



Enhancing Early Childhood Social Development: An Analysis through the Lens of Multicultural Education

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ABSTRAK

Perkembangan sosial merupakan aspek penting dalam perkembangan anak usia dini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perkembangan sosial anak usia 5–6 tahun serta faktor pendukung dan faktor penghambatnya yang ditinjau dari perspektif pendidikan multikultural. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi kasus. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara dengan guru, observasi di kelas PAUD, dan dokumentasi. Tahap analisis data meliputi tiga langkah utama, yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan atau verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan sosial 2 dari 6 anak usia 5–6 tahun berada pada skala Berkembang Sesuai Harapan (BSH), sedangkan 4 anak lainnya masih berada pada skala Mulai Berkembang (MB). Kompetensi sosial yang dimiliki anak saling berkaitan, sehingga kelemahan pada salah satu kompetensi sosial dapat memengaruhi kompetensi sosial lainnya. Faktor penghambat dalam pelaksanaan pendidikan terdiri atas peran orang tua, anak, dan guru, sedangkan faktor pendukung mencakup peran orang tua, teman sebaya, dan guru. Dengan demikian, pendidikan multikultural memiliki peran strategis dalam mendukung optimalisasi perkembangan sosial anak usia dini.

ABSTRACT

Social development is a critical aspect of early childhood growth. This study aims to analyse the social development of children aged 5–6 years and the supporting and inhibiting factors from the perspective of multicultural education. The research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through interviews with teachers, classroom observations in early childhood education (PAUD), and documentation. The data analysis process focused on three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification. The findings revealed that the social development of 2 out of 6 children aged 5–6 years was categorized as Developing as Expected (BSH), while the other 4 children were in the Beginning to Develop (MB) category. Children's social competencies are interrelated; weaknesses in one social competency can influence others. Inhibiting factors in the implementation of education include parents, children, and teachers, while supporting factors involve parents, peers, and teachers. Thus, multicultural education plays a strategic role in optimizing the social development of early childhood learners.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the rampant cases of bullying are increasingly rampant, the Indonesian Teachers' Federation (FSGI) explained that the increase in bullying cases in schools increased by 9 cases with details of 30 cases throughout 2023. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) also conducted a 2022 survey test on the number of bullying in students reaching 58.3%. Bullying cases can occur especially in those who are in a multicultural environment. Multicultural education is an interesting discussion, especially in providing a breakthrough that aims to ensure that all students receive equal education and are creative regardless of race, culture, language, religion, and social class (Kaya, 2020; Sipuan et al., 2022). This approach also provides important support for migrant children living in a foreign country. Multicultural education is not only about teaching students about their own culture, but also about expanding their understanding of different cultures around the world. In line with this view, there is a statement that multicultural education

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is an educational practice that aims to build tolerant, respectful, and democratic social interactions among individuals with diverse backgrounds (Setiawan, 2017; Supriatin & Nasution, 2017). This education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process that aims to change the structure of educational institutions to provide equal opportunities for all children, regardless of gender, talent, or background, to achieve academic success in school.

Multicultural education is a basic need for early childhood, this education has the following meanings: 1. Teaching about cultural diversity as an approach to cultural integration, 2. Introducing various approaches to building social relations, 3. Encouraging the progress of pluralism without regard to differences in social strata in society, and 4. Providing an understanding of diversity as a foundation for strengthening pluralism and equality (Rosyad et al., 2022). Multicultural education is important to introduce from an early age to build self-confidence and multicultural behavior in children (Desmila & Suryana, 2023). Therefore, teachers play a strategic role in the field of education; they are the main pillars in efforts to improve the quality of education services and outcomes (Yestiani & Zahwa, 2020).

The understanding of the provision of multicultural education needs to be emphasized as an ongoing process, not as something that can be "done" and thereby solve the problems that are the target of multicultural education reform (Syathori, 2023). Educators are required to master and be professionally capable in teaching (Ali, 2022; Latifah et al., 2021). In this case, there needs to be an alternative strategy in implementing the concept of multicultural education, especially in early childhood. However, in reality the implementation of multicultural education has not shown optimal results. Three main problems in implementing multicultural education include the difficulty of providing low materials and practices, time constraints and lack of educators, lack of coordination between parents and teachers.

