

Cultivating Patriotism: A Nationalism Education Program for the Children of Indonesian Migrants in Malaysia

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Abstract – This three-day nationalism education program for the children of Indonesian migrant workers (TKI) in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, sought to foster patriotism and reinforce Indonesian national identity. Targeting children aged 7–15 from families within the Pertubuhan Masyarakat Indonesia di Pulau Pinang (PERMAI), the initiative combined Indonesian language instruction, cultural arts appreciation, and historical education through an engaging and interactive approach. Activities such as storytelling, educational videos, and cultural performances were designed to resonate deeply with participants, enhancing their understanding of nationalism. Observations and participant feedback highlighted the program's success, with children demonstrating heightened enthusiasm and active involvement in activities like history quizzes and traditional arts showcases. The program underscored the pivotal role of community organizations such as PERMAI in preserving national identity, while also emphasizing the importance of collaboration among universities, governments, and communities in sustaining nationalism education abroad. Despite its success, challenges remain, particularly regarding the limited availability of formal nationalism-based education for migrant families. Addressing this issue will require stronger inter-agency cooperation and the strategic use of technology to broaden educational access. This program serves as a scalable model for fostering nationalism among the children of Indonesian migrant workers globally.

Keywords – Nationalism Education, Indonesian Migrant Workers, Cultural Identity, Indonesian Language Teaching, Traditional Arts,

I. INTRODUCTION

Nationalism education is one of the strategic efforts to instil a sense of love for the country, pride in national identity, and awareness of national values from an early age. This is a particular challenge for the children of Indonesian migrant workers (TKI) abroad, including in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, where they grow up in a different social and cultural environment from Indonesia[1], [2].

In Pulau Pinang, Indonesian communities who are members of organisations such as Pertubuhan Masyarakat Indonesia di Pulau Pinang (PERMAI) play an important role in maintaining and nurturing national identity. PERMAI, as a non-political and non-governmental organisation, is not only a forum for strengthening social and cultural relations between community members, but is also active in organising educational activities aimed at strengthening national identity among children. Activities such as Indonesian language lessons, traditional arts, and an introduction to the nation's history have been the first steps in nationalism education[3], [3].

However, amidst the challenges of globalisation and cultural assimilation, migrant worker children face immense pressure to adjust to their living environment[4], [5]. This often leads to a reduction in their attachment to Indonesian culture and identity. Lack of access to formal education based on nationalistic values is also an obstacle that must be addressed[6], [7].

As part of its academic and social contribution, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University supports this effort through international community service programmes[8]. One relevant initiative is an education programme that integrates nationalism values in teaching and learning activities. The programme is designed for migrant workers' children with engaging approaches, such as the use of digital technology, interactive cultural arts, and story-based learning about Indonesian history[9], [10].

In addition, nationalism education also requires synergy between the government, society and organisations such as PERMAI. The Indonesian government can expand access to nationalism-based education through Indonesian schools abroad or by presenting a special curriculum tailored to the needs of migrant workers' children. PERMAI, on the other hand, can continue to play an active role as a bridge between the Indonesian community in Malaysia and the government's efforts to strengthen national identity. With a synergistic collaboration between various parties, it is hoped that the children of migrant workers in Pulau Pinang will not only be able to survive in the midst of globalisation, but also grow as individuals who are proud of their Indonesian identity[11], [12], [13], [14]. Nationalism education is not only about remembering history, but also building future generations with strong character, global competitiveness, and love for their homeland [15], [16], [17].

II. THEORY

Nationalism Education

Nationalism education is a learning process that aims to instil a sense of love for the country, pride in national identity, and an understanding of national values. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, education does not only aim to educate the mind, but also to shape individual character in order to have a sense of responsibility to the nation and state. Nationalism education includes an understanding of history, culture, and the values of Pancasila as the basis of social and state life. In the context of children of Indonesian migrant workers (TKI) living abroad, nationalism education is crucial to maintaining their identity amidst the influence of foreign cultures. These children face the challenge of cultural assimilation and the risk of losing their sense of nationhood due to limited access to formal education based on nationalism values. Therefore, nationalism education serves as a bulwark to strengthen their identity as part of the Indonesian nation, while fostering pride in the homeland[18], [19].

