



## **SOCIO-CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN INDONESIA KNITTING HARMONY IN DIFFERENCE**

**Tiara Maya Sari<sup>1</sup>, Aulia Thesa<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Elementary School Teacher Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

Email: <sup>1</sup> [tiaramayasari824@gmail.com](mailto:tiaramayasari824@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup> [auliathesa13@gmail.com](mailto:auliathesa13@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Indonesia's social and cultural diversity creates an environment rich in color and nuance. This article explores various aspects of diversity including language, customs, traditional arts and culture, religion, food, as well as education and cultural literacy. Language, customs, traditional arts and culture, religion, food, and education and cultural literacy are some of the aspects of diversity discussed in this article. While the diversity of regional languages shows ethnic and cultural diversity, Indonesian is the most important national language. Traditional arts and culture display creative expressions that reflect everyday life, while customs and rituals bring ancestral traditions to life. Tolerance between religions is demonstrated by the diversity of beliefs, ranging from Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Confucianism. The richness of nature and agricultural products is demonstrated in Indonesian culinary delights. To understand and appreciate this diversity, it is important to obtain education and cultural literacy. Indonesia can strengthen its identity through understanding and respecting socio-cultural diversity.

**Keywords :** Socio-Cultural Diversity, Customs and Rituals, Cultural Education, Traditional Arts and Culture

### **Introduction**

In the context of national identity, the main focus of studies about Indonesia is its socio-cultural diversity. Theoretical studies show that Indonesia, with more than 17,000 islands and various ethnic groups, has an extraordinary wealth of languages, customs, arts, beliefs and culinary delights. According to socio-cultural pluralism, Indonesia is a laboratory of social life where differences are valued and maintained as wealth rather than potential conflict. Socio-cultural transformation is understood as a major and comprehensive change in the form and characteristics of society, from one situation to another so that it becomes better or more advanced. Russian sociocultural scientist, Alexei N. Tarasov (2016). viewing socio-cultural transformation as cultural dynamics; together with another Russian sociocultural scientist, NV Shishova (2009), Tarasov emphasized that, "Dynamics is an attribute characteristic of culture, which includes the entire set of changes that occur in it under the influence of internal and external factors; its analysis provides research funds, mechanisms and processes that describe the changes" (Tarasov, 2016; Shishova, 2009). Language, as the main tool for communication, is considered a social glue that unites differences. This theory emphasizes that Indonesian as a national language is very important for maintaining national identity, while regional languages help enrich the cultural heritage of each ethnic group. The study of customs and rituals shows that ancestral values remain relevant and upheld, which provides stability and continuity in society. In traditional art and culture theory, the role of creative expression in strengthening cultural identity is outlined. Dance, music, carvings and painting were created by the people to tell mythology, daily life and cultural values. Indonesia is an example of harmonization of religious beliefs, where tolerance is the basis of peaceful religious life. This is in accordance with the theory of religious pluralism.

## Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative and quantitative approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of socio-cultural diversity. Qualitative Research uses in-depth interviews, observation, and content analysis to understand the qualitative aspects of diversity. Meanwhile, the quantitative survey is a questionnaire with a Likert scale and statistical data to measure perceptions and variability of diversity. This approach allows researchers to be actively involved in the daily activities of the community being studied. The research population includes students, teachers and educational practitioners from various educational institutions at the global level. This methodology aims to summarize socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia through a holistic approach, combining the advantages of qualitative and quantitative methods to understand and create harmony in differences.