Based on the research results (Firma et al., 2021) it is known that there are still many educators who do not fully understand the concept, benefits and implementation of multicultural education. The process of multicultural education in early childhood should be delivered through a learning process that pays attention to their growth and development. Early childhood has now experienced very advanced psychological and social development, so multicultural education is important to pay attention to and must receive special attention, because it is a bridge in their social development. In general, social development is a form of maturity of a person in interacting with people around him from the social relationships he has (Musyarofah, 2018). Social development is the ability to behave in accordance with social demands (Dhiu & Fono, 2022). Children's social development is greatly influenced by the process of parental treatment or guidance of children in introducing various aspects of social life, norms of community life (Harjanty & Hardianti, 2020; Kristiana, 2021). In line with the theory of social development of children according to Vygotsky in his works "Thought and Language" (1934) and "Mind in Society" (1978) emphasizes the range of a child's ability to complete a task with the help of others, be it adults or more skilled peers. Vygotsky believed that social interaction plays an important role in child development, and that children learn through collaboration with others who are more experienced. Social development in children includes the ability to take responsibility for oneself, achieve self-understanding, and demonstrate social behaviors such as sharing, empathy, and the ability to follow rules, as explained by (Nasution et al., 2023).

The social skills that develop in children will form an important foundation for further learning and development. The development of these social skills is considered necessary to be developed and successful in early childhood education environments, social competence is an important factor in the process of behavioral change and healthy development related to social, behavioral and academic (Badawi et al., 2016). Social development in children is all things that concern the child's own feelings such as: (self-confidence, enthusiasm for learning, pride in the culture they have and fear of being wrong), visible behavior (cooperation, sympathy, empathy, and friendly attitudes) and how they interact with parents, teachers and friends (Pratama, 2024; Rahmawati & Latifah, 2020). These social skills cannot grow and develop on their own. They need other people and a conducive environment to support them. The stimulus given by teachers at school to help their social development must also be optimal. Therefore, various aspects of development must be considered, including social development. Each main variable in social development such as social interaction, communication skills, empathy and understanding of emotions and prosocial behavior can be a benchmark that social development is starting to form. Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to regulate school conditions, the material presented, classrooms that are responsive to diverse cultures and coordination with parents. However, the lack of response from the education sector to the concept of multiculturalism makes children have minimal understanding of their identity, others and diversity. In line with this question, similar research says that one of the factors that influences the hampered development of children's social skills is the lack of an established understanding of multiculturalism in children. Apart from teachers, parents also play an important role in educating children from radicalism, hatred and intolerance, including by providing religious education and introducing the meaning of pluralism (Ashar et al., 2023).

It is clear that optimal social development of children depends on the conditions of their surrounding environment. To support this development process, adequate education is very important for children. This is the reason for the establishment of the AMI Penang guidance center, which aims to support education for children. However, creating a school that functions well to support children's development is not an easy task. The guidance center faces a number of obstacles, including limited number of teachers, low quality of teaching, and lack of a structured curriculum. The management of the guidance center said that "we and other teachers are determined to provide proper education for children, including those who do not have official documents, through the limited efforts that they make". Previous research conducted in countries other than Malaysia has revealed that the challenges faced by teachers when teaching refugee children vary and depend on the context; teachers face different dilemmas every day as a result of their students' living situations (Kaffa et al., 2021; Maghfiroh et al., 2020). In conclusion, the social development of early childhood is obtained from their maturity and learning opportunities in responding to the environment, an environment that suits their needs can be a supporter in the development process. At this early age, the most important period in providing stimulus to them through various aspects of their development. One of them is the fulfillment of children's needs as social beings.

Based on the description above, that is the reason for the author to research and analyze the Social Development of Early Childhood Reviewed from the Perspective of Multicultural Education at the AMI Guidance Center, Penang, Malaysia with the aim of finding out the results of the analysis of the social development of children aged 5-6 years by revealing the implementation of multicultural education and the supporting factors and inhibiting factors.

