

Diversity as a Medium to Reinforce Ethnic Tolerance in History Subject in Malaysia

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Abstract

This research aims to observe the effectiveness of using diversity of method as a medium to reinforce ethnic tolerance in the subject of history. Teaching materials and methods are integrated during the experiment to the students in the treatment group in comparison with control group students who were taught conventionally. Diversity methods evaluated in this study are divided into four categories, namely introduction of ideas and information, to test the students' understanding, implementation of integrated value and the talent skills. Ethnic tolerance questionnaire was distributed to the two groups in two stages, namely pre and post test. The results showed integration between diversity methods and teaching materials gave a positive impact on the adoption of elements of ethnic tolerance. Consciousness to communicate and tolerance among female students than male students, so also among the treatment groups, namely mean = 4.16 versus control group mean = 4.47. ANOVA test showed a significant difference aspect of ethnic tolerance $F = 811,480$ and $sig = 0.000 < 0.05$. Analysis shows a high correlation between the diversity methods towards awareness of ethnic tolerance.

Keywords: Diversity method, ethnic tolerance, the questionnaire.

Introduction

History and society are two closely interconnected elements as the statement by Husband (1996), "History, in reality, is the movement of time through the medium of society". Thus, History subject is a bridge that can lift the awareness of students about issues involving aspect of social tolerance towards reducing the uneasy feeling of ethnic and boost cooperation since the school days. Baharoldin (1993) admitted that most of the teachers are not focusing on the diversity methods to spark the interest in learning and they did not use teaching materials deeply through appreciation process of human values. This has caused measures to make the subject of history as a means of driving the nation state and the society is still far than expected. Significant weaknesses of history teachers, when teaching, can be seen through findings and observations made by the monitoring team from the Department of Education. According to their findings, school teachers are still tied to the old ways, using the full text of books and not many teaching methods.

This situation should not be left, because without awareness of teachers to change, to improve the quality of teaching through all kinds of methods. This is because all the efforts to nourish the soul with the spirit of friendship and inter-ethnic tolerance through History subject certainly did not achieve the goal because of the following factors: (1) ambiguity of teachers in delivering messages between ethnic relations with the principles of purely academic, (2) indifference to the needs of teachers and students will need climate and learning environment and (3) teacher behaviors that restrict and constrain the creativity of students.

Ethnic relations issues should be highlighted through the history subjects. If the teacher can insert this element during their teaching the course topic, the work to build the students thoughts would work, if the following matters were followed: (1) to discuss the issues of society, (2) lift the themes of unity and, (3) provide a meaningful input to be applied by the students. Thus, studying history is not just telling students to memorize or remember events, but how to use the event to discuss their life. Therefore, history will come alive and give the meaning. Teachers can make history as an agent of unity and unification of the nation, particularly in Malaysia, ranging from multi-ethnic society and culture.

Background Of The Study

Ethnic tolerance connotes a spirit of friendship and maintains relationships between ethnic preferences in order to work and live in harmony among people without any suspicion and negative thoughts towards other ethnicities. Thus, tolerance means educating students to accept, acknowledge and understand existence in society that there were no gaps and flexible to handle changes. Doubt, superficiality and aggravation of other ethnicities can be removed and give a real new thinking from the perspective aligned with the mission and vision of the government in creating the fast life environment for all citizens regardless of their ethnic background and recognize each role and contributions.

Teaching and learning history is very different from other subjects, because in history class, students not only get information about the events of history, but what is more important is the support of thinking and understanding of the historical heritage, universal values and national unity element. The issue of unity in Malaysia not only involve discussion of ethnic relations, but the concept extends to how to create a new dimension in the relationship so that each ethnic integrate and experience a cultural mixing (mixed cultural) until this situation will create a new form of cultural Malaysian race.

In order to achieve this, using the perspective of ethnic history is very helpful, especially if supported by the use of various methods, to attract the interest of students and their existence needs through contributions in groups, role-playing, demonstrations, or become orator poetry with universal themes of the relationship between ethnicity. Historical study can be developed significantly using the social issues related to the role of each ethnic community in order to develop the nation and better nation. The aim is to improve students' views and thoughts about the plural society and cultural elements mixed in Malaysia.

Hassan (1994) points out that the understanding of ethnicity in the students is that they can: (1) receive sociocultural differences that exist between people, (2) accept and understand the culture of every community with an open heart, (3) explore that unique culture exists, (4) recognize the cultural differences between the ethnic groups, and (5) recognize the element of cultural differences and uniqueness of each race.

Historical perspective of ethnic origin will refer to the history of every ethnic background in terms of lifestyle, socio-cultural and economic activities. Through this way, each ethnicity would be more willing to interact and cooperate with each other as citizens of a nation and people. Zakiah Hanum (1989) argues that every ethnicity should be aware of their position and role, accepting the social contract that was agreed upon to avoid conflicts between ethnic and most importantly, always practiced tolerance in the relationship between ethnicity. Shamsul Amri (2007) stressed the importance of each ethnic to self recognize the difference and find the values that can be shared as a Malaysian.

