



The multicultural approach in early childhood education at Small Folks day care

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The purpose of the thesis was to show how the multicultural approach in Early Childhood education is implemented at Small Folks day care, an international and multicultural day care center. The results can serve both as criticism and thus as an opportunity to improve as well as an advertisement for Small Folks. Furthermore, this thesis may be used as a basis for further studies and research on the topic of multiculturalism and its influence on people's lives when implemented from an early stage on.

The thesis is based on my observations and findings of the survey, which were conducted during May-December 2017. The thesis is furthermore built on parts of the Early Childhood Education Plan of Espoo (Varhaiskasvatus 2016) as well as Small Folks' curriculum. The methods used are mixed.

The findings of this study show, that multicultural approach as such is a term which is difficult to define and can have several interpretations. However, Small Folks does implement the multicultural approach well and thoroughly during every day working life. It has been important through this process to explore the client's needs and wishes towards the subject frequently to be able to adjust the offered services to the client's needs.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Early Childhood Education, Day Care, Small Folks

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1 Introduction

This Thesis was conducted during the time period of May 2017-December 2017 in cooperation with Small Folks day care, which is located in Espoo. Small Folks is an international and multicultural day care.

Terminology used in this Thesis:

Racism: hatred or intolerance of another race or other races.

Multiculturalism:

the preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within a unified society, as a state or nation. (www.dictionary.com, 2018)

The thesis concentrates on the multicultural approach in early childhood education used in Small Folks day-care, which is one of the focus points of the everyday work at the day care. The aim was to use the research method of qualitative research, in the form of a survey after which the results will be analysed, measuring whether multiculturalism is implemented and to what extent.

In order to conduct the research, a survey was handed out to 24 parents of children who currently attend Small Folks. During this thesis, other observations were made based on the completion of every day work routines, such as celebrations taking place at Small Folks.

In 2017, seeing racism as a nearly common behavioural pattern, one may argue that it could be prevented if children were properly integrated to different cultures at a younger age. The use of culture to explain observable differences is not merely an essentialising means of replacing the explanation of difference offered by 'race'. Lévi-Strauss also celebrates the importance of cultural diversity (Lentin, 2004),

Through the work I do at Small Folks day care, I see every day how children of all kinds of different backgrounds, nationalities and skin colours, play, live and learn with and next to each other in a peaceful and happy environment. Because of this, I wonder if this kind of upbringing could influence human beings in such way that they are more socially capable and if -as a result- racism would become a much smaller danger.

This is a topic where further studies relating to the benefits of multiculturalism could be developed further. This thesis concentrates strongly on the ways of working at Small Folks, it will serve the day care with a good analysis to possibly make improvements if needed.

A survey that concerns parents of the day care will be given in order to get a wide overview on the multicultural approach seen from the parent's perspective. In order to make the

results well visible, I will add various graphs and tables to help the reader get a clear understanding of the results. The second part of the data will be obtained by observation, which is carried out over the length of several months, during my working hours at Small Folks.

2 Purpose of the study and research question

The topic of my thesis is “The multicultural approach in early childhood education at Small Folks day care.” The thesis will thus concentrate on if and how Small Folks implements the multicultural approach in its early childhood education and finally examine, if there is room for improvement. Purpose is to understand that if children’s experience and whether they get to embrace different cultures, religions during their stay in Small Folks. If the multicultural approach in Small Folks proves positive results, maybe other day-cares who don’t have this as an approach in their curriculum, could use this as an example. The theoretical framework will be taken from the VASU (2016) as well as from the developmental reviews developed by Small Folks and their curriculum, as well as literature, that deals with early childhood education and multiculturalism in general. Furthermore, I will observe the day care routines and conduct a survey. During the process of writing the thesis, Small Folks will serve as support, give feedback and provide the research environment.

3 Multicultural early childhood education

Handzlik defines multiculturalism as a “plurality of cultures gathered in a particular social space”. (Handzlik, I. et al, 2014) Nevertheless, they also thematize the difficulties to narrowing the term down to only one explanation, adding the inclusion of the mentioned cultures interacting with each other. Furthermore, with progressing globalization, the term does not become easier to define. (Handzlik, I. et al, 2014) The authors furthermore mention the change of use of the term: while in former times it was used to describe “Permanent and dynamic interactions between transmitters of distinct cultures”, it is not used of “elements belonging to diverse cultures resulting from global network and information flow. (Handzlik, I. et al, 2014). Claval (1995) states, that the adaptation of certain values, beliefs, knowledge, traditions and attitudes, cultures are built.

