

## Teacher Perceptions of Multicultural Education and Diversity Values in the School Environment

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**Abstract:** *A comprehensive education system is essential to promote peace in a diverse, multicultural society. Teachers have a critical role in organizing the classroom environment, and it is vital to understand their perceptions of Multiculturalism and the extent to which educational programs adopt multicultural principles. This study investigated teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and diversity and evaluated their awareness of these issues. A qualitative research design with case studies was used, and six teachers from an elementary school in Surabaya were deliberately selected for this study. The data were collected through interviews, observation, and document analysis, and the results were analyzed using content analysis techniques. This study found that teachers have adequate knowledge about multicultural education and a positive attitude toward it. However, their understanding and prejudices related to specific concepts still need more. In addition, the inclusiveness of Multiculturalism in annual plans and teaching programs still needs to be improved. Learning transformation is required that encourages active student collaboration, such as the project-based learning (PjBL) model.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher Perception, Multicultural Education, Diversity Values*

**Abstrak:** *Sistem pendidikan yang komprehensif sangat penting untuk mempromosikan perdamaian ditengah masyarakat yang beragam dan multikultural. Guru memiliki peran penting dalam mengatur lingkungan kelas, dan sangat penting untuk memahami persepsi mereka tentang multikulturalisme dan sejauh mana program pendidikan mengadopsi prinsip-prinsip multikultural. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki persepsi guru tentang pendidikan multikultural dan keragaman serta mengevaluasi kesadaran mereka terhadap isu-isu tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif dengan studi kasus, dan enam guru dari sebuah sekolah dasar di Surabaya dipilih secara sengaja untuk penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, dan hasilnya dianalisis dengan menggunakan teknik analisis isi. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa para guru memiliki pengetahuan yang memadai tentang pendidikan multikultural dan sikap yang positif terhadap pendidikan multikultural. Namun, masih ada kesenjangan dalam pemahaman dan prasangka mereka terkait dengan konsep-konsep tertentu. Selain itu, inklusivitas*

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*multikulturalisme dalam rencana tahunan dan program pengajaran masih belum memadai. Untuk menjawab kesenjangan ini, diperlukan transformasi pembelajaran yang mendorong kolaborasi aktif mahasiswa, seperti model pembelajaran berbasis proyek (project-based learning/PjBL).*

**Kata Kunci:** *Persepsi Guru, Pendidikan Multikultural, Nilai-nilai Keberagaman*

## **Introduction**

Multicultural education is free because it promotes equality, understanding, and acceptance of cultural and ethnic differences (Gerson, 2020). By recognizing and valuing diversity, multicultural education aims to create an inclusive learning environment that supports all students, regardless of their background. This education can help students develop empathy and respect for others, increasing social cohesion and harmony. In addition, multicultural education encourages students to learn about cultural and social diversity and helps them develop the necessary knowledge and skills to understand and challenge racism, discrimination, and prejudice (Agirdag et al., 2016). Through critical thinking and research, multicultural education can encourage students to question their assumptions and biases and challenge the status quo (Hazaea, 2020). Thus, multicultural education is essential in today's global and diverse society. Multicultural education can help create a more just, equal, and harmonious world by embracing and respecting cultural differences.

Liu (2022) explains that multicultural education is a policy and practice that aims to recognize and respect the cultural and ethnic differences of students in schools. This involves incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences into educational materials and organizational structures. The goal of multicultural education is to provide equal opportunities in education for students from different cultural backgrounds, to help students acquire knowledge, skills, and behaviours that will enable them to participate in a democratic society and to cultivate positive values such as empathy, respect, and tolerance towards others (Gonzales, 2017). Multicultural education includes promoting equality and excellence in education, cultivating social awareness and cultural literacy, developing basic skills, and promoting personal growth and development. Multicultural education benefits students from different backgrounds and the entire school community by creating a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment (Budirahayu & Saud, 2020; Kim, 2021).

The successful implementation of a multicultural education program requires careful planning and consideration of the unique needs and perspectives of students from different backgrounds. This includes setting clear learning goals and targets, selecting appropriate materials and activities and learning activities, and using assessment tools that reflect the values and goals of multicultural education (Diem & Abdullah, 2020). A constructivist approach to learning, which emphasizes the importance of active engagement and collaboration, is well suited to support multicultural education. By creating opportunities for students to interact with each other and explore different perspectives, multicultural education programs can help students to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural differences (Angreani & Vijaya, 2017).

