

THE INDONESIAN CURRICULUM: DOES IT RETAIN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING?

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims at elaborating issues in Indonesian curriculum 2013, the latest curriculum in the country and address some issues in the pedagogical issues. Curriculum, considering its vital role in nation wide education, should get tremendous attention from all stakeholders: the government through the ministry of education, the school leaders, teachers, society and students. As curriculum plays as the national standards, all the executing stakeholder set their classroom aims, assessment, and plans accordingly. Based on the rationale, it is imperative to look at the curriculum from the lens of multicultural education because Indonesia is a diverse country. A curriculum that is responsive to the cultures in education setting would enhance the equality in education that eventually education for all can be achieved. This study employed systematic literature review as research method. The researcher examined literatures about related to culturally responsive teaching and the evidence of educational problems that currently happens from current published journals as well as important books related to culturally responsive teaching. The results indicated that there is a gap between the reality in the field and the educational system that has been established. A curriculum that is responsive to students' culture urges to be there in the curriculum, whether it is from the teacher or the stakeholders. In addition, the higher education also started to step forward to curriculum that retains students' culture.

Keywords: culture, culturally responsive teaching, curriculum, diversity

ABSTRAK

Karya tulis ilmiah ini bertujuan untuk mengelaborasi masalah dalam kurikulum 2013, kurikulum terbaru di Indonesia, dan membahas beberapa masalah dalam masalah pedagogis. Kurikulum, mengingat peran vitalnya dalam pendidikan nasional, harus mendapat perhatian yang luar biasa dari semua pemangku kepentingan: pemerintah melalui kementerian pendidikan, pimpinan sekolah, guru, masyarakat dan siswa. Karena kurikulum berperan sebagai standar nasional, semua pemangku kepentingan pelaksana menetapkan tujuan, penilaian, dan rencana kelas sesuai dengan itu. Berdasarkan alasan tersebut, maka kurikulum dari kacamata pendidikan multikultural sangat penting dilakukan karena Indonesia adalah negara yang majemuk. Kurikulum yang responsif terhadap budaya dalam pengaturan pendidikan akan meningkatkan kesetaraan dalam pendidikan yang pada akhirnya dapat dicapai pendidikan untuk semua. Studi ini menggunakan tinjauan pustaka sistematis. Peneliti meneliti literatur tentang pengajaran yang responsif budaya dan bukti masalah pendidikan yang saat ini terjadi dari jurnal yang diterbitkan saat ini serta buku-buku penting terkait pengajaran responsif budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat kesenjangan antara realitas di lapangan dengan sistem pendidikan yang telah dibangun. Kurikulum yang tanggap terhadap budaya siswa harus ada di dalam kurikulum, baik dari guru maupun stakeholders. Selain itu, perguruan tinggi juga mulai melangkah ke arah kurikulum yang tetap mempertahankan budaya siswa.

Kata Kunci: budaya, pengajaran responsif budaya, kurikulum, keragaman

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INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is an instrument in national education system that hold critical role. The curriculum in many countries has been evolving following the development of educational theories and research. It contains many different aspects that, to some curriculum users, have the goals for education. So, the curriculum normally set the national educational standards that the educators should deliver and be learned by the students. Indonesia is one of the countries that keeps its curriculum developing. Nonetheless, since its first curriculum in 1947 until the latest curriculum 2013, regardless the efforts (Bjork, 2004), the curriculum is seen as one-for-all solution for various educational problems in the field. In every curriculum update, the policy maker put a lot of expectations in it so that the national education can be improved. It seems right, however a question may rise on how the expectations meet the reality.

The one-fit-all curriculum is one of the most common curriculum designs in many countries. All curriculum designers in different places have tried their best to create the best curriculum structures that can be learned by the students at schools. This is not an instant process. Since the curriculum has to convey the subject, contents, and all the entailments such as teaching instructions, nonetheless, such dense and solid curriculum is often seen and expected to overcome diverse classroom problems and settings and went to the goal of high-stake tests. Devised with such curriculum, the teachers are expected to meet what the government seeks by measuring whether it works through national exams. Many efforts were focused on how to boost students score to meet the standard set on the exam (Murray et al., 2004). As expected, the national exams showed unequal outcome between the school with all resources in the city and some remote schools (Meyzilia et al., 2018). The discrepancy that occurs may be as a result of the cultural construct in the classroom learning context resulted from the current system.

