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**THE CONCEPT OF MARIA MONTESSORI IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (PAUD)**

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**Abstract.** Maria Montessori's educational concept exactly for Early Childhood Education and psychology. In the view of Maria Montessori, children not only build their own understanding of the world actively, but also their own understanding of discipline, or the ability to control and direct their focus and actions. Montessori said: "Childhood is the richest period, this time should be utilized by education as well as possible, if the wasted life of this era can never be searched instead. Our task is to utilize these early childhood years with the highest concern, rather than wasting it. Montessori education is based on the natural conditions of brain absorption and the spontaneous development of child sensitive periods to support physical and psychological development, and directs the child to health and freedom. Montessori learning environment for children aged 3 to 6 years is generally divided into four basic areas: first, practical life (daily life). Secondly, based on the senses (matter focuses on one or more senses). Third, the language. Fourth, math. In addition, music, art, movement and drama are also included in the curriculum. According to Montessori traditional education (old) a teacher who actively defines and imposes on the child everything that a child should do. In the Montessori school the teacher is just a leader, who observes the child to know the emergence of a student's sensitivity and then individual instruction. Once the child is attracted to his attention he is left active to find his own way. Teachers should always be objective in their view. And in the view of Montessori related learners of the present-day chest no one can teach the qualities that constitute the element of character formation. The only thing we can do is put education on a scientific basis, so children can work effectively, without being disturbed and hindered.

**Keywords:** Montessori, Sensitivities Time, Auto Activity

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Essentially early childhood education is an education that is organized with the aim of facilitating the growth and development of children as a whole or emphasizes the development of all aspects of the child's personality. Therefore, early childhood education provides an opportunity for children to develop personality and potential to the fullest. Consequently, early childhood education institutions need to provide various activities that can develop various aspects of development such as: cognitive, language, emotional, physical, and motor.

Initiatively, early childhood education can also be interpreted as one of the forms of education which focuses on the basic laying toward growth and development, both motor coordination (smooth and rough), emotional intelligence, multiple intelligences and spiritual intelligence (Suyadi & Maulidya Ulfah, 2013: 17). In accordance with the uniqueness and growth of early childhood, the provision of education for early childhood adjusted to the stages of development passed by the early childhood itself. This is important, given the results of research on brain development that until the age of 4 years the level of intelligence capabilities of children has reached 50%, at the age of 8 years reached 80%, and the remaining about 20%

obtained after the age of 8 years. Thus, if new education is done to children when they reach the age of 6 or 7 years (elementary school), environmental stimulation of brain function that has been largely developed, will be late in its development so that it can't function properly. This condition can cause children less intelligent, and can reduce the optimization of brain potential that should be owned by every child. Therefore, early childhood education is very urgent as a process of development and development for early childhood.

The findings support the results of a 2007 UNESCO study, entitled "Strong Foundations for Gender Equality in Early Childhood Care and Education-Advocacy Brief". The results showed that early childhood education is very influential on the cognitive, social, and emotional development of student performance when they attended elementary school. According to UNESCO findings it is said that "The early childhood years are critical for cognitive, social and emotional development. Early childhood education that meets the distinct needs of girls and boys can positively affect their performance in primary school and their self-esteem".

Observing the development of children and the need for learning in early childhood, it appears that there are two things to note in early childhood education, namely: 1) educational materials, and 2) educational methods used. Briefly it can be said that the educational materials and methodology used in the framework of early childhood education should really pay attention to the level of their development. Paying attention to the rate of development also takes into consideration their developmental task, as each developmental period also carries out certain developmental tasks.

The observers of the problem of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) certainly know a doctor as well as the first female anthropologist from Italy, whose works have a tremendous impact on the education of preschoolers around the world. He is Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952), whose thoughts and methods of learning have remained popular to this day.

Montessori said: "Childhood is the richest period, this time should be utilized by education as well as possible, if the wasted life of this era can never be searched instead. Our task is to use these early years of childhood with the highest concern, not to waste it."

