

SOCIAL DISTANCE AND ETHNIC BOUNDARY AMONG PUPILS IN MULTIETHNIC AND MONOETHNIC SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT IN MALAYSIA

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Accepted 21 January, 2012

Abstract—This article discusses the social distance among pupils in multiethnic and monoethnic school environment. Social distance is a sense of social segregation or actual separation that exists between pupils of different ethnic group. Social distance that exists will cause ethnic boundary among pupils and social interaction seldom occur. Whether multiethnic or monoethnic school environment affect social distance among the pupils was also discussed in detail in this article. The study was conducted in 12 primary schools in Penang. The sample for this study consisted of 600 primary school pupils. Pupils are required to answer the questionnaire provided and the findings were analyzed quantitatively. Indian pupils from the National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT) showed a narrow social distance than Malay and Chinese pupils either from multiethnic or monoethnic school environment.

Keywords: Social Distance, Ethnic Boundary, Multi Ethnic School, Mono Ethnic School, Ethnic Relation.

Introduction

Social distance that exists within every individual will reinforce ethnic boundary (Najeemah Mohd Yusof, 2006). The thickness of ethnic boundary will be difficult for the construction of social integration in a multiethnic community like Malaysia. The harmonious ethnic relations is necessary to ensure national prosperity (Mansor Mohd Noor, 2006). According to Utusan Malaysia (August 30, 2009), education is one important element in the formation of a nation. The form of education will determine whether the national agenda can be achieved or not. If racism is a nature of the education system, then racism is the output. Pupils attending school of the same ethnic group tend to find themselves in groups and carry out activities with members of the same ethnic group. They also tend to choose a friend or a close friend from their own ethnic group (Sanusi Osman, 1989; Amir Hassan Dawi, 2004). As schools, and homes are usually separated and are dominated by one ethnic group, pupils often have more opportunities to build relationships between members of respective ethnic group (Baerveldt, 2004).

Social distance is a factor that would reinforce ethnic boundary and thus lead to lesser relations between ethnic group. Thus teachers should play an important role to organize activities inside and outside the classroom to ensure pupils from various ethnicities will participate to forge unity in the early stages of schooling (Daily News, 1 September 2010). However, the separation of ethnic groups through education causes the interaction between various ethnic limited and rare (Sanusi Osman, 1989; Sanders, 2002; Amir Hassan Dawi, 2004). During the first six years in the monoethnic school environment hinders pupils to interact with other ethnic groups (Utusan Malaysia, May 8, 2008). This situation will thicken

the ethnic boundary among the various ethnic and further affect the social interactions among them (Najeemah Mohd Yusof, 2006).

1.1 Background of the Study

Malaysia is a country that has a multi-ethnic society, where people live in a political unit similar but separate. Every segment of society has values, beliefs, language and way of life of its own (Mansor Mohd Noor, 2006). Unity between people of various ethnic groups is an important agenda for the country's political stability, social and economic development. The National Education Policy successfully nationalized the image of school stream that exist within the framework of colonialism, but the identity of the various schools is an element of segregation or separation that exist between ethnic groups in this country.

Pupils in national-type schools lack exposure and opportunities for mixing with other ethnic groups. Vernacular School and it features of ethnic identity will make ethnic relations in Malaysia remain in a critical condition (Abd. Rahim Abd. Rashid, 2000). Two aspects of educational development and the relationship between different cultures is always associated with the ethnic composition at schools with the debate that school segregation based on ethnicity is delaying the construction of a multi-ethnic understanding among the pupils and will influence educational attainment (Johnston, 2004). Thus, based on the problems that occur from the differences of school environment, particularly from the aspect of ethnic relations, the researcher conducted a research to identify the social distance and ethnic boundary among the Malay, Chinese and Indian pupils in multi-ethnic and mono-ethnic school environment. The research would give the whole view of ethnic boundary and social interaction among the various ethnic pupils in primary education level.

1.2 Objective of the Study

This research is based on the following objectives, namely to;

- i) Identify the social distance among the pupils in the National Primary School that consist various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Chinese Type Schools (SJKC) and National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT).
- ii) Identify the ethnic boundary that exists among the Malay, Chinese and Indian pupils

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

The hypotheses is stated in Null hypothesis significant at $\alpha = 0.05$ as follows:

- i) H_0 1: There was no significant difference in social distance among the pupils in the National Primary School that consist

various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Chinese Type Schools (SJKC) and National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT).

1.4 Significance of the Study

Through this study, the problem of social distance, ethnic boundary and social interaction among Malay, Chinese and Indian pupils in four schools namely the National Primary School that consist various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Chinese Type Schools (SJKC) and National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT) were identified.

