

Research Article

JAVANESE ETHNIC MINORITIES CREATE PEACE: PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MULTICULTURAL PERSONALITY

Hadi Suyono*, Zalik Nuryana**, Taufik Kasturi***

Ethnic conflicts due to discrimination, oppression, violence, harassment, and genocide perpetrated by majority ethnic groups continue to this day, causing suffering and misery to ethnic minorities. Attempts made to address the ethnic conflicts are in vain. One alternative solution is fostering harmony in multicultural communities through preventive efforts. Hence, this study aims to describe the multicultural personality of ethnic minority communities that contribute to establishing peace in heterogeneous societies. Further, the theme of multicultural personality contributes to developing peaceful inter-ethnic relations. The study employed a phenomenological research design carried out in Seluma, Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key figures from the Javanese ethnic minority groups. The chosen technique for data analysis was interpretative phenomenological analysis. The research findings revealed the primary theme of multicultural personality and key sub-themes: cultural empathy, emotional stability, social initiative, open-mindedness, and flexibility. All of these contribute to peace in multicultural communities. The implications of this study are significant as a model to establish peace, applicable to communities with diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Keywords: multicultural personality, ethnic minority, ethnic majority

1. Introduction

An ethnic conflict that persists to this day is the conflict between majority and minority ethnic groups. Prior evidence suggests that the inequality between majority and minority ethnic groups leads to heightened electoral conflicts, leading to voter participation decline (Ackermann et al., 2024). Cases of minority group conflict are seen worldwide. For example, Muslim ethnic groups in Rakhine State, Vietnam, receive unjust treatment by the majority group (Laoutides, 2024). The minority Kurdish ethnic group who fights for independence faces conflicts in Turkey (Sarigil, 2021). In Xinjiang, the Uighur ethnic minority faces restrictions on religious freedom (Anand, 2022), and conflict among minority ethnic groups in Tigray has caused ecological damage (Mesfin et al., 2024; Negash et al., 2023). Similarly, in Indonesia, conflicts between majority and minority

* Department of Psychology, University of Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia, corresponding author
chadi.suyono@psy.uad.ac.id

** Department of Islamic Education, University of Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

*** Department of Psychology, University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia

ethnic groups have occurred in various regions (Bazzi & Gudgeon, 2021; Bilven et al., 2022; Lele, 2023).

These ethnic conflicts result in ethnic minority groups' suffering, such as discrimination in healthcare, job market recruitment, organizational leadership selection, and educational inequality (Adamovic & Leibbrandt, 2023; Kim et al., 2023; Lancee, 2021; Lippens et al., 2023; Spector et al., 2024). Discrimination leads to experiences of oppression for minority ethnic communities (Ragavan et al., 2020), sexual violence against women (Ummak et al., 2024), student harassment (Kisfalusi et al., 2020), and even genocide of minority populations (Becker et al., 2022; Dussich, 2018; McDoom, 2014). Discrimination, violence, harassment, and genocide have adverse effects on the mental health of minority ethnic communities (Jayasuriya et al., 2016; Jeffery et al., 2024; Scrimin et al., 2014), with minority ethnic community members exposed to mental health disorders including anxiety, stress, and depression (Brance et al., 2023; Housen et al., 2019; Riley et al., 2017; Tay et al., 2021).

Ethnic conflicts require appropriate handling to address disrupted mental health and to maintain the dignity and self-respect of minority ethnic groups effectively (Arbatli et al., 2020; Hillesund & Østby, 2023; Karakoç & Wang, 2021; Lewis, 2023). The inability to resolve ethnic conflicts is due to ineffective conflict resolution. Ethnic conflict management has not been optimally organized because it focuses only on conflict dynamics in health, personal bullying, ethnic-cultural bullying, corporate leadership, social power, resource distribution injustice, violence related to political usurpation, and prejudice dynamics using neuroscience (Bamidele, 2020; Hirschfeld et al., 2022; Izuma et al., 2019; Lessmann & Steinkraus, 2019; Martínez-Santiago et al., 2023; Nazliben et al., 2023). Additionally, attention has been given to post-conflict events, including ethnic conflict resolution using a decentralization approach, dynamic identities within inter-ethnic group relations, the role of indigenous approaches in resolving conflicts to restore harmony among ethnic groups, psychological problems after ethnic conflicts, and differences in perceptions of peace following ethnic conflicts (Carey et al., 2022; Edeh et al., 2023; Eneyew & Ayalew, 2023; Kwori, 2022; Thurairajah, 2020).

The inability to resolve conflicts adequately highlights the need for alternative solutions to prevent ethnic conflicts and alleviate the suffering of minority ethnic groups. On the other hand, effective conflict resolution can promote peaceful coexistence in multi-ethnic communities, thus improving the psychological well-being of minority and majority ethnic groups (Kim & Silverstein, 2021). To achieve peace within diverse communities, it is essential to implement preventive strategies, such as proactive measures taken before conflicts arise (Hegre et al., 2019, 2021; Oberg et al., 2009; Rød et al., 2024). Various countries have implemented conflict prevention strategies, which have proven effective in establishing peace within multi-ethnic communities (Björkdahl, 2007; Karliani et al., 2018; Kumpfer K.L. et al., 2002).