Diversity Methods

Introduction Ideas and Information: Teacher Information

Teachers can begin teaching with relevant induction set then provide the explanations to the students for developing the learning materials. Teachers can use textbooks and other reference sources when giving presentations to students. Description dominant empower teachers to convey the concepts of unity and national integration values in order to be understood in the real context, before the students themselves make the next related activities. Huberman (1992) acknowledged that a clear explanation of the teacher at the beginning of the teaching will give impacts to the students for a variety of enrichment activities and a broader understanding of the topics to be studied.

During explanation, the teacher can test the extent of knowledge and experience on matters concerning students by asking students to give ideas and share experiences. For example, when a teacher describing the historical perspective of ethnic origin and descent of every community, students can be engaged to provide information based on the reality of their lives.

Student Comprehension Test: Training or Drill

To ensure that students understand the message and content, especially the objective, is primarily to disclose tolerance towards other ethnicities, teachers can test students' understanding through task instructions, training or drill as well as the Q & A continues throughout the instructional process. The test can be done orally or in writing. This situation can make learning active and at the same time provides an insight into the spirit of unity and tolerance. Students are also taught to give their views and opinions about relevant issue.

Implementation of Value Integration: Activity and Experience Means

Efforts and measures of teachers in spreading the understanding of other ethnicities, then respect for each other, can be created through the teaching and activity. Teaching under the domination of the teachers, and the activity is driven by students through demonstration, role play, role playing and using multi-media to model appropriate behaviors that are ethnically related be highlighted and teach students the values that they should avoid.

Talent And Potential Highlight: Dramatization And Demonstration

Activity is the best way to promote and inculcate values of tolerance towards other ethnicities while students can participate in activities to learn and demonstrate their talents as recite poems about ethnic relations, poetry reciting, storytelling, stage plays and create arena debate with other students as audience respond reciprocally.

Theoretical Framework

Kymlicka (1999) put forward the perspective of tolerance as issues involving the limits of mixing and mindset of other ethnicities in the manner and positive outlook, then translated through a series of activities were positive, leading to: (1) understand the changing of each community is universal (universal perspective), (2) study the affairs of every ethnicity (ethnic perspective) and (3) study the way in which each ethnic express their culture (cultural perspective).

Banks (2001) refers the concept of tolerance as faith, acceptance, and recognition of cultural diversity and elements that affect the lifestyle, social experience, and personal identity of a nation. Thus, history subjects are able to: (1) develop an understanding of other ethnic cultures, (2) attitudes towards cultural pluralism and (3) is the process of learning a new experience of the values and cultures of others.

According to Hussin Muttalib (1989), ethnic minority in a country cannot be ignored in the educational program, so the curriculum should be applied using local elements and a comprehensive national perspective, so that the model can be used to form the national character. Haris Hassan (1993) recognizes the importance of the role of teachers to enrich the history of the material to be more flexible, non-malay centris and develop the element of unity.

Research Methodology

This was a quasi-experimental study to assess how successfully teachers are incorporating the elements of ethnic tolerance using various methods that have relevance to the interest and attention of students in the instructional process history, by forming two groups of students; the treatment groups were taught in a constructive way of teaching and the control group using the traditional way of learning history. Questionnaires were distributed to students at pre and post test to assess the changes and new ways to measure the success in teaching history and

strengthen the elements of ethnic tolerance. To strengthen the findings, observations were made to reflect the experience of teachers in scrutinizing the behavior of students in terms of ideas and attitudes.

In the experimental classes, many student-centered methods are used and are categorized according to the function and its contribution i.e. (1) the medium of ideas and information (PIM), (2) test student understanding (UKS), (3) implementation of the integration (IS) and (4) the potential skills and talents (MLK) for teaching and learning history really attract and form of ethnic tolerance through their activities being done by the teacher during the instructional process. In term of issues of learning outcomes, Habibah (1996) stated that the teaching of history will become lively if based on student-oriented instead of relying solely on the teacher. Jagdish Raj Sharma (1985) stressed the importance of teachers' thinking about strategies, approaches, and methods that are appropriate for the successful cohesion agenda in History.

The total sample for this study involve form four students namely two classes of form four treatment groups consisting of 80 students and two classes of 80 students to a control group of people from two high schools in two different areas of Rawalpindi and Batang Kali, Selangor. The questionnaires that were distributed were on perspective of ethnic history and were of two levels, pre and post involving 9 items. (1) Practice neighborhood, (2) Accepting cultural differences, (3) Not to pry the social contract, (4) Cooperate developing countries, (5) The formation of attitudes, (6) to adjust itself, (7) not prejudiced, (8) The process of socialization and (9) Respect for racial identity.