Actually, many experts or scientists who are proficient in the field of early childhood education, not only Maria Montessori, but the author hopes with this paper "Concept Maria Montessori in Early Childhood Education (PAUD)" InsyaAllah could be additional treasury of the author's knowledge in particular and readers on generally.

## **B. RESULT & DISCUSSION**

### **1. Maria Montessori's Profile**

Maria Montessori (Rita Kramer, 1988:22) was born on 31 August 1870 in Chiaravalle, a hill town with a view of the Adriatic Sea in Ancona Province in Italy. He is the only child of Alessandro Montessori, a business manager at a state-owned tobacco monopoly company with Renilde Stoppani, an educated woman of a distinguished family. Although Maria does not have a special teacher, she is very close to her mother who encourages her. He also gained the affection of his father, though his father did not approve of his decision to continue his education.

The Montessori family moved to Florence in 1873 and then to Rome in 1875 for the demands of his father's work. Montessori attended elementary school in a public primary school at the age of 6 (1876). His primary school record is "not very interesting", although he earned a certificate of appreciation for good behavior while sitting in grade 1 and above "lavori donneschi" or "women's work" while in class.

In 1883 or 1884, at the age of 13, Montessori continued his studies at the Scuola Tecnica Technical High School Michelangelo Buonarroti, where he studied Italian, Arithmetic, Algebra, Accounting, Geometry, History, Geography, and Natural Sciences. He graduated in 1886 with good grades and exam results. In the same year, at the age of 16, he continued his education to the institute of engineering Regio Istituto Tecnico Leonardo da Vinci, who studied Italian, Mathematics, History, Geography, Geometry and drawing ornaments, Physics, Chemistry,

Botany, zoology, and two languages foreign. He is proficient in Natural Sciences and Mathematics in particular.

Initially he intended to continue his technical education after graduation, an unusual ideal for women at that time in Italy. But, when he graduated in 1890 (age 20 years), with achievements in the field of physics and mathematics, he instead decided to take the medical majors, a more impossible thing at the time. Montessori went ahead with her intention to study medicine. He appealed to Guido Baccelli, professor of clinical medicine at the University of Rome La Spincenza, but strongly unsupported. Nonetheless, in 1890, he enrolled at the University of Rome in a diploma in natural sciences. He successfully passed the Botany, Zoology, Physics, Experimental, Histology, Anatomy, and Common and organic chemistry tests, so he obtained his diploma certificate in 1892. With the certificate, plus Italian and Latin, he qualified for entry into the program medicine at university in 1893.

Because Montessori was a woman, she was enemies and abused by some of her college friends and professors. During the practice of cadaveric (corpse) surgery, Montessori did it by herself because at that time women were together with a man facing a naked body deemed inappropriate. He had to wait for hours until his friends had finished dissecting. She was forced to smoke to cover up the stench of Formaldehyde.

Montessori was awarded an academic award in her first year and in 1895 she gained a position as a hospital assistant, her first clinical experience. In his last two years of college, he studied pediatrics and psychiatry and worked in the pediatric and emergency room consultation room, which made him an expert in pediatric medicine. Montessori graduated from the University of Rome in 1896 as a medical doctor. His thesis was published in 1897 in the journal *Policlinico*. He worked as an assistant at a university hospital and began to open a private practice. Montessori was often regarded as the first female doctor in Italy, but in fact Ernestina Paper obtained a physician degree in Florence in 1877 and medical practice began in 1878.

As a Doctor, he concentrates on the state of the mentally retarded children in the Orphanage. Most children are mentally disturbed by adult mistakes.

In 1900, he founded a special school for children with learning difficulties in Rome. He uses his own way and successfully educates the children with results that are as good as ordinary children. In 1901 he returned to Universities with the desire to study the mind (the science of the soul) not the body. In 1904 he was offered a teaching job as an anthropology lecturer at the University of Rome. Montessori developed all the educational methods that became so successful that children with disabilities could learn even begin for normal children until they passed the exam. With fifty of these children he started the "Children's House" in San Lorenzo Rome.

The job makes Montessori often interact directly with mental disability problems. Montessori believes that defines mental is more of a pedagogical problem than a medical disorder and feels that with special educational exercises, such disabled people can be helped. Montessori's thoughts are very helpful and contribute enormously in the development of the ability of children with mental disabilities.

