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INTERNALIZATION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AT MUHAMMADIYAH PRIVATE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN GUNUNGSITOLI CITY

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implementasi pendidikan multikultural di SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah Kota Gunungsitoli dan dampaknya terhadap karakter siswa. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif, di mana data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dengan kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa, serta observasi langsung terhadap kegiatan di sekolah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah Kota Gunungsitoli berhasil mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai multikultural ke dalam kurikulum, melaksanakan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler yang berfokus pada seni dan budaya, serta memberikan pelatihan kepada guru untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mereka tentang pentingnya keberagaman. Dampak positif dari praktik ini terlihat pada peningkatan empati, toleransi, dan sikap terbuka siswa terhadap perbedaan. Meskipun terdapat tantangan, seperti pengaruh stereotip dari masyarakat, komitmen sekolah dalam menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang inklusif tetap kuat. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan perlunya dukungan lebih lanjut dari orang tua dan masyarakat untuk memperkuat nilai-nilai multikultural dalam pendidikan. Kesimpulannya, internalisasi pendidikan multikultural di SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah Kota Gunungsitoli tidak hanya membentuk karakter siswa, tetapi juga berkontribusi pada terciptanya masyarakat yang harmonis dan berkeadilan.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Multicultural; Toleransi; Keberagaman Budaya; Karakter Siswa; Lingkungan Belajar Inklusif

Abstract

This study aims to examine the implementation of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli and its impact on students' character development. The research employed a qualitative approach, in which data were collected through interviews with the principal,

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teachers, and students, as well as direct observations of school activities. The findings reveal that Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli has successfully integrated multicultural values into its curriculum, organized extracurricular activities centered on arts and culture, and provided teacher training to enhance their understanding of the importance of diversity. The positive impact of these practices is evident in the increased empathy, tolerance, and openness among students toward differences. Despite facing challenges such as societal stereotypes, the school's commitment to fostering an inclusive learning environment remains strong. This study recommends further support from parents and the community to reinforce multicultural values in education. In conclusion, the internalization of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli not only shapes students' character but also contributes to the development of a just and harmonious society.

Keywords: Multicultural Education; Tolerance; Cultural Diversity; Student Character; Inclusive Learning Environment

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in shaping the nation's character, particularly in addressing the challenges of diversity within society. Indonesia, with its vast diversity of ethnicities, religions, races, and cultures, requires an educational system capable of integrating multicultural values to foster harmony, peace, and strengthen unity and national cohesion. One form of education that is highly relevant to this need is multicultural education. Multicultural education aims to introduce and instill appreciation for diversity while cultivating tolerance among individuals in a pluralistic society. In this context, it is essential for educational institutions to internalize multicultural values both in the curriculum and in everyday school practices.

SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah in Gunungsitoli, as part of Indonesia's broader educational network, plays a strategic role in promoting multicultural values. As an educational institution based on Islamic principles, Muhammadiyah not only emphasizes moderate religious instruction but also focuses on character development that enables students to interact respectfully within a diverse society. The internalization of multicultural education at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah Gunungsitoli is expected to foster mutual respect, reduce discriminatory attitudes, and



enhance the quality of relationships among students from diverse backgrounds.

In practice, the internalization of multicultural education at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah Gunungsitoli is implemented not only through classroom instruction but also through various extracurricular activities and a school culture that reflects diversity. The concept of multicultural education adopted by the school includes fostering understanding of the importance of respecting religious, ethnic, and cultural differences, as well as implementing values such as tolerance, unity, and justice. Therefore, multicultural education in this context is not merely about introducing diversity but also about cultivating positive attitudes that support the creation of a more inclusive, peaceful, and harmonious society.

The significance of internalizing multicultural education has been emphasized in various studies. According to Darmaningtyas (2012), multicultural education must become an integral part of Indonesia's educational system, as it helps shape students who are globally aware and respectful of local cultural diversity. Darmaningtyas also stresses that incorporating multicultural perspectives into religious education can foster healthier and more productive interfaith dialogue. Furthermore, Santoso (2015) reveals in his research that multicultural education plays a vital role in building a peaceful and prosperous society. In the school context, multiculturalism functions not only to introduce differences but also to build social solidarity among diverse individuals.

At SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah Gunungsitoli, the internalization of multicultural education is expected to teach students to perceive diversity not as a source of conflict, but as a potential for mutual enrichment. By integrating moderate Islamic values with multicultural principles, the school is committed to producing graduates who are not only academically competent but also socially and emotionally mature in coexisting with various societal groups. Overall, multicultural education at this school aims to nurture students with a global perspective, who appreciate diversity and act as agents of change in advancing a more inclusive and harmonious Indonesia. In this increasingly globalized era, the implementation of multicultural education in schools is crucial—not only to familiarize students with diversity but also to prepare them for the complex and varied challenges of modern life.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the internalization of multicultural education has garnered significant attention within the educational context of culturally diverse countries such as Indonesia. Numerous studies have explored the relationship between multicultural education and the development of tolerance, appreciation for diversity, and student character building. From these studies, several key trends have emerged: first, a focus on integrating multicultural values into formal curricula; second, the implementation of multicultural education within school culture and extracurricular activities; and third, the influence of faith-based education on the internalization of diversity values. Additionally, research approaches have generally included both qualitative and quantitative methods, utilizing surveys, case studies, and participatory observation. However, studies specifically linking the internalization of multicultural education in Muhammadiyah-based Islamic schools located in remote areas like Gunungsitoli remain limited (Amsal Qori Dalimunthe et al., 2024; Muhammad Riza, 2023; Muhlison, 2022).

The first trend is prominently found in research examining the integration of multicultural education into school curricula. These studies typically emphasize curriculum content analysis and how multicultural material is adapted to foster inclusive attitudes among students. For example, studies by Fadhli et al. (2023), Firmansyah (2020, 2021a), and Rahmah & Fadhli (2021) employed qualitative descriptive approaches involving in-depth interviews and document analysis to evaluate curriculum content and implementation. Their focus centers on understanding multiculturalism concepts and how teachers apply them in the learning process. These studies generally underscore the importance of a curriculum responsive to social and cultural diversity as the foundational basis for internalizing multicultural values (Banks, 2015; Geertz, n.d.; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2023).

The second trend highlights the implementation of multicultural education through school culture and extracurricular activities. Research such as that by Mardhiah et al. (2024), Odii et al. (2024), and Pradana Putri & Rong (2021) utilized ethnographic case studies across several schools to observe daily practices supporting the development of tolerance and appreciation for differences. The primary focus includes student social interactions, the role of teachers as facilitators of multicultural values, and



the development of activities promoting cultural and religious diversity (Firmansyah, 2021b; Fridiyanto & Firmansyah, 2022; Said et al., 2013; Suparwan, 2020; Tarmizi, 2020). Participatory observation and interviews serve as main methods to uncover how multicultural values are not only taught theoretically but also practiced within the school's social environment.

The third trend concentrates on the influence of faith-based education on the internalization of multicultural values, especially in Islamic schools. Studies by Hilmin et al. (2023), Rifqi (2021), and Sari et al. (2024) emphasize how moderate Islamic principles taught in Muhammadiyah schools and pesantren contribute to shaping attitudes of tolerance and openness toward diversity. These studies typically adopt qualitative methods involving in-depth interviews and content analysis of religious teaching materials (Hilmin et al., 2023; Sari et al., 2024; Sayyi, 2020). Their focus is on harmonizing religious values with multicultural principles as a strategy to address identity conflicts and intolerance.

Despite these valuable insights, the aforementioned research trends have yet to explicitly explore the dynamics of multicultural value internalization in Muhammadiyah-based Islamic schools situated in remote areas such as Gunungsitoli. Contextual aspects like local socio-cultural conditions, community roles, and geographical challenges have received limited attention. This gap leads to an incomplete understanding of how multicultural values can be effectively embedded in daily educational practices, particularly in environments characterized by both diversity and limited educational resources.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by focusing on the internalization of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli through an in-depth qualitative case study approach. The research will highlight how multicultural values are internalized via curriculum integration, school culture, and the role of moderate religious teachings within a unique local context. This approach is expected to provide new perspectives that combine structural and cultural factors while examining the challenges and opportunities in implementing multicultural education in remote areas marked by complex ethnic and religious diversity.