The report shows positive results from implementing multicultural education in Indonesia, such as increasing students' awareness and understanding of cultural differences, intercultural skills, and participation in intercultural activities. However, to succeed, multicultural education must be systematically integrated into the curriculum and supported by adequate teacher training (Abdurrahmansyah, 2017; Jayadi et al., 2022; Warsah, 2017). Multicultural education programs can promote understanding, respect, and acceptance of cultural differences and create a more equitable and inclusive learning environment for all students.

The role of the teacher in promoting multicultural education must be considered. Teachers are responsible for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that recognizes and accepts diversity and fosters understanding and respect among students from different cultural backgrounds. However, many teachers need more cultural competencies to teach effectively in multicultural classrooms. With an understanding of their students' unique experiences and perspectives, teachers may inadvertently maintain stereotypes or use effective teaching strategies for certain groups of students.

Providing ongoing training and support to teachers in cultural sensitivity and competency is essential to address this challenge. This includes developing awareness of their cultural biases and assumptions and effective learning strategies to engage students from different backgrounds (Blum, 2021; Hordósy, 2021).

In addition, it is essential to ensure that teachers have access to culturally relevant teaching materials and resources and that they can adapt their instruction to

meet the needs of all students, regardless of their cultural background. By supporting teachers in promoting multicultural education, we can create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students and help build a more just and compassionate society (Hariyadi, 2020).

These principles provide a valuable framework for educators and policymakers to ensure that multicultural education is correctly implemented in schools. Multicultural education is not only about adding diverse material to the curriculum but is a comprehensive approach that recognizes and values student diversity and integrates it into every aspect of teaching and learning (Ford et al., 1996; Hordósy, 2021). Teachers must be willing to continually reflect on their own cultural biases and assumptions to interact effectively with students from different backgrounds. In addition, the evaluation of multicultural education does not only focus on academic results but also on its contribution to building a more inclusive and socially just society.

There is a need for awareness raising and implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia. Teachers must be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach effectively to students from diverse backgrounds, and educational programs must incorporate multicultural principles to ensure that all students have equal opportunities for academic success and personal development (Stone, 2006). Penelitian lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk menentukan persepsi guru terhadap multikulturalisme di Indonesia, serta untuk menganalisis sejauh mana program pendidikan benar-benar mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip tersebut. Hanya melalui peningkatan kesadaran, pelatihan, dan implementasi, Indonesia dapat mencapai sistem pendidikan yang komprehensif yang mempromosikan perdamaian dan inklusi bagi semua siswa (Thoyib, 2020).

Further research is needed to determine teachers' perceptions of Multiculturalism in Indonesia and to analyze the extent to which educational programs truly integrate these principles. Only through awareness-raising, training, and implementation can Indonesia achieve a comprehensive education system that promotes peace and inclusion for all students.

## **Multicultural Education in the Era of Globalization**

The concept of multicultural education, as explained by the experts above, involves recognition of cultural, social, and political realities in society and reflects the importance of ethnicity, culture, religion, race, sexuality, gender, social and economic status, as well as exceptions in the educational process. It is a process of developing the human potential that values and respects the dignity of individuals regardless of their cultural or ethnic background. Multicultural education also aims to provide equal opportunities for academic achievement for students from diverse backgrounds, including students with special needs. In addition, it involves providing competencies that enable individuals to accept and understand cultural differences that influence individual behaviour, social norms, customs, and traditions. Multicultural education has a vital role in the era of globalization. In this era, the rapid growth of technology and transportation has made it easier for people to move from one country to another. This causes society to become more diverse in terms of culture, ethnicity, and religion. Therefore, multicultural education is needed to help individuals understand these differences and learn to accept and appreciate the existing diversity. (Spiteri, 2016). Multicultural education also helps reduce discrimination and conflicts caused by cultural, religious, and racial differences. Through multicultural education, individuals will be trained to understand other people's perspectives and acquire communication skills with people of different cultures and languages (Villanueva, 2022). This can reduce misunderstandings and improve relationships between individuals from diverse backgrounds. In addition, multicultural education also helps increase understanding of the complexity of social problems such as poverty, crime, and war. In a multicultural environment, individuals can learn about the history and cultural context of the problem so that they can understand the perspectives of others and find solutions together.