2. METHOD

This research method uses qualitative with a case study approach. The focus of this study is to investigate in depth the social development of early childhood through multicultural education at Sanggar Bimbingan AMI Penang which is the location of the study in Malaysia. In this study, the author collected data based on the source. The subjects of the study included students aged 5-6 years totaling 6 children with a population of 3 girls and 3 boys. Researchers examine developmental elements from two perspectives, namely children's social competence and behaviour in interacting with other people in their social environment. The development element instruments used are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Grid of Children's Social Development Elements

No.	Element	Aspects Analysed
1.	Social competence	
	a. Ability to tolerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The ability to respect friends of different religions when they are praying b. Friendly behaviour towards friends from different cultural backgrounds c. Ability to resolve differences of opinion without discrimination
	b. Ability to empathize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstrate a helpful attitude towards others b. Want to share food with friends
	c. Language and communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fluency in communicating with friends and using good language
	d. Ability to build self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Level of confidence in interacting with peers b. Actively participate in Q&A with the teacher c. Can participate in learning related to cultural diversity
	e. Ability to work together with peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Level of participation in completing group assignments
2.	Social Behaviour	
	a. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The curriculum used b. Implementation of multicultural education and habituation of applied attitudes
	b. Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interaction between friends with age differences
	c. Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Coordination between parents and teachers b. Parental strategies for children's social development

Data collection techniques in this study were through observation, interviews, and documentation. There are two types of data collection based on their sources, namely primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources are obtained through data sources obtained directly through observation and interviews. In this case, students and teachers are the main data sources. Observations and interviews can be in the form of statements, evidence, and knowledge of data sources about everything that researchers question related to the research on the analysis of early childhood social development through multicultural education. Secondary data is accessed through data collections or information from journals, articles, books, or previous research theses and interviews conducted with parents as reinforcement. Researchers use data source triangulation techniques, this includes checking information from various sources, both primary and secondary data. After all the data is collected, the data analysis stage will be the main focus. Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification (Sugiyono, 2016). Data reduction will involve organizing and simplifying the data to make it more interpretable. Data presentation will describe the main findings in narrative form and may also involve the use of relevant tables or graphs. Finally, drawing conclusions or verification will involve in-depth analysis of the findings to identify emerging patterns, trends, or relationships.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Analysis of data collected in this study on the social development of children aged 5-6 years through multicultural education at the AMI Penang Guidance Centre, Malaysia. The subject of the study was early childhood students and supported by observation data and interviews conducted with teachers, principals and parents of students. Based on the results of the interview, data was obtained in the form of: First, the place of study of Indonesian migrant children and student data. The AMI Penang Guidance Centre is located at No. 05 Jl. Lorong Tampoi, 14000 Bukit Martajam, Penang Island, Malaysia. Located in the house of the studio manager named Mrs. Ami Kusmiati or commonly called Teh Mia. The studio accommodates 36 students in which there are several children with different age ranges ranging from early childhood to elementary school who are made into one class. With a total of 6 PAUD students and 30 elementary school students. This study focuses more on early childhood aged 5-6 years. Table 2 shows the classification of student backgrounds.

Table 2. The Number of Students and their Backgrounds

No.	Name	Origin	Religion
1	Ad	Batak	Islam
2	A	Java	Islam
3	Rn	Madura	Christian
4	Fh	Malay	Catholic
5	Pr	Java	Christian
6	Pt	Java	Islam

Next, related to the implementation of multicultural education and the curriculum used at the AMI Penang guidance studio. Based on the results of observations and observations made by the author, only 2 out of 4 educators were able to implement multicultural education for students. This shows the inability of educators to understand what multicultural education is. The implementation of multicultural education is in the form of introducing the language of each region, for example: children whose parents are from Java introduce one of the languages they can to children who come from Madura and vice versa. Introduction to regional dances by teachers taught to students during certain events. The dances taught are also different for each particular event. Introduction to each student's religion, by teaching an attitude of respect when friends of different religions are performing worship, for example: children who are Christian are quiet and not noisy when their friends who are Muslim are performing worship. Related to the curriculum used and based on interviews with the manager and teacher of the AMI Penang guidance studio, it is guided by the Indonesian School Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) curriculum. However, in reality, teachers do not yet know the meaning of the curriculum itself. Resulting in the absence of elements contained in the implemented curriculum, for example: Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), competency standards, learning objectives, and learning evaluation.

