



Enhancing Tolerance and Cultural Diversity through Multicultural Education Management

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Received: January 2023; April 2023; June 2023

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalin.v7i1.450>

Abstract:

This research aims to analyze the management of multicultural education at SMP Negeri 3 Sorong City to increase tolerance and embrace cultural diversity among students. The research method used is descriptive and qualitative. Data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, observation, and documentation. The research results show that the multicultural education management implemented at SMP Negeri 3 Sorong City is diverse in its forms and has produced tolerance values in its students. Through various multicultural education activities in the learning process and educational environment, students are instilled with multicultural values to be tolerant and respectful of fellow students, even though they are of different ethnicities, cultures, and religions. Multicultural education can significantly influence students' attitudes towards tolerance and cultural diversity by developing an inclusive curriculum, teacher training, integration of multicultural values in school activities, and character development programs. This research indicates that implementing effective multicultural education strategies in schools can contribute significantly to increasing tolerance and respect for cultural diversity among students, thereby encouraging social cohesion and unity in a diverse society like Indonesia.

Key Words: *Multicultural Education, Students, Tolerance, Cultural Diversity*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis manajemen pendidikan multikultural di SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong dengan tujuan meningkatkan toleransi dan merangkul keberagaman budaya di kalangan siswa. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif dan kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manajemen pendidikan multikultural yang diterapkan di SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong beragam dalam bentuknya dan telah menghasilkan nilai-nilai toleransi pada siswanya. Melalui berbagai kegiatan pendidikan multikultural dalam proses pembelajaran dan lingkungan pendidikan, siswa ditanamkan nilai-nilai multikultural agar dapat bersikap toleran dan menghargai teman sesama, meskipun berbeda suku, budaya, dan agama. Dengan adanya pengembangan kurikulum inklusif, pelatihan guru, integrasi nilai-nilai multikultural dalam kegiatan sekolah, dan program pengembangan karakter, pendidikan multikultural dapat mempengaruhi sikap siswa terhadap toleransi dan keberagaman budaya secara signifikan. Implikasi dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penerapan strategi pendidikan multikultural yang efektif di sekolah dapat berkontribusi secara signifikan dalam meningkatkan toleransi dan rasa hormat

terhadap keragaman budaya di kalangan siswa, sehingga mendorong kohesi sosial dan persatuan dalam masyarakat yang beragama seperti Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Multikultural, Pelajar, Toleransi, Keberagaman Budaya*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as the country with the 4th-largest population in the world (Almubaroq, 2023). Indonesia occupies this ranking with a population of 273.52 million people (Campos et al., 2022). The data shows that Indonesia is a pluralistic country with people of various ethnicities, cultures, religions, languages, customs, and traditions (Nurman et al., 2022). This pluralism can be seen in the many islands in the State of Indonesia, which range from 13,000 islands consisting of large islands to small islands (Pratiwi et al., 2020). Besides having many islands, Indonesia is also rich in tribes that inhabit the islands. These tribes number around 300 and speak 200 different languages (Ansumali, 2021). Not only that, Indonesia, which is a plural country, also consists of people who have various religions and beliefs. As for religions and beliefs that are legal and have been recognised by the government of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), namely Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism (Sabiq & Ckamim, 2020). The diversity that Indonesia has has made it a multicultural country. As a multicultural country, Indonesia is a rich country with various cultures. Even so, it does not make Indonesia a country that does not accept diversity. This is in line with the sound of the Indonesian nation's motto, namely "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" which comes from Sanskrit (Koswara & Viktorahadi, 2022). Unity-diversity implies that even though it consists of diversity, the Indonesian population is basically one unit. This motto describes the unity and integrity of the nation, which are created from an attitude of unity and are used as a principle in life, nation, and state (Nurhayati et al., 2021).

The diversity owned by the Indonesian nation is a wealth that is not owned by other nations (Mehraban & Ickowitz, 2021; Fatmawati, 2021). But on the other hand, this diversity can also be a problem that becomes a challenge for the Indonesian nation to maintain the integrity of the Indonesian nation by maintaining unity and integrity (Widyatiningtyas et al., 2023). This is because diversity is very vulnerable to conflict and division (Bazzi & Gudgeon, 2021). Therefore, the wealth owned by the Indonesian nation must be respected, accepted, and recognized so as not to cause division and conflict (Muntaha et al., 2020). Conflicts and divisions that can arise due to lack of mutual respect for diversity are conflicts between communities (Baesecke et al., 2020), or what can be called horizontal conflicts. This horizontal conflict includes conflicts caused by differences in ethnicity, language, customs, and religion with other religions (Yanti & Witro, 2020).

