



Multicultural-Based Character Education Leadership Strategy in State High Schools

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At the level of implementation of multicultural-based character education, there are problems such as marginalisation of minority groups and uniformity of character education approaches towards majority and minority student groups, so that minorities are not served. This research focused on the potential of multicultural conflict and its anticipation as well as the strategy of equalising the presentation of character education to multicultural students. This research method uses a qualitative approach to the design of individual and multi-site site analysis. Data collection techniques are interviews, observation, and documentaries. Checking the validity of the data uses four criteria, namely with credibility, transferability, audibility, and conformability, then analysing interactively. The findings of this study are: (1) potential for multicultural conflict is found in: teachers and school residents in how they behave, speak and harass others, the introduction of anti-multiculturalism and groupings based on ethnicity and religion; (2) anticipation of multicultural conflicts; providing orientation and guidance, a system of supervision, integration and coordination with the community; and (3) leadership strategy: planning with deliberations with all parties, empowering all teachers to develop multicultural character, empowering all available resources, becoming an example model and working with various parties.

Keywords: *Strategy, leadership, character education, multicultural*



Introduction

Almost all developed countries in the world carry out character education seriously, like in American schools, especially in the case of citizenship (Scott, 2004). In any type of education, it is very important to carry out a character or moral education (Noddings, 2008). In Japan, in addition to holding special hours for moral lessons (*doutoku*), all subjects are always integrated with moral messages. In the UK character education is carried out in every school; the school becomes the foundation for building and maintaining important values in the life of the nation and state. In California, all schools also implement character education; in its implementation, most schools are affiliated with established conceptualisations to create their character education programs (Benninga et al., 2003). In the State of Malaysia, after riots around 13 May 1969, its educational mission prioritised character education on a multicultural basis.

Indonesia, as a very multicultural country, also has the potential for disunity, with, in 2001, riots occurring in Sampit, Central Kalimantan, the Tarakan riots in 2010 and on July 4, 2011, Balikpapan was grappling with struggles. All of these situations started from personal problems that turned into group problems which became inter-ethnic problems. Sonhadji (2014) called it "future shock" that occurs because of the inability of individuals to adapt to radical changes that occur. A surprise to the changing times will be even higher if the education presented to the community is not able to answer the challenges of the times. For this reason, it is necessary to form a strong character towards students in multicultural-based education in Indonesia. In the world of education, Umam (2018) revealed the results of his survey that 63.07 percent of teachers in Indonesia had an opinion of intolerance towards other religions.

Research on character and multicultural education has been conducted, among others by Ningsih (2017) about multicultural education in shaping the character of the nation through social studies. Atok (2015) describes the framework of thinking and prototyping of character learning models with a multicultural approach, the preparation of learning designs, and character-building strategies in Civics. Wattarasook (2014) found that the management of multicultural education was better because of the role of government. Asniwati (2015), in her dissertation, described curriculum-based character education development. Masita's (2012) research found that local cultural values are the basis of character education. They were conducting research on the leadership of principals, teachers, parents, and the community in shaping student character (Suriansyah & Aslamiyah, 2015). In the research mentioned above, almost no one examined how education leadership strategies shape the character of students who have religious, ethnic, and cultural differences. Are all students, in both the majority and the minority groups, served fairly?



The role of educational leaders is very strategic in constructing their schools to be able to present character education optimally for each pluralist student. In this connection, educational leaders in Indonesia have obligations in the efforts to build multicultural characters. The main role of multicultural-based educational leaders is to develop multicultural awareness in all school residents (Connerley & Padersen, 2005). In character education for multicultural students, it cannot be compared to the formation of characters whose students are relatively homogeneous, for example, all Muslim students from the characteristics of students intensively based in Islamic teachings. Likewise, Christian educational institutions form students who are characterised by the values of their religious teachings.

