

THE DYNAMICS OF SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT SDN 007 LONG MESANGAT

Nurngaini^{1a*}, Muhammad Iqbal Birsyada^{2b}

¹² Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta

^aE-mail: nurngaini636@gmail.com

^bE-mail: iqbal@upy.ac.id

(*) Corresponding Author
nurngaini636@gmail.com

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 20-01-2026

Revised : 07-02-2026

Accepted : 15-04-2026

KEYWORDS

school-community relations;
cultural diversity

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the dynamics of the relationship between the school and the community in the context of cultural diversity at SDN 007 Long Mesangat. This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data collection techniques included observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, involving the school principal, teachers, parents, and community leaders as research subjects. The results indicate that the relationship between the school and the community has not been functioning optimally, as evidenced by low community participation in school activities and a lack of communication and cooperation between the two parties. The main factors influencing this condition are economic factors, low awareness of the importance of education, time constraints, and differences in cultural backgrounds. The impact of this weak relationship is evident in the lack of support for students' learning processes and the sub-optimal implementation of school programs. Therefore, strategic efforts are needed to enhance cooperation between the school and the community through flexible, educational, and locally-based cultural approaches to support educational success.

This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license.



INTRODUCTION

Basic education is the cornerstone of human resource development; therefore, its success depends not only on schools as formal institutions but also on community involvement as the broader social environment. In the context of modern education, the relationship between schools and the community is viewed as an interconnected and inseparable system. Recent research indicates that schools and the community share a close relationship, as both contribute to the educational process and the development of students (Putri et al., 2023). The relationship between schools and the community plays a crucial role in educational management, as the success of an educational institution is also significantly influenced by the effectiveness of its public relations efforts (Hakim, 2019). Furthermore, the relationship between schools and the community constitutes a form of communication and collaboration aimed at enhancing public awareness and participation in supporting education (Mulditasari et al., 2023). This indicates that the quality of education depends not only on classroom learning processes but also on the social support provided by the community environment. Dewantara (2013) stated that education is a shared responsibility among families, schools,

and the community. These three environments are known as the Tri Pusat Pendidikan (Three Centers of Education), which mutually influence student development.

In practice, the relationship between schools and the community is not always static but is dynamic and influenced by various factors such as communication, participation, and community trust in the school. According to recent studies on school-community relationship management, this relationship is a collaborative process systematically designed through communication, coordination, and sustainable partnerships (Wilder, 2023). Furthermore, recent research also confirms that the success of school-community relationships can be measured by the level of community participation, the quality of communication, and their impact on school development (Hutagalung et al., 2025). Thus, the dynamics of this relationship are a crucial aspect that requires in-depth examination as they directly influence the effectiveness of educational delivery.

Schools, as formal institutions, serve not only as venues for the transfer of knowledge but also as spaces for social interaction that bring together diverse cultural backgrounds, values, and norms. In the context of Indonesia's diverse society, the relationship between schools and the community becomes increasingly complex due to cultural diversity, which influences patterns of interaction, communication, and participation in educational delivery. According to (Wirianty, 2022), multicultural education emerges as a response to the reality of diversity, which demands an attitude of mutual respect and acceptance of differences within the educational environment. Meanwhile, according to Birsyada (2015), school culture is formed through the interactions of the school community, reflecting the values, customs, and identity of the educational institution. This is reinforced by Putri et al. (2024), who state that multicultural education emphasizes the importance of fostering a tolerant, mutually respectful, and inclusive society in a pluralistic context, and involves synergy between schools, families, and the community as an integrated educational system. Furthermore, Setiani (2025) asserts that cultural diversity within the school environment can become a source of social conflict if not managed properly; therefore, schools must play an active role in fostering harmonious relationships with the community through a multicultural approach.

However, in reality, various challenges persist, such as low community participation, a lack of effective communication, and differing perceptions between schools and the community. These conditions indicate that the established relationships are not yet optimal and require a more in-depth study to understand the dynamics at play. Joyce L. Epstein argues that the involvement of families and the community in education can enhance the quality of learning and the development of students. From another perspective, Azzahra et al. (2023) explain that multicultural education serves as a means to foster unity in diversity by instilling values of tolerance, justice, and respect for cultural differences. Additionally, integrating local culture into learning can enhance students' understanding and the relevance of the material (Birsyada et al., 2024)

