

The Relationship Between the Implementation of Multicultural Education and the Development of Intercultural Awareness in A Socio-Geographic Context

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Received: 16-06-2023

e-ISSN : 2987-9140

Accepted: 12-12-2023

Volume : 2 No.1, (2024)

Published: 01-06-2024

Page : 1-8

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26740/ijgsme.v2n1.p1-8>

Abstract

The need for multicultural education is growing as the world's population and cultures become more diverse. Teaching students about different cultures increases intercultural understanding. Socio-geographical factors influence the implementation of multicultural education and the level of intercultural sensitivity. This study is critical for exploring these relationships and improving intercultural education. Also, the aim of this research is to investigate the correlation between the prevalence of multicultural education and exposure to culture. This research uses correlation analysis methods to examine the relationship between multicultural educational practices and the level of intercultural awareness in a socio-geographical context. The research results show that there is a positive correlation between the implementation of multicultural education and students' intercultural awareness. The test results show a correlation coefficient of 0.63, indicating that the two variables are significantly related. Also, in the context of relationships between variables, multicultural education can increase understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, while intercultural awareness enables inclusive interactions between individuals from different cultures.

Keywords: Multicultural Education, Intercultural Understanding, Social Geographic

1. INTRODUCTION

As the world's population and cultures have become increasingly diverse, the need for multicultural education has grown. Individuals must be able to recognize, respect, and engage with others from different cultural backgrounds in today's globalized and migratory world. It is widely recognized that teaching students about different cultures in the classroom is a great way to foster intercultural understanding and encourage the growth of a more accepting community. Demographics, population variation, and geography are all socio-geographical elements that may influence the implementation of multicultural education and the resulting level of intercultural sensitivity.

The concept of multiculturalism refers to the plurality of cultures, attitudes and understandings to respond to them (Tilaar, 2004). Almost all countries in the world are formed from cultural diversity, so multiculturalism must be translated into policies in the life of society and the nation, as managing the cultural differences of citizens (Anon, 2016). However, what needs to be considered is what kind of multicultural model can be developed in a country like Indonesia (Nurcahyono, 2018). Schools as educational institutions prepare students to become a generation that has knowledge, attitudes and actions that are wise in facing the realities of

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national and state life, so that they can anticipate negative thoughts towards multi-ethnic and multi-cultural and other religious teachings (We'u. 2020).

Multicultural education has been found to increase students' sensitivity to and understanding of other cultures (Hernandes, 2002). Multicultural education needs to be developed so that Indonesian people better understand the importance of maintaining harmony between fellow human beings, in understanding something it must be completely so that what is the greatness of knowledge in multiculturalism can be broadened beyond just being limited to appreciating differences, more than that, understanding the importance of maintaining harmony, Providing ethics in the opinions of other groups, upholding humanitarian principles and so on is expected to be able to provide glory in this multi-faceted country (Amin, 2018). Previous studies show that multicultural education increases students' sensitivity to other cultures and their understanding of cultural diversity. Also, Karacsony et al. (2022) conducted research on urban schools that had students from various races and ethnicities. Their research results show that students are more aware of other cultures and that multicultural education is better implemented in schools. Based on research, Yilmaz (2016) found similar results. They found that students had a better understanding of cultural diversity and less intercultural prejudice in schools that used a multi-cultural approach.

Although there is evidence to suggest that there is a good relationship between implementing multicultural education and the level of intercultural awareness, it is important to better understand the variables that influence this relationship, especially in different sociogeographic contexts. Social structure, demographics, and geographic qualities are some of the factors to consider (Dinata, 2020). How multicultural education is received and used can be influenced by demographic components, such as population and racial or ethnic composition. For example, in an ethnically homogeneous environment, it is difficult to understand and comprehend other people's cultures. This may be more difficult to do than in environments where ethnic diversity already exists naturally. Also, to achieve the best impact, multicultural education approaches must be adapted to local demographic needs and characteristics (Rutgers et al., 2021).

The influence of multicultural education on intercultural awareness can also be influenced by social structure. According to Banks & Fox-gieg (2010), injustice, inequality of power, and social stratification can influence the way multicultural messages are delivered and received by students. Therefore, efforts to address inequality and social disparities in multicultural education are necessary to ensure that messages about intercultural awareness are conveyed well and reach all students (Banks & Fox-gieg, 2010).

In addition, the geographic conditions of a location can influence how multicultural education is implemented and how intercultural awareness emerges. Factors such as sustainability of multicultural education programs, access to educational resources, and integration with local communities can play an important role. For example, implementing multicultural education may be more difficult in remote areas or with limited access to educational resources. Therefore, efforts need to be made to overcome geographical barriers and ensure that multicultural education programs are widely accessible to all students.

