

# Multicultural Value of Education in Forming the Community's Religious Attitude

Carlan<sup>1</sup>, Cecep Sumarna<sup>2</sup>, Dedi Djubaedi<sup>3</sup>, Siti Fatimah<sup>4</sup>, Abdurrahman Mas'ud<sup>5</sup>, Jamali<sup>6</sup>,  
Didin Nurul Rosidin<sup>7</sup>, Abas Hidayat<sup>8\*</sup>

<sup>1,8</sup>Doctoral Student, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syekh Nurjati, West Java, Indonesia

<sup>2,3,6</sup>Professor, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syekh Nurjati, West Java, Indonesia

<sup>4,7</sup>Lecturer, Faculty of Ushuluddin Adab and Dakwah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Syekh Nurjati, West Java, Indonesia

<sup>5</sup>Professor, Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, Semarang, Indonesia

**Abstract:** The diversity of society can be seen from the culture with diverse religious backgrounds. This study aims to show a portrait of community diversity which is reflected in the attitude of tolerance for religious diversity and can be managed properly through a harmonious portrait of diversity. The method used is qualitative with a phenomenological approach. This type of research places the researcher as the main tile and instrument. Data was collected by observation, interviews and documentation studies. Data analysis uses data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing, strengthened by triangulation analysis. The results of the study show that differences in beliefs and/or religions are integrated with Sundanese culture as a binder of togetherness among the people. Multicultural values include: living in differences, mutual trust and understanding, mutual respect, open thinking, appreciation and interdependence, non-violent conflict resolution. Pluralism is God's law, so religion or belief in God should not be forced on anyone. This is reinforced by data on the index of religious harmony in three dimensions, namely perceptions of tolerance between religious believers (64.14% with an interval of 3.72); the attitude of equality between religious communities (65.71% with an interval of 3.80); and inter-religious cooperation (73.60% with an interval of 4.14).

**Keywords:** Multicultural, diversity, religious, education value.

## 1. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the largest multicultural countries in the world [1]. There are more than 1,340 tribes using 652 different local languages. Religions and beliefs embraced include multi-religion. Tolerance in reality gives the color of attitude, namely the attitude of letting others be different (indifference), the attitude of understanding and accepting different people, the attitude of working with other people who are different. Religion is legitimized to commit violence or intolerance in the name of religion. Relations among religious is very sensitive with regard to social relations between groups of people in society. Relations between different racial and ethnic communities often lead to openness and understanding of fundamental values and principles. That relationship led to the

modification of stereotypes and led to the trend of increased feelings of friendship [2], however, there is a part that leads to the attitude and behavior of isolation, rejection and hostility between groups [3]. Conflict occurs often exploit religious sentiments are interpreted narrowly, including a variety of other interests (economic, political, social and cultural values, and advances in information technology and transportation). Until today it is not the case, due to local knowledge can facilitate communication and consultation which invites people to live in harmony. Indonesia, with its multiculturalism, finds it difficult to avoid social conflicts. According to the study of anthropology and sociology, the diversity of a nation can be potentially positive and vice versa [4]. Because conflict and violence are actual and historical realities, it is justified that acts of violence become mental behavior (mindset) and collective reasoning that is owned by society and individuals. Multicultural nationality is co-opted by logocentrism, a hegemonic interpretation of groups outside the group. The understanding of community theology is exclusive, so that societal bonds collectively do not apply to members of other groups [5].

The arrangement and maintenance of community harmony and social stability requires appropriate and effective policies. Governments are required to give space for the growing attitude of pluralism in public life by building a plurality commitment within the confines of the rule of law, in order to distinguish between tolerance and intolerance, between difference and deviation. In the Kuningan area, West Java, Indonesia has so far been categorized as a dynamic society. Some of the people there adhere to the Ahmadiyah Islamic sect and various other religious sects. The social system is closely related to people's beliefs. The government's religious perspective needs to pay attention to policy derivatives related to populist and adaptive public interests. If the policy is not populist and not adaptive to the community environment, counter-productive events can occur. This condition can encourage resistance by the

\*Corresponding author: abasstikescirebon@gmail.com

community causing social instability.

