SUSTAINED DIALOG AMONG CITIZENS IN PUBLIC PLACE A STUDY OF SOCIAL GROUP: PRAMEKERS, IN INTERACTION AMONG TRAIN PASSENGERS

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ABSTRACT

This paper purposes to explore an alternative citizen interaction form in public place to maintain diversity of society in Pramekers as a social group. These people, known as the Pramekers group, regularly commute in the morning and go back in the afternoon and thus incidentally formed a community of daily travellers. As Harold H. Saunders, the Director of International Affairs of the Kettering Foundation, Washington, DC, argues, "effective dialogue begins at the personal level, and globalization has made that not only necessary but possible. By dialogue we do not mean sporadic, one time exchanges, but rather sustained dialogue that builds a 'cumulative' agenda, develop a 'common body of knowledge,' and teaches participants that 'relationships can be transformed" (Saunders; 2011). I applied participant observation and interview as methods to capture that interaction. This study found that dialogue in Pramekers' daily interaction become not only a way to maintain diversity but also as a medium to accommodate and advocate society's aspirations toward the public policy especially in terms of policy about train to realize toleration among citizens. Dialog in diversity frame, actually can be created in the complexity of public place and understanding of diversity can also be done with gesture and attitude in interaction when treating people of different backgrounds.

K E Y W O R D S : sustained-dialogue; diversity; public place; Pramekers; toleration

INTRODUCTION

Currently, intolerant issues regarding one's belief arises quite alarming. The understanding that the truth only exists in one religion exacerbates social imbalance and fanatic attitudes. The society is divided in religious groups and have tendency emerge the hostility to one another groups. This situation then can be used to political interest and other purpose by the 'elite'. Besides, the chauvinistic ideas take part in groups system in that society. Both ideas become important key to create the image of others as enemies. When the enemy image has been formed, prejudice and then, social conflict in society cannot be avoided.

There is a social group which has characteristic and tendency to maintain diversity in society. This group does not belong to those of the policy maker, or part of the mainstream of radical society of majority that has power to influence the view or thought of society. This group was shaped in the beginning as a container to accommodate the little part of society's interest, namely transportation, especially train. But, the process of continuous interactions for years has been able to build a sustainable diversity through dialogue and gesture of attitude among the members of the group. Those interactions are important because the members of the group come from many social backgrounds, like different professions, different religions, different culture and tradition, personal character, etc. It demonstrated that diversity is the certain thing in society. The dialogue is not merely about conversation, but also the gesture when the members treated other members during the trip. Leonard Swidler emphasizes that the primary purpose of the interaction in a dialogue is each participant can learn from the other so that s/he can change and grow (Swidler, 2003 (rev.), p.1). Harold H. Saunders adds that the changing and growing in the interaction among human beings mean there is a paradigm shift toward the other from different view and background (Saunders, 2001, p.35). Both scholars' ideas are in parallel with the peace building theories that argue that one of the ways to encounter the enemy images is with opening widely interaction among citizens by relationship and dialogue to exchange views and thoughts about the other culture, race, profession, tradition, and also religion.

Prameks is the abbreviation of Prambanan Ekspres, the name of a train commuting from Yogyakarta to Solo back and forth. It takes about seventy-five minutes in each trip. The relative short trip time than other kinds of transportations, like bus or motor cycle, makes possible people from Solo acommodate the train as a daily transportation to go to work or to do other activities, for examples, studying in Yogyakarta, and people from Yogyakarta to have activities in Solo. The train passengers, who always use the Prameks, are called as the Pramekers. These people regularly commute in the morning and go back in the afternoon and thus incidentally formed a

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community of daily travellers. This community's members are from many social backgrounds, like profession, culture, tradition, race, and religion. It is quite rare, even in other countries, that a group is shaped in public place and are able to maintain the social diversity for long time. Usually, people are reluctant to take care about social matter when they have to struggle with their daily activities. A group cannot be shaped just with one or small initiative from all of the members. It needs initiative and support from almost all of members to become a group. The Pramekers is shaped by the awareness of the members to support their transportation interest to support their daily activities. It then indirectly becomes a medium to learn together about the society diversity and formulates the treatment to maintain it. Actually, they who are called as Pramekers are the Prameks passengers. They are a group of passengers that used Prameks accidentally, just for their temporary purpose. In the other hand, there are a group that use Prameks just once a week during weekend, like university students from Solo to visit their families and the last group is the Prameks passengers who use Prameks regularly on a daily basis, who are also called the Pramekers. The last group category is the group of my subject in this paper. It is because their interaction that can be determined as a sustained dialogue.