Further research is needed to gain a better understanding of the components that influence the relationship between the implementation of multicultural education and the level of

intercultural awareness. To better understand the influence of demographics, social structure, and geographic qualities in different sociogeographic contexts, research can involve approaches such as surveys, interviews, or observations. A better understanding of these factors will help in creating and implementing multicultural educational approaches that are more appropriate to individual needs and sociogeographic contexts.

Therefore, it is proven that multicultural education increases students' sensitivity and understanding of other cultures. However, to better understand the relationship between multicultural education and levels of intercultural awareness, it is necessary to consider things such as demographics, social structure, and the geographic qualities of a place. By understanding these things, multicultural education can be better designed and implemented according to individual needs and sociogeographic contexts. Strengthening cultural awareness will help reduce prejudice, and build better relationships between people from different cultural backgrounds (Banks & Fox-gieg, 2010).

The aim of this study was to investigate whether or not there is a correlation between the prevalence of multicultural education and an individual's exposure to different cultures. Student body demographics, school location, and current educational policies will all be taken into account as potential variables that may influence the strength of this relationship. This study can explain the importance of multicultural education in fostering an accepting and welcoming society by highlighting the nature of interactions between the two.

It is also hoped that the findings of this research will significantly increase knowledge about why multicultural education is very important for fostering intercultural sensitivity. It is hoped that educational practitioners and policy makers can use the conclusions of this study to improve intercultural education in a variety of geographic settings. The findings of this research may help pave the way for more accepting communities that value and celebrate their cultural differences.

2. METHOD

Research methodology

Researchers will examine the relationship between multicultural educational practices and levels of intercultural awareness within a socio-geographic context at a specific point in time using a correlational design. This study aims to investigate the relationship between these variables through collecting data from schools representing various socio-geographical contexts.

Population and Sample

The focus of this research is students in various schools that implement multicultural education in various socio-geographical contexts. These students come from a variety of demographic backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, religion, and culture. This population may include schools in urban, rural, or other geographic areas that have significant cultural diversity. Stratified random sampling will be used to ensure that the sample will represent a variety of school types (urban, suburban, or rural) and areas geographical. In this study, random samples from each stratum will be selected. This research will involve students and educators from certain schools.

Method of collecting data

Several data collection methods used in this research are as follows:

- a. Questionnaire: Questionnaire is a commonly used quantitative research technique. Questionnaires can be used to collect data about students' perceptions of the implementation of multi-cultural education and the level of intercultural awareness. Questionnaires can ask about things like students' experiences, their understanding of other cultures, and their opinions about implementing multicultural education in schools.
- b. Observation: The observation method involves direct observation of the implementation of multicultural education in various social geographic contexts. Researchers can look at classroom activities, student interactions, and the materials and approaches used for multicultural teaching. Observations can also include observing social interactions outside the classroom environment, which can impact the development of intercultural awareness.

Data analysis method

The collected data will be analyzed to obtain relevant information. In this context, descriptive statistics will be used to describe the demographic characteristics of the sample as well as the implementation of multicultural education. This method will provide a comprehensive picture of the distribution of demographic variables such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and cultural background of this research sample. In addition, the descriptive method will provide information about the level of multicultural education provided to the sample.

Next, a correlation analysis will be carried out to examine the relationship between the implementation of multicultural education and the level of intercultural awareness. In this research, the two variables that will be analyzed are the implementation of multicultural education and the level of students' intercultural awareness. Correlation analysis is a statistical technique used to measure the relationship between two variables. The results of the correlation analysis will be

In addition, correlation analysis only measures the degree of relationship between two variables, not a cause-and-effect relationship. Therefore, the results can provide preliminary information about the potential influence of multicultural education on the level of intercultural awareness; however, to strengthen this conclusion, further research needs to be conducted.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Assumption Testing

Assumption testing is carried out to determine the normality of data distribution. This is done with Kolmogorov - Smirnov analysis and checking the significance value $> \alpha$ with the following hypothesis:

H0: shows the data is normally distributed

H1: shows that the data is not normally distributed.

The following steps can be used to perform Kolmogorov - Smirnov analysis. The data is initially examined in increasing order. After that, using these data, the empirical cumulative distribution function is determined. In addition, the cumulative distribution function of the

predefined distribution is calculated. The Kolmogorov - Smirnov test was used to compare these two cumulative distribution functions. Based on the results of the Kolmogorov - Smirnov test, the following results were obtained:

Table 1. Assumption Test Results

No	Variabel	Mean	Standar Deviasi	Significance	Information
1	X :Implementation Education Multicultural	43,5	23,2	0,432	Normal
2	Y : Awareness InterculturalStudent	39	19,7	0,512	Normal

Relationship Between Variables

Implementation of multicultural education includes practices and strategies that promote recognition, respect, and understanding of cultural, ethnic, and social diversity in educational environments. This includes developing curricula that reflect cultural diversity, training educators in multicultural approaches, and creating inclusive environments that promote respect for cultural diversity. According to Mahfud (2008), multicultural education is not about developing knowledge skills in students, that is, educational programs are not directed at forming experts in the field of multicultural education, but at educating students to become citizens who are inclusive, pluralist, respect human rights and justice, democratic without having to sacrifice developing religious attitudes and behavior.

