

Research Article

Cultural Education Based on Batik Introduction to Enhance the Creativity of Indonesian Children at the Al Ikhlas Art Studio in Sungai Penchala, Malaysia

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Abstract: Cultural education plays a vital role in fostering children's creative thinking skills. Batik, as Indonesia's cultural heritage, embodies artistic values, symbols, and life meanings that can be utilized as a medium of learning. This study aims to describe the implementation of batik-based cultural education in enhancing the creativity of Indonesian children at Sanggar Bimbingan Al Ikhlas Sungai Penchala, Malaysia. The research method employed is qualitative with a case study design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that batik activities improve children's ability to generate ideas, select colors, and create patterns based on imagination. Moreover, children demonstrate increased confidence in expressing ideas through artwork. Teachers serve as facilitators who guide, motivate, and provide examples during the creative process. The conclusion indicates that batik-based cultural education enhances creativity, self-confidence, and cultural identity awareness among Indonesian children living abroad. This study contributes to the discourse on cultural education by highlighting batik as an effective medium for creative learning and identity development in diaspora contexts.

Keywords: Batik; Children Creativity; Cultural Education; Learning Center; Malaysia

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1. Introduction

Cultural education plays a significant role in shaping a child's personality from an early age. Culture serves as a source of values that guide how one thinks, behaves, and acts. The process of introducing culture from a young age helps children understand their identity as part of a nation. (Akbar, 2023) Instilling cultural values can also foster a sense of love for ancestral heritage that must be preserved and passed on to future generations. Culture-based learning experiences provide children with opportunities to discover life's values through activities closely tied to their daily lives. (Hidayati, 2022)

Batik, as one of Indonesia's cultural heritages, possesses high aesthetic value and is rich in symbolic meaning. Each batik motif depicts a philosophy of life related to hopes, prayers, and moral messages passed down from generation to generation. Various batik motifs, such as parang, kawung, and mega mendung, carry stories that can be introduced to children as a source of artistic learning and character development. Introducing batik motifs gives children

the opportunity to appreciate beauty while understanding the messages embedded within them. (Kusuma, 2021)

Indonesian children living abroad often face limited access to cultural education. The distance from their homeland means they rarely have direct experiences with Indonesian culture. This situation can lead to a diminished understanding of national identity if there are no efforts to strengthen it through targeted learning activities. Such reinforcement is crucial so that children continue to feel pride, love, and care for their roots as part of the Indonesian nation. (Syakira, et al, 2025)

The Al Ikhlas Sungai Penchala Guidance Center in Malaysia serves as a non-formal learning space where children can continue to explore Indonesian culture. This center provides a platform for the children of Indonesian migrant workers to receive supplementary education outside the formal school system. The activities conducted focus not only on general subjects but also on introducing national culture, such as language, art, and the values of Indonesian society. The existence of this center helps children stay connected to their cultural identity even while far from their homeland.

This batik-based cultural education program is carried out by students participating in the Community Service Program (KKN) from the Jam'iyah Mahmudiyah Institute in Langkat. This initiative serves as a form of community service by the students, particularly for Indonesian children living abroad. The KKN students act as facilitators, introducing batik as part of the nation's culture through simple and enjoyable learning activities. The program also serves as a platform for students to share their knowledge while fostering a sense of responsibility toward the education of Indonesian children overseas. (Rahman, 2024)

The batik workshop provided children with the opportunity to develop ideas, experiment with colors, and create patterns according to their own imagination. This process served as a means to foster creative thinking skills while introducing the cultural values of the nation. Children could express their feelings and ideas through the images and colors they chose themselves. This activity also helped boost self-confidence, as each child had the chance to produce a different and unique piece of work according to their individual abilities.

2. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research method using a case study design. The research was conducted at the Al Ikhlas Art Studio in Sungai Penchala, Malaysia. The research subjects consisted of Indonesian children studying at the studio and the teachers supervising the activities.

Data collection was conducted through: Observation of batik-making activities; Interviews with teachers and students; Documentation of the children's batik works/

Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data collection, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The research process was carried out over three months by directly participating in the batik learning activities.

