

Students' Social Interaction in Multi-Ethnic Schools

Tri Astuti, Suyahmo*, Masrukhi, Ngabiyanto

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: suyahmo@mail.unnes.ac.id

Abstract. In Tegal city, there is a multi-ethnic school. Its students have different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This school should manage these differences properly so that there is no conflict. The research objectives are (1) to examine and analyze social interactions among students in multi-ethnic schools and (2) to analyze the obstacles students face in conducting social interactions in multi-ethnic schools. The research location is Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School, a multi-ethnic school in Tegal. Its method was qualitative with a case study type. The research method used is qualitative with a case study type. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and observations. The data validity testing uses the method and source triangulation technique. Data analysis uses compiling data systematically, organizing data into categories, describing data, choosing valid data, and making conclusions. The study result shows that students' social interactions occur in cooperation, competition, and competition. The obstacles faced in social interaction at school are characteristics of immature students, habituation in the family environment, and the density of student activities. This article concludes that the social environment influences students' social interaction in multi-ethnic schools. Social interaction goes well based on the value of tolerance. To minimize conflict between students, the school develops its value.

Keywords: Social interaction; Multi-ethnic school; Students

INTRODUCTION

The people of Tegal, Central Java, are predominantly Muslim. They come from the Javanese tribe. They adopted traditional Islam. Most of them have the social organization Nahdatul Ulama (NU). In the Muslim-majority community, a multi-ethnic school exists, namely Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School of Tegal. The school was founded in 2005 and is one of the leading schools with A accreditation. This school obtains achievements in various fields from local to international levels. The teachers, students, and administrative officers come from diverse cultures, religions, and ethnicities. The school should manage this diversity properly so that there is no conflict. In this diverse background school, there is a minority. Minorities are usually considered a threat to the majority (Weiner, 2018). The minority in this school are students from ethnic groups outside of China. In fact, in multi-ethnic schools, the majority and minority can live side by side and carry out activities together at school. They can accept cultural differences. Culture needs to be inherited. Besides, the younger generation must also understand the history of their ancestors (Asabiyyah & Khaldun, 2020). One of the means of inheritance and teaching culture is school.

Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School is developing very well. In 2021, this school will become a driving school. The driving school is a school appointed by the Ministry of Education to test the Independent Curriculum.

The implementation of activities at this school refers to the Independent Curriculum while still implementing multicultural education. It is because the school is a multi-ethnic school. The value of tolerance develops to create harmony. According to Bennett (2016), how implement multicultural education is in various ways, including through the media of music. Teachers can carry out learning to achieve educational goals.

Multicultural education needs to develop so that the value of tolerance between students can be well maintained (Rubin, 2018). Tolerance is reflected in mutual respect for differences and implemented in various activities at school (Irfani et al, 2013). One of the activities that can be a forum for implementing the value of tolerance is extracurricular activities at school. According to Uberoi & Modood (2019), students whose schools develop multicultural education are more tolerant than students whose schools do not. In multicultural education, students interact well socially. The school environment is one of the factors that influence social interaction.

The school environment influences the ongoing process of student social interaction. The school environment referred to in this case is the condition of students, teacher backgrounds, facilities and infrastructure, and school policies. It can affect student activities, both inside and outside of learning. The school environment can also affect student achievement (Wahid et al., 2020). Student achievement must be in a conducive environment so that students can study

comfortably at school.

Social interaction can lead to integration and disintegration (Permatasari, 2021). Social interactions that lead to social integration are interactions that have positive values, such as cooperation. Meanwhile, social interactions that lead to disintegration have negative values, such as competition and conflict. In multi-ethnic schools, students interact socially by applying the tolerance value so that students can adapt to each other and accept differences. According to Choi & Lee (2020), classes with diverse students must develop multicultural education so that these students can participate in comfortable teaching and learning process. They can interact socially without any conflict in class. Social bonds need to build in a diverse classroom. According to Fitzgerald (2021), social bonding is necessary for school. They make friends in class and consider friends like siblings, so they feel comfortable with each other.

METHOD

The research method is qualitative. This research is a case study. It is because the phenomena studied are different from phenomena that occur elsewhere. The data analyzed are in the form of words and sentences.

The research location is Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School, Gurami Street Number 7, Tegalsari Village, West Tegal District, Tegal City, Central Java. Researchers chose this location because it is a multi-ethnic school that develops multicultural education in various school activities. The school still exists in the community of Tegal, which is predominantly Muslim. The people of Tegal are very interested in sending their children to this school.

