



The urgency of multiculturalism in the curriculum according to Kenneth T. Henson in Indonesian education

**Abdul Karim Suhadha¹, Asep Herry Hernawan², Ahmad Fajar Fadlillah³,
Deodatus Kolek⁴**

^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Kota Bandung, Indonesia

abdulsuhadhaa@upi.edu¹, asepherry@upi.edu², affadh@upi.edu³, deokolek27@upi.edu⁴

ABSTRACT

Indonesia, a nation rich in ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, faces significant challenges in maintaining social harmony. Multicultural education is considered essential in fostering tolerance and intercultural understanding. This article examines the importance of incorporating multicultural values into Indonesia's educational curriculum through the lens of Kenneth T. Henson, a curriculum theorist who emphasizes multiculturalism, constructivism, and educational reform. Utilizing a literature review method, this study analyzes the current state of multicultural education implementation, identifies the gap between practical application and its ideal curricular integration, and reflects on the relevance of Henson's theory within the Indonesian context. The findings reveal that despite supportive policies, field implementation remains constrained by limited teacher understanding, inadequate resources, and resistance to change. These challenges highlight the need for a more comprehensive and context-sensitive approach to multicultural curriculum planning and implementation. While Henson's framework offers valuable insights, its application in Indonesia requires thoughtful adaptation to local sociocultural realities, policy frameworks, and institutional capacities. The study concludes that integrating multiculturalism into Indonesia's educational curriculum is both urgent and necessary, demanding strategic planning, institutional support, and ongoing professional development for educators.

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ABSTRAK

Indonesia dengan lanskap multi-etnis, multikultural, dan multi agama, menghadapi tantangan signifikan dalam menjaga harmoni sosial. Dalam konteks ini, pendidikan multikultural menjadi krusial untuk menumbuhkan toleransi dan pemahaman lintas budaya. Artikel ini mengeksplorasi urgensi integrasi nilai-nilai multikultural dalam kurikulum pendidikan nasional, khususnya melalui lensa pemikiran Kenneth T. Henson. Sebagai teoritikus kurikulum yang menekankan konstruktivisme, multikulturalisme, dan reformasi pendidikan, ide-ide Henson relevan untuk dikaji dalam konteks Indonesia. Menggunakan metode studi pustaka, penelitian ini menganalisis implementasi pendidikan multikultural saat ini, mengidentifikasi kesenjangan antara praktik dan idealitas, serta menyoroti relevansi pemikiran Henson bagi konteks lokal. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun kebijakan mendukung telah ada, implementasi di lapangan masih terkendala oleh pemahaman guru yang terbatas, kurangnya sumber daya, dan resistensi terhadap perubahan. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan strategi yang lebih kontekstual dan komprehensif, bersama dengan adaptasi teori asing agar selaras dengan karakteristik sosiokultural Indonesia. Integrasi pendidikan multikultural membutuhkan dukungan kebijakan yang kuat dan pengembangan profesional guru yang berkelanjutan untuk mencapai tujuan harmoni sosial.

Kata Kunci: kurikulum; multikulturalisme; pendidikan

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INTRODUCTION

In modern society, the implementation of multicultural education is undoubtedly a highly significant subject. The application of multicultural education aims to foster cultural awareness in respecting diversity, promote tolerance, prevent discrimination, and enhance the quality of education. The implementation of multicultural education enhances the learning experience by incorporating diverse perspectives and cultural contexts into the curriculum, thereby creating meaningful and impactful learning (Latifah *et al.*, 2021). One figure who highlights the importance of a multicultural approach in education is Kenneth T. Henson through his work "*Curriculum Planning: Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism and Education Reform*" in 2015. Henson emphasizes the importance of systematically and constructively integrating multicultural values into curriculum planning, using an approach that is responsive to student diversity. He also advocates for educational reform that is not merely administrative but addresses the ideological, social, and pedagogical aspects of the educational process itself.

However, the implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia still faces various challenges. Although the national curriculum has incorporated the values of diversity (kebhinekaan) across multiple subjects, a gap persists between these principles and their actual practice in the field. This gap includes teachers' limited understanding of multicultural approaches, constraints educational resources, and resistance from some segments of society who perceive such ideas as "foreign" or incompatible with local values (Rohmah *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, various critical issues in Indonesia's education sector through 2024-2025 underscore the urgency of integrating multicultural education. According to a Kompas magazine report, the Forum Wartawan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Fortadik) has identified seven key educational concerns requiring critical attention, including improving literacy rates, resolving issues surrounding honorary teachers, and addressing educational access disparities in remote regions.

