

<b>TOPIC 3</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL DIVERSITY</b>
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This topic discusses the socio-cultural diversity in the school community. It will also explain the implications of socio-cultural diversity in teaching and learning in the classroom. The roles of teacher in the classroom are important in creating an conducive environment so that students can feel comfortable in a culture friendly classroom. Thus, culture has implications towards the success or failure of the social personal development of the students. Students come from different background, ethnic , custom and beliefs. Due to this, various school culture is produced in schools. Thus this chapter will explain how a culture friendly environment is created to enable students to feel comfortable and engage actively in the teaching and learning.

Learning outcomes:

1. Analyze the socio-cultural diversity in the school community
2. Explain the implications of socio-cultural diversity in teaching and learning in the classroom

### **3.1 Role of Teachers In The Classroom**

The responsibility of a teacher in the classroom that consists of various races is difficult but if the teacher understand and care for all students; then the teacher can create a culture friendly classroom.

A teacher has to :

- teach with dedication and professional pupils without differentiating the students' races and do not group students by race in one group (make sure they are of different races and gender to ensure that they are given opportunities to interact )
- does not differentiate social class pupils (top, upper middle, lower middle, working and lower) must be given equal treatment. Teachers should be wise to conduct

classes where students can mix freely and not grouped into one social class only.

- ensure that pupils from different groups to socialize and interact with each other without any cultural restrictions and societies. Then learning will be become more interactive and fun.
- punctual and teach students with full dedication and use a variety of teaching and learning methods in line with students level of achievement. Teachers should not waste students' time when teaching and end the class earlier.
- use teaching time to the maximum to conduct activities which arouse their mind by giving them motivation, smile, humour and praises besides giving them general reprimands but not nagging.
- need to respect students just like adults and be fair to all students
- punishments should not be implemented as this will affect the student teacher relationship and decrease the students' interest to continue their study.
- teacher should take steps to prevent undesirable behaviours such as quarrels between students from different races, groupings based on race and create racial sentiments among students
- responsible to create friendly learning community based on the students' from various socio-cultural background

### **3.2 Steps and Measures to Overcome Problems In Multicultural Classroom**

Students are clients of every teacher in the classroom and thus teachers have to understand that there are differences between students or between groups of students. Thus, a teacher need to use skills in classroom management to the

optimum and list down all the information on rules that are compulsory for them to adhere to when they are in school.

All teachers have to understand the behaviour and culture of students so that any action taken in accordance to the correct methods. Teachers also need to think rationally when implementing any learning activity. Among the steps taken are:

- Children of different races should socialize within their groups, especially during activities regardless of social class
- Avoid prejudices against other races
- Students' cultural beliefs should be respected by the teachers
- Teaching and learning activities carried out in the classroom must be able to inculcate mutual trust among pupils
- The process of racial socialization regardless of religious affiliation should be expanded so that the process of the formation of self-learning can be implemented and the spirit of unity can be forged.
- Teachers should ensure that students use language that is standard
- Students are encouraged to interact and communicate with people of different sex
- Teachers should make sure all the students respect students of the opposite sex in the process of communication
- Activities given must involve students of the opposite sex and appropriate assignments given by the teacher
- Activities for improving the language must be carried out so that the students' level of language proficiency will increase and this will help students to achieve social maturity
- Management of students' affairs in the classroom - caring approach shown by the teacher to educate them in using language that is polite and well-mannered, to reprimand and to correct errors in a courteous manner. This will enhance love,

fidelity and efficacy of students towards teachers and this will expediate the information transfer from teachers to students.