The research subjects were grade 2 students. This study focuses on the social interactions of students having different cultures and ethnicities in multi-ethnic schools. Social interaction at school manifests in various activities.

Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The researcher conducted observations inside and outside classrooms to see student activities related to social interaction. The researcher interviewed grade 2 students as the key informants; teachers and principals are additional informants. The researcher documents activities related to social interaction so that the activities are visible.

The data validity testing used the method

and source triangulation techniques. These techniques are to cross-check the data. The researcher used the method triangulation technique to cross-check the data obtained from the interviews with observation and documentation. The source triangulation technique is to cross-check data from several sources so that the results are objective and valid.

Data analysis uses compiling data systematically, organizing data into categories, describing data, choosing valid data, and making conclusions. The conclusion is necessary to comprehensively understand the forms of social interaction among students in multi-ethnic schools.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social Interaction among Students in Multi-ethnic Schools

Plurality often triggers conflict in society (Muslim, 2013). Communities should accept each other's differences so they can live side by side both in the community and in educational institutions (schools). Schools where students have diverse backgrounds, both religious and cultural, must develop multicultural education for the development of tolerance values.

Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School is a multi-ethnic school in Tegal. The students come from different religions and cultures. Social interaction among students with diverse backgrounds is unique to study because the character of each student is also not the same. All levels of society carry out social interaction. This interaction occurs between individuals with individuals, individuals with groups, and groups with groups. Social interaction can also occur between individuals with autism (Morrison et al., 2020). The form of their social interaction is certainly not the same as non-autistic individuals. In addition, social interaction can also occur between men and women who have different age levels. Based on these facts, social interaction can occur between anyone at any time. Social interaction has a specific purpose and objective.

One of the goals of social interaction carried out by Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School students is to realize the value of harmony in schools. Differences in schools can be managed through multicultural education so that tolerance can develop optimally.

There are 35 students in grade 2 of Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School. Their teachers divided them into two groups, namely

group A and group B. The teachers who teach in each class consist of homeroom teachers, sports teachers, and English teachers. Teachers at this school also have diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, namely Islam and Christianity. It is not a problem in the implementation of various activities at school. The following is the number of grade 2 students in terms of religion category:

Table 1. Number of Grade 2 Students

No	Religion	Number of Students
1	Christian	14
2	Catholic	9
3	Buddha	7
4	Islam	5

Source : Researcher's documentation, 2022

Table 1 shows that grade 2 students adhere to various religions. There are 14 Christian students, 9 Catholic students, 7 Buddhist students, and 5 Muslim students.

Each religion has its holiday. When students celebrate certain holidays, other students also appreciate them. The value of tolerance develops well among students of different religions and ethnicities. The form of mutual respect for differences is the implementation of social activities. The following are photos of students carrying out social activities.



Figure 1. Students are carrying out social service activities in the context of celebrating religious holidays

Figure 1 shows students celebrating a joint holiday, Idul Fitri for Muslim students and Waisak for Buddhist students. This activity occurs regularly every year. Each student should save independently at home. The students hand over their saving a month before social activities. The classroom teachers receive the funds. Students, assisted by teachers and school

principals, spend the money to buy necessities (nine staples) distributed to communities around the school that are considered underprivileged. They hold regular social activities yearly to help others and respect differences between students. The form of social interaction in this activity is cooperation.

In addition to social activities, there are also lining up activities before teaching and learning activities begin. This activity aims to form student discipline and tidiness. The teacher checks the completeness of the students' clothes. Neat students are welcome to enter the classroom first. Through this activity, the form of social interaction leads to competition and competition. Students compete to be the best and the neatest. It is for getting permission to enter class first. Students who can enter the classroom early will get a reward from the teacher. The teacher will reward the students who can do good and positive things at school (Anggraini, 2019). They will feel proud because they are better than their friends. In addition to rewards, teachers also give punishment students who violate school rules. According to Hand (2020), regulation must control social interaction. The students agree on the rules; for example, they should not disturb each other during school activities. Another rule is to practice lining up in front of the class before starting the lesson. The following is a picture of students lining up in front of the classroom in the morning.



Figure 2. Grade 2 students are lining up in the morning before entering the classroom

Figure 2 shows that, at Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School, there is a habituation activity in the morning, namely lining up in front of the class. This activity is to check the neatness and discipline of students. After the teacher confirms the number of students present, and the neatness and discipline of students, then students are welcome to enter the classroom in

turns.

