

INVESTING INTOLERANCE: 'PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER' AND CURRICULUM 2013

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Abstract: Investing Intolerance: 'Pendidikan Karakter' And Curriculum 2013. This paper explores and analyses public debates on 'Pendidikan Karakter' (Character-based education) in the formulation and implementation of Curriculum 2013. It poses two interrelated questions: first, how and to what extent does policy debate among variety of religious-cultural articulation on tolerance shape the content and orientation of 'Pendidikan Karakter' in the curriculum and second, to what extent curriculum framework and content do affect the formation of multicultural citizenship. By using Mouffe's Discourse approach, our study results in three interrelated findings: (1) None of the religious-cultural groups with their respective articulation of tolerance have clear-cut concept of 'pendidikan karakter'; (2) Curriculum 2013, in its contents and learning activities, shows strong tendency to religious specificity and religious-cultural difference; (3) Intricate confluence between Religious Competence, Social Competence, and Knowledge Competence has been relatively absent in official documents of the Curriculum and public debate. Our discourse analysis of the findings concludes that first, the curriculum prioritizes ethics of religious-cultural difference and overlooks ethics of multicultural citizenship; second, lack of integrative approach in the curriculum reflects the relatively absence of comprehensive policy framework in the public debate that renders this educational policy continuously contested and revised over time; and third, the curriculum turns out to be breeding ground for intolerance. We strongly argue that the curriculum fails to meet our pressing challenge and demand for the formation of democratic citizenship capable of living together in multicultural Indonesia.

Keywords: (in)tolerance, pendidikan karakter, kurikulum 2013, discourse, citizenship

Abstrak: Investasi Intoleransi: Pendidikan Karakter dan Kurikulum 2013. Artikel ini mengeksplorasi dan menganalisis debat publik tentang 'Pendidikan Karakter' dalam perumusan dan implementasi Kurikulum 2013. Ada dua pertanyaan kunci yang saling terkait: pertama, bagaimana dan sejauh mana perdebatan kebijakan antara berbagai artikulasi agama-budaya tentang toleransi membentuk konten dan orientasi 'Pendidikan Karakter' dalam kurikulum; dan kedua, sejauh mana kerangka kerja kurikulum dan konten mempengaruhi pembentukan kewarganegaraan multikultural. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan Wacana Mouffe, penelitian ini menghasilkan tiga temuan yang saling terkait: (1) Tidak satu pun dari kelompok agama-budaya dengan artikulasi toleransi masing-masing memiliki konsep yang jelas tentang 'pendidikan karakter'; (2) Kurikulum 2013, dalam isinya dan kegiatan pembelajaran, menunjukkan kecenderungan kuat untuk kekhususan agama dan perbedaan agama-budaya; (3) Pertemuan yang rumit antara Kompetensi Agama, Kompetensi Sosial, dan Kompetensi Pengetahuan telah relatif tidak ada dalam dokumen resmi Kurikulum dan debat publik. Analisis wacana kami tentang temuan menyimpulkan bahwa: pertama, kurikulum memprioritaskan etika perbedaan agama-budaya dan mengabaikan etika kewarganegaraan multikultural; kedua, kurangnya pendekatan integratif dalam kurikulum mencerminkan relatif tidak adanya kerangka kebijakan komprehensif dalam debat publik yang membuat kebijakan pendidikan ini terus diperebutkan dan direvisi dari waktu ke waktu; dan ketiga, kurikulum ternyata menjadi tempat berkembang biaknya intoleransi. Kami berpendapat bahwa kurikulum gagal memenuhi tantangan dan tuntutan kami untuk pembentukan kewarganegaraan demokratis yang mampu hidup bersama di Indonesia multikultural.

