

Multicultural Education Management Strategies to Promote Tolerance and Diversity in the School Environment

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Abstrak

Pendidikan multikultural semakin penting diterapkan di sekolah sebagai respons terhadap meningkatnya keragaman peserta didik serta maraknya kasus intoleransi yang terjadi di lingkungan pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis secara komprehensif strategi manajemen pendidikan multikultural yang dapat meningkatkan toleransi dan memperkuat pengelolaan keragaman di sekolah Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan metode systematic literature review (SLR) dengan menelaah 28 artikel ilmiah terpublikasi dalam rentang 2015–2025 pada basis data Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, dan Google Scholar. Analisis dilakukan melalui pendekatan sintesis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola strategi manajemen yang efektif, antara lain kepemimpinan inklusif, implementasi kurikulum multikultural, dan penguatan budaya sekolah inklusif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan inklusif berperan sebagai fondasi utama dalam mengarahkan kebijakan keberagaman, sementara praktik pembelajaran multikultural berkontribusi signifikan dalam membentuk interaksi lintas identitas yang lebih toleran. Selain itu, budaya sekolah inklusif memastikan keberlanjutan implementasi nilai-nilai multikultural melalui norma dan praktik sosial harian. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa strategi manajemen pendidikan multikultural yang terintegrasi mampu menciptakan lingkungan sekolah yang lebih adil, aman, dan berorientasi pada penghargaan terhadap keragaman. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi penting bagi pengembangan kebijakan pendidikan dan praktik manajemen sekolah di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: keberagaman, kepemimpinan inklusif, pendidikan multikultural, toleransi

Abstract

Multicultural education has become increasingly essential in schools as a response to growing student diversity and the rise of intolerance within educational settings. This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of multicultural education management strategies that enhance tolerance and improve diversity management in Indonesian schools. A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted by examining 28 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025 across Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar. The analysis employed a thematic synthesis approach to identify effective management strategies, including inclusive leadership, multicultural curriculum implementation, and the strengthening of inclusive school culture. The findings reveal that inclusive leadership serves as a foundational element that guides diversity-oriented policies, while multicultural teaching practices contribute significantly to fostering tolerant cross-cultural interactions among students. Furthermore, an inclusive school culture ensures the sustainability of multicultural values through shared norms and daily social practices. This study concludes that integrated multicultural education management strategies can create safer, more equitable, and more diversity-responsive school environments. The results offer meaningful implications for the development of educational policy and school management practices in Indonesia.

Keywords: diversity, inclusive leadership, multicultural education, tolerance

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Introduction

The increasingly pluralistic development of global society has made multicultural education a strategic approach to creating schools that are inclusive, tolerant, and responsive to diversity. The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report 2023 shows that more than 42% of countries in the world still face ethnic, religious, or cultural tensions in the educational environment, which has led to increased discrimination and a decline in the quality of social interaction among students (UNESCO, 2023). In the Asia-Pacific region, a UNICEF survey also reports that 31% of students have experienced intolerance or discrimination, particularly related to ethnicity and religion, proving that educational institutions are not yet



fully capable of being safe spaces for diversity (UNICEF, 2022). These findings show that multicultural education is not merely a normative agenda, but an urgent need in creating a learning environment that is capable of appreciating differences. In Indonesia, this challenge is even more complex due to the high level of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity. BPS data shows that Indonesia has more than 633 ethnic groups and more than 700 regional languages living in one national space (BPS, 2021). This complexity makes schools a strategic arena for shaping attitudes of tolerance from an early age, making multicultural education management strategies a crucial issue that needs to be studied in greater depth.

The increase in cases of intolerance in schools reinforces the urgent need for multicultural education management strategies. A study by Kholis & Mufidah (2020) shows that intolerance among students has increased by 10% in the last five years, particularly in relation to exclusivity towards different groups. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology also released data showing that in 2022, there was a 23% increase in reports of identity-based bullying and discrimination compared to the previous year (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Empirical findings from Sakallı et al., (2021) research show that intolerance often manifests in the form of stereotypes, social exclusion, and resistance to intergroup interaction in school settings. This condition has the potential to disrupt the democratic learning process and create social segregation among students. Therefore, a multicultural education management strategy is needed that is not only curricular but also structural and cultural to ensure that schools can become arenas for dialogue, collaboration, and recognition of differences (Arifin & Hermino, 2017). This strategy must include school governance, inclusive leadership, critical pedagogical models, and a school culture oriented towards equality.

