

Beyond Tolerance: Mapping Multicultural Competence Across School Types in Indonesian Pancasila Education

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Abstract

Pancasila Education is a civic education subject in Indonesia that faces the challenge of moving beyond tolerance toward critical awareness and democratic participation. Using a convergent mixed-methods design with partially concurrent data collection and an explanatory follow-up phase, this study mapped baseline levels of multicultural competence among 250 students across four dimensions. It also examined the pedagogical readiness of 32 teachers to integrate local knowledge into Pancasila Education across six senior high schools and Islamic secondary schools in Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Data were collected through student and teacher questionnaires, a teacher focus group discussion, student and teacher interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, and were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics alongside thematic analysis. Results showed that 64.0% of students fell into the moderate competence category. School type and city were significantly associated with all four competence dimensions, but their interaction was not. General senior high schools scored significantly higher than Islamic secondary schools across all four dimensions, with a total-score gap of about 6.7 points ($d = 1.06$). While 82% of teachers valued integrating local knowledge, 67% lacked systematic teaching materials, and 71% relied mainly on lectures and whole-class discussion. These findings suggest that strengthening Pancasila Education requires shifting from normative, tolerance-oriented teaching toward reflective, dialogical, and culturally rooted learning, supported by systematic pedagogical materials and targeted professional development.

Keywords: *Multicultural competence, Local knowledge, Civic education, Pancasila education, Indonesia*

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Introduction

Civic education plays a vital role in preparing students to live together in diverse societies. In Indonesia, this role is deeply embedded in Pancasila Education, the subject that introduces students to national values, unity, democracy, social justice, and respect for diversity. However, Pancasila Education cannot be understood merely as a means of transmitting national values in a normative way. In a multicultural society, it should serve as a pedagogical space where students can understand social realities and cultural differences, develop empathy, and adopt reflective civic positions when confronted with prejudice, discrimination, and social tensions.

This need has become more relevant because Indonesia's diversity is not only a demographic fact but also a social reality that students encounter in everyday life. Students' understanding of themselves, of others, and of the nation is influenced by religion, ethnicity, language, local culture, family background, and social practices. Education that connects civic values to students' cultural experiences can foster cross-cultural understanding, respect for difference, and more meaningful social participation (Banks, 2009; Sleeter, 2013; Hensley et al., 2026).

A central challenge in civic education is connecting the values of the formal curriculum to students' real social experiences. Research has consistently shown that civic education can become normative when it over-emphasizes memorizing concepts, symbolic compliance, and textual understanding of national values. This leaves little room for dialogue, reflection, and interaction with students' cultural experiences (Osler & Starkey, 2006; Wong & Lee, 2019). Under these conditions, students may learn the importance of tolerance without learning to identify injustice, to discuss differences critically, or to participate democratically in school and community life.

Similar challenges are evident in Pancasila Education. Several studies have emphasized its strategic potential to strengthen multicultural character and democratic citizenship, but implementation still often relies on learning strategies insufficiently contextualized to students' social realities (Japar et al., 2022; 2025; Nuryadi et al., 2020). Pancasila Education is an abstract subject that is far removed from students' real social and civic issues unless it is connected to their daily cultural experiences.

Tolerance is often used as the main benchmark in research on Pancasila Education and multicultural learning. Tolerance is foundational, but it does not fully represent multicultural competence. Students may accept differences but lack critical awareness of discrimination, confidence in expressing opinions, or the ability to participate in democratic problem-solving.

Multicultural competence comprises interrelated aspects of awareness, knowledge, and skills that together enable individuals to act responsibly in plural societies (Deardorff, 2006; Müller et al., 2020). Strengthening it requires moving beyond acceptance of difference toward understanding social relations, reflecting on bias, and engaging critically with civic life.

This study investigates the tension between tolerance and critical consciousness. Preliminary data indicate that Pancasila Education instruction remains dominated by lectures and whole-class discussions, and that many students find the material too abstract and insufficiently connected to their socio-cultural realities. Teachers recognize the importance of integrating local knowledge but have not yet developed systematic teaching materials to support its implementation. Initial findings also suggest relative strengths in tolerance and cross-cultural cooperation, compared with critical awareness of discrimination and participatory democratic practices, and point to a fundamental gap not in students' willingness to accept difference but in their capacity for critical civic engagement.

Although multicultural education has been the focus of an increasing number of scholarly works in Indonesian civic subjects, empirical studies that simultaneously map students' multidimensional competence profiles and examine teachers' pedagogical readiness within the same analytical framework remain limited. Most research to date has focused on attitudinal outcomes, such as tolerance, or on curriculum-level analysis, rather than on monitoring the gap between what students are actually demonstrating and what teachers are ready to facilitate (Japar et al., 2022; Patras et al., 2025; Sukisno et al., 2026). This study addresses the gap by examining the interconnected dimensions of Pancasila Education Practice, namely teachers' pedagogical readiness and students' multicultural competence in general schools and madrasahs in Surakarta and Yogyakarta.

Two research questions guide this study:

RQ1: What is the profile of students' multicultural competence across the dimensions of awareness, knowledge, skills, and multicultural education sensitivity in Pancasila Education learning, and how does it vary by school type and location?