Thus, the findings can be used by the government such as Ministry of Education, State Education Department or the District Education Department in implementing any programs to reduce social distance and ethnic boundary that exist and to improve ethnic relations among pupils in multiethnic and mono-ethnic school environment. This study is intended to assist the Ministry of Education to examine the characteristics of the school environment and any action that should be taken to reduce the ethnic boundary and increasing social interaction among the various ethnic pupils in primary school. Outcome from this study can also be used by administrators and teachers to play the role to encourage ethnic relations and social interaction and thus can attenuate social distance and ethnic boundary between the various ethnic pupils and contribute to national unity.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The survey will be conducted in National School that consists of various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National School that consist of Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Chinese Type Schools (SJKC) and National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT). Each school has majority of one ethnic group such as many Malay pupils in national schools, Chinese pupils in the National Primary Chinese Type School and Indian pupils in the National Primary Tamil Type Schools. Mono-ethnic school environment may complicate the opportunities for multiethnic pupils for social interaction and this may thicken the ethnic boundary among them.

Although there are many variables that can be associated with ethnic boundary, but this study focus on the social distance that can thicken or narrow the ethnic boundary and thus affect social interaction among pupils according to their respective schools. The sample consists of pupils in Penang Island only. Findings may not be the same in other areas because of the demographic structure in Penang is different than other states. Methods of collecting data in this study is limited to a research instrument that has been formulated. The findings may also vary if other instruments is used. In addition, this study involved only a small number of sample due to time and cost constraints.

2.0 Brief Literature Review

2.1 School Environment

This research also involved the study of the school environment. Based on the context of this study, this research examined the multi-ethnic school environment that is the National Primary School that consist of various ethnic pupils (SKPE) and mono-ethnic school environment that is the National School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Chinese Type Schools (SJKC) and National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT).

2.2 Multiethnic School Environment

Multiethnic school environment istered and carry out activities with members from the same ethn Malaysia are the National Schools (SK) and National Secondary Schools (SMK). This

type of school usually consists of Malay, Chinese, Indians and other ethnic pupils. Schools that made up of various ethnic pupils will give opportunities for children to develop interaction with different ethnic groups, unlike schools attended by one ethnic group in which the child does not interact with children from different ethnic backgrounds (McGlothin, 2005). However, the population of pupils itself is not sufficient to lead to a positive relationship between friends from different ethnicity. This, in the future will lead to increased stress and conflict (Milem, 2000). For the longer term, the physical distance between the ethnic groups should be reduced (Odell et. al., 2005). A study conducted in multiethnic school environment showed that pupils tend to segregate themselves. For example, an ethnic group may define certain areas in the school as "their territory" (Romo, 1997).

2.3 Mono-ethnic School Environment

Mono-ethnic school environment is like National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT) and National Primary Chinese Type School (SJKC). Many pupils attend schools that consist of their own ethnic group (Johnston, 2004). Based on this study, there are many Chinese pupils attending SJKC, many of Indian pupils attending SJKT. Pupils in national-type schools lack exposure and opportunities for mixing with other ethnic groups (Khalim Zainal et. al., 2010; Abd. Rahim Abd.Rashid 2000, Romo 1997). Pupils from mono-ethnic environment tend to be cluic group. They also tend to choose a friend or a close friend from their own ethnic group (Sanusi Osman, 1989).

2.4 Ethnic Boundary

Ethnic boundary is a pattern of social interaction that enhance and further strengthen the self identification from people outside the group as a confirmation of the distance between the ethnic groups (Sanders, 2002). The study of ethnic boundary has received much attention from researchers in the social sciences which include Shamucl (2001), Sanders (2002), Baerveldt et al., (2004), Baerveldt (2007), Bash (2005) and Chai (2005) to mention a few. Each ethnic group has the determination of boundary to identify their characteristics. Determinations of ethnic boundary are highlighted through the patterns of interaction between ethnic groups (Andereck, 1992).

