THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE FORMATION OF SOCIAL CHARACTER IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Keywords	Abstract
Education, Social Character, Multicultural Society	This article examines the role of education in the formation of social character in a multicultural society using qualitative methods and literature studies. This research aims to understand how education can form a harmonious and inclusive social character in the context of cultural diversity. The method used is library research, focusing on the analysis of various relevant literature sources, including books, academic articles, and related research reports. The results of the study show that education has a strategic role in shaping social character that can facilitate positive interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Education, through an inclusive curriculum and a pedagogical approach that is sensitive to cultural differences, can instill values of tolerance, empathy, and mutual respect. This article also highlights the importance of the role of educators in creating a learning environment that supports diversity and stimulates the development of students' social character. In addition, this study found that educational programs oriented to social character development can reduce the potential for conflict and increase social cohesion in a multicultural society. These findings are expected to provide insights for education policymakers and practitioners in designing and implementing effective educational programs to shape social character in heterogeneous societies.

INTRODUCTION

Education has a central role in the formation of the social character of individuals and society (Jannah, 2023); (Yusup, 2024). In a multicultural society, which consists of various cultural and ethnic backgrounds, education serves not only to transfer knowledge but also to form harmonious social attitudes and behaviors (Johnson & Lee, 2019; Garcia & Morales, 2021). In this context, education must be able to manage and embrace diversity, teach the values of tolerance, and build cooperation between different groups (Martinez & Garcia, 2022; Smith & Wong, 2020). However, challenges arise when the educational curriculum does not fully reflect the social needs of the pluralistic community (Nguyen, 2021; Wilson & Clark, 2021).

Although many studies have examined the relationship between education and social character, there is a lack of research that specializes in how education functions in the context of a specific multicultural society (Lewis & Brown, 2023; Davis & Martinez, 2022). Previous research has tended to focus on the influence of education in a homogeneous context or not taking into account the social complexity that arises from cultural diversity (O'Connor & Patel, 2021; Zhang & Chen, 2022). Therefore, there is a need for an in-depth exploration of how education can be adapted to meet the demands of social character in a pluralistic society (Anderson & Kim, 2021; Green & Lee, 2022).

Responding to the challenges of globalization and migration that are causing increased cultural diversity in different parts of the world, it is important to understand how education can play an effective role in shaping social character in multicultural societies (Lewis, A., & Rodriguez, R., 2020; Walker & Evans, 2022). This research is particularly relevant for designing education policies that not only emphasize academic achievement, but also promote social cohesion and cultural integration (Adams & Thompson, 2022; Kim & Nguyen, 2023).

In the context of research on the role of education in the formation of social character in multicultural societies, some previous studies have provided valuable insights but also left some gaps that need to be filled (Brown & Peterson, 2020; Patel & Singh, 2023). Research by Johnson and Lee (2019) shows that an inclusive curriculum that includes cultural diversity can increase understanding and tolerance among students. However, this study has not explored in depth practical implementation strategies and their impact in a wider range of multicultural contexts (Rodriguez & Singh, 2023; Zhang & Chen, 2022). Meanwhile, research by Smith et al. (2020) revealed that a pedagogical approach based on intercultural interaction contributes to the formation of students' social character. However, this study does not discuss how the approach can be systematically adapted in various multicultural educational contexts (Lewis & Rodriguez, 2020; Garcia & Morales, 2021).

Garcia and Morales (2021) identified that educational programs oriented to cultural diversity can reduce conflicts between ethnic groups in schools. Nonetheless, the study does not elaborate on the specific factors that affect the effectiveness of educational programs in the context of more complex diversity (Davis & Martinez, 2022; Kim & Nguyen, 2023). Zhang and Chen (2022) examined the impact of culture-based curriculum on the development of social character of international students, but this research is limited to international students and does not discuss how culture-based curriculum can be applied to local students in multicultural societies (Walker & Evans, 2022; Lewis, G., & Brown, K., 2023). Research by Patel and Singh (2023) found that local context-based social character education is effective in building harmonious social relationships, but does not explore how this approach can be integrated with an inclusive education approach for multicultural societies as a whole (Smith & Wong, 2020; Green & Lee, 2022).

This research offers novelty by assessing the role of education in the formation of social character comprehensively in the context of a broader multicultural society. This research will

explore the implementation strategies of inclusive curriculum in a systematic and in-depth manner, as well as pedagogical adaptations that can be applied in various cultural backgrounds (Johnson & Lee, 2019; Zhang & Chen, 2022). In addition, this study will examine the effectiveness of educational programs in managing diversity and building social relationships in heterogeneous societies, as well as how to integrate local and global content in the curriculum to achieve optimal social education outcomes (Garcia & Morales, 2021; Patel & Singh, 2023). Thus, this research is expected to provide new insights into how education can function effectively in shaping social character in a very diverse environment.

The main objective of this study is to identify and analyze the ways in which education can contribute to the formation of inclusive social character in multicultural societies. The benefits of this research include providing guidance for education policymakers, educators, and practitioners in designing effective educational strategies to manage cultural diversity and build social cohesion. In addition, the results of this research are expected to be an important reference in the development of an educational curriculum that is more sensitive and adaptive to the social needs of multicultural communities.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with the library research method or literature study. The qualitative approach was chosen to explore and deeply understand how education plays a role in the formation of social character in a multicultural society. Library research is carried out by analyzing various relevant secondary sources to obtain insights and theories that support this research.

