Local Wisdom and Religious Moderation-Based Thematic Learning Management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Malang City

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ABSTRACT

Thematic learning has provided an integrated and convergent approach to the learning process by classroom teachers. This approach has brought students closer to the world and their surroundings. However, it can also cause new classroom issues when the learning topic involves sensitive issues, such as traditions and religious ritual practices. This research focuses on how to manage the values of local wisdom (LW) and religious moderation (RM) in thematic learning, and the students’ literacy level on LW and RM-based thematic learning management. It is a case study with an in-depth interview with madrasah leaders and classroom teachers followed by observation and documentation study. It reveals that LW and RM-based thematic learning management has been shifted from the conventional approach to the functional integrative thematic approach. At the same time, students become aware of the differences and similarities regarding LW and RM that they respect one another.

Keywords: Local Wisdom, Religious Moderation, Thematic Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Thematic learning (TL) which is considered as a complex and less effective teaching and learning activity contains a high local wisdom (LW) literacy and religious moderation (RM). In practice, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic Elementary School) in the city of Malang manages the LW and and MA-based thematic learning by linking the existing topics to the main discussion of religious subjects. Such method is also used in extra-curricular activities. The intra and extra activities is implemented in the classroom, in the laboratory, in the mosque and outside madrasah. It is thus done as one of embodiment to understand each other and respect the differences and similarities about the customs, habits, traditions, religious ritual practices and social status among students of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. It is in line with the purposes of thematic learning which are to develop the ability of students by learning knowledge and to associate various subjects with the students' personal experience with their family and the surrounding environment, to communicate the teaching materials with the real world, and to enhance their ethics and morals by honoring lofty and laudable values along with the times [1][2][3]. Therefore, the role of education management department becomes urgent because thematic learning contains experience and knowledge-integrated aspects.

This is the manifestation of mutual understanding on the differences of tradition, culture, religious practices, ethnicity, and race under Bhineka Tunggal Eka. The frequency of the students in using social media is average to two hours or more per day [4]. Social media are used to complete the various tasks from the teacher, including the assignment for religious subjects. Thus, the provision and the management of religious material and humane local wisdom, and integrated science and religion are urgent to do [5]. Besides, local wisdom literacy associated with religious understanding, interfaith, and the integration of religion and science for the benefit of learning in the elementary school and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has not been thoroughly made. In line with the study, the objectives of the curricular program, groups A and B, at elementary school as written in [2] article 5, which is to develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of students to strengthen the competence in living among community, nation, and state as well as related to the social environment, religion, culture, and art.
The literatures have been, so far, discussing thematic learning on three aspects. Firstly, it aims to improve the effectiveness and learning motivation of the students. The study focuses more on how to improve the students' learning motivation by mapping their interest and talent, not linking the topics with religious materials, traditions, culture, and arts that have been growing among the society in Indonesia [3], [6][7][8]. Secondly, studies about the application of strategies and methods of teaching and learning in thematic learning emphasizes more on the application of strategies and leaning methods with the specified themes in the curriculum, especially the five learning strategies suggested for use in the learning and teaching activities in the 21st century [8][9][11]. Thirdly, the impact of intolerance indicates a heuristic bias by the perpetrators of indoctrination from the environment, predominance of groups on a certain system, the identity crisis among the younger generation, and differences in ideology and social networks [4], [12][13][14][15][16]. The three tendencies have not been perceived as a significant impact in the intolerance prevention activities through education, especially elementary school, which will be the foundation of the children's character and personality building, so they are tolerant under the value of Bhineka Tunggal Eka.

This article responds to the tendency of the previous studies by proposing tolerance value building through local and religious literacy-based thematic learning management. Therefore, three questions are formulated, (1) how is the management of local wisdom and religious moderation in the thematic learning of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Malang City, (2) how is the students' literacy level on local wisdoms and religious moderation in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Malang City, and (3) what factors contribute to determine the implementation of LW and religious moderation-based thematic learning management in MI around the city of Malang. The three questions are expected to respond to the dynamics of thematic learning around Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Based on the issues, this study focuses on three points. The first, the educational institutions of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah are responsible for building brotherhood attitude by growing local wisdoms and religious moderation through the thematic learning activities. The second, the curriculum practiced at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has a significant impact on tolerance building and intolerance prevention in the early age. Similarly, LW and MA literacy is can be a counter on the intolerant and radicalism if the values are transformed into the open practices of academic life without any claims of truth. The third, inclusiveness in religion and local wisdom is needed to understand each other differences and similarities as members of the humanist academic.

