



Multicultural Education in Schools: An Effort to Strengthen Student's Multicultural Competence

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Abstract. To foster harmonious social interactions in the life of Indonesia's plural society, multicultural education needs to be implemented in schools as a formal education environment that plays a role in fostering noble character in students. This study aims to describe multicultural education in the UPI Pilot Laboratory Junior High School, Bumi Siliwangi and Cibiru campuses, to improve students' multicultural competence. The research approach used is a qualitative case study method. The data collection techniques are observation, in-depth interviews and documentation studies. The data analysis techniques are data reduction, data display, and verification. Test the validity of the data using triangulation. The informants were the Principal and a number of PPKn and Social Studies teachers at the school. The results of his research include: (1) In general, principals and teachers already understand the concept of multicultural education and the importance of applying it to students; (2) The implementation of multicultural education in the school environment, among others, is carried out in PPKn (Pancasila and Citizenship Education) and IPS (Social Sciences) subjects by linking a number of materials relevant to diversity, and implemented through innovative learning models that are meaningful for students; (3) Strengthening students' multicultural competence is also carried out through a number of principal policies, extra-curricular activities, and the creation of a school climate and environment that reflects the principles of multiculturalism.

Keywords: Multicultural Competence of Students · Multicultural Education · Schools

1 Introduction

Education is one way to develop human resources in order to obtain social skills and individual development optimally in order to establish relationships between individuals and the community and the surrounding cultural environment. In addition, education is a process of humanizing humans where humans are expected to be able to understand themselves, other people, nature and their cultural environment [1]. Therefore, the basis of education cannot be separated from the culture that surrounds it as a consequence of the purpose of education, namely honing taste, initiative, and work. Therefore, education

that is able to accommodate and provide learning that is able to create a tolerant attitude towards other cultures or in other words, multicultural-based education is very important and will be one of the solutions in developing human resources who have a tolerant character towards other cultures [2]. The combination of education and multiculturalism is one solution to the process of developing all potentials that respects the plurality and heterogeneity that is a consequence of cultural, ethnic, ethnic, and religious diversity [3]. Diversity as well as differences which are actually a necessity and social reality are often responded to differently by the community. People's responses and attitudes towards these differences are still conditions for cultural diseases, such as suspicion, prejudice, ethnocentrism, primordialism, racism, discrimination, and others. This also causes interactions in the form of cooperation to only occur within the internal scope of a group (in-group), and do not occur with outside groups or groups other than the group [4]. Cultural disease is one of the consequences of diversity in society Problem of Research.

Efforts to prevent such conflicts must be carried out through education, namely by building a culture of value and character education in schools. Therefore, it is very important to instill value education in Junior High Schools (SMP) in order to prevent unwanted behavior. The importance of multicultural education is given to students in the hope that they are able to understand that in their environment as well as in other environments there is cultural diversity [5]. If these differences cannot be understood properly and accepted wisely, then conflicts (such as fights between students) will easily occur both in the school environment and in the community. Therefore, the many cases of intolerance and conflict that occur as a negative impact of cultural disease on society should be addressed wisely [6]. It is necessary to socialize and internalize the values of tolerance in everyday life in order to prevent the emergence of intolerant attitudes and cultural diseases in society, one of which is in schools. Schools have a role as one of the agents of socialization in society after the family. Suggests that schools play an important role as a place for students to learn and practice democracy, freedom, and social equality, not only to develop themselves, but also to be implemented in social life [7]. Thus, schools become one of the crucial social institutions to socialize and internalize the value of tolerance to students who are the nation's next generation as provisions and guidelines for life to always respect and appreciate the differences around them [8].

Junior high school students, who are generally in their teens, need to get guidance and assistance as a further strengthening of the development of the basics of personality and character that they get in the family environment, in order to be able to position themselves as good Indonesian citizens, who are able to adapt harmoniously in the environment. Multicultural environment of daily life [9]. Various conflicts that may arise in interactions with fellow friends in the school environment, which are motivated by their religious and ethnic differences, must be anticipated as much as possible through multicultural education in the school environment [10]. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a comprehensive multicultural education model that aims to improve the multicultural competence of junior high school students. It is very important for students to learn how to interact and understand other people who are ethnically, racially, and culturally different from themselves. Multicultural education is allegedly able to train students to have a respectful and tolerant attitude towards all existing cultures, even though it

is different from the culture of the ethnic group [11]. A comprehensive multicultural education model that includes aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and skills is expected to be a strong element in the Indonesian curriculum. to improve students' multicultural competence, as well as being able to grow various life skills needed in an Indonesian multicultural society.

