International Journal of Early Childhood Education & Parenting 1(2) (2024) 51-60

JURNAL UPI

International Journal of
Early Childhood Education & Parenting

ECEPA

Journal homepage: https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/ECEPA/

Mapping the Leading Potential Based on Multiple Intelligences in Early Children Education

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ABSTRACT

Children, aged 0-8, possess remarkable intelligence and talent, yet these often go unrecognised, limiting their potential for success. Parents and teachers, who are primary observers of children, sometimes overlook these abilities, hindering their expected development. Educators must prioritise understanding children's development to uncover their hidden talents and potential. By doing so, educators can guide children towards realising their full potential, leading to a brighter future. This study focuses on identifying superior potential through multiple intelligences mapping in early childhood, conducted at RA Bani Malik, Ledug. Utilising qualitative field research, data is collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that each child has unique potentials, which can be identified and stimulated through various activities such as puzzle-solving for logical-mathematical intelligence, writing letters for language intelligence, dancing for musical intelligence, gymnastics for kinesthetic intelligence, caring for plants for naturalist intelligence, self-questioning activities for intrapersonal intelligence, role-playing for interpersonal intelligence, and painting for spatial intelligence.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Submitted/Received 27 Apr 2024
First Revised 05 May 2024
Accepted 02 June 2024
First Available online 01 Aug 2024

Keyword:
Children's Superior Potential,
Multiple Intelligences,
Early Childhood.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every child must be intelligent and the intelligence of each child is different (Rosyati *et al*., 2020). Children's intelligence is very well stimulated at the age of 0-8 years because it is often called the golden age, at which time the child can absorb well what he sees, hears and learns. The golden age is also a determining factor in producing quality children and in various studies, it is stated that about 50% of adult intelligence begins to form at the age of 4 years. Education and psychology figure from the United States Howard Gardner sparked a thought about multiple intelligences or *Multiple Intelligences*. In this view, Howard Gardner opposes the notion of intelligence in terms of IQ. Still, he explains that human intelligence is mapped into nine, namely linguistic intelligence (language), logic-mathematical, musical, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist, visual and existential (spiritual) (Handayani, 2022). People assume that smart children are children who are smart in exact fields such as fields in mathematics, science and language, and often underestimate the eyes of other intelligences and assume that they cannot lead to success (Firestone, 2020).

Researchers conducted a survey at RA Bani Malik in class B with an age range of 5-6 years. The survey was conducted by observing the potential mapping activities carried out by the teacher to find out the potential possessed by students (Zulela *et al.*, 2022). The potential mapping activities carried out included nine kinds of intelligence using learning media in schools. Potential mapping activities for students are carried out in stages and end with evaluation activities. Before the potential mapping activity is carried out, it is necessary to provide stimulation to children. Because potential mapping activities cannot immediately produce relevant results, several trials are needed within the specified period. In this activity, stimulation is needed so that children get stimulation and encouragement so that children are confident to show abilities according to what children are interested in. Stimulation can (Mujahidah *et al.*, 2021), be done by optimizing the five senses, namely in the form of hearing, touch, smell, sight and taste.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that mapping the superior potential of children is very important to do from an early age. Mapping of superior potential can be done by teachers at school or by parents at home. The mapping carried out is guided by nine aspects of intelligence so that we can find out what potential children have. This study aims to identify the way of mapping the superior potential carried out at RA Bani Malik. The hypothesis proposed is an effective potential mapping activity in knowing the superior potential of early childhood.

2. METHODS

This study uses a field study method (*field research*), which is a research approach that uses data obtained directly from the field as the object under study. Field study research uses an instrument consisting of data obtained and seen directly in the field where we conduct research (Munandar *et al*., 2020).

The variables studied in this study consisted of two variables, namely the independent variable and the dependent variable. The superior potential based on multiple intelligences is an independent variable because these variables influence other variables, as well as early childhood education is the dependent variable. After all, it is a variable that is subject to the influence of the independent variable.