One variable that prevents ethnic conflict is multicultural personality (Hofhuis et al., 2020). It encompasses a personal identity that promotes social brotherhood, equality, respect for diversity, and peace (McGuire et al., 2020; Munniksma et al., 2024; Nordhag, 2021). The concept of personal identity influences an individual's capacity to maintain harmony. It is reflected in a distinct self-image that sets one person apart from others. While each person is unique, self-image aims to exhibit behavior adaptable to ethnic diversity and based on social equality. Embracing multicultural values and acknowledging ethnic diversity can create a peaceful environment (Banban, 2018; Huda et al., 2020; Lessard-Phillips, 2017).

Multicultural personality also contributes to conflict prevention through embedded values such as emotional stability, adaptation to different cultures, concern for diverse environments, and the ability to interact within multicultural communities (Yakunina et al., 2012). Multicultural personality values support psychological skills that facilitate peaceful coexistence with various ethnic groups. Prior research has shown that a multicultural personality encompasses psychological abilities like empathy, adaptability, social adjustment, emotional stability, and positive reactions. These skills are positive indicators of an individual's capacity to participate in interpersonal, social, and cultural relationships in a tolerant, altruistic, and fair manner. They also enable individuals to adapt to diverse ethnicities and cultures (Basow & Gaugler, 2017; Fietzer et al., 2016; Korol, 2018).

Various studies have been conducted on the central theme of multicultural personality. Research started with developing a measurement or inventory of multicultural personality for expatriate selection. (Zee & Oudenhoven, 2000) conducted studies on the validity and reliability of students with international aspirations versus those without (Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). Additionally, there was a longitudinal study on the socio-psychological adaptation of Asian students studying abroad (Leong, 2007), research on multicultural orientation and adaptation (Leone et al., 2005), as well as item response analysis, invariance, and validation for the multicultural personality inventory.

Research on multicultural personality has expanded into the fields of business and professional careers, including work in multinational companies (Korzilius et al., 2011), the role of prejudice in the selection of managers with immigrant backgrounds (Horverak et al., 2013), and how international career aspirations predict interest in working abroad (Carballal-Broome & Pinillos, 2022). The implementation of multicultural personality research has also extended to education, such as the socio-cultural adjustment of international students from Asia (Lee & Ciftci, 2014), second language learning and immigrant integration (van Niejenhuis et al., 2018), multicultural counseling competence among counselor trainees (Fietzer et al., 2018), an investigation of Iranian students learning English (Cheraghi & Karamimehr, 2022), the effects of intercultural training on students' cultural intelligence (Figuerola & Hofhuis, 2024), and longitudinal studies on international higher education (Hofhuis et al., 2024). Another application of multicultural personality research in the political domain includes intergroup forgiveness behaviors due to political conflict (Perez et al., 2023) and, in the mental health field, examining posttraumatic stress among U.S. service members (Herrera & Owens, 2015).

Other research on multicultural personality focuses specifically on limited ethnic groups, compared to the extensive research conducted by various scholars on multicultural personality. Studies on multicultural personality concerning specific ethnic groups that have been previously undertaken include positive attitudes toward out-group Asian Americans (Lilia et al., 2018) and allophilia toward other groups (Liliia, 2018). Given the limited scientific studies contextualizing multicultural personality with specific ethnicities, further research is needed on the role of multicultural personality among minority ethnic groups in fostering harmony within multicultural societies.

The central themes of multicultural personality include cultural empathy, emotional stability, social initiative, open-mindedness, and flexibility (Halim et al., 2014; Ponterotto, 2010). Conceptually, cultural empathy refers to the minority ethnic community members' ability to understand the issues faced by other ethnic groups. Cultural empathy manifests as an increased

sensitivity of minority group members to the challenges experienced by other ethnic communities, which fosters the ability to alleviate the difficulties faced by individuals from different ethnic backgrounds. Sensitivity to the problems suffered by individuals from different ethnicities nurtures harmony within multi-ethnic societies (Garaigordobil, 2012; Sirin et al., 2016; Valdez et al., 2023; Yi et al., 2021; Yiu, 2024).

Another theme of multicultural personality is emotional stability, which involves showing self-control when faced with hostility due to differences in interests between minority ethnic in-groups and majority ethnic out-groups (Niwa et al., 2016). Maintaining a calm demeanor is rooted in the awareness that life consists not only of a single individual but of a multitude of individuals with varied traits and characteristics (Chiang et al., 2019). This awareness enables minority ethnic groups to contribute to creating harmony within multicultural societies (Flynn et al., 2021; Mackie & Smith, 2018).

Meanwhile, social initiative refers to the cultural capacity to negotiate and resolve conflicts due to ethnocentrism (Eko & Putranto, 2021; Robinson, 2020). Another aspect of social initiative is having multicultural awareness to generate ideas and proactively take preventive measures for the potential hostility arising from cultural differences between ethnic groups (Vila, 2023; Wang et al., 2023).

Open-mindedness sub-theme refers to the willingness to learn about other ethnic groups, such as being open to criticism even when it comes from individuals of different ethnic backgrounds (Price et al., 2015). This willingness to learn allows one to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and differences of other ethnic groups. Motivation to learn from other ethnicities can be used to find strategies for building mutual trust in multicultural societies (Dinesen et al., 2020). Achieving mutual trust supports harmonious coexistence between ethnic groups with different cultural backgrounds (Di Fabio & Tsuda, 2018).

