

## The Influence of Social Studies Learning on the Internalization of Accommodative Multicultural Values among Junior High School Students

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine how Social Sciences (IPS) learning influences the internalization of accommodative multicultural values among junior high school (SMP) students. The research is grounded in the recognition that multicultural education plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity, particularly in communities with heterogeneous social backgrounds. Using a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modelling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method, this study surveyed 360 students from several junior high schools in Ternate City, North Maluku Province. The research findings indicate that students' perceptions of multicultural education have a significant relationship with the formation of an inclusive and harmonious school environment; students with positive perceptions of multicultural education tend to be more tolerant and appreciate diversity, thereby creating a more peaceful and supportive environment. These positive perceptions foster the internalization of key multicultural values, including respect for differences, tolerance, and social empathy. Moreover, students' understanding of multicultural concepts directly shapes the way these values are reflected in their daily behavior. These findings emphasize the relevance of the constructivist approach in education, which highlights the importance of concrete and contextual learning experiences in fostering both cognitive growth and affective development among students. This study recommends strengthening teachers' capacity through multicultural education training, updating the Social Studies curriculum to be more responsive to issues of diversity, and developing an evaluation system that encourages teachers to embrace inclusive and transformative teaching practices.

**Keywords:** *Social Studies Learning, Internalization, Multicultural Values, Inclusive Education*

### Introduction

Globalization and advances in information technology have brought significant changes to society's social structure, increasing interactions among individuals and groups from diverse cultural backgrounds. On one hand, diversity enriches social life by offering a variety of values and perspectives (Kilinc et al., 2023; Rapoport & Demir, 2022; Yussupova et al., 2023). On the

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other hand, if not properly managed, it can lead to social segregation, intolerance, and even horizontal conflicts (Kaya, 2022; Muhaemin et al., 2023). In this context, education plays a central role in fostering multicultural awareness from an early age, particularly through learning that instills accommodative values such as tolerance, empathy, and respect for differences (Agyare, 2024; Akbarwati et al., 2024; Kutluca et al., 2024; Yussupova & Tarman, 2025).

Social Studies (Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial/IPS), which integrates elements of history, civics, culture, and geography, plays a strategic role in fostering cross-cultural understanding and shaping students' character (Fatgehipon, 2023). Social Studies learning is designed not only to provide students with cognitive knowledge but also to cultivate social attitudes that help them respond to the challenges of diversity in a positive and constructive manner (Chong & Tsubota, 2023; Mujahidin, 2023; Uge et al., 2019)

With the right approach, Social Studies can serve as a powerful medium for developing intercultural competence and instilling multicultural values, preparing students to live harmoniously in a pluralistic society (Budirahayu et al., 2018; Japar et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the integration of multicultural values is often neither systematic nor well-planned, and has not been fully incorporated into lesson design and assessment. As a result, students may recognize terms such as “tolerance” or “social justice.” Yet, they may not fully internalize these values in their everyday behavior, both inside and outside the school environment.

This issue is particularly important to address because early adolescence—the stage of junior high school students—represents a critical period for shaping social identity and moral values. Educational interventions at this stage have strong potential to foster students' openness to differences and to cultivate their awareness of the importance of living in harmony (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Steyn & Vanyoro, 2023).

Therefore, it is essential to reconsider how Social Studies learning strategies can be directed toward effectively internalizing multicultural values. Previous studies indicate that reflective, participatory, and contextual approaches in Social Studies are particularly effective in fostering cross-cultural understanding and in nurturing students to become democratic and tolerant citizens (Kendall, 2023; Nagda et al., 2003).

Teachers' perspectives on multicultural education play a crucial role in determining how extensively multicultural principles are applied in their teaching, which in turn shapes students' attitudes toward diversity (Hariyadi & Rodiyah, 2023). Multicultural values form an essential foundation for nurturing a generation that is sensitive to diversity, thereby fostering harmony and strengthening social peace in everyday life (Dwintari & Murdiono, 2023; Rohmah et al., 2023).

Moreover, the changing global context and the growing social dynamics within classrooms call for updates in the design of Social Studies learning, making it more inclusive and better aligned with the realities of student diversity (Suari et al., 2024). Therefore, curriculum interventions that intentionally integrate the values of tolerance, social justice, and empathy are essential for shaping students' character and preparing them to live harmoniously in a multicultural society (Abdurrohman et al., 2025).

The purpose of this study is to examine how Social Studies education influences the internalization of inclusive multicultural values among junior high school students. Specifically, it seeks to understand how the Social Studies learning process cultivates tolerance, appreciation of diversity, and social empathy. Using a quantitative approach, the study explores the relationship between teachers' pedagogical strategies, the instructional content delivered, and students' perceptions of multicultural values developed throughout the learning process.

## **Literature Review and Hypothesis Development**

### **Social Studies Learning in Junior High School**

At the junior high school level, Social Studies (IPS) plays an important role in shaping students' sense of national identity, social awareness, and multicultural understanding. As an integrative subject, IPS brings together elements of history, geography, economics, sociology, and civics, with the aim of providing students not only with knowledge but also with attitudes that prepare them for active participation in community life. According to Banks (2008), the primary goal of Social Studies education is to foster an understanding of cultural diversity and to strengthen social cohesion within a pluralistic society (Irawan, 2024). In Indonesia, the Social Studies curriculum is designed to reflect national values such as *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity), tolerance, and a strong sense of civic responsibility (Khairani et al., 2023)

Multicultural values are grounded in principles that honor, respect, and celebrate ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural diversity within society. One important approach to fostering these values is accommodative multiculturalism, which emphasizes inclusion and encourages social and educational systems to adapt in ways that recognize and support diverse identities (Ma'rifah & Sibawaihi, 2023). In the school setting, internalizing these values means that students move beyond merely acknowledging diversity—they also develop open-mindedness, engage in dialogue, and build the capacity to interact constructively with people from different backgrounds. Masyitoh & Muhammad (2025) emphasize that while Civics Education holds strong potential to shape tolerant character from an early age, its implementation still faces structural and pedagogical challenges. Therefore, it needs to be reformed to become more relevant and impactful in preparing a generation that can live peacefully and harmoniously in diversity.