Dr. Maria Montessori developed her observations and interests in care for children with special needs and several years of her work, writing and speaking. On January 6, 1907 in Milan, was founded a first kindergarten under his command, named "Casa dei Bambini". The school is visited by children who are still not enough years to be obliged to learn. The establishment of this school is also at the urging of Ir. Tamalo in Soejono (1978: 78), who asked Montessori for help in raising the children of women workers, had to leave for work in the Tamalo factory in the morning.

In 1913, he made his first visit to the United States. that Alexander Graham Bell and his wife, Mabel, founded the Montessori Education Association in Washington DC other American supporters were Thomas Edison and Helen Keller. In 1929 founded the Montessori International Association in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. In 1938 he opened Montessori

Training Center in Laren, The Netherlands. In 1947, he founded the Montessori Center in London. And in 1949, 1950, and 1951 he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Until the end of his life, Maria Montessori continued to lecture on her method and open Montessori schools around the world. As for his academic works: *Il metodo della pedagogia scientifica* (1909), *Anthropologia pedagogica* (1910), *Dr. Montessoris own handbook*, 1914, *L'autoeducazione nelle scuole elementari* (1916), *The child in the church* (1929), *Il segreto dell'infanzia* (1938), *Formazione dell'Uomo* (1949), *The absorbent mind* (1949; : *La mente del bambino*, 1952), *L'Educazione e Pace* (1949, 1972), and *De l'Enfant à l'Adolescent* (1948).

## **2. The Concept of Early Childhood Education by Maria Montessori**

In compiling the method for which Montessori's education is based is not on assumptions or on the basis of a particular philosophical school, but on the basis of an actual problem. The problem he faced was when he was working at the University of Rome clinic as well as during his time as director of mentally handicapped children. Montessori then conducted a study of the children until he finally found the answer to what had been the question and he concluded there was something wrong about the education of children with disabilities at the time, on this basis Montessori based and compile the method.

### **a. Basic Principles of Education.**

Each child has certain stages of development according to his or her age. Environmental factors and the treatment of adults (educators) should be tailored to their developmental needs. Therefore, Montessori believes that the environment should be a loving area, a nourishing place to foster development, a place where teachers or adults can observe their progress and make changes according to their developmental needs (Amin, 2007: 251).

All the progress or development of the physical and spiritual child is the result and his own effort. Not someone else who makes the child's body healthy, or children can eat and drink even education. It is the Son himself who must strive with his autoactivate to develop his body and spirit. He himself must eat, drink, see, think, will, and work. Teachers can only provide the tools and opportunities and help as stimulants to enable the child to be active. It is impossible to just be silent (is passive) to see other people do, children experience and ability (skill). The child must find his own way to solve the problems he faces in his life.

### **b. Montessori Educational Objectives.**

The main goal of Montessori education is to prepare children for life by emphasizing the process of child development normally and maximally (Hainstock, 2008: 31). Montessori education is based on the natural state of brain absorption and the spontaneous development of child-sensitive periods to support physical and psychological development, and directs the child to health and freedom.

Montessori argues that nature is very influential and determines the development of children, from nature that is the goal Montessori education is to develop the potential of children optimally. The approach in Montessori education treats children as unique individuals. Such an educational approach is flexible and changing according to the child's changes in interests and wants, rather than forcing children according to a uniform program in accordance with the current educational system.

### **c. Curriculum field**

Montessori learning environment for children 3 to 6 years is generally divided into four basic areas: practical life (daily life), based on the senses (matter of one or more senses) language and math. In addition, music, art, movement and drama are also included in the curriculum (American Montessori Society, 1994)

### **d. Educator (Teacher).**

According to the traditional education (old) a teacher is actively determining and imposing on the child everything that a child should do. At Montessori's school "Casa dei Bambini" the teacher is only a leader, who observes the child to know the onset of a student's sensitive period and then gives individual instruction (Soejono, 1978: 92). Teaching is short

and simple. After the child is interested in his attention he is left active to find his own way. The teacher must always be objective in his view.