In the classroom context, teachers whose life-long teaching experiences were influenced by the curriculum policy have faced classroom dynamics that keeps evolving over periods of time. Equipped with the traditional culture of teaching, teachers tend to lecture the classroom and the classroom may not the expected dynamics since every student has brought their own culture. The students in Indonesia are not a monoculture. There are more than 600 ethnics in the country, making many schools in different places are full of cultural diversity (BPS, 2019). Culture implies the possibility that it shapes people ways of thinking, attitude, and behaviour differently. Because culture influence students' way of thinking and the way they make sense of everything (Nieto, 2004). Culture, as if it is a computer, is the software which functions to process all the input data (Hammond, 2014). Therefore, the importance of culturally appropriate teaching emerges since culture characterizes the people make sense of everything, including education.

A study about intercultural communication in an EFL class was also interesting to point out. The study suggested that the students, at some points, do not really have deep understanding about culture, not only the culture of others, but also their own culture (Liu & Fang, 2017). Whereas, students believe that home culture has an important role to play in negotiating with other cultures. Thus, curriculum development, in which learning instruction is also included, has great potential to be explored.

Based on the explanation, there are some gaps that the study may fulfill. First, this study is examining the possibility of employing culturally responsive teaching that has been little concern for the researcher in Indonesian contexts. Second the study investigates how the teacher education program prepares prospective teachers with cultural knowledge.

Therefore, this paper is aimed at exploring possible solutions for the issues mentioned above. It explores why and how the significance of cultural values to be integrated into the curriculum and teaching instruction

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and how the quality of classroom instruction may improve with multicultural teaching approach.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed systematic literature review. The researcher examined literatures about related to culturally responsive teaching and the evidence of educational problems that currently happens. After the problem has been identified, the researcher collected published papers that have the correlation with the theme under Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). PRISMA allowed the researcher conducted the study with systematic framework for reviewing. It started with literature collection, removing them based on the determined criteria that suited the study (screening), synthesis, and concluding.

The process initiated with collecting some literatures from recent papers from the year 2000 to 2020. It was done to see how the trend is directing. The keywords used to find out the related literature was: culturally responsive teaching, culturally sustainable pedagogy, teaching with caring, teaching English with culture, Indonesian curriculum, Indonesian CRT. In addition to research paper the researcher also collected some books related to culturally responsive teaching to support the theoretical framework.

The papers from the internet were sorted to the most relevant for the study. The studies that are matching to the criteria for the topic were selected and analysed for its findings. The analysis employed the qualitative document analysis. The researcher also collected some data from BPS to build the argument of how the situation of status quo and why CRT is needed.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

What is culturally responsive teaching?

Introduced under different terms, such as culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010),

culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012), culturally appropriate pedagogy (Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2014), the teaching with cultural approaches has developed. It is of interest to many researchers because it can help the students achieve academic success. The principles of CRT are much laid on identity and achievement, equity and excellence, developmental appropriateness, teaching the whole child, and student-teacher relationship (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). These points can break down into more detail focus, and for example, in the term of identity and achievement, the study learns more in-depth about identity development, cultural heritage, the affirmation of diversity. In equity and excellence, we can expect equal access to education for all, incorporating multicultural curriculum contents, and equal expectation of all students. Developmental appropriateness includes learning styles, teaching styles and cultural variation. Teaching the whole child embraces skill development in cultural contexts, bridge home, school, and community, learning outcomes, supportive learning community, student's empowerment. Student-teacher relationship incorporates caring, relationship, interaction, classroom atmosphere.

There are at least five dimensions of CRT, as proposed by Banks (2004). These dimensions are interrelated. They consist of content integration, knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social culture. The dimensions describe how CRT can be implemented in reality. Content integration deals with the teacher's approach to integrating the diverse cultures of students with the content taught in the classroom. Knowledge construction process describes how teacher help student constructs knowledge within the framework of the students' background and culture to understand and investigate cultural assumption, frame of references, and biases. Prejudice reduction focuses on the student's attitudes and how these attitudes can be modified in teaching approach and materials.