Internationally, various studies have proven that multicultural education contributes significantly to increasing tolerance and students' ability to interact amid diversity. Evisensia, (2025) study found that schools that adopt multicultural-based management have 28% lower levels of conflict among students than schools that do not implement it. In Finland, research by Firdaus & Suwendi, (2025) shows that the integration of multicultural policies at the institutional level can increase positive interactions between students from different cultural backgrounds. Meanwhile, research by Lee and Rice (2021) shows that multicultural education management not only has an impact on social tolerance but also increases students' empathy, moral resilience, and cross-cultural communication skills. This data shows that multicultural education is not just an abstract concept, but has a strong empirical impact on the quality of social relationships in schools. However, the implementation of this strategy is highly dependent on the quality of school management. This means that the success of multicultural education is not only determined by the curriculum, but also by leadership, institutional policies, and the capacity of teachers to implement inclusive pedagogy.

In Indonesia, the implementation of multicultural education still faces significant challenges. A study by Sulistyaningrum et al., (2023) found that multicultural education is often understood as a ceremonial activity or temporary theme in school activities, rather than as part of systemic governance. Meanwhile, research by Suryaman & Suharyanto (2022) shows that many schools do not yet have internal policies that explicitly support diversity, so multicultural practices often depend on individual teachers' initiatives. In addition, the challenge of teacher competence in understanding cultural diversity and designing inclusive learning remains a major issue. Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2023) reveals that only 37% of teachers have participated in training related to inclusive and multicultural education, indicating a significant gap in professional competency. The experience of schools in Indonesia also shows that school management plays a major role in preventing discriminatory practices, such as the exclusion of minority students or conflicts between cultural groups that occur in several regions Hartinah et al., (2023). These findings reinforce the argument that diversity-sensitive educational management strategies are urgently needed.

The situation is further complicated by the increasing use of social media among students. Exposure to intolerant content on social media often carries over into the school environment and reinforces prejudices between groups. Research by Setiawan et al., (2023) shows that students who are frequently exposed to discriminatory information on social media have twice the level of intolerance compared to those who are not exposed. In a digital ecosystem with a rapid flow of information, multicultural education management strategies must be able to integrate digital literacy, monitoring of student online behavior, and education on the values of diversity into everyday practices at school. Thus, the role of school management is no longer limited to providing a safe physical environment, but also to shaping a school culture that is able to counteract the polarization of identity triggered by digital spaces.

From a theoretical perspective, multicultural education contains not only pedagogical dimensions but also managerial dimensions that play a role in regulating the structure, organizational culture, and social relationships within educational institutions. Banks' (2016) theory emphasizes that multicultural education can only be effective if school management has an institutional commitment to the principles of equality and social justice. On the other hand, that multicultural education must involve the transformation of school culture, not just curriculum change. By integrating the perspectives of educational management and multicultural theory, this study departs from the assumption that school management strategies play a central role in building a tolerant environment. This approach is important because previous studies have emphasized classroom learning aspects, while the managerial and policy dimensions of schools tend to be less explored in depth, especially in the context of schools in Indonesia.

To date, there are research gaps that need to be explicitly addressed. First, the research by Aisyah and Rahmawati entitled Implementation of Multicultural Education in Elementary Schools (2020) emphasizes learning activities but does not comprehensively discuss school management strategies as a major factor in the success of multicultural education. Second, Holm and Londen's study titled Multicultural Education in Nordic Schools (2020) only focuses on the Finnish context and does not provide a strategic model that can be applied in countries with extreme plurality such as Indonesia. Third, the research by Rahardjo et al. in an article titled "School Policy and Diversity Management" (2021) discusses school policies related to diversity but does not integrate the dimension of student tolerance as a key variable. These three studies reveal an analytical gap regarding how systemic management strategies can increase tolerance and effectively manage diversity in schools. This study presents a novelty in the form of an integrative approach that combines the perspectives of educational management, multicultural pedagogy, and student social dynamics to formulate strategies that can be applied in the Indonesian school context. This study aims to comprehensively analyze multicultural educational management strategies that can increase tolerance, strengthen intergroup relationships, and create an inclusive school culture oriented towards respect for diversity.

