

Enthusiastic Study of Children of Indonesia Migrant Workers in Selangor, Malaysia Who Do Not Have Access to Formal Education

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to observe the learning enthusiasm of children of Malaysian migrant workers, particularly in the Sungai Buloh area, Selangor. It focuses on their eagerness to learn not only social sciences but also religious knowledge through lessons and daily practices such as prayers, recitations, and da'wah exercises. These activities help develop both religious understanding and public speaking skills, as children practice delivering lectures and speaking confidently in public. The children in Sungai Buloh, aged 7-13, show an exceptional zeal for learning, which is crucial for shaping Indonesia's future leaders in the next decade. However, many of these children face significant educational challenges due to incomplete documentation, making it difficult to attend public schools in Kuala Lumpur. As most of the community in Sungai Buloh consists of Indonesian migrant workers, their children struggle with limited access to formal education. The Sungai Buloh Learning Studio serves as a vital educational space where these children can study both social and religious sciences, despite the barriers they face. The lack of access to education remains a concern, particularly for migrant workers' children, who are eager to learn but are hindered by their legal status, thus complicating their educational opportunities in Malaysia.

Keywords: *Enthusiastic Learning of Children of Migrant Workers, Access to Education.*

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INTRODUCTION

Education is the main milestone in a nation because youth are the potential successors of the nation who will be the main handle and milestone to continue the relay of Indonesia's state leadership. Education is urgent and very important for the formation of a superior and ethical young generation. Education is a continuous and never-ending process, so that it can produce sustainable quality, which is aimed at the realization of the future human figure, and is rooted in the cultural values of the nation and Pancasila. Education must foster the development of the nation's philosophical and cultural values as a whole and tell them all. Therefore, there is a need for a more in-depth study of education, therefore education begins to be viewed philosophically which refers to the clarity of the foundation of education itself (Mulyasa, 2016).

Along with the changing times, the development of science is also growing rapidly. This is because the way of thinking of the community is increasingly advanced following the times (Ngafifi, 2014); (Rindawati et al., 2021). The progress and development of people's thinking depends on their education. Thus, the quality of education must be improved in order to create quality human resources. The quality of education in Indonesia is still very low compared to other countries. The results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey issued by the OECD in 2018 followed by 15-year-old school students which are held every 3 years, Indonesia is ranked 73 out of 79 countries for mathematics scores and around 71% of students do not reach the minimum level of mathematics competence (Avvisati 2019).

The Sungai Buloh Learning Studio is a non-formal education initiative established by the PMIM (Indonesia Malaysia Student Association) to provide Indonesian children in the Selangor, Malaysia area with educational services suited to their age. Due to the incomplete documentation of many Indonesian children in this region, accessing formal education, especially abroad, becomes highly challenging. This Learning Studio fills a critical gap by offering education similar to formal schools in Indonesia, covering social and religious subjects according to grade levels. Students are evaluated through exams, receive report cards, and, upon graduation, obtain a diploma officially issued by the Indonesian Embassy. This allows students to seamlessly transition to formal education in Indonesia.

Previous studies have addressed the challenges faced by migrant children in accessing formal education due to legal and documentation barriers (Van Waas, 2010); (Kraler et al., 2011). These studies emphasize the need for alternative educational models to ensure that the children of migrants do not lag behind in educational attainment. However, while several studies focus on migrant children's access to education (Lopez et al., 2015), few specifically explore the role of non-formal education systems, like the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio, in providing both social and religious education. Moreover, the existing literature tends to overlook the role of community-led initiatives in filling educational gaps for undocumented children. This study seeks to address this gap by examining how the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio offers a model of non-formal education that not only supports academic growth but also provides cultural and religious education tailored to the needs of migrant children. The findings will contribute to broader discussions on migrant education and the role of non-formal learning environments in mitigating educational inequities.