Based on these various perspectives, it is clear that the relationship between schools and the community in the context of cultural diversity is a crucial factor determining the success of the educational process. As an elementary school situated within a community with a diverse cultural background, SDN 007 Long Mesangat naturally exhibits unique dynamics in the relationship between the school and the community. Differences in values, customs, and the community's perspectives on education have the potential to influence the patterns of interaction and cooperation that develop. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed to understand how these relational dynamics are formed, interpreted, and carried out in daily life. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate for this study because it can deeply explore the experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by the actors involved, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of school-community relations within the context of cultural diversity at SDN 007 Long Mesangat.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between schools and the community in the context of cultural diversity, which cannot be measured quantitatively but must be examined through the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of the research subjects (Miles et al., 2019). According to Creswell (2021),

qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meanings derived from social or humanitarian issues, including interactions within educational settings. This study is a case study, which focuses in-depth on a specific case—in this instance, the relationship between the school and the community at SDN 007 Long Mesangat. Case studies allow researchers to obtain a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under study within a real-world context. This aligns with the view of Yin (2020), who states that case studies are used to understand contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, especially when the boundary between the phenomenon and its context is not clearly defined.

Research Location and Timeframe

This study was conducted at SDN 007 Long Mesangat, which was selected because it features a community with diverse cultural backgrounds, making it relevant to the research focus. The research was conducted from January 10 to April 30, 2026. The subjects of this study are the parties involved in the relationship between the school and the community, namely: the principal, teachers, parents of students, community leaders, and students (as supporting informants).

Data Collection Techniques

Observation

Conducted to directly observe interactions between the school and the community as well as the social dynamics occurring within the school environment. The observation in this study was conducted to directly observe interactions between school representatives and the community, as well as the social dynamics developing within a school environment characterized by diverse cultural backgrounds. The observation was carried out using a qualitative approach, specifically a moderate-participatory method, where the researcher was involved to a limited extent without disrupting the natural activities of the research subjects.

The observation process began with a preparation phase, during which the researcher developed an observation guide outlining the aspects to be observed, such as the forms of communication between teachers and parents, community involvement in school activities, responses to cultural differences, and patterns of interaction among school community members (teachers, students, and the community). Additionally, the researcher determines the appropriate time and situations for conducting observations, such as during teaching and learning activities, school meetings, religious activities, and socio-cultural events.

Next, during the observation implementation phase, the researcher is physically present at SDN 007 Long Mesangat to observe various activities reflecting the relationship between the school and the community. The researcher systematically documented various phenomena, such as: Forms of cooperation between the school and parents, Community participation in school activities, Social interactions among individuals with different cultural backgrounds, Attitudes of tolerance, adaptation, or potential conflicts arising from cultural diversity. Observations were conducted repeatedly over a specific period to ensure the researcher obtained in-depth and accurate data regarding the dynamics at play. During this process, the researcher uses field notes to record events, important conversations, and social situations relevant to the research focus. In the documentation phase, observation results are compiled into detailed narrative descriptions. The researcher also supports observational data with documentation such as photos or activity recordings to strengthen data validity.

The final stage is reflection and preliminary analysis, during which researchers begin to identify patterns of interaction, forms of social relations, and the dynamics emerging in the relationship between the school and the community. These observation results then serve as the basis for further data exploration through other techniques such as interviews and documentation. Through a systematic and ongoing observation process, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of the school-community relationship within the context of cultural diversity at SDN 007 Long Mesangat.

Interviews

Conducted with informants to gather information regarding their experiences, perceptions, and the nature of the relationships that exist. The interviews are semi-structured to ensure that the data collected is more flexible and in-depth. At this stage, the researcher takes several initial steps: Selecting informants through purposive sampling

(school principals, teachers, parents, community leaders) who are considered to understand the relationship between the school and the community. Developing an interview guide containing a list of flexible open-ended questions. Preparing supporting materials, such as a recording device, a notebook, and an informant identification sheet. Obtaining research permission from the school and the informants. Establishing an initial understanding of the context, such as the social conditions and cultural diversity within the school environment.

Interview Implementation Phase

Interviews are conducted in person and flexibly following these steps: Building Rapport The researcher introduces themselves and explains the research objectives. Ensuring informants feel comfortable to share information openly. Guaranteeing the confidentiality of the data provided. During the Q&A, the researcher asks questions according to the guidelines but remains flexible in following the flow of the conversation. Using open-ended questions to allow informants to explain their experiences and perspectives in depth. Conducting probing (delving deeper) with follow-up questions to explore three main aspects: Experience (school–community interactions), Perception (views on cultural diversity), and forms of relationship (cooperation, participation, support).

