



Formation of Regional and National Song Choirs as a Means of Strengthening National Identity for Students of Sanggar Guidance Permai, Pinang Malaysia

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Abstract

This community service aims to introduce the cultural values and traditions of the Indonesian nation and to increase the creativity and artistic talent of SB Permai Pinang children. This community service uses action community service methods which are collaborative and participatory in nature. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation and documentation. The data obtained was analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques. Data analysis was carried out descriptively to describe the process of forming regional and national song choirs, as well as their impact on strengthening the national identity of the students of Sanggar Guidance Permai Pinang. The results of this community service were found the problem that can be concluded is first, students' lack of interest in national mandatory songs and regional songs. Second, there is a lack of material related to national culture. The results of observations showed that all the children there knew the song Indonesia Raya. 50% of the 44 SB students memorized the song lyrics, 40% forgot some of the lyrics and the other 10% did not memorize them. The main conclusion of this community service is the need for concrete measures to strengthen national identity, especially among immigrant children. The formation of regional and national song choirs is an effective way to overcome the challenges of globalization and maintain Indonesia's cultural diversity.

1. Introduction

According to Tilaar (2007) National identity is related to the meaning of a nation because a nation is a whole person, he believes that only through it can a person obtain reality. That is, a person has no meaning in society if he is excluded from it. Because the nation is a marker that can distinguish nations, a person's rationality can influence relations between nations.

It is very important for every citizen to have a national identity. National identity can be defined as self-awareness as a citizen and feelings of belonging to and love for the nation and state. Each country has its own characteristics and identity. Compared with other countries, Indonesia is a different country. Indonesia is an archipelagic country with many different tribes, cultures, religions, traditions and languages. This is what differentiates Indonesia from other countries (Latra, 2017).

However, with the times, in this era of globalization, globalization also has an impact on national identity, such as global influence, cultural competition, and the fast flow of information. Then, hedonism, a decline in the sense of mutual cooperation, good manners, and a sense of nationalism and patriotism are challenges in maintaining national identity in the era of globalization (Istianah, 2023). As a result of globalization, people, especially teenagers, tend to follow trends and the mainstream. According to WHO describes adolescence as a transition period from childhood to adulthood. In this phase, a person searches for their identity and identity. It is feared that the influx of foreign culture will slowly erode local culture (Sarwono 2011 in Anisa Istiqomah, 2020).

People who have a strong identity will love their country and nation. Apart from that, this will foster mutual respect and respect for differences. National identity can also help you become stronger so that you are not easily influenced by other cultures. Especially for children from immigrant families, National identity is important. This is because immigrant children are caught between two worlds: the world into which they were born and the world in which they now live. They have an identity attached to the culture and principles of their nation when they were born, but when they move to another country, they have to adapt to a new culture and principles, which can leave them confused and unclear. Having a national identity can help them overcome this problem. National identity can also be a guide for immigrant children to remain in their home country.

One effort to strengthen the national identity of immigrant children, especially in SB Permai Pinang, is through the formation of regional and national song choirs aimed at children there. SB Permai Pinang itself is an informal education center established to facilitate access to education for the children of Indonesian immigrant workers in Penang, Malaysia. Choir is an activity that can provide opportunities for children to learn and understand Indonesian culture and traditions. The formation of regional and national song choirs can be considered an important step in strengthening children's national identity. Through this activity, they can develop a sense of love and pride in regional and national cultural heritage. By singing regional songs, they not only understand the melody and lyrics, but also feel the cultural values contained in each song. This will increase their understanding of Indonesia's cultural diversity.

The choir also includes national songs which are an effective means of introducing the values of unity and nationalism to children. Through the harmony of united voices, they can feel the collective power in realizing national unity. National songs also have patriotic messages that can form a sense of responsibility and love for the country. Forming regional and national song choirs is not just a musical activity, but is also a real effort to build children's character and national identity. By being involved in the choir, they can grow into a generation that has an emotional closeness to cultural heritage and national values, so that they can become strong pillars in building the nation's future (Mintargo, 2021).

This community service uses the action community service method because in this community service we involved teachers and students at Sanggar Bimbingan Permai, we chose the action community service method with the aim of communicating the results of our practice for approximately one month to readers in an effort to strengthen the identity of students in Permai Guidance Studio by forming regional and national song choirs. Our hope is that by forming this choir, immigrant children in SB Permai Penang, Malaysia can understand the cultural values and traditions of the nation, and can strengthen their sense of love for their homeland and be proud of their own national culture. We chose to form a choir because we think that through regional and national songs it will be more efficient for children to introduce the cultural values and traditions of the Indonesian nation and can increase their creativity and artistic talents. Choirs can also train their self-confidence to appear in public.

2. Methods of Implementation

This community service uses action community service methods which are collaborative and participatory in nature. According to John Elliot (1991), the action community service method is a repeating spiral cycle approach. In contrast to conventional linear models, this model emphasizes the process of continuous learning and reflection as an integral part of community service. This community service was conducted involving the teachers of Sanggar Guidance Permai, students of Sanggar Guidance Permai and community serviceers as collaborators in the process of forming regional and national song choirs.

This method was chosen because this community service aims to understand in depth the formation of regional and national song choirs as a means of strengthening the national identity of the students of Sanggar Guidance Permai Pinang. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation and documentation. The data obtained was analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques. Data analysis was carried out descriptively to describe the process of forming regional and national song choirs, as well as their impact on strengthening the national identity of the students of Sanggar Guidance Permai Pinang.