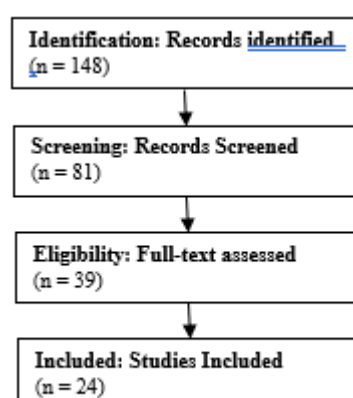
Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review (SLR) design to identify, evaluate, and synthesize scientific findings related to multicultural education management strategies in promoting tolerance and diversity management in the school environment. The SLR approach was chosen because it allows researchers to compile a comprehensive analysis based on empirical research over the past decade in a structured and transparent manner. This design is relevant to the field of education because it is able to reveal patterns, challenges, and strategic recommendations from various research contexts, while avoiding the subjective bias that often arises in traditional narrative literature studies (Snyder, 2019). This approach is in line with the views of Xiao and Watson (2019), who assert that SLR provides a strong methodological framework for reconstructing scientific findings so that they can be used to build theory and guide managerial practice in the world of education. In addition, SLR allows researchers to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the consistency of the relationship between multicultural education management, school policies, and the development of student tolerance in various socio-cultural contexts.

The systematic process was carried out in several stages, starting with the identification of articles in scientific databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar, with a publication range of 2015–2025 to ensure that the data and theories used reflect the most recent developments in multicultural education management practices. During the screening stage, only articles that focused primarily on multicultural education management, school diversity, and student tolerance were retained for further analysis. Articles that were opinion pieces, non-academic reports, or did not undergo a peer-review process were eliminated to ensure scientific validity. In accordance with PRISMA guidelines, the selection process was carried out using strict inclusion criteria covering thematic relevance, theoretical contribution, and methodological completeness. The synthesis stage was conducted using the thematic synthesis technique, which, according to Thomas and Harden (2016), is effective for identifying conceptual patterns and managerial strategies that emerge from various studies such as inclusive leadership, multicultural curriculum, and diversity-based school policies.

This synthesis approach ensures that the final findings provide a holistic, in-depth, and applicable overview in the context of school management in Indonesia. This study is committed to the principle of methodological transparency by presenting the article selection flow using the PRISMA model, so that readers can assess the accuracy and quality of the systematic process used.

The PRISMA stages describe the process of initial article identification, the number of articles screened, the number eliminated based on abstracts and methodological feasibility, and the final number of articles analyzed in full. The presentation of the PRISMA model is also in line with international publication standards in the synthesis of literature in the field of education and management, ensuring that this research follows the best practices in the preparation of credible scientific literature reviews



Results and Discussion

Inclusive Leadership as the Foundation of Multicultural Education Management

Inclusive leadership is one of the main pillars of multicultural education management because school leadership determines the direction of policies, culture, and social climate that influence students' experiences in a diverse environment. In the school context, inclusive leadership not only emphasizes the principal's ability to manage administrative processes but also their capacity to facilitate values of tolerance, social justice, and respect for diversity. According to Hartinah et al., (2023), inclusive leadership involves the ability of school leaders to understand the socio-cultural context of students, respond to the needs of minority groups, and create a space for dialogue that respects different cultural identities. In multicultural education, this leadership is very important because schools are not only places for the transfer of knowledge, but also places for the reconstruction of social identities and values of diversity. Suri & Chandra (2021) research shows that schools with inclusive leadership patterns have a 40% lower incidence of intolerance than schools with traditional leadership patterns that are solely administratively oriented. These findings confirm that leadership quality has a direct relationship with the effectiveness of multicultural strategies in increasing student tolerance.

The implementation of inclusive leadership requires school principals to develop internal policies that explicitly support diversity. In practice, these policies can include the development of an anti-discriminatory code of conduct, mechanisms for reporting cases of intolerance, and procedures for handling conflicts based on culture or religion. A study by Suri & Chandra (2021) found that schools that formally adopted anti-discrimination policies showed a 27% increase in positive interactions between students from different cultural backgrounds over a two-year period. These policies reinforce the perception that schools are safe spaces, thereby encouraging students to respect differences. In Indonesia, such internal policies are still uneven because most schools have not made multicultural education a core organizational value. Research by Kholis & Mufidah, (2020) states that most school principals still focus on fulfilling curriculum administration and academic achievement targets, while strengthening tolerance values is not yet a managerial priority. This condition shows that many schools in Indonesia still operate under a bureaucratic paradigm that does not fully support multicultural education as part of a long-term strategy.