Multicultural be interpreted as recognition of the dignity of human beings who live in a particular community with ownership of their respective cultures that are quite unique [6], [7]. This view is called the politics of recognition. Multiculturalism as the belief that ethnic groups or cultures can live together in peace marked by the willingness of its members to respect the existence of other cultures [4]. Values developed in society, for example, living in differences, mutual trust and understanding, mutual respect, open-mindedness, appreciation and interdependence, conflict resolution and non-violent reconciliation [5]. To understand multicultural values, there are four core values, namely: 1) Appreciation of the reality of life with cultural plurality in society; 2) Recognition of the dignity and human rights of every human being; 3) Development of responsibility of the world community as a whole; 4) Development of human responsibility towards planet earth. The essence of it is an attitude of religious diversity, namely faith. Religion is the attitude or awareness of a person to carry out religion based on belief. Religious attitudes are formed because of the complex integration between the firm belief of religious teachings (cognitive component), the fun of the religion (an effective component) and behavior in accordance with the teachings of religion. Religious attitude is not congenital, but the acquisition or establishment after birth [8]. The complexity of the diversity that occurs in society is the basis of this research, which aims to explore the diversity of society, the education of multicultural values that are embraced, and the implementation model of multicultural values education in shaping people's religious attitudes.

## 2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach. The results in this study are not just a collection of information data, but are organized in a certain and meaningful thought structure to explain the problem under study [9] – [11]. This qualitative approach is focused on phenomenology that contains historical value [12]. Research site in Cigugur, Kuningan, West Java, Indonesia with a population of 44,941. This study identifies the symptoms in society about religious tolerance in Cigugur.

### 1) *Primary and secondary data*

Primary data were obtained from observations and interviews with religious and community leaders, social experts, and others. Sources of secondary data obtained by reviewing various references such as journals on religious harmony, multiculturalism and other supporting books relevant to the research theme.

### 2) *Data collection technique*

Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews with religious leaders, community leaders, researchers, experts, and others. Observations are made by observing all people's behavior in socializing in socio-religious practices. Documentation studies were carried out by making data in Cigugur Village related to community activities in religious social interactions.

### 3) *Data analysis*

Data analysis was carried out in three steps: 1) Data reduction

in the form of a sharper picture of the results of observations and interviews; 2) data display; 3) Conclusion and verification. Although basically this research is qualitative, related to religious attitudes, the researcher adds supporting data in the form of descriptive quantitative data that describes the index of religious harmony in Cigugur. This quantitative supporting data is intended as a form of confirmation of the qualitative analysis carried out by the author.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### A. *Portrait of diversity society*

Geographically, Cigugur is located west of the city of Kuningan, West Java, Indonesia. Cigugur with all its pluralism consists of various ethnic and ethnic groups, religions and beliefs living in harmony. Cigugur is dominated by ethnic Sundanese, then Javanese, Batak, Chinese, Maluku, Bugis, Madura and Minang. Religions and beliefs consist of Islam as the majority, then Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other cults. From a socio-cultural perspective, Cigugur has ethnic and religious diversity.

Cigugur society carries the motto regions cultural and religious tourism. Cigugur society tends to be religious and multireligious. Various religions live and develop side by side as can be seen from the various Sundanese traditional religious and cultural activities that are carried out regularly. The existence of DKM (Masjid Prosperity Council) as an effort to create a religious society, is supported by the availability of various worship facilities. The worship facilities in Cigugur are well maintained. With regard to religious life, Cigugur is a region with unique diversity because in one family there is religious diversity, between the religions of parents and their children are different.

### B. *Education of Multicultural Values Adhered to by the Society*

#### 1) *Living in a difference*

The people of Cigugur live in the midst of different beliefs and still display peace and togetherness, such as mutual cooperation among them. This state of full harmony is based on the awareness of equal rights as citizens and mutual respect for each difference. Cigugur society togetherness can be seen, for example who died were buried in the same location, although different beliefs. Various religious symbols become grave markers with religious values. In addition, togetherness is also seen in weddings. The Cigugur society has a family and is not allowed to practice polygamy and divorce. Such acts can be considered as forbidden.

Prince Djatikusumah, a traditional leader in Cigugur, adheres to the Sunda Wiwitan belief, but does not close himself to differences, including in his family. Her first child is a Christian girl and becomes a Bethel Pastor in Cirebon. His second son, Rama Anom, his potential successor in leading the customs in Cigugur adheres to the Sunda Wiwitan belief. Other children follow Islam, Catholicism, and Sunda Wiwitan. The Sundanese people have Sunda Wiwitan adherents who hold to togetherness. This happens because basically humans must adhere to the life principle of *welas asih* (affection), *undak usuk*

(language etiquette), tatakrma (manners), wiwaha yudha raga (war on the body) with the culture and cultivation they have. Differences in beliefs in the family do not make the family divided, but uphold togetherness.

