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## Multicultural values:

### A perspective against diversity

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to describe and analyze: 1) the importance of multicultural education in a plural nation-state; 2) government policies on the application of multicultural values in educational institutions, and 3) multicultural values as the embodiment of the Pancasila philosophy. This type of research used descriptive qualitative research design, while the form of research used content analysis as the foundation of analysis procedures. The results of the study concluded that: 1) multicultural education needs to be understood by the community because the values of multiculturalism can be an alternative means of solving the national socio-cultural conflicts; 2) government policies on the application of multicultural values in educational institutions can be "entrusted" in the subjects of History, Civics, Religion, and Guidance and Counseling teachers other than through extracurricular activities; and 3) multicultural education needs to continue to be comprehensively deepened, because it contains social values as a source that is not stagnant, only limited to discourse, but these values are in line with the precepts in Pancasila.

**Keywords :** Multicultural values, diversity

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## INTRODUCTION

The implementation of multicultural education in education is believed to be a natural solution for conflicts and disharmony that occur in society, especially those that often occur in the Indonesian nation-state, which is, in reality, plural. In other words, multicultural education can be an alternative means of solving socio-cultural conflicts. The very diverse spectrum of Indonesian culture is a challenge for the world of education to "process" these differences into an asset and not a source of division. Multicultural education has two primary responsibilities: preparing the Indonesian nation to face foreign cultural currents and 'uniting' its nation consisting of various cultures, ethnicities, languages, religions, and regions [1].

National and ideological education has been given a lot in universities (PT), but multicultural education has not been given in the proper proportions. Therefore, schools and universities can develop multicultural education with their respective models according to the principal of education or school autonomy. In the author's opinion, multicultural education should be emphasized more on national and moral subjects and subjects: History, Civics, and Religion.

Previous learning models related to nationality already exist. However, the packaging is still inadequate, especially as a means of education to appreciate differences from ethnicity, culture, religion, language, and other diversity. The emergence can see this of conflicts that often occur in

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the reality of national and state life, as clear evidence that the understanding of tolerance is still very lacking [2], even today the number of students and students who understand something that is actually behind the culture. a nation is still lacking. People know more about the stereotypes of an ethnic group than they know something that belongs to that tribe [3]. Whereas in the context of multicultural education discourse, understanding the meaning behind the cultural reality of an ethnic group is essential. Therefore, multicultural education can be successful if it forms in students an attitude of living to be tolerant, non-hostile, and not in the conflict caused by differences in culture, ethnicity/race, language, religious customs, and others. This fact is in line with what was conveyed by Stephen Hill; the Director of Representatives of the United Nations Agency for Education, Science and Culture, UNESCO for the regions of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Timor Leste, stated that multicultural education could be said to be successful if the process involves all elements of society [4]. Concretely, this education involves not only teachers and lecturers or the government but all elements of society. This phenomenon is because of multicultural education's multi-dimensional aspects of life.

The changes expected from the context of multicultural education do not lie in justification of numbers or statistics and are cognitively oriented, as is usually the assessment of success in the implementation of education in this country. However, more than that, namely creating conditions that are comfortable, peaceful, tolerant in social life, and do not always arise conflicts caused by differences in culture and SARA. Even some people say that the results of multicultural education cannot be determined by a certain standard of time. Therefore, in Indonesian education, it is time to pay great attention to multicultural education. This case is critical because it is indirectly believed to provide solutions to several social problems faced by the Indonesian nation-state in the future [5].

They were related to multicultural education in history learning; these multicultural values have been owned by the ancestors and ancestors of the Indonesian nation. Even those multicultural values long before the Indonesian people recognized writing which was known from history subjects as pre-literacy. The cooperation system, social community, belief system, and culture are real examples of multicultural values that ancestors have owned. These multicultural values become the basis in the development and periodization or subsequent historical chapters, then the previous periodization becomes an inseparable basis with subsequent multicultural values, and so on so that these multicultural values cannot stand alone. Past multicultural values are still used and continue to live on in the next periodization and the values contained in Pancasila as a philosophy and view of life and the basis of the Indonesian [6].