Several studies have shown that when Social Studies is taught in an inclusive and participatory manner, it can significantly strengthen students' awareness of multicultural values. Rahmawati et al. (2024) noted that integrating multicultural education into Social Studies can strengthen students' appreciation of cultural diversity, reduce prejudice, and foster an orientation toward social justice. In the Indonesian context, Baihaqi (2021) found that social Studies plays a pivotal role in promoting peace education and fostering pluralistic citizenship. This potential is further strengthened when learning is designed around critical discussions, social reflection, and case studies that highlight the realities of multicultural life in society (Ajani, 2024; Eizadirad et al., 2024; Mapuya, 2023).

Nevertheless, the success of Social Studies in fostering multicultural values largely depends on the pedagogical approaches used. Active and collaborative methods—such as project-based learning, group discussions, and value-based approaches rooted in local contexts—have been shown to be more effective in promoting student engagement and nurturing inclusive attitudes (Banks, 2013). The more meaningful and contextually relevant the learning experience, the greater the likelihood that students will internalize accommodative multicultural values.

**H1: Social Studies learning has a positive effect on students' attitudes toward diversity.**

Multicultural Values and Accommodative Multiculturalism

Multicultural values are principles that emphasize the importance of respecting ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, and social diversity within society. According to Saputra et al. (2024), in education—particularly at the junior high school level—multicultural values need to be instilled early to shape inclusive and tolerant students who can live harmoniously in a pluralistic society. In the context of Social Studies learning, an accommodative multiculturalism approach is essential to ensure that these values are not only taught in theory but also practiced and internalized through daily learning experiences. Baihaqi's (2021) research reveals that social Studies education that adopts contextual and participatory approaches can effectively foster awareness of pluralism and peace. Methods such as project-based learning, local case studies, and group discussions have been shown to increase student engagement while cultivating values of empathy, solidarity, and respect for differences. Thus, Social Studies that integrates multicultural content and applies an accommodative approach can provide a strong foundation for shaping a generation capable of living peacefully and constructively within diversity.

**H2:** Multicultural values play a crucial role in shaping how junior high school students internalize and apply these principles in their daily lives.

### **The Role of Social Science in the Internalization of Multicultural Values**

Internalizing multicultural values is a significant challenge in societies that are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of ethnicity, culture, and religion. In this context, Social Sciences play a strategic role in shaping individuals' understanding, attitudes, and behaviors toward cultural diversity. Numerous studies highlight that the Social Sciences provide theoretical frameworks and methodologies for analyzing social dynamics and socialization processes related to the internalization of multicultural values.

According to Jamiludin et al. (2023), social science helps analyse how multicultural values are transmitted and accepted in society. David (2017) argues that social science—particularly sociology and anthropology—contributes to understanding patterns of interaction among social groups and the mechanisms of social integration in multicultural societies. It also helps identify the structural and cultural factors that shape acceptance of diversity and foster inclusive attitudes. This suggests that the internalization of multicultural values is not merely an individual process but is deeply influenced by broader social contexts.

Furthermore, social psychology, as a branch of the social sciences, helps explain how individuals process information about diversity, how stereotypes, prejudice, and social identities are formed,

and how these can be reshaped (Mehrad et al., 2023). An effective social learning process allows individuals to internalize values such as tolerance, respect for differences, and solidarity across groups.

In the field of social education, social science serves as a strategic medium for instilling multicultural values—both through the curriculum and through teaching methods and social interactions within educational settings (Firdaus et al., 2020). Multicultural education, grounded in social science, can foster reflective and critical learning experiences. This allows students not only to understand diversity on a factual level but also to embrace these values in their daily lives.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative survey design to examine the influence of Social Studies learning on the internalization of accommodative multicultural values among junior high school (SMP) students. The research population consisted of all junior high school students enrolled in Social Studies in Ternate City, North Maluku Province. From this population, 360 participants—300 students and 60 teachers—were selected through random sampling from schools that had integrated a multicultural-based Social Studies curriculum. The independent variable in this study was the pedagogical strategies employed by teachers in Social Studies learning, while the dependent variable was the internalization of multicultural values, reflected in students' attitudes and behaviors toward diversity. Students' perceptions of multicultural education were also examined as a moderating variable. Data were collected through questionnaires, in-depth interviews with teachers, and direct classroom observations of Social Studies activities.

The questionnaire was designed to capture students' perceptions of multicultural values and their attitudes toward diversity, while the interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into how pedagogical strategies reinforce these values in Social Studies instruction.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), specifically the Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach. SEM-PLS was selected for its ability to assess both direct and indirect effects among latent variables and to determine the contribution of each factor to the internalization of multicultural values.

