Conference Paper

Cultural Understanding of the Students for Multicultural Education in the University

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Abstract

This research maps the profile of students' cultural understanding in Yogyakarta State University (UNY). The sample were the students from seven faculties at UNY. The quantitative data was analyzed using T-Test. The results show that there was a difference in cultural understanding among the students from all faculties. The background of the student does affect the understanding of multiculturalism. In general, the profile of students' cultural understanding is good, but it needs to be upgraded as a capital for further development of multicultural education.

Keywords: cultural understanding; multicultural education.

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1. Introduction

Education is a process of preparing humans to be intelligent and have strong character. Education is also a process of cultural inheritance in a society. Educated people focus on developing their potentials and internalizing cultural values. Understanding culture as a part of cultural competences needs to be developed through the learning process since childhood so that students can give their respect to their own cultures as well as other people's cultures. As stated by Wissler, Kluckhon, and Devis (Koentjaraningrat, 2009: 145) that culture is the whole actions accustomed by human beings through learning. Children can learn cultural values at home, at school, and through the community environment and they can implement those cultural competencies in their real lives. Multicultural education requires strong cultural understanding.

This idea aims to find out the students' understanding on cultures that are associated with multicultural education. The assumption is that if students have got a sufficient cultural understanding, they might be capable of being multicultural persons. The higher the understanding of students about culture, the better their attitude and behavior to live in diversity. Bens (2004: 126) argues that culture includes the way individuals learn about how to interact and adapt to the environment. Students who have sufficient cultural understanding and competences are able to interact and adapt to multicultural

environment and they have positive perceptions about diversity. According to Rahyono (2009: 41) intelligence is cultivated by humans to overcome life's challenges.

Indonesia has been facing challenges in maintaining the existence of the nation and in building a harmonious life (Dwiningrum, 2017). This meaning is contained in the motto of "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" which represents the unifying spirit and the sense of diversity of Indonesian people (Zamroni, 2011). Meanwhile in the schooling context, schools play an important role in preparing students to deal with new cultures, in line with changes that demand openness and readiness to welcome a global culture.

Multicultural education has been integrated in the learning process in universities directly and indirectly. However, the results have not been specifically studied. Multicultural education should be socialized in the learning process (Dwiningrum, 2017). Moreover, multicultural education needs to be developed at all levels of education so that the results are more effective in shaping global skills of the students. Therefore, this initial thought will provide a more empirical picture of the profile of cultural understanding that can be used to develop multicultural education policies in universities.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The concept and strategies of multicultural education

Multicultural education as a global commitment is an essential element of a country to strengthen its national identity. UNESCO recommends efforts to maintain the existence of culture in the process of change, namely education should: a) develop the ability to recognize and accept diversity values, b) strengthen identity and encourage convergence of ideas to strengthen peace, c) improve conflict resolution skills without violence, and d) improve the quality of tolerance, patience, and willingness. Through these recommendations, each country is expected to be able to strengthen its existence in maintaining its social cohesion.

Bank (2002: 14) explains specifically that multicultural education can be conceptualized on five dimensions, i.e.: a) content integration, containing various cultures of different groups, b) the of knowledge construction process, related to the extent to which teachers help students in understanding, investigating, and defining cultural assumptions, c) prejudice reduction, focusing on the characteristics of racial attitudes and its transformation, d) an equity pedagogies, where teachers facilitate student achievement from various groups, and e) empowering culture and school structures by providing space for participation of students from various groups.

2.2. Cultural understanding

Understanding culture requires a comprehensive approach. One of the strategies implemented to improve student understanding is strengthen personal, academic, and professional competencies synergistically. This ability will be able to develop optimally if it is supported by cultural understanding because it is important to understand the cultural values adopted and other cultural values. Cultural competences include awareness, understanding, and experience to actualize them in cross-cultural interactions.

Multicultural learning can shape students' abilities to: a) identify cultural identities as a particular ethnicity that can rise pride while still accepting, respecting and making cooperation with those who are different, b) build interpersonal relationships with other ethnic groups by lying on equality and by avoiding prejudice and stereotype, and c) build self empowerment to develop multicultural life (Zamroni, 2011: 156-157).

Cultural understanding is an in-depth study of the meaning of culture which is a prerequisite for peace in social interaction with different groups. Humans live in a society which is based on cultural values. Cultural values reflect the belief system that underlies the social aspects of life (Kwast, 1993: 2-3). Culture is an important part in people's lives because it is a source of value in cultural education and national character (Hasan et al., 2010). With cross-cultural experience, people are more open and tolerant towards other cultures. To increase cultural awareness, one needs to understand the concept of culture and its characteristics (Mulyana, 2003). The function of intercultural communication is communication that is demonstrated through the behavior of interpersonal communication (Liliweri, 2017). Multicultural education will shape global skills. Bourn (2011) explained that global skills as those in interpreting and actively engaging in the global world dealing with the social justice-based approach.