Ethnic boundary is associated with cultural elements and geographic elements (Espiritu, 1992; Alba, 1992; Waters, 1992, Nagel, 1994; Sanders, 2002). Cultural elements are often associated with social constructs of ethnic groups that show differences in cultural practices and beliefs. Social spaces in which interactions occur between ethnic groups indicate the social boundary between groups. When the interaction between ethnic groups is limited due to impact of the separation occurred such as differences in schools attended by certain ethnic groups, ethnic differences were more pronounced. Ethnic boundary is determined by the social distance between various ethnic groups (Najeemah Mohd Yusof, 2006). Social interaction between various ethnic groups is determined by the ethnic boundary. The Malaysian community which has a diversity of ethnic composition requires a good pattern of social interaction that will make the ethnic boundary thin and this can happen when everyone is in a multiethnic environment (Light, 1994; Sanders, 2000; Gold, 2000; and Najeemah Mohd Yusof, 2006). However, in primary education, pupils who study in mono-ethnic school environment, ethnic boundary among them may be thick (Light, 1994; Sanders, 2000, Gold, 2000; Hazri Jamil

et al., 2004; and Najeemah Mohd Yusof, 2006). Based on this study, the ethnic boundary to be studied in this research involves the Malay, Chinese and Indians at the primary level in the multiethnic and monoethnic school environment.

2.5 Social Distance

Social distance is one of the factors that influence ethnic boundary. Social distance is the extent and degree of understanding and closeness (Park, 1924). Social distance is a sense of social segregation or separation that actually exists between individuals, individual and groups, or groups with group (Bogardus, 1925). According to Bogardus (1925), social distance is a function of the affective distance between members of two groups. In the study of social distance, the focus of the research is the reaction of feeling by the individual to other individuals and groups of community (Bogardus, 1925). Social distance scale was introduced by Bogardus (1925) to measure the willingness of individuals engaged in social situations that involve various degrees of closeness with people from different social groups such as ethnicity.

Starting from the 1950s, social scientists have been conducting research on social distance as a measure to determine the level of prejudice among ethnic groups in American societies. These studies measured the degree in which members of each group is willing to interact with other group members (Parrillo, 2000). The study conducted in the United States found that White American who are the dominant ethnic group continuously showed a tendency to work, sitting on one side and married to other White, more than other minority ethnic groups. If given a choice to White American, they will tend to interact with more Hispanics than Blacks (Allport, 1954, Bobo & Zubinsky, 1996; Bogardus, 1959; Herring & Amisshah, 1997). The findings show that there are selections of the dominant ethnic group in the United States to build a relationship with a particular ethnic group.

Based on Allport (1954), relations between ethnic groups will have a positive impact in reducing prejudice if four conditions exist, namely the cooperation between ethnic groups, a common purpose, common ethnic group status when interaction and support from the authorities. Pettigrew (1997) updated the hypothetical relationship between the group by adding to the five conditions that the potential for friendship. Based on this hypothesis, teachers can expect the level of social distance among pupils will be reduced if pupils spend more time together at school which provides a situation of potential inter-ethnic relations, forming a common goal of requiring pupils from different ethnic groups to work together and get support from teachers and school administrators.

2.6 Contact Theory

Ethnic relations will only happen when individuals from an ethnic group have contact with individuals from other ethnic groups (Baerveldt et al., 2004). Allport (1954), Brewer and Miller (1984), Hewstone and Brown (1986), Howes and Wu (1990), Baerveldt et al., (2004) states that the relationship will reduce prejudice only with the specific situation. According to Allport (1954), this will only occur based on 4 conditions;

- I. Participants were same in status
- II. Participants have the same goal
- III. Goals can only be achieved through cooperation between the participants

IV. Integration is supported by the authorities.

Based on the description of Allport (1954), teachers need to create a situation of equality of status and implementing the group activities involving multiethnic pupils so that they have the same goals for the tasks that been given. Prejudice between ethnic groups can be reduced if they have the same goal (Patchen, 1988; Miller, 1995, Molly, 2003; Najeemah Mohd Yusof, 2006). Literature review and studies showed that social distance is an important factor affecting the ethnic boundary and social interaction among pupils in various ethnic groups in this country.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Quantitative Method

This study applied the quantitative method because a large number of pupils were involved as the sample size is huge. This method is used because it has high reliability but low cost (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009), collecting data through questionnaires take a short period, and enable the data collection process to involve a huge sample size. In this study, questionnaires were sent to schools for distribution to Year 5 class teachers for each school that has been selected to be answered by the pupils. 3.2 Sample of the Study

Stratified random sampling was used for this study. Stratified random sampling is where the population is divided into sub-populations that do not overlap (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). The researchers divided the population of standard 5 pupils in Penang based on ethnicities that is Malays, Chinese and Indian pupils. The sample also divided based on schools that is National Primary School that consist various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Chinese Type Primary Schools (SJJC) and National Tamil Type Primary Schools (SJKT). The main reason researchers use stratified random sampling is that this method has the potential to reduce sampling error (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). The samples of pupils in SKPE (Malay, Chinese, Indian) is 100 Malay pupils, 100 Chinese pupils and 100 Indian pupils. The sample of pupils in SKMS (Malay) is 100 Malay pupils. The sample of pupils in SJJC is 100 Chinese pupils and the sample of pupils in SJKT is 100 pupils. Based on stratified sampling technique, researcher divided the schools into four categories of schools namely National Primary School that consist various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Chinese Type Primary Schools (SJJC) and National Tamil Type Primary Schools (SJKT). 12 schools were selected to conduct this study.