I am interested in this group because of my personal experience when I commute from Solo to Yogyakarta back and forth almost every day in a week to studying in Gadjah Mada University from 2016 until today. My interaction with other Pramekers has changed my paradigm about Muslim thought from gesture and attitude based on how they treated me as a non-Muslim. Besides that, they gained an understanding about Buddhism and a little bit about Chinese religion and culture from me in the interaction along the trip. Javanese culture also influences the characteristic of the Pramekers. We have to acknowledge that Javanese culture is one important foundation in creating this group. The characteristic of the Javanese like social relationship and make team (paguyuban) makes possible this group arose and still survive until now. Their jargon 'saka nyepur dadi sedulur' means those who commute by the train become family, has a deep philosophy. Among the train passangers, there are not boundaries of social backgrounds; it means everyone, no matter one's culture, race, tradition, profession, and religion. Everyone as the train passenger and commute together every day is family. In the relationship as family, they ready to help each other, like shareing information about the train schedule, helping the ticket to be available to members of the group, accommodating the aspiration about the train policy like the cost of the ticket and the parking arrangement in the station area, and then mediating it with the train official (PTKAI DAOP 6), etc. Economic aspects also appear in the relationship of Pramekers when each of them sell and buy the members' products, like foods and handcrafts which are beyond the culture, race, tradition, profession, religion, etc. It is just bridged by the feeling of the same boat.

For this research, I applied participant observation and interview to collect data. Participant observation enabled me to observe the interaction among the Pramekers; the dialogue and gesture when they involved in conversation with each other and treated one another in the group or even with another from the out-group of Pramekers (accidental or temporary passengers). On the other hand, I interviewed some Pramekers to understand their perspectives and thoughts about other members that have different backgrounds or identities and about the group itself. My observation run about one year and it enabled me to find out many characteristics of Pramekers members and to map out the dialogue that occur among them.

HISTORICAL

The distance from Solo to Yogyakarta is about sixty-five km that makes possible the people from Solo do their activities in Yogyakarta and also the people from Yogyakarta to Solo. They have different profession as a lecture, doctor, labour, employee, merchant, and university student with every day trip or few days a week. Among other modes of transportations, for examples, motor cycle, private car, and bus, train is the most enthused to choose. Besides its cost is cheaper than others, train also has lower risk, for instance it is free from traffic jam and it is the fastest trip than other transportations. Compared with other modes of transportation, train has short trip time about seventy-five to ninety minutes and low cost about eight thousand rupiah now (in 1994 the ticket cost about two thousand rupiah, in 2006-2010 about seven thousand and five hundred rupiah to ten thousand rupiah). Bus and car normally take a hundred twenty to a hundred fifty minutes, with ticket cost fifteen thousand rupiah for bus now (in 1994 the ticket cost about six thousand rupiah, in 1998-2009 the ticket cost about eight thousand and five hundred rupiah to ten thousand rupiah, and 2009-2014 the ticket cost about twelve thousand and five hundred rupiah). These reasons make the train is chosen as a daily transportation for the people from Solo and Yogyakarta.

Since 1994, the train with the Solo-Yogyakarta route is the favorite daily transportation to people from Solo or Yogyakarta to support their daily activities. Until today, there are many people still use the train, especially the Solo-Yogya route from 1994. From them I knew the history of the Pramekers. In the beginning, Pramekers was just a predicate for them who used the Prameks in 1994 as their daily transportation. The feeling in the same boat makes them frequently share the information about the schedule of Prameks and other train information. Furthermore, this sharing activity pushed them to create such kind of medium to organize or manage their needs around the train information (paguyuban) and still sporadic with member about fifty persons (interview with Mbah Gintung, and drg. Priyono, 2017).

