SHARPEN NATURALISTIC INTELLIGENCE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN CHILDHOOD

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Abstract

Environmental education we has often hearing today, more ever some schools have begun to teach and apply to their students. Environmental education has huge role learning process for children in school, especially for childhood. There are many benefits can get of children by teaching them environmental education, they are, can make children closer to the surrounding environment, more love nature, more sensitive to the surrounding environment, can grow empathy and etc.

Love to the surrounding environment must be grown from child, so that the future children will love the environment, respect the natural surroundings, can maintain environmental is well. Children are closer to the environment will develop their naturalistic intelligence, one of which can be developed by environmental education, they get from school home. Children with have good naturalistic intelligence will be able to appreciate life and nature.

Keywords: Naturalistic Intelligence, Environmental Education.

INTRODUCTION

Education is very important for life. Childhood education as basic stage in the ongoing process of lifelong education and is considered very important for everyone as the educational foundation for further gap. Childhood doing something must be concrete or clear, the media can be felt real, because at this stage their cognitive abilities are still in the concrete pre-operational. (Sujiono, et al., 2004).

Childhood education is covers all aspects development, and encompasses all efforts and actions by educators and parents in the care, nurturing and education process of children, by creating atmosphere and environment where the child can explore experiences that give him the opportunity to knowing and understand the learning experience it getting from the environment, through observing, imitating and experimenting that takes over and over and involves all the potential and intelligence that has child. The child is a unique person and will passed through various stages development of personality, the environment by educators and parents can getting opportunities for children to explore experiences with a variety atmosphere should be pay attention to children and suitable with development of childhood personality . (Marwah, 2017).

Learning for children is a process more complex development, and learning needs to involving environment to enrich the child's experience. Children will learn to experiment, explore, and investigate environment so that the children are able to build a new knowledge that can used in adulthood. Children have a variety intelligences himself, one of which is naturalistic intelligence that can be sharpen by bringing the child to the environment. (Marwah, 2017).
Naturalistic intelligence is one’s skill in recognizing and categorizing species (flora and fauna) in the environment, the existence recognizing of a species and can mapping relationships between species. (Gardner, 2008). According to Armstrong (2009) naturalistic intelligence is the intelligence to love the nature through the introduction of the flora and fauna contained in the environment and observe the natural phenomenon and concern for the environment. Concern for the environment is very good when starting from Childhood. Where the childhood learn by feeling, hearing, seeing, trying and exploring through the environment, seeing events and events will become a learning and knowledge for them.

Naturalistic intelligence is important for childhood development by learning strategies such as environmental in children, so that concern for environment and nature will be more inherent child until adult. Iskandar’s (2013) delivery of environmental material can be given since the child in childhood education environment. While playing the children can be knowing about plants or animals. Thus knowledge and values about the environment can be introduced to children and the value will be stronger.

Naturalistic intelligence is the intelligence associated with the natural, the environment of residence, or anything related to nature. Naturalistic intelligence is part of human intelligence, according to Howard Gardner (2008). Gardner said the human was born equipped all abilities, like naturalistic intelligence. All children are born with their intelligence, but what the intelligence can develop optimally or not depends on stimulated by parents and environment. The people with naturalist intelligence are usually attract to activities such as planting crops, raising animals or interested in learning about the animal and plant world. Zoo keepers, biologists, gardeners, and veterinarians are people Gardner sees as having high naturalistic intelligence.

According theory of plural intelligence that humans have more than one kind of intelligence and each intelligence cooperates in a child. The intelligence needs to be explored and developed optimally. According to Gardner, by Musfiroh, everyone has the capacity to develop intelligences until highest level provided that appropriate, support, enrichment and learning. (Martutti, A, 2009).

Make the naturalistic intelligence of children more sharpen with introducing environmental education. Environmental education is a process that aims to create community that has a concern for the environment and related problems and has the knowledge, motivation, commitment and skills to work, like individually and collectively in finding alternatives or provide solutions to problems the current environment and to avoid the emergence of new environmental. (Naini & Santoso, 2012).

Environmental education is a process of building human in world that is conscious and caring for the environment with all the problems associated, and people have knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, motivation and commitment work together, like individually and collectively, to solve current environmental problems, and prevent new problems. (Iskandar, Z. 2013).

Environmental education is started in schools to socialize intensively, and moreover, environmental education is beginning to be taught to the students in school. Its goal is that the children love the environment early, especially the around environment where they lived. Teaching about love to the environment at early age is a positive thing, because it is a very beneficial for the children development, one of it is to improve naturalistic intelligence at early age. So in other words, it is more naturalistic intelligence of children that needed learning and education knowledge-based and practice in the environment directly to increase the love of environment by the children.
THEORETICAL BASIS

A. Understanding Naturalistic Intelligence

Howard Gardner's (2008) said that naturalistic intelligence is an ability to recognize, discern, classify, and categorize what he or she sees or encounters in nature or in his/her environment. Be smart in naturally assist the people in the past to recognize the patterns and changes around their environment in order to survive. This intelligence is on the part of the brain to responsible for recognizing the patterns, forming subtle relationships, especially in areas of the brain that can capture and accurate sensor perceptions, as well as separate and classify of the objects.

On the other hand, naturalistic intelligence is the skill of recognizing and exploring species (flora, fauna) in the environment, knowing the existence of species, mapping the relations of species and phenomena, species and other natural phenomena. Those who grew up in urban areas and ability to distinguish non living objects, such as cars, shoes, rubber shoes, etc.. And also feeling the shapes and connect elements in opening the nature, such as beaches, mountains, nature reserves, or forest. (Soefandi, 2009). The student who has intelligence tend to observe the natural environment such as various kinds of rocks, types of soil layers, various kinds of flora and fauna, celestial objects, and so forth.

