ANALYSIS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION POST-CONFLICT WITH ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, RACIAL, AND INTER-GROUP (SARA) NUANCES: AN INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY STUDY

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze the extent to which multicultural education can stand alone as an independent entity in educational institutions in Tanjung Balai City after the SARA-nuanced conflict. The results of interviews with teachers and students of SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai revealed that this school tries to integrate multicultural values into the curriculum. However, multicultural education has not been separated as an independent entity. Teachers design the curriculum by emphasizing cultural and religious diversity in learning materials. Students confirm that diversity is reflected in school learning and activities. This study used a data analysis approach based on the Miles and Huberman framework. The results show that multicultural education in Tanjung Balai focuses on integrating cultural values in learning, but still needs more efforts to realize independent multicultural subjects. Multicultural education has the potential to bridge cultural and religious differences, but it needs professional teacher involvement and appropriate strategies to support the development of religious tolerance among students.

Keywords: Multicultural Education, Indigenous Psychology, Post Conflict

ANALISIS PENDIDIKAN MULTIKULTURAL PASCA KONFLIK BERNUANSA SARA : STUDI PSIKOLOGI INDIGENOUS

ABSTRAK

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Multikultural, Psikologi Indigenous, Pasca Konflik
Introduction

Basically, multiculturalism formed in Indonesia is the result of highly diverse and extensive socio-cultural and geographical conditions (Tarmizi, 2020). According to geographical conditions, Indonesia comprises many islands, each inhabited by groups of people forming a society (Khoeriyah et al., 2022). From these societies, cultures about the people themselves emerge. This, of course, has implications for the existence of a multitude of diverse cultures. Within the concept of multiculturalism, there is a close connection to the formation of a society based on "Bhineka Tunggal Ika," which embodies a national culture that unites the Indonesian nation. However, in practice, there are still various obstacles hindering the formation of multiculturalism in society (Nieto, 2017).

Diversity within the framework of multiculturalism refers to various elements that constitute multiple parts as a unity. 'Plural' means more than one, while 'diverse' means colorful. Furthermore, it can be likened to a rainbow (Yanniris, 2021). The rainbow appears beautiful when its diverse colors unite, just as a nation does. Indonesia will become a peaceful and prosperous nation if ethnic groups and all elements of their cultures are willing to coexist harmoniously and form unity.

Multicultural education plays a crucial role in promoting understanding and harmony within a culturally diverse society, encompassing different cultures, religions, and ethnic backgrounds (Phillips, 2019). However, ethnic and religious conflicts, such as those with an ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup basis (SARA), can pose serious challenges to developing inclusive and self-reliant multicultural education (Larkin et al., 2006). In this context, in-depth research on the impact and strategies of post-conflict multicultural education with SARA nuances is very important to direct the development of effective educational institutions in the future (Kartikawati, 2019).

One of the Indonesian provinces with a large multicultural population is North Sumatra. This diversity is not limited to its capital city alone but extends to various regions in the province, including Tanjung Balai city on the east coast of Sumatra. In this city, various ethnicities and community groups live side by side, from Malay, Batak, Chinese, Kalimantan, and so on. They also practice various religions and beliefs, including Islam, Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhism, and many more.

Based on the lengthy discussion above, it is evident that various ethnic, religious, and cultural groups have the potential for social conflicts. This is proven by acts of intolerance from two parties which resulted in anarchic actions such as the burning of places of worship in Tanjung Balai City some
time ago. This illustrates the existence of a tolerance crisis within the diverse community. If not addressed with full awareness, it can lead to severe social disorder.

Tanjung Balai city, as the setting of this research, has a long history of SARA-related conflicts that have significantly impacted various aspects of life, including the education system. Indigenous psychology studies, which emphasize local perspectives and values in analyzing social phenomena, will provide profound insights into the psychological impact of conflicts and the appropriate approach to promoting sustainable multicultural education.

