

# SISTER SCHOOL AS A CROSS CULTURAL SYMBIOSIS IN THE SERVICE OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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***Abstract.** Pendidikan dan budaya memiliki kaitan nilai yang tinggi, tidak ada proses pendidikan tanpa penetrasi budaya dan sebaliknya budaya tidak akan tertanam tanpa proses pendidikan. UNESCO merekomendasikan bahwa pendidikan harus membuat orang bisa belajar untuk tahu, belajar untuk melakukan, belajar bersama dan hidup bersama. Sesuai dengan perkembangan hidup bersama tidak hanya bermakna terbatas bersama dengan satu suku, satu bahasa atau bangsa namun antar bangsa dan multi bahasa, lebih-lebih di era Asian Economy Community (AEC) pendidikan lintas budaya harus dikembangkan lebih intensif lagi. Salah satu bentuk pendidikan lintas budaya adalah melalui “Sister School Program”. Apa itu sister school dan bagaimana manfaat sister school dalam pengembangan pendidikan lintas budaya? Dalam makalah ini akan dipaparkan secara rinci mengenai sistem pendidikan jenis ini untuk tujuan pengembangan kebijakan masa depan bangsa Indonesia.*

***Keywords:** Sister School, Pendidikan lintas budaya, Kebijakan Pendidikan*

## INTRODUCTION

Today's and future's human life cannot be separated from culture. Education is one of human activities. Education is part of culture; it is unique and cannot be stopped by anyone. Nations cannot stand by themselves. Borderless is a new paradigm. Cooperation is needed in today's life; it is an indicator for the community as a form of culture. However, further concept of social learning is becoming important to ensure that the final aspect of education is sufficient. Students will not be able to learn by themselves- isolated from others. Culture is more than just a socio-psychological case of human interdependency.

Educational analysis is not far away from culture. Discussing culture may not neglect education. Educationalists such as J. Dewey, Whitehead states that “Culture is activity of thought, and receptiveness to beauty and human feeling”. This idea is in line with UNESCO's recommendation that education must make people able to learn to know, learn to do, learn together and live together. What is interesting is that education to make people live together is rarely done especially to live together with people from different ethnic and nations. Through cross cultural education in the form of sister school, this

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educational aim can be achieved. The world community was born in harmony. Everybody grows up with his or her group mentality that he or she brought since he or she was born. Through modeling from others, mentality is grown up. The impact of family and society on mentality is very strong.

Borderless is today's paradigm. Technological engineering is becoming more sophisticated and it forces people to connect, interact through limitless communication, civilization forces people to be in need of one another. Regional understanding and commitment move further towards international scope. Cross cultural and cross nation communication is no more impossible. The meeting point is that how to make people on this earth become more civilized. Culture is important element of cross national communication. Each nation has power to improve itself. Education is one form of culture. Education is needed by every nation. Education can link each nation. It is time for every nation to make their people more civilized. Civilization needs energy and togetherness. Togetherness is to get mutual benefits. There are many aspects to do to cooperate, to take and give. Arts, sports, and technology are some means of cooperation. Instructional engineering is one of the real form of educational development.

Learning can be done anywhere, at any time, and by anyone. The community with its activities is ever lasting learning resources and media. The community dynamics that is heterogeneous becomes references how learning should be. Community creativities in the form of life engineering serve as learning materials. Learning from differences is inspiring and encouraging creativity. Learning is trying to find similarity from differences. Similarities or at least likelihood is a product of an analysis which is not easy to obtain. Every community has style, character, and idealism which are strongly influenced by its culture. Natural factor makes people colonize and active. Community dynamics move based on its ability to anticipate the nature. Where can we find or how can we find similarity from differences? The answer is to understand and implement cross culture in our life. Learning together or learning from others is the implementation of cross culture in life.

Learning together in the areas of education is an effort to reduce egoism and narrow nationalism. As we can see, wherever people are, they need self-recognition, reward and trust from others. Learning is people's need (*human educandum*). It needs intervention from others, support from the nation, local community or even wider.

Many product varieties of community engineering can be used as learning resources and media. Learning is more than remembering (cognitive), but learning through experiencing and practicing will find more ideas based on the problems found and experienced. Schools are not the only place for educational transformation. Freire, Illich as the liberalists and post modernists in education disregard formal education limited to schools. Education should be humanistic. Referring to some experts on humanistic learning, learning product is self-actualization, self-understanding, and self-realization of the learning subjects. Furthermore Hebermans states that productive learning can be achieved through technical learning, practical learning, and emancipatory learning. The four learning styles can be achieved when learning is done directly in or among the community. The community is the inductor and stimulator of learning.

It is not unusual then the more frequent learning together, learning from different condition of the community is done, the more induction will be got. The community as learning resources has variety of characters. The community character is the manifestation of its culture. Culture is tightly bound with education (Tilaar, 2000). Both have high values in the community. There is no educational process without culture and vice versa; there is no culture without education. In the context of culture, education is the process of community and civilization. Culture can be tangible and intangible. The work of culture may the form of arts, systems or way of life can be learnt by anyone, at any place, and at any time. The development of a nation is a result of studying culture. They learn from time to time, across community, and across generation to develop themselves. Regions or areas where a community lives, creates more or less cultural similarities. People who live in Asia will create more or less similar or even the same culture. For example, they have rice or wheat as the staple food, they are familiar spices, and their words and arts looks similar or the same. Ancient artifacts such as temples become undeniable prove that among the nations there are common threads for similarity. Why don't we try to make these cultural similarities as a bridge to live and develop and improve life to be wider and global on this earth? Basically, culture is genetic-generative. People pass through the culture from generation to generation. Culture can influence the life of a society.

