

# Implementation of Multicultural Education In Indonesia Between Expectations and Reality

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## Abstract

The purposes of this study were to describe the current implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia and to describe the implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia in the future.

This research was a qualitative research to understand a phenomenon in the social context naturally with the advanced process of interaction between researchers' in-depth communication and the phenomenon. Subject of research was the researchers, while the research object was the Multicultural Education Implementation of current and forthcoming. The methods of data collection were interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis technique was interactive analysis techniques as disclosed by Miles and Huberman (1984: 23) which included four steps, namely, data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

The results showed that the implementation of multicultural education with a lot of experience irregularities included the dimensions of the multidimensional concept, the dimension of meaning, the content dimension, the cultural dimension, the dimension of primordialism, the egocentric dimensions, and the religious dimensions. It is expected that the future implementation of multicultural education should be improved both in quantity and quality. However, it will require a profound awareness from the Indonesian citizens that pluralism is a priceless investment. With the plurality, Indonesian people can be dynamic, creative, and innovative. Thus, the understanding should be introduced as early as possible that multicultural education can provide services to all students regardless of their socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnic background, race or culture, and equal chance to learn in school. Multicultural education was also based on the fact that students do not learn in a vacuum as their cultures influence them to learn in a certain way.

The researchers concluded that nowadays, the implementation of multicultural education faced a complex problem, thus, the future implementation of multicultural education should be able to minimize the various forms of problems that currently appeared.

**Keywords:** Multicultural education, pluralism, interactive analysis.

## 1. Introduction

The topic of multicultural education in Indonesia is not a new thing (Baedhowi, 2016, lecture sari Education Policy Analysis, IP doctoral program, UNS). It is confirmed that the substance of multicultural education in Indonesia was already initiated when Indonesia was in the process towards the independence, i.e, when The Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI) was formed by Japan and carried out the first session on May 29 to June 1, 1945 to address the basic problem of Indonesia. In the session, there was tense argument between the religious groups and the nationalist groups related with the formulation of the first principle of Pancasila composed by the small committee of Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (PPKI) dated June 22, 1945. The religious group insisted the first principle should be: Belief in the one and only God with the obligation

to enforce Islamic Laws (*Sharia*) for the Muslims. The proposal was disapproved by the nationalists, because the Indonesian population was diverse instead of only the Muslims. The nationalist assumed that the formulation of the first principle should be acceptable to all religions in Indonesia, thus, it should be Belief in the one and only God. In the advance, after the reflection conducted by the religious groups, the proposal was accepted for the realization of national unity. Basically, the essence of multicultural education is tolerance to realize the unity of the nation.

The main key of multicultural education is the absence of discrimination in providing educational services to the children of the nation. Multicultural education is a means in achieving education for all.

In Indonesia, the essence of multicultural education is very important in realizing the Homeland. Because only by being aware of the diversity and efforts to maintain, preserve and embody in the life of society, nation, and state, the disintegration can be addressed. The effort should also be supported by eliminating the egocentric in local, regional, and national levels as it is potential as the conflict that will threaten the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia.

Therefore, in this study, there were several questions that required in-depth reviews. They were: How is the implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia at this time and how is the implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia in the future.

## 2. Methods

This research was a qualitative research. Creswell (2010: 8) explained, "Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzed words, the report detailed views of information, and conducts the study in a natural setting". Furthermore, Moleong defined that qualitative research is a scientific research, aiming to understand the phenomenon in the context of natural social interaction process with the advanced in-depth communication between the researcher and the phenomenon under study (Herdiansyah, 2010: 9). It is also defines as a research to investigate, locate, describe, and explain the quality or feature of the social influences that cannot be described, measured or explained through a quantitative approach (Saryono, 2010: 1). Similarly, Sugiyono (2011: 15) concluded that the research methods of qualitative research is based on the philosophy post-positivism, it is used to examine the condition of the object that is natural, (as the opponent of experiment) where the researcher's key instrument is sampling data source which is done purposive and snowball, collection techniques by triangulation (combined), data analysis of inductive/qualitative, and its results further emphasize the significance of the generalization.

