

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Selly Putri Widyawati¹, Dini Yusa Rachman², Ekawati Putri Kinanti³

Surabaya State University

Email: selly.22051@mhs.unesa.ac.id¹, dini.22059@mhs.unesa.ac.id²,
ekawati.22075@mhs.unesa.ac.id³

Abstrak

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Indonesia is a country with a high degree of ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural diversity. This diversity has the potential to create conflict if not managed properly, making education a strategic instrument for instilling values of tolerance from an early age. Multicultural education serves as an essential approach to fostering empathy, mutual respect, and acceptance of differences in social life. This study aims to analyze the implementation of multicultural education at the junior high school (SMP) level through a review of nine journals discussing multicultural practices in various schools. The findings show that implementation is carried out through the integration of diversity values into the curriculum, the development of school programs and cultures that support inclusivity, and school management that directs policies and social climate. These efforts have proven effective in enhancing tolerance, reducing conflict, and shaping inclusive character. However, challenges remain, such as student prejudice, limited teacher understanding, minimal parental support, insufficient multicultural learning materials, and negative media influences. Overall, multicultural education plays a significant role in shaping students who are capable of living harmoniously within diversity, although continuous reinforcement from teachers, schools, and the broader community is still required.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the largest archipelagic country in the world, has tremendous wealth in the form of ethnic, racial, and religious diversity. There are more than 1,300 ethnic groups with different cultures and languages throughout the archipelago. This diversity also includes differences in religion and local beliefs that are officially recognized by the state. In social life, tolerance is an important key to maintaining



harmony among communities. Diverse regional languages enrich the national identity alongside Indonesian as the unifying language. The arts and culture of various regions reflect the uniqueness of each region. However, this diversity can lead to potential conflict if not managed wisely. Therefore, education plays an important role in instilling tolerance to maintain national unity.

Multicultural education is a relevant approach for a diverse society such as Indonesia. Its goal is to develop human potential while respecting cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity. This type of education instills values of empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect for differences. In addition to serving as a means of learning, this approach also aims to empower minority groups so that they have equal opportunities. Thus, multicultural education strengthens an inclusive and discrimination-free national identity. This is a fundamental requirement for Indonesia to maintain national unity. Educational institutions are expected to be able to design curricula and learning processes based on multicultural values. Teachers also need to have multicultural attitudes and behaviors in order to instill values of tolerance in their students.

Through multicultural education, students are taught to understand and appreciate different perspectives and diverse cultures. This approach fosters pride in one's own cultural wealth while respecting other cultures. Multicultural education also raises awareness that differences in values can be a source of conflict if not handled wisely. Therefore, the application of values of tolerance, empathy, and appreciation for diversity is important in learning. Students who understand this concept will have a humanistic attitude and respect others. Values such as mutual respect and sympathy are important for creating social peace. Tolerance arises from recognition of differences and freedom of thought. Thus, multicultural education becomes the foundation for a harmonious society.

Several studies, such as Hasnida, H., et. al (2022) and Saputra, J., et. al (2022), state that multicultural education can foster tolerance in students. Through this approach, students learn to live peacefully side by side while respecting differences in religion, race, and culture. The results of the study show that the implementation of multicultural education increases mutual respect to a high degree. However, its implementation still faces various challenges in the field. These obstacles include a lack of understanding among teachers, socioeconomic disparities, and gender inequality. In addition, the influence of globalization and the digital age also demands a more inclusive adaptation of education. A homogeneous social environment is often an obstacle in instilling the value of diversity. Therefore, teacher training and educational policies that support the sustainable implementation of multicultural values are needed.

This phenomenon can be seen in junior high schools (SMP) in Indonesia, which have implemented multicultural education comprehensively. Multicultural values are not only taught to teachers and students, but also applied by the entire school community. The implementation process is not limited to formal learning activities, but also includes daily activities in the school environment. This effort aims to shape good character and behavior through habituation in the school environment. A positive environment will encourage the creation of tolerant attitudes among students. Therefore, the author wants to further explore the implementation of multicultural education at the junior high school level. This study is expected to provide an overview of how

multicultural education shapes the attitudes of tolerance among junior high school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Implementation

Implementation can be defined as the execution of a strategy and the allocation of previously planned resources. According to Rusydi (in Harmita et al, 2023), implementation is an important part of the planning process because the success of a plan can be seen from the extent to which it can be carried out. A good plan will be meaningless if it is not realized in concrete actions. Thus, implementation focuses on achieving the objectives of activities that have been carefully prepared so that they can be applied in practice.