3.3 Research Instrument

The questionnaire contains two sections that is Part A which consists of race and type of school attended by respondents. This section is important for the analysis of questionnaires based on race and type of school. The other section that is Part B contains 12 questions with the answer "Yes" or "No". The questionnaire was adapted and modified from Bogardus (1968) and Najeemah Mohd Yusof (2006). If pupils chose the answer "No", this answer represents a wide social distance between pupils of different ethnic groups and thus lead to a thick ethnic boundary.

3.4 Procedures and Quantitive Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 15.0 software on the questionnaires that have distributed to 12 schools as described previously. All completed questionnaires were collected and the answers reviewed. The data encoding process is indicated by code

numbers. Data collected from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and statistical inference. Descriptive statistics were applied to obtain the frequency, percentage and mean to each question in the questionnaire and all of the dependent variable (Gay, Mills & Airasian 2009).

Statistical inference was used to test the hypothesis. Statistical inference used in this study was Chi Square Test. Chi Square Test was also used to test the relevance of independent variables with the dependent variable is the categorical data (Coakes & Steed, 2001). All tests of statistical analysis take a significant level at .05 alpha levels. The Statistical Package for Social Science Version 15 SPSS version 15 was used to analyze the findings.

4.0 Analysis of Findings

Chi Square Test was conducted to examine whether there are differences in social distance among the pupils in SKPE, SKMS, SJKC and SJKT. Chi Square Test was used for this analysis to examine the relevance of independent variables with the dependent variable which is categorical data (Coakes & Steed, 2001).

4.1 Result of the HO 1

Ho 1: There was no significant difference in social distance among the pupils in National Primary School that consist various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Chinese Type Primary Schools (SJKC) and National Tamil Type Primary Schools (SJKT).

Situation 1: I like to sit next to friends from other ethnic group
 Table 4.1: I Like To Sit Next To Friends from Other Ethnic Group*School Category

		School Category					
		SKPE	SKMS	SJJC	SJKT	Total	
Yes	Count	171	31	62	91	355	
I like to sit next to friends from other ethnic group	% I like to sit next to friends from other ethnic group	48.2%	8.7%	17.5%	25.6%	100.0%	
	% School Category	57.0%	31.0%	62.0%	91.0%	59.2%	
	% from total	28.5%	5.2%	10.3%	15.2%	59.2%	
No	Count	129	69	38	9	245	
	% I like to sit next to friends from other ethnic group	52.7%	28.2%	15.5%	3.7%	100.0%	
	% School Category	43.0%	69.0%	38.0%	9.0%	40.8%	
	% from total	21.5%	11.5%	6.3%	1.5%	40.8%	
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600	
	% I like to sit next to friends from other ethnic group	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%	
	% School Category	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%	

Table 4.2: Chi Square Test of I Like Sit Next to Friend from other Ethnic Group* School

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	75.698	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	84.366	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	27.526	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.2, the result of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 75,698$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation "I like to sit next to friends of other ethnic group" between the four school categories. Based on Table 4.1, the highest number of pupils who answered "Yes" to the situation above is from the SJKT that is 91.0% of the

total SJKT pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils that answered "Yes" is SKMS that is only 31.0% of total SMKS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKT like to sit next to friends from other ethnic group based on school categories than pupils from SKMS.

Situation 2: I like if my neighbor is from other ethnic group

Table 4.3: I Like If My Neighbor from Other Ethnic Group* School Category

		School Category					
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total	
Yes	Count	164	43	72	93	372	
I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	% I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	44.1%	11.6%	19.4%	25.0%	100.0%	
	% school categories	54.7%	43.0%	72.0%	93.0%	62.0%	
	% from total	27.3%	7.2%	12.0%	15.5%	62.0%	
No	Count	136	57	28	7	228	
	% I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	59.6%	25.0%	12.3%	3.1%	100.0%	
	% school categories	45.3%	57.0%	28.0%	7.0%	38.0%	
	% from total	22.7%	9.5%	4.7%	1.2%	38.0%	
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600	
	% I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%	
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%	

Table 4.4: Chi Square Test of I Like If My Neighbor from Other Ethnic Group* School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	67.204	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	77.624	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	46.802	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.4, the result of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 67,204$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation of "I like if my neighbor from other ethnic group" between the four categories of schools. Based on Table 4.3, the number of pupils who most answered "Yes" to the situation above is from the SJKT that is 93.0% of the total

SJKT pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils that answering "Yes" is SKMS that is only 43.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKT like if their neighbor from other ethnic based on school categories than pupils from SKMS.

