The Malaysian Experience in Developing National Identity, Multicultural Tolerance and Understanding through Teaching Curricula: Lessons Learned and Possible Applications in the Jordanian Context

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Introduction

Malaysia is a federal constitutional monarch located in the heart of Southeast Asia. It covers an area of 329,847 square kilometers and the total population is over 28.3 million. It has about 5,407,865 students and about 405,716 teachers, with an illiteracy rate of about 5%. Ninety nine percent of children between the ages of seven and twelve are enrolled in schools nationwide. This can be attributed to the provision of proper infrastructure which lead to easier accessibility in rural and remote areas. A total of approximately 15 billion US dollars (about 21% of the total budget allocation) has been allocated for the expenditure on education and training development. During the 18th century, Malaysia became subject to the British Empire and achieved independence in 1957. After Malaysia's independence, the ruling party decided that *Bahasa Malay* was to be the main medium of instruction in all national schools. This was done with the belief that this would promote national unity and a Malaysian identity (Andaya and Andaya,1984).

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Malaysia was quite homogenous as far as the demographic distribution was concerned. It was a singular society of Malay, the indigenous people. The history of ethnic pluralism began with the British who colonized the country in 1726, and their "divide and conquer" policy laid the foundation for communal division in Malaysia. Under colonial rule, from 1874 – 1957, primary and secondary school education was almost entirely ethnically segregated (Abd Rashid, 2002). During the British colonial rule, they encouraged migration, especially from China and India and changed the nature of their ethnically homogeneous society to a more pluralistic society (Santhiram, 1990).   In the decades following Malaysia's independence, the government focused on nation-building and developing a national system of education (Watson, 1980). The government funded education system was centralized and the Ministry of Education established the national curriculum to be used in all state schools.

There are three main races in Malaysia: The Malays (53.3%), who are Muslims and form the majority in the country; while the other two main racial groups are the Chinese (26.0%), who generally follow Buddhism and Confucianism, and the Indians (7.7%), who mostly follow Hinduism. The Chinese community, for example, uses a number of dialects including Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese and Mandarin. For the Indian society, the language spoken is Tamil, and for the Malay, the language spoken is *Bahasa Malayu* (Hassan, 2005) These three groups follow different cultures and traditions, and commonly profess different religions. They have different codes of dress, customs, value systems and beliefs (Jamil & Abd. Razak,2010). Although each of these ethnic groups has its own culture, and has vigorously maintained its traditions and community structures, these cultures have also blended together to create Malaysia's contemporary and uniquely diverse heritage. Other groups (13%) that make up the population include the Eurasians and indigenous groups in the Sabah and Sarawak regions like the Kadazan, Dusunus, Muruts, Ibans, Bidayauhus, penans, just to name a few (Ishak, 2009).

Islam is the religion about 60.4% of the total population, Buddhism 19.2%, Christianity 9.1%, Hinduism 6.3%, others 5.0%. Language varies widely from Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil, to Kadazan, Murut and Aboriginal. Many nations with a less complex mix of people and cultures have taken much longer to develop a national character. As a matter of fact, Malaysia is one of the world's most peaceful and politically stable countries. It is a plural society with people of many faiths and races living in harmony even as each group maintains its traditional culture. Until schooling age, most Malaysian children have only brief encounters with members of an ethnic group other than their own. Education serves as a common platform upon which all ethnic groups can come together and interact with each other in order to achieve a significant degree of understanding and tolerance (Keow, 2008).

At present, the Jordanian society, like other societies, is witnessing an accelerated development in the various aspects of life, which calls for the educational development to be a permanent practice affected by such developments. Therefore, reviewing of the curriculum with the aim of developing and benefiting from the experiences of others is a necessity when new social needs arise from the cultural, social, economic and technological changes in the society. Al-jreibee (2008) believes that there is a need to work on building a Jordanian national identity based on the social, cultural and political heritage produced by all social categories that form the Jordanian social structure which has accumulated over the years, then integrating it to the utmost benefit of the Jordanian people. The Ministry of Education in Jordan has paid attention to the subject of national and civic education through the educational development plans which focused on preparing qualified teachers to play a leading role in the teaching process. Despite this attention, Al-zuoud and Al- khawaldeh (2007) confirm that the educational outputs in respect to a student's knowledge and behavior towards his / her country and society, are still unsatisfactory, and therefore, the failure of the curricula to highlight the Jordanian national identity, and strive to have it represented among the youth, is considered responsible for the emergence of some negative phenomena, especially amongst the youth, and contradicts the national identity aspired by the Jordanians. Every now and then the phenomenon of campus violence emerges probably for tribal reasons or for regional and geographical reasons (southern and northern). There is also a common belief among many citizens in the existence of discrimination on basis of the origin constituting the fabric of the Jordan society (east Jordanians, west Jordanians). All of this is in conflict with the renewable and open concept of the national identity.

Review of Literature

The literature covers ways where education can design, develop and improve effects to spread the message of peace and ultimately bring about a country in which people consciously recognize the values of non-violence and respect for human rights. Studies that addressed the concepts of national identity and multicultural tolerance and understanding have contributed to shedding light on the various and miscellaneous aspects of these issues.

Barone (2004) examined the norm conformity and value perceptions of Malaysian secondary school students. To measure adherence to value – based social norms, a value – behavior questionnaire was administered to approximately 400 Malaysian adolescents. The results showed a self – reported high degree of conformity to social norms. The research, also, showed that the implicit value of respect, justice and fairness were central in Malaysian students' relationships with their teachers.

Seman, et al. (2011) conducted a study using a quasi experiment to determine the effects of teaching and learning History with regards to national integration in the multicultural society of Malaysia. The respondents for this study were multicultural students of the Malay, Chinese and Indian origins from two different schools in Selanger, Malaysia. The findings showed a significant difference between the experiment group and the control group for every aspect that was studied including gender and race. The cultural understandings, racial tolerance and Malaysian identity perspectives showed a high correlation with national integration. The implication of the study revealed that a multicultural based approach to history in schools was positively accepted by multiracial students. Thus, it could be adopted as a teaching model to promote unity among this multiracial society and in the long run to achieve the "One Malaysia" vision.

Balakrishnan (2009) believes that there is a gap between what is in the syllabus and how the students approach real –life moral dilemmas, so in her study, she discussed issues about how students of Moral Education (ME) in Malaysia want to be included, heard, and be part of a syllabus that touches their mind, heart and action. The study aims to focus on students' voices through participatory action research. That is, to involve students of ME in active communication and discussion to resolve the real life dilemmas they face them in their daily lives. She concludes that the voices of students can be heard to enable ME to develop as a dynamic and meaningful subject in secondary schools in Malaysia.

