

The Participatory Development of TARUF Learning Activities Model for Enhancing the Cultural Sensitivity for Muslim Students: A Case Study of Dechapattanayanukul School, Pattani Province

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Abstract

Cultural sensitivity plays a crucial role for the 21st century global citizens. Managing and providing effective cultural sensitivity in schools can improve learning skills and competencies. This qualitative and participatory research is intended to develop the learning activities model for enhancing cultural sensitivity for Muslim students in a public high school. The P-ADDIES technique was employed to propose the model. Participants who provided information through focus group and in-depth interview included schools teachers (both Muslim and Buddhist), peace building facilitators, student teachers, school alumni, and student representatives. The preliminary results reveal the proposed TARUF model comprised of 5 activities namely: Taaruf, Analyze, Relationship, Understand, and Future forward.

Keywords: TARUF Model, Cultural Sensitivity, School, Pattani Province

Introduction

Cultural sensitivity is intended to develop the ability to live and work with others who have different perspectives and different life experiences (Hellerud, 2018). UNESCO has emphasized the importance of cultural sensitivity as one of the competencies for student in the 21st century when culture is considered as both soft and hard skills to develop people (Eyford et al., 1995). Deardorff (2015) highlighted that with the growing diversity in the world today, there are the increasing demands for inter-culturally competent graduates and employees.

Being Muslim in multicultural societies may face difficulties especially when Muslims are minority (Sugibayashi & Sa-u, 2017). In Thailand, Muslims are considered as minority (as its national religion is Buddhism and more than 90 percent of the citizens are Buddhists). However, in the 3 Deep South provinces, Muslims are considered as majority since approximately 80 percent of the people are Muslims (Mandech et al, 2019). This area is seen as a multicultural society which comprising of three important cultures: Malay Muslim, Buddhist and Chinese traditions. In fact, there are Christians living in this area for almost a hundred years, but they are not widely recognized (Chanarnupap and Tongkachok, 2017).

The report from UNISEF (2014) on “Thailand Case Study in Education, Conflict and Social Cohesion” may portray the renewed conflicts in the Deep South since 2004. The violence and militarization of the conflict has had a huge impact on education, resulting in the targeted killing of teachers, the destruction and closure of schools, and the fracturing of the social fabric of inter-community relations and social cohesion, which are very tough to rectify. This situation have gradually affected to students’ competency on cultural sensitivity.

This study attempt to develop the learning activities to support schools for re-building the cultural bond which affected from security problem almost 15 years. This is believed that social bound will create and bring the social cohesion and mutual understanding among people.

Boosting Cultural Competency

In reality, however, putting cultural sensitivity into action can be difficult. With recommendations of the American Psychological Association (APA) cultural competency would be improved (Clay,2010):

- **Learn about your culture.** Effect of one’s culture can be seen by self-assessment to know where biases or interests in other cultures. Knowing ancestors and their experiences would help to be aware of how one’s characteristics and thoughts are shaped.
- **Learn about different cultures.** Journals and academic books can help understand other cultures. Learning another language can also provide

hints of other cultures by learning unique words and expressions and communicating with native speakers.

- **Interact with diverse groups of people.** Participating in intercultural activities such as projects, volunteer work, and internships can improve cultural competency.

In multicultural society, Mandech et al. (2019) suggested that the religious institution in Muslim society have to arrange of social relations of people both between Muslim to Muslim and Muslim to non-Muslim to develop the mutual respect. Similarly, based on the study of Chantasaro (2015), interaction between people on religious differences in the Buddhist and Muslim communities in Southern Thai found that a consensus on how to live together in a group that has a different stance on tradition and culture. He proposed method of cohabitation in to four aspects: brotherly, meeting, talking, learning, and developing together.

Sa-u (2017) presented lessons learned through an academic exchange program for promoting democratic civic education and multicultural communities in Australia and apply the Australian way of multiculturalism to the context of the deep south of Thailand in to his the KOALA Model. The model comprised of 5 components namely: knowledge, open space, activities, languages, and the concept of active citizen. Through this model, he recommended that all component can be applied for managing school activities to enhance students' sense of multiculturalism.

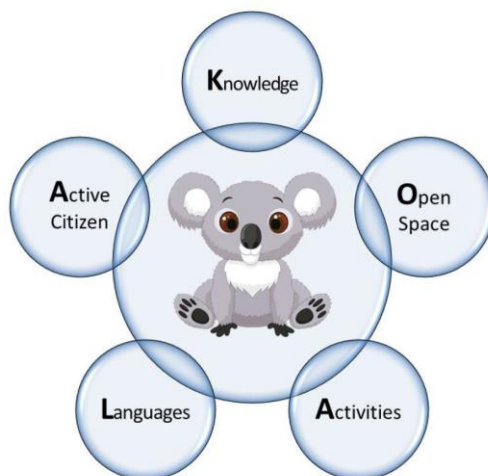


Figure 2 KOALA Model
Source Sa-u (2016: 118)

Daraha (2016) examined the policy and practices of public high schools in educating culturally diverse students in Pattani. The subjects were Buddhist and Muslim students from 3 public schools (Benjamarachutit,

Dechapattanayanukul, and Phokiriratseuksa). The results show that the policy and practices of the three schools included teaching management, activity management, and school uniform according to students' culture. These policy and practices satisfied students, parents and communities. Furthermore, the three schools provided courses which matched with students such as Islamic study and Buddhist courses and encouraged the students to live in harmony. However, there are more chance to enhance students to learn cultural diversity according to her recommendations such as by inviting religious leaders both Buddhist monks and Imams to talk about religions so that teachers and students can practice to construct the peace and harmony, school should teach students to respect each other although they talk the different faith, and the government should find the ways or construct the social policy to make the people respect and accept one another.