Lastly, the flexibility sub-theme refers to adapting to a multi-ethnic environment using psychosocial adjustments (Christmas & Barker, 2014; Sladek et al., 2020). Flexibility contributes to the soft skills of ethnic groups to find alignment and achieve shared prosperity, even when the ethnic groups have different cultural or religious backgrounds (Graham, 2018; Marta & Fernando, 2020).

Considering the background of the problems, the research track record, and the main themes, this study aims to explore the role of multicultural personality within the Javanese minority community in achieving harmonious coexistence in a multicultural society through a phenomenological approach. This study's implications will enrich the scientific understanding of the multicultural personalities of minority ethnic communities. This research hopes to serve as a reference to empower minority ethnic communities with multicultural personalities, enabling them to foster peace in societies with diverse cultural backgrounds.

2. Method

2.1 *Research context, sampling approach, and participants*

The study was conducted on a Javanese farmer community who immigrated to Lokasi Baru, Bengkulu, Indonesia. An interesting aspect of the Javanese ethnic community, as a minority

group, is the members' persistent adherence to cultural traditions from their places of origin, including language, arts, norms, and social life (Hawkins, 1996; Mutiara et al., 2023; Poedjosoedarmo, 2017; Rapoport, 2018). Despite maintaining traditions based on values inherited from their ancestral homeland, the Javanese immigrants have successfully coexisted peacefully with other ethnic groups with different cultural backgrounds, including the Serawai, Balinese, and Malay ethnic groups. For over forty-nine years, the Javanese community has resided in Lokasi Baru without experiencing conflict with the surrounding multi-ethnic population.

A researcher asserts that the Javanese ethnic community can promote peace within a multicultural society (Waston, 2018), which encourages the present study to explore the concept of multicultural personality. The research will delve into multicultural personality, mainly focusing on the Javanese community's openness and willingness to embrace individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The members' characteristics have enabled the Javanese community to engage in harmonious personal, social, cultural, and everyday interactions, resulting in peace within a diverse ethnic society. In line with the research focus, this study employs a qualitative approach to describe the multicultural personality of the Javanese ethnic group and its ability to foster peace in a heterogeneous society (Creswel, 2014). Further, the research employs phenomenology (Creswell, 2013) to interpret the general phenomenon concerning the life experiences of individuals who strive to cultivate a multicultural personality to build peace within a society composed of various ethnic groups.

Table 1. Participant demographics

Participant	Gender	Age	Profile/status
P1	Male	67 years old	Founder/pioneer of the Javanese ethnic community
P2	Male	43 years old	Community secretary
P3	Male	27 years old	Youth leader in the Javanese ethnic community
P4	Male	55 years old	Javanese Ethnic Community Village Head
P5	Male	52 years old	Javanese ethnic community tradition leader
P6	Female	32 years old	Javanese ethnic community female figure
P7	Male	47 years old	Javanese ethnic community member

Participants were selected using purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020) with specific criteria to provide in-depth information on the phenomenon of interest. According to this purposive sampling technique, participants were selected from the Javanese ethnic group who understand, experience, and have been involved in the efforts to achieve peaceful situations and conditions in a multicultural society (Table 1).

2.2 Data Collection

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews (Kallio et al., 2016), meaning that the interviewer prepared questions while maintaining flexibility to adjust to the needs during the interview process with the interviewee. The interviews began by asking participants to discuss their backgrounds. Subsequently, participants were asked questions to explore their life experiences about the central theme, multicultural personality. The interviews lasted between 30 to 50 minutes.

2.3 Procedure

The research followed general procedures through the steps outlined (Creswell, 2013): First, the research problem was selected based on individual or group experiences. Second, participants with direct experience of the phenomenon being studied were identified. Third, the focus was on describing and interpreting the meaning of those experiences. Fourth, data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Fifth, data analysis was conducted to identify patterns of meaning through reduction, description, reflection, and interpretation of the data. Sixth, a report was written, and the meaning was interpreted. Seventh, verification was performed to ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings. Finally, the interpretation of the research findings was contextualized with relevant literature and the practical or theoretical implications of the results. The research procedure is illustrated in Figure 1.