SMP 3 Sorong as a heterogeneous educational environment with students from various cultural backgrounds demands special attention to educational

strategies and policies that can embrace and maintain the values of diversity. Within this framework, this study will delve deeper into concrete problems, challenges, and potential solutions that can be found in the field to strengthen multicultural education management in SMP 3 Sorong. Papua, with its cultural diversity and abundant ethnic wealth, provides a unique context for the implementation of multicultural education management. SMP 3 Sorong, as an integral part of a multicultural Papuan society, has a duty to ensure that the educational process reflects, appreciates, and enriches the cultural diversity that exists. The promotion of tolerance and cultural diversity at SMP 3 Sorong is an important aspect in developing students into individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also have an inclusive attitude, mutual respect, and are able to synergize in diversity. In the context of Papua, cultural richness is not only reflected in language and dance, but also in the way of life, belief systems, and local wisdom passed down from generation to generation.

Multicultural education at SMP 3 Sorong is expected to be a platform where students not only learn about the cultural diversity around them, but also internalize the values of harmony, respect, and equality. Papuan culture, which is rich in tradition, folklore, and art, is a reflection of diversity that can be integrated into the learning process. This not only enriches students' horizons but also fosters a sense of pride in their own cultural identity. In an effort to promote tolerance and cultural diversity, this research will involve an in-depth understanding of how Papua's unique cultural values can be integrated into the curriculum, supporting school activity programmes that celebrate diversity, and stimulating open dialogue about cultural diversity among students. By exploring the essence of Papua's cultural diversity, this study is expected to make a real contribution to the development of a multicultural education management model that is in line with the local context, thus forming SMP 3 Sorong students as agents of change who prioritize peace, cooperation, and respect for cultural differences, both inside and outside the school environment.

In recent years, attention to multicultural education management has increased among academics and education practitioners. Previous studies have explored important aspects related to multicultural education and provided a deeper understanding of effective strategies in increasing cultural tolerance and diversity in educational settings.

Research by Sumarna et al., (2021) highlights the importance of multicultural education in shaping students who are tolerant and value diversity. Banks emphasizes the need to integrate multicultural content in the curriculum and engage students in identity and cultural reflection. Furthermore, research by Sorkos & Hajisoteriou, (2021) emphasizes effective multicultural education management strategies, such as the establishment of inclusive learning environments, teacher training in intercultural skills, and curriculum development that reflects cultural diversity. Studies from D'hondt et al., (2021) suggest that multicultural education can have a positive impact on improving

tolerance and inter-ethnic relationships in schools. By introducing students to different cultural perspectives and experiences, multicultural education can help reduce stereotypes and prejudices. Finally, the implementation of multicultural education in the local context in Indonesia (Suri & Chandra, 2021). The study highlights the importance of understanding local culture and adapting multicultural education strategies to the social and cultural realities of the area.

The novelty of this research lies in its particular focus on the management of multicultural education in SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong, a school located in Papua, which is known for its abundant cultural wealth. While there has been previous research on multicultural education, this research places a deeper emphasis on the unique local context in Papua. In dealing with the complexity of social and cultural challenges in Papua, especially horizontal conflicts and inter-ethnic tensions, this study aims to identify multicultural education management strategies that are appropriate to the local context. Through this approach, it is hoped that this research can make an important contribution in strengthening the values of tolerance, respect for differences, and cultural diversity in SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong and its surrounding environment.

By taking into account the exposure of the data above, this study aims to see how multicultural education management can be effectively applied in SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong, especially in the context of Papua's rich culture. Through a better understanding of best practices in multicultural education management, it is hoped that effective strategies can be found to strengthen cultural tolerance and diversity in the school.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand the phenomenon of implementing multicultural education management in SMP Negeri 3 Sorong City in depth and comprehensively. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore and understand complex cultural contexts as well as capture the nuances and deep understanding of the respondents (Abrams et al., 2020). The case study was chosen because the research focus was limited to one case, namely SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong, allowing researchers to conduct in-depth analysis of specific and complex situations.

The research subjects consisted of students, teachers, principals, and vice principals at SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong. The determination of research subjects is carried out through purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020), where subjects are selected based on certain characteristics relevant to the study. Selected research subjects included students of grades VII and VIII of Indonesian and Civic Education subjects, as well as curriculum division staff and principals. Data collection techniques used include observations, FGDs with students from various ethnic backgrounds, semi-structured interviews with selected teachers and students, and data collection from documents relevant to this study.