UNICIEF (2015) proposed the Happy School Model in the three southern border provinces which comprised of child-friendly school, no violence and weapon, participation, safety, leaning and sharing, faith and trust, and respect to all.

Method

The setting was Dechapattanayanukul School. It is a public school locating in Pattani town. It was established in 1922 as a girl's school and become a coeducational school afterwards. The school portrays the multicultural atmosphere in which half of the students are Buddhists (Siamese and Chinese) and the other half are Muslims (Malay).

This research and development study applied the P-ADDIES Technique proposed by Sa-u et al. (2015) which enhance the participatory process among stakeholders to come out which the intervention project of comprised of 6 stages as following (Table 1) :

Table 1 Research method

Technique	Participants	Method	Results
Analyze	Teachers, Peace building experts, researcher, teacher students, student councils representative	Group discussion	problem
Design & Develop	Teachers, researcher, teacher students	workshop	Learning process program
Implement	Students	2-day-camp	
Evaluate	Teachers, researcher	Group discussion	Students' knowledge on cultural sensitivity

Scale-up	Teachers, researcher, school administrators	Group discussion	The modification of TARUF
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Results

1. problems of Muslim students regarding to cultural senility

The group discussions were conducted twice which in-depth interview and the results revealed that factor influencing Muslim students towards cultural sensitivity can be categorized into 2 factors:

1. Basic knowledge of Islamic teaching

The Islamic knowledge somehow is limited. Some students did not have opportunities to get basic Islamic knowledge. This tendency is seen especially in families with reversed (converted) parents. This situation leads Muslims students to understand Islamic manners and how to behave it accordingly.

2. The cultural adaptation

For students who moved from private Islamic schools to standard schools when they were in Matthatyom 4, they need time to learn how to adapt themselves into new environment where Muslims and Buddhists share the same public space and activities together. Some students had never had non-Muslim friends before since they were in Islamic schools where only Muslim students are allowed to study.

2. Proposed the leaning activity for enhancing the cultural sensitivity

The proposed model – TARUF- comprise of 5 activities as following:

1. **Taaruf**: this activity is considered as an introduction which derived from the holy Quran versus. This activity aims to help students to understand the concept of taaruf which significantly portray how cultural sensitivity is valued in Islamic teaching.
2. **Analyze**: students will be assigned to answer the current situation about cultural sensitivity in the school by watching a short film “Final Lunch” which was filmed by their senior students and won a prize in the “Pergaduhan Teman” contest organized by Sirindhorn Anthropology Center (SAR). The story is about a conflict in a school that Muslim students try to make a halal kitchen where pork is prohibited.



Figure 3 “Final Lunch” short film project

Sources: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RnS8JLzXiM>



Figure 4: the “Pergaduhan Teman” short film project

Sources:

<https://www.facebook.com/KangmuangFilm/posts/1079256218885616/>

3. **Relationship:** this activity attempts to help student to learn to have relationships with different people in society especially between Muslims and non-Muslims. They will learn manners and limitations from their senior students.
4. **Understand:** the students will be asked to collectively come up with a small project for 1 semester in order to learn how to live peacefully in the school by promoting mutual understanding.

- 5. Future forward:** the proposed project will be presented to their friends and school administrators to get comments and modify to make more appropriate and suitable projects.

The model can be summarized in Figure 5

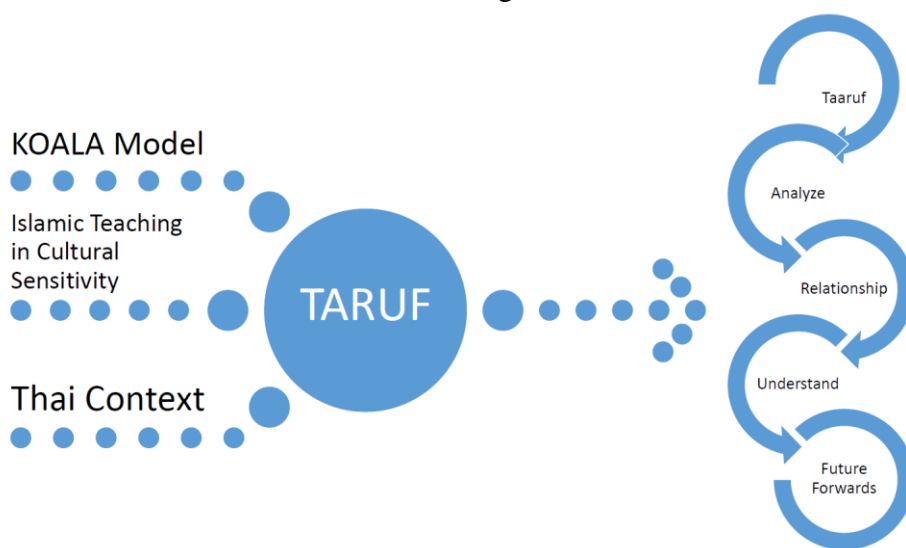


Figure 5 The proposed TARUF model

Conclusion

This study presented the preliminary results of a developed learning activities model for enhancing cultural sensitivity in the Thai school where Muslim and non-Muslim are living together. The process of TARUF tends to provide space for Muslim to learn and adapt themselves to understand differences in multicultural society.

All proposed activities were based on the active learning method which students can learn and participate actively. However, the results of implementations have not yet come out, so modification can be made for improvement after the try out results are completely out.

Acknowledgement

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