Multicultural education in countries that adhere to democracy, such as Canada and the United States, is not something new. Both countries seek to eliminate racial discrimination between whites and blacks. Its main goal is to promote and maintain national integrity (Supardan, 2010). The United States, when it wanted to form a post-independence society (July 4, 1776), just realized that its society consisted of various races and from different countries. Therefore, the United States is trying to find a breakthrough, namely by taking a strategy to make schools a center for socializing and cultivating new aspired values. Through this approach -from elementary to the university- the United States has succeeded in shaping its nation, which is in development beyond its parent society, namely Europe. Concerning cultural values that need to be inherited and developed through the education system in a society, the United States uses a democratic system in education pioneered by

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John Dewey. The point is that tolerance is not only for the common good but also respects trust and interacts with community members [5].

The 1980s are considered the emergence of school institutions based on multicultural education founded by researchers and progressive education activists. James Banks was one of the pioneers of multicultural education. Banks grounded the concept of multicultural education into the idea of educational equality. In the mid and late 1980s, groups of scholars emerged, including Carl Grant, Christine Sleeter, Geneva Gay, and Sonia Nieto, who provided broader insights into multicultural education, deepened the framework that grounded the idea of educational equality and linked it to transformation and social change [2]. Driven by the demands of the United States of America of Latino/Hispanic descent, indigenous people, and other marginalized groups for equal educational opportunities and driven by the efforts of the professional education community to provide solutions to the problem of racial conflicts and the low achievement of minorities in schools, making multicultural education a powerful slogan. Popular in the 1990s, even for two decades, the concept of multicultural education became a prevalent slogan in US schools. In general, this concept is accepted as an essential strategy in developing tolerance and sensitivity to the history and culture of diverse ethnic groups.

Designing multicultural education at the level of a complex and plural society, whether from religion, culture, ethnicity, territory and so on, has serious challenges; it is necessary to realize that multiculturalism is not only something that varies on a large scale. Put forward achieve the goals in multicultural education it is necessary to use several approaches, namely: 1) not equating the views of education with schooling or multicultural education with formal school programs; 2) avoiding views that equate culture with ethnic groups, this means that there is no need to associate culture solely with ethnic groups as was the case several decades ago; 3) competence development in a new culture usually requires initiative interaction from people who already have competence, so it can be seen that efforts to support ethnically separated schools are the antithesis to the goals of multicultural education; 4) multicultural education increases competence in several cultures, its adoption depends on the proportional situation and conditions; and 5) the possibility that education (formal and non-formal) as an awareness-raising on competence in several cultures, will distance from the concept of bi-culture or the dichotomy between indigenous and non-indigenous which has been abolished so far. The five approaches must be harmonized with the conditions of the Indonesian people because society is a collection of individuals in social groups with specific customs, traditions, and cultures [7]. These conditions then make some of them into organized communities that think about themselves and distinguish their existence from the conditions of the community. On the other hand, if life in society means interaction between individuals and the social environment, what makes up the individual is education or the community of educators [6].

In its journey, the concept of multicultural education spread widely to regions outside the United States, especially in countries that have ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural diversity, such as Indonesia. Today, multicultural education generally includes the idea of cultural pluralism. Common themes discussed include cultural understanding, cultural appreciation of diverse groups, and preparation for living in a plural-istic society [4]. The discourse of multiculturalism education in Indonesia found its momentum when the militaristic authoritarian national system collapsed along with the fall of the Suharto regime. At that time, the country's state became chaotic with various conflicts between ethnic groups and between groups, which caused shock and horror to mem-

bers of the community [8]. Such conditions make various parties increasingly question the national system suitable for Indonesia, which is changing, and a system that can make Indonesian people live in peace by minimizing the potential for conflict.

Based on the thought above, the problems that arise are related to 1) the urgency of multicultural education in a plural nation-state; 2) government policies in the application of multicultural values in educational institutions, and 3) multicultural values as an elaboration of the basic Pancasila philosophy of the State.