Lastly, about the learning strategies implemented by teachers. Based on my direct observations and interviews with teachers, there are no strategies implemented in the AMI Penang tutoring studio. Teachers implement random learning every day, because there is also no learning plan. Even when there are only 1 or 2 teachers who come in, they make one learning between PAUD and elementary school students. So that the learning material delivered to students is also less than optimal or not delivered well.

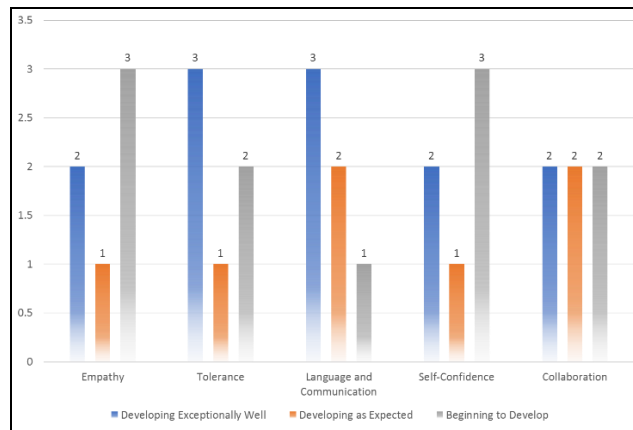


Figure 1. The Results of Analysis of Children's Social Competence Elements

Figure 1 highlights that 2 early childhood students in the studio experienced significant progress in social development, but the other 4 still showed suboptimal development. This shows that direct experiences that children have during the learning process play an important role in their social development. In the element of ability to tolerate, children are able to understand what has been taught by the teacher about tolerance among others, are open to knowing people from different backgrounds and beliefs, and show concern when a friend is insulted or bullied. There are two children who have not shown the ability to respect others or be tolerant, this can be seen in the results of observations that show that they still disturb friends of different religions when they are praying and intimidate friends who have mental disabilities. However, in terms of friendliness, they remain friendly and greet their friends. In the element of empathy, some children still have difficulty in evaluating their actions when their friends need help, such as when they need help borrowing stationery. Only a few of them are responsive and have empathy. Some children also still have difficulty in sharing food with their friends. In terms of language and communication skills, children are able to understand what their friends mean, but some still have difficulty in conveying their thoughts. Moreover, there is still the use of impolite words by some children.

In the element of building self-confidence, children seem reluctant to express their self-confidence without strong encouragement from the teacher. Thus, further encouragement or direction is often needed before they are willing to show their self-confidence. However, some of them have been able to show their self-confidence. In addition, the level of active participation of children in question and answer discussions with teachers is relatively low, only a few children are actively involved. It is important to note that some of these children have the ability to express their self-confidence, while others still need additional encouragement. Finally, in the element of the ability to work together with peers. It can be seen in the developmental element analysis diagram that there are still children who are not yet able to carry out the ability to work together. Those who do not want to cooperate tend to be children who have other elements on a low scale. This factor can hinder children's ability to work well together in social and collaborative situations. Therefore, it is important for children to be developed holistically, including the development of social skills.

The next definition is related to social behavior which includes school, family and peers. The results of the researcher's interview with teachers and principals regarding the delivery of multicultural education applied in PAUD Sanggar Bimbingan AMI Penang, namely in learning the values of tolerance and respect, teachers introduce and provide understanding to each child, they are given an understanding one by one about the character or culture of all their friends so that when they interact everyday, they already know each other's characters. In learning empathy, teachers stimulate them by providing examples by reading story books that describe characters from various backgrounds and describe empathy towards others. In learning self-confidence, teachers create an inclusive and supportive classroom environment where each child feels comfortable speaking, sharing, and expressing themselves without fear of being ridiculed or ignored. By providing space for self-expression, teachers help build children's confidence in expressing their own opinions and ideas.

