

## Multicultural Education; An Effort To Build Harmony In Diversity In Elementary Schools

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**Abstract:** Indonesia is a country with high diversity that includes ethnicity, religion, culture, language, and socio-economic background. This diversity is clearly reflected in the primary school environment, which is the initial stage of children's character building. However, if not managed properly, diversity can lead to social conflicts such as intolerance and discrimination. Therefore, multicultural education becomes a strategic approach in instilling the values of tolerance, mutual respect and empathy from an early age. This education not only introduces students to diversity, but also guides them to understand and respect differences as social wealth. Integrating multicultural values into the basic curriculum can strengthen inclusive attitudes and create a learning environment that is friendly to all differences. The role of teachers, schools, as well as support from parents and communities is crucial in building an inclusive atmosphere in primary schools. Through this approach, primary education can produce a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also has high social intelligence and is ready to live peacefully in a pluralistic and global society.

**Keyword :** *Diversity, Multicultural education, Elementary school, Tolerance*

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### Introduction

Indonesia is known as a country rich in diversity, in terms of ethnicity, religion, language, culture and socio-economic background. This diversity is reflected in various aspects of life, including in the educational environment. Primary school, as the initial stage of formal education, is a place where children from various backgrounds meet. Therefore, diversity in primary schools is not only an unavoidable reality, but also an opportunity to instill values of tolerance, mutual respect and togetherness from an early age (Adha et al., 2021).

However, in practice, diversity that is not managed properly can lead to conflict, discrimination, or exclusive attitudes among students. For this reason, an educational approach is needed that is able to embrace differences as strengths. One of them is through multicultural education, which aims to build an inclusive and harmonious attitude amid differences (Nurhasanah, 2021).

Multicultural education in elementary schools has an important role in shaping the character of students who are open, fair, and respectful of differences. (Maliki, 2023) By instilling these values from an early age, children are expected to grow into individuals who are able to live side by side in a pluralistic society. Therefore, it is important to further

examine how diversity in elementary schools can be managed positively through a multicultural education approach (Desmila & Suryana, 2023).

The importance of internalizing the values of diversity in basic education is the foundation in shaping the character of students who are open, respectful, and able to coexist peacefully. Multicultural education comes as an approach that not only introduces students to the diversity that exists, but also encourages them to understand, accept, and respect differences as something natural and positive (Prasetiawati, 2017).

Through multicultural education, students are invited to learn not only from books, but also from real social life. Values such as tolerance, empathy, justice and solidarity are instilled in the daily learning process. Therefore, basic education is a very strategic moment to internalize diversity values thoroughly and sustainably. Thus, it is hoped that Indonesia's young generation will grow into individuals who love peace, uphold unity, and are able to face global challenges in a pluralistic society (Viridi et al., 2023).

When diversity is not taught in primary schools, various social and psychological problems can arise both in the school environment and in the wider community. One of the main impacts is the growth of intolerant attitudes among students. Without a proper understanding of diversity, children tend to see differences as a threat or "abnormal". This can trigger discriminatory behavior, bullying, and exclusivity in relationships, which ultimately undermines the spirit of togetherness and unity (Mubarok & Muslihah, 2022).

In addition, a lack of education about diversity can also hinder the development of empathy, tolerance and respect for others. Children become less accustomed to interacting healthily with friends from different backgrounds. On the other hand, children from minority or different groups can feel unwelcome, marginalized and even emotionally distressed. This can certainly affect their learning comfort and personality (Rozi et al., 2024).

Even in community life, the behavior that emerges is an exclusive attitude that becomes the seed of radicalism. Pessimism and exclusivism are the seeds that can lead to radicalism. In the long run, if diversity is not taught from an early age, society will face a generation that is narrow in thinking, difficult to accept differences, and vulnerable to being trapped in social conflicts. Therefore, the introduction and internalization of diversity values in primary schools is crucial to form a generation that is inclusive, open, and able to live peacefully in a pluralistic society (Darlis & Nurlaili, 2024). Through education that emphasizes respect for differences, children are not only taught to avoid discrimination, but also to celebrate diversity as a wealth that can enrich their social lives.

Primary school is a very important level of education in forming the basis of children's character and personality. At this stage, students begin to learn to interact with a wider and more diverse social environment. In the context of a multicultural Indonesian society, children from an early age have been exposed to diversity in culture, ethnicity, religion, language, and other social backgrounds (Kamila, 2023). Therefore, an educational approach is needed that is able to teach children to accept, appreciate, and coexist in diversity.