Kata Kunci: (in)toleransi, pendidikan karakter, kurikulum 2013, diskursus, kewarganegaraan

INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental to democratic practice as we are now living in increasingly interconnecting and multicultural world. It can take place in variety of ways, conducted by broad range of actors or institution and in response to multiple purpose. Situated precisely in that spectrum, nation-wide curriculum for elementary and post-elementary education occupies the most central position best suited to get children and youth on the track of multicultural citizenship. Capability to live in cultural diversity is precious and demanding that curriculum should offer to them, the backbone of the nation's future. To predict future course of a nation-state in this rapid changing world one needs among other ways to look at policy making process and curriculum, as its product (its content and learning activities).

As response to the task, we take specific attention to *how public debate among religious and non-religious interest groups takes place in response to the changing orientation or focus of Curriculum 2013 toward character-building*. We also look at *to what extent public debate on importance of character building reflected in the content and evaluation standart of the course on religion and courses grouped under social science courses*. The term character building becomes central characteristics of the curriculum compared to competence based-Curriculum 2004 (KBK) and critical learning based Curriculum 1994 (CBSA). The overall policy making process and revision of this curriculum has drawn broader public attention particularly religious leaders, religion-based academic institutions together with Islamic-non Islamic political parties and other non-Islamic religious groups such Christian Protestant and Catholics. Intensive attention of broader public to this curriculum is partly due to the reinstatement of 'human character' as fundamental component in the curriculum. This specifically attracts religious insititutions and Islamic political parties to share their concerns and interests.

It is obvious since the start that the term character being perceived as associating with moral-ethical issue that characterises human behaviour and perception. As made clearer in later parts of this paper, most of the public involving in policy debate shares common perspective that investing in character based

education will enable children and youth with strong personality, social awareness and social responsibility to the other and broader world. It underlies a common sense that children and youth are both source of moral-ethical trasmitter for the future of nation and source of moral-ethical problems or transgression in the present. Beside this common public perception, a number of narrative with strong currency plays their part in articulating and constesting the term character. There are at least two other dominant narratives, namely, globalization and later on national sovereignty in Nawa Cita. All these articulations centered on grand discourse on tolerance which then reflected in the content of the curriculum particularly in the two of the three domains for output standart evaluation, that is, Attitude and Knowledge (and another one is Skills).

We pursue answers to the above questions by taking discourse analysis approach that stresses power-relation or exercise of power through certain discourse and the formation of certain subjectivity, sensibility and acts produced and reproduced through the practice of that discourse. In our treatment, the discourse is called 'Tolerance', to which a variety of religious and non-religious articulation or groups seeks to define and contribute in Curriculum 2013. Tolerance discourse gains its significance with the dramatic reorientation of curriculum's focus on character-building as the most central component in its learning process and output evaluation. Analysis of the overall findings reveals that almost four years debate on this issue has not been guided by comprehensive framework of understanding and problematization of 'tolerance'.

This reflects the absence of hegemonic articulation of what is tolerance and how it is concreticised or laid out in the curriculum. Furthermore, as we strongly conclude, the curriculum appears up to the present more as site of contestation than product of relative consent. The government as the final decision maker takes up pragmatic turn by recognition the importance of religion course in the curriculum but with the absence of multicultural and inter-religious learning not to mention its disconnection from other courses within two domains of knowledge and skills. Instead of undertaking substantial reappraisal on this matter, the government and public stakeholders are now increasingly focusing on

technicalities in implementation such as teacher's capacity, educational facilities, school management, and strengthening partnership between school, family and society.

This session introduces general context of the questions, study approach, findings and conclusion. Second session discusses academic and policy debate on this issue. It is within such debate that discourse analysis contributes its critical intervention in making more sense of the problematic of tolerance arising from public policy debate on the curriculum's focus on character-building, its manifestation in the curriculum content and practice, and its underlying effects on producing mono-multicultural citizenship in the future. Third Session exposes conflicting articulations on tolerance as public discourse characterising public discussion on character-building of the curriculum. It shows complication of meaning, assumption and projection of Indonesian tolerance through this educational policy and how the government then takes pragmatic turn by not making integrative framework in implementing and evaluating three domains of learning laid out in the documents. Fourth session presents ethical and cognitive consequences of the curriculum for the students living in multicultural-multireligious Indonesian as well as their engagement with the increasingly interconnected world. Conclusion session redraw main arguments and briefly proposes constructive recommendation to the policy community and critical suggestion to academic scholarship on education in Indonesia.