This study uses data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews and documentation. Observations were made at the educational institutions under study so that researchers could know firsthand the existing conditions. Observations in this study were

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

conducted at RA Bani Malik. Interviews were conducted to obtain data orally with related parties, namely school principals, class teachers and guardians of students (Haqiah *et al*., 2023). Documentation is carried out to obtain physical research results such as the design of learning activities, learning media and photos during the learning activities. Furthermore, after obtaining accurate data then analysed using the Miles & Hubergam model which includes reducing data, displaying data often referred to as data presentation and the last stage is concluding (Gerber *et al*., 2017).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Mapping of Superior Potential

In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, the potential is defined as an ability that can be developed which can produce strength, ability or power (Atmaja *et al*., 2023). The word potential can also be interpreted etymologically, which is derived from the word's *potency*, *potential* and *potentiality* which means the ability to be developed. The word potential is also interpreted in Islamic etymology which comes from the word *fitrah* with the plural form *fithar* which has the original meaning, character and creation (Iskandar *et al*., 2022). In other words, *fitnah* can be interpreted as a human trait that has existed since birth (Akhirin, 2015). The potential is the same as the talent that is in the child. Potential / talent is a basic ability possessed by humans since birth.

Because potential/talent has been there since birth, no talent is formed, this is different from interest because interest is a form of pleasure that is formed from several choices (Anwar *et al*., 2023).

Superior potential has an important role for a child. So, parents and teachers need to know the potential that exists in children, so that parents and teachers can guide children to achieve the desires and ideals chosen by the child's superior potential (Heryanti *et al*., 2018). However, it is very unfortunate that often parents do not understand the potential of their children or often parents demand that children choose the choices that their parents want, Children with "dancer seeds" are forced to grow into "accounting trees" or children with "racer seeds" are forced to become "accountants". tree of lawyers", resulting in the creation of drivers or accountants who are responsible because they are not by the superior potential they have (Tien *et al*., 2020). For example, children who have potential in sports are often underestimated by parents and others, they assume that children who have potential in sports cannot be successful so children are forced to choose other options such as in mathematics or language.

3.2. Multiple Intelligences

Intelligence is often defined as a person's ability to understand something and explain it. Intelligence is more associated with intellectuals such as solving a problem. Intelligence was initially measured using an IQ test, which is a test with questions that include analogue material, synonyms, antonyms, mathematics, and wake patterns which can be seen from the results of the test and determine how intelligent a child is. However, according to Thomas R. Hoerr, the test can only measure intelligence narrowly because it only emphasises linguistic and mathematical-logical abilities and cannot predict the overall intelligence of a child, even though a child's intelligence is not only focused on linguistic and mathematical-logical.

After that came the theory of multiple intelligences or Multiple Intelligences an idea that was coined by Howard Gardner and John H. Hobbs. Initially, multiple intelligences were

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

divided into 7 intelligences, namely language intelligence, musical intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, kinesthetic intelligence and spatial-visual intelligence. But after that, Howard Gardner added two divisions of intelligence, namely naturalist intelligence and existential intelligence. Here is an explanation of the nine intelligences according to Howard Gardner:

(i) Language
Intelligence is an intelligence where children have good sensitivity and ability in language and word processing. Characteristics that can be identified from this intelligence are happy to read, loving to write, good at arguing, good at giving speeches, beach poetry and rhyming (Fitria and Marlina, 2020).

(ii) Musical
Intelligence Musical intelligence is an intelligence in which children have sensitivity and proficiency in music. Children who have musical intelligence can be identified by the way they are proficient in using musical instruments, happy and proficient in singing, and good at making song lyrics.

(iii) Logical-Mathematical
Intelligence Logical-mathematical intelligence is an intelligence where children have proficiency in the field of arithmetic, and think scientifically in solving a problem. The characteristics that can be identified from logical-mathematical intelligence are happy in arithmetic, good at science, and good at number patterns.

(iv) Interpersonal
Intelligence Interpersonal intelligence is an intelligence where children have sensitivity to the surrounding environment. Children who have this intelligence are usually able to respond well to the behaviour of others, easily adapt to new environments and can influence others to follow an action taken.

(v) Intrapersonal
Intelligence Intrapersonal intelligence is intelligence in managing oneself, such as doing self-introspection to become a better person, motivating oneself, understanding one's feelings and being able to manage to be good, being able to measure one's desires and being able to express thoughts and feelings appropriately.

(vi) Kinesthetic
Intelligence Kinesthetic intelligence is intelligence where children have good abilities in the field of kinesthetic (movement) and coordination of body movements through fine motor and gross motor movements. The characteristics that can be identified from this intelligence are skilled in using sports equipment, skilled in jumping and running, and proficient in gymnastics and self-defence activities.