Multicultural education is one of the relevant and important approaches to be implemented in elementary schools. Through this education, children are not only introduced to the concept of diversity, but also guided to foster an attitude of tolerance, mutual respect and empathy for differences. This is very important in forming a young generation that is not easily provoked by differences, but is able to make diversity a strength in building a harmonious life.

By internalizing multicultural values from an early age, primary schools can be a strategic place in creating an inclusive and friendly learning environment for all

differences. Multicultural education is not just an additional lesson, but an important part of the process of building a national character that upholds unity in the midst of diversity.

## Methodology

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach (Lexy, 2002) with the aim to examine and analyze the concepts of multicultural education applied in elementary schools in creating harmony amid diversity. This research does not involve field data collection, but focuses more on theoretical studies that review various literatures related to multicultural education, diversity in education, and theories underlying the application of multicultural values in elementary schools. The main data sources come from books, scientific articles, research reports, and other documents relevant to the research topic.

The data were analyzed using content analysis to find patterns and main themes related (Jabar, 2008) to multicultural education efforts in building harmony. The analysis process was conducted systematically by comparing and linking findings from various existing theories. The validity of this theoretical study is maintained through the selection of reliable and relevant literature, and by paying attention to the relationship between theory and practice in the context of education in primary schools.

## Result and Discussion

### 1. Characteristics of Diversity in Primary Schools

Primary school is a level of education that has an important role in shaping children's character from an early age. At this stage, children begin to recognize the outside world besides the family, including a wider and more diverse social environment. Diversity in primary schools is not only limited to ethnic and religious differences, but also includes differences in terms of culture, language and socio-economic background. This diversity becomes an inseparable part of daily life in primary schools and creates challenges and opportunities in the learning process (Widodo, 2020).

The main characteristic of primary schools in the context of diversity is the diversity of learners who come from various backgrounds. This affects the social interactions between students, the way they learn and the values that are formed in school life. Primary schools should be able to create an inclusive environment where all students feel accepted and valued regardless of their differences. In this context, diversity is not a problem, but a wealth that must be understood and managed wisely (Sabani, 2019).

Teachers in primary schools also play a central role in managing this diversity. They must have the ability to recognize differences in the way students learn and be able to create an atmosphere that supports tolerance and respect for differences. Education based on multicultural values is very important to form an open and inclusive attitude among students (Judrah et al., 2024).

With good diversity management, primary schools not only function as academic educational institutions, but also as places to instill social values that will equip students with the necessary life skills to live in a plural and multicultural society. Through this approach, children not only learn about math or language,

but also about how to be good citizens, who are able to coexist in diversity with respect and tolerance (Rozi et al., 2024).

Diversity in schools refers to the existence of various differences that exist within the educational environment, both among students and within the school community as a whole. This diversity includes various aspects, such as ethnicity, religion, culture, language, gender, socio-economic background and academic ability. School as a place of learning not only presents academic lessons, but also a place where students learn to interact with others who have differences. Therefore, diversity in schools is a reality that must be managed wisely so that it can be a source of strength, not a source of conflict (Prasetiawati, 2017).

In the context of diversity, it is important to create an inclusive environment where every individual feels valued, accepted and given equal opportunities to thrive. Diversity in schools is not just about the differences that exist, but also about how schools can teach values such as tolerance, mutual respect and empathy. Thus, diversity in schools is not something to be avoided or feared, but rather something to be celebrated and utilized to build a harmonious community (Kamila, 2023).

Schools with rich diversity also present challenges, such as different ways of learning, cultural conflicts or communication problems between students with different backgrounds. Therefore, it is important for schools, especially educators, to have the skills to manage this diversity, both in terms of learning approaches and in creating a positive social atmosphere. By adopting a multicultural education approach, schools can instill the values of tolerance, fairness and inclusion, which will equip students with social skills essential for life in a plural society (Mubarok & Muslihah, 2022).

Through good diversity management, schools not only produce academically intelligent individuals, but also individuals who are ready to contribute in creating a peaceful and respectful society. Education that respects differences will equip students with important social skills, such as the ability to communicate with people from different backgrounds, empathy, and an inclusive attitude in all their interactions. This will prepare them to become agents of positive change in an increasingly plural society, and support the creation of a harmonious and mutually supportive common life. Thus, the diversity that exists in schools is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity to shape the character of the next generation who are wiser and more open to differences (Viridi et al., 2023).