In addition to formal policies, inclusive leadership is reflected in how school principals become role models in building interactions that respect differences. Inclusive leaders are able to display empathy, openness, and commitment to intercultural dialogue, thereby influencing the attitudes and behaviors of teachers and students. According to Habibulloh (2024), leaders with a social justice orientation contribute significantly to fostering a nondiscriminatory school culture. They found that a leadership style that encourages open and collaborative communication has a positive impact on the comfort level of minority students in expressing their identities at school. This is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context, where ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences are often a source of social misunderstanding. Principals with an inclusive leadership style can bridge these differences through a series of programs that stimulate interaction between groups, such as cultural arts activities, student dialogue forums, and cross-class collaborative projects.

In the framework of multicultural education, teachers are key actors who interact directly with students, so inclusive leadership must include management strategies that ensure the improvement of teachers' competence in understanding diversity. Ginting et al., (2023) study confirms that teachers with multicultural competencies are able to create learning that is sensitive to students' backgrounds, thereby creating an equitable and safe classroom space. However, research by Suprpto and Wirawan (2022) shows that only a small percentage of teachers in Indonesia have a comprehensive understanding of multicultural pedagogy. The majority of teachers are not yet accustomed to managing classroom dynamics involving ethnic or religious diversity, so learning often does not fully take into account students' cultural identities. The role of inclusive leadership is important here because principals can provide professional training focused on inclusive pedagogy, conflict management, and cross-cultural communication. Such training enables teachers to have adequate capacity to implement effective multicultural learning.

Inclusive leadership also influences the creation of a school culture that supports tolerance and intercultural dialogue. School culture is a set of norms, values, and social practices that are accepted by all members of the school. According to Widiastini & Agetania (2023), schools with an inclusive culture have lower levels of interpersonal conflict and less stereotyping than schools with a homogeneous and closed organizational culture. The principal plays a central role in building this culture through repeated institutional habits, such as the use of neutral and inclusive language, the preparation of activity schedules that involve all cultural groups, and the appreciation of diversity through representative school activities. In the Indonesian context, schools often only showcase diversity as annual activities such as cultural celebrations, whereas an inclusive culture should be reflected in daily practices such as classroom interactions, disciplinary policies, and decision-making processes (Suri & Chandra, 2021). Changing school culture requires time and managerial commitment, so the role of inclusive leadership is crucial to the success of this transformation.

Beyond cultural aspects, inclusive leadership is also linked to conflict management within the school environment. Conflicts between students from different cultural backgrounds are inevitable, but they can be minimized through conflict management strategies based on the values of justice and equality. A study by Dessel and Ali (2018) confirms that dialogue-based conflict resolution has been proven to increase empathy between student groups. Inclusive leadership enables schools to apply a restorative approach to

conflict resolution, namely building awareness, repairing relationships, and encouraging social responsibility. This approach is more in line with multicultural education values than conventional punitive approaches, which often exacerbate social segregation among students. Principals can establish mediation units or conflict resolution forums in schools to ensure that any differences of opinion or disputes are handled fairly and constructively.

Thus, inclusive leadership is an integral foundation for the successful implementation of multicultural education management strategies. School leaders who are sensitive to diversity can create policies, cultures, and social interactions that foster a tolerant school environment. In the highly diverse context of Indonesia, inclusive leadership is not only a managerial necessity, but also a fundamental prerequisite for the transformation of multicultural education in schools. Without strong inclusive leadership, other multicultural strategies such as inclusive learning or diversity policies will not function optimally.