Situation 3: I'm willing if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic group.

Table 4.5: I'm Willing If Necessary to Share a Room with Friends from Other Ethnic Group *School Category

		School Category				
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total
Yes	Count	164	43	72	93	372
I'm willing if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic group	% I'm willing if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic group	44.1%	11.6%	19.4%	25.0%	100.0%
	% school categories	54.7%	43.0%	72.0%	93.0%	62.0%
	% from total	27.3%	7.2%	12.0%	15.5%	62.0%
No	Count	136	57	28	7	228
	% I'm willing if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic group	59.6%	25.0%	12.3%	3.1%	100.0%
	% school categories	45.3%	57.0%	28.0%	7.0%	38.0%
	% from total	22.7%	9.5%	4.7%	1.2%	38.0%
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600
	% I'm willing if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic group	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Table 4.6: Chi Square Test of I'm Willing If Necessary to Share a Room with Friends from Other Ethnic Group *School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.642	3	.009
Likelihood Ratio	11.697	3	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	.998	1	.318
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.6, the results of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 11,642$, $df = 3$, $.009 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation of "I'm willing if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic group" among the four categories of schools. Based on Table 4.5, the highest number of pupils who answered "Yes" to the situation

above is from the SJKT that is 55.0% of the total SJKT pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils that answering "Yes" is SKMS of only 33.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKT like if necessary to share a room with friends from other ethnic based on school categories than pupils from

Situation 4: I am willing join the associations that have many members from other ethnic group.

Table 4.7: I Am Willing To Join the Associations That Have Many Members from Other Ethnic Group * School Categories

		School Category				
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total
Yes	Count	169	51	76	67	363
I am willing to join the associations that have many members from other ethnic group.	% I am willing to join the associations that have many members from other ethnic group.	46.6%	14.0%	20.0%	18.5%	100.0%
	% school categories	56.3%	51.0%	76.0%	67.0%	60.5%
	% from total	28.2%	8.5%	12.7%	11.2%	60.5%
No	Count	131	49	24	33	237
	% I am willing to join the associations that have many members from other ethnic group.	55.3%	20.7%	10.1%	13.9%	100.0%
	% school categories	43.7%	49.0%	24.0%	33.0%	39.5%
	% from total	21.8%	8.2%	4.0%	5.5%	39.5%
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600
	% I am willing to join the associations that have many members from other ethnic group	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Table 4.8: Chi Square Test of I Am Willing To Join the Associations That Have Many Members from Other Ethnic Group* School

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.777	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	18.415	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.778	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.8, the result of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 17,777$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation "I am willing to join the association that have many other ethnic" between the four school categories. Based on Table 4.7, the highest number of pupils who

answered "Yes" to the situation above is from SJKC that is 76.0% of the total SJKC pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of school pupils that answering "Yes" is SKMS of only 51.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKC most willing to join the

Situation 5: I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic

Table 4.9: I Am Willing To Carry Out the Associations Activities with Friend from Other Ethnic *School Categories

		School Category				
		SKPE	SKMS	SJJC	SJKT	Total
Yes	Count	201	61	85	87	434
I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic .	% I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	46.3%	14.1%	19.6%	20.0%	100.0%
	% school categories	67.0%	61.0%	85.0%	87.0%	72.3%
	% from total	33.5%	10.2%	14.2%	14.5%	72.3%
No	Count	99	39	15	13	166
I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	% I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other ethnic	59.6%	23.5%	9.0%	7.8%	100.0%
	% school categories	33.0%	39.0%	15.0%	13.0%	27.7%
	% from total	16.5%	6.5%	2.5%	2.2%	27.7%
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600
	% I am willing to carry out the associations activities with friend from other	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Table 4.10: Chi Square Test of I Am Willing To Carry Out the Associations Activities with Friend from Other Ethnic *School Categories

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.449	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	31.657	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	20.977	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	600		

Situation 6: I'm willing if necessary to eat at places that have many other ethnic.