1.1. Thematic Learning Management

Thematic learning (TL) is one of the learning approaches recommended for all the teachers at elementary school (SD) and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI). TL is used in the primary school to integrate the students' development and the knowledge they obtained from the family and society as well as other learning institution where they study. To that end, it is recommended for the teachers of SD and MI, especially the low grades, i.e. grade 1-3 [1], [2]. TL is also called integrated learning because the teaching and learning activities always integrate the students' experience and the lesson to deliver. Besides, there are activities linking the students' knowledge gained from their families and surroundings and the knowledge they get from his friends at school. There is a system in the activities of teaching and learning allowing the learners to be active either individually or in groups during the authentic research, excavation, and discovery of basic knowledge, concepts, and principles of science [2], [3], [17].

TL activity encourages students to interact with their physical and socio-religious environment at home and school, so they can acquire new experience and knowledge. Hence, thematic leaning activities require management and learning plan by: (1) picking the students' experience from the family, society, and peers, (2) building interconnection between experience and knowledge they have with those of the others, (3) TL activities performed assimilation and accommodation [1], [2], [17]. Basically, learning management aims to develop the competence of the students by utilizing the facilities and infrastructure of learning to the maximum, to create situations and conditions allowing motivated and happy to learn, and to help them acquire learning experience well and orderly to achieve the learning outcomes. Thus, the success and failure of the students at school can be influenced by how the learning activities are organized and planned [18].

1.2. Religious Moderation

Islam is a religion which concerns a lot on the welfare of the people as the central goal, while religious moderation promotes a balance between rights and obligations that are theocentric, ethnocentric, and anthropocentric. Therefore, religious moderation among regions and countries varies due to the difference in the concept of nationalism and religious understanding as well as the social condition. Religious moderation within education in Indonesia has become necessity because the societies are multi-ethnic, religion and culture, that they are supposed to make the religion as an ideological,
ethical, and moral source [19]. According to Hermawan, the religious moderation values that can be practiced in education are tolerance, justice, balance, and equality [16]. The values can be internalized into several subjects, such as religious education, faith, and Pancasila and citizenship education (PPKN).

They can be internalized through the learning management, curriculum design, learning design, and the learning activities in the classroom. According to Masdar Hilmy in [20] that to understand and effectively internalize the values at school requires a good understanding of the religious teachings, covering (1) the comprehensive Islamic teachings, (2) the content of the Quran and Hadith, (3) the dynamics of socio-religious society, (4) human values, (5) religious, cultural, and political pluralism, and (6) the rights and obligations of the minority.

1.3. Local Wisdom

Local wisdom (LW) is the basic knowledge acquired from everyday life in a community to use for natural balance. LW is associated with the preserved culture and tradition among society. It is initially coming from the direct experience integrated with individual, spirit, and environment so that each area or ethnic group must possess their own wisdom, such as gotong royong and tepo selero in java, natolu in Batak, rumah betang in Dayak, sipakalebbi and sipakatau in Bugis, and pela gandong in Ambon, every of which is respected, recognized, and passed on the generation to generation through various ways, such as stories delivered from mouth to mouth. However, at the moment LW is also transferred through education at schools through the component of local subject though every region has different intensity.

There are still some LW values and norms practiced among society, such as folk songs, legend, myths, and the folks in the area/community which contain lessons and messages of kindness. The knowledge compiled by the ancestors, community leaders, and spiritual and custom leaders, as well as manuscripts or scriptures are believed to be true and sacred by the community [20][21][22]. Therefore, LW needs to be revitalized for social capital to be true and sacred by the community [20][21][22].

2. METHOD

This research is a case study, which describes the holistic management of thematic learning based on the local wisdom and religious moderation in madrasah around the city of Malang. It employs a constant comparative and modified induction method. During the search for the formal and substantive findings, it performs a research quality assurance process with comparison and induction technique from the planning, implementation, to the preparation of the research reports. The research output can offer insightful ideas regarding the latest and actual management of thematic learning based on local wisdom and religious moderation. Therefore, data collection techniques with in-depth interviews to the leaders of the madrasah and the class teachers, observation, and documentation study considered most representative to find the data related to the focus of the current study. The data were analyzed through data collection period, data reduction, data display, and verification. Then, it is triangulated to ensure the validity of the data.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Management of LW and RM in the Thematic-Based Learning

The curriculum at madarasah is formally implemented by the class teacher i.e. the teachers must be graduates of the study program of primary school or Madrasah Ibtdaiyah with a thematic approach. The local wisdom and religious moderation-based thematic learning management of MIN Malang is divided into two (2). The first, it is organized through the teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Teaching in a classroom emphasizes more on the academic and cognitive learning activities. The second, it can also be held outside of the classroom which focuses more on the affective and psychomotor aspect, such as LW and RM immersion as well as habituation activities. The learning process of LW and RM is conducted in the classroom, the school mosque, art gallery, and school yard especially during training for welcoming the guests either moslems or non-moslems, or the guests from another city or country through traditional dances and traditional clothes from the origin of the guests. The demonstration is often performed for entertaining guests followed by question and answer for the guests.