Implementation of Multicultural Curriculum and Learning Practices to Strengthen Student Tolerance

The implementation of a multicultural curriculum is an essential strategy in creating a learning environment that values differences and encourages student tolerance. A multicultural curriculum focuses not only on content that reflects diversity, but also on pedagogical approaches that facilitate positive intercultural interactions. Pratama (2023) emphasizes that multicultural curricula must be transformative, encouraging students to develop new perspectives on diversity through reflective and critical learning experiences. In the Indonesian context, the implementation of multicultural curricula is often limited to the integration of local cultural elements in certain subjects, so it has not yet become a comprehensive cross-curricular approach. This is reinforced by a study by Sutanto and Marzuki (2021), which found that 64% of teachers still have a partial understanding of multicultural education, namely only as cultural content, not as a pedagogical transformation process. This condition shows that curriculum transformation needs to be supported by consistent school management strategies in order for multicultural education to be effective.

Effective multicultural learning practices must include approaches that emphasize dialogue, collaboration, and appreciation of students' cultural experiences. Students tend to show increased levels of tolerance and empathy when they are engaged in experiential learning that facilitates cross-cultural interaction. In multicultural learning, teachers must be able to ask reflective questions, provide space for open discussion, and encourage students to exchange perspectives. Learning techniques such as cooperative learning have been proven to increase mutual respect among students from different groups (Ginting et al., 2019). In Indonesia, the implementation of this collaborative approach has begun to develop in the Merdeka Belajar (Freedom of Learning) curriculum, but its success rate is highly dependent on teachers' competence in managing heterogeneous group dynamics. Research by Suryaman & Suharyanto (2022) shows that the implementation of collaborative learning that promotes intercultural dialogue can reduce stereotypes among students by up to 30% in one semester. These findings make it clear that multicultural learning cannot be separated from teaching methods that are sensitive to the reality of classroom diversity.

Another aspect that influences the effectiveness of multicultural learning is the representation of teaching materials. Inclusive representation includes the use of teaching materials, case studies, and historical narratives that reflect the cultural, ethnic, religious, and social diversity of students. Sakalli (2021) argues that non-inclusive representation can reinforce identity hierarchies and hinder the development of tolerance in students. In the Indonesian context, several studies show that national textbooks are still dominated by narratives of the majority culture and do not fully and fairly represent Indonesia's cultural diversity (Hartinah et al., 2023). This imbalance in representation can lead to biased perceptions and a lack of space for minority groups to feel valued in the learning process. Therefore, school management strategies need to ensure that teachers are given the freedom and professional support to enrich teaching materials with relevant local and cross-cultural contexts so that students have a more reflective and inclusive learning experience.

To illustrate the variety of multicultural learning strategies often applied in international and national contexts, the following table summarizes several commonly used models of multicultural pedagogical approaches. These models are a synthesis of various relevant empirical studies in the literature from 2015–2025.

Before presenting the table, it should be understood that this summary aims to provide a structured overview of multicultural learning methods that have been proven effective in increasing student tolerance. This table will also be analyzed further after its presentation to assess the relevance of these strategies to the Indonesian context.

Table 1. Common Multicultural Pedagogical Approaches Identified in Recent Empirical Studies

Approach		Key Features	Documented Outcomes	Representative Studies
Cooperative Learning		Group-based tasks, mixed cultural teams, shared responsibility	Enhances empathy and reduces intergroup prejudice	Ginting et al. (2019); Gunawan & Sari (2022)
Culturally Responsive Teaching		Adapts instruction to students' cultural backgrounds	Improves classroom engagement and cultural identity affirmation	Sakalli (2021)

Experiential Education	Multicultural	Simulations, immersion, tasks	cultural reflective	Strengthens awareness and thinking	intercultural and reflective	Holm & Londen (2020)
Dialogic Pedagogy		Structured debate forums, reflection	discussions, guided	Promotes critical thinking, mutual respect	tolerance, and	Suri & Chandra (2021); Abdurrohman et al., (2025)

The table shows that various multicultural pedagogical approaches have different focuses but share the same goal of creating a more democratic and inclusive space for interaction. Cooperative learning, for example, provides a space for direct interaction through group work so that students can learn to understand the perspectives of friends from different backgrounds. In Indonesia, this model is in line with the culture of mutual cooperation and collaboration that has become a hallmark of society. A study by Johnson and Johnson (2019) confirms that heterogeneous group work can reduce intergroup bias and improve students' social skills. Culturally responsive teaching, on the other hand, emphasizes adapting the teaching and learning process to students' cultural backgrounds. This approach is particularly relevant in schools with high cultural diversity, such as in urban areas or multi-ethnic regions, when teachers are able to tailor their instruction to students' cultural experiences, the level of learning engagement increases significantly.