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), implementation is defined as execution or application. This means that implementation is the process of applying ideas, concepts, or policies into concrete actions that have an impact on knowledge, values, and attitudes (Sopianti, 2022). The term implementation itself comes from the English word "to implement," which means to put into effect. Implementation is the provision of the means to carry out something that has an impact or effect on something else. That something is done to cause an impact or effect, which can be in the form of laws, government regulations, court decisions, and policies made by government institutions in the life of the state. In its execution, implementation requires the availability of resources, including human resources, financial resources, and adequate facilities and infrastructure, so that the plan can run effectively. Without adequate resource support, implementation often encounters obstacles that prevent the achievement of policy objectives (Husaini & Amaliya, 2023).

Implementation is also closely related to the effectiveness of an organization in carrying out its functions. Good implementation requires coordination, communication, and commitment from all parties involved. Without synergy among implementers, the policies or programs that have been formulated will not run optimally. Furthermore, implementation serves as a link between theory and practice. Plans written in the form of strategic documents such as policies, programs, or implementation guidelines can only provide benefits when they are consistently applied in the activities. The implementation process allows for organizational learning, where the results of implementation can be used as a basis for improving future planning. Thus, implementation plays a role not only in the implementation stage but also in the next policy development and planning cycle (Ahdia & Afrila, 2024).

Meanwhile, Nurdin (in Asiati & Hasanah, 2022) states that implementation culminates in activities, actions, or mechanisms within a system. Implementation is carried out after planning is considered final, as it is the actual execution process of the plans that have been prepared beforehand. Through the implementation process, various efforts can be made to understand and ensure that the program runs according to the expected objectives. The form of implementation will certainly be adjusted to the activities carried out in order to achieve optimal results. In the context of learning, implementation refers to the application of learning methods or strategies carried out by teachers to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Thus, implementation is not only the final stage of planning, but also a determining factor in the success of achieving educational goals.

2. Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is a form of education that instills ideological values in the form of understanding, respect, and appreciation for the dignity of people from various cultural, religious, racial, economic, social, linguistic, and national backgrounds. According to Banks (in Loke et al, 2023), multicultural education is aimed at diverse communities (people of color) and seeks to foster awareness that differences are both inevitable and a gift from God. Multiculturalism itself is understood as a view that emphasizes the importance of cultural diversity, where mutual understanding, respect, and tolerance are needed to create a harmonious and prosperous life and avoid prolonged conflict. Banks also defines multicultural education as a concept, idea, and educational movement that aims to create equal learning opportunities for all students from various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds so that they have the same opportunities to achieve academic success in school. Multicultural education plays an important role in fostering tolerance in society in order to minimize and prevent conflicts arising from diversity (Zamroni et al, 2024).

Multicultural education is considered the most effective strategy in overcoming the various social unrest that has occurred recently. Kusnadi (in Nurlaili, 2025) emphasizes that a lack of understanding can trigger stereotypes and exclusion of students who are different. Therefore, multicultural education should be internalized in the curriculum, teaching strategies, and every interaction carried out by all elements in education. The main objective of multicultural education is to develop an attitude of respect for differences. This is done by instilling values so that students are able to live harmoniously in a diverse reality and behave positively so that they can manage diversity and behave positively without erasing their identity and cultural. The values referred to are tolerance, solidarity, empathy, deliberation, egalitarianism, openness, justice, cooperation, compassion, nationalism, good intentions, mutual trust, self-confidence, responsibility, honesty, sincerity, and trustworthiness. These values are prerequisites for multicultural education to be effective (Purwasari & Maksum, 2023).

Multicultural education deserves attention from all circles related to the world of education. This is the first step in realizing pluralistic and democratic education, which can lead to the formation of a pluralistic and democratic society. The implementation of multicultural education offers an alternative example through the application of educational strategies and concepts based on the utilization of diversity in society, especially among students, such as ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, social status, gender, ability, age, and racial diversity. Most importantly, this educational strategy not only aims to make it easier for students to learn their lessons, but also to increase their awareness so that they always behave in a humanistic, pluralistic, and democratic manner. In the perspective of multicultural education, tolerance is the result of a multicultural learning process that fosters diversity awareness, respect for identity, and cross-cultural cooperation (Dewi & Merdiana, 2023).