The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis methods (Peel, (2020). Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis technique that aims to identify and analyze the main themes that emerge from the data collected. This approach allows researchers to explore diverse perspectives and experiences related to multicultural education management in SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong, as well as to extract meanings and patterns that emerge from the collected data holistically and deeply.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the era of dynamic globalization, cultural diversity is an inevitable reality in educational institutions. Multicultural education management is becoming increasingly important as a means of creating inclusive learning environments that can promote tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. This study aims to explore and analyze the effectiveness of multicultural education management practices in the specific context of SMP 3 Sorong, with a particular focus on increasing the level of tolerance and understanding of cultural diversity among students.

Application of Multicultural Education

Multicultural education in schools is an effort and process of instilling the values of diversity and difference in order to create educational goals. In its application, SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong has implemented multicultural education. The interview results showed that the implementation of multicultural education values is reflected in the learning process at SMP Negeri 3 Sorong City. Students are taught to respect each other, be tolerant of differences in terms of ethnicity, religion, and language, advise each other if there are disputes in learning, and not interfere with the worship activities of other friends of different religions.

Yes, sis, here we respect and tolerate each other with friends of different religions. For example, if there is a student council service, we do not interfere with them; they are in their own rooms, and we are in our own rooms (Yuni_VII_2023).

Similar statements related to the application of multicultural education management in learning were conveyed by other students, namely:

"If there is a commotion due to fights and ridicule about ethnic differences, cultures, and so on, Don't join the fuss. Because when you are noisy in class, there are usually other friends who make fun of each other. The teacher advises not to ridicule others" (Francess_VIII_2023)

Based on respondents' narratives, it can be seen that students have developed values of tolerance and cultural diversity in their school environment. Meanwhile, from the teacher's point of view, as a teacher, the instillation of multicultural educational values is conveyed when explaining the material

during learning. Teachers as educators have the responsibility to be role models and provide knowledge to each student (Handayani et al, 2022).

Yes, multicultural education here has been implemented for a long time. We treat students the same way, so we don't discriminate, especially when we emphasize making friends. In addition, we as educators also advise students to respect each other even though they have different ethnicities or religions (Pirade_G_2023).

Through the submission of respondents, it can be seen that the form of application of multicultural education in the learning process carried out by teachers is to give advice to students to respect each other, not insult each other between one tribe and another, do not discriminate between majority groups and minority groups, and treat students objectively and fairly regardless of their life background. Organizing cultural activities to commemorate National Day. Multicultural education management implemented at SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong is not only reflected in learning but also manifested in activities designed to commemorate national days such as Pancasila Magic Day, Youth Pledge Day, and the celebration of the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia every August 17. This is known from the results of interviews with several students and also from the teacher's direct narration.

"Here, the form of application of multicultural education is usually when there is an event on August 17, our students are told to wear their own traditional clothes. For example, I am from Manado, so I wear traditional Manadonese clothes" (Violita_VII_2023).

Similar statements were made by other students, namely:

"On major holidays, such as Pancasila Birthday and Youth Oath, students are told to wear traditional clothes, and there are traditional dances as well" (Ryan_VIII_2023).

In this national activity, the management carried out by the teacher is to organize a series of creative events between classes every year and activities related to cultural diversity in order to introduce multicultural values so that students can recognize and learn to accept and appreciate differences.

"On major holidays, we always create activities where children show their ethnic background, for example, their religion or region, but on certain days, such as Youth Pledge Day, we have ordered them to dress according to their area of origin, then National Education Day or other holidays" (Tobing_WK_2023).

This is also corroborated by statements from other respondents, namely:

"Activities in schools related to the introduction and preservation of culture carried out at SMPN 3 Sorong City, such as the agenda of inter-class creation performances held in commemoration of August 17" (Pirade_G_2023).

Based on this, the school also offers creative performance activities and programs as another form of multicultural education in the school. Instilling multicultural values in learning practices, another form of multicultural application as a multicultural education management process applied in schools is the cultivation of multicultural values, which is carried out before the learning process, and also group formation strategies. This was conveyed by Tobing, vice principal of the curriculum section.

"For multicultural education in the teaching and learning process at SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong, we apply that before teachers give lessons in class, we always give directions that we are one Indonesia, even though we are different, but we are still one. Since Indonesia has been blessed by different gods, we should be grateful, we should take care of it. We still have to maintain that diversity" (Tobing_G_2023).