In connection with the problem of education on a multicultural basis as mentioned above, there are several schools in South Kalimantan that have leadership abilities in implementing multicultural character-based education. The multicultural-based schools are the first name is Sungai Loban State High School 1, having school residents with different religious ethnic backgrounds there are six tribes and three religions adhered to by them. The population of Sungai Loban Subdistrict is dominated by migrants from various regions, especially from Bali and Lombok. The second place is the 7th State High School in Banjarmasin, which has school members who belong to four religions and come from various ethnic groups in Indonesia. The third school is Halong 1 State High School, Balangan Regency, this school is located in the Hulu Sungai area, at the foot of the Meratus mountains whose population is dominated by Dayaks. In this case the residents of Halong 1 State High School, come from five tribes and follow four religions. In this connection, it is necessary to conduct research focused on anticipating the potential for multicultural conflict and the multicultural character education leadership strategy in State High Schools in South Kalimantan.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with individual and multi-site analysis designs. Data collection techniques are interviews, observations, and documentaries. Checking the validity of the data uses four criteria: Credibility, that is, the data can be trusted without doubt, Transferability, in that research must be objective and in-depth, and Auditability and Conformability, which refers to the accuracy of the data presented or it being unbiased. The data is then analysed interactively and takes place continuously until conclusions can be drawn through cross-site analysis. Data analysis was carried out with an interactive process, as offered by Miles and Huberman (2014). It starts with data collection, data condensation and data models describing and summarising research results.

Results and Discussion

Potential Multicultural Conflicts

The results of this study found that:

- a. How teachers or school residents behave and speak harasses tribes and different religions. The attitude shown is indifferent to, ignoring of, and even cornering people who are not of the same ethnic or religious affiliation. Sometimes teachers do not realise that in one class, they have diverse and multicultural students so that it is easy to say words that are harassing and offensive to tribes or people of different religions. Some teachers deliberately throw in words that seriously harass other tribes and religions, and there are also intentions to joke.

Attitudes and behaviour and words that intersect with issues of religion, ethnicity, and culture will quickly ignite emotions that result in conflict as a manifestation of ethnocentrism. Conflicts will become more widespread if intolerant provocateurs exploit ethnic, religious and cultural issues. Abusive behaviour and words towards tribes and other religions can occur in the school environment due to the intolerance of the teachers or school residents, and it is also stated by Umam (2018) that 63.07 percent of teachers in Indonesia have intolerance towards other religions. In connection with that, Suryaman (2010) revealed it as a weakness of the preservation of multicultural school culture based on findings in the field, and can be identified as follows: (1) increase in HR or Human Resources, especially for teachers who are lacking teacher education background; and (2) weaknesses of students themselves so they are not ready to face the phenomenon of culture shock.

The potential for multicultural sensitivity conflicts, if not anticipated early, will have fatal and widespread consequences as happened in Malaysia in 1969 in racial conflicts (Chang et al., 2011). The Sampit riots in 2001 occurred as a result of student clashes between tribes, which expanded into inter-tribal wars. In this context, Tilaar (2004) argues that multicultural education in Indonesia should be directed towards the development of multicultural individuals who respect each other and adjust to being accustomed to differences. For this reason, schools must formulate visions and missions that contain multicultural moral values.

- b. The entry of anti-multiculturalism understanding

The potential for multicultural conflict in character education arises as a result of the first influx of new people who do not know the local traditions and culture of an area so that the person is unable to adjust, and it will get worse if the person brings with them an anti-multiculturalist character. Second, the inclusion of anti-multiculturalist understandings; this happens because of the belief that the beliefs concerned to them are the most correct and the best for others to believe. These understandings can enter through people who have a mission to spread their understanding. Besides that, understanding also enters the community through the media of information and communication that is developing at this time, such as social



media. Besides, it was also found that the entry of these notions was intentionally spread by certain groups of people, mainly through radical religious teachings.

In this case, Dewantara (1977) argues that each state consists of several groups, and each group has its characteristics and beliefs. Problems will arise when one group has the belief that their beliefs are the most correct, and the beliefs of others are wrong and misguided. So there are efforts to homogenise all the beliefs, and their beliefs are demanding of their group to save everyone from misguidance. In this case, it is a shared responsibility to understand the differences in groups in order for groups to be harmonious. For this reason, people of different ethnicities, religions, and cultures must adjust to each other, understand each other, and respect differences. To avoid multicultural conflict, people from different cultures must learn to associate with other specific cultures, situations, and events that enter the psychological realm that produces positive emotions.

c. Classification based on ethnicity and religion

The potential for multicultural conflict in character education is due to the grouping of communities based on ethnicity and religion. In general, people who convert to a religion, especially in the Halong Dayak community, will group or move to the same religious group. Classification based on ethnicity, religion in a village, or association in schools, unknowingly creates competition to togetherness and prioritises each other's groups. So that other groups, especially minority groups, will be neglected, even if objective and neutral cultural attitudes are developed. Objective and neutral attitudes can cause ignorance among fellow human beings; it gives rise to individualistic behaviour.