Data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) reveal that the average years of schooling for Indonesians aged 15 and above stands at merely 9,22 years, with significant disparities across provinces. For instance, in Papua Pegunungan Province, the average duration of schooling reaches only 5,1 years. During a hearing session with Commission X of the DPR RI, the Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional (BRIN) disclosed that teacher absenteeism rates in West Papua reached 37-43%, significantly impacting education quality in the region. Furthermore, issues of bullying and sexual violence continue to dominate educational spaces, indicating that the educational system is not functioning optimally. Implementing multiculturalism across all Indonesian schools extends beyond merely providing equal opportunities for all students. It fundamentally involves preparing them to become culturally aware and inclusive citizens in the globalization era.

In this era of globalization, the ability to interact and collaborate with diverse individuals has become an essential skill. Consequently, inclusive education with a multicultural orientation remains critically relevant not only for establishing equitable learning environments, but also for preparing Indonesia's younger generation to confront future challenges (Sipuan *et al.*, 2022). Previous research indicates that the implementation of multicultural education fosters tolerance among students (Hasanuddin, 2024; Nilawati *et al.*, 2021). This study differs from

previous research that examined multicultural education in isolation, without connecting it to other educational theories. The present research aims to analyze the current state of multicultural education implementation in Indonesia, identify gaps between the ideals of multicultural curriculum and its actual practice in the field, and critically evaluate the relevance of Kenneth T. Henson's theory within Indonesia's diverse and dynamic educational context. theoretical and practical contributions by advancing the development of more inclusive and contextual curricula, and strengthening education's role in fostering social harmony within the nation's diversity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In his 2015 seminal work *"Curriculum Planning: Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Education Reform"* Kenneth T. Henson presents a comprehensive framework for dynamic and relevant curriculum planning that systematically integrates multiculturalism, constructivism, and educational reform. Multiculturalism in education constitutes a philosophical approach that emphasizes the recognition and appreciation of classroom diversity. This pedagogical paradigm involves the systematic integration of cultural content and perspectives into curricula to foster cross-cultural understanding, mutual respect, critical thinking, and social justice. The ultimate objective is to equip students with competencies for effective engagement in pluralistic societies while cultivating their capacity to contribute to a more equitable global community. This concept is understood as an idea, a school reform approach, and a movement for equality, social justice, and democracy that seeks to restructure schools so that all students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to function in ethnically and racially diverse nations and global contexts.

Theoretical Framework of Kenneth T. Henson's Thought on Curriculum and Multiculturalism

In his 2015 work *"Curriculum Planning: Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Education Reform"* Kenneth T. Henson offers a comprehensive perspective on curriculum planning that integrates three central themes: multiculturalism, constructivism, and education reform. For Henson, curriculum planning is not a static process, but rather must be dynamic and responsive to students' needs and societal changes. Henson skillfully weaves together multiculturalism, constructivism, and educational reform to create an integrated, mutually reinforcing framework. Constructivism plays a pivotal role in multicultural learning by enabling students to actively construct knowledge from diverse cultural perspectives and experiences, rather than passively receiving information.

Henson conceptualizes curriculum planning as a comprehensive endeavor to establish and sustain a classroom climate where students not merely tolerate diversity, but actively value it and allow themselves to be enriched through interactions with peers from varied cultural backgrounds. The success of 21st-century curricula hinges critically on their capacity to equip teachers in facilitating all students, regardless of background, to achieve both academic excellence and social development (Hagenaars *et al.*, 2023). Henson emphasizes that diversity, encompassing ethnic differences, political affiliations, socioeconomic status, ability

levels, and religious backgrounds brings unique strengths to society. These strengths include fostering both a sense of belonging and pride in one's cultural heritage.

Inclusive education theory provides an essential framework for understanding how to create inclusive learning environments for all students, including those with special needs and those from diverse cultural backgrounds. This theory emphasizes the critical importance of equal access, active participation, human rights-based approaches, collaboration among all stakeholders, and respect for individual diversity (Arifin *et al.*, 2023). Henson's approach to integrating multiculturalism into curriculum design is fundamentally transformative, transcending the mere inclusion of content about specific ethnic groups. This paradigm shift involves restructuring the entire school culture, instructional practices, and even assessment methodologies to ensure all students feel valued, supported, and provided with equitable opportunities for success (Rahman *et al.*, 2022).