During that time, the numbers of members and the requirement toward the transportation especially the train increase time to time (about a hundred members). Officially in September 2006, the Pramekers as a group of Prameks passengers was created and acknowledged by the official of PTKAI DAOP 6 (The official of The Indonesia Train for Yogyakarta-Solo district), with Eka Indarto as coordinator. This group has name 'Prasojo' (Pramekers Solo-Jogja) to differentiate with commuter from Yogya-Solo (there is other part of this group with passengers from Jogja-Solo), but they are in the same group (this paper concerns more specificcally about the Prasojo). This group has about four hundred members now. The coordinator of this group is in charged to organize, coordinate, accommodate, and mediate the aspiration of members around the train interest or train policy that was created by PTKAI (interview with Eka Indarto, 2017).

There is not special requirement to become the member of Pramekers. They can come from many backgrounds. They have the members from various religion backgrounds: Islam, Kristen, Catholic, Hindu, Buddha, and Confucius, and from many cultures: Java, Sunda, Batak, NTT, Ambon, Sumatra, Bali, Madura, and Papua, and have equal treatment in the relationship as long as they have good attitude and are able to maintain the Eastern norm in their interaction in the Pramekers brotherhood as long a trip in Prameks. Indirectly, the Javanese value and culture are absorbed and became the foundation in the interaction among members with each identity of members (interview with Nurazid Mahardinata, Agus, et al, 2017).

The theory of sustained dialogue

Dr. Saunders as the architect of sustained dialogue; "a public peace process", argued that:

"The effective dialogue begins at the personal level, and globalization has made that not only necessary but possible. By dialogue we do not mean sporadic, one time exchanges, but rather sustained dialogue that builds a "cumulative agenda," develops a "common body of knowledge," and teaches participants that "relationship can be transformed." (Saunders, 2001, p. 35).

He emphasizes that sustained dialogue is an interaction that continues over a significant period of time. It has a purpose and destination. The purpose is to change relationships in the dialogue room. The destination is to change a community or a country. Dialogue can happen and can change people and the course of conflict (Saunders, 2001, p.39). It has happened. The Pramekers as a social group in public place has proven that they can maintain the diversity of society in their conducting and participating in such dialogue over ten years. The sustained dialogue holds in some stages: human level dealing, person by person, small group by small group over time, and the systematic and disciplined process where the participant will learn a way of talking that enables people to interact peacefully in transforming their relationship and resolving their problems. This different way of talking and relating is essensial both of to a culture of peace and to economic development and justice, which are critical to peace. This interaction is very influenced by time. It cannot succeed if it is doing in temporary time and there is not openness and awareness from each participant to create peace atmosphere (Saunders, 2001, p.42).

I use Saunders's idea, sustained dialogue, by analysing and observing about one year toward the Pramekers group. I found that interactions among them are not merely about dialogue or conversation without purpose or destination. Gesture that appears when they treated another passengers or Pramekers was another example of interaction that can be categorized as a sustained dialogue. These interactions can be called as sustained dialogue because they did it as a 'habit' during the trip in the train. On the other hand, each member of Pramekers has their own identity: religion, culture, profession. It appears for example, from the religious symbols that they wear (hijab, Rosario necklace, cross necklace), language or accent that they use. These things become the first identities in their interactions with other Pramekers and the can speak many things. The understanding process occurs then; Javanese speak with toning down, Muslims is not only about terrorism even their appearance with burga, or long beard for a man, Chinese is not arrogant as the image that spread in Indonesia society, the Batakenese is not rough as they are depicted. Those become important as the agenda of transformation in the understanding process.

Banawiratma, J. B in Dialog Antar Agama: Gagasan dan Praktik di Indonesia (2010), explains that there are seven layers of inter-group (social identity) dialogue. The first layer is dialogue of life (dialog kehidupan). This layer of dialogue happens in everyday life, when people with different social backgrounds live together in the same community. They know each other, concern on the same daily life problems, and live the spirit of friendship. The second layer is social analysis, when people from different social background who live together try to give meaning to their lives and make an ethical decision. This ethical decision is not value-free, but based on common values, such as justice and care for the needs. The third layer is diving to the tradition of each own religion. While people live their life with many experiences, it is important to know their own traditions. They can find a new tradition based on their experiences or discover an unrecognized tradition. They also can base their ethical decision on their tradition of faith.