3.1 Finnish multicultural education

A goal within the Finnish ECE is to raise children to “learn to think of other people and care about them” (ECE, 2004), and therefore “think positively of (...) other cultures and environments”. Also, the ECEC grants children with different backgrounds the right, to be supported, also regarding immigration and assimilation in Finland, while being able to live out their own traditions. The ECEC also focuses on the multicultural child’s background as well as mother tongue, not differentiating between genders and thus giving equal rights to girls and boys alike.

For the multicultural ECEC to work out, the staff of the day cares need to have a good knowledge of different cultures and be culturally sensitive. Furthermore, the Finnish ECEC encourages activities to get to know different families' cultures, their traditions and backgrounds. In order to do so, the staff needs to make parents aware of the ECEC's interest in everyone's cultures as well as the wish to foster the usage of their own language at home.

3.2 Small Folks' multicultural approach and curriculum

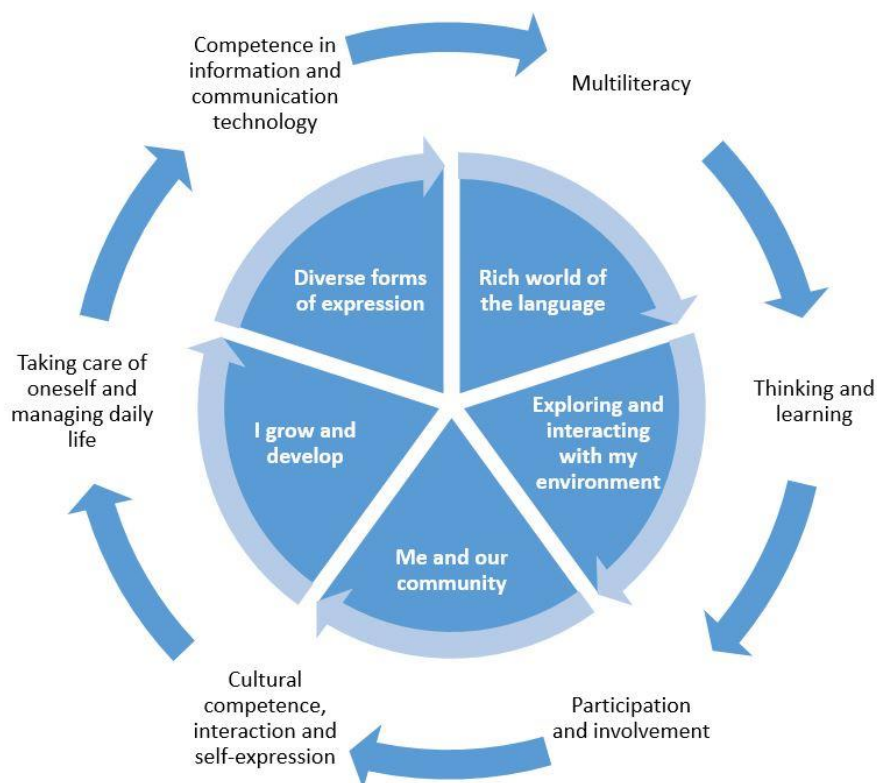


Figure 1: Adaptation of Finnish curriculum in Small Folks (Varhaiskasvatussuunnitelman perusteet 2016)

The joint objectives for instruction established in this chapter have been formulated five following entities:

- Diverse forms of expression
 - Music, art, crafts, verbal and bodily expression
- Rich world of the language
 - Spoken and written language, children's literacy, communication skills - presentations
- Me and our community
 - History, society, ethics, culture, worldview and media education
- Exploring and interacting with my environment
 - Mathematic skills, ICT, technology – and environment education
- I grow and develop
 - PE, nutrition, consumer education, safety

Figure 2: Description of chart content (Small Folks Curriculum, 2017)

Children within the international environment of Small Folks face different cultures as well as backgrounds which enlarges their world image. Small Folks focuses on respecting everyone - no matter their religious or cultural background and thus supports the development of children to be who they are. Early childhood education shall be planned and implemented to give children opportunities to be inspired, experiment and learn new things. Through play and activity in different learning environments, children expand their competence in different fields of knowledge and skills. Early childhood education offers children opportunities for versatile interaction and strengthening of social skills. The goal is that the children learn to appreciate human equality and their own uniqueness.

