

# Multicultural in Early Childhood Education

M Syarif Sumantri  
Jakarta National University (UNJ)  
sumantri\_pd3@yahoo.co.id

## Abstract

*In early childhood multicultural education should be taught through learning how to accommodate all dimensions of the characteristics of early childhood through proper selection of themes, multi-method integration, develop programs tailored to the practice of child development, humanistic approach to learning using the plan prepared in units of daily activities , on the implementation multi-cultural education in early childhood through environmental arrangement that utilizes a variety of media and learning cultural resources, creating a multi-cultural learning atmosphere fairly, naturally, the need for culturally diverse schools that promote multicultural education effectively.*

Key words: multicultural, Early Childhood Education, integrated learning, multi-method.

## Introduction

In general, multicultural education is a concept that was created with the aim to create equal educational opportunities for all students of different racial, ethnic, social class and cultural groups. One important goal of the concept of multicultural education is to help all students to acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills needed in carrying out these roles as effectively as possible in a pluralistic and democratic society, needed to interact, negotiation, and communication with citizens of diverse groups in order to create an immoral society that runs for the common good.

In its implementation, according to the Sudrajat (: 2008:1) paradigm of multicultural education are required to adhere to the following principles:

- multicultural education should offer a diverse curriculum that represents their views and perspectives of many people.
- multicultural education should be based on the assumption that no single interpretation of historical truth.

- The curriculum is achieved in accordance with comparative analysis with emphasis on the point of view of different cultures.
- multicultural education should support the principle of principal-in combating stereotypical view of race, culture and religion.

Multicultural education reflects a balance between understanding the similarities and differences in culture encourages individuals to maintain and expand cultural horizons and their own culture.

Furthermore relation to early childhood education that is importance of early childhood education has become the international attention. In a meeting of the World Education Forum in Dakar Senegal in 2000 produced six agreements as a framework of action education for all and one egg is to expand and improve the overall care and early childhood education, especially for children who are very vulnerable and less fortunate, Indonesia as one member of the forum is bound to implement this commitment.

International attention to the urgency of early childhood education, reinforced by various recent study of the brain. By the time the baby was born she had provided God with a complete brain structure, but only reached maturity after outside the womb. Newborn babies have more than 100 billion neurons and about one trillion glial cells which function as adhesive and synap (the branches of neurons) which will form trillion connections between neurons that exceeded needs. Synap will work until the age of 5-6 years. A large number of connections that affect the formation of the brain's ability throughout his life. The growth of brain tissue affected by the experience gained of children in the early years of his life, particularly pleasant experience. In this development phase will have a tremendous potential in developing language skills, mathematics, thinking skills, and the formation of emotional stability. There are four main considerations the importance of early childhood education, namely: (1) prepare qualified manpower, (2) encourage the acceleration of economic turnover and low social costs because of high labor productivity and durability, (3) improving equity in public life, ( 4) helping parents and children.

Early childhood education is not merely serve to provide learning experiences to children, but more importantly serves to optimize brain development. Early childhood education should also cover the whole process of psychosocial stimulation and is not limited to the learning process that occurs in educational institutions. That is, early childhood education can take place anywhere and anytime as well as human interaction that occurred in the family, peers, and of social relations in accordance with the conditions and developments . The state problem can be defined is how to deploy multi-cultural education in early childhood.

## **Discussion**

Early Childhood Education (ECD) is an attempt to empower all the potential of early childhood in order to grow and develop optimally, and integrated so it can be a basis for further education. As for the meaning of education is an effort to empower all learners potential is optimized and integrated to be used for the benefit of living together in improving the quality of devotion to the One God.

Implementation of education can not be released to do with upbringing and development. Care is for children avoid the dangers that threaten the physical safety and his soul while development work is undertaken for every child's potential to reach optimum levels of development and integrated. Organization of early childhood education also can not be released to do with health care and other social services.

By law, the meaning of early childhood is children aged 0-6 years, while the academic meaning of early childhood usually aged 0-8 years. Among the early childhood, there is normal growth and development, there is a drifting away from the normal criteria (children with special needs), and some are at risk for facing any problem in the future, especially the academic problems (children at risk). The three groups of children need to receive educational services in accordance with the characteristics and needs of each.