3. Material & Methodology

The population of this sudy were all students of Yogyakarta State University (UNY). The samples were 700 students from 7 faculties, namely: 100 students from the Faculty of Education (FIP), 100 students from the Faculty of Sports Science (FIK), 100 students from the Language and Arts Faculty (FBS), 100 students from the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (FMIPA), 100 students from the Faculty of Social Sciences (FIS), 100 students from the Faculty of Economics (FE), and 100 students from the Faculty of Engineering (FT). Respondents were determined by purposive random sampling. Samples taken were categorized as probability sampling which means that

every individual in the population can be a sample. Data collection techniques were carried out by distributing questionnaires developed by the research team. The data extracted from the questionnaires were the aspect of "Understanding of Own and Others' Cultures" including: language, religion, culture and ethnicity. Data were then analyzed quantitatively using the T-Test to prove the Hypothesis.

1. Hypothesis:

   (a) Ho: there is no significant difference in the mean score of the aspect of the students 'understanding of own and others' cultures among students from FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS, and FE in UNY.

   (b) Ha: there is a significant difference in the mean score of the aspect of the students 'understanding of own and others' cultures among students from FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS, and FE in UNY.

2. Test rules:

   The significance level was set at 1%, and the testing criteria were based on the comparison between F_{count} and F_{table} which is to be 2.85.

   (a) If: $F_{count} \leq F_{table(\alpha/2)}$, then Ho is accepted, meaning that there is no difference in the mean score of the aspect of the students 'understanding of own and others' cultures significantly among students from FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS, and FE at UNY.

   (b) If $F_{count} > F_{table(\alpha/2)}$, then Ho is rejected, meaning that there is a difference in the mean score of the aspect of the students 'understanding of own and others' cultures significantly among students from FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS, and FE at UNY.

4. Results and Discussion

The results provide interesting initial information about the students' understanding of multicultural education, especially in the understanding of own and others' cultures aspects.

Analisis One_way Anova Test

1. Tabel descriptives above can be analyzed by using the sample, namely: N1=100, N2=100, N3=100, N4=100, N5=100, N6=100,N7=100. The mean score for X1= 16.64, X2= 17.01, X3=16.93, X4=18.13, X5=17.47, X6=18.75, X7=18.04. Deviation standard S_1= 4.06, S_2=3.47, S_3=3.83, S_4=3.24, S_5=3.81, S_6=3.98, S_7=3.87.

TABLE 1

Descriptives								
UOOC ASPECT								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
FT	100	16.64	4.069	.407	15.83	17.45	8	25
FMIPA	100	17.01	3.471	.347	16.32	17.70	9	25
FIK	100	16.93	3.836	.384	16.17	17.69	10	25
FIP	100	18.13	3.249	.325	17.49	18.77	10	25
FBS	100	17.47	3.810	.381	16.71	18.23	9	24
FIS	100	18.75	3.988	.399	17.96	19.54	10	25
FE	100	18.04	3.874	.387	17.27	18.81	8	25
Total	700	17.57	3.817	.144	17.28	17.85	8	25

2. Analysis test of homogeneity

The purpose of homogeneity test is to find out whether the sample used has the same variance. If the sample does not have the same variance, one-way ANOVA test cannot be done.

Hypothesis:

Ho: there is no difference between the variance of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS, and FE at UNY, gained from probability values. If probability (sig) $> \alpha$, then Ho accepted.

From the test of homogeneity table of the variances, sig score is 0.083. with α 0.05

From the comparison between *sig* and α, it is obtained, sig =0.083 $> \alpha$=0.05, then Ho accepted, meaning that there is no difference between the variance of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK,FIP, FBS,FIS, and FE at UNY.

TABLE 2: Test of Homogeneity of Variances.

UOOC ASPECT			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.873	6	693	.083

3. ANOVA Analysis

The purpose of one-way-anova test to find out whether there is no difference between the mean score of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures*' aspect among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS, and FE at UNY.

Hypothesis:

Ho: there is no difference between the mean value of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK,FIP, FBS,FIS, and FE at UNY.

Ha: there is a difference between the mean value of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK,FIP, FBS,FIS, and FE at UNY.

- Decision:
- Decision criteria: by comparing F_{count} dan F_{table}

If: $F_{count} \leq F_{table}$, then Ho is accepted.

F_{count} from anova table is of 4.14

F_{table} is of 2.85

Result: 4.14 > 2.85 then Ho is rejected.

Table 3: ANOVA.

UOOC ASPECT					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	352.494	6	58.749	4.141	.000
Within Groups	9831.350	693	14.187		
Total	10183.844	699			

Decision: there is a difference between the mean values of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK,FIP, FBS,FIS, and FE at UNY.