With these problems, children living in the Selangor area, Malaysia, do not reduce their enthusiasm to compress education and continue learning, they have a very high enthusiasm and enthusiasm for learning which should be appreciated without coercion and adequate facilities, children remain enthusiastic and diligent to study and go to school remotely using public transportation. Judging from the number of students at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio, it reached 100 students from elementary school and junior high school. With a large number of students so that the SHIFT system is implemented so that teaching and learning activities remain conducive, when teaching and learning activities children are very enthusiastic about receiving materials provided by teachers with various subject matter in general in Indonesia such as Indonesian language lessons, Mathematics, PPKN, SOCIAL SCIENCES, SCIENCES, Religious Education and so on, the difference is that at this Sungai Buloh learning studio adds a special time for Islamic religious materials So that the time for religious studies is longer.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method, the result of this method is data that is narrative. The data collection methods in this study are observation, interviews and documentation as well as literature studies derived from books, journals, articles, official reports, and online news. The data obtained was in the form of observations at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio in Selangor Malaysia, which involved all students of the learning studio from

grade 1 to grade 6 totaling 58 children, to the classroom teachers, residents around Selangor and the manager at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio.

The research begins with the research and data collection stages. Observation activities were carried out to find out the enthusiasm for learning in children through the analysis of Pancasila student profiles to find out the learning conditions at the learning studio, population education programs, as well as media or supporting facilities used in teaching and learning activities at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio Selangor Malaysia. The instrument in this study to find out children's enthusiasm for learning is through the analysis of the Pancasila student profile, the first point is to have faith and fear God Almighty. This discussion has two main variables for the formulation of the discussion in this article, namely: First: The enthusiasm for learning children of Indonesia migrant workers in studying in the Selangor region of Malaysia. Second: Access to formal education for children of migrant workers in the Selangor region of Malaysia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out with the results of First: children of Indonesian migrant workers have high enthusiasm for learning and enthusiasm to continue to study Second: children of Indonesian migrant workers are still enthusiastic about attending school with limited access to formal education due to incomplete documents but can still have access to learning in learning studios.

1. Enthusiasm for Indonesia Children's Learning in Pursuing Education in the Selangor Region of Malaysia

Enthusiasm for learning is passion, enthusiasm, and a strong interest in learning activities. The spirit of learning is an enthusiastic, motivated, enthusiastic attitude that emanates from a person without coercion from anyone. Like at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, there are children who are very excited to go to school, even though this is generally not an official school in Kuala Lumpur, but because of the excitement and enthusiasm of the children who are encouraged to learn Sungai Buloh is indeed very extraordinary for their enthusiasm for learning. Where I can see for myself by participating in the International DIK KKN organized by DIKTI Muhammadiyah. I admire the great discipline and responsibility of the children there, which is shown by always coming to school on time, even though they are already at school 1 hour before the start of the lesson. The enthusiasm of children like this can be proof that they are Indonesia children who have a high determination to get an education even though they are in a neighboring country, but their enthusiasm for learning is extraordinary. Students' enthusiasm for learning is also influenced by several factors, including internal factors, external factors, and learning approach factors (Ahmad Sulu Kurniawan, 2021). Based on the analysis of performance data through the profile of Pancasila students to find out children's enthusiasm in learning, especially at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio, there are six important indicators, namely:

- 1) Faith in God Almighty
- 2) Global Networking
- 3) Gotong Royong
- 4) Self-sufficient
- 5) Critical Reasoning

6) Creative

The first indicator: namely Faith and fear of God Almighty, as evidenced by children carrying out prayers, learning to recite, and practicing lectures or speeches. There is a special hour where children learn to recite together and practice lectures or speeches for 30 minutes in the morning before learning begins

The second indicator: namely global visibility. The elements and keys to global diversity include knowing and appreciating culture, intercultural communication skills in interacting with others, and reflection and responsibility for diversity experiences, as evidenced by the fact that students at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio are on average able to appreciate various cultures from friends from various regions and countries and are able to communicate well with their friends. However, there are some children who are indeed different from other children so that they are able to deal with friends who are of different cultures and regions from various countries.

The third indicator: namely Gotong Royong A student who has the Gotong Royong dimension means that the student is able to collaborate with others and proactively seek to achieve the welfare and happiness of people in his society. Students who are in the Sungai Buloh learning studio are very capable in working together, this is a form of children's enthusiasm in understanding the surrounding environment, as evidenced by the fact that students are able and understand what to do and what not to do when there are friends who are in trouble or need help, they are very sensitive and understand the conditions of the surrounding environment such as throwing garbage when they see that the garbage is full and sweeping the classroom when the class looks dirty.