- Effective communication can develop close mutual cultural relationship
- Effective communication using effective body language will enable close relationship
- Teachers should create a conducive learning atmosphere for effective learning
- Teachers should ensure that development of human capital be given due importance
- Teachers should create a learning environment for students to be motivated
- Recognition, appreciation and a smile be given after students exhibit a desirable behaviour

### **3.3 Role of Teachers in the Multicultural Classroom**

- A teacher should be a role model for students to emulate and serve as a good example in the classroom
- Develop programs aimed at developing the students with clear rules and instructions for decreasing negative behavior
- Avoid using approaches that are opposed to human norms which may prevent students from appreciating the growth of knowledge and own skills

Teachers should develop a learning culture that is fun and full of emotions. Besides it will improve mental health of students, encourage students to think creatively and innovatively, active participation of students and learning will achieved its objectives and aims.

Teachers can also build a dynamic classroom, emphasising moral values, friendly relationship amongst students and giving opportunities for students to practise friendly relationship.

Teachers as mentors and motivators to the students should determine the level of controllable discipline through action with love and care. This practice will provide opportunities to develop their own potential towards producing human capital of quality.

Teachers can expect desirable behaviour among students in the classroom by means of several measures like effective disciplinary control and efficient classroom management. This can be seen in the following situations:

- Reduce absenteeism and disciplinary problems through effective approaches in classroom management
- Big class size is not an excuse that classes cannot be developed. The most important is teacher's efficiency in transforming the classroom into a house "my class, my house" and create a conducive environment.
- Class control skills - students are not a source of the problem but if the class control is good, all discipline problems can be overcome. This situation will help enhance teacher's focus towards delivery of lesson and this will result in effective and fun teaching and learning.
- Teachers need to identify students who cause problems; interact with them during teaching and learning activities, attend to them; give acknowledgement and recognition in and out of classroom to the students concerned.
- Teachers must be firm during teaching and learning using the appropriate approaches and methods, not abusing them but more on educating them
- Set the rules during the process of teaching and learning. Rules set are based on reasons and its objectives.
- Teachers should have patience, persistence and determination in shaping student behavior which may take a longer time
- Teachers should always inculcate punctuality among students

- Using a variety of teaching and learning strategies based on the students' achievement levels. The lesson should start with an interesting set induction, interesting activities that are relevant to the content of the lesson.

### 3.4 Concept of Socio-Cultural Diversity In Schools

- Establish schools which comprises various races
- Ministry of Education - socio-cultural diversity of problems can be being solved by having activities in schools
- Integration of Pupils for Unity Plan (RIMUP) to promote unity among students, regardless of race
- Use of Malay Language as the official language and medium of instruction in all official matters. This also includes students in language activities.
- Development of school should take into account the levels of social class.
- People from the rural and urban areas are given equal opportunities to receive the same education. Students from other communities can embrace the culture of others. There are Malay and Indian students studying in Chinese schools and vice versa.
- Develop racial integration

Construction of religious schools shows Ministry of Education's commitment in inculcating spiritual values and beliefs to students in personality development . There are two types of religious schools : i. *Pondok* school- which is a a traditional Islamic education system and has hostels. ii. *madrasah* hostels (arabic: *madrasa*) is the arabic word for school. Missionary School was founded by Christian missionaries.

- Creating Vision School
  - Vision school share the same facilities in the same premise
  - It is built to create unity among students in schools
  - The schools are integrated under a uniform education system

- Students interact with each other in this school from an early stage, and this will produce a multi-cultural generation with the spirit of unity and racial integration since childhood

### 3.5 Hidden Curriculum

In education, the hidden curriculum refers to the way in which cultural values and attitudes (such as obedience to authority, punctuality, and delayed gratification) are transmitted, through the structure of teaching and the organization of schools (A dictionary of Sociology, 2005). A hidden curriculum promotes and teaches values and beliefs outside the educational curriculum for example through social interactions and administrative behavior.