3. Tolerance

Tolerance is an individual's ability to treat someone well. This attitude of tolerance allows others to have opinions that differ from ours. In essence, tolerance is an awareness to accept and respect differences. Tolerance comes from the English word "tolerance," which means to allow. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), tolerance is defined as a tolerant attitude, keeping quiet, and allowing. Tolerance is a way of respecting, allowing, and accepting opinions, views, beliefs, and habits that

contradict one's own. An attitude of tolerance maintains peace and harmony in society. Tolerance is a tolerant nature or attitude, namely two groups with different cultures interacting fully. An attitude of tolerance includes positive attitudes such as respect and is usually shown to honor differences in opinion, religion, race, and culture in each person or group. Tolerance refers to an attitude of mutual respect among fellow human beings. This attitude of respect is important for a peaceful and diverse environment. Tolerance includes positive attitudes that are good for maintaining harmony and preventing conflict in society (Harefa & Bawamenewi, 2021).

Indonesia consists of diverse ethnicities, cultures, and religions that can trigger discrimination. There are many cases of intolerance due to differences in ethnicity and beliefs. An attitude of tolerance needs to be instilled from an early age in order to maintain the diversity that exists in society. Tolerance is related to civic education, which aims to foster tolerance, responsibility, discipline, and critical thinking. These values of tolerance serve as a foundation for respecting the differences and opinions of fellow citizens.

A. Elements of Tolerance

According to Nurhayati (2023), the elements of tolerance are as follows:

1. Granting freedom or independence

Every human being is given the freedom to act, move, and choose according to their own will, including in choosing a religion or belief. This freedom is given from the moment a person is born until they die, and the freedom or independence that humans have cannot be replaced or taken away by others in any way. This is because freedom comes from God Almighty, who must be upheld and protected. Every country protects the freedoms of every human being, both in its laws and regulations. Similarly, in choosing a religion or belief, humans have the right and freedom to choose without coercion from anyone.

2. Recognizing the Rights of Every Person

A mental attitude that recognizes the rights of every person in determining their own behavior and destiny. Of course, the attitudes or behaviors that are carried out must not violate the rights of others, because if they do, life in society will be chaotic.

3. Respecting the Beliefs of Others

The basis of the above belief is based on the belief that it is not right for any person or group to insist on imposing their will on other people or groups. No person or group has a monopoly on the truth, and this basis is accompanied by the note that matters of belief are a personal matter for each individual.

4. Mutual Understanding

There will be no mutual respect between fellow human beings if they do not understand each other. Mutual hostility and hatred, as well as competition for influence, are some of the consequences of a lack of mutual understanding and respect between one another.

B. Forms of Tolerance

According to Nurhayati (2023), the forms of tolerance that can be practiced are:

1. Being open-minded in accepting all differences.
2. Not discriminating against friends who have different beliefs.
3. Do not force others to adopt your beliefs (religion).
4. Allow others the freedom to choose their own beliefs (religion).
5. Do not disturb others who have different beliefs when they are worshiping.

6. Maintain good relations and behave kindly toward people of different beliefs in worldly matters.
7. Respect others who are worshipping.
8. Do not hate or hurt the feelings of someone who has different beliefs or opinions from us.

4. James A. Banks' Multicultural Education Theory

In this study, the theory used is the multicultural education theory introduced by James A. Banks. James A. Banks, the first Black professor to dedicate his life to the College of Education. Known as a figure in Multicultural Education, he has written many works on multicultural education, *Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society* (Teachers College Press). Recently, there has been hot news about his conversation with Michelle Tucker from NEA Today about the concept he developed called "the five dimensions of multicultural education." Banks explains in detail about the dimensions of multiculturalism. This idea has been widely discussed in various international journals that address the theme of developing multiculturalism in Western education.

