

## Development of Religious Activities Through Cultural Transformation in Hindu-Muslim Multicultural Educational Institutions

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**ABSTRACT:** *Plurality is an undeniable fact in Indonesia. This plurality can have good and bad impacts, such as social disunity or social capital for nation-building. The natural source of this dispute cannot be separated from the domination of values and partial truth claims by each group, although various practical interests serve as catalysts. The purpose of this study was to analyze and provide an interpretation of the development of students' religious activities through the transformation of school culture in multicultural educational institutions at Tengger Children's Nature School, Pasuruan. The research method used is qualitative with the type of case study research. Data collection by in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis by presenting data, condensing data, and drawing conclusions. As for checking the validity of the data, researchers do this using credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This research resulted in the finding that the development of a culture of mutual collaboration within the Hindu Muslim community at Tengger Children's Nature School was carried out through activities that prioritized politeness in interactions, besides that all school members were involved in cohesive activities through the school community association, also through organizational activities in traditional event committees. This is a superior value possessed by multicultural educational institutions in the cultural transformation to develop the quality of education, especially in the religious field, where mutual respect can be achieved.*

Pluralitas menjadi fakta yang tak terbantahkan di Indonesia. Pluralitas ini mampu menimbulkan dampak baik dan buruk, perpecahan sosial atau modal sosial pembangunan bangsa. Sumber alami dari perselisihan ini tidak lepas dari dominasi nilai dan klaim kebenaran yang parsial oleh masing-masing kelompok, meskipun berbagai kepentingan praktis menjadi katalisator. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis, memberikan interpretasi terhadap pengembangan aktivitas keagamaan siswa melalui transformasi budaya sekolah pada lembaga pendidikan multicultural di Sekolah Alam Anak Tengger, Pasuruan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi kasus. Pengumpulan data dengan wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipan, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dengan penyajian data, kondensasi data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Adapun pengecekan keabsahan data peneliti lakukan dengan cara kredibilitas, transferabilitas, dependabilitas, dan konfirmabilitas. Penelitian ini menghasilkan temuan bahwa pengembangan budaya mutual

kolaborasi dalam komunitas Muslim Hindu di Sekolah Alam Anak Tengger dilakukan melalui aktivitas dengan mengedepankan kesantunan dalam berinteraksi, selain itu seluruh warga sekolah dilibatkan dalam aktivitas kohesif melalui paguyuban warga sekolah, juga melalui aktivitas berorganisasi dalam kepanitian acara adat. Hal ini menjadi nilai unggul yang dimiliki lembaga pendidikan multicultural dalam transformasi budaya sebagai upaya dalam mengembangkan mutu pendidikan khususnya dalam bidang keagamaan bisa saling menghargai.

**Keywords:** *Religious Activity, Cultural Transformation, Multicultural Education, School Culture.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Geographically, Indonesia consists of 13,667 islands, both inhabited and uninhabited. Ethnically, there are 358 ethnic groups and 200 sub-ethnic groups. From the language aspect, there are three main languages and 300 dialects (Seff, 2021). Its population is 237.6 million people, who adhere to various religions and beliefs such as Islam, Catholicism, Protestant Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and various beliefs (Sahlan, 2020).

Pluralism is an undeniable reality in this archipelago. On the one hand, this plurality becomes the social capital of nation-building; on the other hand, it has the potential for social conflict (Abbas, 2012). Although various practical interests trigger these conflicts, the natural source cannot be separated from the hegemony of values, and one-sided truth claims from each group (Hutchison, 2022).

The results of a survey on Indonesian student extremism conducted by the Setara Institute in 2020 concluded that 35.7 per cent of students have a new understanding of extremism at the level of thought, 2.4 per cent have shown intolerance in their actions and words, and 0.3 per cent are potential terrorists (Komariah, 2020).