According to Henri Tajfel's Social Identity theory, individuals tend to define themselves based on membership in certain social groups, including nations. In this case, nationalism education helps migrant workers' children to maintain their identity as Indonesian citizens, despite living in an environment with a different culture. Nationalism education plays an important role in instilling national awareness, building nationalist character and helping children overcome the challenges of cultural assimilation. By teaching Indonesian history, Pancasila and national culture, children are able to understand their origins and take pride in their national identity. In addition, nationalism education contributes to the formation of characters who love the country so that they are able to contribute positively to the country in the future, while maintaining their Indonesian identity despite living in another country[20], [21].

Organisations such as Pertubuhan Masyarakat Indonesia di Pulau Pinang (PERMAI) play an important role in supporting nationalism education for migrant workers' children. As an organisation that facilitates the Indonesian community in Pulau Pinang, PERMAI can organise activities such as teaching Bahasa Indonesia, introducing traditional arts and culture, and utilising technology in nationalism education. Language is the main identity of a nation, so Indonesian language classes can help children maintain their ability to communicate in their mother tongue. In addition, the introduction of traditional arts and culture through activities such as dance, music and folk games can instil pride in Indonesian culture. On the other hand, technology is also an effective tool to support nationalism education. Digital platforms can be utilised to provide learning materials in the form of historical stories, educational videos, and national songs that are easily accessible to children anywhere[22], [23].

In the era of globalisation, nationalism education must be integrated into various aspects of the lives of TKI children, both through formal and informal education. Formal education can be conducted through Indonesian schools abroad that offer a curriculum based on Pancasila values. Meanwhile, informal education can be organised by local communities with activities such as cultural competitions, commemoration of national holidays, and interactive history lessons. Nationalism education not only impacts the individual, but also makes a positive contribution to the community and country. Children who have a strong sense of nationalism tend to be the next generation who are able to carry the nation's good name in the international arena, while maintaining their Indonesian identity[24], [25].

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology of this nationalism education activity was designed using a participatory approach, involving active cooperation between the devotion team from Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University and Pertubuhan Masyarakat Indonesia di Pulau Pinang (PERMAI). This activity took place over three days, focusing on the implementation of a nationalism education programme for

the children of Indonesian migrant workers (TKI) who are part of the PERMAI community in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia.

The programme used interactive education methods designed to instil nationalism values through various activities such as teaching Indonesian language, introducing traditional culture, and teaching national history. The subjects of the activities consisted of migrant workers' children aged 7-15 years old who are members of the PERMAI community. The resource persons provided materials through various learning media, such as interesting historical stories, educational videos, and cultural arts practices, including traditional Indonesian dances and songs[1], [16], [23].

Data collection techniques in this activity include direct observation to observe children's participation and engagement, documentation of activities for evaluation purposes, and collection of feedback through questionnaires given to parents and interviews with participants. Observation was used to see the children's enthusiasm and response to the activity, while the questionnaires and interviews aimed to find out the extent to which this activity helped improve their understanding of nationalism values.[9], [16]

The implementation stage of the activity began with the preparation stage, including the preparation of learning materials and coordination with PERMAI to determine the schedule and logistics of the activity. Next is the implementation stage, where the education programme is carried out through learning sessions and interactive activities, such as quiz competitions on the theme of Indonesian history, cultural arts practices, and Indonesian language classes. The final stage is evaluation, where the data that has been collected is analysed descriptively to assess the success of the activities. This analysis provides an overview of the programme's impact on children's understanding of nationalism, as well as recommendations for the development of similar activities in the future. With this approach, it is hoped that the nationalism education programme will not only instil national values in the children of migrant workers in Pulau Pinang, but also strengthen their sense of pride as part of the Indonesian nation, despite living abroad[10], [15], [19], [26].