Brown (2007) examined the politics and practices of education in Malaysia within the context of ethnicity and nation – building. He argues that the Malaysian regime has sought to resolve the tensions between nation– building and ethnicity through a didactic and pedagogical approach to educational development, which promotes a concept of nationhood. Al–Louzi & Farhan (2009) investigate the attitudes of undergraduate students at the University of Jordan towards the causes and consequences of violence and they proposed solutions to curb this phenomenon. Data was gathered from a sample of 629 male and female students through a questionnaire.

The findings showed that the most common causes of students' violence on campus included tribal fanaticism, masculinity, lack of fear of punishment, inadequate socialization and poor investing of free time. The proposed solutions to reduce violence include launching an awareness campaigns among students to respect the concept of national unity, increasing extracurricular activities, publicizing the identity of the violent students, and punishment which will deter future brawls. They added that these incidents in schools and universities were an indicator that the kingdom's education system was not helping students to live in peace and harmony with each other.

Education in Malaysia

Education is a deliberate attempt to construct human beings who will participate in society as productive citizens. It is the most contested terrain in any society, and it is a battlefield or a conveyer belt for the creation of human beings. Malaysia has succeeded in investing education in a way that made it a model to be followed for peaceful coexistence and acceptance of multiculturalism and multi-sectarianism, based on its educational curricula (Al-Anbouri, 2009). As stated in the broad lines of the national and civic curricula in Malaysia, the curricula are aspiring to achieve the greatest degree of unity among members of the community, maintain the democratic way of life, promote social justice and guarantee the freedom of religious, cultural beliefs and diverse traditions of the Malaysian society (Al- saleh, 1999).

The mission of the Ministry of Education in Malaysia is to produce world class education and ensure the development of the individual's potentials and to fulfill the nation's aspirations. Education is fundamental to the inculcation of values and ethics which ultimately shape the nation's character, growth and social cohesion. The seeds of national unity must be sown among the young, and they must be taught and convinced of the benefits of peaceful co-existence. Schools are considered as next in importance to the home for the inculcation of moral values in order to raise disciplined and well-mannered citizens. Unity must be imbued at an early stage, as today's younger generation still have no prejudice against friends of different races, languages and religions. The philosophy of education should call for a different perspective of what a human being is and how to draw out the potentials in each and every one. This philosophy is translated into the school curriculum, which encourages the development of balanced, well-rounded, trained and skilled individuals.

Education should promote the development of inner peace in the minds of students so that they can establish more firmly the qualities of tolerance and compassion. It should, also, cultivate feelings of solidarity and equality at the national level. Formal education in Malaysia is overseen by two government ministries: the Ministry of Education *(Kementerian Pelajaran)* for matters up to the secondary level, and the Ministry of Higher Education *(Kementerian Pengajian Tingg)* for matters regarding tertiary education. Primary education is free and compulsory for children from all ethnic and language groups. Although education is the responsibility of the federal government, each state has an education department to help coordinate educational matters in their respective states. The education system is highly centralized, particularly for primary and secondary schools, with state and local governments having little say in the curricula or other major aspects of education.

Promotion from grade to grade is automatic. However, at the end of each level, students sit for common public examinations. Only primary education in Malaysia is mandated by law. All schools follow the national curriculum and use the Malay language *"Bahasa Malaysia"* as the medium of instruction along with their vernacular languages as a subject. It was the aim of the founding fathers of modern Malaysia to unite their ethnically diverse people through the education system. In fact, this was the underlying principle of the Razak Report (1956), which formed the basis of the Malaysian educational system. During school years, students build their own value-systems towards peace and non-violence. They learn to value peace and harmony, empathy, compassion, friendship and forgiveness. This was stated as the one of the major goals of education policy as follows:

> *To inculcate and nurture national consciousness through fostering common ideals, values, aspirations and loyalties in order to mould national unity and national identity in a multi-ethnic society.*

The cultivation of the spirit of citizenship is emphasized in a number of subjects. The textbooks and the nation are intimate with one another. Textbooks is one of the ways which represents the type of nation that is projected by the state. National education and unity became, in the government's own words: "the over-riding objective" of the education system (Ghee et al., 2009). The task of education is to devise ways to make it possible to avoid conflicts or resolve them peacefully by respecting the culture and spiritual values of each other.

For example, the students are taught the story of Ali (Malay name) and Ah chong (Chinese name) who help Raju (Indian name) with his school homework. In this story, values such as cultural and religious tolerance are emphasized. From the perspective of the Inter- group Contact Theory it was believed that continuous interactions among members of majority and minority groups would lead to improvement in relationships among them.

The desire of the government to ensure that education plays an important role of unifying and integrating the multiethnic population remains important in policy processes in education. Such policies have been to some extent successful in eliminating ethnic differentials. If education policy is not sensitive to the issue of social cohesion and does not incorporate the perspectives of key stakeholders, it can be divisive and alienating, contributing to injustice and violence (Shamsul, 2008). The education curriculum is the heart beat of the education system, and it can be part of the problem as well as part of the solution. Policies and practices within the education system need to be analyzed in terms of their potential to aggravate or ameliorate conflict among the different groups in society. Though groups may be unique in terms of their customs, values and behaviors, the ultimate goal is to develop a respect for their differences and a recognition that diversity makes communities intellectually richer and more interesting. Education is a vital device in Malaysia as the country needs a tool to integrate its multi religious and multiethnic population (Ismail and Hassan, 2009).

The past forty years in Malaysia were spent on nation-building and on enhancing national unity through the development of a unified education system, a national curriculum and the use of *Bahasa Malayu* , as the medium of instruction and communication. Since gaining independence in 1957, the Malaysian government has been experimenting with various ways of creating a national identity that would unite Malaysians of different ethnic and cultural background.

Mahathir Mohammad (former Prime Minster of Malaysia for 23 years) once noted *"Malaysians of all colors and creeds are free to practice and profess their customs, cultures and religious beliefs and yet feeling that they belong to one nation"* (Yong, 2004).