The results of a survey conducted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in 2021, regarding religious tolerance, from 2,213 respondents in 23 provinces of Indonesia, 59.5% of respondents did not mind being neighbours with people of different religions, while 33.7% chose to refuse. Neighbours of different religions. Then related to the construction of places of worship, 68.2% of respondents chose to reject the construction of places of worship of other religions, and only 22.1% said they did not mind (Basir et al., 2021).

Seeing the social phenomena described above, it is necessary to research the extent of individual social movements, social interactions, religious attitudes, and trust in passing on a culture of inter-religious collaboration. Studies like this are critical to increasing religious harmony from being passive (tolerant) to harmonious with a dynamic face (Mubarok & Andjani, 2014).

Research on diversity education through the development of student religious activities through the transformation of school culture in Tengger Indonesia's Hindu-Muslim multicultural educational institutions began with the researcher's interest in data on religious diversity in Tengger Village, which occupies a part of the Lumajang

Regency (Sidi, 2020). In 2013, the Tengger Children's Nature School was built by the *Yayasan Arek Lintang* (ALIT) and several donors. This school can accommodate children from Ngadiwono Village and Banyumeneng Village, about 4 kilometres away. This Nature School has 169 students; 80% or 135 students are Hindu, and 20% or 34 other students are Muslim, under the leadership of the principal, who is also Hindu (Document. Arsip Desa Tengger, 2022).

Instructors' and students' participation in numerous cooperative activities during the construction of Sanggar, Pure, and Mosque worship structures is evidence of good social interactions. According to the shamans, another way to maintain religious unity in the Tengger tribe is to protect local knowledge traditions still practised there. such as the *Karo-Karo*, *Kasada*, and *Unan-Unan* Ceremony.

Joint committees in *unan-unan* and *bari'an* ceremonies are part of the Tengger Children's Nature School's collaborative culture for teaching peace in difference. Even though they hold opposing beliefs, they frequently perform this ritual together as is the habit and usual in the Tengger tribe to continue teaching social harmony to pupils of the Tengger Children's Natural School (Interview, Sudarto, 2022).

The phenomenon in Sekolah Alam Anak Tengger is a form of education that teaches diversity. Diversity education requires inter-relative ethical, intellectual, social, and pragmatic rationalization (Ibrahim et al., 2011), namely teaching the ideals of inclusivism, pluralism, and mutual respect for all people and cultures, which are prerequisites for ethical life and full civic participation in a multicultural democracy and a diverse human world (Khoiruman, 2021).

Although research that discusses interfaith diversity education has been carried out for a long time, Tuula's (Sakaranaho, 2018) research concludes that interfaith forums in the Finnish City have a significant role in fostering and maintaining inter-religious harmony. Naimah's research also shows findings, among others, stating that Christians behave more inclusively than Muslims as a minority group in the two countries studied (Na'imah et al., 2021). Maria Agnes Sasitha's research concludes that the higher a person's inclusive behaviour, the higher the inclusive attitude and level of trust toward other religions (Sasitha, 2018).

Furthermore, Sulastri's research concludes that internal harmony within religious communities *first* includes solidarity among fellow members. Solidarity among members becomes more substantial when there are internal religious activities (Sulastri, 2021). *Second*, inter-religious harmony is manifested through cooperation between Muslim, Christian, and Hindu communities. And *third*, harmony between religious communities and the government. Implementing these three forms of harmony can realize safety and welfare between religious communities in Kindergarten Village.

In contrast, Ismail et al.'s research show that the form of cooperation carried out by Muslims and Christians is implemented in humanitarian activities driven by students with different religious backgrounds (Ismail et al., 2020). In line with Xiaobiao Lin's research, which states that teenagers must be prepared to become candidates for religious leaders, the social change movements carried out in research are alternative and reformative (Lin et al., 2022). These social movements aim to change the behaviour of individuals or the general public. Based on the description of the previous research, the researchers found novelties that have yet to become the focus of research, namely, the development of students' religious activities through the

transformation of school culture at Tengger Children's Nature School, East Java, Indonesia.

