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A Multicultural Approach to Improving Students' Understanding of Bullying at Cibeber Mandiri 2 Elementary School, Cimahi City

Sri Rohartati¹, Deasy Rahmawati², Lisdayanti Nuratifah³, Eri Subekti⁴

¹²³⁴ Universitas Langlangbuana., Bandung, Indonesia

✉ Corresponding Author: sriemultazam@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the application of a multicultural approach in improving students' understanding of the concept of bullying at SD Negeri Cibeber Mandiri 2. The focus of the study includes three things: describing the process of applying a multicultural approach, analyzing significant differences between pretest and posttest results, and measuring improvements in student understanding. The research method used a quantitative approach with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The research population consisted of 52 students, with 26 students as the sample. The multicultural approach was implemented in three sessions that emphasized multicultural values and their relevance to the issue of bullying. The results showed a consistent increase in scores from the first to the third session. The Paired Sample T-Test analysis showed a very significant difference between the pretest and posttest results with a p-value of 0.000. The N-Gain analysis showed that the average increase was in the moderate category with a value of 0.48, which means that this approach is effective, but the results are not uniform across all students. Some students showed very high increases, while others showed low or even negative increases. This confirms the need for more differentiated learning strategies in order to optimally accommodate the needs and characteristics of students.

Keywords: Multicultural approach; bullying; enhancing understanding; elementary school.

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INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a serious problem that often occurs in elementary schools, in the form of repeated aggressive acts, whether verbal, physical, or social, to hurt individuals who are considered weak or different (Istianah et al., 2024). This phenomenon not only affects the emotional and psychological condition of students but also disrupts social interactions and the learning process. Bullying often arises due to a lack of understanding of cultural, religious, and character differences between individuals, causing students to engage in teasing, exclusion, and even physical violence (Roma firmansyah, Arini Putri, 2024). This situation underscores the pressing need for educational strategies that instill the values of diversity, empathy, and mutual respect from an early age (Mirza & Fitriani, 2025). Multicultural education is believed to be relevant in preventing conflict resolution (Huda, M.M. et al, 2023) dan bullying because it emphasizes the understanding that differences are normal and should be respected (Fadhilah, 2024). Through this approach, students learn to develop inclusive and tolerant attitudes, avoiding discriminatory behavior, making the rationalization of multicultural education crucial in creating a safe, comfortable, and bullying-free school environment (Nuriyanti et al., 2024).

This study aims to describe the implementation of a multicultural approach at SD Negeri Cibeber Mandiri 2, measure differences in students' understanding before and after the implementation of a multicultural approach related to bullying, and analyze the increase in students' understanding of bullying after participating in multicultural-based learning (Budianto, 2025). Problem-solving is carried out by integrating multicultural education into the learning process, where teachers act as facilitators who instill the value of diversity through discussion, simulation, and reflection (AKIB, 2025). This research activity was conducted in several sessions with systematic stages so that students could understand the concept of diversity and the negative impact of bullying, while the results of the implementation were measured through pre-tests and post-tests to see changes in students' understanding (Egajaya et al., 2025).

Previous studies have shown that multicultural education is effective in building tolerance and reducing discriminatory behavior among students (Prasetyawati, n.d.), while (M.M., 2024) emphasizes the importance of parental and community involvement in supporting diversity education, and (Nuriyanti et al., 2024) highlights that victims of bullying are prone to long-term psychological effects, making early prevention necessary. An analysis of the situation at SD Negeri Cibeber Mandiri 2 shows that verbal and social bullying still occur, such as teasing about dialects and exclusion due to differences in beliefs. At the same time, students' understanding of diversity is still low, and teachers face limitations in resources and training (MP Hastiani, A Atika, 2024).

Therefore, the application of a multicultural approach is considered relevant as an educational strategy that not only reduces bullying but also fosters an inclusive and harmonious school culture (Gita Sista Indarsih, Shelsabella Qoulan Sadida, 2025). This study aims to determine how the application of a multicultural approach improves students' understanding of bullying at SD Negeri Cibeber Mandiri 2.