Primary schools play an important role in the formation of children's character. At this age, children are in a very crucial phase of development, where they begin to form an understanding and attitude towards themselves, others, and the surrounding environment. Diversity, whether in terms of ethnicity, religion, culture, language, or social background, has become an inevitable reality in many elementary schools. Therefore, building good characteristics in elementary

schools in the context of diversity is very important to create a young generation that is able to live harmoniously in the midst of differences (Kamila, 2023).

Building characteristics in primary schools in the context of diversity means teaching children to appreciate differences, build tolerance and develop empathy for others. These values are essential for creating an inclusive climate where every child feels accepted and valued. In addition, through education that introduces and utilizes diversity as a source of cultural wealth, children can learn about the importance of solidarity, cooperation and mutual support in achieving common goals (Handayani et al., 2024).

The characteristics built in primary schools, such as openness, respect and fairness, will equip children with the social skills needed to interact in an increasingly diverse society. Without this approach, diversity can become a source of conflict and tension. By building character early on in the context of diversity, primary schools not only function as academic educational institutions, but also as places that shape a generation capable of establishing positive and productive relationships with different social groups (Rozi et al., 2024).

Oleh karena itu, penting bagi sekolah dasar untuk menerapkan nilai-nilai multikultural dalam kurikulum dan aktivitas sehari-hari, serta melibatkan seluruh elemen pendidikan mulai dari guru, orang tua, hingga masyarakat dalam menciptakan lingkungan yang mendukung perkembangan karakter anak yang inklusif dan menghargai perbedaan. Sebagaimana dijelaskan oleh Bank bahwa Pendidikan multikultural adalah alat Pendidikan untuk memberikan kesetaraan bagi semua siswa. Secara khusus Pendidikan multicultural adalah sebuah pendekatan terhadap reformasi (Pendidikan) sekolah yang dirancang untuk mewujudkan kesetaraan Pendidikan bagi para siswa dari berbagai kelompok ras, suku, adat, budaya, kelas social, dan liannya (Jayadi et al., 2022). Dengan demikian, pendidikan dasar dapat mencetak individu yang tidak hanya cerdas secara akademik, tetapi juga memiliki kecerdasan sosial yang tinggi, yang siap berkontribusi pada terciptanya masyarakat yang damai dan harmonis.

## 2. Integration of Multicultural Values in the Primary Education Curriculum

The integration of multicultural values in the basic education curriculum is an important step to create education that is relevant to the increasingly diverse social and cultural conditions of society. Diversity in Indonesia, which consists of various ethnicities, religions, cultures and languages, should be used as a strength in the education process. Therefore, the integration of multicultural values in the basic education curriculum has a crucial role in instilling a sense of tolerance, mutual respect and respect for differences from an early age (Kamila, 2023).

Through the integration of multicultural values, students not only learn academic subjects such as math, language, or science, but also gain a deep understanding of the importance of diversity in social life. Multicultural values, such as tolerance, equality, and social justice, can be integrated in various subjects, either explicitly through learning materials related to history, culture, or religion, or implicitly through learning approaches that support positive social interactions

between students from different backgrounds (Huda et al., 2023). For example, in history lessons, students can be taught about the struggles of various ethnic or religious groups in building the nation, while in language subjects, they can be introduced to regional languages in Indonesia. In addition, in daily activities at school, teachers can develop activities that encourage cooperation between students from different backgrounds to build empathy and mutual understanding.

By integrating multicultural values in the basic education curriculum, children will grow into individuals who not only have good academic knowledge, but are also able to interact with others from different backgrounds in a harmonious and respectful manner. This process will help shape a more inclusive generation of young people, who are ready to contribute to a plural and diverse society (Anton et al., 2024). In addition, the integration of multicultural values in the curriculum also provides children with essential life skills to face global challenges. They will be better prepared to live in a world that is interconnected and full of cultural diversity, and able to maintain peace, tolerance and cooperation between nations.