The concept used as a reference in cultural development is interpreted as transformation, internalization, or sublimation in its application to real social life carried out in ways: imitation (presenting models), education, communication, and socialization (Tamma & Sartori, 2021). In the context of this research, cultural development is the process, method, and act of passing on cultural values that are transformed into non-formal learning models from the elders to the younger generation.

According to Gorsky, cultural interactions in heterogeneous societies can be mapped into two; the first is passive cultural inheritance. In passive interaction, what stands out is the attitude of accepting differences as factual. The first model is usually known as an inclusive attitude. Second, active cultural inheritance is shown by engaging in various activities amid differences and diversity; even though humans differ from one another, it does not become a barrier to participating in matters relating to the public interest (Gorsky, 2016).

The transformations approach in the Development of a model of inter-religious cultural education, according to (Gomes, 2013), can be carried out in several dimensions: 1) acceptance of belief, 2) acceptance in social interaction, 3) acceptance of race, and 4) acceptance of intellectuals. Of the four dimensions of diversity values education, all of these dimensions can be applied to heterogeneous societies because, from a sociological perspective, they are achieved by building a culture of social coexistence, spreading a culture of freedom, and accepting diversity and differences.

## **II. METHOD**

This study was descriptive and qualitative, utilizing an ethnographic approach (Sherman, 2018). Concerning the first research question, the researchers revealed the natural environment. Data were collected in a natural setting as the direct data source. In this research, the researcher acts as a research instrument (Creswell, 2017). Primary data for this study consisted of 8 key informants: community leaders, teachers, Pandits or Pandita, ulama', and the head of Sekolah Alam Anak Tengger, East Java.

Interviews were conducted three to four times and lasted between 50 and 70 minutes, on an average of 1 hour. The results of the interviews were recorded and transcribed word for word. Interview questions included philosophy, ideology, values, vision, mission, ideals, hopes, life beliefs, and his views on the diversity learning model: representations of the cultural inheritance of cooperation in the Tenggerese community and those relevant to the research focus. Overall, this study examines community leaders and residents of Sekolah Alam Anak Tengger, East Java, engaged in diversity and harmonious education.

Primary data is also generated from observations, including the physical condition of the village, rituals, meetings, the atmosphere of the community learning process, community interaction and communication, and community activities relevant to the research focus. Meanwhile, what is learned through documents includes personal documents and official documents. The personal document that the researcher obtained is the profile of Sekolah Alam Anak Tengger, Pasuruan, East Java. In contrast, external documents are information materials a social institution uses, such as

magazines, bulletins, statements, and news broadcast to the mass media (Williams, 2015). For external documents, researchers can collect some of them, such as magazines, journals and bulletins, and others.

Data analysis was carried out in the field and after the field. Analysis while in the field was carried out to build a strong focus of study by developing analytical questions. Furthermore, at the end of the analysis, while in the field, the researcher reflects on thoughts about the focus being studied (Djafar et al., 2021). Meanwhile, data analysis after leaving the field was carried out to organize and review the analysis results and whether the researcher had found complete and optimal data to describe the focus of the final research report.

Theoretical data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman path, consisting of three simultaneous activity flows: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (verification) (Hamilton & Finley, 2020). Researchers coding field notes based on the research focus carried out the data reduction stage. Presentation of data through narrative text, matrices, or charts will also be used, making it easier for researchers to build relationships between existing texts. Finally, conclusion drawing/verification is intended by the researcher to find the holistic meaning of the various propositions found about the research focus (Rahi, 2017).