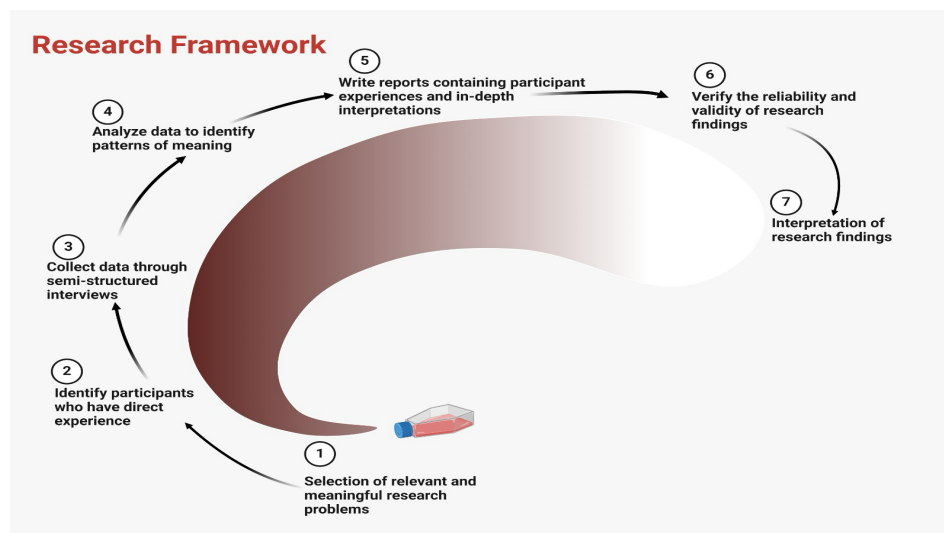


Figure 1. Research Framework

2.4 Data analysis

The research utilized Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the participants' experiences (Alase, 2017; Rajasinghe, 2020). Additionally, IPA can be used to interpret experiences by continuously transcribing and interpreting the data. The initial process applied in IPA involves repeated reading of the interview's verbatim data. The examination and in-depth analysis of the interview results resulted in various points related to each interview process, the content of the interviews, and relevant participant opinions. The subsequent process involves analyzing the data by examining the codes written in the document, creating mind maps, and formulating patterns to connect various perspectives and experiences from the respondents' interviews.

The documentation of the analysis process was carried out throughout the research: before the interviews, after the interviews, the initial listening and re-listening to the audio recordings of the interviews, the process of creating verbatim data from the interviews, and the analysis of the verbatim data. The process helps gain a deeper understanding of the respondents' experiences, thereby facilitating the identification of patterns and themes that open opportunities for further exploration. After noting key points and reviewing codes, the next step is categorizing them into themes based on the research objectives. This includes identifying relationships between emerging themes, grouping themes, and providing descriptive labels to theme groups. The analysis ends with a narrative summary to reveal the core of the respondents' experiences (James & Isaacs, 2023; Pietkiewicz et al., 2014).

3. Findings

Qualitative data identified the main themes related to multicultural personality. Exploring multicultural personality within the Javanese ethnic group is valuable as a preventive strategy to achieve peace in multicultural societies. The Javanese community's efforts to realize harmony in heterogeneous societies are examined through the main sub-themes of multicultural personality, including cultural empathy, emotional stability, social initiative, open-mindedness, and flexibility. This study focuses on these four main sub-themes based on the consideration that cultural empathy is the individuals' ability to understand and appreciate cultural differences as a foundation for building harmonious relationships between ethnic groups. Emotional stability is also analyzed to assess how effective emotion management can prevent conflict and enhance the quality of cross-cultural interactions between ethnic groups. Social initiative is the individuals' ability to initiate and build social relationships within diverse community contexts. This study also explores open-mindedness toward various perspectives and other cultures, crucial to reducing prejudice and enhancing understanding between ethnic groups. Meanwhile, flexibility, which involves adapting to changes and new situations, is examined to understand how adaptability can support social cohesion and peace in multicultural communities.

3.1 Cultural empathy

Cultural empathy in building a multicultural personality is demonstrated by Javanese ethnic group members' willingness to participate in traditional wedding ceremonies organized by the majority ethnic group despite the cultural differences between the two groups. Engagement in traditional wedding ceremonies conducted by the indigenous people is driven by the Javanese's experience of hosting weddings where many guests expressed happiness, as reflected in their statements: "...there are local community activities such as traditional ceremonies and other events...participate...even though our wedding customs differ from theirs..." (P5), and "...feeling happy...when hosting a wedding with many guests present..." (P1).

Incorporating cultural empathy within the Javanese ethnic group is further demonstrated by the people's avoidance of actions that might go against the cultural norms of other ethnic groups. For instance, the use of the Javanese word "*bathok*," which means "coconut shell," is considered derogatory by the Serawai ethnic group, which may lead to potential conflict. To prevent such misunderstanding, the Javanese community has refrained from using the term "*bathok*," as illustrated by the following statement: "...a taboo from the Serawai ethnic group...the Javanese avoid it...for instance, asking for a *bathok*...the Javanese term *bathok* means coconut shell...but it is understood differently by the Serawai ethnic group and could offend their feelings..." (P2).

The behavior demonstrated by the Javanese community in implementing cultural empathy is further seen in the people's willingness to assist Serawai, Malay, and Balinese ethnic groups during disasters. Their readiness to help others is influenced by their own past experiences of hardship, which fosters a sense of empathy. This altruism towards other ethnic groups, despite cultural differences, is expressed by a Javanese participant: "...when other ethnic groups face a disaster...we help ease their burden...because we have experienced...hardship ourselves...which made our lives suffer" (P6). Furthermore, cultural empathy among the Javanese is also shown through their adherence to the customs and traditions of neighboring ethnic groups, as reflected in the following statement: "...we have our customs...but we need to follow the activities of other ethnic groups with different traditions...willing to abide by their rules...when they hold traditional ceremonies..." (P5).

The ability to cultivate cultural empathy within the Javanese ethnic group can help prevent discrimination, potentially reduce violence with other ethnic groups, and promote peace in a diverse community. A local youth leader acknowledges this reality: "We have never experienced discrimination or violence because Javanese people have been living here for years, trying to blend in with residents from other ethnic groups" (P3).

3.2 Emotional stability

Emotional stability refers to the Javanese ethnic group's ability to remain composed in various challenging situations and environments.

"...in the early days here, misunderstandings frequently occurred between Javanese immigrants and local Serawai residents. The problems arose because issues were addressed with anger, leading to unresolved conflicts and worsening situations. This experience taught me that solving problems requires calmness... calmness allows issues to be resolved effectively" (P4).

