

Multicultural Leadership of Student Activists to Creating Democratic Campus

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Abstract

The main objective of this research was to describe student leadership style in students' organization at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa) in applying multiculturalism attitudes and values. The university student was one of the components of the nation in which known as Z-generation. Thus, students had a strategic role because of their intellectual potential, character and role as potential future leaders of the nation. Meanwhile, student leadership has an important role in creating multiculturalism environments following Pancasila ideology. Unesa as a higher education institution has an important role in guiding students to preserve the value of multiculturalism. Therefore, it is needed to explore more about students' view in multiculturalism, especially those who become a leader in students' organizations. This research was conducted by interviewing student activists, observing their activity, and studying documents of students' organization. The results showed that the leader of student activists values multiculturalism in campus activities. For example, the recruitment of student organization board members is for every student who has passion and requirement for the position. Students always discuss the decision to solve the problem and respect each other ideas.

Keywords: multicultural leadership, student activists, democratic campus.

Introduction

Indonesia is a country which is its nation has multicultural character because of its geographical location as an archipelago (Latif, 2010). Its location is in a cross position between two continents and two oceans. The future of its nation will be largely determined by all components of nationality in maintaining multiculturalism in accordance with the Pancasila as an ideology.

There are many challenges to maintain multiculturalism in Indonesia while keep a balance between unity and diversity. National surveys show slowly Indonesia people tolerance reduction, especially people which is in urban areas (PPIM, 2017); LIPI, 2015; Gus Durian, 2014; Setara Institute, 2011; Setara Institute, 2012). The indication showed by their attitudes, such as they did not like being close to other people who have different ethnicities or religions, there were some activities indicated radicalism among students and students, and religion sensitivity increased. This was vulnerable to religious friction. The key that can foster and realize harmony and social inclusion that are based on religious freedom and trust in accordance with Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution are *tolerance* in a democratic environment.

Higher education as an educational institution established by adopting multicultural values by ensuring equality and position between the academic community without distinguishing race, ethnicity, religion, or the nation has an important role to actively participate in running campus life democratically. Students who are part of the millennial generation have a strategic role in applying multicultural values because of their intellectual potential and characters.

Students as millennial or generation z (gen-Z) are candidates for the backbone of the Indonesian nation for future generations. Gen-z who live in the digital age can use gadgets skillfully and fluently. The concept of citizenship of Gen-Z is no longer insulated by nationalism or ethnicity which is limited by geographical conditions. This situation allows cultural hybridity to be happened (Kristeen, 2014). The implications of cultural hybridity without the support of a clear identity will open up opportunities for the formation of multicultural insights, attitudes and behaviors. However, the challenges that will be faced are radicalism, attitudes, and behavior caused by the glorification of monism values. For example, the influence of social media and virtual social relationship will affect a person in his life journey including the journey of religious and cultural life. This will later create a phenomenon of identity hybridism and radicalism which is growing ahead of the 20th anniversary of Indonesia's reform (Qodir, 2018).

However, this hybridity of identity and radicalism can be prevented by instilling the values of multiculturalism in students' the campus life, especially in the organizational life they lead. The values of multiculturalism can be sown through various lifelong learning activities, analogous communication in schools, and various cross-cultural empirical experiences, as well as tolerance practices with school leaders as top leaders or role models for school citizens (Suryaman, 2010). Multicultural organizations can help organizational members who have different ethnicities and races to develop positive values (Banks, 1995). In addition, multicultural leadership in an organization can eliminate the emergence of group prejudice and be able to create conducive atmosphere (Wilson, 1997). Thus, organizations within the campus, including at Surabaya State University (Unesa), should become a place for students to grow and develop positive values related to multiculturalism.

This article describes the leadership style and behavior of students in student organizations of Universitas Negeri Surabaya. The study was conducted to determine the extent of student multicultural leadership style and behavior in organizations they lead. By exploring and understanding the style and behavior of student organizations style, it is expected that higher education can carry out further activities that can increase the value of multiculturalism in the campus so that conducive democratic atmosphere can be maintained. Furthermore, the democratic atmosphere in a multicultural environment within campus can be carried on until students graduate and become a part of society in the future.

Previous research revealed that most students have positive attitudes towards the Pancasila and the diversity of the nation (Suyanto, et al, 2016). In addition, students feel the actualization of the Pancasila values, especially the third principle, is needed in the form of concrete actions and not just formality and verbalistic.

Method

This research is exploratory research which included in grounded research. Data is obtained by deep interviews, observation, and document studies. The interview uses an interview instrument that contains a series of questions about multiculturalism and its application in student organizations. Observations were made on activities carried out by student organizations during the research. Documentation studies are conducted to check the compatibility between the results of interviews and observations with track records of activities that occur in student organizations. The object of the research was the leaders of student organizations at Universitas Negeri Surabaya. The research object was not treated, so it was assumed that the object is in natural conditions. The data analyzed and described quantitatively to see the tendency of opinions from respondents. Data can be used as a basis for the academic community of Universitas Negeri Surabaya to design follow-up activities that can enhance positive attitudes to create a democratic multicultural environment on campus.