In managing multicultural education, SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong prioritizes the value of tolerance between students who have different beliefs in each lesson. At SMPN Negeri 3 Kota Sorong, there are three religions side by side, namely Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. The differences that exist do not make students and teachers involved in problems. In fact, the differences that exist become a strong basis for creating good synergies. In prayer activities to start and end learning, justice is also applied in managing differences.

"In terms of different religious issues, before we start studying, we start by praying, so I do that. For me, yes, I take turns, so for example, this morning Christians have returned to Islam, so it's like that" (Tobing_G_2023).

Next

"The teacher formed groups in the class consisting of various tribes. To teach unity" (Tobing_G_2023).

Through this presentation, it can be concluded that the form of instilling multicultural values as part of multicultural education management is also implemented in learning practices, namely the formation of student groups from various ethnicities, cultures, and religions in classroom learning activities.

Teacher example The teacher is someone who is a role model for students. It is very important to pay attention to the attitudes and habits displayed by a teacher because a student can see and imitate these behaviors, which are considered correct. Therefore, teachers must set examples and display what they teach students in various life practices, including the application of multicultural values. Based on the results of interviews, researchers found that in the learning process as part of multicultural education management, teachers at SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong try to apply multicultural values first such as tolerance, mutual respect, and respect for teachers and students before teaching them in class. In this regard, the vice principal said in his interview:

"We must respect each other regardless of ethnicity, regardless of the color of our skin; we are all one, namely Indonesia. So we do not discriminate between one student and another. We as teachers must also respect each other because we are also made up of different cultures and religions. Provide harmony and prosperity among fellow teachers" (Tobing_WK_2023).

From the results of the interview above, it was revealed that the process of implementing multicultural education at SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong is not only student-centered but also requires good cooperation from teachers in schools. Because, in essence, multicultural education is a process of developing existing diversity values such as differences in religion, ethnicity, language, ethnicity, and economic status so that democracy upheld by the Indonesian nation can be realized as a whole.

Level of Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Through Multicultural Education Management

Education is a means of ensuring that students have knowledge and skills that are useful to them in life as members of society, leaders, and citizens. Education is closely related to the values of a nation. If education in a country is getting better, then the country will also be more prosperous. This is due to the effective education process that will produce quality students so that the nation can develop more rapidly. Multiculturalism has a close relationship with the values of tolerance and cultural diversity. Multicultural education is an educational strategy that can be implemented in all learning materials by using cultural differences that exist in students, such as differences in ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender, and race, so that the learning process becomes effective for all students. This multicultural education is carried out to train and instill the character of students so that they can become humanists and pluralists.

From the explanation above, it can be understood that the existence of multicultural education management will have a direct impact on tolerance and cultural diversity in a school. Students who receive learning that contains multicultural education will be able to learn how to accept and appreciate the differences that exist so as to maintain cultural diversity itself so that it does not become conflicts and divisions. Through various forms and management efforts, multicultural education carried out by schools will influence students to be tolerant of cultural diversity. This can be seen in the educational process that takes place at SMP Negeri 3 Sorong City. In studying and developing the educational environment, this school has implemented various forms of activities and teaching as a form of management in multicultural education. These various forms of management result in a positive response to the level of tolerance and cultural diversity in the school environment, from teachers to students.

"Tolerance so as not to be divided. So that there is no hostility (Ryan_2023).

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be seen that students learn a lot about tolerance and respect for diversity so that it can be applied in their lives. Both students and teachers have realized the importance of tolerance, which must be built through the application of multicultural values in learning.

"The way to deal with friends of different religions is not to make fun of their religion; mutual respect. If any friend makes fun of our religion, so be it. Respect friends who are worshipping or praying" (Nailasiswa_VIII_2023).

Based on this statement, it can be seen that various attitudes shown by students and teachers show that the existence of multicultural education management in learning affects the way of thinking and behaving in managing existing diversity. Students have realized the importance of being tolerant by not interrupting the worship of friends of different religions or looking for commotion or problems regarding the differences that exist around them.

Tolerance and harmony in managing cultural diversity can be obtained from the management of multicultural education in a school (Chuan Chen & Zaini, 2023). Multicultural education is important to be given to students with the aim that they know and can understand the importance of diversity in life. If there is no multicultural education, it is feared that there will be riots and discrimination among people. Multicultural education is very important to be implemented because Indonesia is a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual country, so we must apply it to students to maintain the integrity of the Indonesian nation (Maulidah et al., 2023). Thus, it can be concluded that multicultural education can affect the level of tolerance and cultural diversity of learners. This is the reason for the importance of multicultural education management in the educational process.