Questions

1. What is the level of ethnic tolerance among students who attend the control and treatment classes?
2. Are there any differences of ethnic tolerance among students based on race and gender?
3. Is there a significant relationship in shaping the use of various methods of ethnic tolerance among students?
4. How was the change in attitude and thinking of students about the tolerance element after treatment classes?

Research Outcomes

Ethnic Tolerance Between The Experimental And Control Group

There is a significant difference of ethnic tolerance between the control and treated group (experimental). The treatment group's mean score is higher. This shows the effectiveness of the use of ethnic historical perspective diversity method to explain the origins, way of life, customs, festivals, the role of each ethnic leaders who had served the nation, political cooperation in the fight for independence and unity as well as the issues regarding ethnic unity that have become the stability factor.

Table 1 Level of ethnic historical perspective among control and treatment group

Group	N	Mean	SD	Level
Control	80	3.09	0.272	Average
Treatment	81	4.32	0.280	High

Tolerance Of Ethnic Differences Based On Gender And Ethnicity

Generally, there was a significant change in student behavior after learning of history through the use of Ethnic History perspective thorough diversity methods. Female students show a drastic improvement in terms of understanding, awareness and appreciation of ethnic tolerance, while male students are still at a moderate level and need more encouragement and guidance in order to understand the importance of ethnic tolerance in the value of a plural society like Malaysia.

Every ethnicity has a way of thinking and thought on the relationship between ethnicity, but visible results showed that the perception of students be it Malay, Chinese and Indian are positive that recognizes the need to maintain harmony, tolerance and cooperation as the basis of the relationship, but reject any elements that create antagonisms between different races, creating gaps. Everyone is regarded as divisive society and weaken the country.

Table 2: Two-Way ANOVA test historical perspective of ethnic differences between the control and treatment groups based on ethnicity

Source	Type III Kuasa Dua	df	Mean Kuasa ²	F	Sig.	Fraction Kuasa ²
METHOD	55.708	1	55.708	811.480	0.000	0.840
ETHNIC	1.222	2	0.611	8.900	0.000	0.103
METHOD * ETHNIC	0.265	2	0.132	1.927	0.149	0.024

The above findings indicate the null hypothesis was rejected. It means that there are significant differences between students of ethnic tolerance and the treatment and control groups. Change attitudes tend to accept tolerance and reject prejudice and bad faith towards other ethnicities significantly and this experiment proves successful in building and shaping the attitudes of students.

Table 3: Post Hoc Test Turkey historical perspective of ethnic differences between control and treatment groups of students based on ethnicity

(I) Ethnic	(j) Race	Mean Difference (I-J)	Error	Sig.
Malay	Chinese	0.080	0.050	0.248
	Indian	0.159(*)	0.050	0.005
Chinese	Malay	-0.080	0.050	0.248
	Indian	0.079	0.056	0.346
Indian	Malay	-0.159(*)	0.050	0.005
	Chinese	-0.079	0.056	0.346

Post hoc Turkey tests were conducted to explore different perspectives of Ethnic History by ethnicity, significant differences between the Malay and Indian ethnic students with mean difference = 0.1591, sig = 0.005 < 0.05. The mean value of Malay students was higher than India in terms of students of ethnic tolerance, whereas, no significant difference between the groups in terms of the other ($p > .05$).

Diversity Methods Towards Development Of Ethnic Tolerance

Researchers have used correlation analysis to see the compatibility and strength of the relationship between the use keberagaman method of explaining the historical perspective on the construction of ethnic spirit and values of ethnic tolerance among students. Picture can be seen as follows.

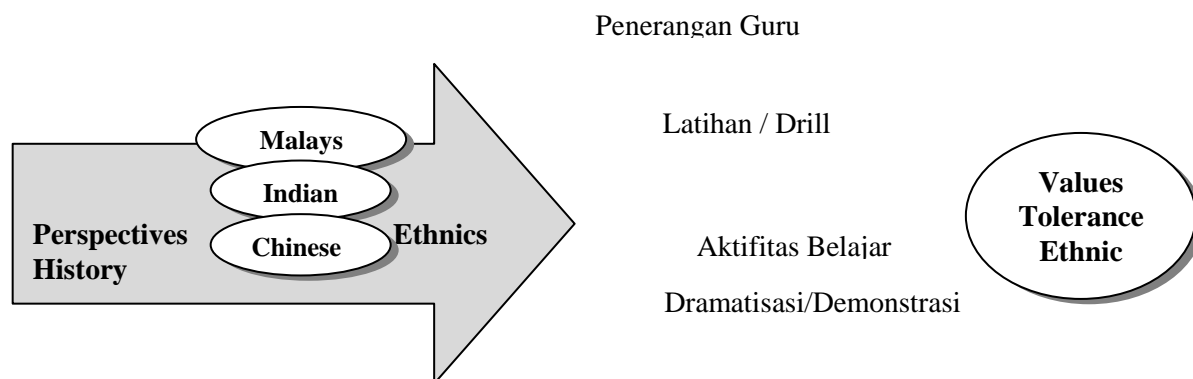


Figure 1 Development of Ethnic Tolerance

Research shows a correlation value in discussing the history of ethnic perspective using the diversity methods to increase ethnic tolerance value in students themselves. The intensity is shown by the value of $r = 0.725$, so the use of the method in the elaboration of history lesson