One of the activities carried out by the community Cigugur society is Seren Taun. Seren Taun is a traditional activity carried out in Cigugur that involves all people regardless of religious background. Cigugur has a close relationship with Sundanese culture and indigenous peoples in other places, such as: (1) Urang Kanekes or Baduy people in Lebak Regency, Banten Province, (2) Kampung Naga community in Tasikmalaya Regency, (3) Cikondang community in Garut Regency, and (4) the people of Kampung Mahmud in Bandung Regency, West Java.

### 2) *Mutual trust and understanding*

Mutual trust as a set of values or norms owned by the community to create cooperation. This value provides awareness about the life of a multicultural society to understand each other's differences and complement each other and contribute to dynamic life relations. Mutual trust and understanding in the life of the multi-religious Cigugur society is the key to people's lives to create harmony. Differences in beliefs become colors for life.

This multicultural value can be seen in the annual community event. All religious adherents are involved in this activity. Togetherness is also supported by ties of blood and descent. Mutual understanding can also be seen in the commemoration of religious holidays, such as Idul Fitri and Idul Adha. They gather and participate in helping with the preparations for the celebration. This mutual trust was built because of the role of religious leaders and community leaders in maintaining harmony in Cigugur. Harmony and peace in people's lives result from the pattern of adaptation of society to culture.

### 3) *Mutual respect*

Religious differences for the citizens of Cigugur became the initial basis for unity and strength to create inter-religious harmony. All religions have a mission to bring peace and harmony, because they are both creatures of God. Sundanese culture and kinship ties for the Cigugur people become the grip of life, so that there is an attitude of tolerance. Tolerance for religious diversity in Cigugur can be seen in the community's slogan "Gotong Royong Sauyunan Bhineka Tunggal Ika, Hidup Tenram Ayem Dina keberagaman".

Tolerance in the Cigugur community, for example, can be seen during Ramadhan, the attitude of always respecting Muslims who are fasting by closing food stalls during the day. If there is a food stall that violates a warning to stop the activity. When Muslims celebrate Idul Fitri, people from other religions come to visit their homes and wish Muslims a happy Eid. In addition, the key to peace is the respective religious leaders. Religious leaders are assigned to be the key to the preservation of local culture. The influence of each religious figure in Cigugur strengthens efforts to maintain togetherness in a multicultural society.

### 4) *Open in thinking*

Everyone needs to have multicultural diversity so that they don't see differences in religious teachings through black and

white glasses. With regard to the differences in Cigugur, religious awareness must be based on the principles of divinity, humanity and nationality. Absolute religious attitudes in various cases of inter-religious and inter-cultural interactions can give birth to truth claims that can grow the seeds of radicalism by justifying all means. For humans, divinity and humanity are Fitrah. A multiculturalist must practice religion according to his abilities and be accompanied by an awareness that pluralism is natural and humans are part of the product of history.

### 5) *Appreciation and interdependence*

Social values that are based on an awareness of pluralism will give birth to a better life and high human values. The society will automatically show appreciation and maintain mutual attachment to each other. Therefore, it is necessary to build community interdependence from various differences in religious traditions. With regard to the attitude of solidarity among the citizens of Cigugur, it has become a commitment among the people to do well to anyone, cooperate and help each other, regardless of religion or ethnicity. The position of the Muslim community in particular, in the Seren Taun activity institutionally does not participate, but it has become the commitment of the Muslim community to respect the activity as an activity or event.

### 6) *Conflict resolution and nonviolent reconciliation*

The presence of the Kuningan Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB) in 2006, can be a medium to bring together representatives of all religious communities. FKUB acts as a mediator in resolving religious conflicts. Religious plurality in Cigugur is a wealth that can make a positive contribution in creating community welfare, on the other hand as a potential conflict. If development is not evenly distributed, it creates gaps in society and triggers the birth of conflict. Local governments are required to play a role in early prevention efforts by means of equitable development and the establishment of targeted regulations.