RESEARCH METHODS

In the study on the Internalization of Multicultural Education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli, a qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. The qualitative approach was selected as this research focuses on an in-depth understanding of how multicultural values are applied and internalized within the school environment. Creswell (2013) states that a qualitative approach is well-suited for studies aiming to explore social phenomena in depth—such as multicultural education—which involves interactions among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This study not only explores individual perspectives and experiences but also seeks to understand how multicultural educational practices are embedded in the daily lives of students and all school members. The type of research used is a case study, which enables the researcher to investigate phenomena thoroughly within a specific context. Yin (2014) explains that a case study is appropriate for examining phenomena in real-life settings and provides insights into the influencing factors and implications of the phenomenon. In this case, Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School was selected as the unit of analysis to understand how multicultural education is implemented, both in school policies and in the social interactions among students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

To collect data, this study used qualitative techniques such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and students to explore their views on the implementation of multicultural education at school. Patton (2002) argues that in-depth interviews allow researchers to thoroughly explore individuals' perceptions and experiences related to the research topic. Participant observation was also conducted to directly observe how multicultural values are practiced in daily school life, including student interactions and school activities that promote diversity. Boeije (2009) notes that observation is an effective technique for obtaining valid data on how these values are applied in social contexts.

For data analysis, this study employed thematic analysis, which enables researchers to identify and organize key themes that emerge from the collected data, including interviews, observations, and documents. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis is an efficient method for exploring and analyzing patterns or themes in qualitative data. To



ensure data reliability and validity, this study also employed triangulation as a data verification technique, by comparing results from different data sources to ensure consistency in the findings (Patton, 2002).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Multicultural Education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli

The implementation of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli can be observed through the school's efforts to integrate values of diversity across various aspects of school life, including the curriculum, teaching methods, extracurricular programs, and interactions between students and teachers. The aim is to nurture students who are not only academically competent but also exhibit tolerance and mutual respect for differences. Field research at this school demonstrates that diversity is not only accepted but is also embraced as a strength to foster a harmonious and inclusive environment.

First, the curriculum at the school is designed to promote intercultural understanding and appreciation for diversity. In every subject, teachers integrate topics that discuss various cultures, religions, and ethnicities. Research findings indicate that students are given opportunities to study not only Indonesian history but also global history with an emphasis on cultural diversity. This curriculum aims to broaden students' perspectives so they can understand the world through multiple lenses. This aligns with Banks' (2009) perspective that multicultural education should introduce various cultural and social values to help students appreciate differences.

In addition, inclusive teaching methods are a key component of multicultural education implementation at this school. Teachers employ various strategies that enable all students to actively engage in learning, without exception. Field observations reveal that teaching approaches such as discussions, group collaboration, and the use of culturally responsive learning materials are commonly used. Teachers act as facilitators who not only deliver content but also guide students in discussing and sharing experiences related to diversity. Nieto (2010) argues that such approaches are effective in creating an open and respectful learning environment.

Project-based learning is also implemented, especially those that focus on diversity. These projects allow students to work in heterogeneous



groups and produce outcomes that reflect various cultures. For example, in art or social projects, students collaborate to create works that incorporate elements of different cultures, such as traditional art, dance, or cuisine from various regions in Indonesia. This helps students better understand the value of intercultural cooperation. Gay (2010) emphasizes that diversity-based projects can foster mutual respect and enrich students' cultural understanding.

Extracurricular programs also play a crucial role in supporting multicultural education at the school. Research shows that the school offers various extracurricular activities that promote understanding and appreciation of diversity, such as cultural arts, intercultural seminars, and celebrations of religious holidays. These programs involve students from different religious, ethnic, and racial backgrounds to get to know one another and celebrate their differences. They provide students with direct experiences in learning about and engaging with diverse cultures. A vital aspect of multicultural education at the school lies in the interaction between teachers and students. Research indicates that teachers serve as role models in demonstrating respect for differences. They do not only convey multicultural values through instructional materials but also model tolerance and inclusivity in their daily interactions with students. For example, during class discussions, teachers encourage students to listen to each other, appreciate differing opinions, and learn from one another's experiences. According to Nieto (2010), the teacher's role is central in fostering an environment that supports tolerance and diversity.

In classroom management, teachers are responsible for creating an inclusive atmosphere where all students feel valued, no one is marginalized, and every difference is respected. Field data reveal that teachers at the school pay great attention to managing classrooms in ways that affirm diversity, such as ensuring equal opportunities for all students to speak and share their opinions. Banks (2009) asserts that effective classroom management in multicultural education enhances participation from students of diverse backgrounds and facilitates the creation of a more open and inclusive environment.

