

# The Importance of Multicultural based Education in Indonesia to Avoid the Conflict and Issue of Disintegration

Hiqma Nur Agustina

Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf, Jl. Maulana Yusuf No.10, Tangerang, Indonesia  
hiqma@unis.ac.id

Keywords: Conflict, Disintegration, Indonesia, Multicultural Based Education.

Abstract: Indonesia is known for diversity in many aspects of life that cannot be avoided. The current social and cultural crisis as a result of the lack of understanding of Indonesian society about the multicultural conditions we have. The importance of inculcating multicultural education to the younger generation so that there are no longer issues of gender, ethnicity, race, culture, social strata and religion. This research aims to review the Indonesia's educational curriculum system and strengthen some previous studies which have revealed the importance of the curriculum of applied multicultural education refers to tolerance, ethno-cultural and religious differences, the dangers of discrimination, conflict resolution and mediation, human rights, democracy and plurality, universal humanity. The problems that arise in Indonesia today because the society is still full of discrimination and racist. This research uses qualitative method and multicultural-based education concept as the analysis tool. The result of the research shows that the concept of multicultural need to be applied for the Indonesians' students in order they are not easily provoked on issues that divide unity and unity among the nation's children. The study concludes that multicultural-based education is intended as a means of breaking conflict and disharmony that occurs in Indonesia's society.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The multicultural issue is the common aspect discussed in Indonesia since this country consists of the diversity of many aspects such as religion, ethics, tribes, language, religion and faith, and culture. Indonesia's natural resources, the non-natural resources, and the human resources gives tremendous value in the international world. The cultural diversity is a necessity in Indonesia because it is a medium to make Indonesia becomes the potential country in the future. In the context of the understanding of plural society, there are several types of culture in the form of ethnic group culture, regional culture is territorial which is a meeting of various cultures of ethnic groups in the area. The population of Indonesia which reaches 200 million and live spread in many islands in Indonesia. They also inhabit in the various regions with varying geographical conditions. They live in the mountains, the edge of the forest, coastal, lowland, rural to urban. It also deals with the different levels of civilization of different ethnic groups and communities in Indonesia.

With the ethnic and religious diversity there is no doubt that tolerance, respect, and respect from early

childhood should be placed as a cornerstone of understanding of Indonesia's multicultural values. This research is intended to reinforce previous research that carries the concept of the importance of multicultural based education in Indonesia so that all kinds of conflicts that can be terminated in the disintegration of the nation can be avoided. This study is a review of the recent conflicts that, if suspected, are based on a loss of awareness of the multicultural conditions that this great nation has. Some of the data taken are some major events that occurred in the period 1998-2017, recorded some major conflicts such as the May 12, 1998 on ethnic sentiment led to looting and rape, religious conflict in Ambon in January 1999 between Moslems and Christians, the tragedy *Sampit* between the Dayak and Madurese tribes representing inter-ethnic conflicts in 2001, the government with several separatist groups intending to escape from the unitary state of Indonesia, such as the *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), *Republik Maluku Selatan* (RMS) and *Operasi Papua Merdeka* (OPM), the attack on Syi'ah groups in Sampang, Madura in August 2012, conflict between students in Jakarta, political conflict and political liberalization, the riot in Tolikara, Papua on July 17, 2015 caused by the

issue of customary war, hoax information spread containing hate speech between religious teachings are some examples of conflicts that can lead to disintegration.

This research uses qualitative method. First, the researcher looks at the various events of conflict that occurred in Indonesia from the news in the mass media and electronics. Furthermore, from the exposure of a number of news about conflicts that have occurred in Indonesia is studied carefully and it is necessary to use the concept of multicultural-based education as one way to reduce the occurrence of conflicts based on ethnic, religious, racial and cultural issues. Referring to the emergence of conflicts that are perceived as endangering the unity of Indonesia, this research is expected to be a review of the importance of the concept of multicultural based education applied in all schools in Indonesia.

## 2 MULTICULTURAL BASED EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

The concepts of multicultural-based education need to be applied in Indonesia to avoid conflict-based conflicts. Designing education in a community setting that is full of inter-group issues such as in Indonesia is not easy. It becomes increasingly difficult if the existing social order is still filled with discrimination and racist. Under these circumstances, multicultural education is directed as an advocate for creating a tolerant society. The intolerant society can cause chaos that leads to the disintegration of the nation. Some cases that occur in our society today is one of them caused by the understanding of multicultural conditions that are not understood correctly by all levels of society in Indonesia. Thus, as a negative effect that arises is the difference caused by one aspect that actually becomes the power of this nation can lead to great frictions and conflicts.