The integration of multicultural values in the education curriculum refers to the recognition, understanding, and application of diversity principles in every aspect of learning at school. The main purpose of this integration is to instill values such as tolerance, mutual respect, and appreciation of differences among students from an early age, so that they can live harmoniously in a pluralistic society (Aprilia et al., 2024). Efforts to integrate multicultural values in the basic education curriculum can be done with the following steps;

a. Introduction to Diversity

The first basic concept of multicultural value integration is the introduction of diversity itself. Diversity in the context of education includes various differences that exist in society, such as differences in ethnicity, religion, culture, language, gender, and social class. Multicultural education teaches students to understand that these differences are inevitable realities and should be appreciated, not avoided or questioned. Therefore, in multicultural learning, students are introduced to diversity, especially in their environment. So for the success of building a multicultural education system, we must understand the priority of differences and the background and environment of diverse humans (Seo & Qi, 2013).

b. Respect for Differences

The integration of multicultural values in the curriculum also emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and acceptance of differences. This is not only related to respecting people of different ethnicities or religions, but also includes respect for differences in ways of thinking, outlook on life, and ways of learning. In

this case, the teacher's role is to guide students to see differences as a wealth that enriches their lives, not as an obstacle (S. W. Rahmawati, 2016).

c. Inclusive and Diverse Learning

To integrate multicultural values, the curriculum must be designed in such a way as to accommodate the different ways of learning of students who come from different backgrounds. Learning materials should be presented in a way that is inclusive and includes various perspectives. For example, in history lessons, teachers can teach various stories from many ethnic groups and cultures, and relate them to values of equality and justice (S. W. Rahmawati, 2016).

d. Developing Tolerance and Empathy

Through the integration of multicultural values, students are taught to develop an attitude of tolerance and empathy towards others. This means that they not only learn to accept differences, but also try to understand the feelings and views of others. These skills are essential for creating harmonious relationships between individuals from different backgrounds (Anton et al., 2024).

e. Building Social Awareness

Multicultural values in the curriculum also aim to build social awareness among students, namely awareness of the importance of maintaining harmony, peace, and helping each other in the midst of diversity. A curriculum that integrates these values helps students understand that they have a social responsibility to play an active role in creating a just, inclusive and equitable society (Arifin & Hasanah, 2024).

f. Inclusive Character Building

The basic concept of integrating multicultural values in the curriculum is to form inclusive student characters. This means that students are trained to think openly, be able to cooperate with anyone regardless of background, and can resolve conflicts with a peaceful and constructive approach (Anton et al., 2024).

The integration of multicultural values in the curriculum is an effort to educate students to have a positive attitude towards the differences that exist in society. This is done by incorporating diversity values in every aspect of learning, creating an inclusive environment, and encouraging students to develop tolerant and empathetic characters. Thus, multicultural education will prepare young people to live in an increasingly plural society, so that they can contribute to the creation of peace and social harmony (Supriatin & Nasution, 2017).

The integration of multicultural values in the basic education curriculum is a strategic effort to instill mutual respect, tolerance, and openness to differences from an early age. In a pluralistic society like Indonesia, basic education has an important role in shaping the character of the younger generation to be able to coexist harmoniously in the diversity of cultures, religions, ethnicities, languages, and other social backgrounds (Gunawan et al., 2022). Multicultural education is not a separate subject, but an approach that is integrated into all aspects of learning. This means that values such as justice, equality, empathy, and respect for differences must be reflected in teaching materials, teaching methods, classroom

interactions, and school policies. Thus, the learning process not only focuses on cognitive aspects, but also develops inclusive social attitudes and behaviors.

In practice, teachers can integrate multicultural values in various ways, such as inserting stories from various local and national cultures in Indonesian lessons, raising examples of figures from various ethnic groups in social studies lessons, or encouraging group work across backgrounds to build cooperation and empathy. A multicultural curriculum also encourages teachers to understand their students' backgrounds and create a safe and accepting learning environment for all.

Through the integration of multicultural values, basic education becomes an important foundation in shaping students who are not only intellectually smart, but also wise in social behavior. Children who are accustomed to living in an atmosphere that respects differences from an early age will grow up to be tolerant, able to avoid conflict, and have concern for others. This is a long-term investment to create a peaceful, just and respectful society in the future.

### 3. Multicultural Learning Strategies in Primary Education

Multicultural learning in basic education is an approach that aims to introduce, appreciate and utilize diversity as a wealth in the teaching and learning process. At the primary education level, children are in a very critical stage of development, where they begin to form worldviews and attitudes towards differences. Therefore, multicultural learning has a very important role in instilling values such as tolerance, mutual respect, and empathy from an early age (Desmila & Suryana, 2023).