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An equity pedagogy occurs when the teacher can modify the teaching approach adjustable to the students' race, culture, gender, and social groups to facilitate the academic achievement of the students. Empowering school culture and social structure, in short, can be done by examining all aspects of the school practices that empower students from a different race, ethnic and gender in school practices including sports participation, proportionality in achievement, labelling and grouping, and staff-student interactions across ethnic and race.

Gay (2018) elaborated the characteristics of CRT that is applicable to the classroom context. She started with what Banks (2004) has said as the content integration, where a story may have a powerful impact on a child. A story can be a tool to shape their knowledge construction. It can form their self-concept and the concept of the people of other ethnic and culture. Then, the pedagogical potential of cultural responsiveness was discussed. Gay (2018) elaborated that although cultural responsiveness can be integrated into the pedagogical approach, the teacher must break the beliefs and myths that students from certain ethnicities do have limitations. It makes nothing can be done for these students that therefore the attribution of CRT such as validating students' culture, comprehensive and inclusive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, emancipatory, humanistic, normative and ethical should exist. Later, the teacher would know the roles and responsibilities.

Culturally responsive caring is also one point of CRT that cannot be separated. Caring is a characteristic in CRT that moves self-determination as a value, an ethic, and

moral imperative (Gay, 2018). Some scholars in educational studies agree that feelings are important in education practice. Many studies are investigating how some psychological attributes, such as motivation affect academic achievement. However, Gay (2018) argued that caring is much more than that. The term 'care' was discussed in two terminologies: caring for vs caring about. Caring about was considered as attitude and caring for was the practice. From this perspective, the educators should express their cares not only in their attitudes but also in their actions.

Nevertheless, the action of CRT application should have the base in teacher beliefs. Teachers, sometimes, may have the unconscious beliefs about the students' race, ethnic, and cultural background that might lead to specific actions in their pedagogical approach to teaching them. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that the beliefs on CRT should be explicit and placed in the correct order so that the teacher can implement the appropriate approach when teaching.

Common problems

I would like to present some of the actual issues faced in Indonesian education. First of all, the equality issue in education. Education hold pivotal part in shaping one's future. The country needs to provide equitable education throughout the nation. It should be admitted that the work is not easy, nevertheless this issue is inevitable. The national statistics bureau released the 2019 statistics. One part that can be highlighted is that the education levels influence the average individual monthly income. The higher the education level, the better income one would have.

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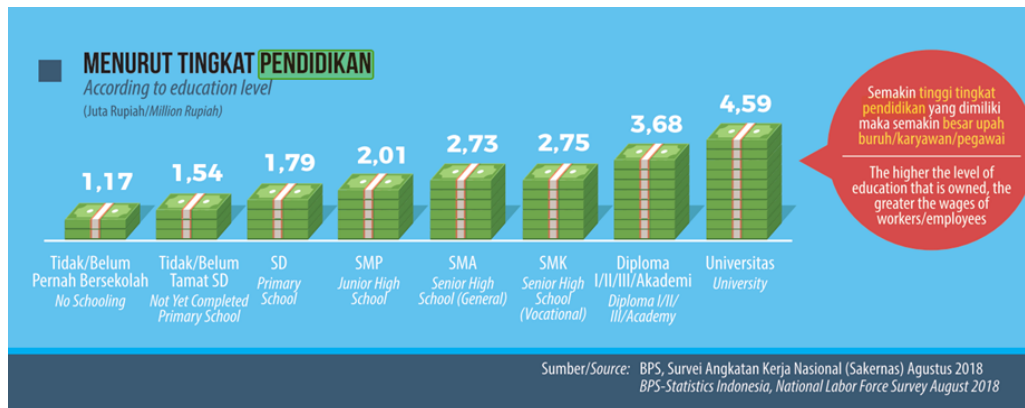


Chart 1. Average monthly wage

The chart above as on chart 1 illustrated how important it is to have better education so that the future social and economic can be achieved. Unfortunately, the data from chart 2 have shown that the number of people in the work field withholding diploma degree were only 12% of the workforce and 41% of the workers only graduated from primary education. The discrepancy is too wide. This data is also supported by the average length of schooling, where the government plan for 12-year compulsory education has only achieved up to 8,37 years or only 70% (BPS, 2019). It should get the attention from the stakeholders. Although the solution of such problem requires multi-stage and cross-section policy, an educational intervention can be a part of the effort. Regardless of the various reasons why children drop out of school like economic reason and parents' latest education (Asmara & Sukadana, 2017), equality is one of the things that plays an important role in keeping dropout rates low. From this perspective, multicultural education is essential as "it is to reform the school and education institutions so that students from diverse social, ethnics, and social-class groups will experience educational quality (Banks, 1993).