Cooperation, exchange of cultural products among communities and nations are ways of making communities and nations that is one another. Through education as a

manifestation of culture, cross cultural cooperation can be established. Educational products such as community empowerment can be obtained from and by the community. Cross cultural education can be made possible if communities are involved. Living in or within the community will directly observe, feel and experience community culture.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Intention or motivation to cooperate appears when learning together and learning from others will result in more self-development and widen educational development elements. People need to be aware that cooperation, learning together, giving and taking are the habitat of civilized community. Educational development through development of human resources (educators or teachers) becomes the cross cultural education priority. Looking at, analyzing, and adopting necessary things are needed for self-improvement and educational development. Through human resources development by learning about educational systems and politics in and from other places, own educational development will be stimulated.

The followings are productive stages for cross cultural education.

1. Having universal feeling and understanding that no one in this world can live alone (sociologic), people are God's creation (religious), and the earth is inhabited by community with a tendency to respect and value one another (united).
2. Self-openness across community, taking and giving one another based on each cultural variety.
3. Willingness to learn and learn from others and to share resources to other communities.
4. Prioritizing on finding similarities rather than on widening differences.
5. Being aware that every community has advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses.

Looking at others, being in between or among the societies are the manifestation of cross cultural education. Any educational institution can perform cross cultural education with provides mutual benefits.

Educational cooperation as the manifestation of cross cultural education can come true when:

1. There is a drive or goodwill to do the cooperation.

2. There is an analysis that benefits each party involved.
3. There is an equality among the parties involved.
4. There is an actualization or action.
5. There is openness among the parties involved.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The word “sister” refers to closeness, take and give, and respect. Cultural cooperation and city management cooperation produce sister city; educational development cooperation results in sister school. Sister school means establishing collaboration between two or more educational institutions from countries which have similarities and differences. There are many things that can be done based on an agreement such as instructional development, professional development, social-cultural activities among students and teachers. Even, the cooperation between Japan and America involve sending parents to both countries. The main goal of sister school is to enlarge and quicken the accomplishment of vision and mission of each educational institution involved in the cooperation. Some specific things that can be done under the cooperation are standardization of learning process, learning outcome, learning materials, learning evaluation, and teacher competence. Cultural, development, and achievement differences are not to be inhibiting the cooperation. Information exchange and cultural exchange can mediate the differences. With each strength, the involved nations can give, take, and share. One of cross cultural cooperation in education is establishing *sister/brother school*. The *sister/brother school* is an indication that education is a culture of a civilized nation. A nation which realizes that the one nation cannot move onwards by itself will need help or to cooperate with other nations.

*The sister school* has several meanings such as:

- The two or more educational institutions cooperate because they have similar financial ability, similar history, and active in involving students in their educational activities.
- Educational institutions that cooperate have equal managerial style and commitment and similar future plans.
- Educational institutions of the different nations or communities establish international cooperation.

The existence of *sister school* makes it possible to develop positive educational cooperation within and between nations, and across culture. The chances of cross culture relationship through *sister school* is widely open. Some positive impacts of *sister school* are as follow.

- The involvement of all education-interested parties both the government or non-government ones.
- Promoting the best models or techniques to those involve in the cooperation.
- Strengthening culture among nations.
- Balancing the educational development at regional, national, and international level.

In the *sister school* program, each educational institution which is to cooperate must already have:

- Human resources, experts or professionals in the area of cooperation.
- Information and communication technology facilities that can be accessed and provide up to date information.
- Advantage or strength as specification that can be learnt by both parties.
- Establishing quality products such as community or environment based learning model. Living or staying in the family or community becomes learning media that directly relates to culture.

## CONCLUSION

The earth is occupied by billions of people and ones depend on the others. People with their culture try to develop and improve their life. As educated creatures (*human educantum*), they try to look for and improve their identity through education.

Education is the community cultural reality. It is done anywhere, at any time, and by anyone. The tendency to live in group, to cooperate, and in needs of others can eliminate partition or regional borders. One way of establishing cooperation and leaning together is through cross cultural education. Learning and learning from others in cross cultural education commence from trusting each other and driving of making others relatives. From cultural heterogeneity, we can derive similarities and other rich resources own by each participating parties as materials for learning. One form of cross cultural

education is *sister school*. Two or more educational institutions cooperate for the sake of mutual benefits of students, teachers, as well as the institutions.

To make cross cultural educational cooperation real, preparation and management which is transparent and beneficial for each institutions are needed. Started with goodwill to cooperate, followed with implementation of the cooperation, and finalized with product evaluation. All the stages are done together. What is no less important is the final product of the cooperation that can be perceived by students, teachers, institutions, community, and the government.

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