In addition to interviews conducted with teachers, researchers also conducted interviews with parents of students as secondary data with the aim of strengthening the data collected. The results of the interviews showed that some parents had coordinated with teachers regarding the habituation of attitudes that support children's social development and parental strategies for children's social development. Meanwhile, some others had not coordinated due to the busyness of parents at work, which resulted in a lack of time to pay attention to their children. In addition, the strategies used to stimulate social competence were also not optimal. Early childhood needs to be given the right stimulus, considering that early childhood

is a child in a development stage often referred to as a problematic age. The characteristics of children who have social competence are depicted from the results of the researcher's observations on the social competence scale used. This can be seen in several elements of social competence that appear in children. Therefore, attention and support from teachers, parents, and environmental conditions are very important in shaping children's socialization abilities. Joint efforts from various parties can play a major role in improving children's social skills holistically. The analysis results are presented in Figure 2.

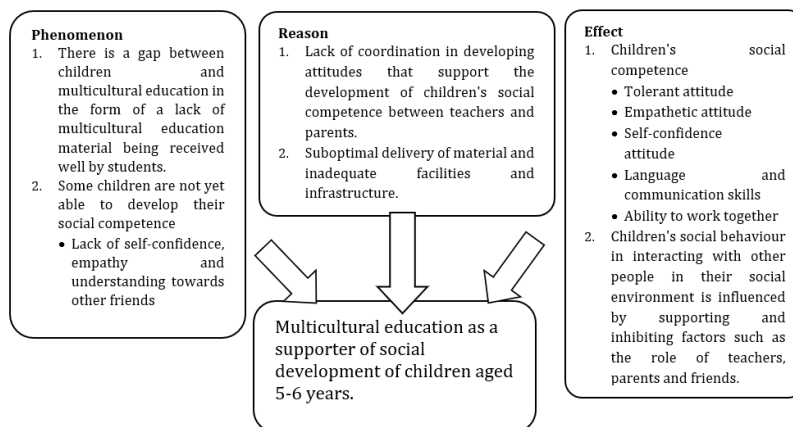


Figure 2. The Analysis Results

Multicultural education can make a positive contribution to the development of children's social competence. However, based on the results of interviews with teachers, there are several obstacles in delivering multicultural education to students. Several factors cause this, namely: First, teachers have difficulty in providing materials and resources that reflect cultural diversity correctly, the lack of teaching materials and resources can hinder teachers' efforts to provide rich learning experiences in terms of multiculturalism. Second, time constraints and lack of educators often make it difficult for them to allocate enough time for multicultural exploration and experience. The class conditions are less strategic because all students from various age levels 3-6 years who should be made into several classes are forced to be put together. Seeing this, it should be separated so that teachers are more optimal in providing quality education. Third, lack of parental coordination due to teaching multicultural education in early childhood. Not only the responsibility of teachers at school, but also involving parents, if parents are not involved or do not support multicultural efforts, it can make it difficult for teachers to create an inclusive learning environment. Lack of parental involvement in supporting multicultural education is also a problem. Parents can play an important role in promoting multicultural values at home and supporting the teaching carried out in schools. However, parents are often less involved or even not interested in supporting multicultural teaching in schools, which can complicate the school's efforts to create an inclusive environment.

From the explanations above, it can be seen that the social development of early childhood at the AMI Penang Guidance Center shows that some are developing well and others are showing less than optimal development. The implementation carried out by teachers is good but not perfect because it is caused by several obstacles. These obstacles are influenced by several factors, including the role of teachers, parental support, and the surrounding environment. Coordination between teachers and parents in delivering multicultural education greatly affects the results of social development in children. The emergence of the phenomenon that appears is the gap between children and the multicultural education they receive and some children have not been able to develop their social competence so that it can have an effect on children's social competence and social behavior.