Lapangan Pekerjaan Utama ¹ Main Industry ¹	Pendidikan Tertinggi yang Ditamatkan Educational Attainment				Jumlah Total
	≤ Sekolah Dasar ≤ Primary School	Sekolah Menengah Pertama Junior High School	Sekolah Menengah Atas Senior High School	Perguruan Tinggi Collage	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
A	24 423 712	6 010 239	4 777 785	491 338	35 703 074
B	622 243	272 420	438 080	121 513	1 454 256
C	6 161 181	4 162 052	6 835 679	1 092 544	18 251 456
D	32 373	39 098	211 418	55 558	338 447
E	232 391	72 091	134 337	32 248	471 067
F	3 959 686	2 042 107	1 943 151	355 353	8 300 297
G	7 251 009	4 816 764	9 110 311	1 895 431	23 073 515
H	1 642 138	1 173 521	2 164 256	418 667	5 398 582
I	2 854 085	1 686 056	2 665 356	456 739	7 662 236
J	33 004	79 312	447 205	335 152	894 673
K	38 200	73 845	732 289	952 519	1 796 853
L	73 286	55 224	175 424	85 991	389 925
M, N	220 080	186 015	742 996	515 700	1 664 791
O	159 377	205 075	2 156 060	2 160 768	4 681 280
P	122 385	155 217	1 275 915	4 513 361	6 066 878
Q	120 823	80 786	413 294	1 233 557	1 848 460
R, S, T, U	2 512 460	1 314 906	1 794 530	387 204	6 009 100
Jumlah/Total	50 458 493	22 424 728	36 018 086	15 103 643	124 004 950

Catatan/Note: ¹ A. Pertanian, Kehutanan, Perikanan/Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing
 B. Pertambangan dan Penggalian/Mining and Quarrying
 C. Industri Pengolahan/Manufacturing
 D. Pengadaan Listrik dan Gas/Electricity and Gas
 E. Pengadaan Air, Pengelolaan Sampah, Limbah, dan Daur Ulang/Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management, and Remediation Activities
 F. Konstruksi/Construction
 G. Perdagangan Besar dan Eceran; Reparasi Mobil dan Sepeda Motor/Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles
 H. Transportasi dan Pergudangan/Transportation and Storage
 I. Penyediaan Akomodasi dan Makan Minum/Accommodation and Food Service Activities
 J. Informasi dan Komunikasi/Information and Communication
 K. Jasa Keuangan dan Asuransi/Financial and Insurance Activities
 L. Real Estat/Real Estate Activities
 M, N. Jasa Perusahaan/Business Activities
 O. Administrasi Pemerintahan, Pertahanan, dan Jaminan Sosial Wajib/Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security
 P. Jasa Pendidikan/Education
 Q. Jasa Kesehatan dan Kegiatan Sosial/Human Health and Social Work Activities
 R, S, T, U. Jasa Lainnya/Other Services Activities

Sumber/Source: BPS, Survei Angkatan Kerja Nasional (Sakernas) Agustus/BPS-Statistics Indonesia, August National Labor Force Survey

Chart 2. Workers according to latest ducation

Second, the cultural diversity needs to be accommodated. Textbooks, as part of the curriculum, needs to be analyzed for cultural values. The latest curriculum, also called as curriculum 2013, has put important aspects in one of its core competences:

*Developing behavior (honesty, discipline, responsibility, caring, courteous, environmentally friendly, mutual cooperation, peace-loving, responsive and proactive), showing attitudes as part of the solution to various problems of the nation, and **positioning oneself as an agent for transforming society in building civilization of the nation and the world** (retrieved from Curriculum 2013 document).*

The statement of the core competence above illustrated some keywords that intercultural interactions and skills are necessarily required. Like the key points of global competence, the core competences are expected to go beyond reading, mathematics, and science. The students need to adapt and adopt the new worlds that expands along with the development of economy, politics, and technology. They need to learn cultures, to communicate with intercultural ability, and to gain knowledge from varied perspectives of global issues (Mansilla & Jackson, 2013). As per the status quo, the social and ethnic diversity in the country is very rich. A question emerges whether or not textbook as part of curriculum accommodate this. A study on some Indonesian textbooks has found that the cultural substances are not adequately accommodated. Whereas, a good and interesting textbook certainly contains "realia" communication that is loaded with socio-cultural values and lifestyles of the users (Purwoko, 2010).