RQ2: To what extent are Pancasila Education teachers pedagogically prepared to integrate local knowledge into instruction, and what factors shape the gap between their conceptual awareness and operational capacity?

Review of Literature

Multicultural Competence: Frameworks and Dimensions

Multicultural competence has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of interrelated dimensions of awareness, knowledge, and skills. Originating in counselling psychology through the foundational work of D'Andrea et al. (1991), the Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey (MAKSS) operationalized these three dimensions as measurable components of an individual's capacity to understand and interact effectively in culturally diverse environments. Later studies extended this framework beyond counselling settings to broader educational forms. Deardorff (2006) proposed a process model of intercultural competence in which attitudes of openness and curiosity lay the foundation, and knowledge, skills, and internal outcomes evolve progressively toward the external outcome of effective and appropriate communication across cultural differences. This model emphasizes that competence is not a fixed state but a developmental process requiring purposeful cultivation through learning experiences. The three-dimensional framework has been further refined in educational research. Müller et al. (2020) conducted a systematic review of assessment instruments in European educational settings and identified awareness, knowledge, and social-emotional skills as key dimensions of intercultural competence among students and school staff. They argue that these capacities require systematic pedagogical development rather than informal exposure to diversity. Similarly, Hoskins & Sallah (2011) emphasized that civic competence in pluralistic democratic societies requires not only knowledge of rights and institutions but also practical skills for participation, negotiation of differences, and responsible action in diverse social environments. The implication for civic education is clear: students who can articulate the value of diversity but cannot demonstrate skills in cross-cultural dialogue or critical reflection have not yet achieved functional multicultural competence (Agyare, 2024; Gluchshenko et al., 2026; Kutluca & Shpendi Şirin, 2024; Ünal & Durmuşoğlu, 2026).

In Indonesia, empirical research on multicultural competence among secondary school students remains limited. Raihani (2018) noted that although Indonesian education policy formally embraces multicultural values through legislation and curriculum frameworks, the translation of these policies into classroom practices that develop genuine intercultural capacities remains inconsistent. The persistent gap between policy aspirations and pedagogical reality underscores the need for empirical studies of students' competence profiles in specific institutional settings. In

particular, it is important to consider different types of schools, such as general senior high schools and Islamic secondary schools, which are governed by different institutional logics and cultural environments.

Culturally Responsive Teaching in Civic Education

Culturally Responsive Teaching, as articulated by Ladson-Billings (1995) and expanded by Gay (2018), offers a pedagogical approach for integrating students' cultural experiences into formal curricular materials. This approach is based on three interdependent principles: promoting students' academic success, developing and maintaining students' cultural competence, and fostering students' critical consciousness to challenge social inequities. In civic education specifically, these principles carry particular weight because citizenship values are not culturally neutral. However, they are always interpreted and enacted through the cultural frames that students bring to the classroom (Demir et al., 2026; Gerfanova et al., 2025; Russell et al., 2026; Yussupova & Tarman, 2025).

Gay (2018) argued that culturally responsive teaching requires teachers to possess cultural knowledge, develop culturally relevant curricula, build caring relationships with students, and communicate effectively across cultural differences. These capacities do not develop spontaneously but require deliberate professional development and institutional support. Abacioglu et al. (2020) demonstrated that teachers' multicultural attitudes and perspective-taking abilities are significant predictors of culturally responsive instructional practices, suggesting that teachers' own competence development is a necessary precondition for student outcomes. When these capacities are underdeveloped, civic education risks remaining at the level of normative content transmission rather than meaningful civic experience.

Research on civic education in multicultural societies reinforces these concerns. Osler & Starkey (2006), reviewing two decades of research on democratic citizenship education, found that effective civic learning requires participatory pedagogies that give students opportunities to experience democratic processes rather than merely learn about them. This distinction between learning about democracy and learning through democratic practice is particularly relevant to Pancasila Education, where values such as *musyawarah* (deliberative consensus-building) and social justice can become abstract without active pedagogical strategies that help students embody these values in social practice.

Local Knowledge as Pedagogical Resource and Its Institutional Variations

The role of local knowledge in civic education has attracted increasing research attention as a counterweight to the abstraction inherent in normative curriculum approaches. In Indonesia, local values such as *gotong royong*, *musyawarah*, *tepa selira*, and *rukun* – cooperation, deliberative consensus-building, mutual empathy, and social harmony, respectively - represent living social practices embedded in community life. Japar et al. (2022) demonstrated that civic education grounded in local wisdom can strengthen multicultural values by connecting curriculum content to students' cultural experiences, thereby increasing both engagement and depth of understanding. Patras et al. (2025) further showed that integrating culturally responsive teaching with local wisdom and active learning strategies produced measurable gains in students' multicultural competence in Pancasila Education settings.

However, the success of integrating local knowledge depends heavily on the institutional environment in which it occurs. Indonesian secondary education comprises two parallel systems: general senior high schools under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, and madrasahs under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. These institutional differences shape the cultural climate of schools, teachers' pedagogical orientations, and the social experiences that students bring to the learning environment (Raihani, 2018). Madrasahs, which integrate Islamic education with general subjects, may instill particular attitudes toward values such as tolerance, social solidarity, and community harmony, grounded in religious rather than purely civic foundations. Understanding how these institutional differences shape students' initial profiles of multicultural competence and the pedagogical spaces available to teachers is essential for developing context-sensitive approaches to Pancasila Education. Existing studies have rarely examined this institutional dimension empirically and comparatively, a key gap the present study addresses.

