

## Formulating Interreligious and Intercultural Ethnic Relations in Schools

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### Abstract

This study extends several preliminary studies conducted by the researcher regarding the aspects of interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students in selected schools and locations in the state of Sabah. This qualitative research involves library research and interview methods with six respondents from various fields, using a set of interview instruments. The objective of the study is to identify the scenario of interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations in schools as well as formulate a model appropriated from previous research. The research findings are then aligned with the findings of previous research as an overall summary of the relationships among students of various religions and cultures in schools. The final findings of the research propose an interreligious and intercultural model of ethnic relations among students that indirectly illustrate the harmony of diverse ethnicities, religions, and cultures in Sabah.

**Keywords:** Ethnic Relations, Interreligious and Intercultural, Students, Sabah

### Introduction

The aspect of inter-ethnic relations is an important element in the effort to form national integration and unity in Malaysia. However, previous studies have shown ethnic relations among school students from different religions and cultures to be distant dan unfriendly due to suspicion, ethnocentrism and polarization among others. As we know, ethnic conflicts in Malaysia also mostly stem from social boundaries which exist because cultural, linguistic, and religious differences clearly underlie the undeniable ethnic divide (Zakaria & Daud, 2018). Jusoh and Embong's study (2021) identified that the main challenges in strengthening a society such as Malaysia encompass ethnic, religious, cultural, socioeconomic, political, and educational aspects. Thus, since independence the government has chosen, in managing super-diverse ethnic and religious relations in Malaysia, to be guided by the philosophy of integration (unity) rather than the assimilation of races, cultures, or ways of life. This

approach is nurtured with values of moderation, as these values can foster unity among the various ethnicities in Malaysia if appreciated and implemented in all aspects of life (Ismail et al., 2016). Resting upon a conviction that good ethnic relations can cultivate social unity and strengthen the nation-building process (Tan & Abdullah, 2021), wise approaches and cooperation from all parties are required to address these challenges (Jusoh et al., 2021). One of the strategies involves reinforcing the aspect of tolerance for ethnic relations among students across diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, this paper is written to see the aspects of formulating interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations particularly in schools in Sabah. The study is also imperative as it provides benefits for us to further broaden our thinking horizon regarding the religion and culture of the nations.

### **Literature Review**

Several studies have been conducted regarding ethnic relations across different religions and cultures among students in Sabah. Mohd Tamring and Mahali's study (2020) found that the tolerance of Bumiputera students in schools around Kota Kinabalu towards Chinese students is high. The demographic analysis of the study, including religion, origin, gender, school stream, and parent's marital status, did not show significant differences for comparison as such a difference is too marginally small. Involving several school students in Keningau et al study (2021) also demonstrated knowledge and experiences in the surrounding community are important in making students to have encountered fewer problems in accepting the customs of other ethnicities. As a result, the interaction relationships among students of diverse cultures are not bound by a single approach. Cultural differences are not barriers but reasons for students to cooperate in a culturally diverse environment because students consistently maintain a positive and open attitude in responding to activities conducted in schools.

At the university level, Tamring's study (2008) indicates that the level of ethnic interaction and tolerance among Sabah's Bumiputera students is high. Differences in religion or varying levels of religious commitment do not influence the level of ethnic interaction and tolerance among students. It portrays the rational actions and pragmatic attitudes of students in the context of daily social life influenced by various factors such as intermarriage. It is also a result of daily knowledge and experiences, encompassing efforts to understand aspects of religious practices, customs, and culture that have shaped attitudes, ways of thinking, and actions in facing the challenges of fostering harmonious ethnic relations. In turn, the community in Sabah, are more likely to form relationships despite different ethnicities, as they have a high acceptability degree and demonstrate a more mature approach in handling differences and conflicts harmoniously (Lukin et al., 2021).

This study is an extension of several earlier studies conducted by the researcher on interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students in Sabah. One of these studies is a survey on the experiences of student interactions in ethnic relations across different religions and cultures in schools involving 207 students of various religions and ethnicities. In addition to discussing the general connections between interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students and two pillars of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely education and peace goals (United Nations, 2021), the study also explores to what extent the interethnic interactions among students across different religions and cultures occurred during their time in school. The study findings indicate that the

responses given by students in terms of respect for beliefs, cooperation, camaraderie, and comfort in socializing with friends of different religions and cultures are highly positive (Ramlie et al., 2022a).