3. Results and Discussion

Currently, the mandatory national song is rarely heard except at certain moments such as the celebration of Indonesian Independence. The phenomenon regarding national songs and of course not being in accordance with Indonesian culture is that there are many young people who do not know these mandatory national songs by heart. This is a finding that is in line with the conclusion of community service by Muliati and Sari (2018) that "Indonesia's young generation is experiencing a decline in the value of nationalism, a lack of understanding of national identity, so they do not have strong character. Compared to the hit songs that can be listened to every day on the applications on their smartphones, national mandatory songs have become eroded and forgotten.

Based on observations at the beginning of the activity obtained from testing students' ability to recognize regional songs and Indonesian national songs. SB students were asked to name the song titles, both regional and national songs. Next, ask them to sing the song Indonesia Raya as the national anthem which must be memorized. Learning about homeland culture should be carried out from an early age because it is to preserve this cultural heritage (Santoso, et al., 2022).

The results of this observation showed that all the children there knew the song Indonesia Raya. 50% of the 44 SB students memorized the song lyrics, 40% forgot some of the lyrics and the other 10% did not memorize them. This needs to be addressed to instill a sense of love for the country by getting to know regional songs and Indonesian national songs. The lack of teaching staff is also one of the factors that causes students there to be less familiar with Indonesian culture.

The first problem that can be concluded is the students' lack of interest in national mandatory songs and regional songs. Second, there is a lack of material related to national culture. The solution that can be given is to form a choir team as a means of strengthening national identity. The implementation of the regional and national song choir program as a means of strengthening the national identity of SB Permai Penang children includes three stages of activities: (1) Preparation, (2) Implementation, and (3) Sustainability.

3.1 Preparation

This team was formed by announcing to all students that there was a choir team. Until a team was formed consisting of 8 children, consisting of 4 students and 4 female students. The following are the names of the students who make up the choir team, including Najuwa, Aqillah, Safira, Ely, Daniel, Putra, Fallah and Faizal. Figure 1 shows documentation of activities during the formation of the SB Permai Pinang children's choir team:



Figure 1. Formation of the Choir Team

3.2 Implementation

This activity is held at SB Permai Penang every Tuesday and Thursday after learning activities are finished, namely from 13.00 to 15.00 Malaysia time. The song lyrics are printed to make it easier for children to read and can be memorized at home. This activity was carried out by showing a video on a projector and singing together, followed by a lyric review. Here students are given a general overview of song creation and provide meanings of words that are rarely known.

This is done so that students not only memorize the song, but also understand the story of the song's creation and meaning. Before the lesson begins, students are also required to sing the songs that have been taught. At each meeting, students will be introduced to one or two new songs to memorize, usually community serviceers use the trick of selecting songs with different tempos. For example, the Teacher's Hymn and the song Halo-Halo Bandung, which students remember more easily because of the difference in tempo between *maestoso*

(slow) and marcia (fast). The songs memorized include: Indonesia Raya, Teacher's Hymn, Halo-Halo Bandung, Apuse, Ampar-Ampar Pisang, and Rasa Sayange. Figure 2 shows documentation of activities when SB Permai host children heard and memorized regional and national songs:



Figure 2. Hearing and memorizing songs

3.3 Continuity

Until we found visible changes in the children, such as starting to enjoy learning activities and wanting to continue singing extracurricular activities every day, there were children who at the beginning of the activity did not want to take part in extracurricular activities, but now these children are most enthusiastic when asked to sing, and as time goes by Their ability to recognize diversity is increasing. This success can also be seen when the students presented a farewell performance for KI KKN Students on December 10 2023. An aspect that is no less important in this service activity is how this program can continue on an ongoing basis. Sustainability of the service program is carried out by implementing collaboration between the KKN-KI Program and SB Permai Penang. Figure 3 displays documentation of activities during the choir's performance:



Figure 3. Choir performing arts performance

4. Conclusion

The conclusions of this community service highlight several crucial aspects related to national identity, especially among immigrant children at Sanggar Bimbingan Permai Penang, Malaysia. National identity is considered the main foundation in building character and a sense of love for the country in the younger generation. In this context, community service on the formation of regional and national song choirs at Sanggar Guidance Permai is a strategic step to strengthen the national identity of immigrant children.

It was found that national mandatory songs, such as Indonesia Raya, were less well known by some students. This reflects the challenges in maintaining cultural authenticity and national identity amidst globalization and the domination of foreign cultures. The impact of globalization, hedonism and changes in social behavior, such as a decline in the sense of mutual cooperation and good manners, were also identified as factors that could threaten the preservation of national identity.

Through the action community service method, forming a choir team is an initiative that has the potential to make a significant contribution in overcoming these challenges. It is hoped that learning through regional and national songs can awaken feelings of love for the country, introduce cultural values, and strengthen the national identity of immigrant children. It is hoped that the existence of a choir team can also increase students' creativity and artistic talents.

The future challenge faced is ensuring the sustainability of this program. It is hoped that the collaboration between the KKN-KI Program and SB Permai Penang can become a sustainable model, ensuring that efforts to strengthen national identity do not just become a temporary activity, but become an integral part of the education and extracurricular activities of immigrant children.

The main conclusion of this community service is the need for concrete measures to strengthen national identity, especially among immigrant children. The formation of regional and national song choirs is an effective way to overcome the challenges of globalization and maintain Indonesia's cultural diversity. Thus, this community service provides an important contribution to the understanding and implementation of strategies to strengthen national identity amidst the complexity of the era of globalization.

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