METHODS

This study uses quantitative methods to measure the impact of implementing a multicultural approach on students' understanding of bullying. Quantitative methods were chosen because they allow for objective analysis of numerical data through comparison of pretest and posttest scores (Sugiyono, 2016). Data were obtained through standardized test instruments that had been tested for validity and reliability to ensure accurate and consistent results. The research design used was a

quasi-experimental design with a one-group pretest–posttest model, which measures students' understanding before and after treatment without a control group (Arikunto, 2019). Although it did not involve a comparison group, this design was still effective in observing changes in understanding within the same group after the multicultural intervention was administered.

This study is descriptive in nature, aiming to describe changes in students' understanding of bullying before and after intervention (Sugiyono, 2016). The study population consisted of all 52 third-grade students at Cibeber Mandiri 2 Public Elementary School. The sample was determined using purposive sampling, namely 26 students in class III A who were selected based on their tendency to engage in bullying behavior based on the results of observations and interviews with teachers (Arikunto, 2019). The instruments used included questionnaires and observation sheets, which were tested for validity using content validity to ensure that the instruments accurately measured understanding of bullying in a multicultural context (Novikasari, 2016). Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha with a value of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ as an indicator of good reliability (Darma, 2021).

Data analysis includes normality tests to ensure that the data distribution complies with parametric statistical assumptions (Darma, 2021), as well as N-Gain calculations to measure the proportional increase in student understanding between pretest and posttest scores. N-Gain is used to assess the effectiveness of a multicultural approach in enhancing students' understanding of bullying through learning that emphasizes cultural diversity and different perspectives. Overall, this series of methods was used to obtain a quantitative picture of the effectiveness of the multicultural approach in improving elementary school students' understanding of the concept of bullying (Ferdiansyah, M. Lubis, M. A., Zubaidah, Z., & Zulfikar, 2025).

RESULTS

Research preparations included the development of multicultural-based learning tools and observation instruments, and questionnaires that had been tested for validity and reliability. Initial observations identified verbal and physical bullying that occurred quite frequently, with teachers' responses needing improvement, especially in response to verbal bullying.

1. Application of a Multicultural Approach in Understanding the Concept of Bullying

The study's results indicate that the application of a multicultural approach has a significant impact on students' understanding of bullying and cultural diversity concepts. Observations of three forms of bullying—verbal, physical, and relational—revealed that verbal bullying related to culturally based teasing is still the most dominant form (score of 4). In contrast, teachers' responses to these cases were relatively low (score 2), indicating a need for improved intervention strategies. Physical bullying occurred with moderate intensity (score 3), but teachers demonstrated good handling skills (score 4). Relational bullying was relatively rare (score of 2), although the spread of culturally based rumors was still felt in the classroom environment (score of 3). These findings indicate that multicultural values have begun to be internalized in the school community, but aspects of prevention and response to verbal and relational bullying need to be strengthened. The questionnaire data involving 26 students also reinforced the observation results. The majority of students showed moderate to high levels of understanding of bullying and the importance of respecting cultural differences. They tended to have prosocial attitudes, such as a willingness to help friends who were being bullied, and motivation to learn how to prevent it. However, some students still showed low understanding, especially in identifying indirect or symbolic bullying. This indicates the need for more structured learning interventions to increase cultural sensitivity and awareness (Pranata & Syamsijulianto, 2025).

The application of a multicultural approach during three learning sessions showed consistent improvement. In the first session, teachers displayed diverse cultural representations through the use of examples and figures from different ethnic groups (score of 5), but the integration of multicultural content in teaching materials was still limited (score of 2). Class discussions began to show students' understanding of the influence of culture in the formation of knowledge (score of 4). In the second session, the integration of culture in the material increased (score 4), followed by an improvement in the quality of class discussions (score 5). The learning methods also became more varied, although attention to learning styles declined slightly (score 3). The third meeting showed the most optimal results with a total score of 98%, marked by the full integration of cultural perspectives into the teaching material, culture-based exploration project activities, and increased empathy, tolerance, and interaction among students (Ayu et al., 2025).