The researcher then conducted a survey study to examine ethnic relations among students across different religions and cultures from the perspective of 77 teachers. The study findings indicate that, based on the observations of the teachers, students mutually respect each other's religious and cultural beliefs. There is no prejudice among students in establishing good relationships and close friendships with their peers across different religions and cultures. Students are willing to collaborate in any school program with their peers of different religions and cultures, and they are not hesitant to seek help from their peers. What is interesting is that students always make an effort to learn something new from peers of different religions and cultures (Ramlie et al., 2022b; Ramlie & Nor, 2023b).

The researcher also conducted a study in a single-stream school to identify students' acceptance of interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations for the purpose of obtaining more diverse perspectives (Ramlie et al., 2023c). The overall findings of the study, based on feedback from 82 students, indicate that the acceptance of students in the single-stream school towards the aspects of cross-religious and cross-cultural ethnic relations is also positive and commendable. This is highly positive as ethnic relations among students across different religions and cultures are multidimensional and extend beyond the learning environment within the school, encompassing interactions outside the school setting. The researcher further conducted an interview study involving 12 experienced teachers to elaborate on the scenario of interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students in more detail. Consistent with the findings of previous studies, the research results indicate that interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students are very good. This situation serves as a platform for teachers to organize activities in schools involving students of various religions and cultures without neglecting sensitivity issues to ensure understanding among the diverse student population remains consistent (Ramlie & Nor, 2023b).

The study by the researcher also found that the concept of MADANI is highly significant in fostering harmony in cross-religious and cross-cultural ethnic relations among students (Ramlie & Nor, 2023a). Malaysia MADANI is a current framework for the government with six visions: M (Sustainability), A (Well-being), D (Innovation), A (Respect), N (Confidence), and I (Ihsan), focusing on economic and financial aspects, legislation, institutions, education, society, culture, urban and rural areas (Ibrahim, 2023). This national philosophy is indirectly related to the aspects of interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

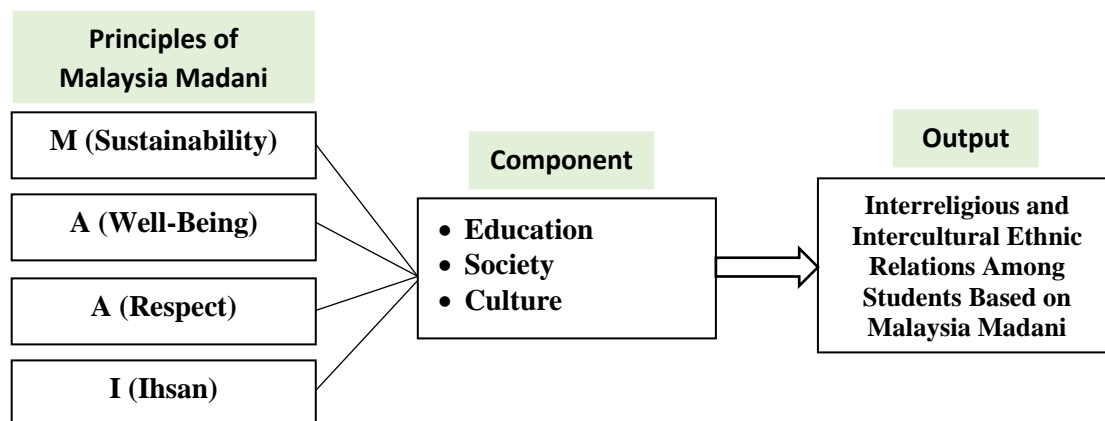


Figure 1: Cross-Religious and Cross-Cultural Ethnic Relations Based on Malaysia Madani.

The highlights of these studies clearly prove that ethnic tolerance among students in Sabah is highly commendable.

### Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative research conducted through library research and interviews. Library research was carried out through journal articles, books, and secondary data sources, while the interview method involved six respondents. Respondent 1 (R1) is a high school teacher with a Doctor of Philosophy degree and over 10 years of teaching experience. Respondent 2 (R2) is an elementary school religious teacher with 7 years of teaching experience. Respondent 3 (R3) is a lecturer at a public higher education institution (IPTA) specializing in Sociocultural and Ethnic Relations. Respondent 4 (R4) is an education sector officer with nearly 14 years of experience, having taught in elementary schools before moving to a department in the education sector (at the time of the interview) and currently serving as a lecturer at a teacher education institute. Furthermore, Respondent 5 (R5) is a retired government officer who held the position of Assistant District Officer for 25 years in several districts, while Respondent 6 (R6) is a student with friends from various religions and ethnicities. This situation resulted in the data collected from various fields (Merriam, 1998). Interview questions for the respondents were developed based on the findings of previous studies conducted by the researcher (Ramlie et al., 2022a; Ramlie et al., 2022b, Ramlie et al., 2023b; Ramlie et al., 2023c) and covered questions related to the following: (1) views on the relationship among students of different religions in schools; (2) views on the relationship among students of different cultures in schools; (3) views on the relationship among students of different religions and cultures in Sabah; (4) efforts to encourage positive interactions among students of different religions and cultures in Malaysia; and 5) issues related to religion and culture that have occurred during their years of service.

To achieve a high degree of confidence in the conducted interviews, the researcher employed triangulation across various fields, involving primary interview data from teachers and supplementary interview data from lecturers, education sector officers, retired government officers, and students. Triangulation across various fields (multiple case or multisite studies) is a form of data triangulation that has high reliability (Merriam, 1998). Interview questions were prepared in advance, and selected questions were posed based on the suitability of the respondents as students, retired government officers, lecturers, elementary school teachers,

high school teachers, and education sector officers. As a result, there was clear consistency for each piece of information obtained in interviews with all respondents, along with the library research findings and the results of previous studies. Since interviews were not entirely bound by structured questions, the study findings were not designed strictly according to themes or categories but presented narratively. In other words, this study takes the form of a conceptual study through the analysis of interview findings, assisted by injections of information from previous studies for validation, ultimately achieving precision in the obtained data.

### **Research Findings**

The research findings are the outcomes of interviews with all respondents regarding their views on the aspects of relations among students of different religions and cultures in schools, as well as their perspectives on these aspects specifically in Sabah. The findings also cover efforts to promote positive interactions among students of different religions and cultures in Malaysia and issues related to religion and culture that have occurred during their years of service.

#### **Views on the Aspect of Relations Among Students of Different Religions in School**

(R1):

*'In my opinion, I consider the situation in the school where I am currently serving, which is in xxxxx. For example, in the xxxxx district, subjects such as Islamic Education and Moral Education are taught in all schools here. In this district, there are various ethnicities such as Brunei, Dusun, Kadazan, and so on. Fortunately, there are no chronic issues, and before my assignment in xxxxx, I also served in xxxxx. In the context of relations among students of different religions throughout my service, no serious problems have arisen, and students assist each other. Rarely do we hear about conflicts occurring here between the two majority religions. Typically, for example, if there is an activity at school involving the Islamic Education Unit, and a program is held in the school mosque, students taking Moral Education will participate in the spiritual activity conducted by the Moral Education teacher. However, this only happens if the activity involves their respective religious beliefs because, for other activities, all students participate together. For example, during communal activities, up to now, there haven't been any chronic cases in both schools where I have served. In my experience during my service in xxxxx, particularly during the month of Ramadan, non-Muslim students and teachers understand and eat discreetly in the school canteen, avoiding eating in front of Muslim students and teachers.'*

(R2):

*'Parents play a role because the students are mostly Muslims. Parents also provide significant assistance to the Islamic Education teachers at the school. I see outside support from parents who also greatly contribute to the implementation of these programs. So, even for teachers who are not Muslims, they cannot be hard on others. This is because the outsiders are mostly parents. They fear there might be complaints from the outside, right? Because we understand now with the power of viral, it can spread out very quickly. In my school, indeed, the majority of students are Muslims. Sixty-three out of eighty-four students are typically Muslim, which is about seventy-five percent.'*

(R3):