Another activity that students do at school is extracurricular. This activity is mandatory for students. Grade 2 students are required to participate in scouting and Wushu activities. Extracurricular activities are an effort to realize multicultural education in schools. The principal is responsible for all student character-building programs and extracurricular activities. It includes: establishing policies for the formation of student character through extracurricular activities, providing direction to vice principals and supervisors regarding student character building through extracurricular activities, and monitoring the implementation of extracurricular activities that lead to character building. The principal must report and account for the student character-building program to the school supervisor. The following is a photo of an interview with the Principal of Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School in Tegal City.



Figure 3. Interview with the Principal of Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School

Figure 3 shows the researcher conducting interviews with school principals as a policymaker in school. The interview result with Mrs. Dewi (the Principal of Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School) indicated that this school has three main activities include intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular. Intra-curricular activities are the implementation of learning in the classroom starting at 07.00-12.00 for grade 2 students. Co-curricular activities are activities carried out at hours or outside of intra-curricular activities, such as numeracy literacy habituation activities and projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. Meanwhile, extracurriculars are students' self-development activities to train students' soft skills. In practice, students should fit their talents and interests. The principal has full responsibility for all these activities in the school. This activity contains multicultural education.

Based on the results of observations, the

form of social interaction between students is as follows.

Table 2. Forms of student social interaction in multi-ethnic schools

No	Social interaction	Forms of activities
1	Cooperation	Do the assignments given by the teacher in groups. Carry out class picket every day. Participate in scouting activities every Friday.
2	Competition	Compete to enter the classroom first in the morning. Compete to go home first when school hours are over.
3	Competition	Students compete when taking daily test, Mid-term test and Semester tests. Students compete in answering questions orally given by the teacher during learning.

Source : Researcher's Document, 2022

Students' social interactions can be observable in the learning process. Learning in the classroom is carried out by implementing discovery learning, where students understand concepts by taking specific actions until they can provide their conclusions (Kristin, 2016). Students are grouped into several groups to discuss the material. The following is a picture of students working on and discussing material from the teacher.



Figure 4. Students are carrying out cooperation in learning

Figure 4 explains that one form of student social interaction in the classroom is during learning. For example, when learning Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKN). Students make groups in class to complete a joint task given by the teacher. It is to mention the children's rights and obligations at home and at school, then explain whether they practice them or not. Student groups consist of boys and girls. They do not differentiate friendships based on gender, religion, and culture. All friends are equal and good; no one is bad in this world. According to Huang et al. (2021), women are more dominant in social interactions. Female students are more creative and mature; they dominate the process of social interaction.

Obstacles faced by students in social interaction at school

Social interaction is a social process that can occur anywhere, including at school. In carrying out social interactions, students face various obstacles, namely:

1. Characteristics of students who are still immature

The characteristics of students are very diverse, although the age difference is not so much. Age does not guarantee thinking and acting maturely. Grade 2 students, 8 to 9 years, can control their emotions and begin to train their independence (Zulvira, 2021). In this initial phase, maturity is still very simple; emotional stability is still in the early stage and sometimes disputes and fights still occur among students. They still often have disagreements, for example fighting over toys, books, and stationery. When this happens, the role of the teacher is necessary. The teacher provides understanding and advice so that they can share it. This process can be a means to mature the mindset of students to be more mature in acting. Students sometimes violate agreed-upon rules, for example, they are prohibited from interfering with each other or inviting their friends to joke during learning. Behavior that is not following the rules can also be said to be antisocial behavior (Kabiri, 2020). In this context, the intended antisocial is an attitude that violates the collective agreement.

2. Habituation in the family

The habits that parents instill at home determine the character of students. Parents have a significant role in parenting at home (Rahman, 2020). There are no parents who teach poor things to their children. They always try to do the best

for their children. They train and instill the habit of good behavior from an early age.

3. The density of student activities

After the long bell rang (indicating the time to go home), parents or caregivers usually picked up the students to go home immediately. They have less time for playing outside of school activities. It is because they have to continue other activities outside of school. These activities are additional hours of lessons. After the Covid-19 pandemic, parents choose to catch up with their children's knowledge. During a pandemic, students study online or virtually. There are obstacles to implementing virtual learning (Miller, 2016). Students have learning difficulties because they do not meet the teacher directly. Parents think it is not optimal, so now is the time to condense activities so that the lag does not continue.