The statement from the resident illustrates emotional stability among the Javanese when facing issues with the majority ethnic group, such as the Serawai. This approach is based on the experience that resolving conflicts with anger is ineffective as problems with other ethnic groups persist. This experience led to a change in strategy, focusing on maintaining emotional calmness. As stated,

“...calmness conditions the mind to be clear... it turns out that calmness helps to find the best solution... thus preventing the problem from escalating further... when there are differences in interests... issues can be minimized... harmony between the two ethnic groups is maintained...” (P2).

One way to maintain emotional calmness is by engaging residents in discussions among the Javanese and other ethnic groups before organizing large community events. Deliberations help bridge differences between the various ethnic groups participating in the event. This method has proven effective as it accommodates shared interests. A Javanese resident shared: “...before the event...ethnic groups are gathered...meetings discuss the procedures of activities while considering the cultural respect of each ethnic group...the meetings unify interests between them and us...” (P7).

Another approach to developing emotional stability is through self-awareness, positioning oneself as a newcomer requiring the magnanimity to respect the majority ethnic group or other ethnic groups residing in a heterogeneous community. A founder of the Javanese community in Lokasi Baru explained this reality: “...we are self-aware...as newcomers, we need to be open-hearted and yield... We realize we are living in someone else's place... we should not stand out... if there are activities, we participate...” (P1). Self-awareness as a newcomer is reflected in indicators such as not seeking prominence in the community: “...there is no need to be exalted... and no need for recognition...” (P3) and maintaining modesty: “...avoiding claiming to be the most capable...” (P1).

Emotional stability, as evidenced by behaviors such as maintaining a calm demeanor, generosity, and open-heartedness, proves helpful in preventing conflicts. When disputes arise between the Javanese and other ethnic groups, these qualities help prevent issues from escalating, generating the best conflict resolution. As explained: “...disputes should not be exaggerated...finding the best solutions to resolve problems...we rely on and need each other...” (P6).

3.3 Social initiative

The Javanese community works to maintain peace by initiating coordination between Javanese community leaders and leaders from other ethnic groups. This effort aims to prevent disturbances during large-scale events. As a Javanese community member stated, “...if there is a celebration...there are discussions among community leaders...to prevent clashes between Javanese youth and other ethnic groups living here...” (P5).

The Javanese community has taken the initiative to participate in social activities by helping other ethnic groups during their traditional celebrations. The program involves Javanese youth representatives seeking permission from the organizing youth groups of other ethnicities to attend these traditional events. This action fosters togetherness through interaction between youth groups from different ethnic backgrounds. The dynamics of interaction between ethnic

groups positively impact mutual respect and consideration, even though they come from different ethnic backgrounds, as expressed: "...Javanese youth ask for permission from the Serawai organizers to participate in the event... even when leaving, they also say goodbye... this is a way of showing respect and consideration..." (P3).

The description of social initiation is reinforced by the behavior indicators from the Javanese ethnic group, who integrate with the local indigenous people and other ethnic groups, thereby eliminating barriers between migrants and locals. This interaction fosters close relationships among different ethnicities in a multi-ethnic society. This behavioral indicator is demonstrated by: "...residents organize wedding parties... form committees... committee members are drawn from various ethnic groups..." (P3).

In addition to weddings, the connections between Javanese and other ethnic groups are established through activities organized by local governments. "...the sub-district or village government... there are events involving Javanese youth... even though they are migrants and a minority... the consideration is that they are ready... when asked to help with various events..." (P2). They are willing to contribute to the success of other ethnic groups when they are entrusted with social program responsibilities, as noted: "...if responsibility is entrusted to Javanese people, they will fulfill the trust to the best of their ability..." (P7). Additionally, high-intensity social interactions with other ethnic groups foster a sense of brotherhood: "...being involved in building houses for another ethnic group... enhances communication... this fosters a sense of family..." (P7).

Another description of the social initiative is that the traditional leaders of the Javanese community can control situations involving problems with other ethnic groups. This control aims to prevent issues from spreading to larger groups. The approach to managing the situation involves finding common ground to maintain peace. The statement illustrates this: "...traditional leaders and elders can manage the situation... so that the problem does not spread to a larger group... the method is to find common ground..." (P5).

The dynamics of social initiative woven by the Javanese ethnic group create social harmony with different ethnic groups as stated: "...there are no issues... we are accepted by the indigenous ethnic groups... so there is no longer any perception of us as outsiders... we can integrate..." (P1).

3.4 Open-mindedness

Open-mindedness is demonstrated by the willingness to learn from other ethnic groups: "...learning from the traditional leaders of neighboring ethnic groups...about the proper procedures according to their culture, rules, ethics, and behavior that apply to other ethnic groups...so that we do not violate their norms...because if we do, it could offend them..." (P6).

Another indicator of open-mindedness among the Javanese is exchanging experiences, as outlined: "...the habit of exchanging experiences with traditional leaders, community figures, and the general public from different ethnic groups..." (P7). The topics discussed during these exchanges include agriculture, animal husbandry, plantations, and house construction, as noted: "...we often discuss with our brothers from other ethnic groups about raising goats and cows using pens...growing rice, fruits, and vegetables...planting palm oil...as well as how to build houses..." (P4).

Open-mindedness is also described in terms of the Javanese as newcomers, instilling in the younger generation the need to preserve the values and culture of their place of origin. However, since they are sociologically newcomers, they must not isolate themselves. The approach involves being willing to learn about local wisdom, such as arts, customs, and culture from the Indigenous ethnic groups, as expressed:

"Although originally from Java, it is necessary to understand the customs of the local ethnic groups. For example, when the regent or deputy regent visits here, it is important to present the local culture of Serawai, such as a welcome dance. It would be inappropriate to showcase Javanese dance, as it would mean not respecting local wisdom" (P3).