Henson argues that effective curriculum design must be intentionally developed and continuously modified to reflect the growing diversity within broader society, local communities, schools, and the student population itself. A crucial dimension of Henson's theoretical framework lies in its conceptual bridging of multiculturalism and constructivism. These pedagogical approaches share fundamental convictions about all students' inherent capacity for academic achievement and developmental success. Moreover, both multiculturalists and constructivists emphasize the critical role of small-group cooperative learning. This pedagogical approach posits that peer interactions within small learning groups enable students to negotiate meaning through dialogic exchange, co-construct shared understanding, and develop essential social competencies. Henson draws upon Lev Vygotsky's theoretical framework to substantiate this concept of "meaning negotiation," a cornerstone of both constructivist pedagogy and positive multicultural interactions. His analysis demonstrates how cooperative learning structures, as opposed to competitive educational environments, significantly enhance students' self-concept through reciprocal validation among group members.

Henson highlights the crucial role of the "hidden curriculum" consisting of subtle messages conveyed through school regulations, daily interactions, and organizational practices which can serve as either a powerful force supporting multicultural efforts or conversely undermining them. Consequently, Henson implies that schools must consciously plan and manage the hidden curriculum to consistently promote multicultural values such as acceptance, respect, and inclusion. Without attention to the hidden curriculum, the messages conveyed through the formal curriculum may prove ineffective. Henson addresses the critical importance of addressing language barriers faced by students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, including English Language Learners (ELL). He contends that teachers must expand their instructional repertoire to effectively respond to these students' needs while dispelling the misconception that learning additional languages interferes with one's native language development. Multicultural theory emphasizes the fundamental necessity of recognizing, valuing, and celebrating cultural diversity within society (Wahidah *et al.*, 2023).

Within educational contexts, this theory underscores the critical importance of exposing students to diverse cultures and perspectives. Regarding the Role of Teachers and Schools in Multicultural-Based Curriculum, Henson posits that teachers serve as the determining factor for students' academic and social (Hagenaars *et al.*, 2023). Teachers must serve as

proactive change agents, engaging in forward planning and investing in skill development to become effective facilitators of learning in diverse classrooms. This requires the capacity to transcend their personal worldviews and authentically connect with students' lived experiences, while demonstrating willingness to both listen and learn from their students. Schools and teachers share a collective responsibility to cultivate inclusive learning environments. This necessitates both a profound understanding of students' cultural backgrounds and a demonstrated willingness to adapt instructional methodologies to accommodate diverse learning needs.

Henson emphasizes that education must serve as an equalizing force, providing upward mobility opportunities for all students regardless of race, socioeconomic background, or geographic location. The theory of educational psychology examines learning processes and individual development within educational contexts (Nurjanah *et al.*, 2023). In multicultural education research, this theory provides a framework for understanding how students' cultural identities and lived experiences shape their learning processes, social interactions, and psychological well-being. Henson's conceptualization of multicultural curriculum integration represents a profound, transformative process that fundamentally reimagines educational paradigms. This approach transcends mere additive incorporation of cultural content; it constitutes a comprehensive transformation of the entire school ecosystem, from foundational philosophies to daily practices, to ensure diversity is both valued and leveraged as a dynamic resource for enriching all students' educational experiences.

The robust concept of the hidden curriculum underscores that every facet of school life contributes to students' understanding of diversity, necessitating a coherent and intentional approach across all institutional levels. This perspective proves particularly relevant within Indonesia's highly pluralistic societal context, where the persistent gap between national ideals and conflict-prone social realities demands profound educational transformation. Character education theory emphasizes the fundamental importance of cultivating moral and ethical values within the educational process (Nafsaka *et al.*, 2023). Within the context of multiculturalism, character education can serve as a vehicle for teaching students about tolerance, appreciation of diversity, social awareness, and adaptability in diverse environments. The urgency of multicultural education in Indonesia, with its national motto "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," is inherent to the nation's fundamentally multicultural character. The Indonesian archipelago is home to more than 1,300 distinct ethnic groups, speaking hundreds of regional languages, while practicing six officially recognized religions alongside numerous indigenous belief systems. This sociocultural plurality predates the nation's independence, with diverse ethnic and cultural communities having contributed fundamentally to nation-building processes. The state formally acknowledges this multicultural reality through its philosophical foundation Pancasila and constitutional framework Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 (Ardi & Saputra, 2024).