Indigenous psychology is an approach in psychology that focuses on understanding human behavior and mental processes based on the local perspective and cultural values of a particular group or community (Surijah et al., 2018). This approach refers to the use of cultural perspectives originating from the community itself, without external influence or interference (Pratiwi & Agung, 2022). In the indigenous psychology approach, the main goal is to describe and explain human behavior in a suitable and contextual way in the community's everyday life. This approach emphasizes that an individual's thinking, feelings, and actions are heavily influenced by the cultural environment and local values that shape their identity and worldview (Agung & Herwanto, 2017).

Therefore, in collecting and interpreting psychological information, a deep understanding of the cultural context, norms, and beliefs that inform individual behavior is required (Smith, 2011). An important aspect of the indigenous psychology approach is cultural validation. This means that concepts and methods used in psychological research must be tested and adapted to the specific cultural context. This is important because what may be considered "universal" in psychology does not always apply to all cultural groups. By conducting cultural validation, this approach is capable of capturing the nuances and complexities of human behavior in a more accurate context.

The discussion above leads the researcher to an in-depth study related to the resolution of conflicts in Tanjung Balai, as outlined in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Researcher</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Research Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Made Redi Hartana</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Analisis Konflik dan Solusi Pemolisian dalam Konflik Antar Agama di Tanjung Balai Sumatera Utara Tahun 2016</td>
<td>The maximal implementation of a safety valve through FKUB (Interfaith Harmony Forum) is emphasized, as this forum is established by the community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and facilitated by the government with the purpose of fostering, preserving, and empowering religious communities for the sake of harmony and well-being.

Syahrin Harahap, Katimim, Sahdin Hasibuan 2017

The Phenomenon of Social and Religious Conflicts in Tanjung Balai, Medan, Indonesia

One source of conflict in Tanjung Balai is suspected to be the accumulation of long-standing conflicts related to economic and power struggles, as each group seeks to optimize its influence and control in relation to other groups.

Sahdin Hasibuan 2019

STRATEGI KOMUNIKASI DALAM RESOLUSI KONFLIK UMAT BERAGAMA DI KOTA TANJUNG BALAI

Efforts to enhance social well-being through the economic sector; dialogue and communication facilitated by the Forum for Interfaith Harmony (FKUB); the Government, the Department of Religious Affairs, and the MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) are making efforts to communicate with the involved parties through interfaith dialogues.

Agus Susanto 2018

Pola Komunikasi Masyarakat Muslim Melayu dan Tionghoa; Studi terhadap Penyelesaian Konflik di Kota Tanjung Balai

Collaboration among various parties and state authorities to achieve stability.

Based on the table above, it can be observed that there are many measures that can be taken to prevent social conflicts related to diversity or multiculturalism (Doucette et al., 2021). One effort to minimize or rectify intolerant attitudes in diverse communities is through implementing multicultural education (Marks & Hara, 2017). In this research, the researcher will undertake an analysis of the implementation of multicultural education in one post-diversity-conflict area, namely Tanjung Balai City. Starting from an in-depth study of diverse areas and the large social conflicts in these areas, it gave encouragement to carry out research in both religious-based and public schools. This is to assess whether multicultural education in these educational institutions has been effectively implemented as a
form of diversity education within the framework of multiculturalism and diversity. By doing so, it is hoped that significant social conflicts, such as the one mentioned above, will not occur again in the same region, or even throughout Indonesia.

Research methods

This research employs a qualitative descriptive research design, and data collection will be conducted through structured and open-ended interview techniques. The interview technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to obtain in-depth and contextual insights from the respondents regarding their experiences, perceptions, and views on multicultural education after SARA-related conflicts. The research respondents consist of 5 individuals, including 3 teachers and 2 students at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai. The following table presents information about the informants in the study.