From the theories, generally, the definition of qualitative research is a research method that is based on the philosophy post-positivism, is used to examine the condition of natural objects, in order to understand a phenomenon in the context of natural social interaction process with the advanced in-depth communication between the researcher and the phenomenon under study.

Subject of research was the researchers themselves, while the research object was the implementation of Multicultural Education in the present and in the future. Data collection methods were interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis technique was interactive analysis as disclosed by Miles and Huberman (1984: 23) which included four steps, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The challenge to conceptualize the general application of multicultural education in Indonesia was complicated since each expert proposes their concepts based on their respective scientific background. There were various outlooks on multicultural education. Azyumardi Azra (2005) asserted that multicultural education is a cross-border discourse due to its relation with to the issues of social justice, democracy, and human rights. It is an education for or about the diversity of cultures in response to the changing of demographics and culture of a particular society or even the whole. Prudence Crandall argued that multicultural education is education that focuses on the background of the students from the aspects of ethnic, race, religion/beliefs, and culture (culture). Briefly, Andersen and Custer (1994) suggested that it is an education about cultural diversity. While Musa Ash'ari stated that multicultural education is the process of understanding a way of life respect, sincere, and tolerant of diversity of cultures living in the midst of a pluralistic society. Multiculturalism is basically a world view that can be translated into a variety of cultural policies which emphasizes the acceptance of religious plurality and multicultural reality in people's lives. It can also be understood as a worldview which is manifested in the political consciousness. Similarly, according to Parekh, (1999) multicultural society is a society composed of several types of culture with all of the benefits, with a few difference in the conception of the world, a system of meaning, values, form of social organization, history, customs and habits . Subsequently, Parekh (1997) explained that multiculturalism consists of three things. *First*, the relationship with the multi-cultures. *Second*, the reference to the prevailing diversity. *Third*, the relation with specific action in response to diversity. The suffix "ism" denotes a normative doctrine is expected to work on every person within the context of society with diverse cultures. Process of multiculturalism as a normative doctrine exists and is implemented has been done through political policies, in this case the education policies. Lawrence Blum (2001) affirmed, "Multiculturalism includes the understanding, appreciation and assessment of a person's culture, as well as respect and curiosity about ethnic cultures of others". Prof. Bennett formulated the core values of multicultural education, namely: (a) The appreciation of the fact plurality of cultures in the community, (b) Recognition of Human dignity and human rights, (c) Development and responsibility of the world community. (D) Development of human responsibilities towards the earth. Based on those core values, there are six goals in association with them, namely: *First*, to develop various historical perspectives of community groups (ethnohistoricity). *Second*, to strengthen the awareness of cultural life in the community. *Third*, to strengthen the intercultural competition of cultures living in the community. *Fourth*, to eradicate racism, sexism, casteism, and various types of prejudice. *Fifth*, to develop awareness on the earth. *Sixth*, to develop skills of social action. Regarding with the focus of multicultural education, H.A.R Tilaar revealed that in multicultural education program, the focus is no longer directed solely to the racial groups, religious and cultural domain or mainstream. Such focus will be pressure on multicultural education that emphasizes an increased understanding and tolerance of people from minority groups against the dominant mainstream culture, which eventually leads them integrate into the mainstream.

Multicultural education is actually behaviour of care and understanding toward the politics of recognition for the minority groups. In the context, multicultural education perceives a wider public. Based on the basic view that the discrimination and non-recognition are not only rooted in racial imbalance, the paradigm of multicultural education includes the subjects of injustice, poverty, oppression, and backwardness of the minority groups in different places, social, culture, economics, education, and so on.