Organization of early childhood education can be done in the family, in TPA (Child Care), in KB (Play Group), in kindergarten (kindergarten), at BKB (BKB), or in integrated health. Wherever organized early childhood education, is needed integrative approach that includes educational services, medical, social, and psychological. All forms and types of education services should always be based upon a foundation of philosophical, religious, scientific knowledge (scientific knowledge) and juridical basis. Without these four educational foundation is not clear directions and achieving the goal will not be effective and efficient.

Early childhood education can not only be based on the theoretical foundation of child development in general but also to consider the various characteristics of individual children. Children with special needs should obtain special education services in other word risk children should get preventive and curative services for the risk of problems later on can be avoided. All forms of education services should integrate all types of peers in an atmosphere of learning and playing an inclusive relation to such matters then all teachers (educators) need the knowledge and skills of early childhood elementary special education (special education) and be able to

develop educational programs that are based on needs individual child (individualized education programs) and related to multicultural education.

Education is generally interpreted as an attempt has been made a conscious, planned and is responsible for presenting an interactional process by using methods and tools to help children develop a range of potentials in humans manifests itself as a whole. In the context of a general meaning, the education provided to children must be done knowingly with the intent that the act of educating is given to children is not an accident or an act which necessarily exist. An action to educate if action is done with full awareness. Therefore, the act of education will be an action that is planned and accounted for.

Another limitation indicates the meaning of education as a cultural transformation that is the delivery, transfer or inheritance of all forms of content and process of the culture of educators on students. In this concept, Fagerlind and Saha in Arif Rohman, (2009:7) defines education as "the process by which the cultural and normative heritage of a society is transmitted from generation to generation" thus defined education as the process of transferring cultural heritage and community norms from one generation to the next. Culture itself is generally given an explanation as a whole the result of thought, feeling and will of man as well as in managing the environment. Wade and Tavis defines culture as a program and set mutually acceptable rules and regulate the conduct of a person in a particular society or community as well as a set of values, beliefs and practices accepted by society. Education as a process of cultural transfer course will cover a variety of rules, values, beliefs and habits agreed upon, used and accepted by society. Ki Hajar Dewantara further provides a humanist view that emphasizes the importance of education preservation of human existence, in the sense of helping people more humane, more civilized, as full human develop. This view tends to emphasize education as a civilizing process and efforts to make students as a civilized human being so that they can build a civilization itself, society and nation.

This cultural transformation is done through a variety of educational interaction between children and children and between children and teachers. As the transformation of culture, education should contain a lot of programs that became the embodiment of human culture, both locally, nationally and globally. This program can provide perspective and awareness of cultural diversity with a variety of outcomes and characteristics on students. As implication of these meaningfulness and cultural diversity becomes the epicenter of it emerged the concept of multicultural education. Education like this shows the process of multicultural education is not just a material or substance which is necessary and must be taught to children but to the educational process itself. Multicultural education includes educational content and

processes associated with cross-ethnic understanding, culture, customs, race and gender issues.

Multicultural education can be a process of preparing and happy human being at a peak of consciousness that created life Man "tribes and nations to know each other, understand each other and love one another" (Surah Al Hujarat: 13). Cues that paragraph and a portrait that essentially factual, the Lord God Almighty, has created human beings in the form of diversity that is unique, perhaps not even seen a human being even identical twins shows the characteristics, attitudes and behavior of the same.

Multicultural education is a form of educational process that emphasizes the multicultural as the centre. This concept is also often referred to as a form of cross-cultural education (cross-cultural Educations). Kartini Kartono (1992:22) explains that the cross-cultural education as a process of transferring the various cultural characteristics from one generation to the next. This view gives a signal that education and dissemination can accommodate cultural diversity in students as a generation heir or successor of a particular cultural design. Every community, tribe or nation has a cultural basis of approved implemented and built together. Therefore, from a variety of communities, tribes and nations will produce a variety of different cultures. Similarly, the Indonesian community and other communities in the world are born with a heritage that differ from one another.