Overall, multicultural education is essential in the era of globalization because it can help individuals to understand and appreciate diversity, reduce discrimination and conflict, and increase understanding of the complexity of social problems.

### **Multicultural Education Goals**

In the context of teaching, multicultural education is provided to enhance students' understanding of cultural and social diversity, promote appreciation and respect for differences, develop cross-cultural communication skills, and prepare students to become influential global citizens (Budirahayu & Saud, 2020). These goals can be achieved in several ways, including providing equal access to resources, learning materials, and school facilities, a learning environment that is friendly, inclusive, and open to all students, encouraging active participation of students in learning, and providing constructive feedback to students. Each student and ensure that assignments and assessments are carried out fairly and to the potential of each student.

### **Principles of Multicultural Education**

Multicultural education in the context of teaching in schools refers to an educational approach that recognizes students' cultural diversity and backgrounds in the curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom practices (Soekmono & Ningtyas, 2020). The principles of multicultural education in teaching in schools, according to Sleeter, C. E., & Grant, C. A. (2019), include:

- a. Anti-discrimination education.
- b. Reflective learning.
- c. Collaborative learning.
- d. The use of various learning methods
- e. Inclusive content and learning materials

### **Research Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach with 10 elementary school teachers who teach in multicultural schools in a city in Indonesia. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling method based on their willingness to participate in the research and their experience teaching multicultural classrooms. They are between 25-50 years old and have 2-25 years of teaching experience. They come from different ethnic backgrounds and have different levels of English proficiency.

The sample size is appropriate for qualitative case studies as it allows in-depth analysis of the collected data. The study group for this research consisted of 6 teachers

working in an elementary school in Surabaya during the 2021-2022 school year. Researchers used a purposive sampling technique to select participants who have the potential to provide information related to research questions. The selection process considers teachers' tenure, age group, and ethnic origin. Qualitative studies generally deal with a small number of people or events, from one or two individuals to larger groups of about twenty to thirty subjects, because the researcher needs to provide detailed information for each person or event. The reason for choosing a particular school is its multicultural structure, which includes factors as varied as race, ethnicity, language, gender, age, disability, social class, and religion. In addition, the proximity of schools to cosmopolitan areas and the quality of the information received from school administrators regarding the general profile of students proved helpful in this study.

This study aims to analyze the extent to which multicultural elements have been integrated into the annual plans of classroom teachers completing undergraduate classroom teacher education programs in Indonesia. The study group consisted of six classroom teachers (two boys and four girls), all Muslim and aged 5 to 19 years of teaching experience. Data was collected through consent forms, demographic information forms, observation forms, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis.

The data collected was analyzed using content analysis, which involves summarizing and interpreting data based on predetermined themes or topic titles. To increase internal reliability, the researchers collected various data and based their findings on an analysis of observations, teacher opinions, and documents. The validity and reliability of the study are also enhanced through the triangulation of the collected data.

## **Results and Discussion**

This study collected data through interviews, observations, and examination of annual plans. The findings are then organized into eleven main themes. These themes cover teachers' knowledge and thoughts about multicultural education, their ability to describe their students, their thoughts about the school atmosphere, and what teachers can do to implement multicultural education. These themes are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Themes and Categories Data Analysis**

Themes	Categories
1. The viewpoint of the teacher regarding education that incorporates diversity.	1.1. The actual level of knowledge the teacher possesses on the subject. 1.2. The teacher believes that multicultural education is necessary for the curriculum. 1.3. Concerns that the teacher may have regarding multicultural education.
2. The teacher's evaluation of their abilities regarding promoting Multiculturalism and its impact.	2.1. The teacher's thoughts and opinions are independent of others. 2.2. The teacher's capacity to recognize and describe students, including their cultural backgrounds. 2.3. The teacher's opinions on the school and classroom environment.
3. Recommendations concerning education that encompasses diverse cultures.	3.1. The actions that teachers can take to aid the implementation of multicultural education. 3.2. Strategies can be employed to support students with diverse native or minority languages. 3.3. Adjustments can be made to teaching methods to account for cultural differences. 3.4. The potential for in-service teacher training to improve knowledge and skills related to multicultural education.
4. The suitability of teachers' yearly plans about including multicultural components	

