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Parental Strategies in Instilling Egalitarian Values in Early Childhood

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses strategies used by parents in an effort to instill egalitarian values in young children. This research reflects the importance of early education that focuses on gender equality. The research method used is a literature review of books, journal articles, and proceedings. The results showed that the most successful parenting strategies included open communication about egalitarian values, positive role models, and educational resources supporting gender equality. This article provides valuable insight for parents and educators in supporting the development of children with strong egalitarian values from an early age. The research results show that the strategy used by "Parental Strategies in Instilling Egalitarian Values in Early Childhood" is by introducing various kinds of games, open communication regarding egalitarian values, positive role models, and the use of educational resources that support gender equality. By implementing this strategy, parents can help their children understand and internalize egalitarian values early on.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Issues related to gender equality have become a significant concern in global discourse. Growing international awareness of the importance of equal opportunities for both men and women has led to various regulations, social movements, and educational policies with a gender-responsive perspective (Nuryatmawati, 2020). However, realities on the ground show that gender stereotypes, discriminatory practices in schools, and the limited representation of women in the education sector remain interconnected problems that continue to persist across generations (Chisamya et al., 2012; Cole, 2022; Dianita, 2020). This article examines the root of these issues, particularly in early childhood education, as the early years serve as the foundation for shaping a child's character, thinking patterns, and value system. By discussing early childhood education, we are opening a gateway to the future, where equality, respect for differences, and a healthy understanding of gender can be firmly nurtured in the next generation who will one day shape the world's civilization.

One of the main obstacles in achieving gender equality from an early age is the persistence of gender stereotypes passed down through generations (Hayati et al., 2021). These stereotypes frequently categorize traits, interests, and social roles based on gender, causing children to grow up with artificial boundaries about what is "appropriate" for boys and what is "expected" of girls. This can be found in daily life, from gender-segregated toys and biased narratives in storybooks to classroom activities that differentiate roles between boys and girls, as well as parenting patterns that consciously or unconsciously reinforce traditional gender roles. When such messages are repeatedly embedded in a child's mind, they are absorbed as absolute truths, ultimately influencing their self-identity, future choices, and ways of interpreting social relationships (Bookchin, 2022; Hood, 2012; Oliver, 2020).

Gender stereotypes not only limit the individual development of children but also have the potential to perpetuate long-term social injustice (Afifah, 2024). Girls may lose opportunities to explore fields considered "masculine," while boys may feel pressured constantly to appear dominant, firm, or aggressive. Therefore, creating a learning environment that enables children to grow according to their interests, abilities, and potential, free from gender stereotypes, is a moral mandate and a professional responsibility for early childhood educators.

Beyond stereotypes, gender-based discrimination still frequently occurs within school environments. Such discrimination may take various forms, ranging from unequal treatment in learning activities to bullying that stems from socially constructed gender norms (Faridani et al., 2025). It is not uncommon for teachers, perhaps unintentionally, to hold different expectations or give unequal attention to boys and girls. For example, boys may receive more praise in science and mathematics, while girls are encouraged toward activities deemed "gentle." This type of bias is a clear example of gender discrimination that may hinder children's academic development and self-confidence.

For this reason, teachers and parents have a strategic role in fostering children's critical awareness of gender equality (Levy et al., 2020). Both must work collaboratively to ensure that every child understands their rights and is supported in rejecting and resisting discrimination. Schools must also function as safe, inclusive, and stigma-free spaces where all children, regardless of gender, can experience fair, joyful, and liberating learning.

At the same time, educators need to introduce diverse gender roles through figures, historical narratives, and human achievements (Puspita Sari, 2020). Stories of women who

have contributed to science, technology, the arts, leadership, and humanitarian work should be incorporated into early learning materials so that girls, especially, can gain positive role models that inspire courage, ambition, and confidence to excel in any field they aspire to pursue.

Thus, through this article, we will explore concrete strategies in early childhood education to address gender stereotypes, prevent discrimination, and provide practical guidelines for teachers and parents in instilling egalitarian values from an early age. Gender-responsive education is not merely about eliminating inequality, but also about building a generation that is more just, empathetic, and appreciative of humanity without gender-based boundaries.