(vii) Spatial-Visual
Intelligence Visual-spatial intelligence is a child's ability to coordinate between visuals (eyes) and thoughts and the ability to transform visual-spatial such as painting, drawing, batik, and designing patterns and buildings. Visual-spatial intelligence involves in terms of lines, shapes, colours, sizes, and areas.

(viii) Naturalist
Intelligence Naturalist intelligence is intelligence where children have sensitivity to nature. Children who have this intelligence have skills in recognizing plants and animals, love to care for plants and animals, and have a high concern for the preservation of nature.

(ix) Existential Intelligence Existential

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

ability is intelligence in the religious/spiritual field and the ability to answer questions about human existence (existential) (Alhamuddin, 2016).

3.3. Characteristics of Early Childhood

Childhood often referred to as preschool children have various distinctive characteristics that are different from children in other phases. Some of the characteristics that exist in early childhood, among others:

(i) Have a high curiosity
Early childhood always want to know the world around them, and they are very interested in new things that they don't know yet even though according to adults it is a simple thing but it could be for early childhood it is a very difficult thing. very curious. As educators, you should facilitate the child's curiosity by providing various kinds of objects that can be used by children to answer their curiosity.

(ii) Unique Personality
Every child has their uniqueness, even though the children are twins, each child has the uniqueness of each individual. This is what underlies educators' need to approach each child individually to understand in detail each child.

(iii) Likes to fantasize and imagine
Every child has a high imagination power, often they imagine something that cannot be predicted by adults. Children often tell things very convincingly as if they were real. The ability to imagine and fantasize in children is very important in the development of creativity and language, so there needs to be direction from educators and parents so that children can distinguish between reality and fantasy. The level of imagination and fantasy of children can be developed by the way children are often invited to listen to fairy tales and tell stories.

(iv) The period of potential for learning
In early childhood, the child's brain development reaches twice that of the adult brain. So that early childhood is also known as the *golden age* or the golden age. This period needs to be optimized properly by providing stimulus in the form of knowledge and experience so that children's potential can develop.

(v) Shows an egocentric attitude
Early childhood still prioritizes himself so that his ego level is still high. This can be seen in children who still like to fight over toys and don't want to budge. Egocentric nature is a natural thing in early childhood, but parents and educators should be able to provide direction to children so that the nature of sharing and helping children is formed (Novianti and Garzia, 2020).

3.4. Characteristics of Early Childhood

Initially, multiple intelligences did not get special attention from educators and parents. The theory of intelligence that is better known by people is the theory of IQ, EQ and SQ, while the awareness of multiple intelligences possessed by children began to be known after the theory of Howard Gardner (Mansir and Purnomo, 2020). Before the assumption of *Multiple Intelligences*, many people thought that intelligence was only limited to intellectual intelligence. Children who tend to talk a lot, move a lot, and like to be adventurous are often considered as children who make a fuss, but from the point of view of *multiple intelligences,* it is a unique thing in intelligence that differs between each child.

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

Multiple intelligences /*multiple intelligences* that exist in children become a basis for creating a stimulation development program to raise and strengthen every indicator of child development. Education that can provide real-life experiences becomes a fun thing and can grow children's intelligence; this can be found in education based on *multiple intelligences*. Because education based on *multiple intelligences* has many activities related to nine aspects of intelligence children indirectly learn and find aspects of intelligence that are by their potential. However, *multiple intelligences* do not always have a strategy that is sure to be effective if applied to every child. There may be a strategy that is successfully implemented in a group but there may also be a failure if it is applied in another group (Heryani *et al*., 2018).

One strategy that can be applied to multiple intelligences-based learning is creative play activities, which is a play activity that gives children the freedom to imagine, create into a unique form of creativity and explore. The basis of development in creative play is (1) integrated or thematic learning, (2) using a learning centre/centre model, and (3) the application of *moving class* or moving class management (Tyrou and Mylonas, 2023).

3.5. Description of RA Bani Malik

RA Bani Malik is an educational institution at the Bani Malik Islamic Boarding School Foundation located in Kedung Paruk RT 01/RW 06 Ledug, Kembaran District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java Province. Led by Mrs. Dra. Aminah Karim as the Head of the Foundation and Mrs. Eka Setyani S.Pd. as Head of the School. At RA Bani Malik there are 5 classes, namely two classes for class A and three classes for class B, with 11 teachers and 135 students.

