among children (Figueroa, 2017; Hanum, 2009; Paksoy & Çelik, 2019; Spring, 2017). Banks (2014) argues that the multicultural education is a movement to reform the educational institutions to provide equal opportunities to everyone, regardless of their ethnicity, culture, gender, and origins to obtain knowledge, skills, and the attitude which is needed benefit effectively in the country and the world communities. It is supported by Banks et al. (2001:3) that multicultural education combines everything that exists in the children without regard to their gender, social class, ethnicity, race, or culture to have the equal opportunity to learn in the school.

Indonesia has a condition where the people are diverse in religion, ethnicity, culture, economy, and the other (Sutresna et al., 2018). Multicultural education needs to be considered and implemented (Loller & Murphy, 2016; Perdana et al., 2018; Sahal et al., 2018). By viewing the education that eliminates discrimination, hopefully, the educational institutions in Indonesia provide equal opportunities to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, culture, social class, and gender. Educational institutions without looking at these differences can provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which are required to run effectively in diverse societies.

Adams dan Love (2009) states, “there are four factors in the learning process, namely students’ innate factors, teacher’s innate factors, pedagogical factors, and curriculum content factors.” In line with Banks (2006), the teachers must know ethnic culture and experience to integrate the ethnicity and the content of the curriculum. The curriculum is one of the essential elements in the multicultural education (Akinlar & Dogan, 2017; Banks & Banks, 2019) as well as what Masngud et al. (2010) statements about the multicultural education curriculum::

“The curriculum of multicultural education has a content concerning ethnicity, minority, gender, cultural awareness, relations among human beings, and clarification of values in a culture. The implementation of education needs to concentrate on the cultural differences that exist in the students, such as differences in ethnicity, religion, language, gender, social class, race, ability, and age so that the learning process can be run easily and effectively”.

Schools influence the success of the implementation of multicultural education curricula and the schools' capability to provide learning experiences that can be interpreted as learning outcomes (Pfeiffer, 2018; Slamet, 2020). Diversity becomes an independent variable that has a significant contribution to the success of curriculum implementation (Slamet, 2020; Whaley, 2017). Masngud et al. (2010) said that “diversity is a considered factor in determining philosophy, theory, vision, development, documentary development, socialization, and curriculum implementation.” It is in line with Matsumoto et al. (1996) opinion that individualism has a significant role in the development of multicultural theory and research. Matsumoto et al. (1996) advises that we must focus on individualism in understanding the cultural differences in society because it can produce several ways of assumption in different cultures.

The importance of providing education services for young children has been noticed by the government as formulated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Article 1 paragraph 14 states that early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth until six years old which are carried out through the provision of educational stimulus to help their physical and spiritual growth and development so that the children have the readiness to participate in the next level of education. Furthermore, article 28 states that early childhood education is carried out through formal and non-formal education. Early childhood education is part of formal education, including Kindergarten (*TK*), *Raudlatul Athfal (RA)*, or other equivalent forms. Whereas in non-formal education, early childhood education is organized in the form of Play Groups (*KB*), Daycare Center (*TPA*), or other equivalent forms. Non-formal education is organized in the form of family education or organized by the environment. Both articles stated above indicate that: (a) educational services need to be provided to all children from an early age; (b) formal education and non-formal education equally need to provide opportunities for early childhood to deserve appropriate education, and (c) to support the continuation of the implementation of early childhood education which is necessary to involve the society.

The involvement of non-formal education in the management of early childhood education is based on various considerations. Some of the considerations include: (a) the offered program is more flexible, means that the programs designed by non-formal education adapt to community's needs, interests, age, and learning opportunities; (b) involving the community in program management; (c) prioritizing the humanistic approach in developing human resources; and (d) many

young children from pitiable groups who have inadequate services of education. This condition as a result of economic insufficiency and unawareness of the importance of education for the development of children's potential from early childhood. Therefore alternative approaches are needed in providing educational services (Sutarto, 2016).

Culture Day is a program proposed by the researchers to be implemented at TK El-Mu'jizah to combine all that exists in the children without regard to gender, social class, ethnicity, race, and culture so that they have equal opportunities to learn in school. The children can recognize the cultures of various ethnic groups, languages, and dialects of various provinces. They also can respect each other among cultures and apply their meanings in daily life. This program involves the school principal, the teachers, and parents so that the program runs well and creates a pleasant impression on the children.

The Culture Day program has several agendas. It offers dance performances from various ethnic groups, telling stories using languages and dialects from different tribes, fashion shows using tribal traditional clothing, and introducing regional specialties on the stage. This program is expected to meet the standards of the cultural content curriculum contained in the multicultural curriculum of early childhood.

## **CONCLUSION**

Covid-19, as reported in various media, has an impact on the online learning process, on formal education particularly. Therefore, attempts to provide understanding and implantation of multicultural values can be carried out through multicultural learning throughout both formal and non-formal education. Non-formal education is carried out through a variety of programs, and broad targets, one of them is early childhood education. Early childhood education is believed to play a role in shaping the children's character from an early age so that in the future, they will have nationalism that is embedded and engraved deeply in their hearts. For this reason, it is necessary to have a multicultural learning design that was developed in the implementation of early childhood education programs, which is A Culture Day Program. The design of multicultural learning in the setting of early childhood education is developed throughout andragogy and dialogic approaches. It emphasizes the principle of self-reliance so that the curriculum is designed by considering the needs of the target groups, especially in terms of knowledge, combined with the implantation and development of attitudes that upholding the meanings and values of integration, differ in unity, and unite even in the diversity.

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