James' theory of multicultural education is an approach in education that emphasizes the importance of recognizing and appreciating cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious diversity in the learning process. Multicultural education not only focuses on knowledge about different cultures, but also emphasizes the importance of justice, equality, and equal opportunities for all students regardless of their social or cultural backgrounds. The dimensions that are important to implement in education according to Banks include: 1) content integration, 2) the knowledge construction process, 3) prejudice reduction, 4) an equity pedagogy, and 5) an empowering school culture and social structure. Banks became the main initiator of multicultural education in the West, successfully bringing other thinkers to take part in this grand project or idea. This theory is considered the most appropriate because it provides a comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding the educational process that values diversity in the school environment. Thus, the theory of multicultural education in this study is relevant to the research objective, which is to determine how the implementation of multicultural education can shape students' attitudes of tolerance

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a literature review method to examine, compare, and analyze the results of previous studies on the application of multicultural education at the junior high school level. This approach was chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview of the development of concepts, implementation practices, supporting factors, and obstacles to multicultural education based on published empirical findings. All findings from the analyzed articles were then interpreted using a descriptive approach. This approach allows researchers to organize data, identify patterns or trends, group research results based on specific themes, and draw general conclusions about the actual conditions of multicultural education implementation at the junior high school level. Through this literature review method, the study produced a comprehensive picture of how multicultural values are applied in various schools, the strategies used by teachers and educational institutions, and the challenges faced in the implementation process. These findings form a strong theoretical basis for understanding the development of multicultural education while providing direction for further research and implementable recommendations in educational units.

Table 1. Journal Article Review

No	Title/Researcher/Year	Method	Research Findings
1	Implementation Multicultural-Based Education as an Effort to Strengthen Character Values of Tolerance and Love for Peace (M. Bima Sakti, M. Mona Adha, Edi Siswanto, 2023)	Descriptive Qualitative	Multicultural education is integrated into the learning process in civics education, curriculum development, and lesson plans that support mutual respect, as well as daily habits such as mutual respect and cooperation. In addition, teachers' exemplary behavior as models of tolerance and peacefulness is also an important factor in encouraging students to internalize these values. The results of the study show that these efforts can enable students to be more capable of harmonious activities and learning amid the diversity of religions, ethnicities, and cultures that exist in the school environment. However, there are still obstacles, such as ethnocentrism, bullying, and discrimination, as well as a lack of awareness among some students regarding the importance of tolerance. To overcome these obstacles, the school implements various strategies, including school policies, guidance counseling by teachers, instilling values of tolerance, conducting extracurricular activities, and imposing sanctions on students who violate these values.
2	Analysis of the Implementation of Multicultural Education through Pancasila Education at SMP Negeri 7 Medan (Dhio Febriansyah Lubis, Ema Serika Ginting, Maria Dwi Sianipar, 2025)	Qualitative Descriptive	SMP Negeri 7 Medan has implemented multicultural education integrated into Pancasila Education subjects and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening (P5) project by holding various routine activities. The school organizes a structured literacy program every week that is connected to the P5 project to hone literacy skills and reinforce Pancasila values. In addition, regular spiritual activities are held every Friday to reinforce the religious and ethical values of students, while the "Kamis Ekspresi" (Thursday Expression) program serves as a forum for celebrating Indonesia's cultural diversity. Healthy exercise activities are also carried out as a reflection of the Pancasila student profile and multicultural education. These activities have had a positive impact in the form of increased tolerance among students, character building, social skills development, and the creation of an inclusive learning environment.

3	Analysis of Multicultural Education for Students at SMP Negeri 18 Pontianak (Jepri Saputra, Sri Buwono, Hadi Wiyono, Aminuyati, Thomy Sastra Atmaja, 2022)	Descriptive qualitative	Multicultural education has been successfully implemented at SMP Negeri 18 Pontianak with a percentage of 81.67%. This is reflected in the students' tolerance towards religious differences with a percentage of 82.56%, which shows the students' ability to live harmoniously despite having different religious backgrounds. In addition, the students' attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for cultural and ethnic differences, with a percentage of 80.79%, shows the students' acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity. The success of multicultural education cannot be separated from the role of teachers, especially in social studies, who have successfully integrated values of tolerance into the teaching and learning process.
4	Management Multicultural-Based Education in Fostering a Culture of Tolerance Among Students (Muh Alawi Harun and Lasriani, 2024)	Qualitative Descriptive	This study shows that schools have made efforts to optimize the processes of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising in the context of multicultural education. Programs such as "Culture Saturday" and worship activities for all students, regardless of their religious background, are concrete steps in instilling values of tolerance. However, there are also obstacles that need to be overcome, such as cultural differences and characteristics that can influence students' perceptions and attitudes. In addition, media content that does not support
			a culture of tolerance is a challenge that must be addressed. To achieve the goals of multiculturalism, support from educators, school programs, and positive interactions among students are essential. Overall, this journal emphasizes that efforts to build a culture of tolerance in the educational environment must involve all aspects, from good management to the active participation of parents and the community.