Discussion

School is a place where children can learn through direct experience or social interaction. Education in schools should be able to provide the right stimulus so that children's development is increasingly optimal, especially in early childhood education. Effective education requires a holistic approach that pays attention to important aspects of learning. As we know, education is an aspect that provides many factors for a person's life, one of which is social development. In addition, to build a good education, a structured education pattern and system is also needed. A good education pattern and system for children is realized if there is an appropriate and structured curriculum (Jeflin & Afriansyah, 2020). The results of the study show that the curriculum process contributes to meeting children's development needs (Mujiburrahman et al., 2023). The curriculum is one of the tools to achieve educational goals, as well as being

used as a guideline in the implementation of the teaching and learning process. However, the AMI Penang guidance studio does not yet have a structured curriculum and the learning that is carried out tends to run without a clear direction. This is one of the factors that causes the failure of social development in children. If the curriculum itself has not been implemented properly, it can have a negative impact on the development of children's competence.

In addition, collaboration between schools and families is also very important in supporting student development. The theory of parental involvement emphasizes that parental involvement in children's education has a positive impact on students' academic achievement and well-being (Hardiyanti et al., 2021). Therefore, strategies that involve parents in the learning process, such as parent-teacher meetings, open communication, and parental support at home, are important factors in creating a supportive and holistic learning environment for students. With strong collaboration between teachers and parents, education can be a meaningful experience and have a positive impact on student development. Thus, collaboration between schools and parents has a major impact on the success of children's education (Yusuf & Qomariah, 2023).

There are several similar studies that discuss the analysis of early childhood development entitled early childhood social development through peers. Then a similar study entitled analysis of social development in bilingual children in the 21st century. And other similar studies entitled Multicultural education in the development of social skills of children aged 4-6 years at KB-TK Hammayu. The three studies explain that the achievement of children's social competence development is influenced by their social environment and inhibiting and supporting factors (Badawi et al., 2016; Elsy Melinda, 2021).

Based on the data obtained by the researcher in accordance with the facts of the research findings, the researcher analyzed the collected data with the Miles and Huberman model data analysis. The results of the analysis showed five elements of social competence possessed by children aged 5-6 years at the AMI Penang Guidance Center. First, the element of tolerance ability which means respect, acceptance, and appreciation of cultural diversity, the world, forms of expression, and how humans become humans (Hjerm et al., 2020). In the theory of tolerance according to Sztejnberg and Jasinnki, it is divided into several dimensions, namely interpersonal tolerance (respecting differences in skin color), social tolerance (interaction building communication) and tolerance in personality (a phenomenon in culture) (Susanto & Kumala, 2019). In instilling the values of tolerance in early childhood, the role of educators and parents is the main one (Pitaloka et al., 2021). For this reason, the role of the environment, family and school, especially the role of teachers, is very important in educating children's character, one of which is by instilling the value of tolerance in early childhood. In instilling character values, one of which is the value of tolerance, among others: in an effort to instill character in children, educators must be directly involved in the process of both learning activities and other activities; educators or teachers are responsible for being examples or role models who have character values including tolerance values and have an influence on students; teachers must be able to provide direction to students that student character grows through cooperation in making decisions; teachers must often carry out routine reflections on developing moral problems and ensure the development of student character on an ongoing basis; educators need to explain and clarify to students on an ongoing basis regarding various good and bad values (Cahyaningrum et al., 2017). Actually, the role of teachers in the AMI Penang guidance studio has shown efforts to stimulate students as described above, but an evaluation needs to be carried out.

Second, the element of empathy ability. There are children who are still unable to develop their empathy, due to the lack of implementation of habits carried out by parents or teachers at school and in the child's play environment. In addition, the child's egocentric attitude still dominates him, this is proven by the fact that there are still children who cannot share food or toys with other friends, do not care about their friends' feelings and still want to win alone. Several journals reveal that by stimulating and stimulating child development through several learning methods, such as storytelling, role-playing, sociodrama, and cooperative learning, children's empathy can emerge. Although in essence early childhood children have high egocentric characteristics at that age, with teachers implementing the right learning methods, it is likely that children will be trained to be caring and empathetic towards others (Nurfazrina et al., 2020).