### Teacher Opinions about Multicultural Education

Interestingly, all the teachers interviewed in this study agreed on the need for multicultural education. They believe respecting cultural differences and creating a more unified society is essential. However, there are differences of opinion regarding the potential fears that may arise in implementing multicultural education. Some teachers express concern about problems arising from students' family backgrounds. In contrast, others believe that teachers can overcome problems by creating an appropriate learning environment and paying attention to their words in class. In general, multicultural education's success depends heavily on teachers' attitudes and efforts, and in-service training may be needed to help teachers implement this kind of education in their classrooms.



### **Teacher Self-Assessment of Multicultural Education and its Impact**

Teacher evaluations of multicultural education were analyzed through several questions. Regarding their thoughts, the teachers saw themselves as competent in implementing teaching approaches appropriate for multicultural education needs. They did not discriminate in their thoughts or actions and saw their students first and foremost as humans and children. However, some teachers felt they needed to improve their topic knowledge. Regarding their ability to describe/recognize their students, five teachers stated they could do so quite well, while one felt inadequate. Those who felt they could describe their students had gathered detailed profiles of their students through home visits, parent-teacher meetings, and studying information on student identification cards.

Regarding the school and classroom environment, three teachers felt the environment was suitable for multicultural education, while three others felt it was not. Those who felt the environment was not suitable cited reasons such as large class size, low level of parental education, and the possibility of students dividing themselves into groups based on race or ethnicity. One teacher who believed the school and classroom environment was suitable stated that the curriculum was comprehensive and included all cultures. In contrast, other teachers thought introducing multicultural education could lead to discrimination.

### **Suggestions Related to Multicultural Education**

In response to the questions asked, the teachers suggested various ways to support multicultural education. Some teachers emphasized the need to communicate with students' families and observe their living conditions. Others suggested creating a sharing relationship between parents and teachers at all times, obtaining valuable information about families through parent observation forms, and having students make presentations and videos to help teachers understand their real lives. However, one teacher stated that cultural backgrounds were not interesting to him, and he needed to do something specifically to understand them.

Regarding things that can be done for students who speak different native/minority languages, four teachers suggested that students should be able to receive instruction in their mother tongue. In contrast, another teacher emphasized the importance of using a common language in education, stating that using more than

one language can cause national disintegration. Two teachers suggested that it is essential to approach students who speak different languages with understanding and use gestures and mimicry to achieve the same understanding.

Regarding adjusting teaching methods, five teachers suggested using different teaching techniques and methods for groups of students from different cultures. Some teachers believe that multicultural elements can only be added as topics in subjects such as Life Science and Social Science, while others suggest that multicultural elements can be spread across various subjects in the curriculum. One teacher stated that the curriculum taught in schools is already designed in such a way that it includes all cultures, and there is no need for different methods or techniques.

The teachers' views on multicultural education are diverse. Some teachers believe that to support multicultural education, they need to communicate with students' families and observe their living conditions, while others suggest travelling or using homework to gain a better understanding of their students. On the other hand, some teachers believe that cultural backgrounds are not interesting to them because they feel that this situation prevents discrimination in their actions.

Regarding students who speak different native or minority languages, some teachers suggested that these students should receive instruction in their language. In contrast, others believe that Indonesian should be used in education to prevent national disintegration. Some teachers suggested approaching students who speak a different language with understanding and using gestures and mimicry or playing games to achieve the same understanding.

Regarding adapting teaching methods, some teachers believe it is necessary to use different teaching techniques and methods for groups of students from different cultures. Multicultural elements can be added as subjects such as Life Science and Social Science, or Multiculturalism can be taught through elective subjects. One teacher believes that the school curriculum already includes all cultures, and there is no need for different methods or techniques.

### **Lesson Plan, which refers to Multiculturalism**

Many studies emphasize the analysis of lesson plans used by teachers who teach different classes in the first, second, third, and fourth grades. The analysis focuses on

the number of learning objectives, activities, and types of evaluation and assessment, with a particular emphasis on multicultural elements. The teachers indicate that the lesson plans are developed collectively, and they strive to remain focused on the learning objectives, activities, and criteria for evaluation and assessment included in them.