TOLERANCE AS DISCOURSE IN EDUCATION

Tolerance matters in education. *But the question remains why does it matter and how best we understand it in relation to the call for democratic citizenship?* In our assessment, most current scholarship conceived tolerance as guiding norm for regulating multicultural relation either within national or transnational borders. It is part of liberal governance dictating how state's policy should integrate and accommodate cultural difference, and, at societal level, how individual and community conduct themselves in relation with others. Despite its apparent deficiencies with the crisis of European and American multiculturalism

today, liberal model of tolerance remains the most preferable including its ramification in educational policy of secular state.

In stark contrast, there have been emerging alternative approaches that contest the epistemological foundation and political consequence of liberal tolerance. UNESCO (2015:36-43; 2005; 2011), for instance, argues for tolerance that focuses more on cultivating multicultural children and youth. It emphasises the intricate relation between cultural values, knowledge transfer, and skill learning in school. As integral to global development agenda, UNESCO's core understanding of tolerance relates to its significance for sustainable development as outlined in UNDP policy framework (UNDP, 2014:15-24; 2015). Its central message is that recognition of cultural diversity is unlikely to be sustainable in society of rampant economic justice and political discrimination. Taking humanistic approach UNESCO lays out four foundational pillars of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. The most important is learning to live together because this capability conveys the other three to be able to interact and cooperate with other, tapping on multicultural opportunity to deepen sense of wellbeing and expand knowledge horizon.

Beyond such global policy approach, academic scholarship takes critical stance stating that liberal tolerance in education produces and perpetuates culturally exclusive citizens and mono-multicultural society (Sen, 2006: 149-169). In similar tone, Wendy Brown (2006: 1-25) exposes tolerance as discourse of power and depolitization that blocks possibility of young generation to be politically active engaging in public matters. It argues that current practice of liberal tolerance fosters polarization of society into identity enclaves and in doing so, facilitates exclusive supremacy of dominant culture. The rise of contemporary islamophobia, religious fundamentalism, and racism of late capitalism has flourished as the systemic effects of liberal governance of multicultural difference in post Cold War and post 9/11 period.

In similar line of thought, the most recent approach called Discourse Analysis goes even further by proposing new way of doing tolerance that builds on what is called hegemonic politics (Mouffe, 2000: 129-140). It argues that the creation of democratic subjects

must start from perceiving ourselves as having not only one single identity but multiple identity that opens possibility for multiple identification with other. Inclusive education should be based not only upon recognition of cultural difference but reaching-out to form cross-identity alliance with others in redefining and advocating public matters that affect all communities. This approach suggests that learning to live together requires character-building based on radical democratic principle which is not essentialist but contingent to create a demos beyond ethnicity and religion.

Our study takes up this approach as analytical tools to understanding how tolerance discourse around character-building curriculum is articulated by variety of social, religious and political forces at national level. It helps us to identify which articulation is influential, their contestation and manifestation in the curriculum. It also enables us to analyse what type of subjectivity, sensibility and praxis of citizenship this curriculum poses on student at present and in future of their adult life. Crux of this approach is that the absence of hegemonic articulation of tolerance makes the curriculum contested over time which is unproductive. Hegemonic articulation means a specific movement among the public contenders who or which is uniting difference to recapture and rename what is tolerance as inclusive discourse. This is to rescue tolerance from being a discourse of identity exclusiveness and supremacy that fail citizens to cooperate and make fusion of horizon that our democracy badly needs.