2. METHODS

The research method employed in this study involves a comprehensive literature review encompassing books, journal articles, and conference proceedings. This approach allows for a thorough examination and analysis of existing knowledge and scholarly works in the field, providing valuable insights and building upon the information available. By synthesizing this wide range of sources, the study aims to establish a strong foundation for its research objectives and enhance the depth of understanding in the chosen subject matter.

This literature review methodology effectively explores and consolidates the current state of research, theories, and findings, enabling the study to draw upon the expertise and insights of numerous experts and scholars. By examining a diverse range of published materials, the research aims to synthesize and integrate the existing knowledge into a cohesive and informative narrative, ultimately advancing the field and providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Implementation Of Instilling Egalitarian Attitudes In Young Children Through Non-Formal Education

Instilling egalitarian attitudes in young children through non-formal education is a crucial step in creating a fair and inclusive society. This approach involves various strategies that can shape children's understanding of gender equality, ethnicity, religion, and other backgrounds.

Firstly, it is essential to create a learning environment that supports diversity (Sari, 2019). Children can become acquainted with various stories and cultures worldwide through storybooks, games, and art activities. Additionally, non-formal educators must set a positive example by demonstrating inclusive and fair behavior. Furthermore, collaboration between families, communities, and non-formal educational institutions should be emphasized. Parents must be encouraged to support egalitarian education and eliminate gender stereotypes at home (Nurfalah, 2019). Communities can also play a role in organizing events and programs that promote equality. Moreover, developing social skills such as empathy and cooperation should be enhanced. Children need to be allowed to interact with peers from different backgrounds (Puspita Sari, 2020; Syahrul & Nurhafizah, 2022). Finally, non-formal education should integrate materials that promote equality into its curriculum. This includes understanding human rights, respecting differences, and encouraging active participation in creating a just society. With this approach, children will grow up with a

deeper understanding of the importance of equality and inclusion, which will help create a better and fairer society in the future.

Parents can use strategies to instill egalitarian values in young children by introducing various games Tristaningrat (n.d.), such as playing with dolls. It is not just girls who can play with dolls; boys are also free to enjoy such games. This helps to eliminate gender boundaries and promote equality from an early age. Additionally, open communication about egalitarian values is crucial. Parents need to talk to their children about gender, ethnicity, and religion equality so that children can understand the importance of respecting differences and avoiding stereotypes. Being a positive role model is also necessary in educating children. Parents should set a good example by demonstrating inclusive and fair behavior daily (Adpriyadi & Sudarto, 2020; Fadhilah et al., 2019).

The use of educational resources that support gender equality is also essential. Parents can select storybooks, toys, and other educational materials emphasizing egalitarian values. This helps children understand that everyone has the same value, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or religion (Hakim et al., 2018). Additionally, parents need to be actively involved in supporting children in experiencing situations that promote equality. They can take their children to community events that promote equality and inclusion. As a result, children will be exposed to egalitarian values in various contexts.

Collaboration between families, communities, and non-formal educational institutions is key to successfully instilling egalitarian values in children. Parents must work with educators and non-formal school staff to create an inclusive educational environment. They can participate in school activities and support initiatives that promote equality. On the other hand, communities also play a crucial role in ensuring that gender equality and inclusion are widely adopted. They can organize events and programs that educate children about the importance of equality. Moreover, communities can provide social support for families to educate children to have strong egalitarian attitudes.

Social skills such as empathy and cooperation are integral to egalitarian education (Syahrul & Nurhafizah, 2022). Children need to be allowed to interact with peers from different backgrounds. This helps them understand the experiences of others and enhances empathy. Moreover, cooperation in various projects and activities also promotes egalitarian values. Children learn to work together as a team without regard to their differences.

Finally, non-formal education should integrate materials that promote equality into its curriculum (Shala & Grajcevcic, 2016). This includes understanding human rights, respecting differences, and encouraging active participation in creating a just society. By integrating egalitarian values into the curriculum, children will understand the importance of equality and inclusion in society. They will learn that everyone has the same rights and that justice is a value to be upheld.