*'It is very important because as a country with a religiously and culturally diverse population. Having diverse relationships among all students helps our society to understand each other and prevent problems in inter-ethnic relationships.'*

What can be concluded from the respondents' views is that the relationships among students of different religions in schools are good, and students do not face any problems interacting or collaborating despite their different beliefs. Students can understand and adapt to the current environment, providing them with space to think openly and rationally, thereby avoiding any form of discrimination or stereotypes. In the meantime, efforts to maintain harmony among students also require contributions from various parties. Parents play a significant role in providing support and encouragement to the school to organize programs that have the potential to develop minds and cultivate creative and critical students. As a country with a diverse population of different religions, it is crucial for us to work together in building shared prosperity and finding the sweetness in the unique diversity that exists in Malaysia

### **Views on the Aspect of Relation Among Students of Different Cultures in School**

As for the aspect of views on the relationship among students of different cultures in school, the respondents express the following perspectives.

(R1):

*'It is somewhat similar to earlier. If we take xxxxx itself, the culture here is diverse, including Brunei, Kadazandusun, and other minorities such as Bugis, Bisaya, and so on. However, the relationships between these cultures can be seen during National Day celebrations so much so that we cannot distinguish the cultural differences between them.. Cooperation among all cultures is evident in activities such as choir competitions and others at a good level. Nevertheless, the school also respects the religious aspect, where Christian students of Dusun ethnicity, for example, will wear their traditional attire. Similarly, students from other ethnicities will dress up according to their own cultures. Furthermore, there are cooking competitions involving their own cultural foods; they will bring the food from their own culture. For instance, in this cooking competition, Kadazan Dusun students will cook their traditional food, and likewise, students from other ethnicities will showcase their own cultural cuisines. So far, the relationships between students of different cultures have not encountered chronic issues and have proceeded smoothly. The feedback from the students themselves is also very encouraging.'*

(R2):

*'From my own perspective, students do not have any issues with each other. It may be because, firstly, those under twelve years old do not yet understand issues of ethnicity. Everything, from what I observe as a 'grown-up' teacher guiding the students. In every program, they are united. In class, they are not isolated. This is because, from what I see in the organized programs, the school involves all students regardless of religion, race, and ethnicity.'*

(R3):

*'From a cultural perspective, in my opinion, students will be able to understand a particular culture more clearly, and this can help students to understand and, at the same time, avoid misunderstandings in a diverse society. For example, if the Malay*

*community can understand the culture of the Chinese community, and vice versa, it prevents issues of disrespecting other cultures. This is because any community from any ethnic group can understand these cultures, including taboos and so on. So, it can help to develop the culture of society in Malaysia even better.'*

(R4) :

*'There are indeed no issues despite the differences in ethnicity and religion. The implementation of programs is also very easy and involves everyone. Interestingly, even though the school has the status of xxxxx, the majority of students are Bumiputera, so they can understand and adapt because they have been taught since kindergarten. There are no dominant issues arising from the implementation of programs. Nor is there ethnic issues. If there is an issue, it only involves minor differences such as discipline problems.'*

(R6) :

*'Our relationship as students is very good. Although each of us comes from different family backgrounds, diverse ethnicities, environments, and so on, we can build a very strong and cohesive friendship. But, to be honest, if I say there is no misunderstanding among us at all, that would be deceiving. Even though it takes quite some time to resolve these conflicts, in the end, each of us tries to take the initiative and think maturely to ensure that our friendships endure.'*

From the respondents' views on the relationship between students of diverse cultures in school, what can be concluded is that cultural diversity in the school does not hinder the organization of programs that require the involvement of everyone. Students have the opportunity to explore and immerse themselves in the customs and cultures of other ethnicities, providing them with exposure to the unique characteristics of each community. In addition, each party provides sustainable cooperation to ensure the success of the established agenda. This proves that diverse cultures will not be a barrier to efforts to strengthen and enhance the level of thinking of students to shape high-quality learners. Despite the complexities that sometimes arise unexpectedly, wise and professional steps are taken to ensure that the conflicts that arise do not escalate. This shows that each party takes careful initiatives to ensure that the close relationships that exist among them endure for an extended period.