Since the management of the FKUB was formed in 2006 until now, various potential cases of inter-religious conflict can be resolved properly through a persuasive and familial approach. For the people of Cigugur, gotong royong is a medium to strengthen the community, in addition to the Seren Taun tradition. Catholics appreciate this tradition. They assume that it is a hereditary tradition that must be preserved. Based on conflict theory, if in society there are various religions with almost the same quantity, then the potential for conflict is large. However, in Cigugur, they live in harmony and the spirit of togetherness.

Relations between various religions in Cigugur are relatively good, because they are accustomed to a pluralistic life. In addition, there are strong hereditary relationships. They are not closed and form their own community, even though their ancestors are Muslim, it does not guarantee that their children and grandchildren are also Muslim. They choose beliefs without any coercion, without demands for descent and kinship, but they choose beliefs according to their respective consciences.

Conflicts in society are difficult to eliminate, but can be

anticipated and resolved with solutions based on human values. Education is the most appropriate vehicle to build awareness of multiculturalism. Education gives birth to awareness of multicultural life without state hegemony and co-optation. This effort can be achieved if there is a paradigm shift in education, such as uniformity towards a single identity, respect and appreciation for diversity to create harmony. However, this is needed not only at the level of paradigms and concepts, but also implemented in action. Differences in beliefs are lived with full togetherness. The process towards togetherness in life is not easy, because the ego and truest feelings must be put aside, not forcing others to believe what is considered true.

The description of multicultural value education in Cigugur described above includes 1) Living in Difference; 2) Mutual Trust and Understanding; 3) Mutual Respect; 4) Openness in Thinking; 5) Appreciation and Interdependence; 6) Conflict Resolution and Nonviolent Reconciliation. In addition, it is also added with the support of quantitative data regarding the perceptions and attitudes of the Cigugur community towards differences in religion and belief, equality, and inter-religious cooperation. The index of religious harmony in Cigugur based on data obtained through a questionnaire focused on three aspects, namely perceptions of inter-religious tolerance, inter-religious tolerance, and inter-religious cooperation.

The first aspect that is measured in this quantitative data is the attitude towards differences and tolerance among religious believers. The cumulative mean index value of attitudes towards differences and tolerance among religious believers in Cigugur is 3.72 and is in the interval 3.4-4.1 in the high category. This is also shown by the cumulative percentage between agree at 32.00% and Strongly Agree at 34.14%, with the total showing a fairly high number above 50%, which is 66.14%. Meanwhile, the highest index value is found in the indicator "Organizing worship/services/religious rituals containing blasphemy against other beliefs/communities heard outside the place of worship is not good for living together", which is 4.5 (very high), then the indicator "Neighbors of different religions are an important part of the neighborhood" of 4.6. and the indicator which is also very high is "All religions teach goodness" of 4.1. The lowest indicator is "Relatives/relatives can marry people of different religions", which is 2.34 and willingness to attend celebrations of other religious holidays, which is 2.74 which is in the "enough" category.

The second variable that is measured is equality between religious communities. Based on research data, the percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" is 65.71% which indicates a high level of equality, attitude towards differences (66.14%). Meanwhile, the harmony index based on the equality variable

shows that the average equality variable between religious communities is 3.80. This shows that the equality between religious communities in Cigugur is classified as high, which is between 3.4 - 4.1. The third variable is inter-religious cooperation. In the inter-religious cooperation variable, higher results were obtained than the previous two variables. The percentage of respondents who answered "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" cumulatively on this cooperation variable was 73.60%. This figure shows the high tolerance between religious communities in Cigugur in terms of social aspects. The variable of inter-religious cooperation in Cigugur shows a very high level of 4.12. The cumulative of the three variables for the respondents' answers "Agree" and "strongly agree" is 68.49%. The index of religious harmony in Cigugur, cumulatively from the three aspects of attitudes towards differences, equality, and inter-religious cooperation, is in the high category of 3.89.

#### 4. Conclusion

The diversity is reflected in the attitude of tolerance. Trust can be managed properly through a harmonious portrait of diversity. Differences in beliefs (religion) are integrated with Sundanese culture as a binder of togetherness among the people. Society displays harmony and cooperation in various aspects of life. The multicultural values embraced include: living in differences, mutual trust and mutual understanding, mutual respect, open thinking, appreciation and interdependence, non-violent conflict resolution.

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