

Research Article

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Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia

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Abstract: This research examines the integration of ulos culture in Christian religious education for multicultural communities in Indonesia, by utilizing a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) approach. Amid the cultural and religious diversity that exists in Indonesia, Christian religious education is often trapped in a paradigm that does not consider local cultural diversity, such as the ulos culture which is very strong in the life of the Batak people. This culture has spiritual and social values that can enrich the learning of Christianity but is often marginalized in religious education curricula which are more focused on aspects of the teachings and doctrines of the religion itself. This research aims to examine how the ulos culture, which is a symbol of local Batak wisdom, can be integrated into Christian religious education through the CRP approach to create an inclusive learning space that respects cultural diversity. In this research, the author used a qualitative method with a literature study approach. The results of research on the integration of ulos culture in Christian religious education through a culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) approach recommend a model of Christian religious education that is multidimensional, empowering, transformative, emancipatory, and promotes equality and social justice. It is hoped that this can enrich understanding, experience, and strengthen social ties, especially in a multicultural context.

Keywords: Ulos, CRP Approach, Christian Religious Education, Multicultural.

Introduction

Education in Indonesia is faced with the challenge of providing learning that not only contains academic knowledge but also pays attention to students' social and cultural context. Indonesia, with its vast cultural diversity, requires an educational approach that can accommodate these differences. One approach that is relevant in education for a multicultural society is Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) which emphasizes the importance of cultural relevance in the learning process. In this context, local culture such as ulos, which is an important part of Batak community traditions, offers opportunities to be utilized in education, especially Christian religious education. Ulos is not just a traditional cloth, but also has meaning spiritual and social which contains important values in the life of the Batak people. This article discusses how ulos can be used in multicultural Christian religious education in Indonesia, as well as how the

culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) approach can be an effective method for integrating local culture into Christian religious education learning.

Christian religious education in Indonesia is often seen as separate from local cultural traditions, even though the values taught in Christianity such as love, forgiveness and unity are in line with many principles in local culture. In areas such as North Sumatra, where the Batak community is predominantly Christian, the use of Batak culture such as ulos in teaching Christianity can create more meaningful and relevant learning for students. However, the implementation of Christian religious education with a multicultural approach in Indonesia still faces several challenges, especially related to understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity in a rigid curriculum. This is where the culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) approach can play an important role by bridging the gap between local

culture and religious teachings, creating education that is more inclusive and responsive to student diversity.

Several studies have been carried out related to ulos, including D. Meyanit Simanjuntak, who extensively studied the various patterns of ulos and their use in the marriage arrangements of the Toba Batak people (D. M. Simanjuntak, 2017). Meanwhile, Citra Simanjuntak discovered the teachings of a charismatic church in Rambung, Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra, which rejected everything related to Toba Batak culture, including ulos (C. Simanjuntak, 2015). The main factor causing the rejection of the use of ulos is the lack of knowledge of today's Batak people about matters related to ulos, both from their manufacture to the local wisdom values contained in ulos (Gultom et al. 2022). Other research conducted by Sirait shows that the local wisdom values contained in the giving of Batak ulos seen from a Christian ethical perspective do not conflict and are in fact in harmony with God's word.

The gap that exists in the current research literature is the lack of studies that focus on the integration of ulos in Christian religious education, especially in the context of education for multicultural communities in Indonesia. Although there are several studies on the integration of Batak culture in Christian religious teaching, there is no research that links ulos culture directly using a culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) approach. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by digging deeper into how ulos can be used in Christian religious learning through a culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) approach.

Method

According to Rahardjo, quoted in (Rifky, 2024), research methods are a way to obtain and search for tentative truths, not absolute truths. The result is scientific truth. Scientific truth is a truth

that is open to continuous testing, criticism and even revision. Therefore, there is no best method for searching for the truth, but there is a method that is appropriate for a particular purpose according to the existing phenomenon. Budiharto was quoted in (Nuary, 2024) that the choice of research method must be adjusted to the research being carried out so that the results are optimal.

This research seeks to analyze and describe the Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia. The type of research used in this research is a descriptive analysis method. According to (Juhadi, 2020) descriptive analysis is empirical research that investigates a specific symptom or phenomenon in a real-life setting. The results of this research were collected using primary data and secondary data.

The approach used in this research is a qualitative approach. According to Bogdan and Taylor in (Djafri, 2024), a qualitative approach is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. According to (B. Arifin, 2024) the method is to transcribe the data, then coding the notes in the field and interpreting the data to obtain conclusions.