Table 1 reveals the sample and participant characteristics

**Table 1**

*Sample and participant characteristics*

participant type	Age	Amount
Student	12-15	300
Teacher	30-50	60

Table 1 presents the sample distribution based on participant type and age range. The participants in this study consisted of two main groups: junior high school (SMP) students and teachers in Ternate City, North Maluku Province. A total of 300 students, aged 12–15, were selected as the primary participants to examine the internalization of multicultural values through Social Studies (IPS) learning. In addition, 60 teachers, aged 30–50, participated to provide insights into the implementation of pedagogical strategies in multicultural-based Social Studies instruction. The sample was selected through random sampling from several schools that had incorporated multicultural values into their Social Studies curriculum. The research instrument was developed in the form of a closed-ended questionnaire, carefully adapted to the characteristics of each participant group. The student questionnaire measured five main constructs: pedagogical strategies experienced in Social Studies learning, the degree of internalization of multicultural values, attitudes and behaviors toward diversity, perceptions of multicultural education, and students' understanding of multiculturalism. In contrast, the teacher questionnaire focused on the implementation of multicultural pedagogical strategies in teaching activities, as well as their observations of students' responses throughout the process. All questionnaire items were developed based on theoretically validated indicators and structured using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree). Before being administered, the questionnaire was tested to ensure both construct validity and instrument reliability.

This instrument served as the primary tool for collecting quantitative data, which was then analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to identify both direct and indirect relationships among the variables in the research model.

Table 2 below presents the composition and distribution of the number of questionnaire items based on participant type and the variables measured.

**Table 2***Composition of Questionnaire Items Based on Participant Type and Variables*

Type	Variables	Number of Question Items
Students	Pedagogical Strategies	5
Students	Internalization of Multicultural Values	5
Students	Attitudes and Behaviors Toward Diversity	5
Students	Perceptions of Multicultural Education	5
Students	Understanding of Multiculturalism	5
Teachers	Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>

Data in **Table 2** shows the distribution of questionnaire items, categorized by participant type—students and teachers—and the variables measured in this study. Six main variables were used to assess participants’ perceptions and experiences of multicultural learning. For students, five variables were measured: Pedagogical Strategies, Internalization of Multicultural Values, Attitudes and Behaviors Toward Diversity, Perceptions of Multicultural Education, and Understanding of Multiculturalism. Each variable consisted of five items, resulting in a total of 25 items for the student participants.

Meanwhile, for teacher participants, one variable was measured: Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies, which consisted of 10 items. This variable was designed to assess the teaching strategies teachers employed to foster the internalization of multicultural values in the classroom. The items were proportionally structured to reflect the characteristics of each participant group and aligned with the objectives and focus of the variable being measured.

Furthermore, the indicators for each variable—outlined in Table 3—were developed based on relevant theoretical frameworks, with careful consideration of the social and cultural context of the educational environment in which the research was conducted.



**Table 3**  
*Variables and Indicators*

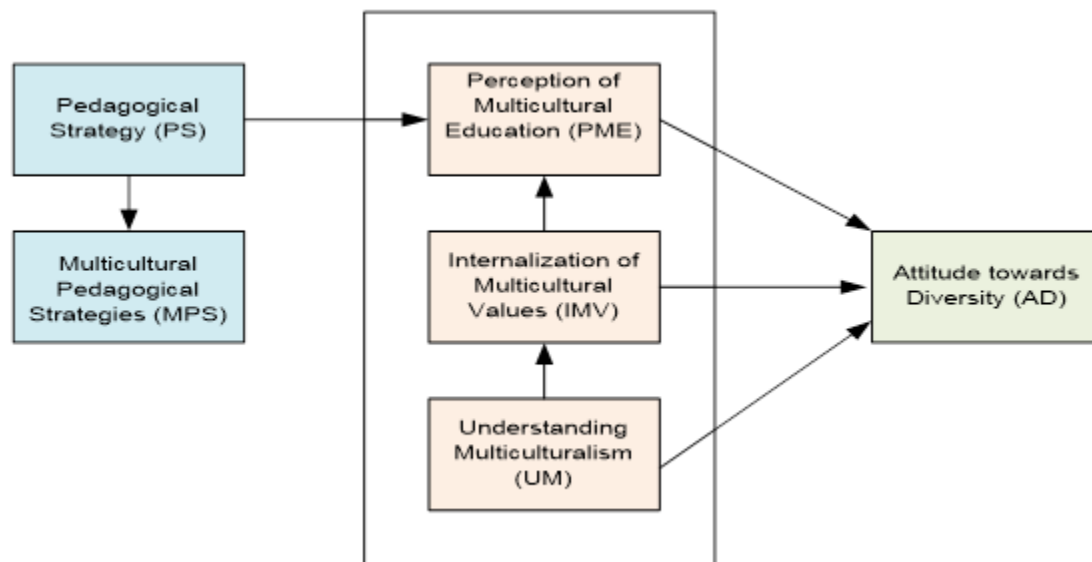
Variable	Indicators
Pedagogical Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity in the teacher's delivery of the material</li> <li>• Use of diverse teaching methods</li> <li>• Incorporation of engaging learning media</li> <li>• Active student participation in the learning process</li> <li>• Relevance of the material to everyday life</li> </ul>
Internalization of Multicultural Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for cultural differences</li> <li>• Tolerance toward religious and ethnic diversity</li> <li>• Learning experiences within an inclusive environment</li> <li>• Willingness to build relationships across diverse backgrounds</li> <li>• Teachers acting as role models of multicultural values</li> </ul>
Attitudes and Behaviors Toward Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative attitudes among individuals from diverse backgrounds</li> <li>• Demonstration of non-discriminatory behavior</li> <li>• Expression of respect for differences</li> <li>• Active participation in cross-cultural activities</li> </ul>
Perceptions of Multicultural Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of multicultural education</li> <li>• Learning materials that reflect cultural diversity</li> <li>• School activities that promote cross-cultural interaction</li> <li>• Teachers modeling respectful behaviors toward diversity</li> </ul>
Understanding of Multiculturalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the importance of respecting differences</li> <li>• Ability to recognize discriminatory attitudes or actions</li> <li>• Awareness of rights and responsibilities in a multicultural environment</li> <li>• Knowledge of Indonesia's cultural diversity</li> </ul>
Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing inclusive and adaptive learning</li> <li>• Integrating values of tolerance into the learning process</li> <li>• Using learning resources that represent cultural diversity</li> <li>• Engaging students in reflective activities on diversity values</li> <li>• Collaborating with fellow teachers to promote multicultural education</li> </ul>