Experiential multicultural education is also an effective strategy because it provides students with direct experiences to understand the concept of diversity through various reflective activities. Firdaus & Suwendi, (2025) found that this model increases students' awareness of social justice issues and broadens their perspectives on cultural identity. The dialogic approach is equally important. Suri & Chandra (2021) shows that open dialogue on multicultural issues can strengthen students' ability to view social issues critically and foster their ability to appreciate differences. In the Indonesian context, a dialogic approach is essential to reduce stereotypical biases and prejudices that may arise among students from different religious, linguistic, or ethnic groups.

The Indonesian context requires the implementation of multicultural learning strategies that are not only pedagogically effective but also adaptive to social realities. Schools in Indonesia have varying levels of heterogeneity. In schools with high levels of diversity, such as in big cities, dialogic and cooperative learning approaches can be applied intensively to build cross-group interactions. Meanwhile, in relatively homogeneous schools, experiential and culturally responsive teaching approaches need to be strengthened to introduce external diversity and encourage students to understand the concept of tolerance more broadly. Research by Sutanto and Marzuki (2021) shows that the homogeneity of the environment often makes students less exposed to diversity, so learning strategies must be designed to broaden their horizons.

The transformation of multicultural learning can only proceed with consistent support from school management, including in the provision of facilities, learning policies, and professional development for teachers. Without a strong managerial framework, the implementation of multicultural pedagogy has the potential to become a sporadic and unsustainable activity. Thus, the strategy for implementing multicultural curricula and learning must be an integral part of overall school management. This ensures that the main objectives of multicultural education, namely increasing tolerance and appreciation of diversity, can be achieved effectively and sustainably.

Strengthening an Inclusive School Culture as a Strategy for Sustainable Multicultural Education Management

An inclusive school culture is a cultural dimension that unifies all multicultural education management strategies in building a learning environment that is tolerant, safe, and responsive to diversity. If the multicultural curriculum provides a pedagogical framework and inclusive leadership directs the organizational vision, then school culture becomes the space where multicultural values are consistently lived and practiced by the school community. According to Setiawan (2024), school culture is not only rules and policies, but also a system of beliefs, social practices, communication patterns, and shared values that are internalized by the school community. In the context of multicultural education, an inclusive school culture reflects norms that reject discrimination, promote cross-identity interactions, and ensure equal participation for all students. Sholeh's (2024) research shows that schools with an inclusive culture have lower levels of inter-student conflict and a higher willingness to engage in intergroup dialogue.

These findings reinforce the argument that without an inclusive culture, other multicultural strategies implemented by schools will only be procedural and will not result in meaningful social transformation. Strengthening an inclusive school culture requires a systematic and sustainable management approach.

First, principals need to ensure that values of inclusivity are reflected in all school mechanisms, including disciplinary policies, decision-making procedures, and internal communication mechanisms. Suri & Chandra (2021) emphasize that school culture can only be formed when inclusive values are consistently applied by school leaders and passed down through clear operational policies. This means that schools must develop internal guidelines on diversity that not only cover the prevention of discrimination but also encourage the recognition of students' cultural identities. In the Indonesian context, school policies related to diversity are often still normative and do not yet have strong operational implications. Suri & Chandra's (2021) study shows that many schools in Indonesia still interpret diversity ceremonially, for example

through annual cultural celebrations, without integrating it into regulations, learning practices, or daily social interaction processes. This situation highlights the need for school management strategies that strengthen the internalization of multicultural values in all school activities.

Furthermore, strengthening an inclusive school culture must involve the active participation of students as the main subjects of school life. Students are not only recipients of values, but also actors who play a role in shaping cultural dynamics. Evisensia, (2025) research shows that student involvement in cross-identity discussion forums, collaborative activities, and diversity-based organizations can increase their social awareness and strengthen the practice of tolerance. Schools need to provide participatory spaces that allow students from various groups to share their experiences, aspirations, and perspectives. These spaces can take the form of cultural dialogue forums, cross-class study groups, or collaborative projects involving students from different cultural backgrounds. The existence of such participatory spaces has been proven to increase cross-cultural understanding and reduce social tension among students (Holm & Londen, 2020). In Indonesia, these spaces for dialogue are often not systematically facilitated. In a pluralistic society such as Indonesia, students need safe spaces to reflect on their experiences of diversity and build social relationships that respect differences.

