

# Multicultural Education: Between Freedom and Tolerance

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**Abstract**—The Indonesian nation is a pluralistic nation of different tribes, races, languages, religions, customs and cultures. This nation's pluralism can be seen as a gift as well as a great challenge for the Indonesian people to have a very large tolerance. Multicultural learning is present in education and is expected to produce a generation of insightful and knowledgeable about multiculturalism. This research aim is to improve students in class X in SMAN 5 in Bandung city to place themselves wisely as a multicultural society. Through the classroom education research method to explore skills in making decisions and providing alternatives to multicultural problems in maintaining integration and harmony. The results prove that students in class X in SMAN 5 in Bandung city are low in prejudice towards diversity in class, showing a more sensitive and open attitude towards the views of others. They are also able to think critically, because they are more open, flexible, and respectful of different opinions.

**Keywords**—*conflict; multicultural education; students; tolerance*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The diverse conditions of the Indonesian nation are the toughest challenges for Indonesia, this diversity can be seen as a gift and a disaster. Grace when the Indonesian people are able to control the differences that exist, RAS, ethnicity, language, religion, and others in one unit to build the nation. It was said that a disaster when the Indonesian nation was unable to appreciate differences and make it a source of conflict.

Education is the most important thing that appear in someone's life. Education is seen as strategic aspect in provision of qualified human resources. Education must be able to build the soul of young generation that has character building so they will have a strong national identity. Multicultural education is a solution to solve nation problems, especially so that students have sensitivity in solving social problems that came from race, ethnicity, religion and value in the community.

Also with competent teachers it is very important to improve the quality of education for students. The important goal of professional teacher education is to prepare teachers to serve students who have cultural diversity [1,2]. Understanding and respecting race, ethnicity and cultural diversity must be an

important component of teacher preparation. It is very important in teacher education to enable teachers to understand and teach as intellectual and cultural activities, and develop perspectives on interactions between race, culture, class and school [3].

In this context it can be said, the main purpose of multicultural education is to instill an attitude of sympathy, respect, appreciation and empathy for adherents of different religions and cultures.

## II. METHOD

This research was conducted using classroom action research methods. The model referred to in this study is a model developed by Lewin consisting of planning, acting (implementing), observing, and reflecting. The research action was carried out in two cycles in which the first cycle of action taken was to apply a single group study approach (Multiple Group Studies) and Multiple Perspectives Approach [4].

This approach is designed to help students learn more about the views of certain groups. Therefore, data must be available about the group's history, habits, clothing, home, food, religion, and other traditions. The advantage of a dual perspective approach lies in the process of critical thinking on the issues being discussed so as to encourage students to eliminate prejudice. Interaction with the views of different groups allows students to empathize. The location of the study was conducted at SMAN 5 Bandung city, while the sample was taken by all students of class X in SMAN 5 Bandung city. Data collection techniques use observation, interviews, documents and results of multicultural education research. Whereas, the data analysis technique uses the analysis of cognitive, affective, psychomotor aspects of citizenship learning which includes multicultural learning in class X in SMAN 5 in the city of Bandung.

## III. THEORETICAL STUDY

Multicultural education offers one alternates by using strategies and education concept that based from utilization of diversity in society, especially those that exist in students such as ethnic diversity, culture, language, religion, social status,

gender, ability, age and race. This thing is based on the following considerations.

One, multicultural education has been exist. Second, multicultural education gives a hope in solving various community upheaval that has occurred lately. Third, multicultural education is against business-oriented education. Forth, multicultural education as a fanaticism resistance that leads to various types of violence.

Multicultural education also helps students to recognize the accuracy of diverse cultural views, help students to develop pride in their cultural heritage, make students aware that value conflict is often the cause of conflict between community groups [5]. Multicultural education is held in order to develop student's skills in seeing life from various cultural perspective with the cultural that they have, and having a positive attitude towards different cultural, race, and ethnicity [6].

The objectives of multicultural-based education can be identified: (1) to function the role of the school in viewing the existence of diverse students; (2) to assist students in building positive treatment for cultural, racial, ethnic, religious groups; (3) providing students with resistance by teaching them to take decisions and social skills; (4) to help students build cross-cultural dependencies and give them a positive picture of group differences [7].

#### IV. DISCUSSION

In learning of citizenship, multicultural education tries to help unite the nation democratically, by emphasizing on the perspective of plurality of people in various nations, ethnic groups, different cultural groups. Thus schools can be conditioned to reflect the practices of democratic values. The curriculum shows a variety of different cultural groups in society, language, and dialects, where students are better able to talk about respect between them and uphold the values of collaboration in learning and association.

The results of the study prove that students of class X at SMAN 5 Bandung City who have low prejudice show a more sensitive and open attitude towards the views of others. Students in class X of SMAN 5 in Bandung are also able to think critically, because they are more open, flexible, and respectful of different opinions. Strong learning materials and learning activities with affective aspects of shared life in cultural differences prove effective to develop flexible perspectives. Students who have a great sense of empathy

allow him to respect for different perspectives. Of course it will be able to reduce prejudice against other groups. Reading multi-ethnic literature books can reduce negative stereotypes about other people's culture, as proved in class X SMAN 5 Bandung can appreciate friends who have different cultural backgrounds. In classroom action research using a multiple perspective approach from the results of the study showed that students in class X at SMAN 5 Bandung were increasing empathy and reducing prejudice. Empathy for different cultures is a prerequisite for efforts to reduce prejudice.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The importance of multicultural education is an educational strategy which is considered to have virtues, especially in: (1) providing new breakthroughs in learning that can increase empathy and reduce prejudice of students in SMAN 5 Bandung in class X so as to create intercultural people (citizens) capable of completing nonviolent conflict and negative prejudice in different cultures; (2) applying learning approaches and strategies that have the potential to prioritize the process of social interaction and have strong affection and psychomotor content of students; (3) multicultural learning helps teachers in managing the learning process to be more efficient and effective, especially giving students the ability to build collaborative and have high value commitment in a pluralistic society; (4) contributing to the Indonesian people in the settlement and management of conflicts with religious conflict that arise in the community by increasing empathy and reducing prejudice.

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