Table 4.11: I'm Willing If Necessary to Eat at Places That Have Many Other Ethnic* School Category

		School Category				
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total
Yes	Count	192	25	76	49	342
I'm willing if necessary to eat at places that have many other ethnic	% I'm willing if necessary to eat at places that have many other ethnic	56.1%	7.3%	22.2%	14.3%	100.0%
	% school categories	64.0%	25.0%	76.0%	49.0%	57.0%
	% from total	32.0%	4.2%	12.7%	8.2%	57.0%
No	Count	108	75	24	51	258
	% I'm willing if necessary to eat at places that have many other ethnic	41.9%	29.1%	9.3%	19.8%	100.0%
	% school categories	36.0%	75.0%	24.0%	51.0%	43.0%
	% from total	18.0%	12.5%	4.0%	8.5%	43.0%
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600
	% I'm willing if necessary to eat at places that have many other ethnic	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Table 4.12: Chi Square Test of I'm Willing If Necessary to Eat at Places That Have Many Other Ethnic* School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	65.116	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	66.655	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.65	1	.199
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.12, the results of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 65,116$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation "I'm willing if necessary to eat at places that have many other ethnic" between the four categories of schools. Based on Table 4.11, the highest number of pupils who answered "Yes" to the situation above is

from SJKC that is 76.0% of the total SJKC pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils that answering "Yes" is SKMS that only 25.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SKPE most willing if necessary to eat at a place that have many other ethnic based on school category than pupils from SKMS.

Situation 7: I am willing if necessary to help a friend who had problems from other ethnic group

Table 4:13: I Am Willing If Necessary To Help A Friend Who Had Problems from Other Ethnic Group* School Category

		School Category					
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total	
Yes	Count	261	83	94	74	512	
I am willing if necessary to help a friend who had problems from other ethnic group	% I am willing if necessary to help a friend who had problems from other ethnic group	51.0%	16.2%	18.4%	14.5%	100.0%	
	% school categories	87.0%	83.0%	94.0%	74.0%	85.3%	
	% from total	43.5%	13.8%	15.7%	12.3%	85.3%	
No	Count	39	17	6	26	88	
	% I am willing if necessary to help a friend who had problems from other ethnic group	44.3%	19.3%	6.8%	29.5%	100.0%	
	% school categories	13.0%	17.0%	6.0%	26.0%	14.7%	
	% from total	6.5%	2.8%	1.0%	4.3%	14.7%	
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600	
	% I am willing if necessary to help a friend who had problems from other ethnic group	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%	
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%	

Table 4.14: Chi Square Test of I Am Willing If Necessary To Help A Friend Who Had Problems from Other Ethnic Group* School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.365	3	.001
Likelihood Ratio	17.246	3	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.6	1	.058
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on table 4:14, the result of Chi Square test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 17,365, df = 3, .001 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation "I'm willing if necessary to help a friends who had problems from other ethnic group " between the four categories of schools. Based on table 4:13, the largest number of pupils who answered "Yes" to the situation

above is from the SJKC that is 94.0% of the total SJKC pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils answering "Yes" to the situation above is from SJKT that is only 74.0% of total SJKT pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKC most willing if necessary to help a friend who had problems from other ethnic group based

Situation 8: I like to make friends with someone from other ethnic
Table 4.15: I Like To Make Friends with Someone from Other Ethnic* School Category

		School Category				
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total
Yes	Count	231	59	78	88	456
I like to make friends with someone from other ethnic	% I like to make friends with someone from other ethnic	50.7%	12.9%	17.1%	19.3%	100.0%
	% school categories	77.0%	59.0%	78.0%	88.0%	76.0%
	% from total	38.5%	9.8%	13.0%	14.7%	76.0%
No	Count	69	41	22	12	88
	% I like to make friends with someone from other ethnic	47.9%	28.5%	15.3%	8.3%	100.0%
	% school categories	23.0%	41.0%	22.0%	12.0%	24.0%
	% from total	11.5%	6.8%	3.7%	2.0%	24.0%
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600
	% I like to make friends with someone from other ethnic	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Table 4.16: Table 4.39: Chi Square Test of I Like To Make Friend with Someone from Other Ethnic* School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.123	3	.001
Likelihood Ratio	23.592	3	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.619	1	.057
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4:16, the results of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 24,123$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation of "I like to make friends with someone from other ethnic" between the four categories of schools. Based on table 4.15, the largest number of pupils who answered "Yes" to the situation above is from SJKT that

is 88.0% of the total SJKT pupils involved in this study. The lowest pupils answering "Yes" to the situation above is from SKMS that is only 59.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKT most like to make friends with someone from other ethnic based on school categories than pupils from SKMS.