Such paradigm will encourage the development of ethnic studies and subsequently will include the studies to the primary to higher education curriculum. The main purpose of this subject is to attain empowerment for minority and disadvantaged groups. The reasons are the three-dimensional ontology and axiology epistemology. Ontology: the branch of metaphysics that discuss the nature of ultimate reality or entity (being), epistemology: the branch of philosophy that believes the resources and knowledge. Axiology: the investigation of the values /dignity and human action (a branch of philosophy) (Dictionary of Popular Natural, Pius A Partanto, M Dahlan Al Barry). Muhaemin El-Ma'hady (2004) affirmed that disadvantageous is a very unfavourable conditions, which brings into a loss. For example in the group that has a certain different characteristics (blacks and whites in the United States) which enforce discrimination.

The legal basis of multicultural education in Indonesia are Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as the Law No. 20 of 2013 and Law No. 23 of 2014 on regional autonomy as well as education policies especially on free education which prohibits discrimination and other treatments. There was an amendment in The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, of Article 31 of the National Education, which are: (1) every citizen has the rights for education; (2) every citizen is obliged to follow basic education and the government must finance it; (3) The government shall manage and organize a national education system, which increases the faith and devotion and noble character in the context of national life that is governed by law; (4) the state prioritizes education budget at least 20% of the national and regional budgets to meet the needs of national education; (5) government to advance the science and technology to uphold religious values and national unity for the progress of civilization and prosperity of mankind.

Other new paradigm as outlined in the new Education Law is the concept of equality, the education units held by the government, and educational units held by the public. Likewise, the equality between educational units managed by the Ministry of Education and those managed by the Ministry of Religion which has certain characteristics. Nevertheless, in all levels of education, the name of education organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (madrassas and so on) is also mentioned. Thus, the Education Law has put education as a whole systemic (article 4 paragraph 2).

The main objective of multicultural education is to advocate a sympathetic, respect, appreciation and empathy attitude for the adherents of different religions and cultures. Imron Mashadi (2009) explained that multicultural education aimed to establish a strong, advanced, just, prosperous, and prosper nation without any discrimination on ethnicity, race, religion, and culture. With a passion to build the strength in all sectors in order to achieve common prosperity, high self-esteem and appreciation from other nations. According to Sutarno (2008: 1-24), the purpose of multicultural education covers eight aspects including, Development of ethnic and cultural literacy. Facilitating the students to have the knowledge and understanding of the various cultures of the entire ethnic groups. Personal development. Facilitating the students to perceive that the culture of each ethnic has equal value between one another, thus, they are confidence in interacting with other people (ethnic group) in different cultures. Clarification of values and attitudes. Education develops core values derived from the principles of human dignity, justice, equality, and democratic. So that multicultural education can assist the students to understand that the conflict of different values is inevitable in a pluralistic society. Equality to create educational opportunities for all students of different racial, ethnic, class, and cultural groups. It can assist the students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills required in carrying out roles as effectively as possible in a democratic-pluralistic society and

required to interact, negotiation, and communication among the citizens of diverse groups in order to create a moral society. According to Clive Black, the objectives of multicultural educational: (a) Promoting Ethnic Studies about the student's ethnic culture, including the heritage language course, (b) Teaching all student about various traditional cultures, both national and international. While such studies can be pursuit in a variety of ways, the arrangement of systematic review of fundamental issues of culture and ethnicity in a nation is also required, (c) Promoting acceptance of ethnic diversity in the society, (d) Providing an understand about the equality of different religions, races, national background and so on, (e) Fostering genuine acceptance and equitable treatment to the ethnic sub-cultures associated with different religions, race, national background, *etc.*, both in national and international, (f) Assisting the students to work toward more adequate cultural form, both for themselves and society.

David Westmeier in "A Basic Philosophy of Multicultural Education and its Application to the Classroom" and Hilda Hernandez in the book entitled "Multicultural Education: A Teacher's Guide to Content and Process", mentioned that Sleeter and Grant (1988), two teachers of multicultural education suggested that there are five approaches of multicultural education. The meaning of multicultural education approach is that "in defining and implementing multicultural education, there are several schools, views, or understanding, and the implementation is what is understood.