Interviews with two teachers, Nurul Vicky Iswatin Hasanah and Agus Triana, confirmed these findings. Both stated that they had implemented the principles of multicultural education by incorporating local and national values, using varied learning methods, and encouraging students to analyze material from their own cultural perspectives. However, the teachers also noted challenges in the form of stereotypes, students' limited understanding of diversity, and the lack of ongoing school programs related to tolerance and anti-bullying. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen school policies, teacher training, and the comprehensive integration of multicultural education into the curriculum (Rosalia, R., Putri, P. R., dkk, 2025).

Overall, this study shows that a multicultural approach not only helps students understand the concepts of diversity and bullying but also contributes to more harmonious and inclusive interactions in the classroom. However, this success requires systematic support through consistent teacher intervention, deeper cultural integration in teaching materials, and sustainable school programs to create a bullying-free environment (Ni Made Ayu Dwipayani, Dewa Bagus Sanjaya, 2025).

2. Differences in Pretest and Posttest Results in the Application of a Multicultural Approach to Bullying

The results of the comparison between the pretest and posttest show an increase in students' understanding of the concepts of bullying and cultural diversity after the implementation of a multicultural approach in learning. Most students experienced a significant increase in their scores, such as respondent number 3, who increased from a score of 4 to 12, and respondent number 5, who increased from 5 to 14. This increase in scores shows that the multicultural approach is able to strengthen students' understanding of culturally-based bullying. However, some students did not experience an increase or even a decrease, for example, respondent number 14, who dropped from 9 to 8, and respondent number 17, who remained at a score of 8. This indicates the need for more intensive assistance for certain students.

Table 1. Normality Test Results

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	.170	26	.051	.922	26	.051
Posttest	.161	26	.082	.926	26	.062

The Shapiro-Wilk normality test shows that the pretest and posttest data are normally distributed, with significance values of 0.051 and 0.062, respectively, which are greater than $\alpha = 0.05$. Thus, the data meet the assumption of normality and allow the use of parametric statistical tests.

Table 2. T-Test Results Table

Pair		Paired Differences		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Mean			
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper		
1	Pretest - Posttest	-3.05035	.59822	-5.46283	-2.99871	-	25	.000
		4.23077				7.072		

The results of the paired sample t-test show a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. The mean difference score is -4.23077, indicating an increase in the posttest score. The t-value of -7.072 with a significance of 0.000 (< 0.05) confirms that this difference is statistically significant. Thus, it can be concluded that the multicultural approach has a significant effect on improving students' understanding of the concepts of bullying and cultural diversity.

3. Improving Students' Understanding of Bullying Concepts

To determine the extent of improvement in students' understanding of the concept of bullying after the implementation of a multicultural approach, an analysis was conducted using N-Gain calculations. This analysis aimed to measure learning improvement by comparing pretest and posttest scores proportionally to the ideal scores of each student. N-Gain analysis was conducted to determine the level of improvement in students' understanding of bullying after participating in multicultural-based learning. N-Gain calculations were made by comparing the difference between pretest and posttest scores with the ideal score, thereby illustrating the proportional improvement in understanding.

The analysis results show that the average N-Gain of students is 0.48 or 48.35%, which is in the moderate category. This finding indicates that, in general, the multicultural approach provides a significant increase in understanding of the concept of bullying based on cultural diversity. Some students showed very high increases, such as respondents number 18 and 21, who obtained an N-Gain score of 1.00 (100%), indicating a maximum increase. However, some students experienced very low or even negative increases, such as respondents number 14 and 24, who obtained an N-Gain score of -0.17, indicating that their understanding actually decreased.