### **Views on the Aspect of Relationships Among Students of Different Religions and Cultures in Sabah**

The researcher also obtained respondents' views on the aspect of relationships among students of different religions and cultures in a broader context than in schools, namely in Sabah. The respondents' views are as follows

(R1):

*'Tolerance in Sabah does exist. For example, the celebration of Aidilfitri in schools is also celebrated by students of different religions, dressed in Malay attire. So do the teachers at the school. Another example is the Kaamatan celebration, where students from ethnicities other than Kadazan Dusun wear traditional attire with headscarves. In terms of celebrations, any festival is celebrated by all students. However, in xxxxx, there are fewer Chinese students, but in the past, when I was stationed at xxxxx, during the Chinese New Year celebration, students and teachers showed a high level of tolerance by wearing red clothes and attire that reflected Chinese culture during the*

*celebration. This indicates that everyone participates in all the festivities held at the school, and no issues arise that could lead to conflicts.'*

(R3):

*'I feel that in the state of Sabah, relationships in terms of religion and culture are better than on the Peninsula. This is because students in Sabah are more familiar with each other, even though they come from different ethnicities and cultures, compared to the Peninsula. This situation arises due to the dynamics within families. For example, we can observe interethnic marriages within families, which is a common occurrence. Therefore, in terms of diversity among ethnicities, Sabah is among the top states, and this is attributed to the fact that people are accustomed to learning about different cultures from a young age within families. This allows for a clear understanding of various aspects within each culture.'*

(R5):

*'In my opinion, here in Sabah, interreligious, and intercultural ethnic relationships are generally harmonious. We mutually respect, tolerate, and, additionally, have a sense of familial bonds. In terms of family, my own family is quite diverse, consisting of various ethnicities such as Chinese, Rungus, Ubian, Bajau, and Brunei. Hence, issues related to ethnicity do not arise. We celebrate various festivals like Hari Raya Aidilfitri, Harvest Festival (Pesta Keamatan), and Chinese New Year. Due to the diverse backgrounds of our families, there are no issues related to ethnicity in Sabah. We can sit together, chat, and share a meal in the same restaurant. This means that, for example, members of the Rungus or Chinese ethnic groups can join us to eat together in a Muslim restaurant based on my experience. In terms of administration, the same applies. In the xxxxx district, there are many ethnic groups, but we have never experienced conflicts related to ethnicity or in terms of religious practices. However, the school children need monitoring. The news they receive nowadays is unfiltered and can influence their minds and behavior. Parents, especially those with children in primary or secondary school, need to monitor them. If left unchecked, they may be easily influenced by undesirable trends. We need to preserve and maintain the harmony we have achieved so far, where there are no issues related to ethnicity or religion. There are no problems. We must preserve and uphold peace, respect, and tolerance in our state and district. That is our hope'*

What can be concluded is that the religious and cultural differences present in Sabah do not pose a barrier hindering the community from socializing and interacting with each other. In fact, celebrations of various ethnic groups are joyously shared, even among different races or ethnicities. Everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the fun and festivity of the celebrations without any problems, each in their own way. This situation serves as a medium to explore the uniqueness and excellence of other ethnicities, teaching us to evaluate things from different perspectives. On another note, parents should monitor their children to ensure that the information they receive on social media regarding existing ethnic differences does not contradict the actual reality, especially in terms of inter-ethnic relationships. Overall, the unique characteristics present in our society today are truly valuable and hold high sentimental value in shaping a harmonious community



### **Efforts to Encourage Positive Interaction Among Students of Different Religious and Cultural Backgrounds in Malaysia**

As for the aspect of efforts to encourage positive interaction among students of different religious and cultural backgrounds in Malaysia, respondents expressed the following views:

(R1) :

*'In the context of students, we can observe from the programs held in schools. For example, for curriculum purposes, students of various ethnicities and religions are mixed in co-curricular and curriculum activities. There are no discrimination for students taking Moral Education and Islamic Education as they are taught together in the same class. They are only separated when Islamic Education and Moral Education are conducted. For instance, at xxxxx, the majority of Islamic students will remain in the class, and Moral Education students will move to another room. In contrast, in my experience at xxxxx, minority Islamic students will leave the class and move to the Islamic Education room. This is in the curriculum aspect. Then, in terms of co-curricular activities, there are three sections in the school: clubs and associations, uniformed units, and sports and games. Quotas for all three sections are coordinated and mixed from all levels. This means that all students are mixed, except for associations like the Quran and Sunnah Association, which is exclusively for Islamic students. For the appointment of committee members and task assignments, there is no discrimination, meaning any qualified and skilled student can participate. However, exceptions will be made for associations that are specifically for Islamic students, such as the Islamic Education Association and the association mentioned earlier.'*