The notion of *"Bangsa Malaysia",* which means "one Malaysian race" introduced by Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in 1991 as part of his vision of 2020, aimed at bringing greater national integration among the various ethnic groups within the country. Schools encourage students of one race to make an effort to study and understand the other races, their cultures, beliefs, and religions. For example: the Indians must understand all about their Malay and Chinese fellow Malaysians, and the same applies to the Malays and Chinese. Teachers who address the differences and add them to the curriculum will succeed in creating a multicultural classroom that will advocate the educational goals of all students (Yusof, 2008).

Similarities between Jordan & Malaysia

The researcher's attention was drawn to the great similarities between Jordan and Malaysia in various aspects. On the Malaysian side, we find that the political system is a parliamentary monarchy. In terms of ethnicities, Malaysian people are made up of Malays, followed by the Chinese, then Indians and other various ethnicities. As for religion, Islam is considered the official religion of the country as the majority of the population are Muslims. On the Jordanian side, the government system is also based on the parliamentary monarchy. As for ethnicities, the majority of the Jordanian people are Arabs divided mainly into Jordanians of East Jordan origin and Jordanians of West Jordan origin "Palestinians", in addition to other small ethnicities such as the Circassians, Chechens and Kurds. As for religion, Islam is the official religion of Jordan, and the majority of the population are Muslims, then Christians. In fact, Jordan and Malaysia have a similar experience of unrest, as for Malaysia witnessed a violent unrest in 1969 between the Malay and the Chinese, Jordan went through a similar experience in 1970, in what became known as the Black September events.

New Trends in Malaysian Education

1- National Ideology *(Rukenegara)* **(RN)**

One of the initial reactions to the riots of 1969 was the formation of the national ideology or *Rukenegara* (the nation's ideology). The belief in God is the first statement of the National Ideology or *Rukunegara* which was formulated in 1970.   It has provided the direction for education, national unity, justice, liberty, diversity and progress. It declares that Malaysians are dedicated to achieve a greater unity of all its people, regardless of their ethnic origins or religion affiliations (Manickam, 2004). The principles of *Rukenegara* are: Faith in God, loyalty to king and country, upholding the constitution, the rule of law, and good behavior and morality.

2- The National Philosophy of Education (NPE) *(Falsafah Pendidikan Negara)*

The NPE was formulated in 1988, and regarded as a statement of vision for the Ministry of Education in the pursuit of educational excellence. It is the core of all educational programs and activities at all levels of schooling, from pre-school until tertiary education (Ismail et al. 2009).

It outlines all the terms, ideas, and principles related to education. It states that: *"Education in Malaysia is an on-going effects towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonic, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society, and the nation at large".*

3- The Vision School

The Vision School is a government initiative to produce a Malaysian race *(Bangsa Malaysia)* built on and the abolition of ethnic differences amongst its citizens (Manickam, 2004). Ethnic interaction can, among other things, promote a realistic sense of inter-ethnic integration. This is because "when groups work together toward common goals further opportunities are presented for developing and discovering similarities of interest and values. The vision school consists of three schools clustered in one common area that is the Malay School, the Chinese School and the Tamil School. Each school is given the autonomy to implement its own educational programs. The three schools share some common physical amenities, such as the canteen, playing fields, assembly areas and corridors. The aim is to bridge the gap amongst the different ethnic groups as well as to inculcate a love for the country and to nurture and sustain unity and tolerance. These three trends were landmarks in the fight against discrimination and misunderstanding. They have achieved the greatest degree of unity and social justice among members of the Malaysian community.

Four Main Subjects

To ensure that the Malaysian education system responds properly to the nation – building, unity and the development of the country, there were many curricula reviews and tremendous changes in education since independence in 1957.

The following four subjects are the core of social studies that played a major role in recognizing the values of non-violence and respect for all ethnicities, religions and cultures; and addressed the concepts of nation -building , national identity, tolerance and multiculturalism.

1- Moral Education *(Pendidikan Moral)*

Value act as a yardstick or standard for anything that humans do, desire and wish for, whether it can be seen, heard or felt by our senses. It shows the direction and determines the way choices are made and actions are carried out. It also tells the person what to do and what not to do in a given society. The public schools introduced Moral Education (ME) for non-Muslim students in 1983 for primary schools, and in 1989 for secondary schools as part of the education reforms. The aim of Moral Education is to produce individuals who are respectable and responsible through the nurturance, appreciation and practice of moral values (Hin, 2007). It educates students to become individuals who are moral or good mannered. It also stresses on the holistic development of the individual and it is concerned with development of moral thinking, moral feelings and moral actions.

ME focuses on the effort to instill spiritual and moral strength through experiential and daily virtues of Malaysian society that are found in religion, traditions, and cultural rites. It is designed to develop the values that Malaysians of diverse cultures share or that the government wishes to develop as shared values to bring about religious and ethnic harmony (Hoon, 2007). The ME curricula in primary schools are organized around five fields: values related to self – development, self and family, self and society, self and environment, and self and country. By middle school, a whole field of values is dedicated to "values relating to peace and harmony". By secondary school, the Moral Education curriculum contains an entire field of study devoted to patriotic activities such as discussing ways of showing gratitude to the government for its efforts to develop the nation and the people (Balakrishnan, 2009)

The curriculum is designed around sixteen values:

Physical and mental cleanliness	Justice
Moderation	Diligence
Compassion	Freedom
Self – reliance	Courage
Respect	Rationality
Humility	Honesty
Love	Gratitude
Cooperation	Public spiritedness

These are the noble values which are observed and upheld by Malaysian society. The values are essential to ensure healthy relationships and interaction between the individual and family, peer groups, society and the institutions in which he \ she is a member. As set by the Ministry of Education, the curriculum leaves no room for discarding, deleting or modifying these values (Banks, 1993).

2. **History (***sejarah)*

History introduced in the secondary school curriculum states that the main focus of the History curriculum is directed towards instilling a patriotic spirit, which is defined by the following characteristics:
  - Pride in being Malaysian.
  - The spirit of loyalty to the nation.
  - The spirit of "we-ness" *(kekitaan)*.
  - Discipline, and
  - Industriousness and productivity.

3. **Local Studies** *(kajian Tempatan)*

Local studies are considered the main pillar for nurturing patriotism in students. It aims to produce students who are loyal to and proud to be citizens of Malaysia, besides being willing to make sacrifices to defend race and country. The content contains the six following fields: cherish yourself, home life, school and social life, society and culture of Malaysia, our homeland Malaysia, and the view to the future of a country.