Results and Discussion

Multicultural values should be actualized in the leadership of student organizations in Universitas Negeri Surabaya, especially by leaders of student organizations. This actualization starts from the

recruitment process of the management team, the process of running the leadership, until the final evaluation of the organization's management.

The student who served as chairman of the Islamic Spirituality Student Activity Unit (called UKKI) stated that he carried out his function as chairman by promoting multicultural values. The position held is a mandate that must be maintained. One of these mandates is to be neutral and not take sides with any group ("*...I try my best to apply multicultural values because the position I occupy is a mandate that I must guard, as much as possible I try to be neutral without taking any group ...*").

The action was carried out since the recruitment of new board members who would join the organization. Recruitment is carried out openly by considering the competency and quality of prospective management, not from other aspects such as regional background or ethnicity. In addition, student commitment was needed to show the seriousness of prospective administrators or new members of UKKI ("*... it is very necessary to regenerate but in choosing new members or administrators I will not see him from which tribe, from which region. What I consider is their commitment and the seriousness of the candidate (member) at UKKI ...*").

This recruitment system is also applied at the Student Executive Board and Student Representative Council of The Language and Art Faculty, the Student Representative Council of The Education Science Faculty, the Student Association of School of Education Department, and The Student Association of Science Department. However, there is a uniqueness case that often appears in the Science Department. Students' interest in joining the management of the Science Department Student Association was lower than joining the board members of the Faculty Student Executive Board. In addition, students who join are usually Muslim students. Non-Muslim students seemed less interested in joining the management of the Science Department Student Association, but they were still actively involved in religious activities in accordance with the religion they believed in. This activity was facilitated by the Student Association of Science Department.

Meanwhile, the head of the University Student Executive Board stated that the recruitment of administrators at the University level was carried out openly. Mentoring and coaching is a system that is carried out to produce functionaries as well as student activists who have multicultural values. The selection of administrators is carried out by considering the commitment, loyalty, and competence of the registrants to devote themselves as administrators.

This open recruitment enables a multicultural atmosphere within the student organization. This can be seen from the composition of the University Student Executive Board administrators consisting of various tribes, namely the Madurese, the Borneo, the Betawi, and the Javanese. However, there were no students from the tribes in the Eastern part of Indonesia who joined the University Student Executive Board administrators. Even so, one student from the Eastern part of Indonesia of the Biology Department has been actively involved in student activities.

The Chairperson of the University Student Executive Board positioned his self to be fair without taking sides with certain reasons, such as ethnicity, religion, and social status ("*... I can confirm, I have never seen them from their primordial background (ethnicity, religion, social status). As far as I know, among them besides being Javanese, there are Madurese, Mixed Tribes, Kalimantan Tribes, Islamic Religion, Protestant Christians, Catholics ...*").

On the other hand, the Chairperson of the University Student Executive Board did not deny that the election of administrators in his period also considered a successful team that helped him in his candidacy as chairman of the University Student Executive Board. Logically, this is still acceptable. The choice of a leader tends to prioritize those who have contributed to and strive for him to become a leader. However, this does not make the Chairperson of the University Student Executive Board forget the nuances of multiculturalism in its activities.

The nuance of multiculturalism is seen in solving problems that arise in the organizations they lead. Problem solving is done by deliberation to reach consensus. Not only the chairperson of the University Student Executive Board who practices deliberation, but also the Student Executive Board at the Faculty level, administrators of the Student Representative Council, and administrators of the

Student Association at the Department level. Student board members try to avoid voting in resolving problems and deciding an action.

The board members stated that decision making by way of deliberation in this organization certainly often faced some obstacles. They understand this situation because the opinions of one student are very different from others. If the consensus agreement cannot be reached, they will delay the deliberation. The next action taken is to persuade the opposing parties. The postponement of this decision was made to prevent something happened that will injure democracy and conducive multicultural nuances among Universitas Negeri Surabaya students.

Recruitment and decision making activities in student organizations in Universitas Negeri Surabaya have shown that students are aware of the multicultural conditions in the campus life that color their lives. Students also believe that this condition is a feature of the life of the Indonesian Nation. They strive to listen, see, and take action carefully and consider various possibilities so that the multicultural community environment in the campus remains conducive. They also realize that obstacles will arise at any time, but they remain optimistic in maintaining a democratic campus in the midst of a multicultural campus community.

Awareness of the importance of the electoral process to be an organizing committee needs to be shared by every student functionary so that the student functionaries understand the nature of their elections, how the election process is carried out democratically. This will be a collective awareness that will be a driving function for them to carry out the mandate, do something equally for all groups, and strive to achieve optimal performance.

Organizational management that is diverse is very important because they are actually the best cadres of each group element, so that the hopes of various backgrounds will be synergy between all elements. Therefore, it will create positive collegial collective leadership.