Gibson gives the definition of multicultural education as a process conducted through a variety of ways individuals develop perceptions, appraisal and acquisition of various systems of different cultures (Hernandez, 2001:5), in this definition, multicultural education includes an individual activity in perceiving a particular cultural system . This perception is the initial formation of one's cognitive structure and as a basis to give consideration or assessment of a culture. The result of the process of perceiving and assessing a culture will become part of an individual belonging to the cultural aspects with different characteristics and values. Thus, through multicultural education activities are very likely occurrence of cultural transformation in the learner. In the process of transformation of cultural, educational atmosphere to accommodate any of the following:

1. Every child should get the same opportunity to achieve full potential
2. Each child must be prepared to participate in intercultural activities in public life
3. Teachers must be prepared to facilitate effective learning for each student child care how similar or different cultural background than their.

4. Schools actively participate in ending all forms of pressure that can stop the various forms of barriers through awareness activities and social processes.
5. Education must consider a child-centered learning fully and openly.

Under the conditions of cultural transformation through education can be classified into three forms of transformation: (1) transformation, (2) transformation of the school, (3) transformation of society. Transformation includes the process of moving the entire self-existence (educators and learners), including the possibility of prejudice, subjectivity, and many wrong assumptions about yourself. In social interaction, individuals can transform perceptions, attitudes and actions of various social phenomena. In the aspect of transforming the school covers the process of moving the various actions undertaken pedagogical school of students. The process encompasses several important concepts such as process educate student-centered, multicultural curriculum, inclusive education materials and media, school and classroom climate that supports and assessment and ongoing evaluation. In the aspect of social transformation became one of the key goals of multicultural education contribute to social transformation that is more progressive and proactive as well as implement and maintain a balance and social justice. Various forms of social phenomena must be transformed into a multicultural educational aspects continuously.

As a tool of cultural transformation, education can bring a variety of messages or ideas through a range of programs and the learning process (Banks and Banks, 1999:3) suggests that multicultural education includes three basic ideas associated with "an idea or concept for an educational reform movement and a process ". The first aspect to consider in multicultural education is the notion that culture can be designed as a form of educational programs. The design of multi-cultural education should accommodate different cultural characteristics naturally take place in social life in society. In a second aspect, the consideration of multicultural education must begin in an activity that leads to the re-establishment values education. This opinion indicates that the multi-cultural education should lead to the discovery of the formation of attitudes, behaviors and cultural values that become the essence of educational activity itself. These changes can include things such as status or social class of children, economic background, habits or customs and various cultural groups. Thinking Third, multicultural education is a process that continues over time and in a natural situation. This understanding provides cues that multicultural education must be made in the process and the environmental situation is normal and

natural. However, it does not mean that multicultural education is not only designed in the design of good learning and planned but need careful consideration and analysis of the content, form and what cultural processes to be effective in understanding children.

The process of multi-cultural education in a practical perspective can be implemented through multi-cultural learning activities. This is in accordance with Seels and Richey opinion that the learning associated with learning in a controlled and planned (Richey: 1994:4).

In general, multicultural education aims to provide prosos situation and culture with all its contents and its form is normal and natural in their students in various educational environments. Samovar and Porter showed three multi-cultural learning objectives are: 1) provide an understanding of cultural in nature, 2) help understand the personal relationship between students and students and students with teachers and 3) provide a critical situation of family-oriented culture in education (Samovar and Porter, 2004:237), thus it was explained that multicultural education as follows:

1. Multi-cultural learning is designed and implemented in a context and a reasonable and natural environment in accordance with the level of development and social situation facing students.
2. Multicultural learning should be able to help students develop healthy relationships and proper social against fellow peers, and adults.
3. Multicultural learning taught in the form of a process that is close to the lives of children and use a variety of contexts is known in the lives of children.

Santrock (1996: 348) explains that multicultural education as education that respects and includes a variety of perspectives from different cultural groups. Conception emphasizes that the content and process of multicultural education needs to provide understanding and learning in their students about the diversity that occurs between them and to help children understand things from a different cultural perspective.