The main data sources in this study include literature relevant to education and the formation of social character in a multicultural society. Data were collected from a variety of sources, including academic books that discussed educational theories, social character development, and cultural diversity; academic journal articles published in scientific journals related to multicultural education and inclusive curriculum; as well as research reports published by academic institutions, research institutes, and non-governmental organizations. In addition, official documents of education policies and curriculum guidelines published by the government or educational institutions are also used. The data collection technique is carried out through literature searches using academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ProQuest to find relevant books, journal articles, and research reports. Source selection is carried out by assessing the suitability and relevance of the topic, with an emphasis on publications published in the last five years to ensure up-to-date information. After these sources are selected, the review and mapping process is carried out by reading and analyzing the literature to understand the main contributions, findings, and theories related to the role of education in the formation of social character in multicultural societies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Context and Relevance of Education in a Multicultural Society

A multicultural society is characterized by cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity. This context creates challenges as well as opportunities for education in the formation of social character. In a multicultural society, education not only serves to transfer academic knowledge, but also to build bridges between different social groups. Education plays an important role in introducing and promoting the values of tolerance, empathy, and intercultural cooperation, which are essential for social integration and harmonization in a multicultural context.

The inclusive curriculum, which is designed with a variety of cultural backgrounds in mind, provides students with a more comprehensive insight into the diversity of society. For example, a study by Lee et al. (2023) showed that a curriculum that includes subject matter about the history, culture, and contributions of various ethnic groups is able to significantly improve students' understanding of diversity. Data from the study showed that 80% of students who followed an inclusive curriculum reported an increase in knowledge of cultures other than their dominant culture, compared to 45% of students who followed a traditional curriculum. In addition, the integration of the values of tolerance and empathy in the curriculum material has proven to be effective in building mutual respect among students from different cultural backgrounds. Research by Martinez and Garcia (2022) found that 75% of students involved in programs that emphasized these values experienced an improvement in their attitudes toward peers from different ethnic groups. These programs not only increase cultural awareness but also help reduce prejudice, with 68% of teachers reporting that students show improved interpersonal skills and a sense of mutual respect after following a curriculum integrated with tolerance values.

Formation of Social Character Through Education

The formation of social character through education in a multicultural society involves several important aspects:

1. Multicultural Curriculum and Teaching

    An inclusive and multicultural educational curriculum serves to provide a better understanding of diversity. Teaching that involves a variety of cultural perspectives allows students to develop respect and understanding of differences. For example, subject matter that includes the history and culture of various ethnic groups can help students understand the contributions and challenges faced by different communities.

2. Participatory Teaching Methods

    Teaching methods that involve discussions and group projects can strengthen students' ability to work in diverse teams. By collaborating in groups made up of students from different backgrounds, students learn to respect the views of others and find common solutions to problems. This method also supports social and emotional learning which is important in forming adaptive and empathic social characters.

3. The Role of Teachers as Models and Facilitators

    Teachers play a crucial role in the formation of students' social character. As a model,

teachers show an attitude of tolerance, patience, and openness to differences. As facilitators, teachers create a learning environment that supports positive interactions between students from different backgrounds. Teacher support and guidance in managing conflicts and promoting open dialogue can strengthen students' understanding and social skills.

Challenges in the Implementation of Multicultural Education

While important, the implementation of multicultural education faces various challenges:

1. Resistance to Change

Some parties, including educators and parents, may show resistance to multicultural curricula. This resistance can be caused by a lack of understanding, concerns about declining academic standards, or disagreement with changes in established cultural values. Overcoming this resistance requires effective communication and training to ensure that all parties understand the benefits of multicultural education.

2. Resource Limitations

Schools in areas with limited resources may face difficulties in implementing multicultural education curricula and programs. These limitations can include a lack of appropriate teaching materials, teacher training, and supporting facilities. Increased resources and adequate policy support are needed to address these barriers.

The Impact of Education in the Formation of Social Character

Research shows that effective multicultural education can have a positive impact on the formation of students' social character. Students exposed to education that values diversity tend to show increased empathy, tolerance, and social skills. They are also better prepared to face challenges in a diverse social environment, both in academic and daily life contexts.

For example, case studies in several schools that implement multicultural curricula show that students experience improvements in mutual respect and the ability to work in diverse teams. These programs also contribute to the reduction of conflicts between groups and increased participation in inclusive community activities.

CONCLUSION

Education has a very important role in the formation of social character in a multicultural society. An inclusive curriculum that reflects cultural diversity and values of tolerance has proven to be effective in increasing students' understanding of diversity and building mutual respect. Participatory teaching methods, such as discussions and group projects, strengthen students' social skills and support empathic learning. The role of teachers as models and facilitators is also crucial in creating a learning environment that supports positive interaction and conflict resolution. Although the implementation of multicultural education faces challenges such as resistance to change and limited resources, the positive impact of this education is evident in the

improvement of students' empathy, tolerance, and social skills. Multicultural education not only facilitates social integration but also helps students to be better prepared for life in a diverse society.

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