What can be concluded is that active interaction can indeed be cultivated and enhanced through a comprehensive and effective approach by schools, both in terms of the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Coordination involving all parties, regardless of religion and ethnicity, except for specific situations, is crucial to enable students to communicate actively. This concerted effort is also essential to prevent any form of discrimination against students. Those with potential for excellence should be given opportunities commensurate with their abilities, regardless of their religion and ethnicity, as this should not hinder students' aspirations to excel. This situation provides students with the opportunity to hone their interests and talents, thereby contributing to the development of innovative and high-quality students in the future.

### **Issues Related to Religion and Culture that Have Occurred Throughout the Service Period**

Respondents expressed the following views regarding issues related to religion and culture that have occurred throughout their service.

(R2):

*'Honestly, I would be lying in there are no issues at all albeit small in xxxxx. Because these issues are actually under the influence of the school management board, particularly related to the church. Just recently, a few years ago, a church was established within the school area. But I'm not very sure about the details of that, but there was indeed involvement from the school management board. So, from the perspective of implementing xxxxx activities, if we look at it before, the hosting cycle used to change among schools in a zone. However, when I first started my assignment, the school principal reminded us not to conduct any district-level competitions in the school. At that time, I didn't quite understand what the principal meant because I was*

*new to the school. But after some time there, I realized that the principal was referring to xxxxx activities. Because we know that xxxxx consists of several competitions, such as Quranic recitation and memorization. From what I understand, they didn't want the school premises to be used for such activities, possibly due to the presence of the church. In reality, these issues also arose, particularly concerning the implementation of xxxxx activities. So, schools of xxxxx stream are actually not happy. As I mentioned earlier, we have eight schools, four of which are xxxxx schools and the other four are xxxxx schools. So, among the xxxxx schools, only we rotate to organize xxxxx activities. They feel burdened, indeed burdened. It's not a small competition.'*

(R4):

*'That day, if there was an issue at xxxxx school, it wasn't really an "issue." It was more of a lack of understanding about religion and language. In xxxxx school, we used to have Arabic language classes. So, all students, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, took Arabic. Most people from xxxxx think that we teach Islamic studies. They don't understand that it's actually a language class. Because when the kids come home, they speak Arabic. They even practice Arabic choir. It happened sometimes, but not a lot. In that area, most of the children are taken care of by grandparents, as their parents work in the city. So, in such cases, their grandparents may lack knowledge and education; they didn't study. That's the problem. Most of their grandparents, not their parents, say things like, "Why teach my grandchild to recite the Quran?" But we're not teaching Islamic studies; we're teaching the language. Sometimes there are teachers who teach Arabic, not religious scholars. They are language teachers.'*

*'In addition, as is the case in some mission schools, the morning assembly will conclude with the recitation of a tasmik prayer. However, the school authorities prefer the prayer to be from their own religion. Since these schools are subject to the constitution, which recognizes Islam as the official religion, they must adhere to the protocol. Nevertheless, they do not insist. Each person will pray according to their own beliefs.'*

Based on the views of respondents from various field studies, the conclusion here is that the likelihood of issues or problems arising involving ethnic diversity under one organization is impossible to avoid. Various factors that can trigger issues, whether intentional or not, either directly or indirectly. One of these factors is miscommunication or misunderstandings that may arise among the parties involved. At the same time, problems can also arise from various perspectives. It cannot be denied that personal desires and the self-interest of certain individuals in certain situations also contribute to misunderstandings between parties. Irrational thinking also results in the misinterpretation of the original intentions of a program that was not meant to have a negative impact on any party. Therefore, in our efforts to avoid unwanted conflicts and ensure smooth operations, it is crucial for us to be prepared for any unforeseen possibilities. It is our responsibility to maintain shared harmony.