Table 2. Informant Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Informant's Initials</th>
<th>Informant Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>RST</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>NSH</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>DS</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>WWN</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through interviews with 3 teachers and 2 students at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai, respondents were invited to provide in-depth information about the challenges and issues they face. This research will produce a profound understanding of how multicultural education is implemented after conflict with SARA nuances in educational institutions in Tanjung Balai City from an indigenous psychology perspective. The questions asked to the teachers were as follows: 1) How does this school integrate multicultural principles with existing education policies? 2) How does this school design a curriculum that integrates concepts of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity into daily learning? 3) Does the curriculum at this school encompass cultural and diversity aspects? 4) Can you provide examples of how teaching at the school promotes understanding of cultural diversity in the community? Then, in this research, students played the role of informants who were conveyed by the teacher regarding the questions asked by the researcher. In this way, through the interview process with students, this research obtained additional information, corrected or confirmed the results of the teacher's responses.
This study utilizes a data analysis approach that follows the interactive framework proposed by Miles and Huberman, as explained by Rijali (2019). The data analysis process consists of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. In an effort to ensure data validity, this research also applies the triangulation method. The triangulation approach employed includes using various methods and data sources by examining information obtained from interviews, field notes, surveys, and documented records found in various data sources. The technique used to test data validity is the triangulation approach, which aims to verify data through the examination of various data sources using different methods.

**Research result**

Based on the interviews with 3 teachers from SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai regarding the first question posed by the researcher about how the school integrates multicultural principles with existing education policies, informants RE and NSH stated that SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai uses a curriculum dominated by core subjects and established curriculum. Although several cultural aspects are included in the curriculum, this curriculum has not yet developed as an independent entity that emphasizes multicultural values.

Furthermore, RST added to the response regarding how the school integrates multicultural principles with existing education policies, stating that in SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai, the approach to curriculum design focuses on integrating the concepts of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity into daily learning. Educators believe that through understanding and appreciation of this diversity, students can grow to be more open, tolerant, and appreciative of differences.

Then, informants DS and WWN who are students at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai confirmed what the teacher said about SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai designing a curriculum that integrates the concept of cultural diversity, religion, and ethnic backgrounds in daily learning. Based on their experiences as students at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai, these students felt that the concept of diversity was genuinely reflected in various aspects of learning and activities at the school.

Next, the researcher asked the second and third questions, namely, how the school designs a curriculum that integrates the concepts of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity into daily learning. All three teachers had the same response to the researcher's questions, stating that every subject at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai encompasses values that reflect various cultural and religious perspectives in Indonesia.
For example, in learning Indonesian language, educators choose reading materials that depict stories from various ethnicities and religions. This helps students to experience the cultural diversity present in our country and develop a deeper understanding. However, it is acknowledged that educators' efforts to introduce multicultural education have not yet fully established this subject as an independent entity.

The results of the research above are in line with the research results of Mu'awanah et al (2020), which revealed that in the context of Indonesian language learning, a multicultural education approach can be applied by presenting material that focuses on past events that contain elements of diversity. Indonesian language learning is a crucial part of promoting multicultural education because diverse materials can effectively help learners understand the concept of diversity as one of the cultural riches possessed by the Indonesian nation.

Based on the responses to the second question, the researcher allowed students DS and WWN to provide their feedback on the teachers' responses. DS and WWN stated that in addition to Indonesian language subjects, educators at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities that celebrate diversity, such as cultural festivals or art activities involving various traditions.

Through indigenous psychology studies, educators can also strengthen character education by teaching values such as tolerance, empathy, and appreciation of diversity (Larrinaga & Amurrio, 2015). This can be achieved through learning activities that involve activities like group discussions, collaborative projects, and organizing events that celebrate diverse cultures. In curriculum development, educational institutions can involve local communities in providing input and suggestions to ensure that unique cultural values and traditions are not neglected. This can enrich the learning materials and help students develop a deeper understanding of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity. The indigenous psychology approach helps educational institutions design a more inclusive curriculum that focuses on honoring local values. By understanding cultural perspectives and indigenous values, as well as implementing solutions such as open dialogue, character education, and participation, we can create a learning environment that promotes a deeper understanding of the diversity of cultures, religions, and ethnic backgrounds at SMAN 1 Tanjung Balai.

Based on the interview responses from the three teachers, which were confirmed by the two students regarding the last question asked by the researcher, namely, how teaching at the school promotes understanding of cultural diversity in society. The informants stated that in addition to the
Indonesian language subject, this can also be found in history subjects by presenting historical events involving various cultural and religious groups, allowing students to understand each group's contributions to the formation of the nation's identity. In addition, educators also ensure that in daily interactions in the school environment, the values of diversity continue to be emphasized. Through open dialogue and discussion, students are invited to talk about their own cultural backgrounds and listen to the experiences and stories of their friends. This helps build mutual understanding and cooperation among students with different backgrounds.