In activities at school, teachers and students need to learn how to interact and understand other people who are different ethnically, religiously, and culturally properly. Learning about tolerance can be done by inculcating values through various approaches, methods, techniques, and various available media strategies [12]. Value itself is a normative measure that influences a person in making a choice. Every society basically must have certain ideas or views about something that is considered good, bad, right, proper, worthy and serve as a benchmark for its members to behave [13]. The value of tolerance is one of the values that applies in society and is part of multicultural values that are universal and also developed in schools, in addition to the value of equality and the value of harmony. Tolerance means mutual respect and appreciation among the many differences that exist in social life. The existence of a process of socialization and internalization of the value of tolerance in the school environment will be able to increase students' understanding and awareness to respect and appreciate differences. Because actually difference is a gift from God Almighty, no human and community groups are born and develop without differences in them [14]. Based on the phenomena experienced by students in junior high schools in general, where there are a number of conflicts based on religious and cultural differences in their environment, and the absence of a comprehensive multicultural education model that is expected to improve multicultural competence.

2 Methodology of Research

This study examines social phenomena in the school environment. The approach used in this research is qualitative. To obtain an in-depth description of these social phenomena, a qualitative approach is used [15]. Qualitative research reveals certain social situations by describing reality correctly, formed by words based on relevant data collection and analysis techniques obtained from natural situations [16]. The method used in this research is Case Study. This is with the consideration that the scope of the research is not too large, thus allowing researchers to concentrate on the focus of the research being worked on, and finally it is hoped that they can get an in-depth picture of the thing being studied [17]. The research participants in this study were the principal and teachers of Civics and Social Studies subjects at SMP Labschool Bumi Siliwangi and Cibiru. The research locations selected were SMP Labschool Bumi Siliwangi UPI and SMP Labschool UPI Campus Cibiru. Research data collection techniques were carried out by means of observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis was carried out in three stages of activity, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing Sample of Research [16].

3 Results of Research

3.1 Teacher Knowledge About the Concept of Multicultural Education

In general, based on the results of in-depth interviews in the field, it can be stated that almost all of the informants, consciously or unconsciously, can be stated that they have understood the concept of multicultural education well. Although, because indeed Multicultural Education has not been used as an independent subject, there are informants who show doubts in understanding the concept, although after being analyzed by researchers based on their views and performance results regarding the application of this concept in the subjects they teach, it turns out that these doubts are it is more related to whether or not it is appropriate or not the way of delivering and applying the multicultural concept to the subjects he teaches. It turned out that the PPKn teacher at one of the UPI Lab school Middle Schools who was the subject of this research had succeeded in implementing the concept of multicultural education well, among others by linking a number of materials relevant to the concept of multicultural education, complete with various assignments that were deemed quite meaningful for the students [18]. Students related to increasing understanding of the concept and its application in everyday life, especially at school. Even based on the results of subsequent interviews with him, it can be stated that teachers really understand the importance of Multicultural Education for their students, this is reflected in the tasks given to them which are considered very useful for increasing students' understanding and self-awareness of multicultural phenomena in the school environment in particular [19].

Based on the findings in the field, it can also be stated that in both Civics and Social Studies subjects, there are a number of materials related to the concept of multicultural education. When the teacher explains the material, it tries to relate it to the multicultural conditions of the Indonesian nation, with the hope that students better understand this and realize their existence as part of a multicultural society, so that they can behave and behave in mutual respect, respect and tolerance towards friends around them who have differences with themselves, both in terms of religion and ethnicity, as well as their cultural background [14]. In general, teachers already understand the concept of multicultural education, and have even tried to apply it through a number of relevant materials complete with assignments through an interesting innovative approach model, thereby increasing students' understanding that they live in a multicultural society, increasing awareness they will appreciate the importance of respect in a multicultural society, challenge students to participate / position themselves in the life of a multicultural society, so that harmonization can be realized without conflict between friends of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds with themselves [12].

Related to the findings in the field about how important understanding the concept of Multicultural Education is for teachers in particular, the rationality of research can be analyzed in implementing it in junior high schools. This is motivated by the view of researchers who consider that the age of junior high school children is the most appropriate to be the forerunner/beginning of a serdik to get a more in-depth and structured multicultural education [9]. Thus, the moral responsibility as a teacher in a junior high school environment to transmit this concept to students is greater than that of a teacher at the elementary level, where the students are considered to be underage so that it is not

yet time to give a deep understanding of the basics. This is the basis of the concept of Multicultural Education and its benefits in life at school in particular, or for high school children who feel they should have a higher understanding and awareness to apply it in everyday life at school in particular, assuming they have received sufficient provisions since they were born being in middle school [11].

What is no less important is the sensitivity of teachers to the excesses (negative impacts) of today's digitalization era, which is not impossible to show students a number of phenomena that sometimes contradict the laws in force in our country. So, as stated by Mr. Rustam, a teacher must be able to lead his students to have a correct understanding of this phenomenon, with the assumption that the teacher should understand more about it and how to anticipate it if one day it occurs in everyday life. Furthermore, through a number of assignments given by the teacher, students are invited to better understand their own culture, as well as the cultural philosophy of other ethnic groups in Indonesia [20]. With the hope, can foster an attitude of tolerance to the diversity that is around his life. As reflected in the results of the interview with Mr. Rustam, that in essence attitudes such as mutual respect, respect, and tolerance so that there is a balance in life, are noble values inherited from ancestors that have been passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, it is only natural for us as Indonesian citizens, especially the younger generation of future leaders to preserve this in our daily lives. The importance of applying the concept of Multicultural Education among students, related to the phenomenon of Indonesian society which is diverse (diverse), and anticipating its various negative impacts in society, must indeed be transmitted by teachers to their students, so that students are able to accept it in their daily lives [6]. Talking about the level of importance of understanding this concept in students, as stated by Ibu Dini in the results of interviews with researchers, that the foundation that has been firmly applied since junior high school is expected to be a provision for students to enter multicultural life in the future.