### **III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Activities of Mutual Respect Between Students, Teachers and Society**

Based on data collection in the field, teachers at the Tengger Children's Nature School in East Java try to set an open example to students with the main principle of politeness in interactions. This is based on the principal's statement that parents must teach politeness at home, starting with Respecting parents, such as good behaviour, speaking gently, telling the truth, and not doing actions that can hurt feelings, such as lying and not listening. He advised. Love your brothers, sisters, brothers, and the whole family by speaking kind words, not harshly, and maintaining harmonious relationships with all family members. Respect the neighbours around the house by often greeting each other when they meet and helping each other when someone is in need.

In line with the explanation of Mr Qohhar, who stated that one way to strengthen inter-religious harmony is by showing a commendable attitude, for example, speaking politely, helping neighbours who have problems, and the most important thing is not insulting other beliefs or religions, because what seen and heard will also be imitated by the community.

This explanation is in line with the opinion of Sukriyani, a Hindu religious figure, who said, "Exemplary is an effective way to foster harmony in the Tengger village community because by showing a good attitude towards society, the community will automatically imitate. Children can get a good education at home only if the family has a healthy life. The elders should treat the younger ones with great affection, while the younger ones should show respect to the seniors. Setting a good example differs from teaching; everyone can teach, but only a few can be role models (Trie, 2021).

In line with Mr Sanimo's statement that an educator must have character first before carrying out character-building for students because every child has a great curiosity

about something, making his five senses see natural things. These real things create a child's curiosity about something and ultimately imitate what they have seen. With such a high curiosity from an early age, they must show commendable qualities that they will imitate and eventually become habits.

Based on the description of the research results, the exemplary community leaders (Pandita, teacher, and cleric' in Tengger Village became a benchmark in the transformation of daily activities in natural schools to provide exemplary examples in speaking and behaving with the principle of courtesy. The exemplary of Pandita, teachers, and clerics towards the community is the key to success in preparing and forming an awareness of collaboration between Hindu and Muslim students. This is because Pandita, teachers, and clerics are the best figures in students' eyes who will be used as role models in identifying themselves in all aspects of their lives. So it is understandable that role models given by religious leaders, teachers, and Tengger village cousins have a positive impact on strengthening the multicultural reality of minority Muslims.

In the context of the findings of this study, cultural transformation in schools is the process, method, and act of passing on cultural values that are transformed into non-formal learning models from the elders to the younger generation. For example, parents who apply the value of politeness in speaking and behaving, these parents have done two things, namely first, providing education to young people. Education can exemplify good attitudes and behaviour, providing input, reprimand, criticism, and constructive suggestions. Second, get appreciation and respect from young people.

As explained by (Geertz, 2013), a role model is an effective way to pass on the culture of harmony in the Tengger village community because by showing a good attitude towards the community, the community will automatically imitate. Older people should treat the younger ones with affection, while the younger ones should show respect for the seniors.

Through the example of Gorsky (Gorsky, 2016), the education of cultural inheritance is called the contribution and social action approaches. An educator must have character first before carrying out character-building for students because every child has a considerable curiosity about something to make his five senses see natural things. These real things cause children's curiosity about something that, in the end, they imitate what they have seen.

The research findings strengthen the results of (Lin et al., 2022), which state that teenagers must be prepared to become candidates for religious leaders; the social change movements carried out in research are alternative (Badrun, 2019) and reformative movements (Hutchison, 2022), namely social movements that aim to change the behaviour of individuals or the general public.

### **Mutual Assistance Activities Between Students**

Based on field findings, several deliberation forums were held by priests, kiai, nature school teachers, and representatives of student guardians. Mr Qohhar, the principal of the school, said that the parents of the students agreed to form a Charity Charity Association (PAS), the purpose of creating this union was to help and relieve families of disaster experts in matters of death for example, buying shrouds and funeral preparation services. The source of funds for this association comes from mandatory contributions in *arisan* activities and voluntary contributions from students and

guardians; from the contributions of the Tengger School Charity Group (KAS), it is growing.