4. **Civic and Citizenship Education** *(Pendidikan Sivikdan Kewargane-garaan)*

In 2005, the Ministry of Education reintroduced the subject of Civic and Citizenship Education so that students of various races and cultures could sit together and be trained to deliberate on issues of common concerns as citizens. This is important because if the exercise is well done, then as future citizens they will learn to resolve critical issues affecting them through deliberation just as the founding fathers of the nation did. Some of the goals of National and Civic Education are: to produce a united Malaysia; to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable, God fearing, well-behaved, competent and harmonious (Barone, 2002).

Key words

National Identity *(Bangsa Malaysia)*

The national identity is a theme of growing interest, due to the importance that the national identity forms at all political, social and academic levels. Al-buhouachi (2000) identifies the national identity as the linking of the individual with a piece of land known as the homeland. Muneer (2002) believes that the national identity is identified through indicators that include the features and characteristics relating to the individual as he identifies his identity and patriotism, choosing and deciding with full freedom, and expressing his affiliation to his nationality and identity.

The concept of national identity consists of several elements, including what is constant, such as the land and language, as well as allegiance and affiliation to the State, and what is inconstant or transformed such as clothes, prevailing crafts and architecture (Abdulkhaliq, 2008). Therefore, the national identity is no longer a static entity and pure substance but a blend of compound cultural mixtures, overlaps and interactions.

National identity is a person's identity and sense of belonging to one country or to one nation with its history, commonly perceived values, and traditions. It is not just a name –tag or badge which is worn saying "I am a Malaysian" or "I am a Jordanian". It is a complex and dynamic psychological structure involving a system of core beliefs about the national group, and associated emotions and feelings.

It is most coherent and distinct in situations where the population originates from a single cultural or ethnic group. An example is Jordan, where the native stock is overwhelmingly of single common origin.

Building a national identity and forging national unity is a challenge facing many newly independent nations, more so multi-racial and multi- religious societies like Malaysia. Dr. Mahathir Mohammed once noted*: "Our unity is as fragile as the egg. If we don't break the egg, the chances of our living together are far greater".*

Nation Building

A nation can be described as a community of people who have a common historical memory, who reflect common values in their daily lives, and who believe in a common, shared destiny. Nation building is of paramount importance to Malaysia, and it refers to the process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. This process aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run.

In Malaysia, the objective of nation building and forging national unity amongst the various ethnic groups ranks very high in educational and political agendas. In fact, national unity and integration are the cornerstone of the education policy (Adnan & Smith, 2001). The education policy has played a significant role in reinforcing the national agenda of building the nation. The Malaysian government has always been asked to establish the identity as "Nation" of Malaysia (Leung, 2003).

Tolerance

Tolerance is the acceptance of the differing views of other people and fairness towards the people who hold those different views. It is the capacity for or the practice of recognizing and respecting the beliefs or practices of others. It is the respect and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures. It assumes readiness to accept others as they are. Tolerance and respect are two vital words that should be borne in the mind of a multi-religious, multicultural, and multi linguistic society. One should not only preach tolerance but try, on many possible occasions, to put into practice the benign spirit of tolerance. Without the practical application of the spirit of tolerance and mutual respect for one another, the ugly venom of discrimination, ridicule and hate would pour forth in jets. This, in turn, would destroy the peace and tranquility of the society and the nation.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or a society. It brings together human beings from a variety of cultures to enable them to reach their fullest potential.The understanding of other cultures is crucially important, and it may help to maintain stability in society. Living in a multicultural society requires a high level of understanding and respect of those from other cultures. It is important to address racial differences effectively in the curriculum so youngsters can be exposed to positive attitudes towards racial differences. The ultimate goal of education is the development, in every individual, a sense of universal values and types of behavior on which a culture of peace is predicated. People should understand and respect each other, and negotiate on an equal footing, with a view to seek common grounds. Once the social fabric is torn, it cannot easily be sewn together again.

The main aim of managing multiculturalism in Malaysia is to maintain national integration in which all their various cultural communities could live alongside each other while maintaining their own original identities (Ibrahim, 2007). Multicultural education is a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality and human dignity. It is essentially an effort to translate a pluralistic world view into educational practices and theories. It affirms our need to prepare students for their responsibilities in an interdependent world. It helps students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. Every student must have an equal opportunity to achieve his or her full potential and must be prepared to competently participate in an increasingly intercultural society and feel valued as an individual.

Riots of May 1969 and September 1970

In May 13, 1969 communal riots erupted in Kuala Lampur and elsewhere in the country between the Malays and the Chinese. An event that almost tore the nation apart. Although the conflict was successfully contained, the aftermath was felt throughout the country. The riots were taken as a turning point to reexamine the policies of the country since independence. After the ethnic riots, the government turned to solving Malaysia's ethnic problems with affirmative action.

The Malaysian government has worked hard to cultivate peace and respect among its citizens. It adopted the approach of empowering all ethnic and religious groups by giving them a share in decision – making, a say in collectively charting the future of the country. Therefore, the riots in 1969, which occurred on a national scale, have been regarded as a catalyst for fundamental policy changes in Malaysian public policy, including education policy (Baginda, 2005).Jordan had a similar experience of unrest, in September of 1970 when it went through what became known as the regrettable event of "Black September" or *(Ailul al Aswad)*. A civil war erupted between the Jordanian army and the Palestinian Resistance Movement. A major guerilla- government confrontation occurred when the government sought to disarm the Palestinian refugee camps. On September 16, 1970, the king declared martial law and formed a military government to enforce it. Heavy fighting between the Jordanian army and the Palestinian Resistance Movement broke out in five cities.

The total number of casualties was estimated to be between 5,000 and 25,000; they included many Palestinian and Jordanian civilians. As a result, the schism in Palestinian-Jordanian relations widened. Malaysia, as a result of the unfortunate incident of 1969 reviewed its legislative provisions and education policies. The Department of National Unity was established as a bureaucratic instrument to keep watch of the state of ethnic relations in Malaysia. It was given the critical role of consciously fostering unity and integration. The government of Malaysia had realized that sweeping things under the carpet was not the solution. It mobilized all its resources to find immediate remedies and long term solutions. Malaysians learned the bitter lesson that nobody gains from an open ethnic conflict. They remain vigilant and chose cohesion, not conflict, as the path for the future. On the other hand, the Jordanian government swept the cracks under the carpet and did almost nothing. In a country like Malaysia, where the people speak a variety of mother tongues, practice different religions, and come from different cultural backgrounds, peace cannot be an accident. The government of Malaysia learned from the tragedies that inflicted the nation and acted in a way that would not allow bad history to recur. The government of Malaysia did not shy away from taking decisions even if they were unpopular. In contrast, the government of Jordan did almost nothing, hoping that this unfortunate incident would not happen again.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the this study is represented as follows:
1. This is the first study of its kind – as far as the researcher knows – which studies the Malaysian experience in the development of the national identity and acceptance of cultural and sectarian plurality for the benefit of preparing and developing national and civic education curricula in Jordan.
2. The current study is characterized by attempting to study the Malaysian experience in the development of national identity and the acceptance of cultural sectarian plurality in an integrated manner, where the Malaysian and Jordanian national and civic education curricula will be analyzed and where planners and developers of the national education curricula in Jordan will benefit from the results of the current study.
3. This study comes as a result of increasing need for studies that reveal areas of defect and weakness in the national and civic education curricula in Jordan, and in performing their role in the development of national identity and the acceptance of multicultural and sectarian plurality.