Multicultural education is a social policy based on cultural preservation and respect between cultural groups in society. Multicultural education means accepting each person's uniqueness regardless of culture, race, gender, physical condition, or economic status. In order for students to understand and respect the diversity of other social groups, education must include multiculturalism, (Efendi & Lien, 2021). Hilda Hernandez defines multicultural education as a perspective that recognizes the political, social, and economic realities experienced by each individual in complex and culturally diverse human encounters. It also reflects the importance of culture, race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, religion, social status, economy, and exclusion in the educational process (Cole, 2022)

Meanwhile, according to Tobroni et al., defining multicultural education is defined as education that provides opportunities to all students regardless of social class, type, or social status, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, or religion. Meanwhile, according to Imron Mashadi, the focus of Islamic multicultural

education is to foster sympathy, respect, appreciation, and empathy for people from different cultures and religions to increase our taqwa in the side of Allah. God does not see where he comes from, how handsome or beautiful he is, how rich he is, or how strong he is; what he saw was how obedient he was (Diana & Zaini, 2023). Sheikh Yusuf al Qaradawi stated that multicultural teachings mean maintaining human peace by incorporating human qualities into society as a whole, especially by limiting uniformity, resistance, pluralism, and majority rule.

In implementing multicultural education in schools, there are four approaches that can be taken by teachers, including the first, the contribution approach. At this point, new materials, ideas, and themes related to multiculturalism are incorporated into the existing curriculum (Zaini et al., 2022). To reach this stage of change, ideas and themes related to multiculturalism are included, and various perspectives and views are accepted. Fourth, approach social action.

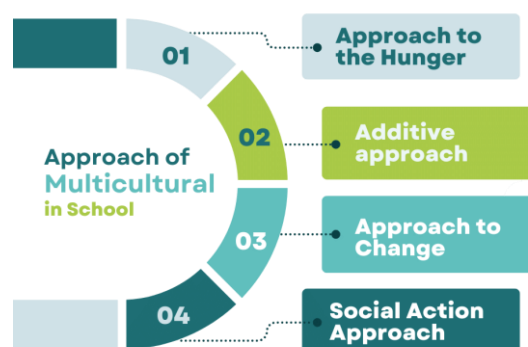


Figure 1. Approach of Multicultural in School

The results showed that the implementation of multicultural education in SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong was reflected in the learning process and school activities. Students are taught to respect each other, be tolerant of ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences, and treat others fairly and without discrimination. Teachers play an important role in instilling these multicultural values in students, both through classroom learning and extracurricular activities.

In addition, the management of multicultural education in schools is also reflected in national and cultural day celebration activities, where students are invited to wear traditional clothes and perform traditional dances. The approach used in this multicultural education includes values such as tolerance, pluralism, democracy, and humanism, which are integrated in curriculum and learning practices.

The contribution of this research in the theoretical realm lies in a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of multicultural education management practices in the specific context of SMP 3 Sorong. By analyzing the

implementation of multicultural education practices in these schools, this study provides new insights that can enrich the literature on multicultural education, especially in the Indonesian context. The findings of this study can lay the groundwork for future research in understanding how multicultural education management approaches can be more effectively implemented in diverse educational environments. In addition, the results of this study can also provide practical direction for other schools to increase their efforts in creating inclusive learning environments that promote tolerance and respect for cultural diversity.

CONCLUSION

Multicultural education is a social policy based on cultural preservation and respect between cultural groups in society. Multicultural education means accepting each person's uniqueness regardless of culture, race, gender, physical condition, or economic status. In order for students to understand and respect the diversity of other social groups, education must include multiculturalism. In implementing multicultural education in schools, there are four approaches that can be taken by teachers, including the first, the contribution approach. At this point, new materials, ideas, and themes related to multiculturalism are incorporated into the existing curriculum. To reach this stage of change, ideas and themes related to multiculturalism are included, and various perspectives and views are accepted. Fourth, the social action approach.

The implementation and management of multicultural education in SMP Negeri 3 has been implemented. This has been explained by the researchers in the explanation above. Many ways to cultivate multicultural values in students have been done, such as the habit of praying before studying, holding an annual agenda to get to know the cultural background of each student, group study, and many others. The implementation of multicultural education implemented at SMP Negeri 3 Kota Sorong is not only centered on building student character, but all teachers are also involved in it. Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of multicultural education to increase tolerance and cultural diversity in SMP Negeri 3 is going well.

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