Figure 1 presents the structural diagram illustrating the relationships among the variables in this research model. Pedagogical strategy is positioned as the independent variable, assumed to have a significant influence on the internalization of multicultural values among students. This internalization is reflected in their attitudes and behaviors toward diversity, including tolerance, appreciation of differences, and active participation in cross-cultural interactions.

The relationship between pedagogical strategies and the internalization of multicultural values is shaped by students' perceptions of multicultural education. These perceptions reflect how strongly students value inclusive educational content and practices that uphold and respect diversity.

In addition, students' understanding of multiculturalism serves as a supporting variable that directly strengthens the internalization of these values. Within the pedagogical framework, multicultural strategies function as a focused approach that embeds the principles of diversity and tolerance into the learning process.

Overall, this model provides a comprehensive framework for examining how appropriate pedagogical approaches can shape students' attitudes and behaviors in a multicultural society.



**Figure 1:** Structural Model Design

## Results

### Overview of the Pedagogical Strategy (PS) Variable

The Pedagogical Strategy (PS) variable was measured using five indicators. Each response was scored, and the total scores were averaged to categorize the variable. The frequency distribution of participants' responses for the PS variable is presented below, with Table 4 providing a detailed breakdown of the results.

**Tabel 4**

*participants answer distribution in Variabel Pedagogical Strategy (PS)*

No	Item pada Pedagogical Strategy (PS)		Alternative answer					Mean	Category
			SS	S	N	TS	STS		
1	My social studies teacher uses a variety of teaching methods.	f %	66 19,5	193 56,9	74 21,8	5 1,5	1 0,3	3,94	High
2	I am invited to engage in discussions during social studies lessons.	f %	80 23,6	210 61,9	44 13,0	4 1,2	1 0,3	4,07	High
3	The teacher provides real-life examples when explaining social studies material.	f %	92 27,1	199 58,7	47 13,9	0 0,0	1 0,3	4,12	High
4	Social studies lessons encourage me to think critically	f %	52 15,3	180 53,1	92 27,1	13 3,8	2 0,6	3,79	High
5	Teachers involve students in teaching and learning process based on project	f %	50 14,7	166 49,0	107 31,6	15 4,4	1 0,3	3,73	High
Accumulation of participants' answer								3,93	High

As shown in Table 4, the most dominant indicator was item number 3, which achieved the highest mean score of 4.12 (classified as High). This item referred to the statement: *"The teacher provides real-life examples when explaining Social Studies material."* The majority of participants—199 people or 58.7%—responded *Agree*. In contrast, the weakest indicator appeared in item number 5, which obtained the lowest mean score of 3.73 (also classified as High). This item referred to the statement: *"The teacher involves students in project-based learning activities."* For this item, the majority of participants—166 people or 49%—also responded *Agree*.

Overall, the results indicate that the average mean score for all items under the Pedagogical Strategy (PS) variable is 3.93, placing it in the High category.

### Overview of the Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV) Variable

The Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV) variable was measured using five indicators. Each response was scored, and the totals were averaged to classify the variable based on participants' overall responses. The frequency distribution of participants' responses to the IMV variable is presented below, with Table 5 showing the detailed distribution.

**Tabel 5**

*Participants answer distribution in Variabel Multicultural Values (IMV)*

No	Item in Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV)		Alternative answer					Mean	Category
			SS	S	N	TS	STS		
1	I believe it is important to respect cultural differences.	f	174	147	17	1	0	4,46	Very high
		%	51,3	43,4	5,0	0,3	0,0		
2	I treat my friends fairly regardless of their ethnicity or religion.	f	202	128	8	1	0	4,57	Very high
		%	59,6	37,8	2,4	0,3	0,0		
3	I am used to working by friends by different backgrounds.	f	119	177	40	3	0	4,22	Very high
		%	35,1	52,2	11,8	0,9	0,0		
4	I can understand perspectives that are different by my own backgrounds.	f	73	211	50	5	0	4,04	High
		%	21,5	62,2	14,7	1,5	0,0		
5	I feel comfortable being in a diverse environment.	f	68	174	93	3	1	3,90	High
		%	20,1	51,3	27,4	0,9	0,3		
Accumulation of participants' answer								4,24	Very high

Based on the participants' responses in Table 5, item number 2 emerged as the most dominant indicator, with the highest mean score of 4.57 (classified as Very High). This item referred to the statement: *"I treat my friends fairly regardless of their ethnicity or religion."* The majority of participants—202 individuals or 59.6%—responded *Strongly Agree*.

Conversely, the weakest indicator was item number 5, which recorded the lowest mean score of 3.9, still falling within the High category. This item referred to the statement: *"I feel comfortable*

*being in a diverse environment.*” The majority of participants—174 individuals or 51.3%—responded *Agree*.