In general, children who has naturalistic intelligence will be happy when they are in a natural environment, such as on the beach, river, and others. They enjoy the proximity in nature. They are very interested in various activities conducted outside the home. Like to camping, cycling, fishing, gardening, walking and so on. Children who have naturalistic intelligence also have a great curiosity about the conditions around them. They often ask about natural phenomenon such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, rain, and so on (Hamzah B. Uno, et al. 2010).

A.1. Characteristics of Children with Naturalistic Intelligence

The children who appear naturalistic intelligence always look alert the surroundings. This sensitivity is based on the high rate of development of their sensory perception. Their high senses allowed them to recognize similarities, differences, and changes the surroundings are much faster than others, and they are easy to categorize or classify the things. In general, children who have naturalistic intelligence could be seen from an early age. The general characteristics of children with naturalist intelligence are as follows (May, et al, 2004):

- Easily to see the patterns and rhythms of the surroundings by observing, differences, equations, or anomalies.
- Showing the things in the environment that others pass up.
- Having the memory of detail, observe and easily remember the things around them.
- Have a keen sense in vision, smell, hearing, touch and maybe even have a sixth sense.
- Loved the animals and loved to know the things about animals
- Loved to the outdoor activities such as gardening, camping, hiking or climbing, even just sitting still and observing subtle changes in the environment.
- Loved the books or shows about natural phenomena.
- The things collection about natural phenomena, natural objects, journals, drawings, and writings of his/her own observations.
- Demonstrate the awareness of threats to the environment including the threat of extinction of a species.
- Easily to learn the characteristics and the things related to the species around the world.

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A child can be has naturalist intelligence when he or she shows these characteristics consistently. So, the child must have a curiosity about nature and the environment around him/her previously. Certainly, it can not be separated from the role of parents and teachers to foster children's interest in nature. The right of encouragement the right impulse, the children may have the interest in the natural surroundings.

A.2 Developing Children’s Naturalistic Intelligence

According Soefandi (2009), There are several activities that can be done to develop naturalistic intelligence in children, they are:
1. Playing in the garden or yard
2. capture of the landscape
3. Explain about the natural phenomenon that is up-dated
4. Evacuation learning during earthquake or flood
5. Camping
6. Stone exhibition
7. Hiking kelling village
8. Simple experiment
9. Handicrafts about natural phenomena
10. Handicraft made from natural or waste
11. Asking the children to keep the plants
12. Visiting nature tours and animal or plant shelters
13. Observing the weather
14. Breeding crops

B. Understanding of Environmental Education

Environmental education is a process for building a human population in a world aware and concerned about the total environment and all its related problems, and people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior, motivation and commitment to work together as individual or collective, and be able to solve current environmental problems, and prevent new problems. (Fadilllah, 2014).

On the other hand, Environmental education is a process of building a human population in a world that is conscious and caring for the environment in its entirety with all the problems associated with it, knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior, motivation as well as a commitment to work together as individual and collective, to solve current environmental problems, and prevent new problems arising. (Iskandar, Z. 2013).

B.1. Benefits of Environmental Education In Early Childhood

Environmental education provides substantial benefits for early childhood development, such as (Iskandar, Z. 2013):
1. Providing the information to children about the importance of maintaining the environment
2. Providing the learning about the importance of the environment to children.
3. Finding out how much sense sensitivity of the child to the condition of the surrounding environment
4. Providing the opportunities for children to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes/behaviors, motivations and commitments required to work individually or in groups.
5. Environmental education includes the affective aspects of behavior, values and commitment necessary to build sustainable societies.

6. Environmental education in schools is one of the character education. Character education and environmental education comprises character values including knowledge (cognitive), consciousness or willingness (affective), and action (psychomotor) to carry out those values.

C. Relationship of Naturalistic Intelligence and Environmental Education

Environmental education is a thing that can be done to improve naturalistic intelligence in children, because environmental education teaches children how to interact with the environment and nature. Children will feel closer to the environment, love the environment, and keep the environment where they lived well. Children who love the environment can be ascertained are children who have a good naturalistic kecrdasan.

Basically, every child is provided with all of access, including if a child has an intelligence in the field of naturalistic or more familiar with the intelligence associated in nature. Teaching the children about love of environmental is more beneficial for the survival of children for now and future. One of the benefits that can be taught by environmental education in children is to get children closer to nature, children have to respect and appreciate the gift of God The Al Mighty, the more, it makes him want to care and conserve the environment, because we know the current environment as well as around us have been much polluted, damaged, and have no function as that should be. Therefore it is good for educators in particular and parents begin to educate environmental education in children at an early age at school and at home, so that children always appreciate and love the natural surroundings.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the explanation and description above, it can be concluded that one way that can be done to hone naturalistic intelligence in early childhood is to apply environmental education. The environmental education is an education that given to one of its targets to teach the concern and love of the child to the natural and its surroundings like plants, animals (flora and fauna), yard, forest, river and others. Children's love to the environment will grow along with the education is done by teachers and parents to children, especially in early childhood. Early childhood is the generation of the nation that must be fertilized in love with nature. So that, they have to maintain and conserve environment. This environmental education is closely related to naturalistic intelligence, where naturalistic intelligence is the ability to recognize, see the differences, classify, and categorize what it sees or encounters in nature or in its environment. Thus, providing learning about nature or environmental education in children can be hone automatically as further or improve naturalistic intelligence in early childhood.

As for suggestions for parents and educators in this case are:
1. Giving more place to explore the ability
2. Let the child do a simple experiment for the development of his knowledge.
3. Be a good partner for children in sharpening their naturalistic intelligence
4. More often closer to the child's environment
5. Bring the child in open natural to be more able to see the beauty of nature, and teach children to be grateful for the blessings God has given.
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