Decision criteria are taken based on probability values.

If probability (sig) $\geq \alpha$ then Ho is accepted.

If probability (sig) $< \alpha$ then Ho is rejected.

From the ANOVA table, the probability value (sig) is 0.00 and the value of significance level α is 0.05

Comparing probability values (sig) with the significance level (α). If probability (sig) $>\alpha$ then Ho is accepted.

Result: 0.00 < 0.05, then Ho is rejected.

Decision: there is a difference between the mean values of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from FT, FMIPA, FIK,FIP, FBS,FIS, and FE at UNY.

Comparison of the Students' Scores of 'the Understanding of Own and Others' Cultures Aspects' at seven faculties at UNY, 2018 with in UNY?

The average value of "Understanding of own and others' cultures Aspect" among the students of FT, FMIPA, FIK, FIP, FBS, FIS and FE is presented in Table 1 and depicted in Figure 1.
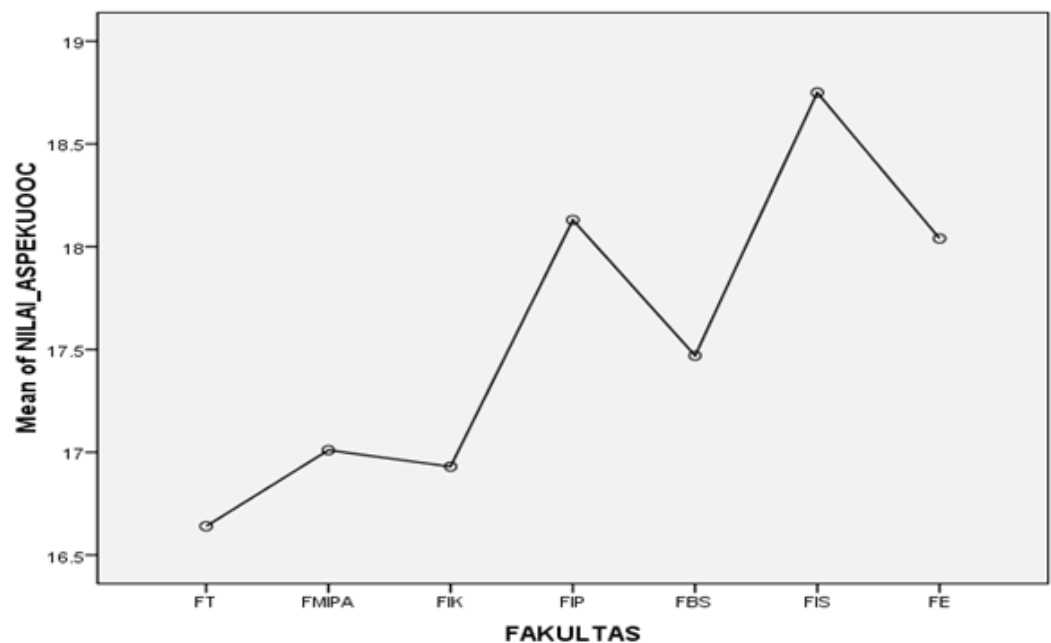

Figure 1: The Understanding of Owns and Others Culture for each faculty.

Fig. 1 shows clearly that the highest mean score is the students in the social sciences faculty (FIS) reaching 18.75, followed by that in the faculty of education (FIP) i.e. 18.13, and 18.04 for the score of the students in the economics faculty (FE).

The results indicate that a class in multicultural education significantly increased the knowledge about diversity, attitudes towards multiculturalism, and increased the levels of preparedness to teach children from diverse backgrounds. Thus, there was no correlation between multicultural knowledge and attitudes and between attitudes and preparedness to teach children from diverse backgrounds (Wasonga, 2005).

However, multicultural awareness and multicultural understanding vary considerably among future teachers based on their own race or ethnicity and prior experience working with youth of color. Multicultural awareness - which refers to an awareness of,

comfort with, and sensitivity toward issues of cultural diversity in the classroom - is crucial to teachers' abilities to promote positive outcomes for all students. Despite decades of policy reforms that emphasize the importance of multicultural awareness, few comparative studies have examined its prevalence in students preparing to be teachers (also known as preservice teachers) or the link between multicultural awareness and future teachers' measured competencies (https://phys.org/news/2017-12-multicultural-awareness-boosts-uneven-resource.html#jCp)

5. Conclusion

There is a difference between the mean values of the '*understanding of own and Others' Cultures' aspect* among the students from all faculties at UNY. The background of the student from facultie of social and faculties of science affect the understanding of multiculturalism. As a part of people's lives, culture influences their views and activity. Establishing relationship with people from different culture help to explore culture and build understanding of each culture.

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