The research findings show that the average mean score for all items under the Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV) variable is 4.24. This indicates that, overall, the IMV variable falls within the Very High category.

### Overview of the Attitude Towards Diversity (AD) Variable

The Attitude Towards Diversity (AD) variable was measured using five indicators. Each participant’s response received a score, and the total scores were then averaged to determine the overall category of the variable. To provide a clearer picture of how participants responded, the frequency distribution of answers for the AD variable is presented in Table 6.

**Tabel 6**

*Participants answer distribution of Attitude Towards Diversity (AD)*

No	Item in Attitude Towards Diversity (AD)		Alternative answer					Mean	category
			SS	S	N	TS	STS		
1	I respect friends who come by different cultures.	f	172	151	15	0	1	4,45	Very high
		%	50,7	44,5	4,4	0,0	0,3		
2	I never discriminate against friends based on their religion.	f	187	135	13	1	3	4,48	Very high
		%	55,2	39,8	3,8	0,3	0,9		
3	I actively participate in activities that involve diverse groups.	f	107	183	45	3	1	4,16	High
		%	31,6	54,0	13,3	0,9	0,3		
4	I am willing to help friends by different cultural backgrounds.	f	99	198	38	4	0	4,16	High
		%	29,2	58,4	11,2	1,2	0,0		
5	I believe everyone deserves to be treated equally.	f	166	151	18	4	0	4,41	Very high
		%	49,0	44,5	5,3	1,2	0,0		
Accumulation of participants' answer								4,33	Very high

Based on the participants’ responses shown in Table 6, item number 2 stood out as the strongest indicator, with the highest mean score of 4.48, which falls into the *Very High* category. This item corresponds to the statement: *“I never discriminate against friends based on their religion.”*

More than half of the participants—187 individuals (55.2%)—expressed *Strongly Agree* with this statement.

In contrast, the weakest indicator was item number 3, which recorded the lowest mean score of 4.16. Despite being the lowest, it still fell within the *Very High* category. This item relates to the statement: “*I actively participate in activities that involve diverse groups.*” More than half of the participants—183 individuals (54%)—responded with *Agree*.

The findings show that the overall average score for all items under the Attitude Towards Diversity (AD) variable is 4.33. This result indicates that, in general, participants’ attitudes towards diversity can be categorized as *Very High*.

### Overview of the Perception of Multicultural Education (PME) Variable

The Perception of Multicultural Education (PME) variable was measured using five indicators. Each participant’s response was scored, and the combined results were averaged to determine the overall category of the variable. The distribution of participants’ responses to this variable is presented in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Participants answer distribution in Variabel Perception of Multicultural Education (PME)*

No	Item in Perception of Multicultural Education (PME)		Alternative answer					Mean	Category
			SS	S	N	TS	STS		
1	Social studies learning helps me understand the importance of diversity.	f	150	168	19	0	2	4,37	Very high
		%	44,2	49,6	5,6	0,0	0,6		
2	I believe education should encourage tolerance.	f	164	152	18	5	0	4,40	Very high
		%	48,4	44,8	5,3	1,5	0,0		
3	Multicultural education is important to be taught by an early age.	f	121	168	48	2	0	4,20	Very high
		%	35,7	49,6	14,2	0,6	0,0		
4	Social studies materials make me more open to differences	f	114	185	39	1	0	4,22	Very high
		%	33,6	54,6	11,5	0,3	0,0		
5	I feel that social studies learning is relevant to life in a diverse society.	f	78	194	64	3	0	4,02	High
		%	23,0	57,2	18,9	0,9	0,0		
Accumulation of participants' answer								4,24	Very high

As shown in Table 7, the most dominant indicator is item number 2, which achieved the highest mean score of 4.40 (*Very High*). This item refers to the statement: “*I believe education should promote attitudes of tolerance.*” Nearly half of the participants—164 individuals (48.4%)—responded with *Always*.

On the other hand, the weakest indicator is item number 5, which recorded the lowest mean score of 4.02 (still in the *Very High* category). This item corresponds to the statement: “*I feel that social studies learning is relevant to life in a multicultural society.*” The majority of participants—194 individuals (57.2%)—answered *Often*.

Overall, the average score for all items under the Perception of Multicultural Education (PME) variable is 4.24, placing it in the *Very High* category.

### Overview of the Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS) Variable

The Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS) variable was measured using nine indicators. Each participant’s response was scored, and the combined results were averaged to determine the overall category of the variable. The following section presents the frequency distribution of participants’ responses to the MPS variable, as shown in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*Distribution of participants’ responses to the Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS) variable.*

No	Item in Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS)		Alternative answer					Mean	Category
			SS	S	N	TS	STS		
1	I design social studies lessons that incorporate multicultural values.	f	24	37	1	0	0	4,37	Very high
		%	38,7	59,7	1,6	0,0	0,0		
2	I use a contextual approach in teaching about diversity	f	29	33	0	0	0	4,47	Very High
		%	46,8	53,2	0,0	0,0	0,0		
3	I encourage students to discuss social and cultural issues.	f	31	30	0	1	0	4,47	Very High
		%	50,0	48,4	0,0	1,6	0,0		
4	I adapt my teaching methods to the students’ backgrounds.	f	29	27	4	2	0	4,34	Very High
		%	46,8	43,5	6,5	3,2	0,0		