This research uses qualitative research with field research methods (field research). According to (A. Arifin, 2024) this approach is adapted to the main aim of the research, namely describing, and analyzing the Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia. So that this method will be able to explain the problems of the research (Arifudin, 2024).

Determining appropriate data collection techniques greatly determines the scientific truth of a research. The data collection techniques used

in this research are observation, interviews, and documentation.

Engineering can be seen as a means of carrying out technical work carefully using the mind to achieve a goal. Even though the study is an effort within the scope of science, it is carried out to collect realistic data systematically to realize the truth. Research methodology is a means to find a cure for any problem. In this case, the author collects information about the analysis of the Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia, articles, journals, theses, ebooks, etc. (Ulimaz, 2024).

Because it requires material from the library as a data source, this research utilizes library research. Researchers need books, scientific articles and other literature related to the topics and problems they explore, both print and online (Paturachman, 2024).

Searching for information from data sources requires the use of data collection techniques. Amir Hamzah in (Kartika, 2020) claims that data collection is an effort to collect information related to the subject under study. The author uses library research methods to collect data. Specifically, the author started with the library to collect information from books, dictionaries, journals, encyclopedias, papers, periodicals, and other sources that share the views of the Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia.

Amir Hamzah further said that data collection means various efforts to collect facts related to the topic of discussion that is being or will be explored (Kartika, 2021). These details can be found in scientific literature, research and scientific writings, dissertations, these, and other written sources. According to (Kartika, 2022) data collection can be carried out in various

circumstances, using different sources, and using different techniques.

Observation is part of the research process directly regarding the phenomena to be researched (Lahiya, 2025). With this method, researchers can see and directly feel the atmosphere and condition of the research subject (Arifudin, 2025). The things observed in this research are the Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia.

The interview technique in this research is a structured interview, namely interviews conducted using various standard guidelines that have been established, questions are arranged according to information needs and each question is needed to reveal any empirical data (Judijanto, 2025).

Documentation is a technique for collecting data through existing documents or written notes (Kusmawan, 2025). Documentation comes from the word document, which means written items. In implementing the documentation method, researchers investigate written objects, such as books, magazines, meeting minutes and diaries. According to Moleong in (Ramli, 2024) the documentation method is a way of collecting information or data through examining archives and documents. Furthermore, according to (Arifudin, 2021) documentation strategy is also a data collection technique proposed to research subjects. The data collection method using the documentation method was carried out to obtain data about the condition of the institution (research object), namely the Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Approach (CRP) Integration of Ulos Cultural Values in Christian Religious Education for Multicultural Society in Indonesia.

Muhadjir in (Sappaile, 2024) states that data analysis is the activity of carrying out, searching for, and compiling records of findings

systematically through observations and interviews so that researchers focus on the research they are studying. After that, make the findings material for other people, edit, classify, and present it.

Results and Discussion

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) Approach

CRP was first introduced by Gloria Ladson-Billings in 1994 through her book *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, which discusses effective teaching practices for African American children. Ladson-Billings emphasizes that culturally responsive education seeks to enrich students' learning experiences by linking learning materials to their cultural values, while developing critical skills for understanding and addressing inequalities in society. Apart from Dr. Ladson-Billings, Dr. Geneva Gay, another Black scholar, shares the critical nature of aspiring teachers learning about students' culture and how it influences their responses to classroom learning.

CRP (Culturally responsive pedagogy) is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the importance of cultural relevance in learning. This approach aims to make learning material more relevant and meaningful for students by connecting their cultural experiences with the academic content being taught. Ladson-Billings (1994) argued that CRP requires teachers to recognize cultural differences in the classroom and align the curriculum to respect this diversity. In the context of Christian religious education, CRP can be applied by connecting religious teachings with cultural values that students are familiar with, so that they can see the connection between religious teachings and their cultural experiences. For example, teachings about love and peace can be connected to Batak cultural symbols such as ulos, which symbolizes love and peace between people.

Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009) in Al Musanna (2011) state, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) is an educational praxis (theory and application) that emphasizes the relationship between education and its socio-cultural dimensions. The emphasis on student culture and community is not only used as an effort to bring students closer to their context, but more than that, it is hoped that it can bridge the emergence of students' awareness of their cultural identity. Ginsberg and Wlodkowski added that cultural differences, which were previously seen as a barrier to achievement and interaction, were replaced with a perception of harmony that places cultural diversity as a strength to encompass differences in learning styles. Through CRP praxis, teachers are required to elaborate on the various cultural dimensions of students and use them as a basis for enriching learning interactions. CRP or Culturally Responsive Pedagogy is a theoretical educational approach, which aims to improve student achievement, with a focus on helping them accept and strengthen their cultural identity.