LW and RM value-based thematic learning is also organized through the activities of multi-region cultural art skill practice corresponding with the learning topic in the class and the theme of the school activities, such as the commemoration of national days and certain scheduled day. The teachers wear the traditional clothes of particular areas in turn according to the schedule. Thus, the students
also wear traditional clothes and display the area's traditions and songs to welcome guests from either another city or abroad. All of the activities are managed by the school for learning, educating, and respecting the values of LW and RM for the students and all of the school parties. These activities teach habituation and tolerance among the academics of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in the city of Malang.

3.2. The Literacy Level of LW and RM in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

Teachers put a lot of attention on the students' understanding of religious. They usually train the students in the classroom or mosques through religious practices and lecture, while the immersion for LW and RM values is less concerned. The teaching activities for LW and RM values for the students of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Malang are manifested into the three programs. First, thematic learning in the classroom. The immersion of LW and RM values is done through story telling related to the Muslim figures and religious holidays. The story telling process is usually assisted with interactive audio-visual media. They explain the history of religions in Indonesia, their teachings, scriptures, and places of worship. In addition, they also describe various recitation of religious rituals prevailing among society in both family of Nahdlatul' Ulama ' (NU), Muhammadiyah, and other community organizations.

The activities are expected to let the students know and understand the meaning of religions in Indonesia and the purpose of religious activities. Besides, it aims to teach them about respect for similarity and difference of religious teachings and practices that they are not ignorant to one another. It goes similar to the teaching activity for cultural and social environment. The students are given material through story-telling, role-playing, singing, and audio-visual media-assisted demonstrations. Teachers explain about the meaning of culture, dance, clothes, and customs of every area through audio visual media. After that, they ask the students to mention the names of traditional songs, dances, and the clothes. Through the activities, students are expected not to be mutually vilifying and degrading the customs, songs, and traditions of every area.

The second, the activities of thematic teaching outside the classroom emphasizes on growing the attitude of respect on the differences. The literacy of LW and RM is conducted through religious activities in the mosque by choosing the imam of the group prayer from various versions, such as those of NU and Muhammadiyah. The activities are the follow up of the literacy activities in the class room. Similarly, LW literacy is practiced by displaying various traditional clothes and traditional songs at some events, such as the commemoration of the national day and official activities of the school, such as at the students' graduation day. The third is literacy of LW and RM. It is usually practiced with there are guests from outside the region and abroad, from both the school, Muslim, and non-moslem. Through the activities, students can understand and know the meaning of unity among society that adheres to Bhineka Tunggal Eka which are taught through thematic learning with sub-themes and materials in the field of Pancasila and citizenship education (PPKN) and social sciences (IPS). Of the three forms, such activities show that LW literacy and religious moderation have been running well around Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Malang.

3.3. Classroom teacher factor and literacy skill level of LW and RM in determining the success of thematic-based learning management

Thematic learning, as one of the teaching and learning approaches in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, is supposed to be implemented in an organized, integrated, and sustainable way to improve the students' LW and RM literacy. Traditionally, the students of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Malang are accustomed to coexisting together through academic and non-academic activity. In the academic aspect, they participate in the thematic learning activities from the classroom teachers, religious teachers – who teach Qur’an-al-hadits, Aqidah, Fiqh, Islamic Cultural History – sport teachers, and art teachers. Students regularly do religious practices by showing various ways and types of religious rituals of NU, Muhammadiyah, and other organizations. They are also briefed with the religions acknowledged by the Republic of Indonesia, their histories and places of worship. Similarly, on the environmental topic, students are asked to portray the different types of social activities and traditions commonly performed in their environment. The teachers also explain the background of the differences and the way to respect them. The other classroom teachers also do similar method with their respective topics.

In a non-academic aspect, students regularly welcome visitors with different religions, races, and ethnicities. They are also assigned to obtain and perform traditional art performances with traditional costumes. Similarly, on the national and religious holidays, students and teachers participate in the event. From these particular activities, they become familiar with tolerant, unradical, respectful, and empathetic values. They also keep the unity of
Local Wisdom and Religious Moderation values which tutorial, practice and a direct visit to the place that occur experience are developed using observational study, society. Meanwhile, learning strategy and socio-religious religious issues that occur among their family and thematic learning management are related to socio- and religious material developed in LW and RM-based the theme and curriculum material [24]–[26], The themes LW and RM literacy competencies as the elements within guidelines in the learning process that affect the students' religious holidays. 