Situation 9: I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity.

Table 4.17: I Choose Friends Because Of the Goodness and Courtliness Not Because Of Their Ethnicity * School Category

		School Category					
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total	
Yes	Count	243	84	78	81	468	
I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity.	% I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity.	50.0%	17.3%	16.0%	16.7%	100.0%	
	% school categories	81.0%	84.0%	78.0%	81.0%	81.0%	
	% from total	40.5%	14.0%	13.0%	13.5%	81.0%	
No	Count	57	16	22	19	114	
	% I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity.	50.0%	14.0%	19.3%	16.7%	100.0%	
	% school categories	19.0%	16.0%	22.0%	12.0%	19.0%	
	% from total	9.5%	2.7%	3.7%	3.2%	19.0%	
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600	
	% I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity.	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%	
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%	

Table 4.18: Chi Square Test of I Choose Friends Because Of the Goodness and Courtliness Not Because Of Their Ethnicity * School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.17	3	.760
Likelihood Ratio	1.174	3	.759
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.073	1	.787
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4:18, the results of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 1170, df = 3, .760 > .05$) indicates that there is no significant difference in the situation "I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity" between the four categories of schools. Based on Table

4.17, each school showing the total percentage is more or less the same for this situation is from 78.0% to 84.0%. This means there is no significant difference in the situation of "I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of their ethnicity" between pupils in SKPE, SKMS, SJKC and SJKT.

Situation 10: I like to talk about myself to friends from other ethnic

Table 4.19: I Like To Talk About Myself to Friends from Other Ethnic* School Category

		School Category				
		SKPE	SKMS	SJJC	SJKT	Total
Yes	Count	130	38	56	56	280
I like to talk about myself to friends from other ethnic	% I like to talk about myself to friends from other ethnic	46.4%	13.6%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	% school categories	43.3%	38.0%	56.0%	56.0%	46.7%
	% from total	21.7%	6.3%	9.3%	9.3%	46.7%
No	Count	170	62	44	44	320
	% I like to talk about myself to friends from other ethnic	53.1%	19.4%	13.8%	13.8%	100.0%
	% school categories	56.7%	62.0%	44.0%	44.0%	53.3%
	% from total	28.3%	10.3%	7.3%	7.3%	53.3%
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600
	% I like to talk about myself to friends from other ethnic	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

Table 4.20: Chi Square Test of I Like To Talk About Myself to Friends from Other Ethnic* School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.357	3	.010
Likelihood Ratio	11.384	3	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.24	1	.007
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.20, the results of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 11,357$, $df = 3$, $.010 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation of "I like to talk about myself to friend from other ethnic" between the four categories of schools. Based on Table 4.19, the number of pupils who most answered "Yes" to the situation above is the SJKC and

SJKT that is 56.0% of the total SJKC and SJKT pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils answering "Yes" to the situation above is from SKMS that is only 38.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study was conducted, pupils from SJKC and SJKT most like to talk about their self to friends from other ethnic based

Situation 11: I like to share secrets with friend from other ethnic
 Table 4.21: I Like To Share Secrets with Friend from other Ethnic* School Category

		School Category					
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total	
Yes	Count	84	14	23	35	156	
I like to share secrets with friend from other ethnic	% I like to share secrets with friend from other ethnic	53.8%	9.0%	14.7%	22.4%	100.0%	
	% school categories	28.0%	14.0%	23.0%	35.0%	26.0%	
	% from total	14.0%	2.3%	3.8%	5.8%	26.0%	
No	Count	216	86	77	65	444	
	% I like to share secrets with friend from other ethnic	48.6%	19.4%	17.3%	14.6%	100.0%	
	% school categories	72.0%	86.0%	77.0%	65.0%	74.0%	
	% from total	36.0%	14.3%	12.8%	10.8%	74.0%	
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600	
	% I like to share secrets with friend from other ethnic	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%	
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%	

Table 4.22: Chi Square Test of I Like To Share Secrets with Friend from other Ethnic* School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.786	3	.005
Likelihood Ratio	13.559	3	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.525	1	.469
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.22, the results of Chi Square Test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 12,786$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation of "I like to share secrets with friend from other" between the four school categories. Based on Table 4.21, number of pupils who most answered "Yes" to the situation above is from SJKT that is 35.0% of the total SJKT

pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils answering "Yes" to the situation above is from SKMS that is only 14.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SKPE most like to share a secret with a friend of from other ethnic based on school categories than pupils from SKMS.