Some of the student functionaries stated that the diversity of the students' background does not trigger the conflict. They think this diversity becomes a trigger for emerging student creative ideas. Thus, it can be stated that the diversity of students' background is a kind of encouragement and motivation for students to implement student leadership that emphasizes multicultural values.

In addition, the student leadership style has demonstrated developments in global leadership. As the gen-Z, students will face the global community in the future so that they need to be concerned about global leadership in student leadership. Challenges and expectations for global leadership (including student leadership) are mostly related to expertise, competencies and personality (Dziatzko et al., 2017). However, students have tried to prioritize expertise, competencies and personality in determining student leaders and administrators in their organizations.

Based on observations and documentation studies, multiculturalism practices have become apparent in student activities. For example, in the Informal School Education Department, the orientation activities of new students and Art and Sports Week Festival activities are carried out to establish kinship, sportsmanship, and bond between student among the classes. The cooperation of students in these two activities fosters mutual belonging and instills family values regardless of cultural background. This is where the important role of student organizations appears in practicing family values in the campus environment.

Various activities of student organization at department, faculty, or university level are sought to meet the needs of all students with diverse cultural backgrounds and interests. For example, the University Student Executive Board held a cross-religious seminar activity with the theme of religious diversity in the frame of Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The Chairperson of the University Student Executive Board stated the reason for choosing this theme because religious issues had become a central issue in Indonesia. Student organizations need to have discussions about national issues to prevent division in the name of ethnicity, religion, race and culture.

Similar activities were carried out by the Student Executive Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law. They held seminars and national dialogues that discussed radical notions and religious fundamentalism on campus. In addition, they conduct activities for new students with an emphasis

on strengthening the sense of nationalism, national insight to counter radicalism in the name of religion.

In the accordance, the Student Association of the Moral Education of Pancasila and Civil Department has actualized multicultural values by holding dialogues between Islamic and Christian people. In this activity, dialogues that clarified the prejudices of the two religions took place. One of the prime programs of this department that will soon be running is visitation and audience by the students to Ahmadiyya people, the Bahai religion people, Confucianism people, Hinduism people, Buddhism people, and some Churches. Students will be divided into groups containing five student organization administrators and 25 of students (that is rarely participated in student organization) spread to these communities. They will learn directly about the communities and religions so that they can get to know well, respect and prioritize tolerance when interacting with these groups. In addition, the department Student Association also provides community service through actions and social services that do not care about the background of the community they wish to serve.

Observations on several student activities programs showed that have multicultural values appeared in their activities, such as discussions, guest lectures, national dialogues and workshops that aim to provide enlightenment to students regarding concepts and multicultural issues. Student activists who are student functionaries have a strategic role in socializing multicultural values among each other at the department, faculty, and university level. The process of disseminating multicultural values can be applied in a variety of leadership and managerial activities that he does including in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular is a variety of activities outside the scenario / academic design (eg extreme sports hobby groups), but has a significant relationship with academic performance (Bauden, 2016). This extracurricular complements the curriculum. This also refers to activities in the academic sphere but outside the curriculum (for example, Pencak Silat Student Activity Unit). In extracurricular and co-curricular activities, students learn patience, achieve knowledge and understanding, implements what they learned to concrete actions. In general, co-curricular/extracurricular activities are not part of the curriculum, but it is always accompanies the curriculum in the process of achieving competencies with good character and can be compete in global world.

Thus, multicultural leadership is not just a matter of the leaders' idealism on campus, but how students have a multicultural character wherever they interact. The focus of the multicultural leadership of students is indeed in co-curricular activities, but actually it also relates to curricular, extracurricular life, even in real life society.

One measure of leadership effectiveness according to the two-track theory is the result of work which in this case can be realized in the form of student work in the form of a one-year work program (House and Mitchell, 1975). In relation to the student organizations work program when it is associated with multicultural values, the result is that the program to organize people in general has reflected multicultural values. This can be seen from the process of its formation which procedurally seeks to explore the interests and information of all student stakeholders. In terms of its formation, the entire work program of the people was formed from the results of the agreement of all elements of the community including efforts to accommodate the general policy of the village. Universitas Negeri Surabaya student organizations are part of campus life which is certainly one of the cornerstones of the university in student competence and personality development activities. As the spearhead of development (competency and character), students are naturally reasonable if they are given that trust by developing programs that are related to the interests of institutions that have slogans "growing with character". In the end, students will have positive values in accordance with the competencies desired by Unesa. This is accordance with the opinion that strong positive associations that can be observed between campus and character development, which are based on institutional characteristics (Astin, et al, 2004). Characteristic educational institutions are institutions that prioritize the readiness of curriculum programs and co-curricular, especially those designed in such a way as to contribute to character development.

Conclusions

The conclusions from this study are (1) The style and leadership behavior of activist students who occupy positions as committee members is perceived by students to have applied multicultural values in their leadership activities, and (2) the student work program has reflected multicultural values, so it can be concluded in general that the community work program from the aspect of its manufacture has reflected multicultural values but is limited to multicultural procedures. But there are some people whose work programs have clearly reflected multicultural values.

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