The researchers focused on four main subjects based on pre-interviews conducted with the teachers. For the first three years of elementary school, Science is included in the scope of thematic subjects, so the analysis of lesson plans for separate Science and Technology classes is only done for fourth grade. The analysis results are presented in Table 2, which shows how much the lesson plans at each grade level emphasize multicultural elements.

**Table 2. Lesson plan analysis related to multicultural elements**

Grade	Thematic Lessons	f	Example
Grade I	Learning achievement targets	86	
	The number of learning objectives that emphasize Multiculturalism.	7	Similarities and differences in classmates' characteristics.
	Several activities.	77	
	The number of learning achievements that emphasize Multiculturalism.	7	Our similarities and differences
	Assessment and evaluation types.		Based on observation, filling in the blanks, true/false, multiple choice, short answer, oral presentations, and self-evaluation
	Assessment and evaluation methods that emphasize Multiculturalism.		Evaluation using a self-evaluation rubric
Grade II	Number of learning achievements	95	
	Number of learning objectives emphasizing Multiculturalism	7	Participation in school and class elections contributes to the culture of democracy.
	Number of activities	92	
	Number of activities emphasizing Multiculturalism	7	Democracy in school
	Types of Assessment and Evaluation		Assessment and evaluation include observation, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, multiple choice, short answer, oral presentation, and self-evaluation.
	Methods that emphasize Multiculturalism		Evaluation is done using a self-evaluation form
Grade III	Number of learning achievements	111	
	Number of learning objectives emphasizing Multiculturalism	8	The practice of democracy is debated with enthusiasm supported by examples from school life.
	Number of activities	105	

	Number of activities emphasizing Multiculturalism	8	It is okay to be different
	Types of Assessment and Evaluation		Assessment includes observation, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, oral presentations, and self-evaluation.
	Methods emphasizing Multiculturalism		The evaluation uses a self-assessment rubric
Grade IV	Number of learning achievements	46	
	Several learning goals that emphasize Multiculturalism.	7	To meet the feelings and thoughts of others with respect.
	Number of activities	39	
	Several activities emphasize Multiculturalism.	7	We respect the feelings and thoughts of others.
	Type of assessment and evaluation.		
	Methods that emphasize Multiculturalism		Evaluation using a self-evaluation rubric

Based on the analysis of the lesson plan for fourth-grade Science class, the number of learning outcomes and types of assessment are limited. This is inconsistent with the belief expressed by the teachers that various teaching methods and techniques should be used for different groups within the same class and that multicultural education should be integrated into the lesson. Therefore, the teachers do not adequately reflect their ideas about multicultural education in their lesson plans. This contradicts their opinions expressed in the interview that various teaching methods and techniques are needed for groups from different cultures and that multicultural elements can be added as themes in curriculum subjects such as Science or Social Studies.

## Discussion

An important multicultural education that enables students to develop empathy, respect, and tolerance for others and equip themselves with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours necessary to participate in a democratic society and obtain equal opportunities in education. Teachers need to understand the importance of multicultural education and be able to apply its principles effectively in their classrooms.

The success of implementing multicultural education is closely related to teachers' attitudes and professional preparation. Multicultural education programs aim

to enable students from different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and social groups to express their perspectives (Abdurrahmansyah, 2017; Wahyudi, 2020). Teacher competence and educational programs' adequacy are critical factors in implementing multicultural education. The case study approach used in this study aims to analyze teachers' thinking about multicultural education and the incorporation of its principles into lesson plans.

Teachers need to have a deep understanding of the culture of their students and instil confidence in them. Although the teachers in this study had a positive attitude towards multicultural education, their actual knowledge of the topic was limited, and they needed clarification about critical concepts. Although they recognize the importance of equality in education, they may never acquire the necessary training or practical knowledge to implement multicultural education effectively. To fully address the needs of a diverse student population, it is important that teachers continually educate themselves about multicultural education and receive adequate training in this area.