The imperative of "learning to live together in peace and harmony" has never been more important and compelling in terms of both regional and global considerations. There is a sense with phenomenological evidence in Jordan that there is something wrong with this society and we must seek solutions through education. Jordan's educational system is threatened by school and university violence which indicates that there are deficiencies in the educational system. Jordan's Queen Rania has warned on several occasions that the country's educational system is threatened by violence and by regional and tribal allegiances over national identity. To some extent, it has failed to fulfill its first and basic function, which is citizenship building.

Tribal violence erupts from time to time among students. Some large scale brawls leave several students injured and inflict major damage to property. Rawashdeh (2011) believes that the main factors behind the rise in tribal violence are related to the current state of justice, politics, education and the economy in Jordan. Tribal violence has erupted several times among the students of the University of Jordan, Al-Hussein University and Mu'ta University prompting security forces to close the roads leading to the universities. He added that school and university administrators should deal firmly with violence and exercise zero tolerance towards this very disturbing phenomenon. They should not give in to social pressure and favoritism when it comes to punishing students who instigate violence.

Measures against those involved in the riots should also be accompanied by alternative policies to eradicate violence from Jordan's institutions of higher learning.The spirit of togetherness and the ability to rise above differences are important in ensuring continued peace and stability in Jordan and elsewhere. Education for peace is not so much teaching students about peace, as it is enabling them to be peaceful. The researcher believes that tolerance, communication and inter – personal skills are essential attributes. It is easy to see the lack of such traits in daily encounters with fellow Jordanians. This comparative study links up issues of religion, culture and national origin in Jordan and Malaysia that have some common historical roots, but very distinctive trajectories of nation building over recent decades.

Study Methodology

A qualitative analysis is employed in analyzing and identifying the various factors contributing to the level of tolerance and understanding of other cultures among young Malaysians and Jordanians.

To fulfill the study's objectives, the methods employed were library research with the emphasis on textual analysis, interviews with students, teachers, school principals and administrators at the schools, directorates of education at the ministerial levels. Observations while visiting schools in both Jordan and Malaysia were also made.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines the politics and practices of education in Malaysia within the context of ethnicity and nation-building. The central focus in this paper is a discussion of educational policies in terms of multi-ethnicity, multi-religions and multi-languages. Though Jordan is not considered as multicolored as Malaysia, it faces from time to time incidents of violence, intolerance and misunderstanding. Lessons learned and their possible applications in the Jordanian context will be examined.The study also explores the level of tolerance and understanding practiced among Malaysian students regarding the diverse heritage in a multicultural classroom environment and nation – building. It stresses the government of Malaysia's efforts in managing its complex ethnic, cultural and religious differences to bring about a sense of national unity and a culture of peace and harmony through education. The research seeks to examine how the ethnic, racial and cultural needs of a country's student population are considered when creating the education policy of a country.

Questions of the Study

The main questions addressed in the research are:
1. Whether and how a country's education policy can help to promote coexistence rather than reinforce divides?
2. How education policies of Malaysia grapple with questions of diversity and citizenship?
3. How divisive moments in a country's history are presented in its education curriculum?
4. How Jordan can benefit from the Malaysian experience in maintaining peace and social cohesion.

The researcher will follow George Bereday methodology with its four steps: description, interpretation (social analysis), interview and comparison.
1. **Description:** "Geography of learning" which depends on collecting pure educational data.
2. **Interpretation:** (social analysis): is the implementation of other social science methods to interpret educational information and data.
3. **Review:** a process for arranging the scientific material to be collected on a unified basis and preparing it for comparison.
4. **Comparison:** the process of moving from one country to   another in one aspect of comparison or more.

Study Sample

- National and civic curricula in Malaysia for grades four and ten.
- National and civic curricula in Jordan for grades four and ten.

Limitations of the Study

- This study is restricted to the analysis of national and civic education curricula in Jordan and Malaysia; therefore, it is not possible to generalize it to the other subjects.
- This study took place during the academic year 2010 – 2011 in Jordan and Malaysia.

Content analysis of the national and civic education curricula for grades 4 and 10 in Malaysia and Jordan
Content analysis: national and civic education curriculum of the fourth grade in Malaysia

Subject (Egoism)	Learning Outputs

A.   Knowing points of strength and weakness
  . Knowing self
    control
	The student:
	- prepares a list of the behaviors that contribute in developing noble ethics

B. Self Management
  . Self health
  . Personal
    Appearance
	- takes responsibility for self management
	- adopts a healthy lifestyle
	- shows trust and ability to develop his potentials
	- maintains his safety and has self control

Subject (Loving the Family)	Learning Outputs

A. About the family
  •   Nucleus family
  •   Extended family
	- defines the family background and roots
	- interacts and communicates with family members politely
	- shows positive feeling towards the father, mother and the rest of family members

Subject (Co-existence at school and in the community)	Learning Outputs
A . Interacting in the community and school B . Interacting with their peers, teachers, administrators, and members of "Parents and Teachers Association",	- explains the importance of interacting with the school community - recognizes that there is a responsibility incumbent upon him at school - participates in preserving the school building - accepts and respects the difference in capabilities and views between individuals at school and in the local community

Subject (Culture in Malaysia)	Learning Outputs
A . Understanding and valuing the multi cultural wealth and cultural heritage of Malaysia	- explains the diversity in the Malaysian culture - describes good social manners in the Malaysian culture and their importance - comprehends the need for co-existence in a multi ethnic society - recognizes the special cultural heritage of other categories in the society - takes pride in the rich cultural environment which distinguishes the Malaysian culture - shows acceptance and respect to the practices of other cultures - respects the mother language for all races in Malaysia