Data recording is conducted by recording the interview (with the informant’s permission). Note key points, expressions, and situations during the interview. Observe nonverbal language. At the closing stage, the researcher briefly summarizes the interview findings for the informant. Provide the informant an opportunity to add information. Express gratitude for the informant’s participation.

Data Processing Stage

After the interview is complete, the following steps are taken: 1) Transcription of data, which involves converting the recorded audio into written text. Data reduction: selecting important information relevant to the research focus. Categorization: grouping data based on themes (experiences, perceptions, relationships). Data verification: conducting a double-check (member check) if necessary. Collecting data in the form of school documents related to collaborations or activities with the external community, activity archives, photos of activities related to the research process, as well as other records relevant to the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted at SDN 007 Long Mesangat, located in a community with a lower-middle socioeconomic background and cultural diversity. Most community members work as laborers, farmers, day laborers, and in the informal sector, which requires long working hours and even overtime. These conditions affect community involvement, particularly that of parents, in educational activities at the school. Additionally, the cultural diversity within the community also influences patterns of social interaction, including in establishing relationships with the school. Differences in values, customs, and ways of thinking help shape the dynamics of the relationship between the school and the community.

Nature of the School-Community Relationship

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the relationship between the school and the community at SDN 007 Long Mesangat is still considered sub-optimal. This is evident from: low parental attendance at school activities such as parent-teacher meetings, minimal community participation in school programs, a lack of active communication between the school and parents, and the fact that most parents tend to delegate full responsibility for their children’s education to the school without actively engaging themselves. According to Muhammad Iqbal Birsyada & Utami (2024), social dynamics are a process of social construction formed through community interaction, cultural values, and collective experiences that unfold dialectical through processes of externalization, objectification, and internalization. These dynamics are adaptive to changing times, are passed down through local culture, and play a role in fostering solidarity and social integration within society. Bronfenbrenner (1979), through his Ecological Systems Theory, states that children’s development is influenced by interactions between family, school, and the social environment. A lack of communication between schools and parents can hinder children’s academic and social development because the educational environment is not mutually supportive

Research findings indicate that several key factors contribute to the weak relationship between schools and the community, namely: 1) Economic Factors: The majority of the community prioritizes work to meet basic living needs. Many parents work from morning until night, often including overtime, leaving them with no time to participate in their children's school activities. 2) Low Educational Awareness: Some members of the community do not view education as a top priority. They tend to assume that the school is the sole party responsible for their children's education. 3) Time and Energy Constraints: High work demands leave parents exhausted, leaving them without the energy to optimally monitor their children's educational progress. 4) Sociocultural Factors: Cultural diversity leads to differing perspectives on education and the role of parents in supporting their children's learning process.

This lack of harmonious relations results in insufficient parental support for children's learning activities, low student motivation, hindered school programs requiring community participation, and a lack of parental oversight over children's academic progress.

DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the dynamics of the relationship between the school and the community at SDN 007 Long Mesangat are significantly influenced by the community's socioeconomic conditions. This finding aligns with Creswell (2021) perspective, which states that social phenomena in education must be understood within the context of the community's environment and living conditions. Economic factors are the primary cause of low community involvement in education. Parents prioritize meeting economic needs over engaging in their children's education. This aligns with the theory that family economic conditions influence the level of parental participation in education.

Additionally, low educational awareness indicates that outdated paradigms persist in society, viewing education as solely the school's responsibility. However, in modern educational concepts, collaboration between schools and the community is the key to successful learning. This aligns with Epstein (2019), emphasis on the importance of parental involvement in enhancing student learning outcomes. Cultural diversity also influences the dynamics of these relationships.

Furthermore, low educational awareness indicates that an outdated paradigm persists in society, one that views education as the sole responsibility of schools. In fact, in modern educational theory, collaboration between schools and the community is key to successful learning. This aligns with the ideas of Joyce Epstein, who emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in enhancing student learning outcomes. Cultural diversity also plays a role in shaping the dynamics of these relationships. Differences in values and mindsets lead to variations in the level of concern for education. In this context, schools are required to develop an inclusive and adaptive approach to community conditions. This aligns with the concept of multicultural education, which emphasizes the importance of valuing diversity in the educational process.

The impact of weak school-community relations is evident in the low level of support for students, both academically and non-academically. A lack of parental attention can reduce students' motivation to learn, thereby affecting their academic outcomes. Djamarah (2014), explains that parental attention in the form of supervision, guidance, and motivation is essential for fostering children's enthusiasm for learning. Children who receive insufficient attention tend to have low learning motivation and declining academic performance. This indicates that educational success is not determined solely by the school but also by the active role of families and the community. Thus, the dynamics of the school-community relationship at SDN 007 Long Mesangat suggest that efforts to enhance more effective collaboration are still needed. Schools need to develop more flexible communication strategies, such as adjusting activity schedules to accommodate parents' circumstances, and educating the community on the importance of their involvement in their children's education.