(Varhaiskasvatussuunnitelman perusteet 2016, Opetushallitus).

Small Folks also includes both Finnish and international holidays as part of their activities in the curriculum, therefore every group does a special activity relating to that holiday, it is also implemented in the yearly schedule. This allows the children to celebrate diversity throughout the year and cultural knowledge and traditions are shared and taught to the children. In every day working life, the multicultural approach at Small Folks is implemented continuously. For example, the breakfast, the two snacks as well as the lunch that are served, are always child-specific and wishes from parents concerning the food that might include religious-specific restrictions are strictly followed and implemented. Also, if there are certain religious-concerning restrictions about hygiene, these are followed. The way the staff reacts and adapts wishes from parents is furthermore important, since it cannot only be tolerant but a supportive and positive reaction. Most of the children at Small Folks day care have a multicultural background. No matter where they are from, what skin colour they have and what languages they speak outside of the day care, they are all playing with each other.

Concerning holidays celebrated in Small Folks, parents are asked to provide information on how to properly address and celebrate their culture-specific party. Very often, parents even provide culture-specific foods and drinks for the whole day care. That way, the celebration becomes even more authentic. Also, everyone is for example asked to wear white on Eid-Al Adha, thus children wear original celebration clothes, children of other nationalities or cultures wear white as well as the teachers. Thus, the Muslim religion in this case is being respected in all its ways, let's the Muslim children celebrate and enjoy their holiday and at the same time teaches children with other backgrounds about the religion and its traditions and habits.

The multiculturalism is implemented in several ways. For example, all nationalities that are present at Small Folks are being embraced by celebrating the specific countries' parties. As for example the Chinese New Year, the children learn about the traditions and its meaning, they sing Chinese songs and bake or cook the country's food. That way, children from other countries get to know and learn about other cultures in a playful way. Of course, the

activities are always age-specific. By being implemented and fostered from an age as early as 6 months, the children grow up with the knowledge that there are other cultures, religions and skin colours, they learn how to not only tolerate them but also to embrace them and get to enjoy a feeling of togetherness.

Valentine's day is celebrated as the celebration of friendship in Small Folks, as it is considered in Finland. Unlike other countries where it's associated with romance, this is a good way for international students to get a glimpse into Finnish tradition. Besides the baking and crafting for this celebration, Small Folks offered longer opening hours specifically for this day to enable parents to spend quality time with each other. For this evening, a movie screen was set-up and activities such as pizza-baking and movie watching while wearing their pyjamas was offered to the children.

For Chinese New Year, a lot of crafting takes place weeks before the actual holiday. Children learn about the celebration and usually also e.g. the Chinese embassy offers information, material and decoration. To this event, also parents are invited, while mostly parents from the specific country take this offer. The walls between the CC and EE classroom are being opened and traditional music as well as traditional Chinese food is being offered.

This specific holiday is not exactly part of the curriculum, nevertheless, since it is celebrated in America, Canada and New Zealand as well, it is celebrated at Small Folks as well.

In order to get the day care ready for the festivities, there are "golden" chocolate coins hidden in the classrooms and "leprechaun"-footprints are left in the entrance to make the children a nice surprise when they come to day care on 17th of March. Also "green" pancakes are served for breakfast and celebration-related crafts are being made throughout the week. In the afternoon, children can go for a golden coin hunt. Also, teachers and children are asked to wear green on this specific day.

For the Easter celebration, there are baskets crafted throughout the week before the party and other topic related crafts are being made as well. Educational videos or books are being shown and read, leaving the Christian history out. For the celebration there are furthermore surprise eggs bought by the Management, one for each child. Also, teachers boil eggs and colour them together with the older children. On the celebration day, there are "Easter bunny tracks" left in the entrance and children get to search real- and chocolate eggs in the afternoon.

For May Day, children bake buns and get dressed up. Since making Mead by oneself includes the process of fermentation, resulting in alcohol, there is alcohol-free and child-friendly Mead offered for the party, where parents are also invited to.