Hernandez (2002) reveals that the educational pattern emphasizes the essence of multicultural based education must be prepared so that students who have citizenship in a diverse and interrelated cultural and linguistic community can be correlated with each other. Social, economic, political realities that tend to be dynamic can affect everything that happens both in and outside school. Students should also be able to understand the importance of culture, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, social status of the economy and exceptions in the educational process.

Multicultural based education is also concerned with the significant educational changes. It describes

the social, economic, and political realities widely and systematically so that it can affect everything that happens in school and outside school. Multicultural based education broadens the exemplary practices, and seeks to improve the rejected optimal educational opportunities. This type of education also discusses the creation of educational institutions that provide a dynamic learning environment, reflecting the ideals of equality, equality, and excellence.

The sporadic inter-group violence in the late 1990s in the various parts of Indonesia shows how fragile the sense of togetherness that is built within the Nation is, how strong the prejudices between groups are and how low the mutual understanding between groups are. The global context after the September 11, 2001 tragedy and the US invasion of Iraq and the political frenzy of identity in the reform era adds to the complexity of diversity and inter-group issues in Indonesia. One of the conflicts originating from the latest ethnic, religious, racial and cultural tribes portrayed by the media is the issue of Jakarta's regional head election which took place in 2017. The conflict became more acute after the hoaxes containing hatred between religious teachings continued. Peace figures SARA conflict in Poso, Maluku, Malik (2017) considers mass-gathering religious wrapped around the issue very dangerous. He is concerned that the current situation is repeating the SARA conflict in the early 2000s.

The conflict caused by the religion and ethnics in Jakarta last April, 2017 became the example the emergence of multicultural based education applied in Indonesia. It will be the important action to be applied in every school from the very earlier level until the highest level of education. Furthermore, it is also become the reason why this research is conducted to state the solution to overcome the problem of not understand that Indonesia is really multicultural in many aspects by having multicultural based education in every school in Indonesia.

### 2.1 What is Multicultural Education?

Multicultural education is a cross-border discourse because it deals with issues of social justice, democracy and human rights. Understanding of multiculturalism at least contains two very complex notions that are multi meaning plural, culturalism containing cultural or cultural sense. The term plural has a kind of meaning, because pluralism does not mean recognition of the existence of the kinds of things, but the recognition that has political, social and economic implications. Therefore, according to Tilaar (2004) pluralism is concerned with the

principles of democracy. The multicultural education should facilitate a teaching-learning process that transforms an essential, prejudiced, and discriminatory monoculture perspective into a multiculturalist perspective that values diversity and differences, tolerance and open attitude. Such a paradigm shift demands an unlimited transformation of the cognitive dimension. According to Watkins (1994) multicultural education operates under the protective canopy of egalitarianism, inclusion, and social justice.

Yakin (2005) stated there are two goals to be achieved in the application of multicultural based education. Basically the initial goal of multicultural education is building educational discourse, policy makers in the world of education and students majoring in science education or general students. It means that there is a hope that if they have a good multicultural education discourse then they will not only be able to transform multicultural education that is able to instil the values of pluralism, humanism and democracy directly in school to the students. While the ultimate goal of multicultural education is that learners are not only able to understand and master the learning materials but also expected that the learners will have a strong character to always be democratic, pluralist and humanist. Because these three things are the spirit of multicultural education.

Agil (2004) mentioned the term of multicultural education can be used on a descriptive and normative level, which describes issues of education with regard to multicultural societies. Furthermore, it includes a consideration of the educational policies and strategies in a multicultural society. In this descriptive context, the curriculum of multicultural education should include subjects such as: tolerance, themes of ethno-cultural differences, religion, the dangers of discrimination, conflict resolution and mediation, human rights, democracy and plurality, universal humanity and subjects, other relevant subjects. With those kind of understandings, so we can avoid the conflict which is caused by the different of point of view, culture or tradition, ethnics, religions and even the different in the political party.

From some definitions put forward by educational experts, it all seems to lead to the same goal of how to create a strong, advanced, fair, prosperous and prosperous nation without distinction of ethnicity, race, religion and culture. All of them must be united to build the strength across sectors so we could achieve mutual prosperity, high self-esteem and appreciated by other nations in the world.