Bennett explains that multicultural education as a learning process approach is based on the beliefs and values of democracy and provide a variety of cultures that occurred in the community who many-kind and the world of mutual dependence (Bennett, 1996:11). This understanding becomes the basis for the development of multicultural education, especially the understanding that multicultural education can be done by integrating cultural diversity in learning activities as an approach. It also gives direction in a multicultural learning that emphasizes the cultivation of democratic values and an understanding of the reality of multicultural students.

According Samatov and Poter, (2004:237) in implementing the multicultural education requires effort and commitment of educators through the preparation of curriculum design and teaching strategies that accommodate and develop multi-cultural education component. Design a curriculum that accommodates multi-cultural education will be the basis and reference for educators to implement and promote multi-cultural learning that suit their needs and stages of child development. William and Getano (1985) as quoted Roopnaire and Johnson (2002:287) suggests considering the multicultural curriculum planning 4 components: (1) children culturally relevant needs, experiences, interests, questions,, feelings and behavior, (2) Families beliefs, concerns , and desires for Their Children, (3) community event, Messages, and expectations permeate That children environment and (4) teacher knowledge, beliefs, values, and interests have a Formative effect on the curriculum and on teaching practice.

In early childhood multicultural education needs to consider aspects related to:

1. Culture students in accordance with the needs, experiences, interests, questions, feelings and various their behavior.
2. Attention, beliefs and desires of the child's family.
3. Expectations, the messages and social events that are in the child's environment.
4. The values of trust, knowledge and interests of teachers.

Education is a conscious effort, planned and systematic through the interactional process between teachers and students to help students become people who was culture.

Multi-cultural education is one effort to build the interactional process for students to recognize, understand and find a variety of cultural understanding. Interactional process between teachers and students in understanding various aspects of multicultural learning activities can be realized through multicultural.

Multicultural learning is that teachers do business on a regular basis and planned through various interactional processes that provide opportunities on students discover and understand the concept of multi-cultural.

Interactional process is orderly and planned to involve the element of purpose, materials, media and learning resources are appropriate and can accommodate multi-cultural understanding.



## Conclusion

Based on the above discussion it can be concluded several things into consideration in developing a multi-cultural education in early childhood is:

1. Required multicultural understanding in early childhood through habituation activity events are patterned to form certain concepts, such as the introduction of physical characteristics, cultural, social, according to the characteristics of early childhood development.
2. In the formal education needs to be included multicultural themes in the planning and early childhood learning.
3. Methods, media and assessment that is used to insert the substance of the multicultural.
4. Steps multicultural learning in early childhood need to consider the scope: 1) integration, 2) development of knowledge, 3) prejudice reduction, 4) empowering school culture and 5) mental health education.
5. It should be specifically developed emotional social stimulation such as tolerance, cooperation, mutual respect, empathy and pride in her work itself is also another people.

## Bibliography

- Bank A James. Cherry A McGee Banks. *Multicultural Education. Issues and Perspective*. Boston. Allyn and Bacon, 1989
- Barbara Seels B and Rita Richey. *Instructional Technology. Definition and Domain of The Field*. Washington DC. Association for educational Communication and Technology, 1994
- Bennet I Cristine. *Comprehensive Multicultural Education. Theory and Practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996
- Hernandes, Hilda. *Multicultural education. A Teacher Guide to Thinling Context, Process and Content*. Columbus: Upper River, 1989.
- QS Al Hujarat 13
- Roopnarine Jaipul and James E.Johnson. *Approach to Early childhood Education*. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1987.

Kartini Kartono, *Pengantar Ilmu Mendidik Teoritis*. Bandung: Mandar Maju, 1992

Samovar A Larry and Carlton Duccan. *Multicultural Education toward Good Practice*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1989.

Santrock W. John. *Child Development*. University of Texas at Dallas: Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1996.

WadeCarol and Carol Tavis. *Psikologi*. Terj. Jakarta: Erlangga, 2003.