

Teaching Environmental Awareness since the Early Age

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Abstract

The environmental issues that occur in Indonesia are quite diverse such as floods, landslides and wastes. The wastes in the landfill are increasing in volume and when the wastes generated by the society and industry cannot be accommodated, new problems will emerge, such as disease outbreaks and other natural disasters such as floods. Demographic factors that is not balanced with the awareness of each individual in maintaining the environment will only endanger the nation's ecosystem. Family is the first and main education which is also a role model for children. The education will be continued into wider scopes which are schools and community. The key to overcome the environmental issues in this nation lies on the awareness and integrity of each individual. Through a good synergy between schools, communities and government on awareness that by maintaining the environment from the early age, it will create the next generations to be perceptive and wise in utilizing the environment as a form of gratitude towards the masterpiece of the Creator.

Keywords: teaching environment, education, early age, family

Introduction

Some environmental issues that often occur in Indonesia include: earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, illegal logging and mining, forest fires, landslides and waste. Some of these problems mostly occur due to human behaviors that do not take concern about the environment. Based on the observations throughout the year there has been an increase in illegal logging cases in Indonesia. This makes the forest in Indonesia reduced and barren so that will cause landslide disaster. The trees' roots in the root forest are useful to absorb and store water and strengthen the soil structure. Thus, the soil will remain strong and away from soil erosion. The damaged forests in Indonesia that are caused by illegal logging and illegal mining reached 41 million hectares of the total 130.68 million hectares nationally. Meanwhile the forest areas and land that burned in fires reaches 40,000 hectares.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry noted that there have been 90 cases of forest destruction since 2014 to 2016 which are all criminally processed. Due to these illegal logging the country potentially suffered losses of 276.4 trillion rupiahs

(Pikiran Rakyat, 2016). If this case is left unattended without the consistency of strict sanctions then it is no wonder that it will potentially cause material and morale losses even greater in the future.

In addition, the low awareness to dispose of the waste in its place for all circles has affected the increasing volume of waste in the landfill (TPA – Tempat Pembuangan Akhir). If it is left unattended, TPA will not be able to contain the waste generated by the society and industry; it will trigger the emergence of new problems such as disease outbreaks and other natural disasters such as floods. Based on the facts above, it can be seen that environmental issues are influenced by two main factors; the first factor is natural factors and the second one is human factor. Natural factor; it is inevitable that Indonesia is a disaster prone area because Indonesia is a meeting point of the three tectonic plates of the world (Djauhari, 2014). Being the path of the pacific pacific and the Mediterranean, Indonesia is often called ring of fire country in which it has a row of active volcanoes that makes the region fertile rich in minerals and minerals indispensable in life (Wikipedia, 2014). On the other hand, Indonesia is also a region with high vulnerability and potential disasters such as earthquakes, volcanism, floods, landslides, and so on. Human factor; humans have the natural to always try to meet the needs of life. On the one hand, people give less care in maintaining the environment to meet the needs of life. Due to demographic factors such as the increase of the population, depressing economic needs that are not balanced with the awareness and people's concern to maintain and care for the environment will make the nation's ecosystem threatened because of its own inhabitants. Based on these conditions it is necessary to awaken the individual awareness in order to possess awareness to maintain the environment well.

Method

This study shows how important environmental awareness since the early age. This study used a descriptive method that was collaborated with the observation result and literature review. The study is based on the increasing number of environmental issues. Therefore, this study is expected to help human's behavior change for better.

Discussion

Environmental issues in Indonesian are quite diverse; therefore, it is necessary to find a good strategy contributing all components of the nation to maintain the environment including the younger generation. As the hope of the nation, they should be taught about the awareness and care to love the environment since early. According to Daryanto : 1) that to awaken human consciousness to the environment, the most important thing to do is touch the heart (affective / attitude). If the awareness process has occurred, then the knowledge, understanding about the environment (mind), and improvement (skill) in managing the environment can be improved. This can be initiated by individual awareness through education since the

key to overcoming environmental problems in this nation lies in the awareness and integrity of each individual (Daryanto, 2013). Education is one's conscious effort to improve oneself.