The school charity group (KAS) agreed that an *Arisan* activity would be a forum for gathering, meeting, and strengthening relationships between school members, student guardians, and Tengger village community leaders. *Arisan* is a reflection of the cultural activities of the Tengger village community, which prioritizes activities carried out together, exclusively, intimately, and privately as well. This is based on the assumption that in these social gathering activities, each individual will carry out more efficient direct interactions to make the communication more reciprocal or reciprocal.

The reciprocal relationship referred to here is the tendency to exchange kindness; exchanging kindness can be in the form of social care (social solidarity), caring for one another, and helping each other. This reciprocal relationship (reciprocity) occurs because it is driven by norms and values internalized within students. There is a sense of social concern, mutual concern for one another, and mutual assistance between students regardless of religious background (Muslim or Hindu).

The caring attitude and feelings of Tengger Alam School students can be seen in their daily life as part of a community group. Students, as part of a group or community members, cause them to care about what is happening around them; for example, a disaster occurs (illness, death, etc.) or matters related to celebrations (weddings, thanksgiving, etc.). Some people cannot afford it or need help; there are activities (at associations, in the neighbourhood).

The Tengger people also recognize the existence of *Pengasih Pitu* (Seven love affections) (Waluyo, 1997), including *Asih Marang Kuasa Pangeran* (God), *Asih Marang Bapa Biyung* (Parents), *Asih Marang Ibu Pertiwi* (Motherland), *Asih Marang Jiwa* (sense of soul), *Asih Marang Sepadane Urip* (Fellow Humans), *Asih Marang Sato Kewan* (Animals), *Asih Marang Tandur Tetuwuh* (Plants). In this *tetuah*, the Tengger people are emphasized to do good to fellow human beings even though they have different beliefs; not only humans but nature, plants, and animals must also be maintained. This is what causes the Tengger community to be thick with harmony.

They manifest this concern in the form of assistance to other people or in religious teachings it is called "alms," which is to set aside some of the assets they have acquired and owned for the benefit of the people or to help other people who are in need (not able). Apart from alms, there is also helping fellow students who are in need, if there are those who are challenging to help so that later if these traders experience difficulties, they will be assisted as well. This concern will be mutually reciprocal and mutually beneficial.

Based on research findings, social activities in cultural transformation at the Tengger Children's Nature School were formed by holding regular meetings to foster a sense of brotherhood and concern among residents. Discourses and ideas from various layers of society regarding the establishment of intense interactions in which it can be said that the reciprocity that occurs in social relations pays more attention to activities related to the life cycle, such as the donation of disasters to others (death, accidents, illness) as well as various activities that related to the association that is followed (activities both social or other meetings). Forms of solidarity that are naturally formed can become a medium for forming religious maturity and establishing cooperation in projects that concern common interests so that religious cohesiveness is established between students.

The establishment of intense interactions between Tengger Children's Nature School students is categorized by (Geertz, 2013) as an alternative form of movement, namely social movements that aim to change some of a person's behaviour, which aims to exchange kindness, exchange of kindness can be in the form of social concern (solidarity social), pay attention to each other and help each other. This reciprocal relationship (reciprocity) occurs because it is driven by norms and values that are internalized within religious adherents. There is a sense of social concern, mutual care for one another, and mutual assistance between residents regardless of religious background (Muslim or Hindu) in the Tenggerese community.

The attitudes and feelings of concern that the Tengger Children's Nature School habituates are in line with the explanation (Gomes, 2013) that interactions in religious beliefs can be carried out in several dimensions: 1) acceptance of the beliefs between the beliefs of students who are Muslim and Hindu 2) acceptance in the social interaction of students in activities and associations that have an impact on their culture to care about what is happening around them.