Overall, positive N-Gain results in the moderate category indicate that the multicultural approach is effective in improving students' understanding of bullying issues, although improvements are needed in its implementation to ensure that all students benefit equally.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of a multicultural approach at SD Negeri Cibeber Mandiri 2 has proven to be relevant and effective in improving students' understanding of the concept of bullying. Initial observations showed cases of verbal bullying based on cultural ridicule (score of 4) with low teacher intervention (score of 2), thus emphasizing the need for diversity-based learning strategies. These findings are in line with Wahyuni, S., & Dafit, (2024), who emphasize that multicultural education is

important for instilling values of tolerance, empathy, and mutual respect in preventing bullying in elementary schools. The improvement in students' understanding occurred through a gradual learning process over three meetings, starting from the integration of cultural content to the strengthening of social action. The increase in learning achievement scores from 76% to 84% and finally to 98% demonstrates the effectiveness of the continuous internalization of multicultural values. This supports the view of (Zulaiha, A. R., & Munir, 2025) that the implementation of multicultural education must take place gradually—through content integration, knowledge construction, and social practice. The role of teachers is a key factor in the success of this approach. Teachers not only integrate cultural elements into learning but also act as cultural mediators who shape tolerant and inclusive attitudes. This view is consistent with Amin (2025), who emphasizes that teachers are central figures in multicultural pedagogy because they serve as role models in creating a safe learning environment that values diversity.

Quantitatively, the pretest–posttest design shows a significant difference in students' understanding before and after the intervention. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test shows that the data is normally distributed ($p > 0.05$), so the use of the Paired Sample T-Test is methodologically appropriate. The t-test results show a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05), which means that the application of a multicultural approach has a significant effect on improving student understanding. These findings are in line with Sugiyono (2016), who explains that the pretest–posttest design is effective for measuring changes resulting from educational interventions. N-Gain analysis provides a more in-depth picture of learning effectiveness. The average N-Gain of 0.48 (moderate category) indicates that the multicultural approach has a moderate but significant impact on improving student understanding. This category is in line with Hake's (1998) classification, which states that scores of 0.3–0.7 indicate better learning effectiveness than traditional methods. The diverse individual results, ranging from high N-Gain scores (1.00) to negative scores (-0.17), indicate differences in students' readiness and response to learning. (Alfiyana, R., Sukaesih, S., & Setiati, 2018) noted that internal factors such as motivation and initial interest have a significant effect on N-Gain achievement.

The variation in N-Gain results also indicates that some students require a more differentiated learning approach. According to Rustaman, n.d. (2011), differences in initial abilities and certain cognitive resistances can cause some students to need more time and a more intensive approach to change their understanding. Overall, the multicultural approach has proven effective in significantly improving understanding of the concept of bullying, although refinements are needed to ensure that its benefits are felt equally by all students (Ramdhan, T. W., & Arifin, n.d., 2025).

CONCLUSION

1. The multicultural approach has proven effective in increasing students' understanding of bullying based on cultural diversity at SD Negeri Cibeber Mandiri 2. Through three meetings, this approach has succeeded in reducing physical bullying behavior while encouraging inclusive attitudes and cooperation among students. However, observations show that culture-based verbal bullying still occurs frequently. This indicates the need to strengthen the role of teachers in carrying out more assertive and consistent interventions, particularly to address verbal and relational bullying, which has not been handled optimally.
2. The results of the comparison between pretest and posttest scores show an increase in students' understanding after the implementation of the multicultural approach. Most students obtained higher posttest scores than pretest scores, although a small number of students experienced stagnation or a decline in scores. The t-test results prove that there is a very significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. These findings reinforce the evidence that the application

of a multicultural approach has a positive effect on improving students' understanding of culturally-based bullying.

3. Based on the results of the N-Gain analysis, the average increase in student understanding falls into the moderate improvement category. The majority of students showed significant improvement, but there were some students who experienced low improvement or even a decline in understanding. These findings indicate that although the multicultural approach is generally effective, more personalized and adaptive learning strategies are needed so that all students, regardless of their initial level of understanding, can achieve optimal improvement.

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