Hidden curriculum refers to the unintended or implicit values cultivated in the practices exercised in the classroom and educational institutions through the application of the curriculum. For example, "Children are said to be rewarded not only for learning their subject curriculum but appearing to do so with enthusiasm, alertness, and deference to and respect for authority. In this way education imparts not only formal knowledge but an understanding of how to act 'properly' in wider society." (Crystal Reference Encyclopedia, 2001) This can be also associated with the instructional practices exercised in the classroom by teachers to cope with the demands of organizational structures over which they have little control as the "set of values, attitudes, knowledge frames, which are embodied in the organization and processes of schooling and which are implicitly conveyed to pupils" (Collins Dictionary of Sociology, 2000)

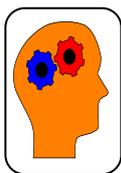
Hidden curriculum is taught indirectly when teachers teach the planned curriculum. Planned curriculum is usually referred to a systematic written plan covering the objectives, content, delivery and assessment strategies to be implemented within a specific time frame either in the classroom or outside the classroom (Saedah Siraj, 2001; Wiles & Bondi, 1998; Prat, 1994; Schubert, 1986). As the teacher teaches the formal curriculum, there is the hidden curriculum which may make as much if not more impact on the pupils. (Turner, 1983) For examples, unintended messages about minorities, ethnic groups, gender or work ethics may be discussed. Students learn through hidden curriculum which comprises the school culture such as the rules and

routines in school, information of school, students' culture, custom and traditions practised and aspiration of schools.

Besides that, student participation in co-curricular activities allow students to observe a variety of practices and values learned in the curriculum in the classroom.

Co-curricular activities are designed usually related to extracurricular activities. Co-curricular activities usually provide an opportunity for students to practise the values and the key elements that form part of the moral value.

Elements and moral values acquired through extra-curricular activities are regarded as hidden curriculum. This shows that the hidden curriculum will indirectly help the overall potential of pupils in the school as stated in the National Philosophy of Education (Philosophy of Education).



Reflect on the relationship between curriculum, co-curriculum and hidden curriculum? Compare and contrast between one another.

### 3.6 Existence of Multi Cultural Classroom

In Malaysia, most of the schools consist of pupils from different ethnic groups. The presence of a variety of students can enrich the learning environment in which students in the classroom can understand one another as regards to race, ethnicity and cultural practices. Therefore, students can establish friendly relations and promote unity and close cooperation. This allows the concept of 1 Malaysia can be realized.

However, there are times when the existence of diverse cultures can create problems that are unexpected. If, however, teachers in the classroom to realize and understand the importance of cultural diversity, then it is easier to bring awareness to the students by create a friendly learning culture.

Here are some important aspects that should be emphasized by all teachers when dealing with different types of students to practice their religion, language, race and culture are different and have different beliefs.



Discuss the importance of the following aspects of the classroom that consists of cultural diversity to create a friendly learning culture.

- Communication
- Use of different language
- Beliefs about the world
- The notion that different
- Orientation time
- The practice of different religions

### 3.7 National Culture

National culture is a characteristic in life and it belongs to all citizens of Malaysia to produce a friendly environment through relationships and friendly interaction for a progressive Malaysia. Cultural development for a newly independent nation is extremely important in the creation of a stable and united country. Therefore, the creation of a Malaysian national culture is intended to achieve three objectives:

- (i) Strengthening social and national unity through culture;
- (ii) Nurturing and preserving a National Identity which stems from a national culture;
- (iii) Enriching and increasing the quality of life from a practical and spiritual perspective, in line with socioeconomic development.



Reflect: What is the national cultural policy?

Is it a guide for producing one's national identity ?

Is it important in Malaysia?

Can it be practised easily?