This celebration presupposes the crafting of presents and cards by the children. Also, baking is required for the “Mother’s Day coffee morning” to which all day care Mums are invited from 8.30-9.30h to enjoy some extra-quality-time with their children. For this event, teachers make coffee and tea in the morning, put out the baked goods and prepare the classroom for a breakfast morning.

As for the Muslim celebration “Eid Al Adha”, the children craft cards and little presents, some groups also bake. As usual, parents of the specific religion or culture are welcome to bring own foods as well. Since “Eid al Adha” is the feast of sacrifice, Small Folks also needs to consider the way the history of the specific holiday is implemented and taught to the children. As for Eid, an attenuated version is used for the day care, the actual mention of sacrificing a lamb is not suitable for the environment, thus, we call it the “celebration of sharing”.

In the afternoon typically, the party starts, and different age groups get to celebrate together, eat the snack that is usually typical for the specific holiday, they get to hear stories or see videos and learn more about the Muslims’ children holiday. Afterwards, presents are being exchanged and some country-specific songs are played and danced to. In order to keep the celebration as close to its intended way as possible, Muslim parents are being asked to share as much as they like to, and possible suggestions are being implemented. Also, parents are usually asked to dress their children in celebration-specific clothes for the holiday, usually through the weekly newsletter which is delivered by e-mail. For the Eid-celebration, all children as well as the teachers wore white clothes. Also, in this case, it is important to consider the children’s ages and to implement the celebration according to their levels and skills.

Diwali, the celebration of light winning over darkness is a big event in India. Therefore, we also celebrate it at Small Folks. Weeks before, all age groups start to craft decorations for the party. This year, there were big candles with glitter hung up in the hallways, saying “Happy Diwali” in English as well as in Hindi. During the week of the party, each group teaches about the history and rea-son of celebrating Diwali in an age-appropriate way. Though there are many videos explaining Diwali and its traditions, many were not child-friendly at all, which is why own versions for explanation needed to be created instead. Also, different groups bake specific Indian treats for the party but also parents bring food, which makes it very authentic. On the day of the party, children are asked to wear colourful- or traditional Indian clothes, so do teachers. In order to celebrate, usually 2 day care groups are put together and the communication and fun between age-groups is fostered. The Indian snacks are eaten together, age-group depending there is also more explanation about the celebration provided. Afterwards, the children could dance to Indian music.

Though Halloween is originally an American tradition and celebration, it is also widely celebrated in Finland nowadays. The Halloween party at Small Folks is a bigger event, since it is also an evening where parents can participate. Again, there is lots of baking required from the groups, this year, the groups will make “Blood cookies”, “spooky bananas”, “monster cookies” etc. Furthermore, all children and teachers are asked to put on a costume as well as parents too. There is also a parent costume contest which is awarded to the best costume idea. Furthermore, there will be activities related to Halloween in the whole day care.

Father’s Day is being celebrated in the same way as Mother’s Day and a breakfast with self-made baked goods, presents and cards takes place to honour the dads.

In 2017, the Finnish Independence Day is celebrated at a much bigger scale than in previous years. Since Finland turned 100 years in 2017, parents were invited to join the festivities at the day care. Besides the usual crafting, learning, preparing and baking, there was also a song presented and performed for the parents. The song was made by early childhood education teachers and is in Finnish but for this specific occasion, children and staff will learn and perform it in its original language.

For Christmas preparations, teachers start many weeks before the official and big party to practice a group-specific performance with the children. While every group has different skills, the performances need to match the skill-level. For this celebration, parents are welcome to join and come for a whole afternoon. Children bake and craft for their parents and surprise them with little gifts. Also, the memory books are being laid-out, so that parents can admire what their children have done during the last 2 months. Apart from the big celebration, there is a Santa Claus coming to give some presents to the children which are to be used by the whole group. The whole day care is furthermore being decorated for Winter and Christmas and celebration-related goodies are offered.