Schools are not effective for some children from racial, ethnic, religious and cultural groups because classes do not fit their cultural background. Efforts to equalize the strengthening of education for all students from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are not appropriate. Grouping based on religion, ethnicity, or group will bring group egoism, and it will eliminate the basic values of the Indonesian state in the world of education..

The motto of the Indonesian people is different, but one must be strengthened to be the basis for the formulation of multicultural education in Indonesia, to anticipate group egoism. Although they are different, they unite to move forward together, and in caring for and supporting one another. Strictly, Degeng (2013) states that the uniformity paradigm and behavioral paradigm that emphasizes competitive and less friendly, must be eliminated.

Anticipating Multicultural Conflicts

The leaders of multicultural-based schools in the three schools that were studied had a vision, mission and awareness to build harmony in the school environment and the community

(Figure 1). Anticipatory actions for potential conflicts continue, and in the findings of this study are found as follows:

- a. Provide orientation and guidance to teachers, new employees, and new students about the excellence of school residents. The action was taken as a good start in anticipating the emergence of behaviour or words that can cause multicultural conflict in the school environment. Besides, guidance is also carried out to tackle hoax information from social media that can break community unity and harmony.
- b. Be aware and supervise early on the possibility of conflict so that it can be easily anticipated. As at the age of adolescence people usually start dating, dating between different religions could cause serious conflicts, so it needs serious attention for the school and parents.
- c. Coordinating with the community, especially village officials and community leaders, in overseeing the entry of new people and radical provocative understandings of multicultural harmony. This collaboration is carried out to avoid and resolve multicultural conflicts as early as possible.
- d. Collaboration between schools or with the community to provide religious teachers. Schools that have students of various religions generally have minority groups of adherents of certain religions, so that their religious teachers are not provided at the school. To overcome these problems, collaboration with other schools and/or religious leaders is needed.
- e. The harmonious village model, this is implemented as an example of an intermingling model in one village, which consists of different ethnicities and religions. Still, harmony and friendship are always done and run well. The life of the village community in harmony is full of the atmosphere of intimacy and family.

Leadership Strategy for Multicultural Based Character Education

The results showed that; the principal's leadership strategy starts with:

- a. Making a plan with deliberation, to strengthen character education that touches all students, who have different religious and ethnic backgrounds, which includes the spiritual character according to the religion and social character of the students.

In the planning phase, efforts were formulated to provide character reinforcement to all students who are multicultural through both intracurricular and extracurricular activities. In multicultural-based character education planning, in addition to being done by deliberation, must also involve various groups, which need to be involved according to Martin (2013), namely schools (students, teachers, principals, administrative staff, finance), policymakers and the community. So that in the meeting, the planning will be able to recognise the desire and expectations of various parties related to efforts to strengthen character education to the characteristics of multicultural school citizens.



Strengthening character education for students must touch all students with multicultural backgrounds as much as possible, both the majority and minority students. Hoyt in Liddell (2008) argues the theory of planned behaviour that the intention to act ethically can be predicted by measuring behavioural control (ethical decision-making ability). The four components of an ethical decision-making model are a set of moral abilities (sensitivity, reasoning, motivation, and action), and ethical/moral education is focused on the ability to develop a more advanced moral education.

b. Empower all teachers to load character reinforcement material in each subject they teach.

The research findings show that the empowerment of teachers by school principals in the context of strengthening multicultural-based character education makes teachers more concerned about differences. Empowerment is carried out by first equipping teachers with multicultural awareness/care. Communication skills should be used amid differences, strategies for strengthening character education for students of different religions, ethnicities, and cultures: For example, in one study group, students must have backgrounds of different religions, ethnicities, and cultures.

The results of Masrukhi's research (2008) showed that the leadership of the school principal in supporting the learning process of citizenship education subjects at school made a positive and significant contribution to the learning of citizenship education at school as a character builder. Learning design as a message of integrated character development in the learning design of each subject must always be integrated. Every teacher of any subject must also be able to present an education that is building a multicultural character for all students.

c. Empower existing resources for strengthening the character education of multicultural students:

Empowering a variety of available resources, including infrastructure, extra activities, and so forth. Students are resources that can be used as reinforcement of multicultural-based character education. From the association and extra-curricular activities, a character-building process occurs for each student involved without distinguishing between religion, ethnicity, and culture. Empowering community leaders and parents in cultivating a peaceful life amid differences.