The main components of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) include:

1. **Understanding Student Culture:** Teachers using CRP must understand the cultural background of their students, including their language, values, traditions, and ways of thinking.
2. **Use of Relevant Learning Materials:** Materials used in learning must reflect cultural diversity and be relevant to students' lives.
3. **Critical Skills Development:** CRP aims to develop critical thinking skills, where students are invited to understand and criticize their own culture as well as other cultures.
4. **Building Strong Relationships:** CRP emphasizes the importance of respectful relationships between teachers and students.

Teachers must demonstrate empathy and openness to students' cultural experiences.

In the book *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, Gay outlines that the fundamental goal of culturally responsive pedagogy is to empower ethnically diverse students through academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal growth. (Geneva Gay, 2018)

Some important characteristics regarding culturally responsive teaching are:

1. Culturally Responsive Teaching is Multidimensional

Multidimensional Culturally responsive teaching includes curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, teaching techniques, classroom management, and assessment performance.

2. Culturally Responsive Teaching Is Empowering

Because culturally responsive teaching is empowering, it allows students to become better humans and more successful learners. Empowerment translates into academic competence, self-confidence, courage, and a willingness to act.

3. Culturally Responsive Teaching is Transformative

Students are taught to be proud of their ethnic identity and cultural background. If education is to empower, then all groups, including marginalized ones, must also be transformative. The transformative agenda for culturally responsive teaching has a dual focus, namely: one direction is related to facing and transcending cultural hegemony. Another direction is to develop social, intellectual and critical analytical awareness in students so that they can fight prejudice, racism and other forms of oppression and exploitation that may have developed in communities and society.

Being transformative helps “students to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary to become social critics who can make

reflective decisions and implement their decisions effectively in personal, social, political and economic action”. Students must learn to analyze the effects of injustice on individuals and different ethnic groups and become agents of change committed to promoting greater equality, justice, and balance of power between ethnic groups. They practice these ethics and skills in different community contexts- classrooms, schools, playgrounds, neighborhoods, and society at large.

4. Culturally Responsive Teaching is Emancipatory

Culturally responsive pedagogy is liberated in the sense of releasing the “shackles” of knowledge rules and mainstream ways, thereby allowing students to focus more closely and concentrate more thoroughly on academic learning tasks.

Collaboration, community, and connectedness are also key features of culturally responsive teaching. Students are expected to work together and take responsibility for each other's success.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching is Humanistic

It is humanistic, because it is related to welfare, dignity and respect for various individuals and groups. People of different cultures must also be culturally responsive to each other. This includes being open, receptive, and respectful of the points of view, thoughts, experiences and perceptions of oneself and others, including a willingness to criticize them; understand and respect differences between oneself and others; recognizes that people view the world and life through different lenses and actively promotes equality and social justice.

Ulos as one of the cultures of the Batak people

The use of ulos by Batak people is not solely because it contains economic, social, aesthetic and religious elements, but because each type of ulos contains local wisdom values, even

these values have been instilled since Batak people were born and even until they died. Ulos are worn in various moments, both happy and sad, from birth to death, Batak people are inseparable from ulos. When a baby is born, the maternal grandparents will give ulos tapoltua to the baby's parents at the baptism (usually 7 days after birth). The gift of ulos is filled with the hopes of grandparents that the baby will always be enveloped in warmth that is integrated with health, intelligence and honor throughout his life. (R. J. Siagian 2024). For the Batak people, ulos and the act of giving ulos (mangulosi) are symbols of love from the person who gives the ulos to the person who is given the ulos. Apart from that, ulos is also a symbol of strong family ties and is a medium for social communication (Hariati and Purwarno 2024).

In summary, the values of local wisdom contained in ulos and the giving of ulos from one party to another include: (Hikman Sirait et al, 2024)

1. Love

In daily life and relationships within the community, one proof of the Batak people's love for each other through actions is by giving ulos (mangulosi). In ancient times, ulos were made by themselves for a long time so there was an element of sacrifice to produce ulos and this was interpreted by the Batak people as an effort to give the best to other people (the people being ulos).

2. Prayers of blessing and hope

In Batak society, ulos is also associated with hope and prayer. In giving ulos (mangulosi), it will be preceded by conveying umpasa. Because umpasa contains advice, prayers and statements of blessing, so you can be sure that the words conveyed are life guidance advice, prayers of blessing and great hope for the person who is given the ulos. This gives an idea that mangulosi which starts with umpasa full of religious meaning by making God a place to lean on and

depend on (Sirait 2018; Sinaga, Djunaidi, and Diani 2021).