Principles of national cultural formation

- Based on core culture of citizens of the region
- Other cultures which are appropriate and acceptable
- Islam is the important element in the formation of the national culture

### **3.8 Importance of National Culture In Malaysia**

- To strengthen friendly relations between the various races
- Establishing a united Malaysian people
- Produce a developed Malaysia
- To promote unity among Malaysians
- Ensure tolerance among Malaysians
- Fostering well-being among people of Malaysia
- Produce a Malaysia excellence, glory and distinction
- Unleashing Vision 2020 requires though collaboration and unity
- To realize the concept of 1 Malaysia

### **3.9 Teachers' Role in Creating Culture-Friendly Learning Environment**

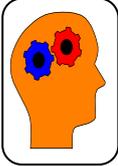
Teachers as agents of change and agents of socialization can play an important role in creating a united Malaysian society amongst students. A

teacher can think of a few steps as indicated below to create a culture-friendly learning environment.

- To promote friendly relationships during teaching and learning
- Encourage two-way interaction to provide opportunities for students to give ideas and opinions
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in group activities
- Establish classroom routines that can provide opportunities for students in the class to work together regardless of race
- Encourage students to understand and respect the cultures of other people and feelings of other races
- To organize various cultural activities among students of different ethnic groups
- Conduct visits to orphanages that can result in a feeling of comradeship
- To organize charitable activities that can produce feelings of goodwill
- Conduct forums among students to promote unity and cooperation
- Provide multi-cultural exhibition in the school in order to showcase the work of different races and cultures
- Always greet “ Salam 1 Malaysia”
- Organizing cultural festivals and exhibitions
- Organize solidarity dinner during important days such as *Kongsi Raya and Deepa Raya*
- Promote *Citra Warna* program at the school level

### 3.10 Parental Role In Producing Unity and Cooperation

In addition to teachers and school staff, parents can play a very important role among their children to sow the seeds of unity and goodwill. Without cooperation, tolerance, and goodwill and the sense of racial belonging, it is difficult for us to achieve a Greater Malaysia. Parents need to practise friendly cultural practises, developing human capital and bring awareness to our children on the importance of cooperation, solidarity and goodwill.

	<p>How can schools provide opportunities for parents to create awareness of aspects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1Malaysia concept</li> <li>• Vision 2020</li> <li>• <i>Citra Warna Program</i></li> <li>• Vision Schools</li> <li>• Fly <i>Jalur Gemilang</i> Campaign</li> </ul>
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### 3.11 Roles of Parents in Promoting Culture-Friendly Environment in Schools

Parents should encourage their children to participate in various activities in the school such as:

- i. Program of academic excellence
- ii. Sports and games
- iii. Co-curricular activities
- iv. Community Service
- v. Activities work together session at school

The school should involve parents and outsiders in the programs organized in schools so as to provide an opportunity for parents to understand the aspirations of the country's education. To this end, parents need to take part in various programs organized by the school, such as:

- Parent Teacher Association Annual General Meeting
- Co curriculum Day and Canteen Day
- School Open Day
- Forum and Dialogue between parents and teachers in school
- *Gotong Royong* activities in school
- Teachers' Day celebration in school

### Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how the Integration of Pupils for Unity Plan (RIMUP) can promote cooperation and unity among students of diverse cultures.
2. Describe the steps taken by the government to produce a united Malaysian society in the 21st century.
3. Discuss how the school can improve goodwill and cooperation among students in schools ranging from cultural diversity in order to create an excellent country.
4. Explain how co-curricular activities in school can forge friendly relations among diverse students
5. List the activities that can be implemented by teachers in schools to produce students who are able to realize the concept of 1 Malaysia.
6. Discuss the importance of Vision Schools in producing good citizens and a

united Malaysia.

7. Discuss the roles of the following groups in creating a united Malaysian society and progress towards the success of the 1Malaysia concept.
  - i. Schools
  - ii. Parents
  - iii. Government Agencies
  - iv. Political Parties

### Conclusion :

This topic discusses on the implications of socio cultural diversity. Teachers should understand the background of students and their socio economic status in order to select the appropriate sistem of delivery, learning materials for their students. The hidden curriculum which encompasses all forms of learning that occurred as a result of implementation of curriculum and co curricular activities. The strategies that the teacher uses also play a role in creating a conducive environment for students of all races.



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