### **Organized Cultural Activities in Traditional Events**

Based on the results of Mr Sukriyani's statement as a teacher at the Tengger Children's Nature School, it was stated that people's participation in their involvement in traditional activities is highly valued because it plays a vital role in maintaining the traditions that have been passed down from the ancestors of the Tenggerese people, both Muslims and Hindus. Religious leaders from Hindus and Muslims took the initiative to make the ceremony a unifying custom for layers of elements of the Tengger community, both Hindus and Muslims, like the *unan-unan* ceremony, which is a ritual performed by slaughtering a white buffalo dedicated to God as an expression of gratitude for the blessings nature has given so that the necessities of life can be fulfilled and also as a form of a request to be kept away from all misfortunes.

In this banquet, all Tengger Children's Nature School students were also involved as participants so that they felt they both had historical stories that could be passed on to the next generation. Because all mingle together without any partitions within the frame of kinship, even though they have different understandings and beliefs, this is a form of togetherness within the framework of religious diversity but still family.

Apart from the *unan-unan* ceremony, there is also the *karo-karo* ceremony tradition, the most significant ceremonial tradition carried out by the Tengger people, both Muslim and Hindu. The celebration of this ceremony is similar to the Idul Fitri and Idul Adha holidays, where *karo-karo* is carried out for two weeks on the second month of the Tengger calendar, or the Tengger people call it Karo Month. Precisely on this day, the people of Tengger apologize to each other and also visit every house in the local community; what is most impressive in this ceremony is that there is the slaughter of all livestock products, both Chicken, Goat, Pig, Cow, and Buffalo to be enjoyed for the meat.

This celebration is highly anticipated by students and teachers of the Tengger Children's Natural School because it is a reward for a year's hard work both cultivating, farming, and raising livestock. All walks of life, young and old, big and small, Hindus and Muslims mingle as one in the joy of the Karo celebration. This *karo* celebration seems more complete and lively if the harvest is abundant.

Based on research findings, religious leaders from Hindus and Muslims took the initiative to make traditional ceremonies unify the elements of Tengger society, both Hindus and Muslims. The participation of the people in their involvement in traditional activities is highly valued because it plays a vital role in maintaining the traditions passed down from the ancestors of the Tenggerese people, both Muslim and Hindu.

The research findings are in line with Geertz's social and cultural theory (Geertz, 2013) that various traditional ceremonies that require community participation contain a system of knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, morals, customs, and other abilities, and habits that are accepted by the community and can foster a sense of kinship because all mingle as one without partitions in a family frame even though they have different understandings and beliefs, this is a form of togetherness within the framework of religious diversity but still family. That is, cultural values are efforts that cover all aspects of human life formed through internalizing expressive, progressive, and integrative values.

Whereas the manifestation of a collaborative culture between religious communities in the Tengger Tribe, when referring to opinions, is included in the category of active cultural inheritance, shown by being involved in various activities amidst differences and diversity, even between one human being and another. Others are different but are open to participating in public interest matters (Gorsky, 2016).

The findings reinforce Tuula's research, concluding that the Interfaith Forum in Finland City has a vital role in fostering and maintaining interfaith harmony (Sakaranaho, 2018). In line with the research of (Sasitha, 2018) and (Sulastri, 2021), the higher a person's inclusive behaviour, the higher the attitude toward inclusiveness and the level of trust towards other religions.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

There is the development of social activities through cohesiveness based on the social capital of the community, so the transformation of collaborative culture at the Children's Nature School in Tengger Village in this study is included in the category of active cultural transformation, shown by being involved in various activities amidst differences and diversity, even though one human being is different from another, but not a barrier to participate in matters relating to the public interest.

This study found that developing religious activities, such as mutual respect between students, teachers and the community, and cooperation between students through a cultural transformation in togetherness, aims to change some of a person's behaviour. This can be preserved for the next generation on an ongoing basis. The findings of this study are similar to the model of social movements in the diversity of Geertz, Gorsky, and Munson as alternative forms of movement. The social movement displayed is the exchange of kindness which can be in the form of social care (social solidarity), mutual care, and mutual assistance. Through Gorski's example, cultural inheritance education is called the contribution and social action approaches.

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