Third, the element of language and communication skills as a basic need for children to be able to adapt. Language is a communication tool that functions to convey messages in the form of symbols which are then arranged in sequence so that they become meaningful sentences that are used to communicate. In language there are four main tasks that must be mastered and completed by children, including: understanding the meaning of words and other people's words, increasing vocabulary, arranging words into sentences, the words that children say are imitations of the words of people they often hear. In addition, Lev Vygotsky emphasized the important role of social interaction in the formation of language in children's thinking. Judging from the results of the analysis of language and communication of children aged 5-6 at the AMI Penang guidance center, it seems that there are 3 children who have not fulfilled the main tasks they have in speaking. This is due to the lack of stimulation from parents in improving children's speaking skills.

Fourth, Elements of building self-confidence in children. Ideally, self-confidence in children aged 5-6 years includes children being able to appear in front of friends, teachers and other people, being able to participate in competitions, being able to tidy up toys without being asked, and being able to start interacting with other people (Fazrin et al., 2018). However, after conducting observations, it was found that many of them were still unable to show self-confidence. This self-confidence problem is caused by two factors, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors come from within the child and external factors come from the child's social environment. Similar research results show that thanks to high social support, children have high self-confidence (Ayu Sestiani et al., 2021). Because with high social support, children will feel appreciated and loved by others. Not only that, the intelligence abilities that children have also affect their level of self-confidence (Ginting et al., 2022). Therefore, it is important for educators and parents to support and develop children's intelligence because it can help increase their self-confidence.

Finally, the element of the ability to work together is a very important element to develop because it includes the previous elements, so that early childhood becomes an individual who is able to socialize, interact, have a sense of tolerance, respect, and share with each other to achieve the goals of children's social development (Prabandari et al., 2019). Because if children are unable to develop their abilities holistically, it will be an obstacle for other elements.

The concept of multicultural education here is can be a significant factor in encouraging the development of social competence in children. Multicultural education aims to understand, appreciate, and respond to the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, languages and social backgrounds that exist in society. In addition, the main goal of multicultural education is to create an inclusive, fair learning environment and open the door for students to understand and appreciate cultural differences (Purnama, 2021; Retnasari et al., 2019). Of course, in delivering multicultural education, teachers must experience several obstacles that need to be overcome so that this goal can be achieved optimally. First, the lack of availability of materials and resources that reflect cultural diversity highlights the need for updates to the curriculum and increased access to supporting facilities. Second, time constraints and the lack of educators require additional support from the school to ensure that teachers have sufficient time and resources to provide multicultural education effectively. Finally, the lack of coordination with parents indicates the need to build strong partnerships between schools and families to support multicultural education. By addressing these obstacles through improved teacher training, better resource allocation, and building partnerships with parents, it is hoped that multicultural education can provide greater benefits for the holistic development of children.

In fact, the children who were the subjects of this study showed variations in their socialization abilities. Some of them could socialize well, while others still faced obstacles in the aspect of socialization. These obstacles were influenced by several factors, including the role of teachers, parental support, and the surrounding environment. Children's social development is greatly influenced by the maturity of the child's individual, the role of parents, the environment, and the learning environment (school) (Muzzamil, 2021). According to Halid, as explained, there are several factors that can influence children's social interactions (Meiranny et al., 2022). These factors involve the role of parents in providing care to children, environmental influences, and peer relationships. Therefore, attention and support from teachers, parents, and environmental conditions are very important in shaping children's socialization skills. Joint efforts from various parties can play a major role in improving children's social skills holistically.

4. CONCLUSION

This study reveals the results of the social development of children aged 5-6 years in the delivery of multicultural education by teachers at the AMI Penang Guidance Center. The results show a lack of optimization in each element that the five elements analyzed show results that are interrelated with each other. If in one element the child experiences suboptimality, it will affect the other elements as well. The five elements analyzed are the ability to tolerate, the ability to empathize, language and communication skills, the ability to build self-confidence and the ability to work together. The inhibiting factors are educational stimulation provided by teachers, parental strategies in helping to optimize child development and factors from within the child. The supporting factors are habits carried out by teachers and close coordination between parents and teachers. This study has limitations that must be considered when interpreting the results. The sample size of children and teachers is relatively small, limiting the ability to generalize these findings to a broader educational context. Therefore, future research should seek a larger sample in order to obtain more diverse findings.

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