e. Student

At this time no one can teach the qualities that become elements of character formation. The only thing we can do is put education on a scientific footing, so that children can work effectively, without being bullied and blocked. As suggested by Montessori, children have a high desire to learn and work along with a strong desire to get pleasure. Children are happier to learn than to be entertained or pampered. Children are always looking for something new to do, something difficult and more challenging. All activities done by the child is spontaneity from within the child is not because of others. The child should not be disturbed by giving something he does not want. The spontaneity of the child is what Montessori wants in his education. In addition, natural nature (kodratnya) child is always experiencing its development that develops by itself.

Montessori learning model believes that education has begun when the child is born. The Montessori learning model has a premise that in the early years a child has "sensitive periods." Sensitivity can be described as an innate or potential that will develop very rapidly at certain times. This potential will die and will not appear again if not given the opportunity to develop, just in time (Utami, 2013: 29).

Montessori provides guidance for this sensitive or sensitive period in the following nine stages:

Table B.1. Stages of Child Developmental Development

No	Age	Development
1.	Born - 3 years	The period of absorption of the mind (absorbed mind), introduction and sensory experience / the five senses.
2.	1, 5 - 3 years	Language development
3.	1, 5 - 4 years	The development and coordination between the eyes and the muscles. Attention to small objects
4.	2 - 4 years	The development and improvement of movements. Great attention to the real things. Begin to realize the order of time and space
5.	2, 5 - 6 years	Improved use of the five senses.
6.	3 - 6 years	Sensitive to the influence of adults
7.	3, 5 - 4, 5 years	Start scribbling
8.	4 - 4, 5 years	Indra peraba began to develop
9.	4, 5 - 5, 5 years	Began to grow interest in reading

The basic education model of Montessori's learning emphasizes on three things:

- 1) Self-education (endocentric)  
According to Montessori, children have the natural ability to develop themselves. Children have a natural desire to learn and work, along with a strong desire to get pleasure. In addition, children also have the desire to be independent. The desire for independence does not arise on the orders of an adult but arises from within the child himself. These natural impulses will be met by facilitating the child with busy activities. But in these activities, should not help children but must practice alone.
- 2) Sensitive Period  
Sensitivity is a very important period in a child's development. When the sensitive period comes, the child should be immediately facilitated with game tools that support the actualization of their potential. Teachers have an obligation to observe the emergence of

child-sensitive periods rather can provide appropriate action in accordance with the child's condition.

### 3) Freedom

Montessori's learning model gives children the freedom to think, to work and to produce something. This is because childhood sensitivity cannot be known when the certainty of its appearance. This freedom aims to enable the child to realize the potential of the child freely.

Montessori's learning model focuses on the development of motor, sensory and language aspects. The main emphasis is placed through the exploitation of sensory devices. Montessori's learning model frees children to move, touch, manipulate and explore freely. The learning step in the Montessori learning model consists of three steps (Gutek, 2015:193):

- a. Show. Example: Step shows as showing the paper is red, the teacher is saying, "It's red!" As well as other colors.
- b. Steps know Master disrupts colored papers and say to child, "Take the red!"
- c. Remembering Steps Of colored paper that has been confused, the teacher picks up a piece of paper and asks, "What color is this?"

In the Montessori class there is (Roopnarine, 2015: 382), *first* grouping of age mix, usually age 3.4, and 5 years combined, and so on 6.7 and 8 years and so on. *Second*, the arrangement of rooms with low-open shelves contains a lot of carefully arranged materials that children can choose. Instead of arrangements with single-oriented furnishings to assist with the teaching of the whole class, tables and benches are grouped to help the child's or a small group's personal work. *Third*, open space on the floor makes children bias work on the floor. The number of shelves to load the required Montessori material is more than the usual rows of shelves that extend to the middle class in some places to create large windows, or special fields. *Fourth*, Montessori manipulative material is made for the use of children individually or in small groups, rather than as a teacher's tool. *Fifth*, the attitude of working together rather than the competition in completing the task. Students complete the task independently and then check the response with "control" material or seek help from other children. Here students do not see the teacher as the only source of information in the classroom. *Sixth*, there is an emphasis on authentic assessment, which includes portfolio and work-based assessment and extensive teacher surveillance, which includes portfolio and work-based assessment as well as extensive teacher surveillance. *Seventh*, the development of individual responsibility is strongly emphasized. For example, children return their materials to their place after use, they clean and maintain the classroom, at least in part, and they participate in the development of classroom rules.