Contest without Hegemony

Focus on character building in the curriculum 2013 relates to greater extent to a public concern with 'character' of Indonesian youth. As our data shows, last years of curriculum 2006 and after 2013 were marked by series of bloody fights between students of two or three neighboring schools, drugs abuse, free sex, and terrorism-radicalism involving youth. All these have drawn dramatic attention among the publics to discuss and rethink about objective and operational system of our education particularly Curriculum 2006 (KBM). It leads to public assertion that the curriculum overemphasises competence at the expense of investment in character-building. As response, Ministry of Education under the leadership of

Muhamad Nuh revised the curriculum, brought into public hearings, and gained political support from national representative board (DPR). With this new curriculum, there takes place quite fundamental reorientation of education in its objective, contents of courses, methodology and process-output evaluation.

However, such ideological reorientation unveils increasing public concern with tolerance in multicultural Indonesia. Significance of character in the curriculum reflects the interpenetration of multiple public articulations that gives birth to tolerance as specific discourse targetting the youth as object of discursive intervention and their education system as site of multicultural learning and practice. There are competing but simultaneously interweaving articulations as follow: social-cultural identity of the nation, ultimate supremacy of Pancasila, globalization (integration and its threats), and later on, 'demography bonus'. All these articulations have sought until now to signify what is tolerance and how it contributes to their respective concerns through character-building in the new curriculum. The most recent articulation is 'Nawa Cita', Jokowi's policy framework, within which question of national sovereignty in multifront of economic development, security, and culture points toward the ever increasing urgency of national character as evident in new narrative officially called 'Revolusi Mental'.

To the question of which articulation undertaken by religious groups and Islamic political parties, it shows that none of this actors has specific or comprehensive policy proposal on character-building education. Large number of Islamic and Christian groups share similar concern with recognition of culture and religion without clear-cut exposition of multicultural-interreligious learning. MUI (Indonesian Board of Islamic Scholars), for instance, emphasises the urgency of religious values and practice in the pedagogy of the curriculum but offers no clear guideline how to deal with multicultural imperative instructed by majority of nationalist-Islamic groups. This stance relates to its 2005 Fatwa on Pluralism, Secularism, and Religious secularism that Islamic education should focus on Islam and multicultural teaching relegates to the government's responsibility. Much more explicit stance but less influential taken by Hisbut Tahrir that Islamic education for character-building should be centered on

Ummah creation, focusing primarily on Khilafah citizenship as to resist neoliberal-secularist education.

On the other hand, Islamic political parties (PAN, PPP, PKS, PKB) do not propose clear-cut proposal relating to Islamic values even in relation to multicultural Indonesia. Knowing that this is politically sensitive issue, the parties share common concern with nationalist parties (PDIP, PD, GOLKAR, GERINDRA) which stress the urgency of character building education in abstract formulation. They prefer to deal with technical issue of the curriculum such as capacity of the teachers, books and facility provision and educational infrastructure. This abstract articulation also marks the voice of Christian groups (Catholic-KWI and Christian Protestant-PGI) stating explicitly the urgency of religious values for character-building while touching less on multicultural aspect of religious learning in the curriculum. In line with those institution-based representation, broader public of social media discusses range of character-related issues from negative effect of information technology, 'western culture', to the call for local cultural values.

The nature of the overall articulation on tolerance above ends up in stressing the need for recognition of cultural-religious values and their respective contribution to the making of 'Indonesian character' through the curriculum. What is left untouched is crucial issue of multicultural education and how religious learning being able to promote authentic multiculturalism by learning and understanding other culture and religion. This absence of hegemonic articulation reflects deeper problems of Indonesian remaking or ideological reinvestment of 'Bhineka Tunggal Ika' that, historically and sociologically, requires not only logic of cultural difference but also political logic of cultural-identity equivalence. As we argue in next session, the absence of cross-identity alliance among the articulating groups unveils in one hand ever embodiment of liberalist-secularist underpinning of tolerance in the production of Indonesian character of the youth and, on the other hand, political deadlock among influential religious and political groups that blocks their multicultural initiative in formulating an inclusive framework of the curriculum's religious learning and activities in elementary up to senior high school.