Moreover, the assessment of students' attitudes is also an integral part of multicultural education practice. The school's evaluation not only considers academic achievement but also assesses how students apply multicultural values in their daily lives. For instance, students' ability to



collaborate with peers from different cultural backgrounds is one of the important indicators in the evaluation process. Gay (2010) suggests that fair and equitable assessment in multicultural education can encourage students to be more open and appreciative of differences.

The success of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli is also evident in the creation of an environment that genuinely supports diversity. Field research shows that students feel comfortable expressing their cultural identities, and differences are not seen as barriers but as strengths. This demonstrates that multicultural education at the school is implemented not only in theory but also in daily practice. Nieto (2010) argues that schools that successfully integrate multicultural education are those that foster an environment where students feel respected, accepted, and equally empowered to grow.

In conclusion, the implementation of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli involves various approaches, including curriculum development, inclusive teaching methods, extracurricular programs, teacher-student interactions, and attitude-based student evaluation. Based on field observations, the school has successfully established a diversity-supportive environment and nurtured student character that values differences—an essential skill for their future social lives.

The Role of Teachers and Students in the Internalization of Multicultural Education

Based on observations conducted at Muhammadiyah Junior High School in Gunungsitoli, the role of teachers in the internalization of multicultural education is evident through their pedagogical approaches and daily classroom interactions. Teachers not only serve as instructors but also as facilitators who assist students in recognizing and appreciating cultural, religious, and social diversity in their environment. According to Banks (2009), effective teachers in multicultural education go beyond teaching about diversity—they also model and introduce constructive ways of interacting with individuals from different backgrounds.

In daily instruction, teachers at Muhammadiyah Junior High School actively integrate multicultural values into the curriculum. Observational data indicate that project-based learning, intercultural dialogues, and the use of materials that reflect both local and global cultures are frequently



employed. Teachers ensure that each student has equal opportunities to express their thoughts and share experiences related to diversity. They also adopt teaching strategies that promote intercultural interaction, encouraging students to collaborate in groups composed of diverse backgrounds. This allows students to learn from one another and expand their understanding of various cultures and values.

Meanwhile, the role of students in internalizing multicultural education is equally significant. Students are encouraged to become agents of change who promote values of tolerance and mutual respect among their peers. Observations show that students actively participate in classroom discussions on topics related to cultural, religious, and social diversity. This aligns with Banks and Banks (2010), who emphasize that multicultural education aims to cultivate positive attitudes toward diversity through experiential learning and meaningful interaction with others. Students are also exposed to real-life encounters with diversity through extracurricular activities, such as cultural arts, religious celebrations, and community service. These experiences provide opportunities for students to engage with other cultures and interact with peers from various backgrounds. Observational data suggest that students are enthusiastic and actively involved in these activities, demonstrating that they are not only learning about diversity in theory but also applying these values in their daily lives.

Beyond extracurricular activities, students also embody multicultural values in everyday interactions within and outside the classroom. They show respect for differences in ethnicity, religion, and personal opinions. Observations reveal that students are open to diverse ideas and strive to understand others' perspectives. Teachers play a pivotal role in fostering this tolerant attitude by facilitating class discussions on social issues related to diversity, such as interfaith conflicts, human rights, and government policies on inclusion. Teachers consistently guide students to respect differing viewpoints, even when those perspectives diverge from their own.

In addition, teachers introduce students to the noble values embedded in both religious and cultural teachings. At Muhammadiyah Junior High School, special attention is given to promoting interreligious understanding. For example, in religious education classes, teachers not only teach internal values but also stress the importance of respecting other faiths. This approach helps students to internalize the principles of coexistence and religious tolerance.



On the other hand, students also take an active role in fostering an inclusive and harmonious school environment. Observational data show that students apply multicultural values in everyday life, engaging in intercultural activities such as cultural exhibitions, information exchanges on traditions and customs, and participation in social events that highlight diverse cultural values. These practices contribute to building a learning community in which diversity is celebrated rather than marginalized. Overall, the roles of both teachers and students in the internalization of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Junior High School in Gunungsitoli are mutually reinforcing. Teachers serve as facilitators who guide students in developing tolerance, while students actively apply these values in their daily interactions. The multicultural education implemented at this school contributes to creating an inclusive environment where every individual feels accepted and respected, regardless of their cultural, religious, or social background. This approach aligns with the view of Banks and Banks (2010), who underscore the importance of education in preparing students to thrive in a pluralistic and diverse society.