One aspect that can be added from the interview data regarding the willingness to learn is the use of language for communication with other ethnic groups, as expressed: 'We, from the Javanese ethnic group, understand the language of the local people who are the majority ethnic group. We adjust the language used by the indigenous people when communicating'" (P1).

The Javanese ethnic group also demonstrates open-mindedness through willingness to appreciate the strengths of other ethnic groups, particularly regarding discipline, as indicated in the interview data: "The Serawai people are noted for their discipline... if there is a traditional event, it is held on time" (P4), and cohesion, as stated: "The Serawai people are cohesive... for example, if there is a communal event, they do not delay... they attend punctually" (P4).

Indicators of behavior such as willingness to learn, exchanging experiences, openness, and appreciation of the strengths of other ethnic groups characterize the open-mindedness present within the Javanese ethnic group, which facilitates ethnic integration. This dynamic creates a peaceful situation in a multi-ethnic society, as reflected in the interview data: "...we have blended with other ethnic groups... this allows for mutual communication... it has a positive impact... we can appreciate each other's existence... this process contributes to harmony and peace" (P2).

3.5 Flexibility

Indicators of flexibility are demonstrated through the Javanese ethnic group's ability to align with the cultures of other ethnic groups, as indicated by the interview data: "...willing to adapt to the local culture... to avoid violating the rules that have been communicated by the adat leader from the Serawai ethnic group, which has the largest population..." (P4).

The implementation of adaptation is evident in the consultation with the Serawai adat leader for each organized activity, as expressed: "For every event or activity organized by the Javanese community, we always seek advice from the adat leader... to ensure that we do not violate the norms of the local ethnic groups..." (P5). Another realization of the Javanese ethnic group's respect for other ethnic groups is demonstrated by: "The Javanese understand... when in Rome, do as the Romans do... we strive to be polite... we never cause trouble for them..." (P7).

Another aspect of flexibility demonstrated by the Javanese ethnic group is the people's respect for the customs of other ethnic groups, as indicated by the statement: "...different waters, different fish...different fields, different weeds...this means...wherever we live, we need to uphold the customs of the place we are residing in...Javanese...are willing to play a role in preserving the customs of the local ethnic groups..." (P2).

Flexibility is also demonstrated through finding commonalities related to the customs of other ethnic groups, as indicated by the interview data:

"...we can adjust by finding commonalities that exist...for example, the indigenous ethnic group carries weapons as part of their attire...Javanese here also carry weapons for farming...we and they have in common the carrying of weapons, although the functions are different..."(P4).

Descriptions such as aligning with local customs, upholding traditions, and finding commonalities are characteristics of flexibility that enable the Javanese to live peacefully alongside different ethnic groups in a multicultural society. As stated, "...we can live side by side with the indigenous ethnic groups" (P6).

4. Discussion

Based on the research findings, the development of multicultural personality among the Javanese, as a minority ethnic group, plays a crucial role in establishing harmonious relationships with a multi-ethnic society, such as the Serawai ethnic group, which is the majority and indigenous, as well as other ethnic groups like the Balinese and Malays. More specifically, the study identifies cultural empathy and emotional stability as critical themes contributing to the psychological dynamics of the Javanese in fostering peace within a multicultural community. The psychological dynamics of the Javanese multicultural personality are demonstrated by cultural empathy through their willingness to attend traditional ceremonies organized by other ethnic groups and efforts to avoid actions that could offend the local community, predominantly Serawai. Additionally, emotional stability is developed through maintaining a calm demeanor in resolving conflicts with different ethnic groups, which is more effective in maintaining peace.

Analysis of other vital themes within the Javanese multicultural personality, such as social initiative, open-mindedness, and flexibility, reveals that these aspects are crucial for fostering a multicultural personality that promotes peaceful coexistence among various ethnic groups. Social initiative was demonstrated through proactive steps taken by the Javanese, such as coordinating with local leaders, forming joint committees to create peace, and fostering brotherhood in a multi-ethnic society. Open-mindedness includes a willingness to learn, adherence to local cultural practices, exchanging experiences, and engaging in discussions, all of which encourage the Javanese to understand ethnic groups different from themselves. Flexibility was shown by the ability of the Javanese, as newcomers, to adapt to local cultural norms, maintain politeness, and uphold traditions, thereby enhancing integration and unity. These key themes collectively contribute to tolerance, respect, and cooperation exhibited by the Javanese, benefiting the development of a harmonious and peaceful life with other ethnic groups such as the Serawai, Balinese, and Malays, thus shaping a multi-ethnic community.