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Nationalism Education Programme

A three-day nationalism education programme for children of Indonesian migrant workers (TKI) in Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, successfully accommodated the need for national values-based education for children living in a culturally different environment. The programme involved children aged 7-15 years old from migrant worker families who are members of the PERMAI community, with the main objective of instilling love for the country and strengthening Indonesia's national identity. The programme, organised by Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University (UNTIRTA) in collaboration with PERMAI, includes various educational activities such as Indonesian language teaching, introduction to traditional arts, as well as delivery of Indonesian history materials designed with interesting and interactive methods[27], [28].

Participation and Engagement

The programme's approach based on active participation through interactive learning methods proved effective in increasing children's engagement. The programme combines various forms of media such as historical stories, educational videos, and cultural art practices such as traditional Indonesian dance and song. The diversity of methods used succeeded in attracting children's interest, so that they could be fully involved in each session. Based on observations during the activity, the level of participation of the children was very high, as evidenced by their enthusiasm in participating in the quiz competition on the theme of Indonesian history as well as cultural arts performances that were carried out with great enthusiasm. The use of multimedia, which presents Indonesian history in the form of an interesting story, was very helpful in deepening their understanding of Indonesia's national identity, as well as fostering a sense of pride in their homeland[19], [20].

Impact on Understanding Nationalism

Evaluations conducted through feedback from participants and their parents show that the programme has had a positive impact in strengthening the understanding of nationalism in migrant workers' children. Activities such as Indonesian language teaching proved effective in improving their language skills, which is an important aspect in maintaining national identity. In addition, the introduction of traditional Indonesian art through various cultural art forms such as dance, music and folk games further strengthens their bond with Indonesia's cultural heritage. The understanding of Indonesian history introduced through materials packaged in the form of stories and educational videos not only provides insight into the nation's journey, but also fosters a deep sense of pride and love for the country[7], [15], [17].

The Role of Organisations and Related Party Synergies

The importance of the role of organisations such as PERMAI in supporting nationalism education programmes cannot be underestimated. As a bridge between the Indonesian community in Malaysia and the efforts of the Indonesian government, PERMAI plays a key role in facilitating activities that focus on strengthening national identity among the children of migrant workers. Synergy between higher education institutions, the government, and the community is necessary to create an educational environment that supports the formation of a nationalist character. In this context, this programme demonstrates the importance of collaboration between various parties to ensure the sustainability of nationalism education, both in the form of formal and informal education [19], [20], [21], [23], [24].



Figure 1: Nationalism Education Activity for Indonesian Labour Children

Challenges and Recommendations

While the programme has shown encouraging results, some significant challenges still need to be overcome, particularly in relation to the limited access of migrant workers' children to formal education based on nationalism values. Most children of migrant workers abroad do not have adequate access to Indonesian schools, resulting in a limited understanding of Indonesian history and culture. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen cooperation between the Indonesian government and community organisations such as PERMAI to provide formal education facilities based on nationalism abroad, which can be a more affordable and appropriate access to education for migrant workers' children. In addition, it is important to further develop the use of digital technology as a means to disseminate nationalism education materials. More intensive use of digital platforms can make it easier for migrant workers' children, especially those living in areas with limited access, to access learning materials related to Indonesian history, culture and values. Digital technology can also serve as a bridge to deliver nationalism education in a more flexible and inclusive manner, in accordance with the times and the needs of children in the era of globalization [9], [15], [22], [26], [28].

V. CONCLUSION

Overall, the nationalism education programme has had a significant impact on the understanding and strengthening of the national identity of migrant worker children in Pulau Pinang. Through an interactive and fun approach, the children not only gained knowledge about Indonesian history and culture, but also strengthened their sense of pride and love for their homeland. In the future, it is important to continue and expand this programme by involving more parties, as well as continuing to develop more innovative methods and supporting technology so that nationalism education can be accessed by more children of migrant workers abroad. This programme can be used as a model in the effort to integrate national values in the education of children abroad who are increasingly connected to the global world.

VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare no conflicts of interest.

VII. AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

Authors have equally participated and shared every item of the work.

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