Method

Research Design

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods design involving partially concurrent data collection and an explanatory follow-up phase. The data analysed in this article constituted the baseline phase of a broader intervention study. The quantitative strand mapped the multicultural competence of 250 students, while the qualitative strand examined students' learning experiences

and teachers' pedagogical practices and readiness to integrate local knowledge into Pancasila Education. In three participating schools, the student questionnaire, student interviews, and teacher Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were conducted during the same fieldwork period. The questionnaire was also administered in the remaining schools, and follow-up teacher interviews were subsequently conducted to elaborate on the pedagogical conditions and help explain the quantitative patterns identified among students.

The quantitative and qualitative data were initially analysed separately and subsequently integrated during interpretation through comparison, triangulation, and the development of meta-inferences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Student interviews were used to contextualize and corroborate the questionnaire findings, whereas the teacher FGD, follow-up interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis provided evidence concerning the instructional conditions associated with those patterns. This design enabled the study to connect students' multicultural competence profiles with the pedagogical context of Pancasila Education without assuming a causal relationship between teachers' practices and students' outcomes.

The two strands were treated as complementary but served distinct analytical functions. The student questionnaire constituted the primary quantitative component for mapping multicultural competence, while the qualitative data contextualized, elaborated, and helped explain the quantitative patterns through students' and teachers' accounts of Pancasila Education practices. The findings from both strands were compared and integrated during interpretation to identify areas of convergence, divergence, and complementarity and to develop meta-inferences regarding the relationship between students' competence profiles and the pedagogical conditions in which they developed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted across six schools representing diverse institutional and socio-cultural contexts in two cities: Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Each city included two general senior high schools and one Islamic secondary school, for a total of four general senior high schools (Schools A, B, D, and E) and two Islamic secondary schools (Schools C and F). The selection of these schools followed three concrete criteria: (1) institutional type, ensuring representation of both general public schools and Islamic secondary schools (madrasah) under different governing authorities; (2) geographic setting, balancing urban school sites with those in peri-urban or semi-

rural surroundings; and (3) active MGMP membership. Because participating teachers were already embedded in this professional network, access, rapport, and follow-up communication with schools could be reliably maintained throughout data collection. This institutional diversity enabled the study to capture variation in learning contexts, school cultures, and students' sociocultural backgrounds that may shape the development of multicultural competence.

Two participant groups were involved. First, 250 senior high school and madrasah students completed the Multicultural Competence Questionnaire. Students were drawn from all six schools, with representation from each institution to ensure comparability across contexts. Second, 32 Pancasila Education teachers affiliated with the subject-teacher associations (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran*/MGMP) in Surakarta and Yogyakarta participated in qualitative data collection. The inclusion of both students and teachers enabled the study to examine Pancasila Education learning from two complementary perspectives: teachers' pedagogical practices and students' competence outcomes.

Data Collection Tools

Data were collected from multiple complementary sources: a student questionnaire, a teacher questionnaire, a teacher Focus Group Discussion (FGD), student and teacher interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence enabled methodological triangulation and supported the integration of students' competence profiles with the pedagogical context of Pancasila Education (Patton, 2015). The student questionnaire served as the primary quantitative instrument. It was developed using the Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey (MAKSS) framework proposed by D'Andrea et al. (1991), which conceptualizes multicultural competence across three core dimensions: awareness, knowledge, and skills. For this study, the instrument was adapted to the Indonesian secondary school context and extended to include a fourth dimension, multicultural education sensitivity (MESS), resulting in a 27-item questionnaire comprising six awareness items, six knowledge items, five skills items, and ten multicultural education sensitivity items. Items were rated on a three-point Likert scale. Prior to data collection, the instrument was validated through expert judgment by three experts in Pancasila/civic education, who independently assessed each item for (a) content relevance to its corresponding MAKSS dimension and (b) clarity and readability of the wording for senior high school students. Items that received divergent ratings or

were flagged as ambiguous were revised accordingly, and the instrument was finalized only after the reviewing experts deemed all items relevant and clear. Reliability testing yielded Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.896 for the Surakarta sample and 0.900 for the Yogyakarta sample, indicating strong internal consistency across both sites (Field, 2018).

The teacher questionnaire was designed to collect information on Pancasila Education learning patterns, teachers' perceptions of the importance of local knowledge, and their readiness to integrate local cultural values into teaching materials and classroom activities. It combined Likert-scale items with open-ended questions, allowing respondents to elaborate on their teaching experiences beyond what fixed-response options could capture (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

A teacher Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving participants from three of the six school sites was conducted to explore the broader context of Pancasila Education, including teachers' experiences, instructional practices, and challenges in integrating local knowledge. The FGD enabled participants to respond to one another, compare experiences, and collectively articulate the pedagogical issues encountered across their school contexts (Krueger & Casey, 2014). During the same fieldwork period, interviews were conducted with selected students from these three schools to obtain more detailed accounts of their experiences of diversity, classroom interaction, and multicultural learning. These interviews were used to contextualize and corroborate the patterns identified through the student questionnaire.