## Result & Discussion

Research findings show that socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia is a source of wealth that enriches people's lives. Indonesian is the backbone of national identity, while regional languages remain an important aspect of local identity. Customs and rituals still play a role in maintaining diversity, but variations in practice can be found between ethnic groups. To realize the ideal type, society and country that they aspire to, the Indonesian people must reaffirm their awareness of their common ideals to become a united nation-state based on the reality of unity in diversity, as a unitary state supported and supported by the elements different elements as "cultural fibers" of the nation (Kayam, 1989: 25). Traditional art and culture reflect the creativity and beauty of everyday life, creating a deep impression on society. Although social media plays a positive role in representing diversity, challenges related to stereotypes and certain emphasis in cultural representation still need to be overcome. In fact, Ritzer (1979: 232-3), by re-describing the writings of Lenski (1966) and Lenski & Lenski (1974) inserts one stage of plantation or planter society (Horticultural Societies), between hunter-gatherer societies (Hunting and Gathering Societies) and agrarian or agricultural society (Agrarian Societies), as a society that, at least in part, depends more on growing food and raising animals, rather than from hunting animals and collecting wild fruit and plants for food. Likewise, Vago (1989: 172), who emphasizes the discussion of the dynamics of power relations from Lenski (1966), inserts 2 (two) types of society among those who rely on their livelihoods from hunting animals and gathering their produce. wild plants, and agricultural communities, namely simple horticultural societies and advanced horticultural societies. In Vago's discussion (1989: 172), simple community farmers grow crops using digging sticks, as the simplest tool in the gardening economy and growing plants can rely more on garden produce as a food supply, which This in turn is related to the emergence of the division of labor, including the development of economically valuable specialist jobs and full-time jobs in politics and religion. Modern industrial society is the last type of society in the socio-cultural transformation and civilizational development of human society, before then developing from the end of the 20th century a type of post-industrial society (postindustrial societies) in postmodern societies (Bell, 1973). Society's perception of diversity is generally positive, and the high level of interfaith tolerance reflects maintained harmony. However, differences in perceptions between generations and geographic variations demonstrate the importance of contextual approaches in designing educational policies and approaches that focus on understanding and valuing differences. It is important to recognize that the concept of harmony in diversity is central to Indonesian society, and joint efforts are needed to ensure that this cultural diversity continues to be enriched and woven into sustainable harmony. plurality of citizens that grows and develops in society. Plurality of citizenship basically refers to the idea that a society consisting of different identity groups can live together, especially within the context of a nation-state that unites different groups.

### *Language and Communication*

It was found that Indonesian as the national language plays a crucial role in uniting differences. Regional languages function as local identities, but people tend to understand and use Indonesian widely.

### *Customs and Rituals*

Customs and rituals are still highly respected, but there are variations in practice between ethnic groups. Traditional ceremonies have an important role in maintaining diversity and providing a strong identity. Traditional Arts and Culture: Traditional arts and culture become creative expressions that enrich everyday life. Some traditional arts, such as shadow puppetry and dance, have high appeal and are protected cultural heritage.

### *Perception of Diversity*

The questionnaire survey showed that the majority of respondents felt proud of the socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia. There is a difference in perception between the younger generation and the elderly regarding the level of

appreciation for diversity. Interfaith Tolerance: Statistical data shows a high level of interfaith tolerance among society. There are significant differences in perceptions of interreligious tolerance between geographic regions.

### *Social Media Representation*

Content analysis shows that social media plays an important role in representing cultural diversity. There are challenges related to stereotypes and unequal representation of some ethnic groups.

### **Conclusion**

The socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia is valuable capital that enriches national identity. Understanding and respect for differences, strengthened by education and collaborative efforts, will ensure that harmony in diversity remains a key force in building an inclusive and united society. This research provides a deep understanding of socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia and efforts to create harmony in differences. The research results highlight several key aspects that reflect the richness and challenges of cultural diversity in this country. Language as National Glue, Indonesian remains the national glue that unites ethnic and cultural differences. Regional languages have an important role in maintaining local identity and maintaining cultural heritage. And Customs and Rituals as Identity. Customs and rituals are still highly respected, creating a strong identity and maintaining diversity. Variations in practice between ethnic groups show complexity in the implementation of customs. Likewise, Traditional Arts and Culture as a Mirror of Creativity. Traditional art and culture reflect people's creativity, providing identity and color to everyday life. The role of traditional art as a protected cultural heritage needs to continue to be strengthened. And Positive Perceptions and Interfaith Tolerance also Positive perceptions of diversity and a high level of interreligious tolerance reflect the harmonious attitude of society. Likewise, challenges remain, including differences in perception between generations and geographic variations. Harmony in Diversity as the Main Theme. The main theme that emerged was the concept of harmony in diversity, signifying a joint effort to embrace diversity. Maintaining harmony requires cooperation between groups and collective efforts to overcome challenges.

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