Fourth Indicator: i.e. independent A student who has an independent dimension means that the student has the initiative for self-development and his achievements and is based on the recognition of his strengths and limitations as well as the situation he is facing and is responsible for the process and results. The children of migrant workers in the learning studio are almost on average all independent in terms of being able to clean up their respective school equipment, go to school and go home using the school bus without waiting for both parents and children are able to do personal needs such as going to the bathroom, eating by themselves, completing their own schoolwork and many other activities that reflect the children of migrant workers who are independent.

Fifth Indicator: Critical Thinking A student who has the Critical Reasoning dimension means that the student is able to use his or her reasoning skills to process information, evaluate it, and make the right decisions to overcome the various problems he faces. The student is able to filter information, process it, look for the relationship between various information, analyze and make conclusions based on that information. This dimension also means openness to various new perspectives or proofs (including the original opinion that was dropped by this new proof). This openness is also able to be useful in the future because it fosters students who are open, willing to change their opinions, and respect the opinions of others. Here are some elements and sub-elements of the Critical Reasoning dimension:

- 1) Acquiring and processing information and ideas in this element, it means that a student is capable. First: Asking questions (to collect accurate data) Second: Identifying, clarifying and processing information and ideas
- 2) Analyzing and evaluating reasoning

3) Reflecting and evaluating his own thoughts

In terms of critical thinking, most of the children of migrant workers have their own ideas to express their opinions, such as children when asked always to raise their hands to give opinions and give good responses given by teachers and children are able to answer questions and process their answers well. And to test the child's criticality, the teachers gave practical assignments to make speeches, especially for students in grades 5 and 6, so that the children were able to process words and think critically.

Sixth Indicator: that is, the creativity of a student who has a creative dimension means being able to modify, produce something original, meaningful, useful, and impactful to overcome various problems both for himself or the surrounding environment. Here are some elements and sub-elements of the Creative dimension:

- 1) Generate original ideas
- 2) Producing original works and actions
- 3) Have flexibility to think in finding alternative solutions to problems

In terms of creativity, these migrant workers' children are able to express through wall magazine works with various decorations and interesting and motivating content, and various other interesting classroom decorations, both done independently and in groups.



Figure 1. Learning activities in the classroom

It can be concluded that every child is able and has an attitude of enthusiasm for the environment and their enthusiasm for education, especially their enthusiasm for teaching and learning activities, both social and religious lessons. Then from the enthusiasm of the children, of course, it is nothing but the efforts of a teacher who educates and forms a good character. From the enthusiasm of the students who are encouraged to learn the buloh river, the teacher certainly does not forget to give an appreciation or reward to competent students and students who have character in accordance with the elements and indicators in the Pancasila student profile.

In general, teachers are more focused on their busyness and duties as teachers, namely engaged in administrative matters, promotions, competency tests and others so that their duties as educators are forgotten. The absence of appreciation makes Shiva more introverted, indifferent, and even stressful children, because they feel that their efforts and achievements are not appreciated, and that it is useless to live in the world. For this reason, the teacher's task is not only to provide direction and assignments, but it is highly recommended to appreciate students because they make them feel proud, enthusiastic and continue to develop their

achievements and encourage them to carve out achievements. The appreciation given to students who have failed is verbal appreciation in the form of positive words and motivation.

Through field observations and individual interviews, teacher appreciation has proven to play a very important role in students' enthusiasm for learning. The practice of giving appreciation has also been applied by teachers at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio to their students, as evidenced by the teachers at the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio giving learning appreciation to students in grades 1 to 6 by giving gifts or rewards to students who excel at the end of the learning semester. This reward is given to students who are competent and have several indicators according to the Pancasila student profile.

2. Access to Education for Children of Migrant Workers in the Selangor Region of Malaysia

The realization of the right to education is based on the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and the main provisions of international human rights legislation, such as the 1949 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966 and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child. The right to basic education, as emphasized in the ICESCR, is a special condition that must be established by the ratifying state. The substantive aspects of education and the implementation of education administration are fundamental elements of Article 13 of ICESCR so that the state provides basic education for all. The availability and convenience of educational facilities and infrastructure as well as acceptance and adjustment are legal segments (target indicators), the fulfillment of which must be regulated gradually by the state so that its fulfillment is achieved and increased at any time in the field of education, especially primary and secondary education (Endah et al., 2018).