3. The meaning of peace and brotherhood

In mangulosi, besides there are hopes and prayers, then There is another meaning shown, namely peace and brotherhood. When people give ulos, they are giving their love to other people and trying to ensure harmony in relations with each other so that peace can be realized in the community. Apart from that, the expression of love and brotherhood in giving ulos inspires and motivates the existing community to pay attention to each other in brotherly relationships.

Usually, Batak people will give ulos to their closest family and then to other parties outside the family. Giving ulos can be started from older people to younger people or from ulos givers to other people who are not family. Local wisdom values within mangulosi which is summarized in the elements of respect and appreciation in parallel with forms of attention and concern for others.

Integration of Ulos in Christian Religious Education through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)

Indonesia has very diverse tribes and cultures, each province has different tribes and cultures and has its own characteristics. One of the provinces in Indonesia is the province of North Sumatra which is located on the island of Sumatra. Most tribes in North Sumatra are the Batak tribe. The Batak tribe is divided into six ethnic groups, namely Toba, Karo, Simalungun, Pakpak, Angkola and Mandailing. Each Batak tribe has its own language, culture, customs, and characteristics that must be protected and maintained. The most identical characteristic of the Batak tribe is the traditional cloth made by the Batak people, namely Ulos. Ulos is a woven cloth in the form of a shawl. Batak people, especially Toba Batak, wherever Batak people carry out activities, including traditional events, will use

Ulos. Ulos used in one event can vary and the type depends on the event being held. Each Batak sub-tribe has ulos with different motifs and there are several patterns that contain mathematical elements (Astuti, 2019).

Ulos is a traditional cloth that has deep symbolic meaning for the Batak people in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Ulos are used in various traditional ceremonies, religious rituals, and important celebrations in Batak society. Ulos symbolizes social bonds, affection, protection, and peace between individuals in a community. Apart from that, ulos is also considered a means of blessing and strengthening the spiritual relationship between humans and God. In the educational context, ulos has the potential to become a symbol that connects Batak cultural values with Christian religious teachings. For example, ulos can be used to teach the concepts of love, protection, and unity in Christian teachings, which are in line with religious principles such as love of God and love of others.

In the context of Christian religious education, culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) can be applied by integrating the local culture of society, especially students, in Christian religious teachings. In Indonesia, for example, the use of Batak cultural symbols such as ulos can be used to teach the values of love, peace and forgiveness found in Christian teachings. The integration of culture in Christian religious education in North Sumatra strengthens the relationship between religious teachings and local culture, as well as increasing students' understanding of religious teachings that are more contextual and relevant to their lives. This approach requires Christian teachers to recognize the cultural values that exist in Batak society, such as a close sense of family, and use them as a bridge to teach Christian religious teachings. For example, kinship in Batak culture can be harmonized with the concept of God's love in Christian teachings, which teaches that love must be mutually given and received, not

only in the context of the family but also in broader social relationships.

Ladson-Billings in his writings explains that culturally responsive or relevant education must meet three criteria: the ability to develop students academically, the willingness to maintain and support cultural competence, and the development of sociopolitical or critical awareness. (Ladson-Billing, 1995)

Model of Christian Religious Education for a Multicultural Society

Ulos Cultural Interaction in Christian Religious Education through the Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) approach offers several important components to be developed, namely:

1. Multidimensional Christian Religious Education

If we use a Culturally Responsive pedagogical approach by integrating ulos then in the learning process ulos will be included in the written curriculum content and teachers will also pay attention to other aspects such as learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, teaching techniques, classroom management and assessment performance.

In this regard, the integration of ulos in Christian religious education can be implemented with explanations in teacher teaching in class, for example teachers can link the teachings of love in Christianity with the practice of giving ulos in the learning context and explain its meaning. Apart from that, in several schools in Medan that the author observed there was also the practice of using ulos, for example in the tortor dance to welcome guests at school or in celebratory activities such as Christmas celebrations for students and teachers at school.

2. Empowering Christian Religious Education

By using a culturally responsive pedagogical approach, the PAK developed is empowering. Ulos which is integrated into the

Christian religious education process will open up space for students to develop academic competence, self-confidence, courage and criticality. In this case, the teacher is not the sole source of knowledge. The teaching and learning process in Christian Religious Education will provide space for students to express their understanding, experiences and even questions about the ulos that they have seen in the community and society.