The first approach, according to Sleeter and Grant, is "teaching the culturally different". It means by teaching about a particular culture which is different from the one's culture. In this case, the target of multicultural education is the minority where they are small in number and living within the mainstream society with different culture. It aims to introduce the minority to the mainstream's culture, thus, they have the competencies (knowledge, values, and other skills). Here, the fundamental purpose of multicultural education according to this approach is that the minorities can live in accordance with the majority culture.

The second approach is "human relations". The target of multicultural education in this approach is those who live in a social environment where a lot of social relations between cultures exist, or in other word, in the community where a lot of social relationships between people from diverse ethnicity and culture exist. According to this approach, multicultural education is appropriate to conduct in the urban areas or big cities where the residents consist of various ethnicities and who live daily in diverse cultural relations. The relations between ethnic groups are potential for a variety of cultural conflicts. The main purpose of multicultural education is to prevent social conflicts caused by differences in ethnical and cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, Sleeter and Grant did not mention the content or form of multicultural education with this approach, but it is allegedly connected with the culture studies to attain mutual recognition, mutual understanding, and mutual respect.

The third approach is "ethnic studies". Concretely, there is a field of study or subjects called "Chinese-American ethnic and culture studies", "Afro-American ethnic and culture studies", and so on. The target is anyone who is interested about a particular culture and the aim is to introduce certain distinctive culture. The disadvantage of this approach is the tendency of the students to study their own culture instead of other cultures. However, it is basically provides an introduction of different cultures for anyone who are interested to attain mutual understanding, mutual recognition, and mutual respect.

The fourth approach is "multicultural education approach". The target is all students. With this approach, all students, without exception, study a wide range of cultures ("multi cultures"). Thus, the contents of multicultural education is multicultural, so-called

“multicultural educational approach”. The purpose of this approach is to promote human rights (all people have rights by nature as human beings who should be treated humanely), appreciate the differences (ethnic and cultural differences do not have to make some people consider themselves as higher and others as inferior), and responsive and willing to get involved to overcome the problems of equality (equality of humanity in spite of different race, colour, and culture).

The fifth approach is “Multicultural and social reconstructive”. Reconstruct is defined as rearrange, reorder, or rebuild. Westmeier *in* Tatang M. Amyrin, claimed this approach was the most suitable and appropriate to describe what is exactly multicultural education based on several reasons. *First*, since the title of social multicultural education is more appropriate and suitable in accordance with the designation of multicultural education. The designation of multicultural education must demonstrate (ideal) "multicultural education" to attain the entire curriculum (field of study). "Multicultural education" is no longer just a part of the “social studies”. Thus, the subjects of language, arts, math, science and others should be part of the educational curriculum (in school or formal education institutions) that have multicultural content. Secondly, according to Westmeier, the term "education that is reconstructing the social order" reflects the main purpose of this fifth approach that is, in fact, include the purpose of the fourth approach, which is related to the teaching and learning of human rights, respect diversity and differences, equality issues and so on. Thus, the ultimate goal is to make disciples (students) understand, responsive for a responsibility, and willingness to take action with regard to various multicultural issues (cultural diversity) that exist within families, communities, and society in a nation.

Indonesia is a country with a high diversity in various cultural background, ethnicity, language, and religion diverse. Thus, strategic approaches and instruments that can be utilized as a national movement to realize the national unity and integrity toward a sovereign and dignified nation are required. One of the instruments is the multicultural education.

Based on the field analysis, the diversity implementation of current multicultural education in Indonesia can be explained from several aspects: diversity in the concept dimensions, diversity in the meaning dimensions, diversity in the content dimension, diversity in the cultural dimensions, diversity in primordial dimensions, diversity in egocentric dimensions, and diversity in the religious dimension.