In various socio-religious activities, especially on the participation, students and the other educator's personnel regional cultural art performances, teachers' and ethnic areas. Besides, they also conduct cross- communication and visitation to various cross-religious activity of LW and RM is realized through as mosque terrace. In socio-cultural aspect, the literacy learning activity is inside and outside the classroom, such designed integrated. In socio-psychology, the religious learning activity is inside and outside the classroom, such as mosque terrace. In socio-cultural aspect, the literacy activity of LW and RM is realized through communication and visitation to various cross-religious and ethnic areas. Besides, they also conduct cross-regional cultural art performances, teachers' participation, students and the other educator's personnel in various socio-religious activities, especially on the religious holidays.

The teaching and learning activities can generate tolerance and distinguish the diversity among school members as it has been practiced through pedagogic, socio-psychological, and socio-cultural organization [23]. Contextually, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Malang initiate pedagogic organization that portrays thematic learning activity and religious subject practiced using integrated thematic learning principles. The learning activity is performed in the classroom, laboratory, and outside class such as mosque terrace, schoolyard and art stage designed integrated. In socio-psychology, the religious learning activity is inside and outside the classroom, such as mosque terrace. In socio-cultural aspect, the literacy activity of LW and RM is realized through communication and visitation to various cross-religious and ethnic areas. Besides, they also conduct cross-regional cultural art performances, teachers' participation, students and the other educator’s personnel in various socio-religious activities, especially on the religious holidays.

Thematic learning and religious subject are the guidelines in the learning process that affect the students’ LW and RM literacy competencies as the elements within the theme and curriculum material [24]–[26]. The themes and religious material developed in LW and RM-based thematic learning management are related to socio-religious issues that occur among their family and society. Meanwhile, learning strategy and socio-religious experience are developed using observational study, tutorial, practice and a direct visit to the place that occur Local Wisdom and Religious Moderation values which are applied in such as mosques, art workshop, and meetings between teachers, students’ parent with different educational background, ethnicities and social status. The activity intends to understand and take benefit from the culture developing at school [27] and learning experience in each person in fostering tolerant attitudes, mutual understanding of differences and similarities to establish literacy competencies in LW and RM.

Learning Management as an educational tool, formulated based on religious values and local wisdom humanity, can build a tolerant attitude and inhibit the evolution of intolerance among students, teachers and other educators as well as parents [28], [29] In Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Malang, LW and RM-based thematic learning management can generate the growth and development of tolerance attitude among students and teachers with different socio-religious background status and ethnic supported by the themes, the art, cultural, and religious material formulated for the principle of openness, the universality of religious value, humanism, and local values. Thematic learning management is used as the tool to develop Local Wisdom and Religious Moderation literacy in the direct learning activity in Madrasah or school visit to different Madrasa, and socio-religious status. Therefore, RM becomes important for the thematic learning activity implementation in the school because each religion and LW has values sacredly honored by each believer. Evisopandi states that every religion and LW has several values that will obey by their believer whether as the obligatory or prohibition as well as the sacred things [4]. Each adherent of religion and LW is required to understand each other to prevent claiming that they are the rightest [30][31][32][33].

Thus, improving LW and RM literacy understanding for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is important because they have provided literacy the students need in the future. They will be tolerant and respectful towards similarities and differences in religious dimension and local traditions and sensitive matters related to SARA. Nowadays, students and young generation confronted with two problems, which are the free flow of information through social media and the development of new exclusive housing with a various socio-religious background that has expanded to the suburbs [4]. According to Haryani, government should intervene the hate speech through cyber-net by discourses, speeches, and similar information and enforce regulations to create a civil society because a good and peaceful society will bring a good family and school environment as well [20]. If a family and educational institutions are good, the society will be good, and the other way around.
4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Thematic learning management which is eventually formulated under openness, religious universality, humanism, and local wisdom can cultivate a tolerant attitude, and develop the literacy of LW and RM. Besides, it inhibits the evolution intolerance among students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents. Habituation and modelling are supported by the infrastructure of integrative learning and followed by demonstration, practice, and direct observation on the activities of religious ritual, art, and traditions and cultural performance. In addition, they also do collaborative activities when welcoming guests from different ethnicity. Social-religious status can enhance the students’ literacy of LW and RM, behavioral tolerance, mutual understanding, and mutual respect for similarities and differences.

The limitation of the current research lies on the focus and location, which is only based on the LW and RM values given in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Malang. It is therefore recommended that further researches examine the learning management of religious subjects in other private or public schools to promote tolerance and religious literacy. Besides, tolerance can be viewed from various perspectives, such as the socio-economic status of the teachers and students that future researches may concern on.

REFERENCES


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