Overall, instilling egalitarian attitudes in young children through non-formal education involves various strategies involving families, communities, and educational institutions. By working together and focusing on creating an environment that supports gender equality, children can grow up with a deep understanding of the importance of equality and inclusion, which will help create a better and fairer society.

3.2. The Impact of Instilling Egalitarian Attitudes in Young Children

The Qur'an also emphasizes that the dignity of humanity is equal in the sight of Allah, and there is no distinction between one ethnicity and another (Hakim et al., 2018). Therefore, instilling egalitarian attitudes in young children has a positive impact because egalitarianism is a belief in equality and fair treatment of all individuals, regardless of gender, race, or other backgrounds. The impacts include, among others, an increase in a child's self-confidence. When they know they have the same rights as others, they tend to feel more valuable and confident in expressing their opinions. This is crucial in shaping a strong personality. Another positive impact is the improvement of a child's cooperation and communication skills. Growing up in an environment where everyone is treated fairly makes them more likely to work well together and understand the importance of listening to others' opinions. Furthermore, instilling egalitarian values can help address gender inequality. By teaching children that women and men have equal rights, we can break down existing gender stereotypes. Children will grow up believing that their careers and dreams are not limited by gender.

However, it is also important to understand that instilling egalitarian values requires a consistent approach from all parties involved in a child's life, including family, school, and the community (Hughes et al., 2016). Additionally, adult role models are crucial. Children are likelier to adopt egalitarian values if they see the adults around them practicing them (Sheina Lew-Levy et al., 2018).

In addition to the positive impacts, instilling egalitarian values also faces challenges. One of them is resistance to change in a society that may still adhere to traditional views of gender roles. However, with the right education and awareness, this challenge can be overcome.

Overall, instilling egalitarian values in young children is a valuable investment in a fairer and more inclusive future. It helps create a more sensitive generation to gender equality and human rights issues and promotes peace and justice in the global community. Therefore, it is important for all stakeholders, from families to educational institutions, to work together in instilling these values in children.

In conclusion, the process of instilling egalitarian attitudes in young children is not merely an educational effort but a transformative movement toward building a more just society. By nurturing a sense of equality and mutual respect from an early age, children learn to value diversity and empathy as integral parts of human interaction. These early lessons can shape their moral compass and influence how they contribute to their communities in the future. As they grow, such children are more likely to challenge discrimination and advocate for fairness in various aspects of life, including education, the workplace, and civic engagement. Thus, promoting egalitarian values in childhood serves as the foundation for cultivating responsible, compassionate, and socially aware citizens who uphold justice and equality as universal principles.

4. CONCLUSION

In summary, instilling egalitarian attitudes in young children through non-formal education is essential for building a fair and inclusive society. This approach involves various strategies such as creating a diverse learning environment, promoting collaboration

between families and communities, and developing social skills. It also requires the integration of egalitarian values into the curriculum. Egalitarian attitudes, which emphasize equal treatment regardless of gender, race, or other backgrounds, have numerous positive impacts, including increased self-confidence, improved cooperation and communication skills, and addressing gender inequality. However, consistent efforts from families, schools, and communities are required, along with positive role models. While challenges may exist, instilling egalitarian values is an important investment in a more just and inclusive future.

Moreover, instilling egalitarian attitudes in young children has a significant impact. It aligns with the Quranic belief in the equal dignity of all humans and contributes to children's self-confidence, cooperation, and communication skills. It also helps break down gender stereotypes and promotes gender equality. To be effective, this effort requires consistency and role modeling by adults. Overcoming resistance to change is possible with proper education and awareness.

In conclusion, instilling egalitarian values in young children is an invaluable investment in a more equitable and inclusive future. It fosters a generation sensitive to gender equality and human rights, contributing to global peace and justice. Therefore, it is crucial for all stakeholders, from families to educational institutions, to collaborate in imparting these values to children. The researchers recommend that parents apply egalitarian values to young children, not just knowing but implementing them in their lives. Egalitarian implementation should start early to become ingrained in an individual's character and personality. For future research, seeking more references through international journals is suggested, as there is still limited literature available in Indonesia.

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6. AUTHORS' NOTE

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