4 Research methods and data analysis

4.1 Mixed research methods

The research method is qualitative, because the topic is mostly feelings-as well as opinions-related. In order to reflect the results of my research, only the qualitative research methods can reflect values and perceptions, which are most necessary for the topic dealt with. The main idea of the qualitative research is to describe reality, including the values and also backgrounds of the questioned persons. (Hirsjärvi et al, 2010). The interviewed or questioned persons are furthermore seen as a whole, including their life-situations and different backgrounds, different ways of be-having. (Taylor, S.J. et al. 2015). The inductive analysis method presumes a target group which is chosen according to the needs of the researcher, rather than randomized. (Polit et al., 2008). The results are furthermore seen in a unique way rather than being generalised. (Hirsjärvi et al, 2010)

4.2 Data analysis

The content analysis for qualitative research requires careful preparing, organizing and reporting of the results found. To start with, there needs to be enough and adequate material to be able to go into a well-grounded analysis. (Elo et.al, 2008) In the reporting phase, results are described by the content of the categories describing the phenomenon using a selected approach either deductive or inductive.

It has been argued that the use of quotations is necessary to indicate the trust-worthiness of results (Polit & Beck, 2012; Sandelowski, 1995a). Conformability refers to objectivity and implies that the data accurately represent the information that the participants provided and interpretations of those data are not invented by the inquirer. The findings must reflect the participants' voice and conditions of the inquiry, and not the researcher's biases, motivations, or perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Polit & Beck, 2012)

In many studies, content analysis has been used to analyse answers to open-ended questions in questionnaires (Kyngäs et al., 2011). There is a need for a self-criticism and good analysis skills when conducting qualitative content analysis. Any qualitative analysis should include continuous reflection and self-criticism by the researcher (Pyett, 2003; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011) from the beginning of the study (Elo et.al, 2014).

Surveys require a lot of pre-work to be done: the objectives and goals need to be clearly defined and well-communicated to the people taking part in the research. Furthermore, the research questions need to be well thought-through and clearly presented, leaving only room for information that is desired. Within surveys, there are also different strategies of data collection: e.g. through the internet and via e-mail or a survey programme, on paper or handing them out. After collecting the data, it needs to furthermore be analysed on its quality. (Punch, K.F. 2003)

The study group was chosen out of practicality reasons, since the Beautiful Birds' and Tiny Tigers' parents are mostly having children also in the two older groups and thus the two younger groups' parents represent a good average of the opinions represented at Small Folks day care.

The survey will be analysed and evaluated and made visible to the reader through graphs and tables, through the survey I hope to get the most person-al results, that reflect the parent's opinions the best. Also, I believe that in a survey people are able to open up more than in other cases, e.g. presenting their opinions in public or in a group. Also, it offers the advantage anonymity. After filling out the survey, parents were asked to send the document to my e-mail address. During the research process, surveys were sent to 20 parents from Beautiful Birds and Tiny Tigers.

5 Findings

5.1 Survey results

The survey was given to 24 parents and 12 responded to the survey. Based on the results, the majority (50%) answered that they feel the multicultural approach at Small Folks is “a nice plus”. 25% answered that “it’s very important” and the last 25% responded “it’s important”. None of the parents answered with “not important for me”, which means that Small Folks is providing them with a level of multiculturalism they value for their children’s education and development.

1. The multicultural approach at Small Folks is

12 responses

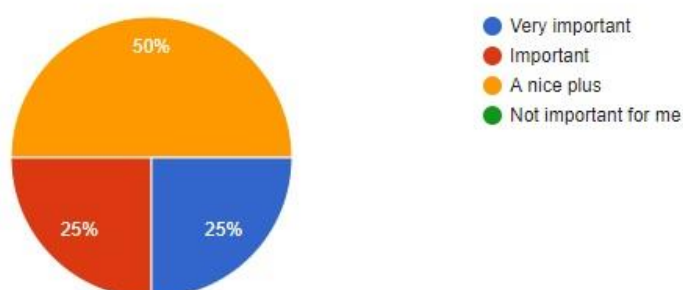


Table 1

2. What does multicultural upbringing mean to you?

12 responses

I look at multicultural upbringing as a form of educating about and fostering different stories, values, beliefs, perspectives from different people. And to clarify a bit more, the word ‘multicultural’ to me could embody anything from race, ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, non-conventional physical appearance to various types of behaviour. (2)

Understanding one another and having a healthy relation .

In any case, what does it mean to me? I think it’s a nice plus if it starts as early as day-care, but multicultural sensitivity and ‘upbringing’ is what my kid will need for years to come. Most adults need it, too

At this stage just having friends from different cultures. In future to travel around the world and show him different cultures and people.