Subject (Malaysia my Country)	Learning Outputs

A . About Malaysia
  ▪   Location
  ▪   Population
B.   Taking pride in:
    National identity
  ▪   National anthem
  ▪   National costumes
  ▪   National language
  ▪   National flowers
	- explains the importance of national identity
	- participates in building the Malaysian nation
	- shows obedience and affiliation to Malaysia
	- takes pride in Malaysia
	- shows his appreciation to the Malaysian efforts in providing a prospering social environment based on peace

Subject (Current challenges facing Malaysia)	Learning Outputs

A . Building the discernment culture for the future
  ▪   Good social behavior
  ▪   Creativity
  ▪   Competitive capability
  ▪   Technological skills
	- describes the importance of self discipline for success
	- adopts the discernment culture in building the personality
	- appreciates discernment culture in the improvement of life and work

Content analysis: national and civic education curriculum of the tenth grade in Malaysia

Subject (Personal Self)	Learning Outputs

A. Personal performance
  . Personal vision
  . Foresight (future outlook)
	- Describes the characteristics of personal vision
	- Describes the most important personal vision
	- practices in order to achieve the personal vision

A. Development of the balanced personality
   • Intellectually
   • Spiritually
   • Emotionally
   • Physically
	- describes various aspects of the balanced personality
	- Illustrates the importance of developing the balanced personality in all aspects
	- Practices various aspects of the personality in a balanced manner
	- Appreciates the importance of the balanced personality in the individual's life

Subject (Relations with others)	Learning Outputs

- Family relations
   • Family needs
    - Social
    - Political
    - Economic
	- Describes the family needs
	- Illustrates the role of government and non-government bodies related to the family foundation
	- Participates in the efforts to enhance the family foundation
	- Maintains close relationships with the family members

Subject (Social Upbringing)	Learning Outputs

A. dealing with the social issues and problems in the society
   • Drug addiction
   • Free treatment
   • Violence
   • Destruction
   • Gangs
	- explains the most important social issues and problems in the society
	- recognizes the consequences of the social problems in the society
	- takes the appropriate measures to solve the social issues and problems
	- expresses his appreciation to the efforts paid by the concerned authorities in solving the social issues and problems

Subject (Social Upbringing)	Learning Outputs

B. Rules and laws in the society
   • Society panorama
   • Safety on the roads
   • Juvenile crimes in the society
	- knows the prevailing social traditions and legal rules
	- explains the role of the society traditions, rules and regulations in serving the society
	- describes the importance of complying with the safety regulations and rules on the roads
	- explains the purpose of enactment of the criminal law for juveniles
	- practices social tradition
	- acquaints himself and obeys the society customs and traditions

Subject (Diversity of Cultural Heritage in Malaysia)	Learning Outputs

A. Important principles in the teachings of various religions
   • Values
   • Practices
B. The importance of religious practices, particularly in festivals such as
   • Islamic festivals
   • Chinese New Year
   • Christmas
   • Good Friday
	- explains the values in various religions
	- values the role of the State in ensuring the practice of rituals of various religions
	- practices religious values and teachings in the daily life
	- respects values of various religions and the practice of religion by others
	- explains the importance of practicing religious celebrations and festivals
	- participates in the religious festivals of various religions and sects

Subject (Malaysia a country of sovereignty)	Learning Outputs
A. The importance of the Malaysian constitution • Political • Social • Economic B. Main provisions of the Malaysian constitution • language • religion • citizenship • Human rights • Privacy of the Malay, the aboriginals and the Sarawak	- explains the historical role in formulating the Malaysian constitution - explains the importance of the Malaysian constitution - describes the mechanism of forming the constitution - takes pride in the provisions of the Malaysian constitution - explains the main provisions in the Malaysian constitution - describes duties and rights of the citizens in the constitution - Obeys and defends the supremacy of the Malaysian constitution

Subject (Future Challenges for the Malaysia State)	Learning Outputs
A. Building discernment culture at work • Work ethics • Quality of work • Increasing knowledge and efficiency at work • The role of research in development • Eradication of corruption • Welfare workers B. Rationalization • Consumer responsibility • Safety standards for consumers	- explains discernment culture at work - describes the importance of culture at work - explains the importance of discernment culture at work in the personal and national development - values the efforts paid by the State in the dissemination of discernment culture at work - prepares a manual for the consumers rights - explains business ethics - discusses the importance of complying with the safety standards for the consumers and environment - adopts the consumption culture standards in daily life

Content analysis: national and civic education curriculum of the fourth grade in Jordan

Subject (the globe and its photographs)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. The globe	- identifies the globe's shape - enumerates the continents and oceans - compares between land and water in terms of the area
B. Longitude and Latitude	- identifies the four main directions on t map - differentiates between longitude and latitude - extracts the longitude and latitude benefits
C. The map	- compares between real photographs of the Earth's surface and the photographs on the map - extracts the beneficiary categories from the map - differentiates between t model of the globe and the map
D. Map elements	- identifies map elements - extracts the importance of each element in the map - inquires the map and reads it, measures distances between areas using the drawing scale
E. Types of maps	- enumerates types of maps - classifies phenomena as per the types of maps - designates the phenomena relating to the types of maps on the map of Jordan
F. Aerial photographs	- identifies the methods of taking aerial photographs - extracts the benefit of aerial photographs - shows the difference between the aerial photographs and maps - identifies the aerial photographs as a model of the earth's surface
G. Location	- identifies the location of Jordan in relation to the world - extracts the importance of Jordan's location and its water outlet - designates on the map of Jordan , the borders and the water outlets

Subject (Resources & Environment)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Resources	- identifies the source of the food and clothing - states the importance of availing resources in his environment - differentiates between regenerated and none regenerated resources - suggests means of conserving resources for next generations
B. Environment	- mentions the natural phenomena around him - differentiates between vivid and none vivid environment
C. Environmental pollution	- numerates the types of environmental pollution - explains the reasons behind the disruption of environmental equilibrium - suggests solutions to conserve natural resources from the hazard of pollution