Three Fronts of Intolerance

The political deadlock among articulating groups and strong tendency to prefer liberalist-secularist tolerance has led the ministry to take pragmatic framework. As evident in official documents of the curriculum, religious learning occupies special place in the the overall structure of content and evaluation. The curriculum has two separate faces, the face of religion and the face of knowledge, as it publicly states that this curriculum is character and competence based. It seems normal naming and classification, but as we argue this contains fundamental contradiction and has performative effect on student's subjectivity, sensibility and practical action toward the other of different culture and religion. In our analysis, there are three fronts where the contradiction takes place: relation between faith and knowledge, tolerance and religious-cultural diversity, and citizenship and religious-cultural diversity. These three areas are interrelated in their making of both fundamentalist and secularist subject among the students.

First front, *relation between faith and knowledge* is made less mutually supportive. Faith belongs to the realm of individual experience in his or her relation with God, while knowledge concerns with her and his technical and cognitive ability to socially creative and economically productive. This is clearly evident in the documents on pedagogical standardization (SKL) where 'competence' evaluation of religious courses is completely different from competence evaluation of non-religious courses (in both social science and exact science clusters). The stated objective of religious courses is to produce certain attitude in different stage of school (SD, SMP, SMA). It emphasises belief in God according to their respective religion, being able to live peacefully with other of difference culture and religion, and representing national identity in international-global world. While the component of knowledge including skills aims at being knowledgeable about diversity, know-how of skills, and having national awareness.

As also found in the course books on religion (Islam, Catholic and Protestant), the relation between faith and knowledge is deeply problematic. Official statement in the documents that this curriculum bases on holistic-integrative approach has been analytically

untenable. In learning-teaching activity, this points to rigid compartementalization that facilitates the construction of essentialist subjectivity and sensibility that disempower them to look beyond their 'theological' cleavage. While at the same time, they are endorsed to learn and exercise basic knowledge (literacy-numeracy in SMP) and skills (vocational-SMA) without continued guidance of inclusive ethics-morality. As empirially indicated in next two fronts, this contradiction makes their subjectivity-sensibility splitted into being religious fundamentalist and being secularist simultaneously.

Second front, *relation between tolerance and cultural-religious diversity* turns to be grey area that no clear understanding of its productive relation may take place. As result of the first front, tolerance means recognition of cultural-religious difference and endorsed by fundamentalist prescription that one should recognize the existence of the other in broader social and cultural spectrum of neighborhood, society or nation-state. This type of tolerance, widely called liberal discourse of tolerance, does not encourage students to cope with the 'presumed difference' outside theological-cultural narrative of their respective religion. Instead of that, the tolerance discourse in the curriculum discourages students from taking pro-active engagement with the difference, or at least engaging the difference as object of knowing does not take place. History and great narrative of justice from other religion are absent while supremacist stories of respective religion in the world are reinterpreted and renarrated to inform contemporary claim to truth and dignity. It also applies to the moral-nationalistic courses of the curriculum (PPKN, IPS) which laden with facist-ultranationalist narrative in tems of anti-colonial struggle and post-colonial campaign to be equal in international order.

One of the most apparent effects of this lack of pro-active knowing the other is typical subjectivity and sensibility that embody hypocrisy —inauthenticity— in practical engagement with other. It then makes natural acts of stereotyping, that of naming and identifying the other with our own cultural, theological, facist register within the siymbolic structure of signification where we are the interpreting master. In doing so, the curriculum intensifies culture of fear of the other, looking at other religion and culture as threat to their

respective cultural- religious supremacy. As we know very well, this culture of fear produces cultural violence, that is, making the other existence unintelligible insofar as our narrative cannot tolerate. In contemporary practice, this hypocrisy and cultural violence are the nature of what is called 'political correctness', pretending to recognize the other in euphemism. .