The density of student activities makes them have to be disciplined with time. They have less time to interact with their friends. The solution is maximizing time during school hours for students. Students choose to play and interact as much as they want before going home.

Another obstacle relates to the differences in cultural background. The solution to these obstacles is developing the value of tolerance. They have an understanding and realize that Indonesia is a plural country. Indonesia is a country with a diverse ethnic, cultural, ethnic, and religious community (Anggraeni, 2022). This difference is understandable so that no division is in all circles, including education.

One of the efforts is through learning activities. Learning is carried out based on Information Technology. Students learn by utilizing various applications. Grade 2 students can bring smartphones to school if needed to support learning. Before learning, the teacher must plan a good learning outcome (Parkhouse et al., 2019). Teachers carry out learning in various ways. The teacher applies a different learning model to each material. When teachers apply specific learning models based on Information Technology, students must cooperate in bringing smartphones to school. The use of smartphones is to access material digitally, solve evaluation questions through the quiz application, and so on. After learning is complete, students should save their gadgets. They sometimes play games first in class during recess. According to Bulduklu (2019), students' interest in games will decrease with age. When studying in elementary school, students are very interested in games. It made

students become individualists in the class at that time. Another obstacle is that gadgets affect students' social interactions (Harfiyanto, 2015). Students become busy with their apparatus. They don't talk to each other.

Classroom learning also uses the principle of cooperative learning. According to Yoshimura et al., 2021, cooperative learning is an effective method to apply in the classroom. It is because students can work together with other students. The teacher groups students into certain groups with the aim that they can make friends regardless of differences.

Social interaction is necessary for students during the learning process (Fahri, 2019). Students can learn together in class with friends. Boys and girls can learn in one group (Powers et al., 2020). It is also known as the social learning model. Students get used to interacting in class on a small scale before they socialize in the community.

According to Mulisa & Kassahun, (2019), the implementation of cooperative learning also has obstacles. The obstacles encountered by the teacher were that students in the class were more difficulty with the condition because they were busy with their respective groups. Students are doing social interaction to complete group assignments. It takes a long time for teachers to condition the students. None of them are Children with Special Needs, so teachers do not need to give special treatment to students. According to O'Flaherty, et al. (2019), students without the risk of disabilities have better social interaction skills when compared to students with disabilities. Students at this multi-ethnic school belong to the Children Without Special Needs category.

CONCLUSION

Social interaction among grade 2 students at a multi-ethnic school, in this case, the Tunas Hidup Harapan Kita Elementary School, Tegal city, went well. They base this social interaction on the value of tolerance which teachers develop through multicultural education. Social interaction leads to competition and cooperation. Even if students have conflicts in class, they can overcome them.

REFERENCES

- Anggraini, S., Siswanto, J., & Sukamto, S. (2019). Analisis Dampak Pemberian Reward And Punishment Bagi Siswa SD Negeri Kaliwiro Semarang. *Mimbar PGSD Undiksha*, 7(3).
- Bennett W, C. (2016). Secondary choral directors' multicultural teaching practices, attitudes and experiences in international schools. *International Journal of Music Education*, 34(2), 196-207.
- Bulduklu, Y. (2019). Mobile games on the basis of uses and gratifications approach: A comparison of the mobile game habits of university and high school students. *Convergence*, 25(5-6), 901-917.
- Choi, S., & Lee, S. W. (2020). Enhancing teacher self-efficacy in multicultural classrooms and school climate: The role of professional development in multicultural education in the United States and South Korea. *AERA Open*, 6(4).
- Fahri, L. M., & Qusyairi, L. A. H. (2019). Interaksi Sosial dalam Proses Pembelajaran. *PALAPA*, 7(1), 149-166.
- Febriyani, S. A., Rustini, T., & Wahyuningsih, Y. (2022). Pengembangan Sikap Toleransi Siswa Sekolah Dasar Pada Keberagaman di Indonesia. *Jurnal Gentala Pendidikan Dasar*, 7(1), 16-24.
- Fitzgerald, C. (2021). Social bonding and children's collaborations as citizen-peers at primary school. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*.
- Hand, M. (2020). On the necessity of school punishment. *Theory and Research in Education*, 18(1), 10-22.
- Harfiyanto, D., Utomo, C. B., & Budi, T. (2015). Pola interaksi sosial siswa pengguna gadget di SMA N 1 Semarang. *Journal of Educational Social Studies*, 4(1).
- Huang, X., Chen, M., Liu, X., & Mensah, I. K. (2021). Social interaction and entrepreneurial intention: an empirical investigation for China. *SAGE Open*, 11(3).
- Irfani, A. I., Alimi, M. Y., & Iswari, R. (2013). Toleransi antar Penganut Nahdhatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, dan Kristen Jawa di Batang. *Komunitas: International Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture*, 5(1).
- Kabiri, S., Shadmanfaat, S. M., Smith, H., & Cochran, J. (2020). A social learning model of antisocial coaching behavior. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 64(8), 860-879.
- Kristin, F. (2016). Analisis model pembelajaran discovery learning dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa SD. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Perkhasa: Jurnal Penelitian*