5	Implementation of Multicultural Education in Character Building of Ninth Grade Students at Sultan Iskandar Muda Multicultural Junior High School (Nadila Wanti, Rusydi Ananda, Nuriza Dora, 2024)	Qualitative Descriptive	The implementation of multicultural education at SMPS Sultan Iskandar Muda in shaping the character of students through various programs. One of the main programs is that students are taught to pray before class while respecting diversity beliefs, thereby fostering mutual respect. The seating arrangement of students based on ethnic, religious, and gender diversity is also implemented to encourage positive social interaction among students. In dividing groups, teachers play a direct role in ensuring fairness so that there is no discrimination based on background. In addition, multicultural values are incorporated into the curriculum of all subjects, along with the "Chatbot Bhineka" program () and joint religious classes aimed at increasing students' understanding of diversity. However, obstacles in the implementation of multicultural education remain, such as differences in ethnic backgrounds that can trigger prejudice, lack of parental support for this initiative, and language barriers that reduce the effectiveness of communication between students. Negative media coverage has also been identified as a factor that can internalize views that are contrary to the values of tolerance.
6	Implementation of Multicultural Education from an Islamic Perspective (Case Study at SMP IT El-Azma Bekasi) (Kardi Leo, Nurwajah Ahmad, Andewi Suhartini, 2022)	Qualitative Case Study	Multicultural education at SMP IT El-Azma Bekasi is implemented through the integration of diversity values into the curriculum, particularly in the subjects of Civic Education, Religious Education, and Social Studies. In addition, the school also implements it through extracurricular activities such as sports, arts, and social activities involving students from various backgrounds. In the classroom, teachers use cooperative learning methods to encourage cooperation and mutual respect. This approach aims to develop students' tolerant and empathetic attitudes so that they are ready to live in a diverse society. However, the implementation of this program still faces several obstacles, such as teachers' lack of in-depth understanding of multicultural education, the assumption that
			diversity values can only be taught in certain subjects, and a lack of support from school principals and parents. In addition, schools also face challenges in adjusting the curriculum to the diversity of students' backgrounds, whether in terms of culture, religion, or language.

7	Internalization of Multicultural Education at Pancabudi Junior High School in Medan (Wini Dirgahayu, Azizah Hanum OK, 2024)	Qualitative Phenomenology	SMP Pancabudi Medan has successfully implemented multicultural education through various aspects. The internalization of diversity values is carried out through intracurricular and extracurricular activities, as well as special programs designed to foster tolerance, mutual respect, and appreciation for cultural, ethnic, and religious differences. The successful implementation of multicultural education is supported by various factors, including the availability of budget, adequate facilities, the diversity of students' backgrounds, and the commitment of teachers and principals. Multicultural education has a tangible positive impact on students' attitudes. Students become more open-minded, appreciate differences, and are able to establish harmonious social relationships. Conflicts related to cultural and religious differences decrease significantly, replaced by increased cooperation among students.
8	Implementation of Multicultural Values in Education: Analysis of Teachers' Roles and Strategies (Ilham Adiansyah Harahap, Hendra Alsa Fahmi, Ida Marina Harahap, Ahmad Darlis, Mohammad Al Farabi, 2024)	Qualitative Case Study	The implementation of multicultural values at Adhyaksa Junior High School has been successful through the effective roles and strategies of teachers in the learning process. Teachers are able to instill multicultural values by teaching the importance of respecting differences in religion, ethnicity, culture, and language, as well as creating a democratic and inclusive classroom atmosphere. Through exemplary behavior, habit formation, and fair interaction without discrimination, teachers have succeeded in encouraging students to understand, accept, and apply multicultural values in their daily lives. This can be seen from the students' attitudes of respecting differences, not bullying, and maintaining a comfortable classroom environment, thereby creating a harmonious learning environment. This study shows that the strategies used by teachers at SMP Adhyaksa have a significant positive impact on the development of tolerance, togetherness, and social harmony among students, both at school and in their daily lives.