These findings underscore the importance of understanding and respecting cultural differences to build a cohesive and harmonious community within a multi-ethnic environment. Hence, the research recommends a framework, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Multicultural Personality for preventive efforts in achieving peace framework

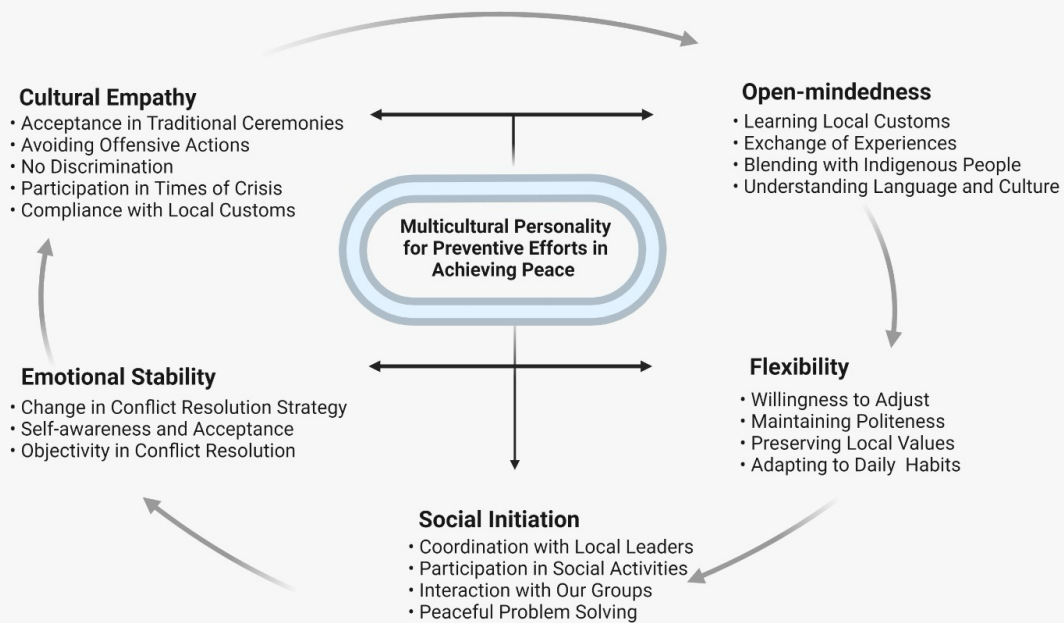


Figure 2. Multicultural personality for preventive efforts in achieving peace framework

4.1 Cultural empathy

Based on the data analysis, cultural empathy is a crucial aspect of developing multicultural personality within the minority community of the Javanese and as immigrants, as it helps foster harmony within a multi-ethnic society. The research findings on cultural empathy can be outlined as follows: the Javanese community is willing to participate in traditional ceremonies organized by other ethnic groups. Their participation in these ceremonies is based on their past experiences, such as when Javanese held their traditional ceremonies, such as weddings, where the presence of guests according to the plan brought them joy. Findings regarding cultural empathy contribute to multicultural personality and peace between the Javanese and the Serawai ethnic groups. Theoretically, empathy is explained as an individual's ability to feel what others are experiencing (Cuff et al., 2016). This ability benefits understanding and appreciating differences between ethnic communities without hindering mutual respect and understanding of others' desires (Guthridge & Giummarra, 2021; Liew & Fadil Azim, 2022).

Understanding acceptable and unacceptable behavior according to the social norms of other ethnic groups is another way that cultural empathy fosters harmony in a growing multi-ethnic society (Jami & Walker, 2022). For the local Serawai people, the term *bathok* is considered a harsh and insulting term that can hurt feelings. To prevent offending the Serawai ethnic group, the Javanese have chosen to refrain from using the term *bathok*.

Further findings support the idea that cultural empathy can promote peace through ethnic integration. The ability to integrate significantly contributes to preventing discrimination and bullying (Kapikiran, 2023; Schultze-Krumbholz et al., 2020; Vanman, 2016). This is evident in the

Javanese's ability to integrate, which helps build harmony with the Serawai ethnic group, the majority group. The evidence for this is the absence of discrimination and bullying against the Javanese by the Serawai.

Further findings related to cultural empathy include the Javanese community's willingness to help those from the Serawai and other ethnic groups affected by misfortunes. The ability to empathize with others' suffering motivates the Javanese to voluntarily assist Serawai and surrounding ethnic groups in their time of need. This willingness to help is driven by their own experiences of hardship, which enhances their ability to empathize with the suffering of others (Ferguson et al., 2021).

4.2 Emotional stability

Based on the data analysis, emotional stability is a component in developing a multicultural personality. Emotional stability contributes to building a multicultural identity by learning from experiences, where resolving issues with anger only exacerbates conflicts with other ethnic groups. This experience led to a change in strategy towards problem-solving by maintaining calmness. Such calmness fosters objectivity in addressing issues (George & Dane, 2016). This strategic change has proven effective in preventing further escalation of problems when conflicts arise between the Javanese and Serawai or other ethnic groups, fostering a harmonious environment.

Emotional stability develops effectively due to the absence of personal interests, awareness of one's position as an outsider, willingness to avoid being highlighted, efforts to not elevate oneself, avoiding the belief of being the most capable, and maintaining openness during conflicts to avoid exacerbating issues and seeking the best solutions. These indicators contribute to the Javanese maintaining calm when facing differing interests with other ethnic groups. This calmness facilitates rational decision-making, leading to the best possible solutions (Brown, 2011), and helps maintain peace within a multi-ethnic society.

The ability to maintain emotional stability, which is useful for generating effective solutions to address differences, positively impacts the creation of unity and tolerance among different ethnic groups. The ability to uphold unity and tolerance is a psychological potential for resolving various issues with clarity. Psychological skills in managing oneself to remain clear-headed when facing problems arising from cultural differences can lead to effective resolutions (Korol, 2018).