No	Item in Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS)	Alternative answer						Mean	Category
		SS	S	N	TS	STS			
5	I observe and assess students' attitudes toward differences.	f	23	32	3	4	0	4,19	High
		%	37,1	51,6	4,8	6,5	0,0		
6	I provide space for dialogue to express differing opinions.	f	30	27	2	3	0	4,35	Very High
		%	48,4	43,5	3,2	4,8	0,0		
7	I integrate the value of tolerance into social studies content.	f	33	26	1	2	0	4,45	Very High
		%	53,2	41,9	1,6	3,2	0,0		
8	I use learning media that reflect diversity.	f	30	30	2	0	0	4,45	Very High
		%	48,4	48,4	3,2	0,0	0,0		
9	I believe social studies education is effective in shaping tolerant character.	f	36	25	1	0	0	4,56	Very High
		%	58,1	40,3	1,6	0,0	0,0		
Accumulation of participants' answer								4,41	Very High

Overview of the Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS) Variable. Based on the data in Table 8, the most dominant indicator is item number 9, which recorded the highest mean score of 4.56, placing it in the *Very High* category. This item corresponds to the statement: “*I believe social studies education is effective in shaping a tolerant character.*” The majority of participants—36 individuals (58.1%)—responded with *Strongly Agree*.

Meanwhile, the weakest indicator was item number 5, which obtained the lowest mean score of 4.19—still within the *Very High* category. This item corresponds to the statement: “*I observe and assess students' attitudes towards differences.*” The majority of participants—32 individuals (51.6%)—responded with *Agree*.

The results show that the average score for all items under the Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS) variable is 4.41. This indicates that, overall, the MPS variable falls into the *Very High* category.

### Overview of the Understanding Multiculturalism (UM) Variable

The Understanding Multiculturalism (UM) variable was measured using five indicators. Each participant's response was scored, and the combined results were averaged to determine the overall category of the variable. The following section presents the frequency distribution of participants' responses to the UM variable.



**Table 9***Distribution of participants' responses to the Understanding Multiculturalism (UM)*

No	Item in Understanding Multiculturalism (UM)		Alternative answer					Mean	Category
			SS	S	N	TS	STS		
1	I know that multiculturalism values differences.	f	85	198	52	3	1	4,07	High
		%	25,1	58,4	15,3	0,9	0,3		
2	I understand the meaning of tolerance in social life.	f	147	173	18	1	0	4,37	Very high
		%	43,4	51,0	5,3	0,3	0,0		
3	I understand that every culture has equal value.	f	115	183	34	6	1	4,19	High
		%	33,9	54,0	10,0	1,8	0,3		
4	I can explain the benefits of living in a diverse society.	f	56	184	93	5	1	3,85	High
		%	16,5	54,3	27,4	1,5	0,3		
5	I am aware of the challenges and solutions in a multicultural society.	f	67	176	89	7	0	3,89	High
		%	19,8	51,9	26,3	2,1	0,0		
Accumulation of participants' answer								4,08	High

Participants' Responses to the Understanding Multiculturalism (UM) Variable Based on the data in Table 9, the most dominant indicator is item number 2, which obtained the highest mean score of 4.37, placing it in the *Very High* category. This item corresponds to the statement: "*I understand the meaning of tolerance in community life.*" The majority of participants—173 individuals (51%)—responded with *Often*.

Meanwhile, the weakest indicator was item number 4, which recorded the lowest mean score of 3.85—still within the *High* category. This item corresponds to the statement: "*I can explain the benefits of living in a multicultural society.*" The majority of participants—184 individuals (54.3%)—responded with *Often*.

The results show that the average score for all items under the Understanding Multiculturalism (UM) variable is 4.08. This places the overall UM variable in the *High* category.

### Hypothesis Testing (Path Analysis)

This section examines the evaluation of coefficients that represent the causal relationships among latent variables. A causal relationship is considered not significant when the t-statistic falls within the range of -1.96 to 1.96 at the 0.05 significance level.

To obtain more stable estimates of the t-statistics, the bootstrapping resampling procedure was applied. This technique produces more reliable estimates for the inner model, enabling

researchers to better evaluate the significance of the t-statistics and generate results that are both more accurate and dependable.

Through the resampling procedure, researchers can evaluate how well the inner model explains the variance of the endogenous constructs being tested. Therefore, applying resampling techniques such as bootstrapping is essential for accurately assessing and interpreting the results of SEM analysis. This technique provides more stable and precise population or sample estimates and is also used to test the significance of statistical estimates by generating confidence intervals or p-values from the resulting statistical distribution. With the aid of the PLS software application, the estimation results of the structural model's critical ratio values were obtained. A summary of the coefficient calculations is presented in Table 10.