9	Analysis Learning Multiculturalism in Junior High Schools in the District of Sajingan Besar on the Indonesia-Malaysia Border (Hadi Wiyono, Sri Buwono, M Zainul Hafizi, 2024)	Qualitative Descriptive	The implementation of multicultural learning in junior high schools in the Sajingan Besar Subdistrict is carried out through various strategies by integrating local culture into the learning process. Teachers apply multicultural learning through direct explanations of the surrounding culture, inter-ethnic group discussions, integration of local culture into teaching modules, and project assignments involving writing verbs in the Dayak language and then translating them into English. In addition, out-of-class learning activities such as field trips, educational tours, and Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) activities also strengthened students' understanding of cultural diversity. However, in implementing multicultural learning, there are a number of obstacles, such as limited teaching materials that include local culture, a lack of teacher skills in managing multicultural learning, and low interest among some students in other cultures.
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RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Multicultural education is an important approach in dealing with the pluralistic reality of Indonesian society. Schools, as educational institutions, play a strategic role in instilling the values of diversity in students from an early age. Junior high school was chosen because at this stage of development, students are in a phase of identity search, where their ability to accept differences is greatly influenced by their social and educational environment. Based on an analysis of nine journals that examine the implementation of multicultural education at the junior high school level, it can be concluded that multicultural education has basically been implemented through four main approaches, namely:

1. curriculum and learning process integration
 2. school programs and culture
 3. school management.
1. Implementation of Multicultural Education at the Junior High School Level
 - a. Integration in the curriculum and learning process

The implementation of multicultural education in junior high schools is generally carried out through the integration of multicultural values into the curriculum, especially in the subjects of Pancasila Education, Civic Education, Social Studies, and Religious Education. In several schools, such as SMP Negeri 7 Metro, SMP Negeri 7 Medan, and SMP Sultan Iskandar Muda, teachers actively incorporate values of tolerance, empathy, and respect for differences into the learning process. This integration is not only limited to teaching materials but is also reflected in lesson plans, the selection of teaching methods, and the creation of a democratic and inclusive classroom environment. This proves that teachers have a central role in ensuring that multicultural values are effectively internalized by students. Research by Bima Sakti et al (2023) shows that

SMP Negeri 7 Metro internalizes multiculturalism through curriculum planning and lesson plans that emphasize mutual respect. Similar findings were found in the research by Dhio Febriansyah Lubis et al (2025), which explains that multicultural education at SMP Negeri 7 Medan is integrated through Pancasila Education and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) subjects. In line with this, multicultural learning at SMP Kecamatan Sajingan is more prominent in the form of cultural activities and thematic projects, such as the P5 program, cultural arts activities, and local cultural integration (Hadi Wiyono et al, 2024). The integration of multicultural values is also strongly evident in social studies learning, as revealed by Jepri Saputra et al (2022) at SMP Negeri 18 Pontianak. Social studies teachers play a direct role in instilling values of tolerance and respect for religious and ethnic differences. Meanwhile, at SMP IT El-Azma Bekasi, Leo et al. (2022) found that multicultural values are integrated into Civics, Religious Education, and Social Studies subjects through cooperative learning methods that require cooperation and problem solving, which have been proven to strengthen students' ability to understand different points of view. This is in line with the view that multicultural education not only conveys subject matter but also shapes critical and empathetic thinking.

b. School Programs and School Culture

In addition to integration in learning, various schools also implement multicultural education through school programs and school culture. Programs such as Cultural Saturday, Expression Thursday, interfaith religious activities, Pancasila thematic literacy, Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), art performances, and heterogeneous group social activities have successfully become a forum for expressing diversity and strengthening student character. These programs show that multicultural education does not only focus on cognitive aspects, but also includes affective and psychomotor aspects through habituation and direct experience. Schools such as SMP Pancabudi Medan even implement holistic internalization of values through intracurricular, extracurricular, and special programs that involve all components of the school. School culture greatly influences the formation of tolerant character in students, as school is the first social space where they interact with differences in real life. SMP Negeri 7 Metro (Sakti et al., 2023) accustoms students to respect each other, greet each other politely, and work together regardless of religious or ethnic background. Teachers' exemplary behavior in demonstrating inclusive attitudes also influences the internalization of tolerance values in students.