The managerial ability of a school principal as a school manager must be able to manage and utilise everything in the school environment and its surroundings. The key to empowerment in institutions is the ability in the organising process which includes: job breakdown, work division, work union, work coordination, and reorganisation monitoring.



d. Cooperating with the community, coordinating with related agencies:

Collaboration with the community, especially with community leaders and religious leaders in the context of developing multicultural characters. Collaboration with the community will guarantee smoothness, security, peace in carrying out the character education process for all students. Coordination with related institutions will ensure the strengthening of character education by the religion of the students.

The role of the community in its contribution to character education in Indonesia cannot be considered trivial. Principals, in general, feel very important and valuable moments when interacting with the community, parents of students with students, and with various educational relationships (Cockburn, 2013). Principal's communication skills are needed so that multicultural-based school character education programs receive support from the community, both morally and materially.

e. Become a model/example and set an example

In addition to the example of the school headmaster as an example of the school leader, this is done modestly and deliberately. The principal's behaviour is not only as a reference for students but also for teachers and other education personnel. The principal's appearance and behaviour model will be a hidden curriculum for shaping the character of students.

In line with the opinion of Warnick (2008), that as a central figure, the educator will be a reference for people involved in the school activities concerned. Besides, the principal must carry out the supervisory function. Supervision of character education that needs to be done from Yuliandaru's research results includes: (1) supervision of the implementation of character education involving all components of the school (teachers, parents, school staff); (2) supervision is carried out in observing student behaviour in daily life at school, and home activities; (3) cooperate with parents to monitor the development of student character.

Suriansyah & Aslamiah (2015) found that principals' strategies in shaping students' character with philosophical leadership, is for example, discipline, instructional leadership, quality leadership, and empowering teachers and education personnel. The teacher's strategy is exemplary, with habituation, and heart touch. The parent and community strategy is effective communication and effective partnership.

Teacher Leadership Strategies in schools found that: (1) integration of material, processes, and learning methods enable the formation of spiritual and social characteristics of all students with different religious backgrounds, (2) establishes good relationships/coordination with other teachers and students; (3) Pancasila leadership; (4) and is to be supervised.



Student Leadership Strategies, namely: (1) inviting to do positive things in groups; (2) empower Intra-School Organizations to create interesting work programs and strengthen the formation of spiritual and social character for all different students; and (3) establishing joint visits to other schools to get to know each other and establish friendships.

Community Leadership Strategies around the School: (1) coordinating/always dealing with the school; (2) provide input advice to schools related to the strengthening of character and multiculturalism; (3) bequeath the values of harmony to their children; and (4) supervision of the symptoms of character deviations and multiculturalism.

McCall and Hollenbeck also raised the findings for leaders of multicultural educational institutions who must behave flexibly in strategy and tactics, cultural sensitivity, ability to deal with complexity, resilience and reason, honesty and integrity, personal stability, and possessing technical skills (Connerley & Padersen, 2005).

In this case, Banks (2017) suggests five dimensions of multicultural education that are expected to help schools implement several programs that can respond to differences in students: (1) content integration (material); (2) knowledge construction; (3) prejudice reduction; (4) equitable pedagogy (equal education); and (5) empowering school culture and social structure. All educational activities in schools must be directly proportional to the objectives of multicultural character education management.

Hamalik (2004) argues that the school and class are an organisation, where the teacher is the leader. The teacher is obliged to supervise student learning activities, make teaching plans for their class, make the best possible learning management, conduct classroom management, and democratically regulate class discipline.

According to Schultz (2008), for learning in the classroom, as the frontline in shaping student character, the seven steps put forward in classroom learning must be filled in or integrated with the substance of multicultural characters. The seven steps are: (1) objectives and objections, (2) material and resources (3) anticipatory tools or notes, (4) instructional input (5) guided practice (6) independent practice, and (7) assessment/evaluation.

Environmental factors play a big role in character building, namely the environment in which a person grows and is raised, norms in family, friends, and social groups (Seifert & Sutton, 2009). Culture and climate in the family are the main and first factors in developing children's character, then the closest people like peers and social groups, social form, and climate in the community, which is seen and felt directly by children has a great influence on the formation of children's character. Matsumoto (2001) argues that although ethnic, religious, and cultural differences among individuals are managed properly, there will be a process of emotional adjustment that develops into a character for children in a community.



In the community environment around the school, the principal can become a facilitator, mediator, innovator on issues of character building in a multicultural society. The main key for school principals is to have awareness and care and pluralist sensitivity (Pidarta, 2011). The principal must first communicate and establish good relations with parents, especially with community leaders.