3. Results And Discussion

The batik-based cultural education program is a learning activity designed to provide direct experiences to Indonesian children living abroad so they can continue to recognize and cherish the nation's cultural heritage. This activity serves as a vital bridge connecting children to their Indonesian cultural identity, which they may increasingly rarely encounter in their daily environments. Through this activity, children are encouraged to understand that batik is not merely a fabric with beautiful patterns, but also embodies profound life values such as patience, precision, hard work, and pride in one's own culture. Each batik motif introduced carries a specific message that can serve as a lesson in attitude and behavior. (Sari, 2022)

This activity also provides an opportunity for children at the Al Ikhlas Art Studio in Sungai Penchala, Malaysia, to learn while creating directly. The learning process involves not only explanations but also hands-on practice in making simple batik pieces. The children appeared very enthusiastic as they began to explore various batik motifs from different regions of Indonesia. They studied the images, listened to the explanations, and then tried to recall the shapes they had seen. This atmosphere made the learning process feel more vibrant because the children were directly involved from start to finish.

Batik lessons offer a great opportunity for children to develop their own ideas and imagination. Each child has a different approach when creating designs and choosing colors. Some use bright colors, while others opt for softer hues according to their personal preferences. This process helps children learn to boldly express themselves through the art they create. Their joy is clearly visible when they successfully complete the simple batik designs they created themselves. This activity also hones fine motor skills, as children must move their hands carefully while drawing and coloring. (Bahiyah, et al, 2024)

Each stage of the batik activity provides children with a gradual and meaningful learning experience. They start by learning about batik motif shapes, then drawing basic patterns, and finally coloring their finished pieces. The teacher provides instructions using simple language so the children can easily follow each step. The children also frequently ask questions when they encounter difficulties, fostering active interaction between the teacher and the students. This kind of atmosphere makes the learning process feel more engaging and enjoyable for the children.

The objectives of this batik learning activity can be explained through several key interrelated points, namely: Introducing Indonesian batik culture: Children are introduced to batik as one of the nation's cultural heritages, featuring a wide variety of motifs and meanings that differ from region to region. Enhancing children's creativity: Children are given the opportunity to create works based on their own ideas and imagination without rigid constraints. Developing patience and attention to detail: The process of drawing batik patterns requires a high degree of precision, so children learn to be more patient in completing tasks. Fostering a love for Indonesian culture: Children begin to understand that Indonesian culture is incredibly diverse and must be preserved, even though they are far from their homeland. Building the courage to express oneself: Children are encouraged to confidently showcase their artwork to others without fear or hesitation. Creating a fun learning environment: Art activities make children feel more free, joyful, and unburdened while learning.

This training session was attended by approximately 25–35 children from diverse family backgrounds of Indonesian workers in Malaysia. From the very start of the activity, the children displayed high enthusiasm. They sat neatly, paid attention to the teacher's explanations, and occasionally raised their hands to ask questions. When the practical session began, the children immediately tried drawing simple batik patterns following the provided examples. Some children also looked at their friends' work and offered simple comments. This created an active, lively classroom atmosphere filled with a passion for learning.

The activity proceeded smoothly because the children were directly engaged from start to finish. They did not merely listen to explanations but also experienced the process of creating batik art firsthand. Each child displayed different expressions: some were deeply focused, some smiled upon seeing their drawings, and others proudly showed their work to the teacher. This activity provided a memorable learning experience because the children not only gained knowledge but also a fun, hands-on experience.

The learning process was conducted step-by-step to help the children better understand the material. The teacher first explained batik, starting with a simple definition and moving on to examples of motifs found in Indonesia. The children were shown images of batik motifs such as parang, kawung, and mega mendung. The explanations used language that was easy to understand so the children could follow along well. (Ramadhani, et al, 2025)

After the initial explanation, the children were guided through the steps to create a simple batik piece, namely:

Learning about batik motifs: The children were shown various examples of batik motifs from several regions in Indonesia. They were asked to observe the shapes and patterns in each motif. Drawing simple batik patterns: The children create batik patterns on paper using pencils. They follow the examples provided by the teacher while developing their own shapes based on their individual ideas. Coloring the batik drawings: The children use colored pencils or crayons to add color to the patterns they have drawn. They are free to choose colors to make their artwork look appealing. Presenting the artwork: Once finished, the children are asked to show their drawings to their classmates. This activity builds courage and self-confidence.