materials showed a very positive impact in building and shaping the ethnic tolerance among students.

Changes In Student Attitudes And Thought About Elements Of Ethnic Tolerance

From interviews that were conducted with three people according to ethnic, to explore the opinions and attitudes towards other ethnicities in the task of learning and social interaction showed various reactions that recognize the changes in their attitudes and behavior.

Student I

"I used to never think about other ethnicities, we used to meet, but I prefer to choose the same ethnicity, I do not feel comfortable performing schools tasks with different ethnic students. I do not bothered by their presence but sometimes I prejudice about them. After I followed the lesson of history using various ethnic perspective and various methods, I think I need to change and should acknowledge their existence. "

Students II

"I have a better understanding of other ethnicities through activities in class especially through discussion, role-playing and role assignments involving students because the situation of ethnic relations can be understood more clearly I can do the tasks he was given."

Students III

"In my understanding of other ethnicities especially the people of Malaysia ... it is important to preserve the stability of the country. Many events of history can be highlighted to emphasize the importance of unity and preserve the relationship between ethnicity. We need to embrace the cultural differences and recognize the uniqueness of every ethnicity. Teaching History through Ethnic History module can deliver a deeper message about tolerance causes various methods used. "

The interviews on student admission clearly show that there is an increase in knowledge and attitudes towards other ethnicities especially acknowledge and accept diversity. Teaching history is more effective because teachers use a variety of activities and methods, so the message of ethnic tolerance is not only understandable but also modeled in the form of role-playing and group formation.

Discussion Of Study

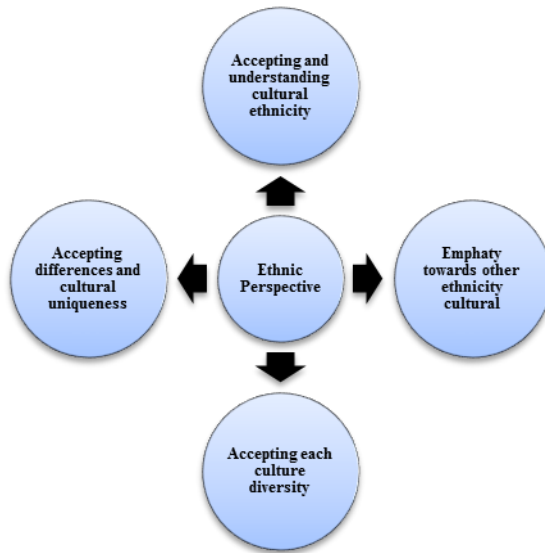


Figure 2 A Historical Perspective of Ethnicity

The figure above shows an understanding of the history lesson objectives using ethnic perspective as opinions presented by Hassan (1993). This perspective should be developed by teachers to shape the thinking, attitudes and emotions of the cultures of ethnicity in Malaysia. The usage of diversity methods facilitate the students to receive, understand, empathize and recognize each ethnic cultures, without any prejudices and can adapt to changes as well as the clash occurred. Teachers can also submit issues around students so that it will ease the students with relevant examples and easy to understand.

The results also show that females are better in the thinking and attitudes of ethnic culture that can accept, recognize the uniqueness and recognize cultural differences that exist in Malay, Chinese and India when compared with male students.

Teaching History through Historical perspective of ethnic and diversity methods are considered successful and get rid of pessimism and prejudice of students against other cultural elements. On the other hand, thought, attitude, and appreciation are more positive and reflective about other ethnic cultures. Students admitted are more receptive to teaching materials and a positive attitude towards ethnic mixing in activities developed by teachers and recognize other ethnic cultures in a more practical like dramatization, simulations, and demonstrations are more confident, fun, and encouraging.

Conclusion

History is an important subject in the development of attitude and behavior in students if teaching and instructional process is done wisely using a correct interpretation to describe a topic followed by diverse and interesting methods, simple and robust. Instructional process of history subject is the right platform to design and develop the pattern of thought, feeling, and intention and empathies of cultural values in a plural society, because negative thinking and understanding can affect the younger generation. Consequently, the mission and vision to foster unity and continue the development and modernization of the country will not be achieved.

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