To build a nation with diverse ethnics and cultures distributed throughout a vast area, a strategy and systematic effort is required. The consideration which should be contemplated for the subject of education in Indonesia is by developing a model of multicultural education, i.e., education that is able to accommodate numerous differences in a harmonious, tolerant, and mutual-respect. It is expected it will be one of the pillar of peace, prosperity, happiness, and harmony among the Indonesian society. Multicultural education as a pedagogical obligation in the framework of cultural studies views the education process as an acculturation process. Multicultural is the idea derived from the fact of people diversity. Different life experiences raise the different awareness and values as the representation of the ethnical background. The diversity, however, leads to conflict due to fanaticism. In the education realm, it can cause a problem in the learning process.

Multicultural education expectedly becomes an effective tool to accommodate the issue of ethnic and cultural diversity in the learning process. In the multicultural education implementation, students are exposed to different concepts. These concepts include the concept of a successful life, belief systems, spirit of other cultures, see the world from other view, and appreciate other's strengths and weaknesses. Multicultural education also processes more subtle

ability through moral and character, a willingness to look at ourselves from the perspective of others, and a willingness to listen to others with sympathy and sensitivity. Multicultural education should be able to instil the students' awareness that they are members of ethnic and cultural communities, citizens of a political community, and also a part of the human being in general. Moreover, the system of multicultural education can assist the students to understand the history, social structure, culture, language, and religion in the community, culture, and politics, hence, they can understand themselves better and find a way around the community (Parekh *in* Ruminiati, 2011: 7)

In fact, the problems related to multicultural education in Indonesia were distinctive to the problem faced by other countries. They included the role of multicultural education to address the social matters and the problems related to cultural-based learning. However, they could be used as material to develop the multicultural education in Indonesia. Problems related to multicultural education in Indonesia currently are due to the following factors:

a. Regional diversity of cultural identity

Diversity is an asset as well as a potential conflict. Regional cultural diversity indeed enriches the culture and is a valuable asset to build a multicultural nation. But it is also potential to disintegrate and a fertile land for conflict and suspicion. The problems arise when there is an absence of communication between the cultures. The lack of communication and understanding among diverse cultural groups is vulnerable to conflict. The conflicts that occurred during this time in Indonesia were triggered by ethnicity, religion and race diversity, such as Sampit Conflict in the Central Kalimantan. Moreover, it can be used by provocateurs as a means to provoke the community. As an anticipation, the prevailing diversity should be recognized as something that exist and natural. Furthermore, conflict management is required to eliminate possible conflicts at an early stage as the solution, including the Multicultural Education. Multicultural education is expected to promote mutual understanding, appreciation, and communication.

b. Power shifting from the central to the region

Reformation and democratization had brought Indonesia to confront with a variety of complex new challenges. One of them was related to the cultural issues. In the cultural realm, the shift of power from the central to the region brought on a major impact on the recognition of local culture and diversity, in contrast to the centralized cultural policy in the New Order era. Culture, as a wealth of the nation, was developed in the context of the regional culture, instead of being regulated by the central policy. In power, things are used for power or to perpetuate the power, including the issue of regionalism. The concept of "Sons of the Soil" to occupy the central positions in the government is aimed for equalization capability instead of ideology disclose. "Sons of the Soil" in the government are essential to encourage the young **generation** to actively participate in the regional development. The expectation is the principle of equity and equality. However, if this issue is exaggerated, people will be fragmented by the regional issues. People will easily ignited by the issue of regionalism. Personal factors (e.g., envy and desire for position) can be turned into a destructive public issue. The concept of territorial division into provinces or regencies rifling recently is always being blown-breathed by certain individual or groups in order to gain the public sympathy. They join forces to take advantage of this regional issue. People are easily provoked particularly for the oppressed and disadvantaged groups.

