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Education in Malaysia- Building Global Citizens

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The importance of global education cannot be overstated in today's interconnected world. It equips students with the values, skills, and abilities to navigate and participate in a complex, interdependent society. Global education is also important because it promotes cultural awareness and social responsibility among Malaysian students, a country noted for its cultural diversity. This results in informed and compassionate global citizens.

Global education encompasses various aspects of life, including cultural awareness, critical thinking, global awareness, social responsibility, and collaboration. Therefore, exposing students to diverse cultures and global issues prepares them to become active and responsible global citizens and broadens their perspectives on life.

Cultural awareness is important in global education as it entails being aware of and understanding the various cultural backgrounds and viewpoints that exist both inside and outside one's community. Hence, it is essential to foster cultural awareness in Malaysia, where different cultures live side by side.

Multicultural education promotes a sense of shared humanity among students while helping them recognise and appreciate cultural differences (Banks, 2008). Malaysian educational institutions can assist students in appreciating their own and other people's cultural heritage by incorporating multicultural education into the curriculum. This will help foster social cohesiveness in a diversified culture and improve students' cultural competency (Banks, 2008).

For example, educational institutions can incorporate lessons on the history, traditions, and contributions of Malaysia's various ethnic groups to help students develop a deeper appreciation of

national cultural patterns. Furthermore, cultural exchange programmes can facilitate interactions between students from different cultural backgrounds, enhancing understanding and fostering mutual respect.



Social responsibility is also an essential part of global education. It involves instilling a sense of duty and commitment to the students to impact society positively. Tharp (2015) emphasises that education fosters consciousness and empowers students to engage in social justice efforts.

Integrating social responsibility in education addresses societal issues in Malaysia. Educators should incorporate community service and service-learning projects so that students can practically apply classroom knowledge. These initiatives foster responsibility and empathy. Activities like recycling campaigns, assisting local shelters, and enhancing environmental awareness teach the value of social responsibility and collaboration. Such experiences help students realise that even small actions can significantly impact their communities and the world.



Technology also enhances global education by providing access to information and connecting students and educators worldwide. Castells (2010) notes that the digital age has transformed interaction and information access, facilitating a global perspective in education. Therefore, Malaysian institutions can use technology to help students engage with international classrooms, participate in virtual exchanges, and access diverse resources, making global issues more tangible and relevant for students.

Supportive policies are also an important part of global education. The Malaysian National Education Blueprint 2013-2025 emphasises preparing students for global citizenship through critical thinking, communication, and cultural awareness (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). Therefore, educators and policymakers must work together to integrate global education into the curriculum. It is also important to implement multicultural education and global competencies for trainee teachers to raise awareness on the importance of global education to the students.

In summary, global education plays a vital role in shaping culturally aware and socially responsible global citizens. This is particularly significant in Malaysia, as the country has diverse culture and global citizenship. By promoting cultural awareness and social responsibility in education, educators can leverage students' diverse backgrounds to enhance learning experiences and make a positive difference in our interconnected world, fostering a more inclusive, empathetic, and equitable society.

Reference

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