Subject (Tourism in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Civilization and archeological sites	- defines the touristic sites on Jordan's map - identifies the civilization and archeological landmarks in Jordan - explains the impact of media in the democratic education
B. Desert castles and palaces	- defines the desert castle sites on the map - mentions the importance of erecting and utilization of castles. - explains the reasons for building castles in Jordan by the Omayyads
C. Touristic and recreational sites	- mentions the most important archeological, civilization and landmarks of Ma'en, North Shona and the Dead Sea spas - explains the reasons behind the tourists interest in the spas in Ma'en, North Shona and the Dead Sea - defines the locations of Jordan Valley, Aqaba and Al-Azraq on the map - mentions the most important archeological and civilization sites in Jordan Valley, Aqaba and Al-Azra - explains why there are reservations in Al-Azraq

Subject (Population in Jordan)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Population of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	- explains the general characteristics of the population in Jordan - classifies the population into age categories - classifies the living patterns in Jordan
B. Population distribution in Jordan	- makes conclusions on the factors affecting the population demography in Jordan - arranges the governorates in a descending order as per the number of population - classifies populated areas of Jordan into: congested, medium and sparse
C. Immigration	- identifies the immigration patterns in Jordan - extracts the reasons behind internal and external immigration - identifies the results of internal and external immigration in Jordan

Subject (The Biography of the Country and the King)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Great Arab Revolt	- states the reasons behind the rise of the Great Arab Revolt - defines the reasons for choosing Sharif Al-Hussein Bin Ali as the leader of the Great Arab Revolt
B. March of the Great Arab Revolt	- identifies the components of the Great Arab Revolt Emblem - tracks the path of the Great Arab Revolt - values the role of Sharif Al-Hussein Bin Ali in his endeavor to unite the Arabs
C. The stages of establishing the Emirate and the independence	- tracks the stages of establishing the Emirate of Transjordan. - identifies the conditions of the State Independence - values the role of the Hashemites in building Jordan and its independence
D. The State	- describes the nature of the regime in Jordan - explains the reason for giving the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan this name - identifies the services offered by the State to the citizens - illustrates the concept of the citizen, his duties and rights
E. The constitution	- interprets the concept of the constitution - familiarizes himself with the Jordanian constitution - identifies the articles of the constitution relating to the regime - identifies the authorities in Jordan
F. Modern renaissance in the reign of His Majesty King Abdullah II	- familiarizes himself with the achievements of King Abdullah II in all areas - explains the role of King Abdullah II in serving the youth sector - values the role of King Abdullah II in developing the Aqaba region
G. The Slogan "Jordan First"	- explains the slogan "Jordan First" - identifies the relationship of the slogan "Jordan First" with education and work

Subject (Service Institutions)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Education	- identifies types and levels of educational institutions - appreciates the role of educational institutions in building and development
B. Health	- enumerates the services offered by the health centers to the citizens - enumerates the services offered by the government hospitals - shows the importance of getting the vaccines in a timely manner - values the role of the Ministries of Education and health in preserving the student's health
C. Public security	- explains the concept of Public Security - enumerates the tasks of Public Security personnel - appreciates the role of Public Security personnel in protecting people and their properties
D. Means of transportation	- enumerates the means of transportation - builds positive trends towards using means of transportation and preserving them - values the role of the state in providing means of transportation
E. Communications	- describes the forms of communication and shows their importance - states the advantages of modern means of communications
F. Media	- Classifies the means of media and gives examples - shows the function of means of media in contemporary life - describes the media forms and explains their importance. - actively participates in the school broadcasting activity

Content analysis: national and civic education curriculum of the tenth grade in Jordan

Subject (Education in Jordan)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Education in Jordan	- recognizes the role of the Jordanian State in developing education
B. Vocational education in Jordan	- recognizes the objectives and tasks of the Vocational Training Corporation
C. Culture and media	- shows the types of cultures and gives examples - shows the effect of mass media on humanity - values the role of vocational work in developing the society

Subject (Citizenship)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. The concept of citizenship and its constituents	- distinguishes between active citizen and inactive citizen - states the characteristics of the good citizen
B. Citizenship: purposes, duties and rights	- identifies the citizenship duties and rights - distinguishes between the basic rights and civil rights - complies with the citizenship duties
C. Citizen values and entitlement	- distinguishes between affiliation and allegiance - explains the prominent manifestations of allegiance and affiliation to the homeland - states the manifestations of boasting the homeland and shows his pride in homeland

Subject (Democracy)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Democracy: principles and purposes	- explains the concept of democracy and shows its patterns - shows the importance of democracy and purposes - explains the effect of media on the national education
B. Democracy: scopes and applications	- shows the areas of modern democracy and the mechanisms of their applications - participates in the students council elections - states the elements of success of the democracy in application
D. Fundamental rights for the woman and child	- familiarizes himself with the most important international conventions relating to the woman and child rights - states woman's rights in the Jordanian constitution - values the need to preserve woman's rights - shows the measures taken by the State to protect child's rights
E. Democratic experience in Jordan	- shows the political conditions that accompanied the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan - defines the challenges that face the application of democracy in Jordan and provides solutions to address them - states the factors that helped in the application of democracy in Jordan

Subject (Political Concepts)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Parties	- shows the role of parties in the democratic State - shows why citizens are reluctant to join parties - defines the body responsible for issuing licenses to the parties
B. Intellectual trends and totalitarian regimes	- shows the intellectual trends to which the Jordanian belong - distinguishes between political pluralism and totalitarian regimes - familiarizes himself with the principles addressed by the Jordanian constitution in the area of political freedom

Subject (Social Concepts)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Public opinion	- Shows the importance of public opinion in decision- making - Mentions the factors affecting the formation of public opinion - Shows the steps for forming the public opinion and the methods of its measurement
B. Fanaticism and discrimination	- States the forms of fanaticism forms - Describes the liberal ethics of fanaticism and suggests solutions for eliminating fanaticism
C. Coexistence and tolerance	- Shows the effect of tolerance in the development of human relations - States the forms and means of tolerance - Represents the means of tolerance and respect

Subject (Management Process)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Management and leadership	- mentions the functions of the management process - extracts the sources of management power - distinguishes between the dictatorship and democratic leaderships - shows the characteristics of the successful administrative leader
B. Communications	- shows the objects of communication - explains the forms of communication - shows the effect of obstacles to communication on the human inter-communication
C. Human motivation	- familiarizes himself with the humanitarian theories in respect of human motivation - explains the characteristics of the effective control system - shows the types of control
D. Active Jordanian institutions	- shows the functions of the National Institute for Training and compares between the functions of the Civil Service Bureau and Audit Bureau - states the functions of Control & Inspection Bureau - values the role of Anti Corruption Bureau in protecting the national economy - explains the citizen's role in preserving the gains of the homeland