### 3. Advantages and disadvantages of the concept of Maria Montessori on Early Childhood Education.

Based on the results of the above research, some conclusions can be drawn about the advantages and disadvantages of the Montessori concept of early childhood education, among them:

- a. Advantages of the concept of Maria Montessori on Early Childhood Education.
  - 1) From the point of teaching (didactic). In the world of teaching in general Montessori is seen as the pioneer of the founders of the basics for schools with a new stream. Montessori who diverts the center of education from teacher centered to the center of student-learning (learners as a center of learning / learners starting independently in learning). In line with the child's sensitivity, Montessori uses spontaneous interest in autoactivates and child activity in teaching
  - 2) From the point of education. Montessori asserts that every education is self-education. So Montessori uses the best possible freedom and activity of the child in her method, so that every developing child will develop according to her nature and her talents.
  - 3) From the point of child psychology. Montessori opened the eyes of knowledge that there is a sensitive period in each child. The development of each child should be observed, education and learning must be adjusted to the child's development.

b. Disadvantages of the concept of Maria Montessori on Early Childhood Education.

- 1) From the point of teaching (didactic)
  - a) Freedom, according to the Montessori system not the real freedom, but limited freedom. Montessori's own learning tools should be used for learning, teachers and students are not allowed to use other tools. They should be used for a particular purpose, should not be used for things that are deviant.
  - b) Activity of the child in childhood very necessary, so that children can make their own things. It aims to be or not to educate intelligence not to rejoice or to enjoy life. That's how in Montessori's school there is no liveliness to play in the true sense of the word. Activity of the child in childhood
- 2) From the point of education. The Montessori education system is too individual, there is no opportunity for social education because in Montessori school there is no training in the entourage. Beauty education is not enough attention in Montessori teaching. Religious education at the start of the child's age was also not observed.
- 3) From the point of child psychology. The fantasy world of children. Montessori's opinion of the fantasy world is a fantasy demonstrating spiritual poverty and not in accordance with reality. So, Montessori forbids children to play delusions, for example, playing apian trains, boys being conductors, girls becoming mothers, children holding fictional churches and so forth. In connection with the extermination of a child's fantasy world. So, in school Montessori neglected the expression subjects, such as: storytelling, drawing and making / reading poems.

### C. CONCLUSION

Based on the author's analysis of the concept of Maria Montessori in Early Childhood Education (PAUD):

1. The development of each child must be observed; education and teaching must be adjusted to the child's development.
2. Montessori's main goal of education is to prepare children for life by emphasizing the child's developmental process normally and maximally. Montessori education is based on the natural conditions of brain absorption and the spontaneous development of child sensitive periods to support physical and psychological development, and directs the child to health and freedom.
3. It is Mantinada who opens the eyes of childhood sensitivity.
4. Montessori asserts that every education is self-education, then, Montessori uses the best possible freedom and activity of the child in her method, and education is self-educating in order for each child to develop according to her nature and talent.
5. Montessori diverts education center from teacher-central (teacher as center of learning / the only source in learning) to children central (students as center in learning / students start independent in learning)

#### Suggestion:

1. Although an education using the correct system and method if not supported by the parent's collaboration is less achieved its educational goals. Therefore, schools should collaborate with parents of learners for the success of educational goals. Keep in mind that the parents are the first teachers, role models, symbols of security, and the source to get love and education for their children. The rapidly changing age demands a greater role for parents to maximize their closeness with their children. Because moments of togetherness are the most important part of the child's present and their future, which must begin from the moment they are born.
2. To the real policy holder of education at the institutional level, is expected to practice Islamic education as an effort to empower learners and society (environment).

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