As a leader, it is important for the principal to have a good relationship with the community for the character education program based on multiculturalism to be effective. The principal's leadership cannot stand alone because it needs full support from the school community. Cockburn's (2013) research shows that for most school principals it is very important to interact with the community, parents with students, and to various educational relations.

A leader needs to build good cooperation, especially in internal schools; the results show transformational and transactional leadership behaviours will be more effective if they collaborated with collegial/collective leadership (Koeslag-Kreunen et al., 2018). Hsiao & Chang (2011) find that transformational leaders foster creativity for teacher innovation because transformational leadership behaviours such as husband and wife who both advance the household and, according to Sivesind & Wahlström (2017) will be more effective if they are charismatic.

Supriyanto (2016) briefly stated that building a multicultural character is done with education, habituation, and examples. Community education must be managed with multicultural values so that interaction and integration can run peacefully, to foster an attitude of togetherness, tolerance, humanism, and democracy in accordance with the ideals of Pancasila (Hanum, 2009).

Following various integral methods according to Koesoema (2012), can be integrated by including multicultural spirits in them, namely: spreading throughout school life, priority values and virtues, developing three dimensions of life processing, organisational development, and management, developing a school culture that grows (caring community), explicit, planned, integrated, individual motivation growth, professional development, collaboration with many parties, integrated into the curriculum, providing space for action and a continuous evaluation system.

To ensure the effectiveness of multicultural character education, according to Mardh & Tryggvason (2017), students must be able to articulate, learn collectively, and act according to social demands in relationships with others. After studying the characteristics of multiculturalism, they must be applied to the environment outside the classroom, at least in the school environment. In carrying out this strategy, principals and teachers do not carry out false roles but must be actual and real, and contact and interaction must always occur with



students (Figure 2). Thus students will be able to interpret, idolise, and imitate all the behaviours of school principals and teachers.

Conclusion

The potential for multicultural conflict in character education is vulnerable if the school principal and teacher behave and say that they harass other ethnic groups and religions. If there is the entry of new people, they must understand anti-multiculturalist grouping based on ethnicity and religion. Anticipating multicultural conflicts; provide orientation and guidance to new school members, supervision is wary of the influx of people who carry anti-multiculturalism, the intermingling of various ethnic groups, religion in a community and coordination between schools and the community.

Strategies in the school and classroom environment that is making plans with deliberations to strengthen character education that touches all students who have different religious and ethnic backgrounds equally evenly, which includes spiritual characters according to their religion and social character of the students. Empowering teachers and available resources for strengthening the character education of multicultural students. Cooperating with the community, coordinating with related institutions. Become a model or example and set an example. The teacher integrates materials, processes, and learning methods that enable the formation of spiritual and social character. Student Leadership Strategies; inviting to do positive things in groups, empowering OSIS to create programs, and carry out work programs that attract interest and strengthen the formation of spiritual and social character for all multicultural students. Establish mutual visits to visit with other schools to get to know each other and create friendships. The leadership strategy in the community is to provide input advice to schools related to the strengthening of character and multiculturalism, bequeathing the values of harmony to their children. Supervision of the symptoms of distortion of character and multiculturalism.