Therefore, textbooks as crucial part of education especially in the country that the teacher heavily depends on the textbooks to teach, need to convey the cultural values so

that the students will get themselves in a diversity-friendly environment.

One-fit-all curriculum vs culturally responsive teaching

The curriculum is the core of formal education program run by educational institutions. In addition to the contents of the course or subjects, it also carries beliefs, attitudes, skills, and knowledge (Mulenga, 2018). As it is usually programmed by policymakers, the nature of the curriculum is to be implemented with the top-down process. Such implementation produced the authoritarian power in education that the curriculum is the solution of each educational problem. Although it is not the only way out, the stakeholders need to see the roles of the curriculum in the contexts of diversity because all instruments used to achieve educational goals are set or derived based on the curriculum and diversity in the classroom is inevitable.

Considering the importance of curriculum, the needs of cultural contents in the diversity point of view emerge. It is a must as the schools' settings in Indonesia, for sure, comprises of several hundreds of ethnics. The inclusions of cultural values, traditional symbols, stories, etc. can be an effort of content integration in culturally responsive education (Banks, 2004). When the contents were fully integrated, the windows of equal education for all can be wide open. It is also the reason why teachers should always be part of the curriculum development because they know well the setting and the cultures in their classroom (Alsubaie, 2016; Bouckaert & Kools, 2018). The educators who carry out the sets of subjects to teach would have the opportunity to make those lessons to be understood in more specific contexts based on the experiences of the students. The students would also have a sense of belonging and motivations when they are taught the way they understand the surrounding in their cultural background.

The students as the subjects of all educational goal should be the concerns in the process of curriculum implementation. Say

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that curriculum is developed to shape the future of the nations through educating the youths, students are the individuals being targeted in the course. Therefore, like the concepts offered by Gay (2018), the students should be the ones that all the stakeholders care for. From the government, in this case, the ministry of education, the school leaders, and the teacher should take the students into account. From this perspective, culturally responsive teaching should present in the classroom context.

Why CRT offers proper instruction for Indonesian education?

A study about teaching belief and practices was published on the dissertation publication by Munandar (2019). His study reported the pedagogic beliefs and practices of Indonesian teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) regarding the teaching and learning of culture and interculturality in the local high-school English classrooms. The study took a perspective viewing that language and culture as something that is socially constructed and is interrelated in multiple and complex patterns. One of the indications of the study was that the teacher belief and practices in their pedagogy is affected by some factors such as Indonesia's policy on language, general education and the English as a foreign language pedagogy. These factors were shaped through complex ways that the cultural values from the source of the target language is infused in the pedagogy. Here raised a question, how does curriculum contain itself with cultural contents?

Teachers, in the classrooms, have to face the sets of curriculum contents and all that embodied in it to be delivered in the school subjects with the students. In order to make the process of delivery to be smooth, the teachers should have a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum, and then they can have the complete image of what to be taught. Later, they can analyze what strategies and approach to be used to teach the students with diverse cultural background.

Culturally responsive teaching conceptually might not be well known

amongst Indonesian educators. The concepts, however, has been there since there was local content taught in some school in remote areas. The local contents were usually taught depending on the province or the regency government. The inclusion of the local contents was limited to the teaching of local language or dialects. Such example can be an initiation for CRT to be integrated into Indonesian teaching context. It is true that many of the cases where CRT is successfully implemented happened in the United States context (Gay, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1992). The implementations of CRT in western contexts are also usually happened in the inter-racial context like the African, Hispanic, Italian, Asian, and White European or American.

Nonetheless, it does not mean that the CRT is only promising in such a setting. Education in Indonesia also needs it since diversity also exists in the country. However, an inter-ethnic combination that occurs in the classroom was to be a factor for the teachers' consideration if the teachers and other stakeholders expect the education to be equal for everyone.