The fourth layer manifests in sharing about faith experience in a multiidentities community. In this layer, people share their own identity to people from other social backgrounds. At the same time, people also learn about other's

identity. This layer can lead people to avoid manipulative and aggressive ways of encounter between people with different social backgrounds. The fifth layers are when people from different social backgrounds share their identity and discuss it with each other. They can discuss deeper and scientifically about each identity and traditions. Each social identity's history and difficult issues must be also discussed to make an open understanding about each other's identity. An open contextual social identity from each identity is needed to make a rich dialogue in this layer. The sixth layer is dialogue of actions (dialog aksi). In this layer, people from different social backgrounds live together not only for their own, but in purpose to act on social concerns. People from different social background face similar social problems, such as social and gender injustice, human rights, and ecology crisis. Inter-group (social identity) dialogue also talks about these problems. Inter-group communities empower the society and build a transformative community. The seventh layer is intragroup (social identity) dialogue. This layer is an act of auto critic of one's own community. Enriched by experience with people from different social background lead people to see their own group and criticize it. The critic can be a challenge or affirmation of one's thought. The main purpose is that people become a better person.

Both ideas from those scholars are used to depict the interaction in the Pramekers members as long about seventy-five minutes trip in the Prameks that it is not merely about conversation among participants in the interaction. The core is there is transformation in the understanding process toward others from different backgrounds. This is important to promote the peace education. Bringing people from different groups (identities) together, intergroup contact holds great potential for promoting peaceful relationship between groups. Intergroup (many identities) contact has some benefits. It can change attitude, improve affective reactions, and produce more positive intergroup behaviour. Interaction with members of an out-group (different identities) generally can be associated with reducing prejudice toward the out-group members with whom contact has occurred, toward entire out-groups based on contact with only a small proportion of members, and even toward entire out-groups not directly involved in the contact. Members of different groups come to redefine themselves as members of one more inclusive group (Mania, et al, 2010, p. 87& 95). Individuals as members of many different groups (identities) will mute the conflict, if not eliminated; overlapping memberships minimize the risk of serious conflict between any two groups (Jackson, 2003, p.110).

MAINTAINING DIVERSITY THROUGH THE "SUSTAINED DIALOGUE" AMONG PRAMEKERS MEMBERS

I am with slanting of the eyes, and bright colour of skin indirectly will be recognized as a Chinese or minimal as non-Muslim, and someone with

burga will be recognized as a Muslim. It is possible if in our mind, we have our own record or perception or even prejudice toward each other. When a Chinese get a help from a Muslim, like borrowing a laptop because needs to finish my assignment, the process of changing perception occurred in this interaction, in an interaction in Prameks with a Pramekers. Interaction is then continuous with dialogue by asking each other's background friendly because of that different background or identity. The next interaction will start by asking each other's news. In another moment, I found a group of Pramekers members composed from a Christian woman (I knew from the necklace that she wears, and she is a lecture of Yogyakarta State-owned University/UNY), and some Muslims women (because all of them wear hijab, generally they are an employee of some enterprises) were eating together in one plate and involved in uproar conversation. Allport in Thomas F. Pettigrew's intergroup contact theory argues that intergroup contact will succeed if there is equal status of each member. For those experiences above, there are the equal status as a Prameks passenger and Pramekers members, and the same goal (common goals), namely, arrived in Yogyakarta without any obstacle or problem and happily (Pettigrew, 1998, p.66).

In other interview behind, with that Christian woman, I have asked her whether they have involved in dialogue about religious topic. She answered me that they never involved in dialogue about religious topic, because it is a sensitive topic. But despite they never involved in religious dialogue, they know their flexibility in each session of interaction. Bettencourt BA in Pettigrew's intergroup contact theory emphasized that attainment of common goals must be an interdependent effort without intergroup competition. Besides that, there is explicit social sanction as the authority that support establishes norm of acceptance included in Pramekers group where the Java culture as a common culture which is used in Pramekers community. This culture is indirectly become a foundation or authority in almost interaction of Pramekers as the one condition of successful in intergroup interaction (Pettigrew, 1998, p.67). She also adds that she never got any discrimination experience as the member of Pramekers even she is a minority in the group. The other members (no matter their culture or religion) will give their back up seat (because there is not guarantee to Prameks passengers to get seat on the providing seat, so that the Pramekers usually bring a backup seat to precaution if they do not get the providing seat) if she does not get the providing seat and also does not bring her back up seat. According to Vincent Y. Yzerbyt (2010), stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination occur because individuals belong to groups that compete for limited resources (in the interaction among the Pramekers the limited resource is the providing seat). Only when (they) need to cooperate to achieve common goals do intergroup relations improve (Yzerbyt, 2010, p.148).