## c. Nationalism shortage

Cultural diversity requires a force to bring people together (Integrating Force) related to the plurality of the country. Pancasila as the outlook of the nation, national identity, and ideology of the state is a fixed price that is not negotiable and serves as an integrating force. Currently, Pancasila receives less attention and proper position since the issue of regionalism is propounded. Narrow and fault perception on Pancasila as the ideology of the New Order should be abandoned.

During the New Order, policies were centralized and the fall of the regime suggested people to abandon or to reform the foundation, including Pancasila. However, not all things existing in the New Order were incorrect, just as not all of them were correct. There are things that still need to be developed. Nationalism should be upheld, but in educational, persuasive, and humanistic approach rather than with the deployment of force. History has demonstrated the significant role of Pancasila to unify regionalism. Indonesia urgently needs a strong spirit of nationalism to reduce and eliminate issues that potentially disunite and disintegrate the nation.

## d. Fanaticism

Fanaticism in a broad sense is necessary, but the narrow fanaticism is dangerous as it considers a particular group as the truest and kindest and the other groups as enemy. The phenomenon of narrow fanaticism, however, took place in various ways in this country. For instance, *Bonek* as one among football supporters represents its homeland. The local football club is good, but the excessive fanaticism for the club and blindly hostile the other clubs becomes a destructive one. Physical attacks against the opposed players and the destruction of cars and objects around the stadium indicated the phenomenon.

Fanaticism and pride in the groups is good and very necessary, but as they are expressed in hostile and aggressive behaviours, the narrow fanaticism becomes destructive. The conflict and dispute between local police officers and the national army in Indonesia is also an example of the narrow fanaticism. Moreover, when this fanaticism mingled with religious issues (e.g. in Ambon, Maluku and Poso, Central Sulawesi), it is potential as a threat for national integration.

## e. Conflict of National Unity and Multicultural

There is a tug of war between the interests of national unity and the multicultural movement. On the one hand the yearning to maintain the unity of the nation is oriented to national stability. On the other hand, practically, the concept of national stability is manipulated to achieve certain political interests. The existence of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in Aceh can be one example that when national stability maintenance policy was turned into pressure and mobilization armed force. This would lead to a feeling of antipathy towards the central power which of course it could be a threat to national integration. Fortunately, this disagreement can be resolved by peaceful and civilized way. Recently, all the warring parties have been invited to have reconciliation and jointly develop the areas ravaged prolonged war and the effect of tsunami.

From the multicultural side, there is the movement to secede from the central power with the justification of having different cultures with the central government in Java, for example, Free Papua Organization (OPM) in Papua. However, the peaceful and multicultural resolutions have been able to solve the separation issue lately. One of the OPM warlord who surrendered and committed to the Unitary State of Indonesia has established the village of Unity in Diversity in Nabire, Papua.