Follow-up interviews with Pancasila Education teachers were subsequently conducted to obtain more detailed evidence on their pedagogical readiness, use of local knowledge, development of instructional materials, and perceived barriers to implementing more reflective and culturally responsive learning. In addition to documenting pedagogical conditions, the teacher interviews helped elaborate and explain the quantitative patterns identified among students. Classroom observations and document analysis were used to examine the alignment among teachers' accounts, observed instructional practices, lesson plans, teaching materials, and the integration of local knowledge into learning objectives, classroom activities, and assessment.

Data Collection

Data collection was organized in overlapping phases rather than in a strictly sequential order. The student questionnaire was finalized before the fieldwork and was not developed from the qualitative findings. It was administered as the baseline measure of students' multicultural

competence within a broader intervention study. In three of the six participating schools, the student questionnaire, student interviews, and teacher FGD were conducted during the same fieldwork period. The questionnaire was subsequently administered in the remaining schools using the same instrument and administration procedure to ensure comparability across the six sites.

The student questionnaire provided quantitative data on the four dimensions of multicultural competence: awareness, knowledge, skills, and sensitivity to multicultural education. Student interviews conducted at the three FGD-linked schools provided contextual accounts of students' experiences with diversity, classroom interactions, and multicultural learning. The teacher FGD documented shared instructional practices, challenges, and initial perspectives on integrating local knowledge into Pancasila Education. After the primary fieldwork phase, follow-up teacher interviews were conducted to obtain more detailed evidence regarding pedagogical readiness, the development of teaching materials, and the instructional conditions associated with the quantitative patterns observed among students. Classroom observations and document analysis were also used to examine how local knowledge and multicultural learning were represented in classroom practices, lesson plans, learning activities, and assessment.

The quantitative and qualitative data were initially organized and analysed according to their respective research questions. The student questionnaire addressed the profile and group variation of multicultural competence, while the interviews, FGD, observations, and documents examined the pedagogical context underlying that profile. The findings were subsequently brought together during interpretation to identify convergence, divergence, and complementarity across the data sources. This integration enabled the study to develop meta-inferences concerning students' multicultural competence and the pedagogical conditions of Pancasila Education without treating the qualitative strand as a separate or unrelated component (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Means, standard deviations, percentages, and score distributions were calculated to describe students' multicultural competence across the dimensions of awareness, knowledge, skills, and sensitivity to multicultural education. Independent-samples t-tests were used to provide initial comparisons of the total and dimensional scores by school type and city, with Cohen's *d* reported as the corresponding effect-size measure. A two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was then conducted to examine the simultaneous effects of school type, city, and their interaction on the four competence

dimensions. Significant multivariate main effects were followed by separate two-way univariate analyses of variance for each dimension, with partial eta squared (η^2) reported to indicate effect size (Field, 2018).

Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis following Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase procedure: familiarization with the data, initial coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition and naming, and report production. The analysis focused on students' experiences of diversity and classroom interaction; dominant Pancasila Education learning patterns; teachers' understanding and use of local knowledge; the availability of systematic teaching materials; teachers' management of student diversity; and opportunities for more dialogical and reflective learning. The trustworthiness of the qualitative findings was strengthened through source and methodological triangulation. Themes derived from student interviews, teacher interviews, and the FGD were compared with classroom observation notes and instructional documents across the participating schools. Supporting and divergent evidence across the data sources was considered when refining the themes, thereby reducing reliance on a single participant group or method and strengthening the credibility and confirmability of the interpretations (Patton, 2015).

Mixed-methods integration was conducted during interpretation. Quantitative patterns in students' multicultural competence were compared with qualitative evidence concerning students' learning experiences and teachers' pedagogical practices. Areas of convergence, divergence, and complementarity were identified across the two strands. Meta-inferences were then developed to explain how the competence patterns identified among students were situated within the pedagogical context of Pancasila Education, while avoiding causal claims about the relationship between instructional practices and students' outcomes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical principles in educational research. All participants were informed of the study's purpose, the nature of their involvement, and how their data would be used for academic purposes. Participation by teachers and students was voluntary, and the identities of schools, teachers, and students were anonymized when presenting the findings to ensure confidentiality and prevent potential negative consequences for participants. Confidentiality, informed consent, and the responsible use of data were treated as foundational principles throughout the research process (BERA, 2018).

Findings

RQ1: What is the profile of students' multicultural competence across the dimensions of awareness, knowledge, skills, and multicultural education sensitivity in Pancasila Education learning, and how does it vary by school type and location?