It means increasing the children’s awareness and understanding of various beliefs, values, traditions and behavioural patterns that can be different because of people’s cultural background. At the same time, I would emphasize the relevance of language, because a shared language (in this case, English) is essential for the ability to act multiculturally. Taken together, I would say that multicultural upbringing encompasses both the understanding of the diversity of views and a shared language to communicate and discuss these issues.

Table 2

The question “What does multicultural upbringing mean to you?” was asked as an open-ended question to get the most honest and personal answers possible. The answers were summarized as “mutual understanding and learning social skills”, which was mentioned by one parent, “open-mindedness and cosmopolitanism” which was mentioned by six parents, “as an important base for further education” by one parent and “as something that parents bring in” which was mentioned by one parent. This result shows that parents find only positive traits to their association with a multicultural upbringing.

3. What influence do you hope the multicultural upbringing has on your child?

12 responses

I hope that by making my kid aware of the 'multiculturality' he would become more open-minded, empathetic, curious, intrigued about new things, not afraid of change and develop a more creative and problem-solving mindset. (2)

A healthy understanding and a positive attitude towards every culture.

Open mindedness, curiosity, empathy, less fear of the unknown and different.

First of all, to avoid any kind of racism behaviour in future. To understand being a nice person is important in his life not the country people were born or what race or colour they are. Every one can be a good friend.

In short, I hope my children to be able to understand, interpret, and interact with different people regardless of cultural differences. While understanding and appreciating others, I hope that my children would also be able to interpret and value their own cultural heritage. I believe that multicultural environment actually helps children to make better sense of who they are and not to take everything for granted. In this sense, I hope that multicultural upbringing would help them to be open-minded, build healthy self-identity, and strong self-efficacy. Equally important, I hope that they would see and focus on all the similarities between people that have nothing or very little to do with cultural differences.

Table 3

What influence do you hope the multicultural upbringing has on your child?

Subject	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Learn about different cultures		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X
Open-mindedness	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Curiosity				X				X				
Empathy		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Tolerance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Self-Confidence	X		X			X						X
Appreciating others' and own culture		X	X	X	X	X						X
Less fear of unknown								X				
Fast adaption in new cultural environments					X	X			X	X		X
Become socially capable		X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Respect	X	X		X		X	X				X	

Table 4

As part of the research stage it was important to understand the background of the families the children came from, if Small Folks appeals to Finns or just Expats living in Finland. It seems that based on the results it is 50-50 and there are equal Finns without multicultural background, yet they value the international factor.

One of the parents responded, "I'm fully Finnish, however, I have been working abroad every now and then since I was 16 years old." Another one explained "I have lived six years in Kuwait and Dubai. My wife has lived in Germany and shorter periods in UK and USA. I would hope that we have a pretty good exposure to other cultures although our genetics and the first language are 100 % from Finland." So even though they are fully Finnish in background their environment has been multicultural and international. There were also parents who have lived in other countries and arrived to Finland for work or study. One answered "Yes, a background of a strong division (cultural, too) between Croatia & Serbia. Combined with living as an expat since the age of 18."

The Beautiful Bird's group is- with 8 different nationalities highly multicultural. The Tiny Tigers group is momentarily rather homogenic nationality-wise. However, this is only the average of nationalities within the day care, the Eager Elephants and Crazy Crocodiles inhere different nationalities as well.





			
Beautiful Birds	Tiny Tigers	Eager Elephants	Crazy Crocodile
Finnish: 4 Austrian: 1 Indian: 6 Chinese: 2 Iranian: 3 New Zealander: 1 Danish: 1 Croatian: 2	Finnish: 8 German: 2 Indian: 8 Canadian: 1	Finnish: 5 Greek: 1 Korean: 1 Pakistan: 2 Iranian: 2 Marokko: 1 Indian: 2 Chinese: 1	Finnish: 5 Indian: 8 Chinese: 1

Table 5

There were also parents who shared their different levels of multiculturalism within their family unit. Besides being in constant communication with parents, also the form “All about your child” is important for teachers. In the form, there are all relevant information listed such as the child’s personality, parents’ hopes and wishes towards the day care, special diets or religious requirements as well as family background and other necessary information.