The integration of ulos culture in Christian religious education through the CRP approach not only has the potential to enrich students' learning experiences but can also be a bridge to building multicultural awareness. Ulos as a symbol of compassion and peace provides a strong context for Christian religious teachings about love and unity. For example, when a teacher teaches the concept of love in the Bible, they can use the gift of ulos as a concrete illustration of acts of love in Batak culture. This not only makes learning more relevant but also helps students see the connection between religious teachings and their everyday cultural practices.

3. Transformative Christian Religious Education

The Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) approach inspires students to understand their own cultural identities and backgrounds. Christian religious education is an open space for students to get to know themselves well, accept and be proud of what they have. This educational process involves all groups in the learning process. In this case, the transformative agenda of culturally responsive pedagogy has a dual focus, namely understanding one's own identity and also developing social awareness and critical thinking processes by developing intellectual and analytical thinking. Students are expected to be able to develop good thought processes and avoid racism, prejudice and discrimination which are problems in the community and society.

Regarding ulos, in the reality of everyday life, students can encounter different

understandings, even contrary to what they think. In this case, the culturally responsive pedagogy approach uses ulos to help students develop knowledge and skills accompanied by critical awareness of the things they can do in accordance with Christian religious principles. They can learn from each other through ulos culture how to develop an attitude of loving each other, paying attention in different community contexts, for example in classrooms, schools, playgrounds, the surrounding environment, and society in general.

4. Emancipatory Christian Religious Education

One of the principles of the culturally responsive Pedagogical Approach is liberate. This is interpreted as an effort to release the "shackles" of knowledge rules and mainstream methods, thereby allowing students to focus more closely and concentrate more thoroughly on academic learning tasks. Students are expected to be responsible for developing cooperation in the community, seeking and developing connected relationships between one another. In the process of Christian religious education, ulos can be a symbol of connection between relationships.

The integration of ulos culture in Christian religious education using a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) approach offers an innovative way to link local values with religious teachings. Ulos, as a symbol of Batak culture, has deep meaning and can be used to enrich students' learning experiences. The culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) approach aims to link learning material to students' cultural experiences, thereby making learning more meaningful and relevant. In the context of Christian religious education, CRP invites educators to understand students' cultural backgrounds and use these values as a bridge to teach religious teachings.

5. Christian Religious Education which promotes equality and social justice

In the context of Indonesia with its multicultural society, the culturally responsive pedagogical approach inspires educators and

students to develop openness and respect for differences between themselves and others. In an effort to integrate ulos culture through a culturally responsive pedagogical approach in Christian religious education, the meaning of mangulosi from various age levels and the context of giving ulos in different events (joys and sorrows, deaths and births, etc.) promotes the principles of equality and social justice in the community and society. The Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) approach emphasizes the importance of respectful relationships between teachers and students. By using ulos as a teaching tool, teachers show respect for students' culture, which in turn builds students' trust and involvement in the learning process.

The integration of ulos in Christian religious education through CRP not only enriches learning content but also builds multicultural awareness among students. By understanding the values of local wisdom contained in ulos, students are invited to pay attention to the following things, namely: First, accepting cultural identity. Students learn to be proud of their cultural identity while appreciating the diversity around them. Second, develop critical skills. Through discussions about ulos and the values contained in it, students are invited to think critically about how religious teachings can be applied in their social context. Third, creating inclusive learning spaces. By integrating local culture into Christian religious education, classrooms become more inclusive and respectful of differences.

Challenges in Implementing a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) Approach

In its development, although the integration of ulos culture in Christian religious education has good potential for development, there are several challenges that need to be considered. First, not all Christian communities in Indonesia, especially those who are not from the

Batak tribe, have a deep understanding of Ulos culture. Therefore, efforts are needed to introduce Ulos more widely through education and cultural activities. Apart from that, the integration of Ulos culture must also be carried out carefully, so as not to cause misunderstandings or conflicts between groups. This requires active involvement from educators and religious leaders to ensure that the use of local culture in Christian religious learning maintains the sanctity of religious teachings and does not deviate from Christian doctrine. However, with the right approach, ulos culture can be an effective tool for increasing spiritual and social understanding in Christian religious education, as well as building mutual respect amidst existing cultural diversity.

Conclusion

The integration of Ulos culture in Christian religious education with a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) approach can enrich students' learning experiences, as well as build a deeper understanding of cultural and religious diversity. This approach supports the creation of inclusive and relevant learning, which respects local cultural values while adhering to the teachings of the Christian religion. Thus, Christian religious education in Indonesia can be a forum for developing multicultural awareness, building relationships between groups, and strengthening national identity.

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