Situation 12: I always go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic

Table 4.25: I Always Go To the Canteen with Friends from Other Ethnic*School Category

		School Category					
		SKPE	SKMS	SJKC	SJKT	Total	
Yes	Count	153	13	52	61	279	
I always go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic	% I always go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic	54.8%	4.7%	18.6%	21.9%	100.0%	
	% school categories	51.0%	13.0%	52.0%	61.0%	46.5%	
	% from total	25.5%	2.2%	8.7%	10.2%	46.5%	
No	Count	147	87	48	39	444	
	% I always go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic	45.8%	27.1%	15.0%	12.1%	100.0%	
	% school categories	49.0%	87.0%	48.0%	39.0%	53.5%	
	% from total	24.5%	14.5%	8.0%	6.5%	53.5%	
Total	Count	300	100	100	100	600	
	% I always go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100%	
	% school categories	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% from total	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%	

Table 4.26: Chi Square Test of I Always Go To the Canteen with Friends from Other Ethnic*School Category

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	57.22	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	63.57	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.212	1	.137
N of Valid Cases	600		

Based on Table 4.26, the results of Chi Square test (Pearson Chi-Square) above ($\chi^2 = 57,220$, $df = 3$, $.00 < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in the situation "I always go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic" between the four school categories. Based on Table 4.25, number of pupils who most answered "Yes" to the situation above is from the SJKT that is 61.0% of the total SJKT pupils involved in this study. The lowest number of pupils answering "Yes" to the situation above is from SKMS that is only 13.0% of total SKMS pupils involved in this study. This means significantly, in the population of this study, pupils from SJKT most often go to the canteen with friends from other ethnic based on school categories then pupils from SKMS.

Based on the analysis, Chi Square Test of 12 questions of the Social Distance, researcher found that there is only one question that has not been significant in the situation of "I choose friends because of the goodness and courtliness not because of ethnicity". The results indicate that no significant difference among pupils in SKPE, SKMS, SJKC and SJKT. But 11 questions on social distance showed the significant results. These results indicate that there are significant differences in social distance among the pupils in SKPE, SKMS, SJKC and SJKT.

Overall, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there are no significant differences in social distance among the pupils in National Primary School that consist various ethnic pupils (SKPE), National Primary School that consist Malay pupils (SKMS), National Primary Chinese Type Schools (SJKC) and National Primary Tamil Type Schools (SJKT).

5.0 Discussion of Findings and Implications

Overall, the study of social distances among the pupils in SKPE, SKMS, SJKC and SJKT showed that pupils from SJKT willing to be together with other ethnic groups. This study is consistent with studies conducted by Odell (2005), using the Bogardus Social Distance Scale (1959) has been modified, showed that by creating opportunities for building friendships across ethnic groups is one strategy that could lead to a significant reduction in the levels of social distance in undergraduate ethnic pupils. This is because although the school environment is monoethnic such as in SJKT, there are many activities that provide opportunities for pupils from SJKT to interact with other ethnic pupils from SK and SJKC such as in sports and camping activities. Opportunities to interact and role in promoting ethnic relations played by teachers reduced the social distance among the pupils of SJKT. This study is also consistent with studies carried out by Allport (1954), which expresses the relationship between the ethnic groups will have a positive impact in reducing prejudice if four conditions exist, namely the cooperation between ethnic groups, a common purpose, common ethnic group status as interact and support from the authorities.

Pupils from SJKT showed narrow social distance than pupils from SKPE, SKMS and SJKC. The narrow social distance indicates that the Indian pupils from SJKT are willing to do any activity with other ethnic friends. The social distance is narrow among the pupils in SJKT is caused by the role played by teachers and administrators in providing exposure to pupils through various activities organized in schools to encourage ethnic relations and thus thinning the ethnic boundary. The wide social distance is

shown by the pupils of SKMS that are not willing to do any activities with friend from other ethnic. The wide social distance among the pupils in SKMS is due to the lack of role played by teachers in organizing various activities to expose pupils to interact with different ethnic groups.

5.3 Conclusion

This study describes in detail the social distance and ethnic boundary among the pupils at SK, SJKC and SJKT. This study proved that social distance between pupils is still wide. Pupils are still not willing to do daily activities with friends of different ethnicity. However, the narrow social distance shown by the pupils from SJKT proved that teachers play a very important part in instilling positive attitudes and also implement various activities with friends of different ethnicity. Pupils should be placed in multiethnic school environment from an early age so that social interaction can take place and unity be achieved in a plural society like Malaysia.

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