- f. Uneven economic welfare between diverse culture groups  
Issues with racial (SARA) background, like Sampit in the Central Kalimantan, were motivated with the jealousy as the immigrant population was perceived to have higher social and economic status than the native inhabitants. Thus, some of the cultural conflicts were triggered by the issue of economic welfare issue. Involvement of people in demonstrations rife in this country, regardless of theme events and demonstrations, often happened because people experiencing great pressure in the economy. In fact, they were willing to be paid for twenty thousand rupiah to attend the demonstration regardless with the orientation. There are many cases that have been unfolded by the media about this. People will be easily intimidated to take anarchists action when they have economic problems. They will release their frustration to the well-established groups that enjoy the wealth while they are incapable to reach it. This is apparent from the phenomenon of luxury cars vandalism by irresponsible people. Luxury cars as a symbol of luxury and reliability frequently become the target of destruction in a riot. Even in everyday life, they are frequently damaged in certain areas dominated by the oppressed groups.
- g. Alignments of the Mass Media  
Among the mass media, there is certainly a particular ideology that is highly valued and respected. The issue of press freedom, autonomy, and public's right should be balanced with the responsibility for the impact of provided information. People should be alert for the existence of certain parties using the media for their particular interests, which can actually degrade the culture of Indonesia. The affairs involved the government officials and public figures that have been spotlighted by the media consequently bring on "punishment" in terms of both the legal and social sanctions which can foster a new culture which undermines the noble culture. Indeed, such news is very marketable and easily gets the public's attention, but it also potential to influence people to absorb the negative values in contrast to the Eastern culture.  
The divorce issues among the public figures represented in the media also bring a negative public opinion, thus, the impression of divorce and remarriage become a new culture and a common trend. The institution of marriage can be less respected. However, television and the media must provide appropriate substance for the spectators and educate good culture, as watching television and reading the newspaper become a strong tradition in this country. So, the spectacles serve as a guide, not just spectacle guidance. When the eviction of illegal settlements is displayed in the form of residents' mournful cries combined with the actions of officers who dragged the homeless, it will have another effect for viewers when at the same time, the media displayed the tattooed thugs who act against the civil service officers. Irony was apparent when the highlight is on the crying babies/parents in compared with a tattoo on the arm or on the back. The event is the eviction of illegal settlements, but different symbols used. Crying is a symbol of weakness, helplessness and despair. Tattoos are often connoted as a symbol of thugs and extortion acts. Television greatly influences public opinion in highlighting various incidents. By looking at the weaknesses and shortcomings in the implementation of multicultural education at the present time, the future implementation of character education should be done in a systematic reform. The point is that the future implementation of multicultural education should be improved in quantity and quality. Thus, a profound awareness throughout Indonesian citizens that pluralism is a priceless investment is required. By plurality, Indonesia can be dynamic, creative and innovative. For it must be fostered as early as possible, multicultural education is expected to provide

services to all students regardless of socioeconomic, gender, sexual orientation, ethnical background, race or culture, they have an equal opportunity to learn in school. Multicultural education is also based on the fact that students do not learn in a vacuum, the culture influences them to learn in a certain way (Parkay and Stanford, 2011: 35).

Therefore, the practice of multicultural education in Indonesia should be flexible, unnecessarily in the form of separate subjects or monolithic. Implementation of multicultural education is based on five dimensions: (1) the integration of content, (2) the process of formulating knowledge, (3) the elimination of prejudice, and (4) similar pedagogy, and (5) school culture and structure that empowers schools.

Concerning with cultural pluralism, a new tolerant and elegant paradigm to prevent and solve conflicts of culture is required, namely the paradigm of multicultural education. It is important to guide the students in addressing realities of a diverse society, so that they will have an appreciative attitude towards the diversity. Tangible evidence of widespread conflict of ethnic, culture, race, and religion shows that our education has failed in creating awareness of the importance of multiculturalism. As for the building of multicultural education paradigm offered Zamroni (2011) are as follows: Multicultural education is at the heart of creating quality education for all citizens. It is not just the curriculum changes or changes in teaching methods as it transforms the consciousness that provides direction on where the transformation of educational practice should be heading. Experience showed that the misleading efforts to omit the education gap posed a growing inequality. Thus, the teachers who provide multicultural education must have confidence that; cultural differences have the strength and value, the school should be an example for the expression of human rights and respect for cultural differences and groups, justice and social equality should be of main focus in the curriculum, the school can provide the knowledge, skills, and character (i.e. values, attitudes and commitment) to help students from diverse backgrounds, with family and community schools can create an environment that supports multiculturalism.

Until now, multicultural education is still a discourse. The practice of multicultural education in Indonesia does not seem workable as in the United States, although in terms of cultural diversity they indeed have a lot of similarities. It was caused by a long history of education that has been motivated by primordialism. For example, the establishment of educational institutions based on religious backgrounds, regions, individuals and groups.