Implications of the Research Findings

The findings of this study imply that schools need to improve their engagement with the community through more flexible and contextually appropriate programs. Additionally, parents require education on the importance of their role in their children's education. Pidarta (2011) explains that the relationship between schools and the

community is a two-way communication process between schools and the community to enhance community understanding, support, and participation in education. Schools need to adopt approaches aligned with the local community's socio-cultural conditions. Collaboration among schools, the community, and the government is necessary to raise educational awareness. A locally-based cultural approach can be utilized to strengthen social relations

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the dynamics of the relationship between the school and the community at SDN 007 Long Mesangat, within the context of cultural diversity, have not yet functioned optimally. This is evidenced by the low level of community participation, particularly among parents, in school activities, as well as the limited communication and cooperation between the two parties. The primary factor influencing these weak relationships is the community's economic conditions, where most parents prioritize work to meet basic living needs. Consequently, attention to their children's education is not maximized. Additionally, low awareness of the importance of education, limited time and energy, and cultural background differences also influence the patterns of interaction between the school and the community.

The impact of these conditions is evident in the lack of support for students' learning processes, low parental involvement, and the suboptimal implementation of school programs that require community participation. Therefore, strategic efforts are needed from the school to build more effective communication, raise community awareness about the importance of education, and develop an adaptive approach to the community's socioeconomic and cultural conditions.

REFERENCES

- Azzahra, F., Asbari, M., & Ariani, D. (2023). Pendidikan multikultural dalam membangun nilai toleransi dan inklusivitas. *Jurnal Pendidikan Nusantara*, 5(3), 95–108.
- Birsyada, M. I. (2015). Pengembangan strategi pembelajaran IPS sejarah berbasis critical pedagogy di sekolah. *Sejarah Dan Budaya: Jurnal Sejarah, Budaya, Dan Pengajarannya*, 9(2), 200–216. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um020v9i22015p200-216>
- Birsyada, M. I., Saefudin, A., Wibowo, B. A., & Dzulkurnain, M. I. (2024). Fostering historical thinking and reasoning through hybrid dialogue: Integrating Javanese philosophy into history education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 23(12), 192–215. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.12.11>
- Birsyada, M. I., & Utami, N. W. (2024). Social construction of kentongan for disaster risk reduction in highland Java and its potential for educational tool. *Heliyon*, 10, e30081. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e30081>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Harvard University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2021). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dewantara, K. H. (2013). *Pemikiran, Konsepsi, Keteladanan, Sikap Merdeka*. UST Press.
- Djamarah, S. B. (2014). *Pola Asuh Orang Tua dan Komunikasi dalam Keluarga*. Rineka Cipta.
- Epstein, J. L. (2019). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Hakim, L. (2019). Peran hubungan masyarakat (humas) dalam pengelolaan lembaga pendidikan. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 7(1), 45–56.
- Hutagalung, R., Siregar, M., & Nababan, T. (2025). Manajemen hubungan sekolah dan masyarakat dalam meningkatkan partisipasi pendidikan. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Indonesia*, 13(1), 45–58.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

- Mulditasari, F., Rahmawati, N., & Prasetyo, B. (2023). Komunikasi dan kerja sama sekolah dengan masyarakat dalam meningkatkan partisipasi pendidikan. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 11(1), 67–78.
- Pidarta, M. (2011). *Manajemen Pendidikan Indonesia*. Rineka Cipta.
- Putri, A., Sari, R., & Nugroho, D. (2023). Hubungan sekolah dan masyarakat dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan peserta didik. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 12(2), 123–134.
- Putri, A., Sari, R., & Nugroho, D. (2024). Implementasi pendidikan multikultural dalam membangun toleransi di lingkungan sekolah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan*, 9(2), 210–222.
- Setiani, D. (2025). Pengelolaan keberagaman budaya dalam mencegah konflik sosial di sekolah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial*, 11(1), 30–42.
- Wilder, S. (2023). School–community relationships and student outcomes: A systematic review. *Educational Research Review*, 38, 100–115.
- Wirianty. (2022). Pendidikan multikultural sebagai respons terhadap keberagaman dalam lingkungan pendidikan. *Jurnal Adabiyah*, 22(2), 145–156.
- Yin, R. K. (2020). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.