**Discussion**

Multiculturalism essentially refers to a movement that seeks equality and equity in diversity (Qodir, 2018). The core concept of multiculturalism is an effort to create openness and acceptance of differences (Cathrin & Wikandaru, 2023). Although the long history links the development of the concept of multiculturalism to Western nations, its practice has actually existed in Indonesian society long before a similar development by Western nations (Supriani et al., 2022). This evidence can be seen in Furnivall's report, which observed the diversity of ethnic, and religious groups living harmoniously in traditional societies. According to ( ) the concept of multicultural education in Indonesia is implemented to seek an ideal form of education that promotes ethnic diversity. This approach aims to respect and value diverse cultures and ethnic identities in an educational context.

As expressed by Ambarudin (2016), multicultural education plays a crucial role in ensuring that students do not lose their cultural roots, especially in the face of the sociocultural realities of the globalization era. In today's era of globalization, cultural interactions have become a potential influence on students. Confronting this global phenomenon, it is essential for students to be provided with adequate understanding and knowledge, so they possess a deep competence in global knowledge, including cultural aspects.

According to (Biasutti et al., 2019), multicultural education has become an imperative that cannot be ignored in shaping the new face of Indonesia. He argues that multicultural education requires a careful examination of its concept and implementation, encompassing ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions (Sudrajat, 2014). It may be beneficial to observe the experiences of countries that have implemented multicultural education in diverse and open societies in this era of globalization.
Indeed, the multicultural reality in Indonesia is a potential asset that can serve as a model for developing cultural strength. Therefore, it is clear that this wealth should be preserved and nurtured.

Furthermore, (Tanzila et al., 2018) reveal that Indonesia continues to face various challenges in politics, culture, economics, law, and education. One of the most concerning issues is the occurrence of violence related to SARA. Some examples include religious blasphemy, acts of terrorism, sexual harassment, domestic violence, human trafficking, as well as conflicts involving different religions and beliefs.

Although multiculturalism plays a crucial role in uniting ethnic diversity, it also has the potential to trigger conflicts if not managed properly. For instance, while cultural diversity can be a social adhesive, if not well-managed, these differences can lead to conflicts. Multicultural education, despite being a topic of discussion, has not been effectively implemented. In Indonesia, the implementation of multicultural education still requires significant time, even though our diverse culture supports it (Oktaviani Hidayat et al., 2019). This is due to the long history of education in Indonesia, which has often been influenced by primordial factors. For example, many educational institutions were established based on religious backgrounds, regions, individuals, or specific groups.

In other words, despite the potential for multiculturalism, the journey of multicultural education in Indonesia still faces obstacles and requires time to develop more substantially (Doucette et al., 2021). Therefore, the implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia can be done flexibly by emphasizing the core principles of multiculturalism. This requires active involvement from educators such as teachers, lecturers, religious instructors, and similar professionals, who must have the professional capability to integrate multicultural concepts into the education process. Additionally, they need to choose strategies suitable for the context, strengthen character formation among students within the school environment, and present relevant and context-appropriate materials to encourage the development of religious tolerance among students.

Conclusion

The research results indicate that multicultural education in Tanjung Balai focuses on integrating cultural values into learning but requires more effort to establish an independent multicultural subject. Multicultural education has the potential to bridge cultural and religious differences, but requires the involvement of professional teachers and appropriate strategies to support the development of religious
tolerance among students. There are several findings that suggest multicultural education has not yet achieved the status of an independent subject. Teachers at the school designed the curriculum by integrating multicultural aspects into existing subjects, such as Indonesian and History. However, these efforts are not fully adequate in generating a profound understanding of cultural and religious diversity among students. The indigenous psychology approach applied in this study emphasizes the importance of local perspectives and cultural values in designing multicultural education. Nevertheless, the research results indicate that more efforts are still needed to strengthen students' character education in facing the challenges of cultural and religious diversity. Educators need to collaborate more actively to develop suitable and effective strategies for teaching multicultural values to students.

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