The teachers in this study agreed on the need for multicultural education. They also expressed concerns about its implementation in the school and classroom environment. In particular, they are concerned about the potential for dividing students into "groups" and exacerbating discrimination and the burden that multicultural education can place on school infrastructure. This concern suggests that teachers may need a deeper understanding of the principles and goals of multicultural education, and may need more preparation to implement them effectively in their classrooms. However, it is noteworthy that teachers believe they are carrying out multicultural education through equal treatment of all students, indicating a need for further education and training to understand the complexities and nuances of multicultural education fully.

Teachers' fears about the potential negative impact of multicultural education on student division and discrimination, as well as school infrastructure, suggest that they need a thorough understanding of the goals and principles of multicultural education. This lack of understanding hinders their ability to fully integrate multicultural elements into their teaching practices and lesson plans. As suggested, multicultural education is not about dividing society but about promoting unity and understanding

among diverse groups. Therefore, teachers must receive sufficient training and support to implement multicultural education effectively. With this, the potential benefits of multicultural education may be fully realized.

Teachers' lack of experience or training in multicultural education has contributed to their inability to conceptualize ideas about how to apply them. This highlights the need for teacher training programs that include multicultural education as a core component. In addition, differences between teachers' statements about the current curriculum that accommodates all cultures and their analysis of lesson plans suggest a gap between what teachers believe they are doing and what they are doing in practice. This emphasizes the importance of regular evaluation and assessment to ensure that multicultural education is implemented effectively in the classroom (Ratna Dewi et al., 2020). This study highlights the need for ongoing teacher training and support to ensure that multicultural education is implemented effectively and that all students receive an equal and inclusive education.

When the suggestions of most teachers on multicultural education were analyzed, the participants emphasized that teachers themselves can solve problems that may arise and prevent problems related to the implementation and administration. Many reports that teachers spend little time getting to know their students, so they need more concrete information about them (Suparlan, 2014). Likewise, in this study, most of the teachers stated that for teaching and learning to be effective, it is necessary to learn as much detail as possible about the origins of pupils; However, some teachers stated that they felt there was no need to know students' cultural backgrounds because this could lead to discrimination. The spirit of multicultural education lies in getting to know students in all aspects to shape an educational environment according to their needs and interests and ensure a democratic educational environment. Getting to know students better is not a way to create discrimination but an attempt to shape education according to students' different needs and priorities (Arifudin, 1970; Warsah, 2017).

Teachers need to know the cultural background of their students, as this can help create a more inclusive and welcoming classroom environment. By understanding the culture and traditions of their students, teachers can create more culturally relevant and responsive lesson plans and activities. This can lead to increased engagement and

participation from students, as well as better academic results. In addition, by recognizing and valuing the diversity of their students, teachers can help establish a sense of pride and self-worth in students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

It should be remembered that multicultural education is not only about accepting and appreciating different cultures but also about recognizing and overcoming the inequalities and power imbalances that exist in society. Knowing and respecting student culture can help teachers to create an inclusive learning environment and promote positive learning experiences for all students. Respecting diversity and recognizing cultural differences are vital to equal education opportunities (Suprihatiningrum, 2022; Wahyudi, 2020). However, teachers' reluctance to ask families about their cultural background may indicate that some prejudices and misunderstandings still need to be overcome. Teachers and educators need to receive sufficient training and support to effectively implement multicultural education and create an inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

The transformational approach to multicultural education aims to empower students to analyze critically and challenge dominant cultural beliefs and values (Abdurrahmansyah, 2017). This approach emphasizes the importance of promoting social justice and equality and encourages students to take action against oppression and discrimination. In this approach, the curriculum is changed to reflect diverse cultural groups' experiences, histories, and perspectives. The teacher's suggestion to conduct a thorough study of schools aligns with the transformational approach. It involves examining all aspects of the school and its culture to identify areas where multicultural education can be applied effectively (Shan et al., 2021). By doing this, schools can develop a more inclusive and equitable environment that values diversity and promotes social equity.

It is heartening that some teachers recognize the need for different teaching methods and techniques for students from different cultures and are open to incorporating multicultural elements into the curriculum. However, as we all know, there is still a long way to go to truly embrace Multiculturalism and create a truly inclusive and equitable educational environment for all students. As Spring & Spring (2018) advocated, a transformational approach is a promising way forward. It emphasizes the need for students to critically evaluate concepts and issues from

different viewpoints rather than simply adding superficial cultural content to the existing curriculum.