Challenges in the Internalization of Multicultural Education

The implementation of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Junior High School in Gunungsitoli faces a range of challenges that must be addressed to create an inclusive educational environment. Although the school is committed to embedding values of diversity, several obstacles remain—ranging from resource limitations and pedagogical practices to student and community acceptance. These challenges often stem from the mismatch between theoretical instruction and the social realities students encounter in their daily lives. One of the most significant challenges is the diversity of students' socio-cultural backgrounds, which can influence how they interact and accept multicultural values. Observations reveal that not all students possess the same level of understanding regarding diversity. This discrepancy is rooted in familial and environmental factors, especially among students raised in more homogeneous settings that may be less open to differences.

Another major challenge is the lack of resources to support the implementation of multicultural education. Teachers at Muhammadiyah Junior High School sometimes encounter limitations in accessing adequate teaching materials that encompass a variety of cultures and traditions.



Banks (2009) emphasizes that an effective multicultural curriculum requires content that is representative of multiple cultures; however, schools often struggle to provide such comprehensive resources. The scarcity of textbooks and instructional tools that reflect diverse cultural narratives can hinder holistic learning processes. Moreover, the awareness and understanding of teachers regarding the importance of multicultural education can also pose challenges. Not all teachers have received sufficient training in implementing effective multicultural education approaches. This lack of professional development can affect their ability to integrate multicultural principles into classroom instruction meaningfully. A recurring issue observed in the field is the resistance among some students to changes in mindset related to multiculturalism. Many students tend to feel more comfortable with familiar beliefs and customs developed from childhood and may find it difficult to embrace new ideas introduced from outside their immediate social environment.

Another challenge arises from the lack of parental and community support. Multicultural education in schools cannot succeed without active collaboration from parents and the wider community. In some instances, parents who are unaware of the significance of multicultural education may be reluctant to support the school's efforts in instilling values of diversity in their children. Nieto (2010) highlights the crucial role of parental involvement in the success of multicultural education, yet many parents remain unaware of its potential benefits in broadening their children's worldview. Additionally, the evaluation of multicultural values poses difficulties. It is often challenging for educators to assess how deeply students internalize multicultural values in terms of attitude and behavior. Teachers may struggle to develop objective assessments that reflect students' cultural, religious, and social awareness. Another external factor that complicates the internalization process is the influence of mass media, which often reinforces negative stereotypes of particular ethnic or religious groups. Students exposed to such media narratives may find it difficult to reconcile this content with the messages of tolerance and diversity promoted in school. This highlights the need to integrate media literacy into multicultural education, helping students critically evaluate information and adopt more objective, inclusive perspectives.

Furthermore, applying multicultural principles in everyday life outside the classroom also presents challenges. Although students are



taught about diversity in school, they often encounter environments beyond school that do not support these values. In communities still divided by ethnic and religious differences, students may feel pressured to conform to the dominant group, making it difficult to practice inclusion in real-world contexts. Finally, a major challenge lies in creating a truly inclusive school environment. Despite numerous initiatives to foster diversity, not all students at Muhammadiyah Junior High School feel fully accepted or valued. Some students from minority backgrounds may experience marginalization, both in classroom participation and extracurricular activities.

In summary, the challenges in the internalization of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Junior High School in Gunungsitoli encompass a wide array of factors. From limited resources and inadequate teacher training to student resistance and lack of community support, addressing these issues requires collective efforts from school administrators, educators, students, parents, and the community. Only through such collaborative engagement can multicultural education be effectively implemented and prepare students to live harmoniously in a diverse society.

Evaluation and Impact of Multicultural Education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City

The evaluation and impact of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City can be viewed from various perspectives, including changes in students' attitudes, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and the integration of diversity values in school life. The evaluation is conducted to assess the extent to which multicultural education has succeeded in fostering understanding and tolerance among students of different cultures. The impact of this multicultural education also affects interpersonal relationships within the school, creating a more inclusive and respectful environment. Based on observations, the evaluation process at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City involves various parties, including teachers, students, and parents, working together to measure the success and challenges of multicultural education.

In terms of learning evaluation, teachers assess students' understanding of cultural diversity through tests, discussions, and



observations of their behavior in everyday life. This evaluation focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on students' attitudes toward differences. The positive impact of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City is evident in the growing tolerance among students. According to the observations, students have shown improvement in their ability to interact with peers from different cultural backgrounds. They are more open to new ideas and perspectives and are more able to collaborate in diverse groups.