## 2.2 Forming a Peaceful Multicultural Country

The diversity of Indonesia should be interpreted by the strengthening of unity and unity among fellow Indonesian citizens. This is in line with Indonesia's reform ideals for the realization of a democratic civil society, and enforced the law for the supremacy of justice, the clean government of corruption, collusion and nepotism for the realization of social order and security in society that ensures the smooth productivity of citizens and economic life Which welfare the people of Indonesia.

The pattern of Indonesian's society that is *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is not only a diversity of ethnic groups but also about the cultural diversity that exists in Indonesian society as a whole. Existence of diversity can be seen from the realization of mutual respect, respect, and tolerance between cultures with each other. *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* can unite every single differences just like what we have been passing through in many years ago. This big country can be a prosperous and promising country if all of the citizens have the great ability and willingness to act and do based on one concept, that is one in diversity. We have passed many difficult wars to reach the independence of Indonesia, some riots which tried to change the form of united country, and also many variety of terrors to destroy the government. The worst part is because there are some people want to spark the fear of the terrorist. Some bombs exploded in some places to destroy the comfort and tranquillity that we always have before. The distrust on government is one of the intentions to create this turmoil. This of course we cannot let it happened any longer. There should be an attempt to stop this irresponsible act for the establishment of a country that we love together.

The various concepts relevant to multiculturalism include democracy, justice and law, cultural values and ethos, togetherness in equal differences, ethnicity, ethnic culture, religious beliefs, cultural expressions, private and public domains, human rights, community cultural rights, and other relevant concepts. All of those concept must be known by every single citizens of Indonesia, starting from the Kindergarten students until the university level. For those people who just become the employee, those concepts must be delivered in training, advertisement, flyers or even special event by the legitimate government in every province, district, sub-district throughout Indonesia. Therefore, the differences which can trigger the friction or conflict could be minimalized.

In line with various efforts that have been done by the government, one of the things done by the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Lukman Hakim Saifudin about the call for the provision of lectures in the house of worship (Rakhmatulloh, 2017). The call was one of them forbidding religious lectures to offend the elements of SARA (Tribe, Religion, Race, and Intergroup). This is intended to condition the state of Indonesia can always protect all citizens without exception according to the fifth precepts of Pancasila, "Justice for all the people of Indonesia."

### **2.3 The Application of Multicultural based on Education in Indonesia**

The need to maintain values and behaviors to create a peaceful and conducive atmosphere among fellow citizens of Indonesia is necessary to maintain the security of a stable state. Therefore, the implementation of multicultural education can be said success if each learner has mutual tolerance, does not hostile, and does not have conflict caused by the differences in culture, ethnicity, language, and so forth.

According to Abercrombie et al. (1994), multicultural based education is said to succeed if the process involves all elements of society. That's because multidimensional aspects of life are covered in multicultural education. The expected changes are in the creation of a comfortable, peaceful, tolerant state in the life of the community, and not necessarily arising conflicts caused by cultural differences and racial intolerance.

Lan (2011) believed many people who applied multicultural based education will bring positive impact, that is solving the problem of inequality brought about by the ethnic domination and discrimination. It means that multiculturalism which argues for the celebration of, as well as appreciation and respect for diversity is seen as the anti-thesis of assimilation, which promotes homogeneity and similarity. This is why multiculturalism became the preferable alternative for the New Order's assimilation policy, which failed to integrate the people into one unified, Indonesia.

The implementation of multicultural based education in Indonesia is considered very important to do considering the conflicts that many occur lately because of triggered issues related to differences in ethnicity, religion, race and culture. The aspect of appreciation and mutual understanding and respect becomes an important aspect of multiculturalism. This can be seen in Lawrence Blum's definition of

multiculturalism as an understanding, appreciation, and assessment of one's culture, and a respect and curiosity about another's ethnic culture. It includes an assessment of the cultures of others, not to approve all aspects of the culture, but to see how an indigenous culture can express value to its members. That notion clearly ignores the critical dimension in the study of multiculturalism, by giving judgment or consideration of the various cultures and their values. However, the principle of difference is a key word or concept in multiculturalism. This concept is indeed an important concept in postmodern culture. Multiculturalism strongly disagrees and tries to combat the nature of ethnocentrism and racism that usually arises as a result of not knowing other views and values. The ignorance and ignorance of others in the history of human life has caused tremendous wars, death and destruction.