Subject (Jordanian Armed Forces)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Arab Army	- shows the emergence of the Armed Forces and beginnings thereof - enumerates the formations of the Armed Forces. - explains the assets of all formations of the Armed Forces - values the role of the Armed Forces in protecting the homeland
B. National security and development	- shows the role of the Armed Forces in the development - values the participations of the Armed Forces in the health services
C. Ministry of Interior	- states the roles of the Ministry of Interior - values the role of the Civil Status and Passport Department
D. Security corps	- enumerates the Security Corps and defines the ministry to which those security services shall report. - explains the duties of each of the Public Security, Civil Defense and Intelligence Department - values the role of the Security Corps in preserving the security of the homeland and citizens

Subject (Civilization March of Jordan)	Most Important Learning Outputs
A. Governorate of Mafraq	- defines the location of Mafraq Governorate - explains the historical and cultural development of Mafraq Governorate - enumerates the archeological sites in Mafraq Governorate - values the role of the State in discovering the archaeologies, preserving and renovating them

Subject (civilization of Jordan)	Most Important Learning Outputs
Governorate of Madaba	- defines the location of Madaba Governorate - explains the historical and cultural development of Madaba Governorate - shows the most important archaeologies in Madaba Governorate and the famous sites. - mentions the most prominent civilian figures and highlights their roles in the service of the homeland.
Theban	- defines the location of Theban on the map of Jordan - shows the historical and cultural development of Theban - shows the importance of choosing Theban as the capital of Mo'ab - enumerates the most important archaeological sites in Theban

In summary, the rules and regulations stipulated by the government of Malaysia is different from those stipulated by the government of Jordan when it comes to multicultural tolerance and social cohesion. Besides, the national and civic education curricula in Malaysia emphasize the concepts of national identity, multiculturalism, tolerance and nation - building, while the curricula in Jordan emphasize basically the loyalty to the regime and the nation as a whole. The curricula of national and civic education in Jordan are not concerned with social conflicts among the different sectors of the Jordanian society. They take the issues of social cohesion and tolerance as face value with no attempt to question the reasons behind tribal brawls and violence on campuses and in schools, and no serious attempts have been made to find ways and means to alleviate the unfortunate incidents of violence that erupt from time to time.

Discussion

In view of the social, economic and political challenges that Jordan is facing nowadays in light of the popular revolts in some Arab countries, the need has become urgent to review the academic curricula in general and the national and civic education curricula in particular. The revision would absorb the successful universal international identity and its representation among the youth; thereby reaffirming to them the concepts of allegiance and affiliation to become capable of dealing positively and actively with the requirements of citizenship. I believe that the future of Jordan lies in our ability to unite. National unity without a common identity is an exercise in futility. People need to come to terms with the fact that we need to co-exist in harmony, and this can only happen if there is genuine respect and acceptance of differences. Public education should only serve the interests of unifying the society and should clearly not have a divisive effect.

It is the responsibility of the government to develop and safeguard the education system which truly promotes the principle of "unity in diversity". The goal is to maintain national integration in which all the various cultural communities could live alongside each other while maintaining their own original identities. Schools and institutions of education are in a unique position to address the teaching and learning of diversity by creating an environment that will allow positive interaction among students from different backgrounds (Mustafa & Norzaini, 2009). Unfortunately, we are more inclined to search for differences rather than recognize commonalities. Diversity among various groups should be a source of strength. If we can accept each other, we can go a long way to unite Jordan and make it strong and resilient. While stressing the whole, it is recognized that the individual has rights which should be respected and not lightly encroached upon. We must be aware of the obstacles and difficulties that lie in front of us in order to circumvent hurdles and strategize our efforts in the most optimum manner. Co- curriculum activities encourage students to interact with each other. Therefore, they will be able to get to know each other closely. As a result, unity can be achieved.

Students should be encouraged to reflect upon their learning and be able to transfer it across the curriculum to situations outside the curriculum. Through social cohesion, students will learn, understand, accommodate and assimilate each other. Schools must act as the lighthouse of the society, providing direction and guidance. One of the key instruments to create a cohesive society is education. Achieving that will require resolve from the government to remedy the causes, not just the symptoms. Nevertheless, the educational policy alone cannot elicit tolerance, peace and cultural harmony. The government has to rise up and play its role in bringing people to a melting pot where everybody feels that justice and equality is fully served. There should be zero tolerance to any ethnic or racial remarks and actions. All men are created equal, and the government should bear that in mind.

Malaysia will remain one of the few nations in the world today, whose experience and track record in dealing with many ethnicities and many cultures is a useful one. It is useful for other countries to study closely and perhaps gain some useful insights from it. Considering that we are all God's creation, we should be able to work out ways by which we are able to live with one another in harmony and mutual regard, just as we would with people of our own kind. The seeds of national unity must be sown among the young. They must be taught and convinced of the benefits of peaceful co-existence (Abdullah, 2009). While Malaysia can point to some measures of success in its efforts, I would never presume to prescribe the exact Malaysian experience to other countries since it may fail miserably when taken out of the Malaysian context. Jordan must choose the path that suits its own circumstances.

Recommendations

- Adopting zero tolerance policy whereby students face harsh punishment for any remarks or acts against other groups of different race, religion or national origin.
- Dedicating a full day or more of staff development in schools to learning more about multicultural education, tolerance and national identity.
- Establishing student-led anti-violence organizations, allowing students to be empowered advocates.
- Importing relevant knowledge and skills in the area of peace-building in a multicultural environment.
- Formulating action plans or conflict resolution policies that might be implemented in tackling violence when it erupts, if precautionary measures do not bear fruit.
- Encouraging the media to make a positive contribution to the process of bringing people closer together.
- Creating inter-faith dialogues and networking for the multi-religion society.
- Concentrating on trust and confidence-building measures, especially among the younger generation.
- Promoting ethnic unity and common purpose rather than demarcation, division and segregation.
- Encouraging an open and democratic approach to instruction and learning rather than a closed and controlled one.
- Making textbook writers more sensitive to the nation-building intent.
- Not giving in to social pressure and favoritism by school and administrators when it comes to punishing students who instigate violence.
- Proposing a qualitative research study in Jordan to examine the relationship between official policy and actual school practices in the areas of tolerance and multi-cultural understanding in selected educational settings.
- Introducing political freedom on campuses. Hence economic development and prosperity alone is not sufficient to maintain political stability.

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