Sharing information around the train information is another daily interaction among Pramekers. It is included the providing of Prameks ticket,

and the schedule of Prameks. In addition to that, they also held the halal bihal, 'the asking for and giving forgiven' event in Muslim tradition in the moment of Idul Fitri, each year and was followed by all Pramekers members even if they are non-Muslim. In this event, they usually collect some fund voluntary to buy some foods and eat together in some place or at one's house of Pramekers. It is not only that, the Pramekers who are non-Muslim also followed the managing and organizing the celebration (interview with some Pramekers, 2017).

PRAMEKERS ACCOMODATING ASPIRATION AND MEDIATION AROUND THE TRAIN POLICY

In the beginning, train with Solo-Yogyakarta and Yogyakarta-Solo route is not as comfortable as now. Besides that, train with those routes, passengers of Prameks, and the providing of seat are limited. The passenger of Prameks then depends on the providing of Prameks seat. The Prameks ticket that is provided also depends on the seat of the ticket. It means that just only limited passengers can be passenger of Prameks. This policy very annoved the Pramekers. They then held the meeting to solve this problem and in agreement to hold the mediation with PTKAI to talk about their concern. For this project, everything was not easy in the beginning. They had to speak their concerns to the local legislation department in Solo and Yogyakarta (DPRD Solo and DPRD Yogyakarta), and the Solo and Yogyakarta governments. In their proposal, besides that policy, they included about the maintaining and management of Prameks, like the dirtiness of Prameks in each its railway coach; everyone could smoke, and threw the trash in every place. They argued that the setting of Prameks initially as a commuter transportation so that the policy; one ticket one seat was not available for the hundreds of Pramekers members. Finally, the official of train (PTKAI DAOP 6) changed their policy. Passengers could come in to the train and if they did not get seat, they could sit on the floor of train or stand in the side of train with the handle attached in the train's roof. Today, train can bring passengers more than before (interview with Eka Indarto, 2017).

On the other hand, the cost of Prameks ticket becomes more expensive time to time. The Pramekers appraised the official train (PTKAI) attempts to play with the ticket cost of Prameks. They initiated mediation again. For them, the ticket cost about ten thousands rupiah to twenty-five thousands rupiah for executive class was too expensive. In this moments they had jargon that 'tiketmu nggulingke centhingku', means the ticket cost of Prameks decreased their income. According to many complains from the members of Pramekers, Pramekers's coordinator did mediation again with PTKAI and proposed the objection proposal. In that proposal was included the proposal about the buying mechanism of Prameks ticket, where they just could buy the ticket one to two hours before the departure schedule. It meant that the Pramekers have to wait for long time to buy the ticket and it would make possible that they did not get the ticket because had sold out with too short of the break time. With the long mediation, finally the ticket cost of Prameks was down to eight thousands rupiah to fifteen thousand rupiah for executive class until today. Whereas for the buying ticket mechanism, Pramekers can buy the ticket three hours before the departure schedule. It is not only that, today, passengers can buy their tickets seven days before the departure schedule by reservation (interview with Eka Indarto, et al, 2017).

The other policy that had their objection was the parking cost. Pramekers, economically, usually use their motorcycle or car from their house and park it in the Solo Balapan station. When they arrived at stations in Yogyakarta, like Maguwo, Lempuyangan, and Tugu station, they have another motorcycle or car that they entrusted in the local house around those stations. For those, they must pay the parking or entrusting cost. In a few months ago, PTKAI put into effect the increasing parking cost every an hour about one thousand rupiah; six thousand maximal for motorcycle and ten thousand rupiah for car. It meant that they have to pay about six to ten thousand every day based on that cost, because they usually commute in the morning about seven o'clock to five o'clock in the afternoon. The resulting for mediation with PTKAI is PTKAI gave different parking tariff for Pramekers about ninety thousand rupiah a month with pay in the beginning month until today (interview with some Pramekers, 2017).