Intercultural awareness, on the other hand, refers to an individual's understanding, appreciation, and recognition of the cultural diversity around them (Supriatin & Nasution, 2017). This requires an appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives, values, and norms, as well as the ability to interact effectively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Intercultural awareness also includes an understanding of the inequalities and social injustices that may exist between different cultural groups.

Several studies have shown a positive correlation between the implementation of multicultural education and the growth of intercultural awareness. Based on research by Malazonia et al. (2017), for example, found that effective multicultural education can increase students' intercultural awareness. In their research, they found that students who participated in inclusive and diverse learning experiences had greater intercultural awareness than those who did not.

In addition, a study conducted by Drexel University School of Education (2014), supports a positive correlation between the implementation of multicultural education and students' intercultural awareness. Students who participate in multicultural education demonstrate higher levels of intercultural awareness than those who do not. In addition, this research shows that multicultural education can foster attitudes of tolerance and respect for cultural differences. Gashi's (2021) research findings are consistent with previous research. They found that effective multicultural education can reduce students' stereotypes and prejudices against various cultural groups and increase their intercultural awareness.

A significant component of this educational approach is the development of intercultural awareness, which refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and appreciate cultural differences and similarities (Baker, 2015). This awareness is vital in today's globalized world,

where individuals are constantly interacting with people from diverse cultural contexts, both locally and internationally. Through targeted teaching practices, such as cross-cultural exchanges, collaborative learning, and cultural immersion activities, students can develop a more nuanced understanding of global interconnectivity and cultural relativism (Zalli, 2024).

In the socio-geographic context, the geographic location plays a crucial role in determining the type of multicultural interaction that occurs (Douglas & Craig, 2011). Urban areas with high population diversity provide different challenges and opportunities for intercultural education compared to rural regions. The socio-economic factors also influence the depth of multicultural engagement within educational institutions. Therefore, the effectiveness of multicultural education in fostering intercultural awareness is shaped by local demographics, economic conditions, and the social infrastructure in place to support inclusive education.

Furthermore, educators and policy makers must be aware of the potential challenges in implementing multicultural education (Gollnick, 199). These include biases, prejudices, and the resistance to change from various stakeholders, such as parents, communities, or even educators themselves. Overcoming these barriers requires strong leadership, continuous training for teachers, and a curriculum that is both inclusive and adaptable to different socio-geographic settings (Dania et al, 2025). Ultimately, the relationship between multicultural education and intercultural awareness is reciprocal. As multicultural education is implemented with sensitivity to local socio-geographic realities, it enhances intercultural awareness, which, in turn, supports the broader goals of fostering social cohesion, reducing discrimination, and promoting peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.

This research shows a significant and positive correlation between the implementation of multicultural education and students' intercultural awareness. Sukarma (2011) emphasized that, Multicultural education can play an important role in developing students' intercultural awareness by exposing them to cultural diversity, encouraging inclusive interactions, and appreciating the values of diverse cultures. Said by Munadlir (2016), Multicultural education in schools must be carried out comprehensively, not only with fair attitudes between students of different religions, races, ethnicities and cultures, but also must be supported by a curriculum, both written and hidden curriculum, integrative evaluation and teachers who have understanding, productive attitudes and actions in providing multicultural education services to students.

4. CONCLUSION

The research conclusion shows that the implementation of multicultural education has a positive relationship with students' intercultural awareness. The results of the assumption test show that the two variables, namely the implementation of multicultural education and students' intercultural awareness, show a normal distribution. In addition, the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.63 indicates a significant positive relationship between the two variables.

Multicultural education gives students the opportunity to learn about diverse cultures, values, and perspectives. Through interactions with peers from various cultural backgrounds, students can gain a deeper understanding of cultural differences and foster an accepting attitude towards diversity.

In addition, socio-geographical factors influence the relationship between the implementation of multicultural education and students' intercultural awareness. Students' intercultural awareness can be influenced by variables such as a region's cultural diversity, its demographics, and the availability of educational resources.

Overall, the implementation of multicultural education makes a significant contribution to increasing understanding, appreciation and respect for cultural diversity. Meanwhile, intercultural awareness contributes to understanding and interacting with people from various cultural backgrounds. As a result, multicultural education can be a useful instrument for fostering intercultural awareness and inclusive attitudes in educational environments.

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