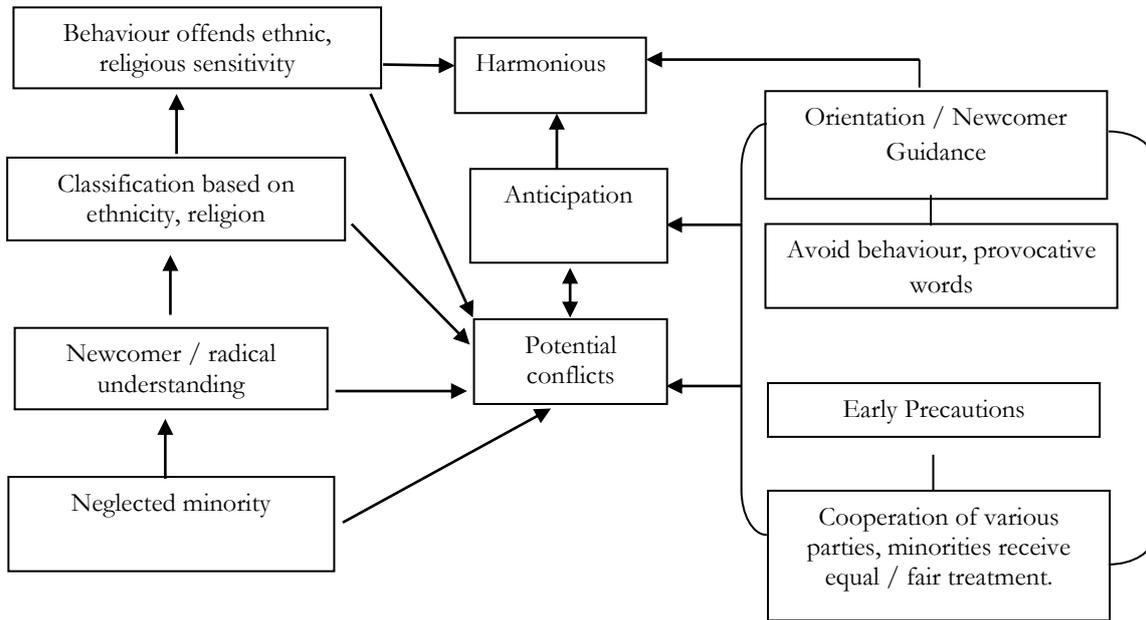


Figure 1 Potential Conflict Findings and Anticipations

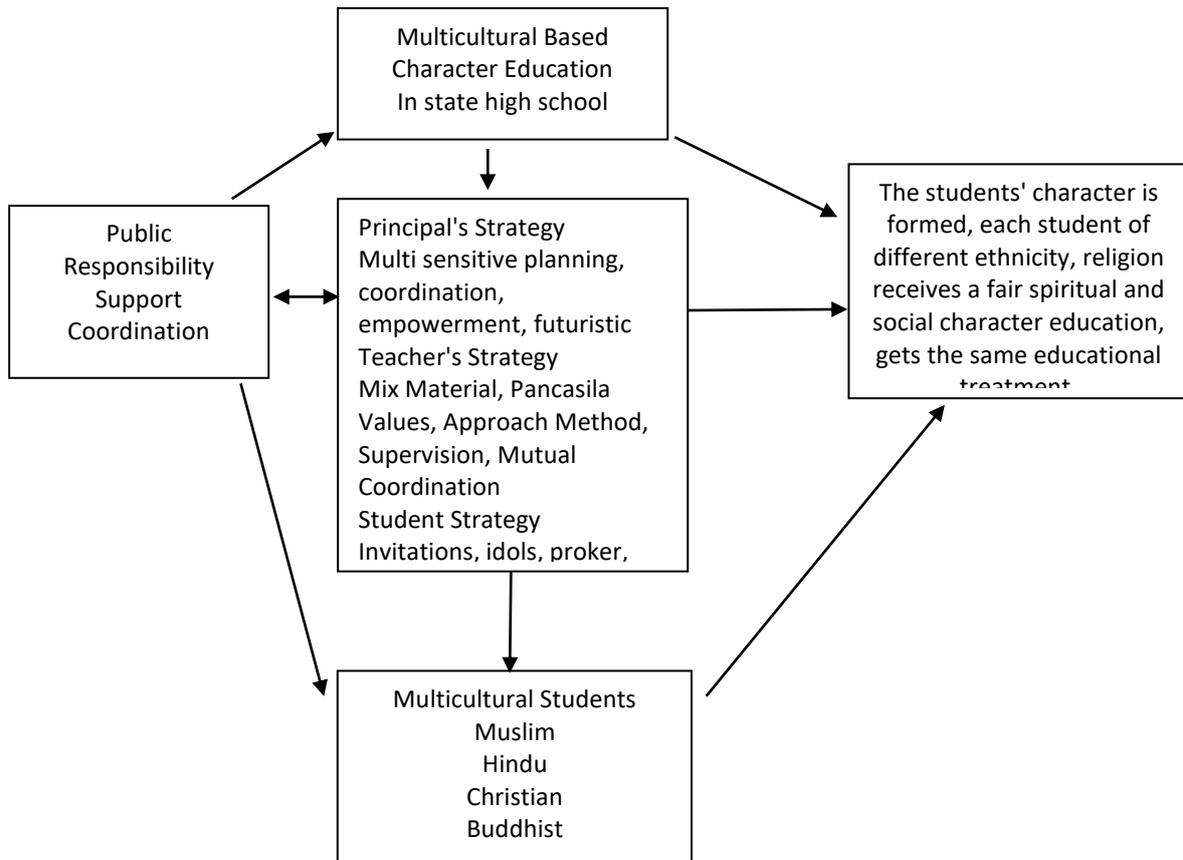


Figure 2 Research Findings Multicultural Character Leadership Strategy Flow



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