Another important aspect in building an inclusive school culture is the role of teachers as social agents who shape student relationships and interactions. Teachers are not only responsible for teaching, but also for mediating culture and fostering students' social values. According to Gay (2018), teachers who are culturally sensitive are able to encourage respectful interactions and reduce conflicts that may arise due to differences in social identity. However, research by Suprpto and Wirawan (2022) shows that many teachers in Indonesia still find it difficult to implement culturally sensitive learning due to a lack of training, minimal conceptual understanding, and the absence of school policy support. For this reason, multicultural education management strategies must include significant investment in teacher professional development, including training in cross-cultural communication, conflict mediation, and inclusive learning design. Such training not only improves teachers' pedagogical competence but also helps them become models of inclusive values for students.

Strengthening an inclusive school culture is also closely related to how schools handle diversity-based conflicts. Conflict is a natural part of the social environment, and multicultural schools must have conflict resolution mechanisms that are in line with the values of justice and equality. According to Dessel and Ali (2018), a restorative conflict resolution approach can increase understanding and empathy among students and reduce social segregation. This approach does not emphasize punishment alone, but encourages dialogue, relationship restoration, and joint resolution. Schools can form conflict resolution teams consisting of teachers, counselors, and student representatives to mediate cases of intolerance or identity conflicts. In several cases of intolerance that have occurred in Indonesian schools, the absence of restorative conflict resolution mechanisms has meant that the resolution has often been one-sided and uneducational, so that the root causes of intolerance have not been addressed (Hidayat & Santoso, 2022). Therefore, schools need a conflict management framework that is in line with multicultural values so that the school environment can be a safe space for all students.

In addition to structural mechanisms, the development of an inclusive school culture must be strengthened through symbolic practices and routine activities that consistently represent multicultural values. According to Sakalli (2021), symbolic practices such as the use of inclusive language in school communication, the provision of interaction spaces that reflect diversity of identity, and the integration of cultural activities into daily activities can shape a collective school identity that values differences. Routine activities such as ceremonies, class meetings, extracurricular activities, and joint school projects must contain messages of diversity and tolerance that are not merely symbolic but reflect the school's multicultural vision. This is the difference between schools that only “hold multicultural activities” and schools that are truly “multicultural.”

The sustainability of an inclusive school culture can only be achieved if these values are brought to life through daily practices and do not depend on specific moments. From the overall analysis, it can be seen that strengthening an inclusive school culture is the multicultural education management strategy that plays the most important role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the value of tolerance.

If inclusive leadership is the driving force and multicultural learning is the operational instrument, then school culture is the ecosystem that enables these two strategies to function harmoniously. This is in line with the research objective of identifying multicultural education management strategies that can increase tolerance and diversity management in schools. Strengthening an inclusive school culture places the entire school community as an integral part of the transformation process and ensures that the value of diversity is not only understood cognitively but also practiced socially in everyday school life

Conclusion

This study shows that multicultural education management is a very important strategy for increasing tolerance and managing diversity in the school environment. Through three main dimensions, including inclusive leadership, the implementation of multicultural curricula and learning practices, and the strengthening of an inclusive school culture, it was found that increasing student tolerance cannot be achieved through pedagogical interventions alone, but requires a systemic and comprehensive managerial approach. Inclusive leadership has been proven to play a fundamental role in creating school structures and policy directions that support diversity, while representative and collaborative multicultural learning

practices are able to build cross-identity interactions more effectively. An inclusive school culture then functions as a social ecosystem that ensures the sustainability of tolerance values through daily habits, norms, and interactions at school.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that multicultural education management strategies can only be successful when leadership, curriculum, and school culture move harmoniously within a consistent value framework. Schools that are able to combine these three strategies not only create a safe and democratic learning space, but also shape a generation of learners with more mature social competencies in dealing with diversity. Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools strengthen professional training for teachers related to inclusive pedagogy, develop operational anti-discrimination policies, and create restorative conflict resolution mechanisms to deal with issues of intolerance in an educational manner. The government and education stakeholders also need to provide policy support and resources to ensure the sustainable implementation of multicultural education at all levels of education.

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