Students' Multicultural Competence Profile

The quantitative analysis of student questionnaire data revealed that multicultural competence among the 250 participants remained predominantly at low to moderate levels. Overall mean scores across all six schools ranged from 42.14 to 57.00 on a maximum possible score of 81, yielding an overall mean of 50.07 (SD = 7.12), which represents 61.8% of the maximum attainable score. When categorized by competence level, 7.2% of students ($n = 18$) fell in the low category (below 50% of maximum score), 64.0% ($n = 160$) in the moderate category (50–66.6%), and 28.8% ($n = 72$) in the high category (above 66.7%). These figures indicate that the majority of students possessed a foundational level of multicultural competence, but that substantial room for development remained across the sample. As illustrated in Figure 1, School A in Surakarta recorded the highest mean score (57.00), while School F in Yogyakarta recorded the lowest (42.14), indicating meaningful variation across institutional contexts.

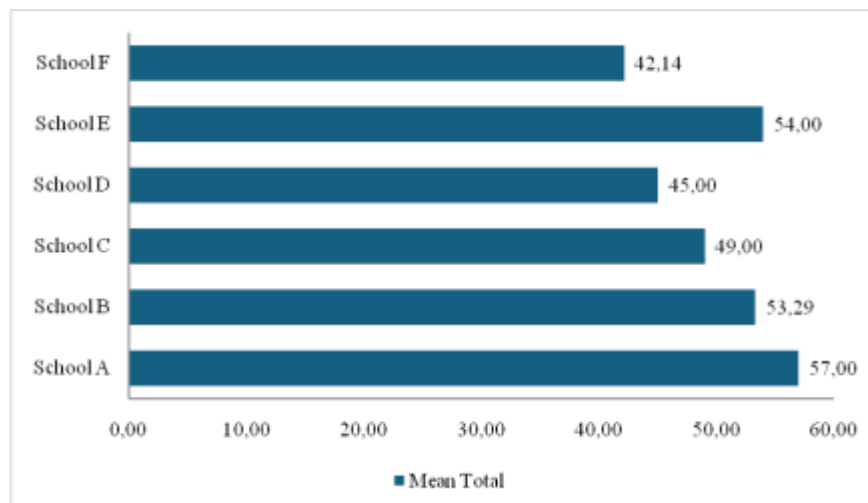


Figure 1. Mean Multicultural Competence Pre-Test Scores by School
Source: Primary data (analysed by the authors), 2025

Table 1 presents a detailed breakdown of mean scores by school across all four dimensions of multicultural competence.

Table 1*Mean Pre-Test Scores of Students' Multicultural Competence by School*

No.	School	City	Type	N	Awareness (max 18)	Knowledge (max 18)	Skill (max 15)	MESS (max 30)	Total (max 81)
1	School A	Surakarta	General SHS	42	12.69	12.71	10.55	21.05	57.00
2	School B	Surakarta	General SHS	41	12.07	11.98	9.88	19.37	53.29
3	School C	Surakarta	Islamic SHS	42	10.79	10.76	9.29	18.17	49.00
4	School D	Yogyakarta	General SHS	42	10.05	10.07	8.26	16.62	45.00
5	School E	Yogyakarta	General SHS	41	11.95	12.02	9.85	20.17	54.00
6	School F	Yogyakarta	Islamic SHS	42	9.45	9.52	7.52	15.64	42.14
Overall				250	11.16	11.17	9.22	18.49	50.07

*Source: Primary data (analysed by the authors), 2025***Variation by Location**

When disaggregated by city, students in Surakarta consistently outperformed their counterparts in Yogyakarta at the aggregate level. The mean total score for Surakarta students ($n = 125$) was 53.10 ($SD = 5.84$), compared with 46.99 ($SD = 6.99$) for Yogyakarta students ($n = 125$), a gap of approximately 6.1 points. This difference was statistically significant, $t(248) = 7.49$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.95$, indicating a large effect of city on students' overall multicultural competence. This pattern held across all subscales, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2*Mean Subscale Scores by City*

Dimension	Surakarta Mean	% of Max	Yogyakarta Mean	% of Max
Awareness (max 18)	11.85	65.8%	10.47	58.2%
Knowledge (max 18)	11.82	65.6%	10.53	58.5%
Skill (max 15)	9.90	66.0%	8.54	56.9%
MESS (max 30)	19.53	65.1%	17.46	58.2%
Total (max 81)	53.10	65.6%	46.99	58.0%

Source: Primary data (analysed by the authors), 2025

However, this city-level pattern masks meaningful within-city variation. School E, a general senior high school in Yogyakarta, recorded a mean total score of 54.00, higher than School C, an Islamic secondary school in Surakarta (49.00). This suggests that institutional type, rather than city location alone, may be a stronger explanatory factor for differences in students' multicultural

competence profiles. The gap between the two cities was most pronounced in the Skills dimension, where Surakarta students scored 66.0% of the maximum compared with 56.9% for Yogyakarta students, a difference of 9.1 percentage points. This suggests that the disparity in practical multicultural capacities between the two cities was greater than the gap in awareness or knowledge.

Variation by School Type

A comparison of general senior high schools and Islamic secondary schools revealed a consistent pattern across both cities. As shown in Table 3, students from general senior high schools ($n = 166$) scored significantly higher than those from Islamic secondary schools ($n = 84$) on every competence dimension, with a total-score gap of approximately 6.7 points, $t(248) = 7.89$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.06$. To test school type and city simultaneously, a two-way MANOVA was conducted with the four competence dimensions (Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, and MESS) as dependent variables. Significant multivariate main effects were found for school type, Wilks' $\lambda = .750$, $F(4, 243) = 20.24$, $p < .001$, and city, Wilks' $\lambda = .753$, $F(4, 243) = 19.88$, $p < .001$. The school type $\times$ city interaction was not significant, Wilks' $\lambda = .972$, $F(4, 243) = 1.78$, $p = .133$, indicating that the pattern of differences between general senior high schools and Islamic secondary schools did not vary significantly across the two cities.