**Table 10**

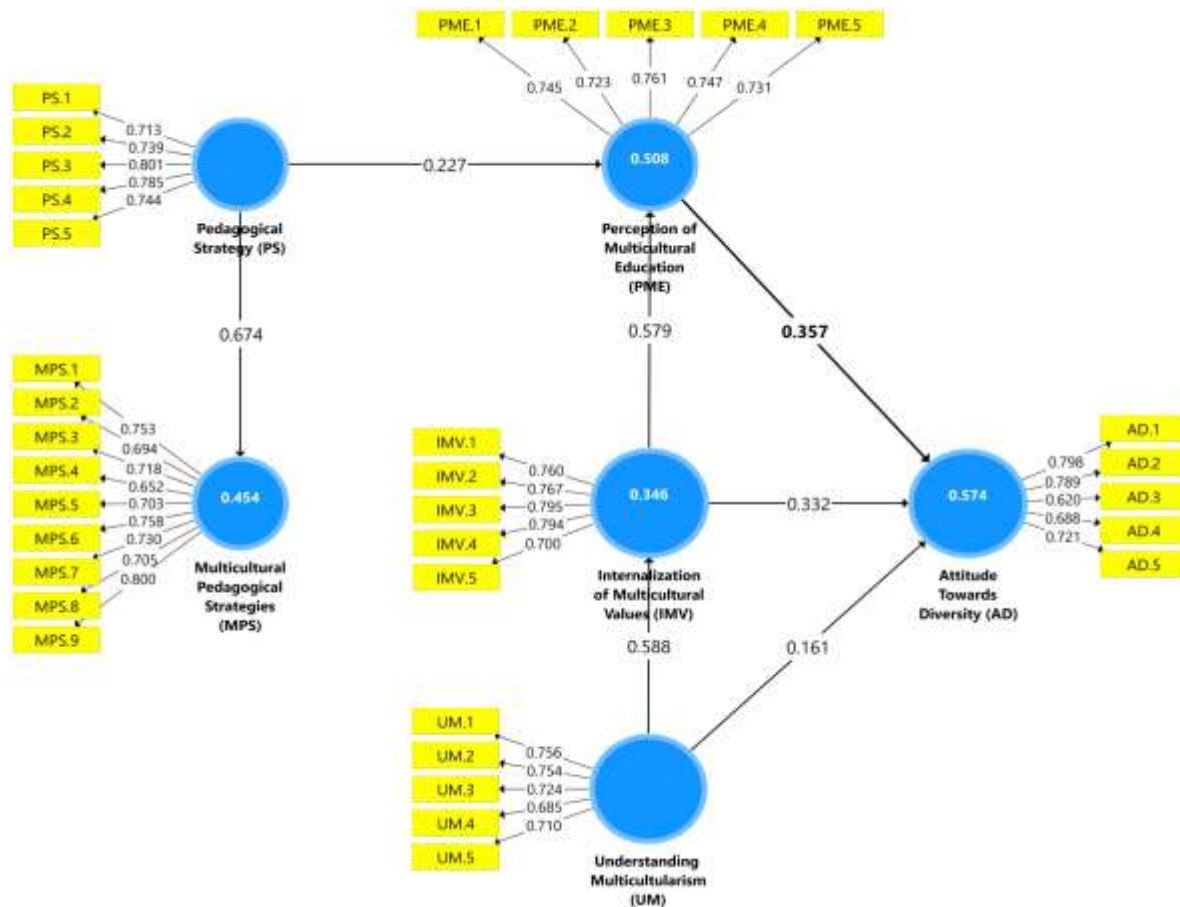
*Result of the analysis utilizing SEM-PLS path*

Influence among latent variable		Coefficient path	t-value	p-value	Summary
Var. Exogen	--> Var. Endogen				
Pedagogical Strategy (PS)	--> Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS)	0,674	13,919	0,000	Significant
Pedagogical Strategy (PS)	--> Perception of Multicultural Education (PME)	0,227	4,085	0,000	Significant
Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV)	--> Perception of Multicultural Education (PME)	0,579	12,809	0,000	Significant
Understanding Multiculturalism (UM)	--> Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV)	0,588	15,094	0,000	Significant
Perception of Multicultural Education (PME)	--> Attitude Towards Diversity (AD)	0,357	4,881	0,000	Significant
Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV)	--> Attitude Towards Diversity (AD)	0,332	5,924	0,000	Significant
Understanding Multiculturalism (UM)	--> Attitude Towards Diversity (AD)	0,161	2,620	0,009	Significant

The analysis reveals that the Pedagogical Strategy (PS) variable has a positive and significant effect on Multicultural Pedagogical Strategies (MPS). With a path coefficient of 0.674 and a t-value of 13.919, the findings indicate that the stronger the pedagogical strategies applied, the

more effectively multicultural pedagogical practices are developed. The analysis shows that Pedagogical Strategy (PS) has a positive and significant effect on Perception of Multicultural Education (PME), with a path coefficient of 0.227 and a t-value of 4.085. In addition, the Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV) significantly influences PME, with a coefficient of 0.579 and a t-value of 12.809, and also affects Attitudes Toward Diversity (AD), with a coefficient of 0.332 and a t-value of 5.924. The results further indicate that Understanding Multiculturalism (UM) has a strong positive effect on IMV (coefficient 0.588,  $t = 15.094$ ) and also influences AD (coefficient 0.161,  $t = 2.62$ ). Finally, PME itself demonstrates a significant positive effect on AD, with a path coefficient of 0.357 and a t-value of 4.881.

All relationships among the variables show t-values greater than 1.96, which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). In other words, each variable has a positive and significant influence on the others. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 2, which presents the path diagram of both the measurement model and the structural model.



**Figure 2.** Path Diagram Model and Structural Model (Overall)

Based on the path diagram in Figure 2, it is clear that the Attitude Towards Diversity (AD) variable is most strongly influenced by the Perception of Multicultural Education (PME), which has the highest path coefficient of 0.357. In turn, the PME variable is shaped by Pedagogical Strategy (PS), with a path coefficient of 0.227. Within this context, the most dominant indicator for PS is PS.3 (*“The teacher provides real-life examples when explaining social studies material”*), with the highest loading factor of 0.801. Therefore, it can be concluded that if policymakers seek to strengthen students’ attitudes toward diversity, policy evaluation should prioritize PS.3 as a key performance indicator, since it represents the most critical area for improvement.