The main objective of multicultural learning in elementary education is to form a young generation that is able to live side by side with various differences without ignoring human values. This objective is based on the need to build an attitude of tolerance and inclusiveness. Teaching students to accept and appreciate differences in ethnicity, religion, race, and culture in their environment (Viridi et al., 2023). The need for an attitude of tolerance and mutual respect in order to foster a sense of empathy in students at an early age. This will help students understand the feelings and experiences of others from different backgrounds, so that they can be more sensitive to the needs and problems of others. Then besides that, this need is supported by the need to build good social skills in students at an early age. This can encourage students to work together with friends from different backgrounds and learn to communicate in a respectful manner (Prasetiawati, 2017).

Multicultural learning refers to teaching that emphasizes the importance of understanding and appreciating cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic differences in everyday life. The basic concept involves two main aspects:

- a. Knowledge of Diversity: Students need to be taught about cultural, religious and ethnic diversity in Indonesia and the world. This can be done through

history, geography or art lessons that introduce students to various cultural heritages and traditions (Sulaeka & Susanto, 2023).

- b. Positive Attitude towards Difference: More than just knowledge, it is important to develop a positive attitude towards differences. This involves teaching values such as equality, respect and cooperation between different individuals (R. K. N. Rahmawati & Rahman, 2020).

Multicultural learning not only provides knowledge about diversity, but also has a positive impact on students' personal and social development, including increasing social awareness, reducing discrimination and stereotypes, preparing students to live in a global society. Through the application of appropriate methods, inclusive teaching materials, and a supportive environment, multicultural learning will help students grow into tolerant, empathetic individuals who are ready to contribute to an increasingly pluralistic world (Sipuan et al., 2022). In Zimmerman's view, multicultural learning is included in the context of changing individual students as needed. This is included in self-regulation. According to him, self-regulation is the process of changing students' personalities so that they have the skills needed to learn. Learning in this context is not something that is directed at students, but something that comes from the students themselves (Hladík et al., 2012).

Multicultural learning strategy in primary education is an approach that aims to create an inclusive learning environment that respects diversity. At the stage of primary education, children are in the phase of character building, and the application of this strategy is very important to develop attitudes of tolerance, empathy, and the ability to interact harmoniously with people who come from various cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, and languages (Zamroni et al., 2024).

There are several strategies that can be applied in multicultural learning in elementary schools:

- a. Use of Diverse and Inclusive Teaching Materials

Teachers can integrate learning materials that cover various cultures, religions and perspectives. For example, in a history lesson, teachers can introduce students to various figures from different ethnicities and religions who have made important contributions to the nation's history. This helps students see diversity as a strength that enriches the nation, rather than a source of division.

- b. Application of Collaborative Learning Methods

Another effective strategy is through collaborative learning, where students are invited to work together in diverse groups. This gives them the opportunity to learn to appreciate differences and develop important social skills, such as communication, cooperation and empathy. Through group work, students can

learn from each other's different perspectives, which enriches their experience (Affandi, 2024).

c. Building an Inclusive Classroom Environment

Teachers need to create a safe and accepting classroom environment for all students regardless of their background. This includes avoiding stereotypes or discriminatory behavior and encouraging students to respect each other. An inclusive classroom environment supports the development of a tolerant character and opens space for students to become individuals who value diversity (Syamsuardi et al., 2024).

d. Use of Learning Media that Represents Diversity

The use of different types of learning media, such as books, movies and digital teaching materials that reflect diversity, is essential. Through these media, students can learn about cultures, languages and traditions that are different from the ones they are familiar with, broadening their horizons about the outside world. It can also help reduce prejudice and misconceptions about other groups (Olyssia et al., 2024).

e. Teacher Training and Development

For multicultural learning strategies to be successful, teachers also need to be trained to manage diversity in the classroom. This training includes skills in creating an inclusive classroom atmosphere, how to resolve conflicts related to differences, and how to use culturally sensitive approaches.

f. Respect for Local Culture

Encouraging students to appreciate and preserve local culture and introducing them to the cultural heritage around them is another important strategy. Activities such as inviting community leaders, holding cultural festivals, or hands-on learning outside the classroom can raise students' awareness of the importance of cultural diversity in the local context (Maulida et al., 2021).

g. Diversity-Based Extracurricular Program Development

Schools can develop extracurricular programs that involve activities from various cultures, such as dance, music or handicrafts from different regions. These activities provide an opportunity for students to learn more about diversity first-hand and encourage them to respect each other's differences.