## METHOD

This type of research used a qualitative descriptive design, while the form of research used content analysis (content analysis), so the implementation refers to the content analysis procedure [9]. Thus, there are 3 (three) steps or procedures carried out, namely: 1) data procurement includes: (1) determination of the unit of analysis through careful and repeated reading; (2) recording and recording data is a significant problem because the content analysis is in the form of unstructured symbolic data; 2) data validation, namely the use of semantic validation patterns by measuring the level of sensitivity of symbolic meanings related to context; and 3) the inference and analysis process as one of the content analysis procedures. The inference is intended to draw abstract conclusions then present and discuss the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Urgency of Multicultural Education in a Plural Nation-State

Since its emergence as a scientific discipline in the 1960s and 1970s, multicultural-based education (MBE) has been defined from various perspectives. In the terminology of education, some terms are almost the same as MBE, namely multicultural education (multicultural education) as used in multicultural life in Western countries. Several definitions are tied to disciplines, such as educational anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Hernandez suggests a classic definition for emphasizing the conceptual dimensions of MBE that are important for educators [10].

The first definition emphasizes the essence of MBE as a perspective that recognizes the political, social, and economic realities experienced by individuals in complex and culturally diverse human encounters. The definition intends to reflect the importance of culture, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, social status, economy, territory, and exclusion in the educational process. In its conceptualization, MBE is an educational activity that is empowering. Therefore, MBE is a vision of proper education and should be implemented and understood by all students, including university students.

Regarding students or students, MBE questions ethnicity, gender, class, language, religion, and exceptions that influence, shape, and pattern each individual as a cultural being. MBE is the result of the complete development of each individual's unique constellation or interaction who has intelligence, ability, and talent. The MBE prepares students for citizenship in a diverse and interrelated cultural and linguistic community. MBE is also associated with significant educational change. The MBE describes a complex cultural, political, social, and economic reality, which broadly and systematically influences everything inside and outside the school. MBE is also related to all educational assets, manifested through context, process, and content. MBE reaffirms and re-examines exemplary practice and seeks to improve denied optimal educational opportunities. MBE

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talks about creating educational institutions by providing a dynamic learning environment to reflect the ideals of equality, equality, and excellence. The explanation above describes the epistemology of multicultural education and the concept of multicultural education. The context of multiculturalism education in Indonesia needs to be included in the national curriculum, which can create a multicultural Indonesian society and other efforts that can be made for this realization.

The description above is in line with the opinion of Supardan that in realizing multicultural education in Indonesia, it is necessary to pay attention to because 1) it functions as an alternative means of conflict resolution; 2) students and students are not deprived of their cultural roots, and 3) multicultural education is applied in the national curriculum and is very relevant in a democracy such as the pluralistic nation-state of Indonesia [11].

## **2. Government Policy in the Implementation of Multiculturalist Values in Educational Institutions**

Several critical aspects in implementing multicultural education in the school structure are the absence of policies that inhibit tolerance, including the absence of insults to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, territory, and gender. It must also foster sensitivity to cultural differences, including clothing, music, favorite foods, and the like, which are structurally different. In addition, it also provides freedom for children to celebrate religious holidays and strengthens children's attitudes so that they feel whole and involved in democratic decision-making [12].

Considering the description above, the policies that need to be carried out in the multicultural education process are: 1) no longer limited to equating the views of education with schooling or multicultural education with formal school programs. A broader view of education as a cultural transmission frees educators from the assumption that the primary responsibility for developing cultural competence among students and students is solely in the hands of teachers. More and more parties are responsible because school programs should be related to informal learning outside of school; 2) avoid the view that equating culture with ethnic groups is the same. This case means that there is no need to associate culture solely with ethnic groups, as has been the case so far. Traditionally, educators have associated culture only with relatively self-sufficient social groups rather than with several people who are continuously and repeatedly involved in one or more activities. In the context of multicultural education, this approach can inspire the compilers of multicultural education programs to eliminate the tendency to stereotype students based on ethnic identity; thus, it will increase the exploration of a greater understanding of similarities and differences among students and students from various ethnic groups; 3) because competence development in a "new culture" usually requires initiative interaction with people who already have competence, it can be seen even more clearly that efforts to support ethnically separated schools are antithetical to the goals of multicultural education. Maintaining and expanding group solidarity is a barrier to socialization into a new culture. Education for cultural pluralism and multicultural education cannot be logically equated; 4) multicultural education increases competence in several cultures. The culture to be adopted is determined by history and the situation in the surrounding environment; and 5) the possibility that education (in and out of school) can increase awareness of competence in several cultures [13].

Awareness, as stated above, will be able to distance the concept of bi-culture or the dichotomy between natives and non-natives. This kind of dichotomy limits individuals from fully expressing cultural diversity. This approach will increase awareness of multiculturalism as an aver-

age human experience. This kind of awareness also implies that multicultural education has the potential to avoid the dichotomy and develop a better appreciation through the cultural competencies that exist in students and students.

