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Ethnic identity of young Malaysian adolescents in Sarawak

SU-HIE TING

TECK-YEE LING

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneliti identiti etnik remaja Malaysia yang tinggal di Sarawak dari aspek pengenalan mereka dengan kumpulan etnik sendiri dan toleransi mereka terhadap kepelbagaian etnik. Kumpulan etnik yang diberi tumpuan dalam kajian ini ialah Melayu, Cina dan Pribumi Sarawak. Pembangunan identiti etnik remaja diukur dengan soal selidik Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure yang diasaskan oleh Phinney (1992). Data untuk kajian ini diperolehi daripada 1181 peserta yang berumur 13 hingga 17 tahun di tiga buah sekolah kawasan bandar dan tiga buah sekolah luar bandar di Sarawak. Hasil kajian menunjukkan pembangunan identiti etnik yang positif bagi golongan remaja yang dikaji, terutamanya dari segi perasaan afektif terhadap kumpulan etnik mereka sendiri. Walau bagaimanapun, tingkah laku etnik mereka tidak mencapai tahap setinggi perasaan afektif mereka terhadap kumpulan etnik sendiri. Ini termasuk penggunaan bahasa etnik, amalan gaya hidup kumpulan etnik dan interaksi dengan anggota kumpulan etnik yang sama. Perbandingan dari segi kumpulan etnik menunjukkan bahawa remaja Pribumi Sarawak mempunyai hubungan yang paling rapat dengan kumpulan etnik mereka, diikuti oleh remaja Melayu, dan yang paling rendah telah ditunjukkan oleh remaja Cina. Kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa jarak ruang social yang kecil bagi remaja Malaysia berupaya menjana situasi bagi mereka untuk membangunkan identiti etnik yang diengselkan pada keistimewaan

kumpulan etnik mereka di samping berjaln dengan unsur-unsur budaya kumpulan etnik yang lain.

Kata kunci: Identiti etnik, kepelbagaian etnik, Melayu, Cina, Pribumi Sarawak

ABSTRACT

The study examined the ethnic identity of young Malaysian adolescents living in Sarawak from the aspects of their identification with their own ethnic group and their tolerance of ethnic diversity. The ethnic groups focused on were the Malay, Chinese and Indigenous groups of Sarawak. The development of ethnic identity of the adolescents was measured by means of Phinney's (1992) multigroup ethnic identity measure. The data for the study were obtained from 1181 participants aged 13 to 17 in three urban and three rural localities in Sarawak. The results showed positive ethnic identity development for the group of adolescents under study, with frequent reports of affective behaviour towards their own ethnic group. However, this was not backed by up an equally strong display of ethnic behaviour such as using the ethnic language, practicing the life style of the ethnic group and interaction with members of the same ethnic group. A comparison by ethnic group revealed that the Indigenous participants had the strongest affiliation with their ethnic group, followed by the Malay participants, and the lowest was shown by the Chinese participants. The results suggest that the close proximity in social space for the adolescent Malaysians generates the conditions for them to construct notions of an ethnic identity that is hinged on the distinctiveness of their own ethnic group and interlaced with cultural elements of other ethnic groups.

Key words: Ethnic identity, ethnic diversity, Malay, Chinese, Indigenous