The culturally responsive teaching, after all, is not only about the inclusion of students' culture. It implies a broader sense that it ensures the teaching that concerned every student, regardless of their social, economic status, racial, and gender (Cummings, 2009). The discrepancy of these factors would create a privilege to some students and make some students who lack the privilege left behind. The gap that has not been filled makes the opportunity to success only opens its door to some, and the others do not even have the key to the door. The effort to reach it can be handled by all stakeholders and especially the teachers that they are the ones who implement it in their teaching process. They can use their authority in their own classroom to ensure that their teaching is culturally responsive when they perceived themselves as a curriculum developer.

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How do the current teacher education programs prepare the future teacher?

Teachers as the “executor” of educational institutions, they carry out the mandate not only to be involved in the curriculum development process but also to be involved as implementing actors of the curriculum. So, preparation of teacher in the teacher education programs has to be thorough including preparing them to be culturally aware and well-prepared for intercultural interactions in the culturally diverse classrooms. A study conducted by (Gandana & Parr, 2013) opens an outlook of the cultural integration into curriculum in higher education program. Starting from the ideas that in order to understand the language teaching and learning, the teacher should be viewed of their self-understanding. The teacher themselves have some perspectives of their identity: professional, cultural, political and individual identities they appealed (Varghese et al., 2005).

The study has shown a dilemma faced by an instructor in a new course called ‘intercultural communication’. Not only does the course bear a different discourse that represent other culture, it also holds some practical issues since the instructor herself has her own cultural and political perspective that may have differences on the way the course is delivered which of western culture basis. Some contextual factors such as hierarchical institutional factors, curriculum demands, and limited resources, have occasional tensions between the teacher’s stated beliefs and her instructional practices.

The study indicates that the higher education institutions in the country has initiated a moving-forward step in preparing the teachers with multiculturalism awareness. Although the practice has faced some dimensional problems starting from the personal problems of the instructor and the professionalism of the instructor, to the problem of the context of various teaching resources and student backgrounds (socioeconomic class, ethnicity, family, race, gender, sexuality, language, culture, religion and belief).

It is a good start for the teacher education program. In the US context, where CRT has long been explored, culturally is included in the teacher professional development (TPD) program (Kavel, 2017). The TPD ensures the implementation of certain professionalism sustainable. A sustainable program for incorporating and accommodating the notion of curriculum and instructions that are responsive will be the key to future success of teacher education that would provide the teachers to equal education regardless the students’ background.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to elaborate issues in Indonesian curriculum 2013, the latest curriculum in the country and address some issues in the pedagogical issues. This study has explored the current situation that there was inequal education opportunities for many students in Indonesia as shown by BPS data. The curriculum also shown the problem of top-down that is administratively powerful that leave small room for the teacher to develop their teaching to be culturally responsive for the students. One piece of good news found in the previous study was that some teacher education program has offered the students some cultural awareness through one of their courses.

Education in a country is essential since it is the key to the future of the nation. Curriculum as the core of what to be taught and educators as the actors who deliver it hold essential roles that both complement each other. In order to reach the goals as expected, equality in education is needed to ensure that all students succeed. The culturally responsive teaching has one to offer for this purpose. Although the integration of CRT into curriculum faced some complications due to bureaucracy, the teachers can take over the responsibility to deliver their lessons as good teaching practice. They can integrate cultural content based on the students' race, socio-economic status, gender, and disability. The

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educator can help students develop inquiry through cultural frameworks. They should also remember not put prejudice on the students so that the learning process would not be biased.

Suggestions

The implication of this study is that there is the need of how Indonesian teachers perceive themselves as a curriculum developer and as the teacher who can integrate the culturally responsive teaching into their daily educational practices. This will enrich the literature and give insights on how culturally responsive teaching might have been practised subconsciously. Therefore, Indonesia is open to positive curriculum reform and ready to give all children in the nation equal educational opportunities.

For further research, the study has indicated that the field is open in Indonesian contexts since there has been little research in culturally responsive teaching, meanwhile the demographic situation suggests that it is needed. This study also found that there is hidden possibility of unequal education in the system that is why the workforce with lower education is still high. It implies that the future researcher may have action research to improve the situation.

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