### **3. Multicultural Values in the Elaboration of the Pancasila Philosophy**

Based on historical perspective, the lifestyle of modern society in the behavior of social, national, and state life is based on Pancasila as the basis of the state and the philosophy of life of the Indonesian nation. Therefore, multicultural values become an essential reference so that there is no friction of interests in society. Moreover, as an archipelagic country, Indonesia has a variety of races/ethnicity, culture, language, religion, territoriality affecting the socio-economic conditions of different people or groups. It is appropriate to unite because Pancasila is the only source and basis in social life. Nation and state [6].

Belief in one God (Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa) percept. The values contained within the first point are about the relationship between the state and religion and the relationship between religious communities. These values include piety to God Almighty, tolerance for freedom of worship, respect for other religions/beliefs, harmony, and cooperation between religious communities. For citizens, these values have consequences, including religious institutions and communities and adherents of religions and beliefs in God Almighty who must proactively increase their devotion to God Almighty, uphold freedom of worship, respect religion. or belief, fostering tolerance, harmony, and cooperation among religious believers.

Fair and Civilized Humanity (Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab) percept. The values within the second point correlate to the relationship between state and citizens and the relationship between state and other nations. These values include equality, respect for human rights, solidarity between nations, justice, civility, and peace. For citizens, these values lead to citizens having a moral obligation to develop respect for human rights; developing a culture of equality, and discrimination, mutual respect, cooperation, solidarity, peace, and cooperation with fellow citizens and other countries; and the development of fair and civilized attitudes and behavior.

The Unity of Indonesia (Persatuan Indonesia) percept. The values contained in the third precept are related to the sustainability of the homeland and the Indonesian nation. These values include love for the nation, homeland, national unity, respect for pluralism, harmony in pluralism (multiculturalism), and cooperation. For citizens, these values have consequences as citizens have a moral obligation to develop attitudes of nationalism and patriotism; appreciation of pluralism and development of cooperation across ethnic groups, races, religions, and groups; prioritize the interests of the nation above personal and group interests to maintain national unity.

Democracy Led by Wisdom in Deliberation/Representation (Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/ Perwakilan) percept. The values contained in the fourth precept are related to the management of state government. These values include wisdom, deliberation, consensus, democracy, participation, decentralization, transparency, and accountability. For citizens, these values result in citizens having a moral obligation to participate actively in administering the state for the development of democratic governance; and being proactive in various community activities to foster a democratic culture.

Social justice for all the people of Indonesia (Keadilan Sosial bagi Seluruh Rakyat Indonesia) percept. The values contained in the fifth precept are related to efforts to realize the common goal of living as a state. These values include social justice, welfare, equity, and social security. For

citizens, these values have consequences as citizens have a moral obligation to actively participate in realizing welfare and social justice, social security, and empowering poor community groups.

## CONCLUSION

Indonesia, as a plural country in terms of religion, ethnicity, culture, ethnicity, and territory, it is necessary to have the concept of multicultural education so that it becomes a guide to strengthen national identity. School subjects such as history, civic education, and religion taught from elementary school to university need to be perfected in their packaging so that multicultural values can be inserted, for example, inter-regional local culture and values or Pancasila points. Therefore, the younger generation is proud of the Indonesian nation, which can then be used to increase the sense of nationalism. This practice is deemed necessary so that the students have multiculturalistic perceptions and attitudes, can live side by side in the diversity of cultural, religious, and linguistic character, territoriality, respect the rights of every citizen without distinguishing the majority or minority ethnicity, and can work together to build the nation's strength so that it is considered in the solid international arena.

Multicultural education is a new discourse in Indonesia, but the urgency of its implementation is very high. Seeing that the phenomena and facts are so complex, their application is not only through formal education but also informal and non-formal education that can be implemented into social and state life. Multi-cultural education can be integrated into the education system through curricula ranging from early education to higher education in formal education. Implementation of multicultural education can be done through the curriculum at every level of education, student programs, and habituation to the daily learning process both in the school and family environment. Multicultural education can be inserted by inculcating multicultural values into the curriculum or multicultural responsive learning activities by prioritizing respect for differences in race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and territory among community members.

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