To achieve learning goals in schools, teachers need to apply appropriate learning strategies. Some of the strategies that can be used include discussions, simulations, role-playing, observation, case studies, and problem-solving. In learning through discussion, the teacher will get input from students about various cultures and people from different tribes and provide information about their contribution to living together as a nation. This learning strategy allows for exchanging ideas about using works from other cultures by people from different cultures.

Learning through simulation and role-playing, students are allowed to play the role of people with different religions, cultures, and ethnicities in everyday life (Paimin, N., 2018). Some activities need to be carried out with a committee involving students from various religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Observation and case studies are also learning strategies that can be carried out by holding joint activities in the community to observe social processes between individuals and groups and mediating in cases of conflict between community members.

As one teacher suggested, a comprehensive study of the school environment can also help identify areas where improvements can be made to promote greater cultural sensitivity and understanding. Teachers must be aware of their biases and perceptions and continually evaluate and change themselves to implement multicultural education effectively. This requires ongoing professional development and training in pre-service teacher education and in-service training programs. To develop the necessary skills and competencies, teachers must also have a solid foundation in multicultural education concepts and theories, including understanding the relationship between education and culture and the differences between cultures. By creating an atmosphere of mutual respect, empathy, tolerance, and democratic awareness, teachers can create a learning environment that values diversity and sees it as a source of wealth, helping students develop a remarkable ability to listen to others and see things from their different perspectives.

It is essential for teachers to reflect on their own biases and beliefs continually and to engage in professional development focused on multicultural education. As this



study reveals, many teachers in Indonesia may need more knowledge or skills to deal effectively with cultural diversity in their classrooms. Therefore, teacher training programs need to include lessons about the relationship between education and culture and the differences between cultures. In addition, in-service training can be provided to help teachers develop multicultural competence and create an inclusive and respectful learning environment for all students. Ultimately, the goal should be for teachers to see diversity as a strength and to help students develop empathy, tolerance, and democratic awareness.

Multicultural education is about recognizing diversity in society and actively promoting inclusivity, respect, and empathy for people of different cultures, races, and backgrounds. By incorporating multicultural education into school programs, students can understand and appreciate cultural differences and become better prepared to navigate diverse social environments. Additionally, multicultural education can help promote social justice and reduce prejudice and discrimination, which is essential for creating a more just and harmonious society.

Therefore, policymakers and educators should prioritize integrating multicultural education into school programs and provide teachers with continuous training and professional development opportunities. In doing so, they can ensure that all students learn in a safe and inclusive environment that values and respects diversity. Multicultural education is undoubtedly essential in today's world, where diversity is becoming more and more prevalent. By exposing students to different points of view and encouraging them to consider themselves as equals, multicultural education can help them develop empathy and understanding of others. It also prepares them to work in a diverse world and can enhance their communication skills. Therefore, it is suggested that multicultural education should be included in educational programs, and teachers should be encouraged to adopt its principles. In addition, it is very important to provide teachers with the necessary education and training to be able to effectively teach and implement multicultural education in their classrooms. Increasing the number of studies conducted in this research area could also provide more insights and strategies for effective multicultural education.

## **Conclusion**

Multicultural education is not only about recognizing diversity in society but also

about promoting inclusivity, respect, and empathy for people of different cultures, races, and backgrounds. By incorporating multicultural education into school programs, students can understand and appreciate cultural differences and become better equipped to explore diverse social environments. In addition, multicultural education can help promote social justice and reduce prejudice and discrimination, which are essential for creating a more just and harmonious society. Therefore, policymakers and educators should prioritize integrating multicultural education into school programs, and provide continuing professional training and development for teachers. By doing so, they can help ensure that all students can learn in a safe and inclusive environment that values and respects diversity. Multicultural education is essential in today's world, where diversity is becoming more and more evident. By exposing students to different points of view and encouraging them to consider them equally, multicultural education can help them develop empathy and understanding for others. It also prepares them to work in a diverse world and can improve their communication skills. Therefore, multicultural education should be integrated into educational programs, and teachers should be encouraged to adopt its principles. In addition, it is essential to provide teachers with the necessary education and training to teach and implement multicultural education in their classrooms effectively. Increasing the number of studies conducted in this research area could also provide further insights and strategies for effective multicultural education.

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