Precisely at this point we can detect the fundamental irony of MUI's Fatwa 2005 on Pluralism, Liberalism and Religious Secularism. MUI launches persistent critique againts liberalism and secularism of Islam. Its understanding of liberalism and secularism in fact reflects liberalization of Islam in which Islam should be taken as a special particularity with its theological supremacy. Instead of againts the logic of liberalism, MUI's Islam is a religion with particularizing/essensializing politics that liberalisim promotes in tolerance discourse. This directly draws our attention to find similarity between subjective effects of religious courses in the curriculum and fundamentalist subject MUI's fatwa has in public sphere. The curriculum aims at producing religious subject presumably critical of 'western secularist liberalism' but what it gets is what it resists in its rhetorics. However, it is still inconclusive in this paper, to what extent rhetorics of anti-secularism does serve the objective of liberalism and secularism.

Third front, *relation between citizenship and religous-cultural diversity* is the furthest gap that this curriculum produces in student's subjectivity and sensibility toward other cultural-religious identity. As affected by the two fronts above, democratic imaginary of making collective identity has been cancelled out in the overall process of learning in schools. To understand this gap, we need to graps three competing essentialist narratives operating in the curriculum 2013: religious, nationalist, globalist narrative. This represents public articulations in formulation and implementation period of the curriculum. The three narratives seek to signify what is the best character Indonesian citizen should perform in contemporary world. Religious narrative through religious courses imagines the worldly affairs as relatively sinful that then requires the formation of Indonesian citizens faithful to religious-moral dictate. Nationalist narrative through PPKN and IPS looks at the greatness of national history and culture that the students

should be equipped with in their experiencing of the world. While globalist narrative through geography, economy, mathematics, and physics courses, throws students into broader world of welfare and technological advancement that require them to be Indonesian citizen highly competitive in globalized world.

Against the backdrop, the curriculum framework does not provide integrative approach for rendering the three narratives as ingredients of democratic citizenship. During their learning period, the students are confined into separate narratives materializing in later stage of their life. They are made unable to cooperate or get along with other students who perform other narratives. This underlying competition, which seems unbridgeable, has then contributed to their ignorance to cultural-religious diversity in their adult life. In contrast, democratic citizenship living in multicultural world requires student to be accustomed with cross-narrative learning and cross-identity engagement. In democratic citizenship framework, the student are encouraged to find strengths or benefits in other narratives or identity and move forward to build up common ground for joint action. Furthermore, the absence of democratic citizenship framework does mirror contemporary Indonesian politics of intolerance where ongoing procedural democracy reproduces identitarian formation of leadership while increasing primacy of law enforcement arises from the decaying of democratic politics.

CONCLUSION

The overall analysis in this paper has central message that Curriculum 2013 should be taken seriously if authentic tolerance is to take place in multicultural Indonesia. There are two aspect of the curriculum under our scrutiny. First, policy making process shows political deadlock resulting from the absence of hegemonic articulation of tolerance among religious-political groups for character-building curriculum. Second, absence of curriculum's integrative framework gives birth to the three fronts of intolerance investment in learning activities in schools. The first front produces splitted subjectivity and sensibility as the student is made fundamentalist and secularist simultaneously. Second front intensifies private experiencing of the other, or privatization of

religious-cultural difference. And third front perpetuates public ignorance, or absence sense of publicness. All the three are the intensive breeding ground for intolerance during their learning period and in later stage of their adult life.

As the curriculum currently debated and revised, this paper suggests fundamental rethinking of its framework and the content. Any curriculum has built on at least four axioms: (1) Curriculum change results from change in people; (2) a school curriculum not only reflects but also is a product of its time; (3) Curriculum changes made an earlier period of time can exist concurrently with newer curriculum changes at a later period of time; and (4) Curriculum development is a never-ending process (Olivia, 2015). With this axioms in mind, the curriculum also draws our attention to rethink comprehensive policy making framework that gets multiple stakeholders together to find out common ground in promoting authentic tolerance, undertake reflexive nature of the curriculum in which they are complicit, and proposing democratic citizenship, multicultural citizenship, as a grounded framework of renewed curriculum.

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