H. Horne's definition of education is a continuous, higher (eternal) process of adjustment for physically and spiritually developed people who are free and aware of God as manifested in the intellectual, emotional, and human nature. From some of the experts' definitions of education, it can be concluded that education is the guidance or assistance of adults in the development of a child to adulthood, whose goal is that the child can carry out his or her own life duties without assistance. to remember that the responsibility of a state towards its citizens under international law is that every state defends and protects its citizens both inside and outside its sovereign territory. The purpose of this article is to find out the role of Indonesian representatives in solving problems related to the education of migrant workers in East Malaysia, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, and to find out what are the obstacles faced by Indonesian representatives, working to improve access to education and protect the children of Indonesia's migrant workers.

The role of Indonesian representatives abroad is to ensure the protection of their citizens, including the fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities in the country and the organizations they represent. The representative of the Republic of Indonesia, as the representative of his country, is the "home" for all Indonesia citizens abroad, who are responsible for protecting their citizens. Della, Khanza Myra Dea (2019). The Indonesia Student Assembly (PPI) Malaysia 2021 is an association of students who are currently pursuing or pursuing higher education in Malaysia. PPI is one of the pioneers in the Sungai Buloh Learning Center, especially in the Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia area, the efforts and goodwill of the students to take care of children in Kuala Lumpur but due to the lack of access to limited education incomplete documents.

Most of the children of migrant workers living in the Selangor area of Malaysia are Indonesian children who follow their parents because their parents have lived in Malaysia for a long time, worked and married, so these children have limitations in completing formal education. PPI children from different universities have a program to establish a learning studio in the Selangor area, then PPI children take care of all SIKL permits to get a permit to build a school or learning studio, then the Sungai Buloh Learning Studio is established in Selangor Malaysia. However, the curriculum of the Sungai Buloh Study Center itself still uses KTSP. The reason for continuing to use KTSP is because it is in accordance with the rules of SIKL which oversees educational studios in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



Figure 2. *Closing Ceremony of International KKN Students*

The Sungai Buloh Learning Studio School in Selangor, Malaysia, serves as an important solution to the various challenges faced by Indonesian migrant workers and their children, particularly in accessing formal education. Due to limitations such as incomplete documentation, many children of Indonesian migrant workers struggle to enroll in local public schools. The establishment of this school, operated under the supervision of the Indonesian School Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) and the Indonesian Embassy, ensures that these children can continue their education and progress to higher levels upon graduation.

This finding aligns with previous studies that emphasize the importance of alternative educational models for migrant children facing legal and social barriers. For example, Van Waas (2010) highlighted the vulnerability of children of undocumented migrants who often face restricted access to basic rights, including education. The Sungai Buloh Learning Studio School addresses this gap by providing an officially recognized education, thus supporting Van Waas' argument for the need for protective measures for migrant children.

Moreover, (Kraler et al., 2011) argued that community-based education programs play a pivotal role in ensuring that migrant children receive necessary education, despite structural limitations in formal education systems. The parents' appreciation for the religious instruction provided at the Sungai Buloh school reflects the findings of (Lopez et al., 2015), who noted that religious and cultural education is often a significant concern for migrant families seeking to preserve their cultural identity while living abroad.

Thus, the research findings not only support existing literature but also contribute to understanding how community-led education programs, supported by official institutions, can effectively address the educational needs of migrant children. The relief expressed by parents further reinforces the importance of such initiatives in providing comprehensive education that includes both academic and religious instruction.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the results of this study is that in general this article states that education is very important, through education a person's life will be better and every individual will be more qualified. By going through several stages in this study, migrant children in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia have a high enthusiasm for learning, so they are inspired by PMI children to provide access to non-formal education so that hopefully it can be useful for knowledge that Indonesia children who live outside Indonesia, especially in Malaysia, really need access to education in order to become a generation that will later be useful for the country of Indonesia. Writing this article, we hope that later the results of this research can be used and become a reference and consideration material for other researchers.

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