Therefore, the practice of multicultural education in Indonesia can be flexible with emphasis on the basic principles of multiculturalism. Whatever and however the shape and model of multicultural education, it should not be separated from the general purpose of multicultural education, namely: (1) to develop a fundamental understanding of the process of creating the system and provide equal education waiter, (2) to relate the curriculum with the character of teachers, pedagogy, classroom climate, school culture and context of the school environment in order to build a vision of “flexible school environment”. The principle of flexibility in multicultural education was also suggested by Gay (2002) as cited by Zamroni (2011: 150), that it is a mistake to implement multicultural education in the form of a particular subject or monolithic. Instead, multicultural education should be treated as an approach to promote the comprehensive and thorough study. Multicultural education can also be applied as a tool to construct a tolerant and inclusive society that has a spirit of equality in social life, when each citizen contributes in accordance to the ability and opportunity for the society as a whole entity. Even Gay recommended that it should provide opportunities for students to learn the role of the culture in improving the prosperity and welfare for the people.

Zamroni (2011) suggested that multicultural education is proposed to be used as instruments of social engineering through formal education, in other words, school institutions should play a role in promoting awareness of living in a multicultural society and developing an attitude of tolerance to realize the need and ability to cooperate with all the prevailing differences. Schools should be perceived as a small community, in terms it should contain the element of the society. School perceived as a small community implies that the student is seen as an individual who has the characteristics embodied in talents and interests and aspirations as the student's rights.

At the school level with high diversity, the school must pay attention to the student that has different developmental needs including: a) the personal and social needs, b) the needs for vocational and career, c) the psychological and spiritual and moral development needs.

At the community level, the requirement should be fulfilled including: a) the academic needs, b) the psychological needs, c) the need for togetherness, and d) the need for security. Education should be able to meet those needs. Schools must serve as a safe haven with the atmosphere of kinship and a spirit of mutual support. In relation with that, the learning process is aimed to develop an individual in a whole including the intellectual, social, moral and spiritual. Extrinsic motivation and encouragement for students should be accompanied by the intrinsic ones.

From the perspective of learning outcomes, multicultural education has two goals for the student developments. *First*, the development of cultural identity as the students' competencies to identify themselves with a particular ethnicity. The competencies include the knowledge, understanding, and awareness of ethnic groups to generate pride and confidence as a member of a particular ethnic group. *Second*, the interpersonal relations.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the description in previous sub-chapters, several conclusions can be explained as follows:

1. Analysis of multicultural education implementation in Indonesia in the present indicated several prevailing weaknesses and shortcomings. This was due to lack of public awareness of the importance of the diversity. In education realm, there were schools that had not promoted the appreciation for the diversity. Teachers as one of the major stakeholders in the education sector had not provided exemplary means for the students to realize the spirit of tolerance in building the unity of the nation of Indonesia.
2. The implementation of multicultural education in the future should be focused on the resolution of the weaknesses and disadvantages of the previous implementation. Therefore, the integrated improvement of both in quantity and quality of multicultural education is required, for example, the establishment of school that assimilate the newcomers and native people in the transmigration program areas that are accompanied by actual assimilation activities such as collaborated performing arts. In order to eliminate any gap, discrimination must be omitted for instance exclusive concept schools that are specialized only for a particular ethnic, religion, residents, or community, as it will build a mindset barriers that could undermine the values of tolerance and the spirit of unity. Similarly, the discrimination educational model must be eliminated by changing it into a flexible educational model that appreciates the diversity. The activities involving ethnic, cultural, religion, language or other discriminations should be reduced to a minimum as much as possible as they would damage the unity of soul. The perspective on natives and

non-natives should be omitted because eventually, it will create differences that ultimately destroy the spirit of national unity.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the analysis of the multicultural education implementation, the recommendations were formulated as follows:

1. Religious leaders, community leaders, traditional authority, youth leaders should disseminate the assimilation in sustainable, systematic, and continuous activities.
2. The Government should establish the assimilation of schools abstain from discriminatory treatment for students.
3. The government should prohibit the exclusive school model due to its prone for non-tolerance and non-spirit of unity.
4. The Government should promote the multicultural activities, such as, the national youth campsite, multicultural dance competitions, and other activities.

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