PPRAMEKERS INTERACTION AND PEACE BUILDING

Luc Reychler in Challenges of Peace Research (2006) describes that there are some challenges to build peace building. The first challenge is not to lose the big picture. The macro-perspective gives an overview of the necessary peace building efforts and allows the peace builders to oversee and coordinate what they are doing. The second challenge is to get a better understanding of the sustainable peace building architecture. The third challenge concerns the slow learning process. There is a need to build structures that support a better exchange of knowledge between the decision-makers, the practitioners in the field, and the research community. The fourth challenge is to deal more effectively with the peace building context, which is characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, competing values and interests, and the struggle for power (Reychler, 2006, p.1).

Creating sustainable peace needs the essential requirements or preconditions; an effective system of communication, consultation and negotiation, peace-enhancing structures and institutions, an integrative political-psychological climate, a critical mass of peace building leadership, and a supportive international environment. In its interactions, Pramekers created an effective system of communication; sustained dialogue in peaceenhancing structures process through their daily interaction, like a Muslim girl that lets Old Catholic nun to sit when she did not get the seat, or Chinese woman that got back her things that left in the train from Muslim man who found it. Indirectly, these interactions have contribution to maintain the peace building in multicultural society, especially in public place. In interview with some Pramekers they said that they never heard before the conflict occurred among passengers as long trip in about seventy-five minutes in Prameks. This fact proved that Pramekers succeed to maintain the peace building in public place (interview with Agus, dr. NurazidMahardinata, et al, 2017).

Interactions that are created by Pramekers with their sustained dialogue is resulting the atmosphere of peaceful along the trip with Prameks. Two dimensions of peace are success to be presented, namely negative peace and positive peace. These terms I borrow from Galtung that defined as the absence of personal violence (negative peace) and the absence of structural violence (positive peace). When some social media a few months ago reported the news about two women in Bandung that fought in the railway coach because they fought for a seat (personal violence), it never occurred in Prameks as long as the Pramekers experience and in my one year experience commuting with Prameks. Structural violence in Galtung term is discrimination in the treatment of all passengers in Prameks. That discrimination can occur between members of Pramekers with the system of policy, especially around train policy, and among members of Pramekers. Their sustained dialogue has reached the level of, there is no more "we" and "they" or "you" but all is "we are" in the same group of Pramekers because of the same common goals and the feeling in the same boat as a Prameks passengers.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above discussion, there are several important points to highlight. First, the sustained dialogue is better to hold before any conflict occurs. The sustained dialogue was performed by Pramekers prove that sustained dialogue is not merely held by the 'elite' to peace building agenda after conflict occurred. Dialogue that is not merely about conversation without purpose or destination, can be intertwined in the lowest level society; personal by personal and even in public place, if there is awareness in individual as a part of society to maintain the diversity or multiculturalism in society.

Second, the fact that the Pramekers community has contribution to maintain the diversity of society and build peaceful environment in society especially in public place, needs to be supported by other society and governments. One of the ways to support them is through the forming of similar group like Pramekers in many public places. Pramekers interaction can be called as a social movement with peace building agenda behind it. It can be a movement in the grass root level to prevent radicalism, and conflicts based on the multiculturalism. It is not easy to maintain the community with characteristic like Pramekers in the middle of radicalism and individualistic wave of society recently. Each Pramekers has to pass several stages that are not easy. They have to pass the agonizing decision initially as an openness stage. It is a period in which they come to a decision to engage with the adversary, with the enemy, or with the unknown. The next level is they sit down with each other for the first time. They do what comes naturally: they pour out all of the anger and grievances with each other that have been boiling inside them. Then, the quality of the exchange changes from talking at each other to talking with each other because they have together named a problem about which all care. They will not only talk to understand the dimensions and dynamics of this problem; they will begin to talk about possible ways of dealing with it. After that, is a phase in which they will begin to design a course of action in the form of a series of interactive steps which because of their interactions, will help to change relationships in a larger community. The last stage is a period in which participants decide to take their design for action into the larger community and to begin engaging others in it (Saunders, 2001, p.40-41).

Third, the awareness of Pramekers to maintain the diversity of society indirectly increases the sensitivity of society toward the public policy. This sensitivity then becomes the first step as a controller of public policy. The feeling in the same boat faced them to survive and experience peace education and the meaning transformation that the diversity and multiculturalism is something certainty in this world.

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