## Discussion

### **Social Studies Learning Positively Affects Students' Attitudes Toward Diversity (H1)**

Based on the results of the structural model analysis using the SEM-PLS approach, Hypothesis 1—which states that “*Social Studies learning positively affects students' attitudes toward diversity*”—is supported. This conclusion is strengthened by the significant causal pathway from pedagogical strategies in social studies learning (PS) to students' perceptions of multicultural education (PME), which in turn influence students' attitudes toward diversity (AD). The path coefficient from PS to PME is 0.227 with a *t*-value of 4.085, indicating a positive and significant relationship. Likewise, the path from PME to AD has a coefficient of 0.357 with a *t*-value of 4.881, further confirming its statistical significance.

This sequence of influence demonstrates that effective social studies teaching strategies—especially those grounded in real-life examples (PS.3, with the highest loading factor of 0.801)—shape students' positive perceptions of multicultural education. These favorable perceptions then serve as the foundation for developing respectful attitudes toward diversity, as reflected in the main indicator AD.1 (“*I respect friends who come from different cultures*”), which shows a loading factor of 0.798. In summary, social studies learning exerts an indirect yet strong influence on students' attitudes toward diversity, mediated through their perceptions of multicultural education.

These results align with constructivist theory, which emphasizes the importance of concrete experiences in shaping students' understanding and attitudes. Therefore, improving the quality of social studies teaching strategies—particularly by incorporating real-life examples—should be a key priority in fostering students' tolerance and appreciation of diversity.

### **Multicultural Values Significantly Affect the Internalization of Multicultural Values in Junior High School Students (H2)**

Hypothesis 2, that states “*Multicultural values significantly affect the internalization of multicultural values in junior high school students,*” is supported based on the SEM-PLS analysis. This is supported by the causal relationship between Understanding Multiculturalism (UM) and the Internalization of Multicultural Values (IMV), with a path coefficient of 0.588 and a *t*-value of 15.094. Since the *t*-value is well above the critical threshold of 1.96 at the 0.05 significance level, the effect is considered highly significant. This means that the stronger

students' comprehension of multicultural values, the deeper their internalization of these values becomes. Importantly, this process of internalization does not occur instantly; rather, it is shaped by a solid understanding of the principles of cultural diversity, equality, tolerance, and respect for differences. Within the context of junior high school education, strengthening the cognitive dimension—namely, students' understanding of multicultural values—serves as the foundation for developing the affective dimension, which is the internalization of those values into their attitudes and behavior. Thus, this finding carries strategic importance: it suggests that interventions in multicultural education at the junior high school level should begin by deepening students' grasp of core multicultural values, thereby ensuring a more effective and lasting internalization of these values.

### **Systemic Implications and Intervention Strategies**

Overall, the analysis shows that students' attitudes toward appreciating diversity (AD) are most strongly influenced by the indicator *"I respect friends who come from different cultures"* (AD.1), which is shaped by their positive perceptions of multicultural education (PME). In turn, these perceptions are strongly influenced by the pedagogical strategies (PS) applied, particularly the ability of social studies teachers to present real-life examples (PS.3). This indicates that students' lower levels of tolerance may stem from the less-than-optimal use of contextual and relevant teaching approaches.

To address this, three main policy strategies are recommended:

- 1. Multicultural Education-Based Teacher Training**

Strengthen teachers' capacity through thematic training that highlights the use of real-life examples in social studies instruction, while involving multicultural experts and community leaders as key resource persons.

- 2. Revitalization of the Social Studies Curriculum and Teaching Materials**

The social studies curriculum should be redesigned to be more responsive to issues of diversity by adopting a problem-based learning approach and integrating contextual media such as videos, current news, and local case studies.

- 3. Strengthening Teacher Evaluation Systems and Incentives**

Develop a teacher evaluation system that incorporates indicators of multicultural pedagogy, and provide incentives for teachers who consistently implement inclusive strategies and promote tolerance in their classrooms.

## **Conclusion and Suggestions**

This study concludes that social studies learning plays a crucial role in shaping students' accommodative multicultural attitudes, though the influence occurs indirectly yet meaningfully. The teaching strategies applied—especially the integration of real-life examples and contextual materials—help shape students' perceptions of multicultural education. These positive perceptions then foster attitudes that emphasize valuing and respecting cultural diversity.

Moreover, students' understanding of multicultural values is essential in determining how these values are internalized and applied in everyday life. These findings are in line with constructivist theory, which emphasizes the importance of meaningful learning experiences in shaping both the cognitive and affective dimensions of students.

Thus, social studies learning functions not only as a channel for transmitting knowledge but also as a strategic means of instilling values, guiding students to grow into inclusive, tolerant, and respectful members of a multicultural society.

Based on these findings, several strategic steps are recommended to strengthen the role of social studies in fostering multicultural values at the junior high school level. First, teachers should receive ongoing professional development in multicultural education, enabling them to design and deliver lessons that are both contextual and responsive to the diverse realities of their students. Second, the social studies curriculum needs to be redesigned to integrate approaches such as problem-based learning, reflective dialogue, and materials that address socio-cultural diversity. Third, schools are encouraged to implement teacher evaluation systems that acknowledge and reward pedagogical efforts aimed at cultivating multicultural values in the classroom. Fourth, the internalization of multicultural values among students should begin with strengthening their conceptual understanding of equality, tolerance, and respect for human dignity. Finally, future research should explore additional ecological factors—such as school culture, peer relationships, family influences, and media—in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of how multicultural attitudes are formed within educational contexts.

These recommendations aim to support the development of an education system that is not only inclusive but also responsive to the richness and diversity of Indonesian society.

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