### **Formulating the Model for Interreligious and Intercultural Ethnic Relations in School**

The findings of this study prove that ethnic relations across different religions and cultures among students, in general, do not face serious problems. These study findings are refined with the results of previous studies conducted by the researcher (Ramlie et al., 2022a; Ramlie et al., 2022b; Ramlie et al., 2023b; Ramlie et al., 2023c) to formulate interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations, as depicted in Figure 2.

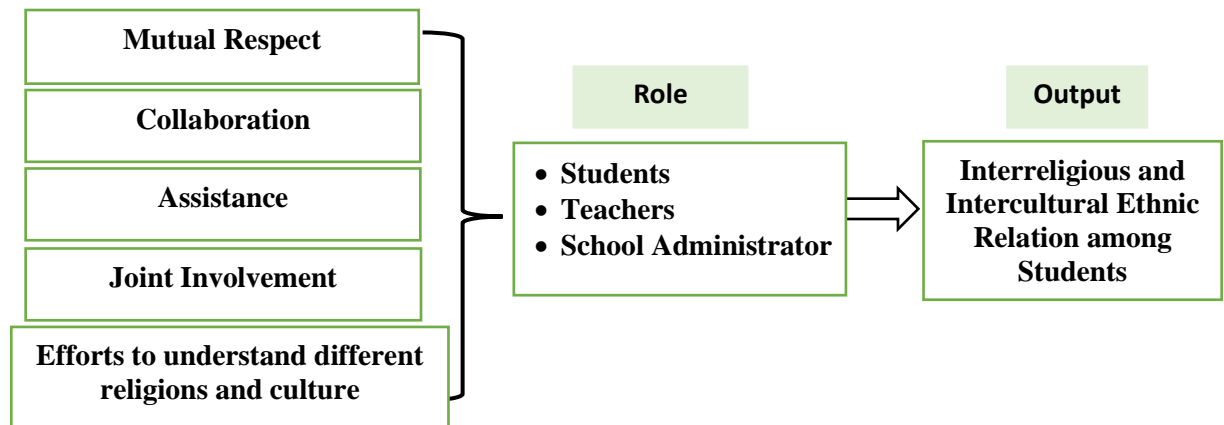


Figure 2: Model of Interreligious and Intercultural Ethnic Relations Among Students.

Based on Figure 2, what can be concluded is that effective interreligious and intercultural ethnic relations among students will result from attitudes of mutual respect, cooperation, assistance, collective involvement in all activities and matters, particularly in schools, and a continuous effort to understand the existing religious and cultural differences. All parties, including parents, teachers, and the government, play a significant and crucial role in this matter. The uniqueness that is possessed should be viewed from a positive perspective as it provides benefits for us to further broaden our thinking horizon regarding the religion and culture of the nations. Such a situation makes us appreciate the values and benefits from healthy interactive relationships among all parties in the effort to shape an intelligent human community.

### Conclusion

The diversity of races, ethnicities, and cultures in Malaysia, especially in Sabah, teaches us to adapt in every aspect of life as members of society. This matter should be managed well, especially in educational institutions, as the early exposure given to students regarding religious and cultural differences can shape their perceptions and thoughts about this context in the future. Nevertheless, we all need to be aware that unwanted issues may potentially arise without a sense of balance and mutual tolerance. Such actions can strain relations between communities and lead to uncontrolled discrimination that will undermine the harmony and security of society. Therefore, the values of mutual respect and tolerance in cross-religious and cross-cultural relations should be utilized to ensure that we can maintain the harmony we have achieved indefinitely.

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### **Interviews**

- Interview with Respondent 1 (R1) on September 28, 2023. Telegram Live Stream platform.
- Interview with Respondent 2 (R2) on May 27, 2023. Face-to-face.
- Interview with Respondent 3 (R3) on September 26, 2023. Telegram Live Stream platform.
- Interview with Respondent 4 (R4) on May 29, 2023. Face-to-face.
- Interview with Respondent 5 (R5) on May 28, 2023. Face-to-face.
- Interview with Respondent 6 (R6) on May 29, 2023. Face-to-face.