Table 3

Comparison of Multicultural Competence Scores by School Type

Dimension	General SHS M(SD)	% of Max	Islamic SS M (SD)	% of Max	t(248)	Cohen's d
Awareness	11.69 (1.69)	64.9%	10.12 (1.43)	56.2%	7.27	0.97
Knowledge	11.69 (1.64)	65.0%	10.14 (1.64)	56.3%	7.05	0.94
Skills	9.63 (1.46)	64.2%	8.40 (1.45)	56.0%	6.29	0.84
MESS	19.30 (2.66)	64.3%	16.90 (2.25)	56.3%	7.06	0.94
Total	52.31 (6.73)	64.6%	45.57 (5.61)	56.3%	7.89	1.06

Source: Primary data (analysed by the authors), 2025

Note. All comparisons significant at $p < .001$. General SHS $n = 166$; Islamic SS $n = 84$.

Table 4*Follow-up Univariate Effects of School Type and City on the Four Competence Dimensions*

Dimension	School type F(1, 246)	p	η^2	City F(1, 246)	p	η^2	Interaction F(1, 246)	p	η^2
Awareness	64.34	< .001	.207	48.81	< .001	.166	0.03	.870	< .001
Knowledge	58.46	< .001	.192	39.60	< .001	.139	0.03	.853	< .001
Skills	51.08	< .001	.172	72.75	< .001	.228	2.98	.086	.012
MESS	59.71	< .001	.195	49.83	< .001	.168	1.21	.272	.005

Source: Primary data (analysed by the authors), 2025

Table 4 showed that both school type and city were significantly associated with all four competence dimensions. The largest school-type difference was found for Awareness ($\eta^2 = .207$), whereas the largest city difference was found for Skills ($\eta^2 = .228$). None of the school type $\times$ city interactions reached statistical significance. These findings indicate that school type and city were independently associated with the four dimensions, while the differences between general and Islamic secondary schools remained broadly consistent across Surakarta and Yogyakarta.

RQ2: To what extent are Pancasila Education teachers pedagogically prepared to integrate local knowledge into instruction, and what factors shape the gap between their conceptual awareness and operational capacity?

Teachers' Pedagogical Readiness to Integrate Local Knowledge

Qualitative and survey data from the 32 participating Pancasila Education teachers revealed a consistent gap between conceptual awareness and operational capacity. Table 5 summarizes key indicators of teachers' pedagogical readiness.

Table 5*Teachers' Pedagogical Readiness to Integrate Local Knowledge*

Indicator	% of Teachers	Interpretation
Acknowledge the importance of integrating local knowledge into learning	82%	Conceptual awareness is relatively high
Have not yet developed systematic teaching materials	67%	Operational readiness remains limited
Learning is still dominated by lectures and whole-class discussion	71%	Classroom practice remains largely teacher-centered

Source: Primary data (analysed by the authors), 2025

A large majority of teachers (82%) acknowledged that local knowledge should be integrated into Pancasila Education to make learning more relevant to students' lives. However, 67% of the participating teachers reported that they had not yet developed systematic teaching materials to support this integration. This discrepancy indicates that teachers' recognition of the value of local knowledge had not yet translated into pedagogical practice. The gap was further evident in dominant instructional patterns: 71% of teachers reported that Pancasila Education still relied primarily on lectures and whole-class discussion, limiting students' opportunities to engage with cultural experiences dialogically or to reflect critically on social issues.

Qualitative data from the FGD session elaborated these patterns. Teachers identified three primary constraints: the absence of ready-to-use teaching modules that incorporate local cultural values, limited professional development opportunities focused on culturally responsive pedagogy, and uncertainty about how to connect specific local knowledge content to the competence indicators specified in the national curriculum. One teacher described the challenge as follows: recognizing that values such as *gotong royong* and *musyawarah*—cooperation and deliberative consensus-building - are relevant to Pancasila learning is not the same as knowing how to design a learning activity around them that develops students' critical thinking rather than simply illustrating a concept.

Additionally, classroom observation data indicated that when local knowledge was referenced in instruction, it was used predominantly as an illustrative example, a brief mention of a cultural practice to accompany a conceptual explanation, rather than as a structured pedagogical resource for dialogue, reflection, or student engagement. Document analysis of lesson plans across the six schools similarly revealed limited explicit integration of local knowledge into learning objectives, activities, or assessment criteria.