Another noticeable impact is the increased intercultural understanding. Before the implementation of multicultural education, many students may not have fully understood the diversity around them. However, after engaging in diversity-based learning, they began to realize the importance of respecting other cultures and applying these values in daily life. Extracurricular activities also play a role in evaluating the impact of multicultural education at the school. Students involved in activities such as cultural arts, art performances, or cultural seminars appear more active in learning about and understanding other cultures. The evaluation of these activities indicates that students participating in extracurricular programs have a deeper understanding of diversity.

Another impact observed is the change in relationships among students. Before multicultural education, some students preferred to socialize with peers from similar backgrounds. However, after the introduction of multicultural education, relationships between students from different backgrounds have improved. They respect each other and collaborate in various activities. In evaluating multicultural education, the role of teachers is crucial. Teachers who are well-trained and have a strong understanding of multicultural education are able to create an environment that supports students in developing respect for diversity. Evaluation results show that teachers with specialized training in multicultural education are more effective in managing diverse classrooms and helping students develop positive attitudes toward differences.

The long-term impact of multicultural education can also be seen in how students apply the values of diversity after graduating from Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City. Most students show an improvement in their social skills, enabling them to better adapt to a pluralistic society. This aligns with Banks' (2009) view that effective multicultural education can prepare students to be responsible



citizens and active participants in a pluralistic society. The evaluation of the impact of multicultural education also shows an increase in parental involvement. Before the implementation of multicultural education, parental involvement in school activities was often limited to specific events. However, after the multicultural education program, parents became more involved in their children's education. They realized the importance of multicultural education in helping their children understand and appreciate differences in society.

Finally, negative impacts should also be considered in the evaluation of multicultural education. Some students may struggle to adjust to the new values being taught, especially if they come from very homogeneous environments. Therefore, schools need to continue providing support to students experiencing difficulties in this regard. Overall, the evaluation and impact of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City show that the application of diversity values can bring about positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors. By involving various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the community, multicultural education at this school can continue to develop, shaping a more tolerant, inclusive, and globally prepared generation.

CONCLUSION

The internalization of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City has demonstrated a significant impact in creating an inclusive and tolerant educational environment. Through the application of diversity values across various aspects of school life—ranging from curriculum development, teaching methods, to extracurricular programs—the school has successfully instilled a deep understanding of the importance of respecting cultural, religious, and social differences among students. This multicultural education program not only focuses on theoretical instruction but also emphasizes the cultivation of positive attitudes toward diversity.

Despite these successes, challenges such as stereotypes and discrimination persist. To address these issues, Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City needs to continually foster constructive dialogue and implement programs that strengthen understanding and tolerance among students. Overall, the internalization



of multicultural education at this school aims not only to educate students academically but also to shape individuals capable of living harmoniously within a diverse society. With sustained commitment, it is expected that these values will be deeply embedded within students and positively influence their social environment.

The internalization of multicultural education at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School in Gunungsitoli City has significantly contributed to the creation of an inclusive and tolerant educational atmosphere. By integrating diversity values in curriculum development, teaching methods, and extracurricular activities, the school has fostered a profound appreciation for cultural, religious, and social differences among students. The program emphasizes not only theoretical knowledge but also the development of positive student attitudes toward diversity. Observable positive outcomes include increased tolerance, openness to various cultures, and enhanced students' ability to interact harmoniously with peers from different backgrounds. Thus, multicultural education in this school offers valuable lessons that diversity can be a source of strength, enriching the learning experience and fostering better character development.

This study makes a significant contribution to the field of education, particularly in the context of multicultural education. By introducing new variables related to the impact of multicultural education on student character, this research opens avenues for further studies on the effectiveness of similar programs in other schools. Moreover, it updates evaluation methods by incorporating surveys, discussions, and feedback from students and parents, providing a more holistic perspective on program success. These findings not only enrich existing literature but also present a model that can be adopted by other educational institutions aiming to implement multicultural education. Consequently, this research contributes to the development of more inclusive and responsive educational concepts that address the needs of diverse communities.

Although this study presents positive results, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample was limited to one school, so the findings may not be fully generalizable to broader contexts. Additionally, variations in students' socio-cultural backgrounds may influence the results, and limitations in resources and external support pose challenges. Therefore, further research is necessary to explore the impact of



multicultural education across different contexts using more diverse methodologies. Future studies may also consider factors such as gender and student age to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how multicultural education can be internalized effectively. Addressing these limitations is expected to provide deeper and more applicable insights for advancing multicultural education development.

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