c. School Management

The success of multicultural education implementation is inseparable from the support of school management. Targeted planning, organization, implementation, and supervision have proven to be the key to forming a tolerant school culture. Activity management, curriculum development, facility provision, and coordination between teachers and the school all contribute to creating a conducive learning environment. Schools that have a strong commitment to multiculturalism tend to be more successful in reducing conflicts between students, improving social relationships, and creating a comfortable learning atmosphere for all students. This support from school management ensures that multicultural education is not only carried out in the classroom, but becomes a shared commitment of the entire school community. This managerial approach also includes teacher training, the provision of infrastructure, and clear anti-discrimination policies so that the learning process can take place inclusively. Research

by Nadila Wanti et al (2024) reveals that SMPS Sultan Iskandar Muda implements seating arrangements based on ethnic and religious diversity to encourage positive interaction. Teachers also exercise strict control over group divisions to prevent discrimination or exclusive grouping based on certain backgrounds. This approach has been proven to reduce prejudice and minimize friction between students, despite continuing obstacles such as stereotypes formed by family or media environments.

2. The Impact of Multicultural Education Implementation on Students' Attitudes Towards Tolerance

The results of the journal review show a consistent pattern that the implementation of multicultural education directly contributes to increased tolerance, work, empathy, and appreciation for the diversity of students. Some important findings include:

- a. Increased Attitudes of Respect for Religious, Ethnic, and Cultural Differences
- b. Decreased Conflict Among Students
- c. Increased Empathy and Democratic Attitudes
- d. Strengthening of National Identity and Moderate Character

3. Challenges in Implementing Multicultural Education

Although showing positive impacts, all journals identified a number of obstacles, including:

- a. The persistence of prejudice, ethnocentrism, and stereotypes among students brought from their families or communities.
- b. Teachers' lack of comprehensive understanding of the concept of multicultural education.
- c. Minimal support from parents, who sometimes do not agree with the school's values of tolerance.
- d. Limited teaching materials that contain local cultural diversity, especially in border areas.
- e. The negative influence of the media, which constructs intolerant views among some students.

These obstacles indicate that the implementation of multicultural education requires continuous support, not only in terms of learning, but also in terms of school policy, strengthening teacher capacity, and collaboration between schools, parents, and the community. When viewed using the theory of multicultural education proposed by James A. Banks, the implementation of multicultural education in junior high schools in Indonesia generally shows a tendency to be in the early stages, namely content integration and knowledge construction. In the content integration stage, schools have integrated material on cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity into subjects, particularly Civics, Social Studies, and Religious Education. Students are introduced to the concepts of tolerance, cross-cultural cooperation, and the importance of mutual respect. Meanwhile, in the knowledge construction stage, teachers help students build a critical understanding of how cultural perspectives influence the way they see the world, so that students can understand that each group has different ways of life and values. However, the findings show that some schools have not yet reached the next stage, namely equity pedagogy and empowering school culture and social structure, which is a condition where the entire school structure, including policies, class organization, and interaction patterns, truly reflects the principles of multiculturalism. This gap shows that efforts to implement multicultural education need to be directed not only at learning aspects, but

also at strengthening school management, improving teacher competence through continuous training, and developing school programs that support positive interactions between students from various backgrounds. In addition, collaboration with parents and the community is very important so that multicultural values are also practiced outside the school environment, enabling students to gain consistent experience in appreciating diversity. Thus, multicultural education is an urgent need that must be continuously maintained and developed as the foundation for shaping students' character. Strengthening implementation in all aspects of school will help students face the challenges of diversity in society, build tolerant attitudes, and create a harmonious social life in the context of Indonesia's highly pluralistic society.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this literature review shows that the implementation of multicultural education at the junior high school level has been successful and has had a significant impact on character building among students. Multicultural education at the junior high school level in Indonesia has reached the stages of content integration and knowledge construction, but still needs to be strengthened in order to reach the stages of equity pedagogy and empowering school culture as described by James Banks. Multicultural education makes students more tolerant, appreciative of differences, able to work together, and creates a harmonious learning environment. However, the success of this implementation is highly dependent on teacher competence, school management support, parental involvement, and the availability of educational resources. Therefore, multicultural education must continue to be developed through curriculum strengthening, teacher training, school collaboration with the community, and the creation of an inclusive and sustainable school culture.

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