Discussion

Students' Multicultural Competence in the Context of Pancasila Education

The finding that the majority of students (64.0%) fell within the moderate competence category, with only 28.8% reaching the high category, indicates that multicultural competence in Pancasila Education has developed to a foundational level but has not yet reached the depth required for critical civic engagement. This pattern aligns with broader findings on multicultural education in Indonesian schools, where normative exposure to diversity values through the curriculum does not

automatically translate into demonstrable competence across all dimensions (Japar et al., 2022; Raihani, 2018). More recent evidence from Indonesian social studies education similarly shows that students' internalization of multicultural values is supported by concrete, contextually meaningful learning experiences that connect multicultural concepts to their everyday social environment (Muhammad et al., 2025).

The qualitative findings provide further context for interpreting this competence profile. Pancasila Education instruction remained dominated by lectures and whole-class discussions, while local knowledge was generally introduced as an illustrative example rather than used as a structured resource for dialogue, reflection, or student participation. This contrasts with the more systematic integration reported by Zakiah et al. (2023), in which multicultural values were explicitly incorporated into the themes, learning outcomes, and instructional materials of Pancasila and Civic Education. The predominantly illustrative use of local knowledge observed in the present study can be understood through Gorski and Dalton's (2020) distinction between surface-level reflection, which recognizes and respects diversity, and critical reflection, which engages more directly with power relations, injustice, and exclusion. Sleeter (2013) similarly argues that multicultural education risks remaining at the level of cultural recognition when students are not given opportunities to critically examine discrimination and social inequality.

At the aggregate level, the proportional scores across the four competence dimensions were relatively close, although Skills recorded a slightly lower percentage of the maximum score than Awareness and Knowledge. A more noticeable pattern appeared in the city comparison, where the difference in Skills between Surakarta and Yogyakarta reached 9.1 percentage points, the largest gap among the four dimensions. Deardorff's (2006) process model positions skills as an important bridge between multicultural knowledge and effective cross-cultural behavior. Hoskins & Sallah (2011) similarly emphasize that civic competence requires not only knowledge of democratic values but also the ability to participate, negotiate differences, and act responsibly in diverse environments. The present findings, therefore, indicate that the practical dimension of multicultural competence warrants particular pedagogical attention, especially in contexts where students' opportunities for dialogical and participatory learning remain limited.

Institutional Type and Location as Contextual Moderators

The finding that students from general senior high schools obtained higher scores than those from Islamic secondary schools across all four dimensions warrants careful interpretation. The follow-up analyses showed that both school type and city were independently associated with Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, and MESS, while their interaction was not statistically significant. This pattern indicates that the school-type differences were broadly consistent across Surakarta and Yogyakarta. However, it does not demonstrate that the institutional type itself caused the observed differences. The results may also reflect variation in student composition, instructional resources, school culture, teacher capacity, and pedagogical support. Choi & Mao (2021) demonstrate that teachers' professional autonomy and access to institutional support are significant predictors of effective multicultural instruction. Islamic secondary schools operate within a distinctive institutional context that integrates religious and general education, but the present findings do not determine whether or how this institutional structure contributed to the observed competence profiles.

The significant differences across cities also require a contextual rather than causal interpretation. The largest city-related difference occurred in the Skills dimension, but substantial variation remained among schools within the same city. For example, School E, a general senior high school in Yogyakarta, recorded a higher mean total score than School C, an Islamic secondary school in Surakarta. This variation indicates that aggregate comparisons by city or school type do not fully represent the conditions of individual schools. Japar et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of school-level support and teacher capacity in implementing multicultural education through civic education. Although the present study did not directly test these school-level mechanisms, its findings indicate that institutional and geographical differences should be interpreted alongside variation in pedagogical practices and learning environments rather than as inherent characteristics of particular cities or school systems.

Teachers' Pedagogical Readiness: The Gap Between Awareness and Capacity

The teacher data reveal a pattern that mirrors the student competence findings, namely, high awareness alongside limited operational capacity. The fact that 82% of teachers recognized the importance of integrating local knowledge, while 67% had not developed systematic teaching materials and 71% continued to rely on lectures and whole-class discussion, points to a structural

gap between pedagogical intention and classroom practice. Gay (2018) describes this gap as characteristic of teachers who have internalized the values of culturally responsive teaching but have not yet acquired the instructional design skills needed to implement it consistently. Abacioglu et al. (2020) similarly found that positive multicultural attitudes do not automatically translate into culturally responsive practice without sustained professional development and institutional support.

The FGD and follow-up interviews provided a more detailed explanation of this awareness–capacity gap. Teachers were not uncertain about whether *gotong royong* or *musyawarah* – mutual cooperation and deliberative consensus-building- were relevant to Pancasila learning. Their main difficulty concerned how to translate these values into learning objectives, structured classroom activities, and assessments that could promote dialogue, reflection, and critical thinking. That is a pedagogical design problem, not an attitudinal one. When local values appear in lessons only as examples, a brief mention to accompany a concept, they function as decoration rather than as tools for thinking. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that culturally relevant pedagogy requires this deeper integration, connecting cultural content to academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness simultaneously, rather than treating culture as a supplementary illustration.