3.2 Application of Multicultural Education in UPI Lab school Middle School

Regarding the importance of implementing Multicultural Education in schools, all informants stated that it was very important to implement it. This is partly because in reality, the religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds of teachers and students in schools are different [21]. There are even students who fall into different categories because they are classified as special needs children. This phenomenon makes schools, especially principals and teachers, determined to implement this multicultural education in a comprehensive school environment, of course [22]. That is, it is not just that students understand about multicultural education in terms of the concept, but must be followed by a number of attitudes and behaviors that reflect their understanding and acceptance of multicultural conditions in the school environment in particular.

The importance of promoting mutual respect, respect and tolerance between friends who have differences with themselves, has tried to be fostered in the UPI Labschool Junior High School environment, especially by PPKn and Social Studies teachers, among others by trying to link a number of materials that are considered relevant in the subjects they teach. With the concept of Multicultural Education [8]. A number of innovative learning models are also carried out, complete with a number of interesting tasks for

students so that learning becomes more meaningful and the original goal of implementing the concept of multicultural education can be carried out. Students are invited to think critically and analytically about various hoax news and various conflicts that occur in their environment, also on social media. So that in the end, they can determine their attitude while still trying to respect the various differences of opinion that exist [7].

The application of multi-cultural education at the Lab school Junior High School is also reflected in the types of tasks given by the teacher. For example, as done by Mr. Ridwan who considers that multicultural education is a heterogeneity that exists in society, including in the classroom. So that students can understand broadly the meaning of heterogeneity in the surrounding environment, especially in schools, he is tasked with looking for cultural differences between provinces in Indonesia, outside West Java and DKI Jakarta. Also application assignments related to the diversity that surrounds student life A(Mlinar & Krammer, 2021). Whether it concerns people outside his family, or even his own mother and father. This is intended as an effort to foster multicultural concepts in children. So that children can be more aware of their existence as part of a multicultural society. A good learning approach is also tried to be applied by a teacher, namely Problem Solving through Google Class Room, through an article on social conflicts given by the teacher and tries to see students' responses to the phenomenon of difference in society, while directing the best attitude that must appear in them when find this in life in the school environment in particular (Muhajir et al., 2020).

3.3 Implementation of Multicultural Education in Schools

In relation to the implementation of Multicultural Education at the UPI Labschool Junior High School, in general, all informants stated that indeed Multicultural Education had not been used as an independent subject listed in the curriculum. But actually, it doesn't mean that these two junior high schools have never introduced this concept at all, because in reality, especially in Civics and Social Studies subjects, the concept of Multicultural Education is tried to be applied by linking it with a number of relevant materials. Thus, it can be stated that teachers quite understand the importance of implementing this in PBM in schools [23]. Also trying to create a conducive climate among students as well as in the school environment in general, regarding various attitudes and behaviors that support the creation of harmonization for the multicultural life that exists there. Because, although the numbers are relatively small, in both schools there are students of different religions, ethnicities and cultures of course. In fact, talking about differences that can also be categorized as part of a multicultural society phenomenon, the school also accepts ABK students [24]. This is in line with the demands of the 2013 Curriculum, which requires schools not to sort out when they will accept students. Because from the beginning an understanding of the concept of multiculturalism was fostered and also the application of attitudes and behaviors related to it in life in the school environment to students through various learning according to related materials, in particular such as mutual respect, respect and tolerance for friends who have differences., then the social life in the Labschool SMP environment is quite conducive.

Extra-curricular activities carried out at SMP Labschool related to the implementation of the concept of Multicultural Education are in great demand by students, and

students feel happy in participating in each of their activities. This activity is also considered very effective in creating a conducive climate in the multicultural community at school [4]. The school and teachers always try to create a conducive climate so that students can live in harmony in situations that contain differences. The teachers try to imitate and get used to the various attitudes needed in a multicultural school life, for example mutual respect, respect, and tolerance among them [21]. So that students are accustomed to doing it with full awareness and able to live mingle with friends of different religions, ethnicities, and cultures.

4 Conclusions

Multicultural education has been implemented in Labschool Bumi Siliwangi and Cibiru Junior High Schools. Teachers basically already understand the concept of multicultural education. Multicultural education is integrated through civic education learning and social science learning. Multicultural education materials are integrated into citizenship education materials and social science education. In addition, multicultural education is integrated into school extracurricular activities and other school programs. Multicultural education provides knowledge to students about cultural insight and the formation of tolerance.

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