4.3 Social initiative

The social initiative, as part of multicultural personality aspects, can be described as the initiative to coordinate with leaders from other ethnic groups to maintain peace during various activities involving large gatherings, forming joint committees to ensure harmony, and helping the success of residents in organizing traditional ceremonies selflessly. Indicators of social initiative are effectively realized as manifestations of altruism, which involves providing help without expecting anything in return (Munroe, 2018). When this altruism is voluntarily and maximally contributed, it leads to high appreciation from other ethnic groups, which positively impacts the acceptance of the Javanese ethnic group, thereby contributing to the development of harmonious relations among ethnic groups in a multicultural society.

Another analysis related to social initiative is that community members, as peacekeepers, frequently interact with individuals from different ethnic out-groups. This enables intense communication—inter-group interactions foster cooperation (Kauff et al., 2021; Nomikos, 2022). Additionally, the indicator of social initiative contributing to the development of multicultural personality includes humility in arranging meetings between traditional leaders to foster mutual understanding between different ethnic groups, thereby promoting unity in a multicultural society. Furthermore, village government officials and traditional leaders from the Javanese community are taking the initiative to meet with Serawai, Balinese, or Malay ethnic groups to resolve cultural differences and demonstrate the effectiveness of overcoming prejudice. This initiative to engage with leaders from other ethnic groups is part of cultural competence (Rullo et al., 2022) as a preventive measure to ensure peaceful interactions in a heterogeneous community.

Various indicators of social initiative demonstrate that having a multicultural personality is beneficial in creating harmonious conditions when two ethnic communities coexist. This peace is well-maintained because the immigrant ethnic group actively participates in local activities, performs assigned tasks to the best of their ability, and strives to maintain intensive communication for various matters. The positive impact of these behavioral indicators manifests in assertiveness, which can foster tolerance (Lee & Ciftci, 2014; Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2016) and play a role in preventing conflicts, thereby ensuring that peace is well-maintained.

4.4 *Open-mindedness*

Open-mindedness (Riggs, 2010) is a component of multicultural personality that contributes to peace between two different ethnicities living together in a multicultural society. This is evidenced by the willingness to learn (Al-Abrow et al., 2023) from the leaders of other ethnic groups about local rules, ethics, and behaviors aligned with local culture. The willingness to learn about local customs results in understanding norms concerning what is allowed and prohibited, which is aligned with other ethnic traditions. This understanding helps the Javanese community avoid violating rules, norms, and cultures established in the out-group, such as the indigenous Serawai community.

Another aspect of open-mindedness involves creating opportunities for exchanging experiences with different ethnicities. As newcomers, it is crucial not to be insular but instead to be willing to learn about local wisdom, such as local arts, customs, and culture from indigenous residents. The willingness to learn about the strengths of the Indigenous community, particularly regarding discipline and cohesion, is significant. Frequent discussions between newcomers and indigenous people of different ethnicities facilitate integration, allowing for effective communication and mutual understanding of languages used by different communities. This dynamic interaction fosters intercultural competence, reduces ethnocentrism, and enhances the ability to adapt to other cultures, all contributing to the achievement of peace in a multicultural society (Karen & van Oudenhoven, 2013; Kashima et al., 2017; Tagle, 2021).

4.5 Flexibility

As a component contributing to developing a multicultural personality, flexibility can be described as the willingness to align with and avoid violating local cultural norms. Another aspect of flexibility is maintaining politeness by adapting to indigenous residents. This value prevents actions that violate norms, positively affecting harmony with indigenous people despite ethnic differences. Furthermore, flexibility is demonstrated through adherence to local customs, respecting local wisdom, and adapting to various cultural practices of different ethnic groups. These indicators of flexibility help reduce biases in group interactions (Dovidio et al., 2017), serving as a preventive measure for conflicts between ethnic groups.

Indicators of flexibility that contribute to developing a multicultural personality significantly support the dynamics of cultural competence, tolerance, and trust in interactions among different ethnic groups. These dynamics contribute substantially to the growth of peace in a heterogeneous community composed of various ethnicities (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015; Vasiljevic & Crisp, 2013; Wu & Bodigerel-koehler, 2013).

5. Conclusion

The research emphasizes the significance of developing a multicultural personality within the Javanese ethnic community, as a minority and immigrant group, to promote harmonious relations with the Serawai ethnic community, the majority, and the indigenous group. The Javanese community also works to maintain positive relationships with the Malay and Balinese ethnic groups, as well as other minorities and immigrants. The study identifies specific components of a multicultural personality, including cultural empathy, emotional stability, social initiative, open-mindedness, and flexibility. These aspects collectively contribute to preventing ethnic conflicts and promoting peace in a multicultural society. Cultural empathy involves participating in cultural events, avoiding offensive actions, and understanding cultural differences. Emotional stability is shown through maintaining calmness and objectivity, which helps prevent conflicts and maintain peace in a diverse community. The analysis suggests that social initiative involves proactive interactions by coordinating with local leaders to maintain peace and promote unity. Open-mindedness involves being willing to learn, respect local cultural practices, sharing experiences, and engaging in discussions to foster mutual understanding between different ethnic groups. Flexibility is shown in the ability of migrant residents to adapt to local cultural norms, maintain politeness, and uphold traditions, which enhances integration and cohesion among ethnic groups. These findings underscore the importance of these aspects in building a cohesive and harmonious community to establish peace in a multicultural environment composed of diverse ethnicities.

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