Multicultural learning strategies in primary education aim to equip students with the ability to live in a plural society and respect differences. By implementing various strategies, such as the use of inclusive teaching materials, collaborative learning methods and creating a safe classroom environment, primary schools can play a major role in fostering tolerant, empathetic and inclusive attitudes among the younger generation. This will support the creation of a peaceful and harmonious society in the future.

Learning strategies in primary education are very important because at this stage children are in a critical phase of their cognitive, emotional and social development. Primary education not only aims to teach academic knowledge, but also shape character and social skills needed for life in society. Therefore, the

selection and implementation of appropriate learning strategies will have a major impact on the overall development of students (Wahyudi et al., 2024). These include;

a. Improving Learning Effectiveness

The right learning strategy can increase the effectiveness of learning by making the material easier to understand and interesting for students. In primary education, children have a limited attention span, so interactive, creative and diverse teaching methods can help them focus and be more interested in the lessons. For example, by using games, collaborative projects or the use of technology, students can learn in a fun way and absorb information more easily (Mea, 2024).

b. Cultivating Social Skills

In addition to academic skills, primary education also aims to foster social skills which are very important for children. Learning strategies such as project-based learning or group work help children to learn to interact, cooperate and respect the opinions of others. These are fundamental skills that they will use throughout their lives, whether in personal, professional or social contexts.

c. Increase Independence and Creativity

Learning strategies based on active learning and problem-based learning can encourage students to think critically, solve problems, and work independently. This approach gives students the opportunity to explore their own knowledge, rather than just passively receiving information from the teacher. This can increase students' confidence, independence and creativity in learning.

d. Accommodating Diverse Learning Styles

Every child has a different learning style. Some are more visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or use a combination of all three. Varied learning strategies allow teachers to accommodate these diverse learning styles, so that each student can gain an optimal learning experience. With an approach that is tailored to individual needs, students will feel more cared for and empowered in the learning process.

e. Cultivating a Positive Attitude towards Learning

Good learning strategies can create a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere, which in turn increases students' motivation to learn. By creating an enjoyable learning experience, students will develop a positive attitude towards learning and feel more confident to explore new knowledge. This positive attitude is crucial in shaping students' character which will influence their behavior throughout their education and life.

f. Facilitating Inclusive Learning

Basic education should also be inclusive, that is, it should include all students, including those with special needs. By choosing appropriate learning strategies, such as differentiated learning or the use of assistive technology, teachers can ensure that all students, without exception, can be actively

involved in the learning process. This helps to create a fair and equitable learning environment for all students (Viridi et al., 2023).

g. Improving Relationships between Teachers and Students

Learning strategies that focus on two-way communication between teachers and students can strengthen this relationship. The teacher is not only a source of knowledge, but also a facilitator who listens and understands students' needs and interests. Good relationships between teachers and students create a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning and supports students' social-emotional development (Juniarti, 2023).

The importance of learning strategies in elementary education cannot be underestimated. The right strategy can improve the quality of learning, accommodate various learning styles, foster social skills, and create an inclusive and supportive environment. That to form social skills requires a supportive environment and community (Rokhman et al., 2014). This is important to note in multicultural learning strategies in schools. Through effective strategies, elementary education can help students develop not only in academic aspects, but also in character, social, and emotional aspects that are very important for their future lives.

## Conclusion

Diversity is an inseparable reality of Indonesian society, including in the primary education environment. Primary schools are the first place for children to learn to live in differences, so they have a strategic role in shaping the character of students who are inclusive, tolerant and respectful of others. However, poorly managed diversity can lead to conflict, discrimination and exclusivism that negatively impact children's social and emotional development.

Multicultural education is present as an effective approach to internalize the values of togetherness, tolerance, empathy, and justice in students' lives from an early age. By integrating multicultural values into the curriculum and learning practices, elementary schools can create a safe, inclusive environment that supports the development of students' character as a whole. Teachers, as the spearhead of education, have a central role in instilling these values through interactions and learning methods that are oriented towards respect for diversity. Through planned and sustainable multicultural education, it is hoped that the young generation of Indonesia will grow into individuals who are able to live side by side harmoniously in a pluralistic society, and are ready to face global challenges with an open attitude and mutual respect.

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