5.2 Observation results

The observation concerns the children and the day care staff as to how the multicultural aspect is being implemented in everyday life. The observation is taking place as structured as well as participant observation. The benefit of combining both research methods is, that observation aspects are not possible to identify through the survey and they thus complement each other. Also, the observation enables me to see everyday life situations at the day care, so how multiculturalism is implemented and not only in theory.

The material that is used in the thesis will be collected through observation as well as through conducting a survey and thus, it will be a qualitative research. The results will be analysed in a text as well as being made visible in graphs and tables. The reasons for choosing the qualitative research method is, that this kind of method best represents emotions and feelings which are an important part of the topic of research. When making decisions that concern the children’s well-being, emotions and feelings are surely the most important influencing factors. The observation allows a glimpse from the perspective inside the day care life and how the multiculturalism is implemented. It may offer much more than a survey or the first impression of the day care. Thus, also possible downsides can be detected.

Through observation, interests and preferences of children can be gathered as well as their social and cognitive development can be observed and used later as grounds for activities or to take actions to support children in certain fields. As Fine (1988) mentions, also personalities and temperaments can be identified through observation. Surely, one can say that observation is one of the most significant elements of working with children.

The strength in Small Folks could be considered that children develop a broader understanding of different cultures since their friends are from all parts of the world. Then again, one may argue that the children don’t receive enough Finnish language teaching, which may narrow the options of schools in the future since English school spots are limited. But considering some of the children may have to move away from Finland at some point, children who study in English have it easier since English is more international than Finnish. There is also a sensitivity factor that Small Folks should be aware of and prepare for a situation where a parent does not like the celebration of a holiday that goes against their values, for example Halloween.

6 Discussion and conclusion

For most of the questioned parents, the multicultural approach at Small Folks is not a priority, but rather a nice service that the day care offers. For parents it is thus important, that their children learn about different cultures and values, to learn to accept and cherish differences and to learn from them. Also accepting and understanding different ways of thinking or behaving resulting from different life experiences and backgrounds seems to be important. They hope, that a natural curiosity emerges in their children, to want to learn more about different cultures and values. Also, parents see the teaching about different cultures as a richness the children gain. Furthermore, parents expressed that they feel that the English language used in Small Folks helps their children to reflect on what is a “multicultural approach”.

Since qualitative research is mostly feelings-based, it involves emotions and own opinions, therefore during research process it is essential to keep that in mind. The results were clear in that the majority found the multiculturalism approach in Small Folks to be a positive one. I believe that the line between cherishing a culture or tradition and being too stereotypical is quite thin. Thus, to keep it as authentic as possible, a close communication with the parents from the specific country is key. The anonymity plays an important role. Besides my insight that I gain through the work at Small Folks, I do not share any personal information with a third party, it was solely for the research purpose of this Thesis. The work that was done in cooperation with Small Folks day care was easily explicable. All information as well as help were provided quickly. Concerning the communication with parents, I learned that it is more efficient and accessible to ask parents to fill out a survey on-site in order to get the most answers in a short amount of time. Via e-mail, the possibility to not answer or ignore a survey is much bigger than in personal contact. Thus, possibly through e-mail collection of the survey answers, parents had more time to think about the topic asked and were able to get deeper into the topic. The observations of the celebrations and every-day implementation of multiculturalism were easy to do, notes made in the end of the day facilitated the correct and complete recording of what was seen.

The topic- though not being easy to confine- is still interesting and worth researching to me. Thus, an opinion from an irrelative person would have been interesting to add to the research analysis as well in order to prove how different the term of multiculturalism is considered but also in order to find a clearer result to the research question.

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Appendix 1: Pictures of holiday celebrations in SmallFolks

Valentine's day celebration



Snacks for Eid Al-Adha



Easter decorations



Halloween decorations







Appendix 3: Survey

Survey

Dear Parents,

I am currently writing my bachelor thesis about the multicultural approach in early childhood education.

In order to collect enough data to support the thesis, I would kindly like to ask you to answer the following questions or circle the right option.

1. The multicultural approach at Small Folks is

Very important Important A nice plus Not important for me

2. What does multicultural upbringing mean to you?
3. What influence do you hope the multicultural upbringing has on your child?
4. Do you have a multicultural background? Which?

Please send the filled-out survey to: Florine.Beddig@student.laurea.fi

Thank you kindly for the big help!

Warm Regards,
Florine Beddig