- Pendidikan Dasar*, 2(1), 90-98.
- Miller, B., & Morris, R. G. (2016). Virtual peer effects in social learning theory. *Crime & Delinquency*, 62(12), 1543-1569.
- Morrison, K. E., DeBrabander, K. M., Jones, D. R., Faso, D. J., Ackerman, R. A., & Sasson, N. J. (2020). Outcomes of real-world social interaction for autistic adults paired with autistic compared to typically developing partners. *Autism*, 24(5), 1067-1080.
- Mulisa, F., & Kassahun Mekonnen, S. (2019). The double-edged prospects of peer-to-peer cooperative learning in Ethiopian secondary schools. *Small Group Research*, 50(4), 493-506.
- Muslim, A. (2013). Interaksi sosial dalam masyarakat multietnis. *Jurnal diskursus islam*, 1(3), 483-494.
- O'Flaherty, C., Barton, E. E., Winchester, C., & Domingo, M. (2019). Coaching teachers to promote social interactions with toddlers. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 21(4), 199-212.
- Parkhouse, H., Lu, C. Y., & Massaro, V. R. (2019). Multicultural education professional development: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(3), 416-458.
- Permatasari, M. A., Suprpto, Y., Setiawan, D., & Setyowati, D. L. (2021). Implementasi Interaksi Sosial dan Kearifan Lokal dalam Konservasi Lingkungan Kampung Sasiranggan Banjarmasin. *Jurnal Kawistara*, 11(2), 143-155.
- Powers, R. A., Cochran, J. K., Maskaly, J., & Sellers, C. S. (2020). Social learning theory, gender, and intimate partner violent victimization: A structural equations approach. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 35(17-18), 3554-3580.
- Rahman, M. H. (2020). Orang Tua Multi Etnik Di Kota Tanjung Balai: Gaya Pengasuhan Dan Perkembangan Sosial Emosional Anak Usia Dini. *AWLADY: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 6(2), 173-191.
- Rubin, D. I. (2018). From the beginning: Creating a diversity and multicultural education course at Jacksonville State University. *Education and Urban Society*, 50(8), 727-746.
- Tohar, S. N. A. M., Zakaria, R. M. A., & Razali, W. M. F. A. W. (2020). Aplikasi 'Asabiyyah Ibn Khaldun dan Mekanisme Pengukuhan Semangat Kekitaan dalam Mendidik Generasi Muda Multi Etnik Malaysia [An Application of Ibn Khaldun's 'Asabiyyah and The Mechanism to Strengthen Esprit de Corps in Educating The Younger Generation of Multi-Ethnic Malaysia]. *BITARA International Journal of Civilizational Studies and Human Sciences (e-ISSN: 2600-9080)*, 3(4), 71-82.
- Uberoi, V., & Modood, T. (2019). The emergence of the Bristol School of Multiculturalism. *Ethnicities*, 19(6), 955-970.
- Wahid, F. S., Setiyoko, D. T., Riono, S. B., & Saputra, A. A. (2020). Pengaruh lingkungan keluarga dan lingkungan sekolah terhadap prestasi belajar siswa. *Syntax Literate; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, 5(8), 555-564.
- Weiner, M. F. (2018). Curricular alienation: Multiculturalism, tolerance, and immigrants in Dutch primary school history textbooks. *Humanity & Society*, 42(2), 147-170.
- Yoshimura, M., Hiromori, T., & Kirimura, R. (2021). Dynamic changes and individual differences in learners' perceptions of cooperative learning during a project activity. *RELC Journal*.
- Zulvira, R., Neviyarni, N., & Irdamurni, I. (2021). Karakteristik Siswa Kelas Rendah Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 5(1), 1846-1851.