This pedagogical pattern provides important context for interpreting students’ moderate baseline competence. When teachers lack systematic instructional materials and rely predominantly on lectures and whole-class discussions, students are exposed to multicultural concepts without opportunities to practice cross-cultural dialogue, perspective-taking, and democratic participation. The pedagogical environment directly constrains the development of competence. As Osler & Starkey (2006) note, civic education that does not provide students with opportunities to experience democratic processes, not merely to learn about them, will consistently yield stronger knowledge outcomes than skills outcomes. The present findings do not establish that teachers’ instructional practices caused the students’ competence scores. Nevertheless, the convergence of questionnaire, interview, observation, and document evidence indicates that strengthening teachers’ operational capacity is an important consideration in developing more participatory multicultural learning through Pancasila Education.

Toward a Reflective Model of Pancasila Education

When read together, the student and teacher findings point to the same structural problem from two directions. Most students demonstrated a foundational but moderate level of multicultural competence, while teachers generally recognized the importance of local knowledge but had limited capacity to translate that awareness into systematic instructional practice. The resulting meta-inference is that recognition of multicultural values at both the student and teacher levels is not sufficient without structured opportunities to apply those values through dialogue, reflection, and participation. This study, therefore, addresses the research gap by examining students' multidimensional competence profiles and teachers' pedagogical readiness within the same analytical framework. Its contribution lies not in establishing a causal relationship between the two, but in showing how student competence and instructional capacity can be interpreted as interconnected dimensions of Pancasila Education practice.

For students, strengthening multicultural competence requires learning experiences that go beyond mere recognition of cultural diversity. Banks (2009) argues that civic education in multicultural societies must help students understand diversity as a dimension of democratic life, not merely as a social fact to be accepted but as a political reality to be engaged with critically and responsibly. Johnson and Morris (2010) propose that critical citizenship education must encompass political, social, personal, and praxis dimensions, enabling students to understand social power relations and participate in constructive change. In Pancasila Education, this would mean designing learning activities that draw on values such as *musyawarah* (deliberative consensus-building), *tepa selira* (mutual empathy), and social justice, not as content to be memorized but as frameworks for analysing real social situations, discussing discrimination, and practicing democratic deliberation. For teachers, strengthening operational pedagogical capacity requires more than awareness training. Systematic teaching materials that translate local knowledge into structured learning activities, assessment rubrics that capture skills and critical awareness alongside knowledge, and professional development focused on instructional design rather than attitudinal change are all necessary conditions. Japar et al. (2023) found in their JSSER study that effective multicultural civic education in Indonesian schools depended critically on school-level support structures and the availability of concrete pedagogical resources. These findings directly support the present study's call for systematic materials development as a priority for strengthening Pancasila Education.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the sample was limited to six schools in Surakarta and Yogyakarta, which are relatively homogeneous in terms of Javanese culture. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other regions in Indonesia with different socio-cultural, linguistic, and religious characteristics. Second, the cross-sectional design limits the study's ability to make causal statements about the relationship between teachers' pedagogical practices and students' multicultural competence profiles. Third, the use of self-report questionnaires for both students and teachers may have introduced social desirability bias, particularly given the study's focus on values related to tolerance, diversity, and civic attitudes. Fourth, although the qualitative data were enriched through teacher and student interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, the teacher FGD and student interviews were limited to three of the six participating schools. Therefore, the qualitative findings may not represent the full range of pedagogical experiences across all school settings. Finally, the teacher participants were limited to active members of the Pancasila Education subject teacher associations, which may have introduced selection bias in the representation of broader teaching practices. Future studies should involve more diverse regional settings, longitudinal designs, broader teacher samples, and multiple qualitative data collection sessions to strengthen the generalizability and explanatory depth of the findings.

Conclusion

Pancasila Education in Indonesia carries an ambitious civic mandate: to develop students who can understand, negotiate, and participate in a genuinely plural society, rather than simply transmit national values. The results of this study indicate that this mandate has been fulfilled only in part to date.

Students across the six schools demonstrated a basic level of multicultural competence, although this competence did not develop uniformly within the sample. The qualitative findings further indicated that the recognition of diversity was not always accompanied by structured opportunities for critical reflection, dialogue, and democratic participation. In other words, students have learned to accept difference but have not yet been fully equipped to engage with it critically or to act democratically within it. This gap is substantive rather than marginal: it separates civic education

that produces harmonious coexistence from civic education that produces active, reflective citizens.

The variation across school types adds a further layer to these findings. In general, students from general senior high schools obtained higher scores than those from Islamic secondary schools across the four competence dimensions. However, within-city variation shows that institutional type alone is insufficient to explain the differences among schools. School-specific conditions, including teacher capacity, learning culture, and the extent of local knowledge integration, may also be relevant. The city-level differences tell a similar story: aggregate patterns exist, but meaningful variation remains within each setting.

The findings are equally instructive for teachers, where the gap lies not in awareness but in implementation. Teachers generally acknowledged the importance of incorporating local knowledge, yet awareness alone does not translate into practice without systematic teaching materials, structured professional development, and clear pedagogical frameworks to embed local values in reflective learning experiences.

Taken together, these findings point to a clear direction for Pancasila Education: shifting from normative tolerance to critical civic practice requires simultaneous investment in student learning experiences and teacher pedagogical capacity. Future research should investigate what that shift looks like in practice, especially across general and Islamic secondary school settings, which this study shows have meaningfully different starting points and therefore require context-sensitive rather than uniform approaches to strengthening multicultural civic education.

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