There are three keys to cultivate and nurture the environmental awareness through education since early including: 1) Family as the first role model for children. Family is the first and main education, also a role model for children. Role model is someone whose behavior we copy, imitate and follow (Bruce & Sahat, 1992). The children will automatically imitate whatever the parents do, especially in their golden age. Based on that theory, it is advisable as parents to set a good example as well as familiarize the good things to their children. In association with exemplary and habituation of parents in cultivating a sense of environmental awareness since early can be done by giving the example as follows: the habit of disposing of garbage in its place, the habit to work together cleaning the house and yard, the habit of saving the energy (turning off the unused lights, fans, air cons), save on water usage, reduce the use of plastics, recycle waste into valuable goods for more.

Further education will be continued in the wider scope of schools and communities; 2) Environmental education at school. Once the child learns to recognize many things in his family, then the school as the second home for the child should provide a harmonious and supportive nuance towards the growth and further environmental-care characters development. This can be done through the support of appropriate strategies and methods including: Strengthen the environmental-care characters development; Encourage environmental education through an integrated approach (integrating the environmental materials into the learning process) and monolithic (environmental education into independent subjects, e.g. through supplementary subjects) at all levels of education; Establish a culture of environmental-friendly school, where schools provide customary habits that lead to environmental concerns such as: energy-saving, persuasive slogans for loving environment, environmental action, waste recycling exhibition, routine work service; Develop adiwiyata schools including: a) The development of the school policy are based on environmental awareness, which includes philosophy; the vision of school take a serious care of culture and environment, policy in material development, environmental study, policy on human resource capacity improvement, natural resource saving policy, policy to allocate fund for environmental activities, policies that encourage the realization of schools with environmental-friendly culture; b) The development of an environmental-based curriculum that includes the development of an environmental learning model (integration or monolithic), the exploration and development of environmental issues and issues that exist in the surrounding communities, the development of environmental-themed curricular activities, and the development of learning methods; c) The development of participative-based activities that include the creation of extracurricular or curricular activities that support the development of the FME, active participation in environmental activities outside the school,

establishment of partnerships with government, private enterprise and NGOs in the development of environmental education; d) The development and management of school support facilities which include: developing of the existing quality of school support facilities for PLH, improving the quality of environmental management inside and outside the school area, increasing energy saving, water saving, stationery, waste management system development and medical garden plantation as well as school garden, hydroponics; e) Commitment and synergy of school residents, community and school committees to protect the environment (Kementerian Negara Lingkungan Hidup, 2010) ; 3) A society with environmental awareness Movement. Community has an important role in creating the next generation to be aware of the environment since early age.

Once the awareness has been successfully done and developed in families and schools, it is expected to create the roots of people who care about the environment. This can be assisted by the public figures who are elected as the ambassadors of the environment to provide socialization to the community to participate in maintaining the environment, creating rivers in schools, developing waste banks in the community, routine work service, a competition for the cleanest and healthiest neighborhood etc. With the synergy between family, school, the community, it will awaken the awareness and integrity of each individual to maintain the environment (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2017). Besides, it will create an integrated system order that produces the generation who are environmental-friendly since early age.

Results

The key to overcome the environmental issues in this nation lies in the awareness and integrity of each individual. To build a good awareness of the environment required a variety of ways, being one of them is by building the awareness of the next generation of this nation through education. Through a good synergy between family, school, community and the government to the awareness of preserving the environment since early age will create a wise and skill nation of next Indonesian' generation in utilizing the environment as a form of gratitude towards the masterpiece of the Creator.

Acknowledment

To Ahmad Dahlan for the help and support during the process of accomplishing this paper.

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