After the practical activity concludes, the children's diverse and engaging artwork is on display. Each drawing has its own unique characteristics reflecting the child's creativity. Some use bright colors, while others choose simple yet neat colors. This demonstrates that every child has a different way of expressing their ideas.

The benefits of this activity are clearly evident in the children's development, namely: Children learn about batik as part of Indonesian culture; Children are able to create simple works of art; Children become more creative in drawing; Children feel more confident when showing their work; Children learn to work patiently and carefully; Children enjoy participating in learning activities more.

The results of the activity show an improvement in the children's ability to understand batik culture. Children began to be able to name several simple batik motifs such as parang, kawung, and mega mendung and understand that each motif has different shapes and characteristics. This process demonstrates that learning experiences through art activities have a direct impact on children's memory and understanding. Children also showed creative development through the drawings they produced, evident in the variety of colors, patterns, and shapes they created according to their individual imaginations.

These findings align with the views of Naufalian, Khoiroh, and Lutfiyah (2024), who explain that cultural exposure through art activities and hands-on practice can enhance a sense of patriotism and strengthen children's understanding of the nation's cultural identity. Children actively engaged in culture-based activities tend to retain learned values more easily because they directly experience the learning process. This is clearly evident in the batik activity, which helps children more easily recognize Indonesian cultural motifs and their meanings. (Septi, et al, 2024)

Additionally, this activity has a positive impact on children's social attitudes. Children were observed helping one another when facing difficulties in drawing or coloring. They also exchanged suggestions regarding color choices to make their artwork more appealing. This situation fosters a positive sense of camaraderie among the students, as they learn to collaborate and appreciate their peers' work. This attitude demonstrates the development of social values that emerge through shared artistic activities.

Another perspective from Hidayat and Balakrishnan (2024) explains that experience-based learning through collaboration and hands-on practice can strengthen social attitudes, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to interact among students. Learning processes involving active interaction, such as small group discussions and mutual assistance, provide children with opportunities to build better social relationships. This is evident in the batik activity, which encourages children to share ideas and help peers facing difficulties. Another noticeable development is the increased self-confidence of the children. They do not hesitate to display their work in front of their peers and teachers. When receiving praise, the children appear more enthusiastic about continuing to learn and trying new things. This courage is a sign that the children are beginning to feel comfortable with their abilities and are confident in presenting their work without fear.



Figure 1. Batik-Based Cultural Education Activity.

This batik-based cultural education activity provides a fun learning experience for Indonesian children at the Al Ikhlas Guidance Center in Sungai Penchala, Malaysia. The children not only learn about culture but also develop creativity, courage, cooperation, and a love for Indonesian culture through the hands-on experiences they gain during the activity.

4. Conclusion

Batik-based cultural education activities provide a meaningful learning experience for Indonesian children at the Al Ikhlas Art Studio in Sungai Penchala, Malaysia. The children were able to learn about various batik motifs, such as parang, kawung, and mega mendung, and understand the differences in the shapes and meanings of each motif studied. The learning process, which involves image recognition, simple explanations, and hands-on drawing and coloring activities, makes it easier for the children to grasp the material. This activity also fosters a love for Indonesian culture and enhances creativity through the creation of simple batik pieces tailored to each child's imagination.

This activity also has a positive impact on children's social attitudes and personal development. Children demonstrate a willingness to help one another when facing difficulties in drawing and coloring, and they are bold enough to offer simple suggestions to their peers. Self-confidence is also evident as they dare to display their artwork in front of their peers and teachers. This learning experience makes children more active, confident, and eager to participate in activities related to culture, making the learning process more enjoyable and memorable.

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