3.6. How to Map Early Childhood Superior Potential

Mapping of children's superior potential needs to be done from an early age, this is intended so that educators and parents can know from the beginning the child's potential and can provide direction to children to develop their existing potential. There are four ways to map the superior potential of early childhood:

(i) Recognizing the characteristics of children
Educators and parents must carefully identify the characteristics of children, this is intended so that educators and parents understand children's habits and how children learn. In this case, educators and parents cannot equate the character of each child, because each child has a different character. If educators and parents already know the characteristics of the child, it will not be wrong to take steps to find out the potential of the child's self.

(ii) Arrange stimulation activities
Important stimulation is given to children to encourage them to know various things to increase their knowledge. As often as possible invite children to see the outside world such as introducing them to the surrounding environment, introducing various professions, introducing children to history, introducing children to sports and many other activities. It is intended that children have a lot of knowledge references and by themselves, the child will choose what field the child likes (van Bijleveld *et al*., 2020).

(iii) Grouping the list of children's talents and interests
After doing the stimulation activities, ask the children what things are interesting and interesting after seeing various kinds of new things. After that, educators and parents can record what the child is interested in. For example, after the child is introduced to

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

various professions, it turns out that the child is interested in becoming a machinist, then record this. Make a note of the child's interests at least 5 interests and after that make a priority scale or which one is more interested in the child, so that the child can begin to think about which things he likes.

(iv) Testing of talents and interests

Testing can be done by educators and parents as a means of facilitating children to pursue their greatest interests. The children's consistency with the chosen interests can also be seen from the interest and talent test activities. In talent and interest testing activities there must be a boring period that will be passed by the child, but it becomes a challenge if the child is interested and has potential in that field then the child will not just give up but on the contrary, if the field is not the right field If the child is interested in it, the child will likely give up in the middle of the trip.

3.7. Mapping the Excellent Potential of Early Childhood in RA Bani Malik

The mapping activity of the superior potential of early childhood carried out at RA Bani Malik begins with socialisation with parents at the beginning of the new school year, this aims to equalise perceptions between teachers and guardians of students. Teachers as educators will not be successful in carrying out learning activities without direct support from students' parents. Because children's time at school is only a few hours different from more children's time at home.

The mapping of superior potential is focused on teaching and learning activities. When learning activities include activities with six aspects, namely aspects of religious and moral values, physical aspects of gross and fine motor skills, cognitive aspects, language aspects, social-emotional aspects and artistic aspects. The six aspects include *multiple*, religious and moral values include existential (spiritual) intelligence, gross motor physical aspects include kinesthetic intelligence, fine motor physical aspects include visual-spatial intelligence, cognitive aspects include logical-mathematical intelligence, cognitive aspects include logical-mathematical intelligence, Language includes language/linguistic intelligence, art aspects include visual-spatial intelligence, social-emotional aspects include interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence.

The stimulation provided is in the form of learning activities that are by the learning theme and cover these six aspects of development. Mapping of logical-mathematical intelligence can be stimulated by playing puzzles, language intelligence can be stimulated by arranging letters or flashcards, musical intelligence is stimulated by playing musical instruments and drum band activities, kinesthetic intelligence can be stimulated by joint gymnastics and dancing activities, naturalist intelligence can be stimulated by taking care of plants and cleaning the school environment, intrapersonal intelligence can be stimulated with self-questioning activities and motivational activities, interpersonal intelligence can be stimulated by role-playing activities, spatial-visual intelligence can be stimulated with activities painting and drawing.

After giving stimulation to children, it is also important for the teacher to communicate the child's development to parents so that parents can know the complete development of the child and can help the teaching and learning process at home. Almost 45% of parents at RA Bani Malik have not been able to recognize the potential that exists in their children. This is because the busyness of parents is the main factor so that attention to children is reduced. Parents are expected to take part in the activities of the teaching and learning process

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

because there is a need for the role of parents to support and help so that the learning and teaching process can run optimally and as expected.

4. CONCLUSION

Multiple intelligences / multiple intelligences that exist in children become a basis for creating a stimulation development program to raise and strengthen every indicator of child development. Recognizing the potential that exists in children is very important for educators and parents to do. Mapping of children's superior potential can be done by: recognizing children's characteristics, arranging stimulation activities, grouping a list of children's talents and interests, and testing talents and interests.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The author confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X

DOI: xxxx.xxx
e-ISSN 3046-451X