The problem of multiculturalism today cannot be ignored because every time we are faced with problems related to multicultural problems (Lubis, 2004). Although diversity and diversity are key concepts, it should be noted that multiculturalism not only recognizes the diversity of cultures and the interaction and interplay between cultures with each other intensively as the impact of cultures living in one region or city. Cultural interaction also takes place through the influence of TV media featuring different events from different countries and cultures.

Multiculturalism does not accept the concept of dichotomy versus others, the owners of capital versus the proletariat, our culture versus objectivism, and similarity versus differences, since dualism creates a conflict between two entities and two forces to choose from each other/or. Multiculturalism is more accepting of a dialectical form of thought, with a difference not seen as something absolute contradictory, but two mutually requiring things.

## **3 CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, multicultural based education is said to be a process of developing all human potential and appreciating its plurality and heterogeneity as a consequence of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. Thus multicultural based education requires the highest respect and respect for human dignity and prestige from wherever it comes and cultured him whatever. Furthermore, multicultural based education can also be a solution to the many horizontal conflicts that almost solve the Indonesian nation today.

The emergence of the application to have multicultural based education in Indonesia can't be



denied since it can be used to avoid the disintegration and the arise of multi conflict ethnics. A nation can be a great nation if the values of tolerance, mutual respect and appreciation are always being maintained. Being a great nation with the diversity that exists will be a plus value for Indonesia. It is not forced to be uniform and the same, but with diversity in many aspects that make the nation of Indonesia become a great and strong nation. Collaboration among many leaders to create prosperity for every citizen, the cohesiveness of the potential young generations to create the works that can scent the nation, as well as the unity that has been championed by the pioneers of this nation must be always we keep watched. With all of those, the progress and prosperity of Indonesia can be achieved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research is funded by Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf, Tangerang, Indonesia which become my sponsor to make it finished completely. My gratitude for my institution which become my first principal funders. Furthermore, as the researcher and active scholar, I do really hope this research could give the contribution to other scholars who are doing the research about multicultural based education in Indonesia. We do need to change our paradigm to build the “feeling of being uniform or sameness” cause every people have their own ideas about their faith, tradition, religion, ethnic, habit and practice.

## REFERENCES

- Abercrombie, Nicholas, Stephen, H., Bryan S. T., 1994. *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*, Penguin Books. London, Revised Edition.
- Agil, S., 2004. *Aktualisasi Nilai-nilai Qur'ani dalam Sistem Pendidikan Islam*, Ciputat Press. Jakarta Selatan.
- Hernandez, H., 2002. *Multicultural Education: A Teacher Guide to Linking Context, Process, and Content*, Prentice Hall. New Jersey & Ohio.
- Lan, T. J., 2011. Heterogeneity, politics of ethnicity, and multiculturalism. What is a viable framework for Indonesia?. In *Wacana Journal, Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia*, Vol. 13 N. 2: 279-292.
- Lubis, A. Y., 2004 Memahami “Cultural Studies” dan Multikulturalisme dari Perspektif Pascamodern in *Wacana*. Vol. 6, No. 2, (103-131).
- Malik, I., 2017. *Selangkah Lagi, Krisis Konflik SARA bisa Bisa Terulang – Bagian 1*, Retrieved from: <http://www.suara.com/wawancara/2017/01/30/070000>

- /ichsan-malik-selangkah-lagi-krisis-konflik-sara-bisa-terulang, January 30, 2017
- Rakhmatulloh, 2017. *Larang Singgung SARA, Menag Keluarkan 9 Seruan Ceramah Agama*, Friday, April 28, 2017 in *Sindonews.com*. Retrieved from: <https://nasional.sindonews.com/read/1200976/15/lanar-g-singgung-sara-menag-keluarkan-9-seruan-ceramah-agama-1493372813>
- Tilaar, H. A. R., 2004. *Multikulturalisme, Tantangan-tantangan Global Masa Depan dalam Transformasi Pendidikan Nasional*, Grasindo. Jakarta.
- Watkins, W. H., 1994. Multicultural Education: Toward a Historical and Political Inquiry. *Educational Theory*. Volume 44 Issue 1, Pp. 99-116.
- Yaqin, M. A., 2005. *Pendidikan Multural: Cross-Cultural Understanding untuk Demokrasi dan Keadilan*, Pilar Media. Yogyakarta.