METHODS

The proposed research method is a qualitative approach incorporating literature review methodology. The research process involves gathering data from various relevant written sources, including scholarly journals, books, research reports, and online news portals. The primary source referenced for the conceptual framework is Kenneth T. Henson's book titled

"Curriculum Planning: Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Education Reform". In addition, a minimum of 20 valid and relevant scholarly articles from the past decade (2015-2025) along with other pertinent references will be utilized to support the analysis. The collected data will be systematically examined to identify emerging patterns, dominant themes, and key findings regarding both the challenges and potential strategies for promoting multiculturalism in Indonesian schools within an inclusive education framework.

The compiled data will then undergo synthesis to construct evidence-based arguments and theoretical formulations that address the research questions. This approach facilitates a nuanced understanding of complex issues through comprehensive examination of existing scholarship. Data analysis will employ critical reading techniques to systematically identify key themes regarding implementation realities, prevailing challenges and opportunities, disparities between multicultural education ideals and on-ground practices, and core conceptual contributions from Henson's theoretical framework. A literature analysis will be employed to strengthen the study's theoretical framework and identify research gaps requiring further investigation. This approach is expected to yield comprehensive and policy-relevant insights for developing inclusive educational practices and implementing multicultural learning approaches in the Indonesian context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Current Implementation Status of Multiculturalism in Indonesian Education

Indonesia's multicultural condition represents both a national asset and potential source of conflict, where diversity serves simultaneously as a source of richness and strength. The nation's history has been marked by various SARA-based conflicts, demonstrating the fragility of national unity when diversity is not properly managed, as seen in instances of violence that disrupt social harmony. Even in the current digital era, identity-based social tensions and polarization remain evident, fueled by various factors including politics and narrow religious interpretations. This situation can lead to the emergence of intolerance, discrimination, and prejudice toward other groups (Sri-Suneki, 2021). Within educational settings, this lack of understanding manifests in practices that remain incompletely inclusive. Existing curricula may prove inadequate in comprehensively representing diversity, while many teachers feel insufficiently prepared or lack the necessary competencies to effectively manage diverse classrooms and teach multicultural values (Shinta & Albina, 2024).

The disparity between the national ideal of "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" and the conflict-prone social reality demonstrates that efforts to instill multicultural values through education have not yet fully succeeded. Although the concept has long been recognized, its implementation continues to face resistance and has not become an integral part of the education system in many schools. This situation creates a clear urgency for stronger and more systematic multicultural education. Without effective education that instills understanding, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity from an early age, the potential for conflict will continue to loom over national unity. The role of multicultural education in fostering harmony and national unity is seen as a bridge that can accommodate Indonesia's differences and minimize division (Sibaweh *et al.*, 2024). The concept of multiculturalism taught from the earliest stages of education is expected to enable students to understand, accept, and

appreciate existing differences. Its primary objective is to cultivate "cultural beings" who value both universal humanistic principles and their nation's noble values, while fostering a civilized and harmonious society (Gofur *et al.*, 2022).

Multicultural education aims to instill values of sympathy, tolerance, empathy, and social solidarity among students. This approach serves as an effective strategy to mitigate potential social conflicts while fostering appreciation for diversity across ethnicities, religions, races, and intergroup differences. Beyond merely being a pedagogical tool, multicultural education plays a vital role in strengthening national identity while preserving local identities, and promotes unity within the framework of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Futaqi, 2022; Gerson, 2020). From a sociology of education perspective, the relationship between individuals and social structures within educational spaces constitutes the primary focus of analysis. This theoretical framework proves particularly relevant to Indonesia's multicultural school contexts as it reveals how cultural norms, power structures, and social dynamics both shape and influence the implementation of inclusive and equitable education (Jayadi *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the multicultural approach encompasses not merely curricular content, but more fundamentally necessitates the reconstruction of educational praxis to cultivate greater sensitivity toward social diversity and inequality.

In multicultural societies, education serves as a vital instrument for promoting tolerance and mutual understanding. It enables students to cultivate positive attitudes toward diversity while equipping them to become critically engaged and reflective citizens within pluralistic communities. Multicultural education plays a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and reducing prejudice, discrimination, and identity-based conflicts. The urgency of multicultural education in Indonesia is not merely theoretical but constitutes a practical imperative to preserve national integrity and social harmony amidst continuously evolving diversity dynamics. By integrating theoretical frameworks with diverse perspectives, a holistic and sustainable approach can be developed to advance multiculturalism in Indonesian schools supporting efforts toward inclusive and competitive education (Loke *et al.*, 2023).

The implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia has emerged as a critical discourse, particularly in the post-Reformasi era, coinciding with growing awareness of diversity and potential conflicts. From a policy perspective, Indonesia possesses a legal foundation supporting democratic, equitable, and non-discriminatory education that upholds human rights, religious values, cultural values, and national diversity (Furqon, 2020). Curricula such as Kurikulum 2013 and Kurikulum Merdeka are also noted for their multicultural ethos. Kurikulum Merdeka, for instance, is designed to be more flexible, student-centered, and emphasizes the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* which encompasses critical thinking, inclusivity, and global awareness (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021). Field realities indicate that teacher training regarding multicultural education remains uneven and tends to be superficial. This situation impacts the inadequate integration of these values into both curriculum and daily instruction. Many teachers still lack a profound understanding of multicultural education's concepts and urgency, resulting in sporadic and unsystematic implementation. Moreover, the limited availability of learning resources that adequately represent Indonesia's cultural diversity also poses a significant challenge (Azhari & Albina, 2024). The need for an inclusive curriculum and teaching materials capable of reflecting the social and cultural realities of students, particularly in language learning within multicultural environments has become increasingly imperative (Aziz *et al.*, 2024).

The importance of multicultural curriculum principles lies not only in their focus on cognitive knowledge, but also in shaping character and fostering tolerant, inclusive social attitudes (Futaqi, 2022). Resistance to change emerges among certain groups who perceive multicultural education as conflicting with local values or religious identities. The integration of multicultural values into curricula frequently encounters concerns about the erosion of local identity (Limbong *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the adopted approach must demonstrate sensitivity to local contexts while incorporating cultural wisdom as an integral component of education (Jayadi *et al.*, 2022). However, field implementation continues to face numerous challenges. A primary obstacle is the lack of teacher understanding and preparedness regarding multicultural education concepts and practices. Adequate teacher training, availability of resources including relevant and inclusive teaching materials remains limited. Resistance to change from some educators and stakeholders, along with potential value conflicts that may arise during multicultural curriculum implementation, also presents challenges that must be addressed. Implementation often occurs informally through extracurricular activities or teacher initiatives, rather than being systematically integrated into the formal curriculum (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021).

Discrepancies Between Field Implementation and the Ideal Application of Multiculturalism in Curriculum

Indonesia, as the world's largest archipelagic nation comprising over 17,000 islands, is renowned for its remarkable ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity. This pluralism is symbolically enshrined in the national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* which fundamentally affirms the spirit of national cohesion amidst difference. However, beneath this richness lie significant challenges in maintaining social harmony, particularly amid rising cases of intolerance, discrimination, and SARA-tinged conflicts that still occur across various regions. In the context of this pluralistic society, multicultural education becomes critically important. This form of education aims to equip students with cross-cultural understanding, tolerant attitudes, and the necessary social skills to thrive in a diverse society. Beyond merely introducing different cultures, multicultural education focuses on cultivating critical awareness of inequalities and actively working to create inclusive and equitable learning environments for all groups (Nugraha, 2020).

Ideally, the implementation of multiculturalism in educational curricula should holistically reflect societal diversity, promote substantive understanding and appreciation of differences, and equip students to actively participate in pluralistic societies (Slamet *et al.*, 2021; Suyurno *et al.*, 2024). This aligns with the dimensions of multicultural education proposed by Kenneth T. Henson, which encompass content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and school culture empowerment. The fundamental gap lies in the transition from policy-level recognition of diversity to consistent and substantive implementation at the school and classroom levels (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021).

Existing curricula may acknowledge the importance of diversity, yet frequently fail to adequately integrate perspectives and contributions from various cultural groups within instructional materials. Teaching resources often still exhibit biases or imbalanced representation. Furthermore, despite supportive policies, the lack of structured implementation guidelines and adequate teacher training results in uneven application of

multicultural education, leaving it dependent on individual teacher or school initiatives (Azhari & Albina, 2024). Ideally, teachers should possess strong competencies and convictions for teaching in multicultural environments, yet in reality many feel inadequately prepared (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021). Community and parental involvement, which is essential for enriching the curriculum and creating a supportive learning environment, must be actively cultivated (Hartinah *et al.*, 2023) and has not yet been optimized.

Reflections on Kenneth T. Henson's Thought and Critiques of His Theory

Kenneth T. Henson's (2015) conceptual framework in his book *"Curriculum Planning: Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Education Reform"*, offers a robust framework for inclusive curriculum design. Henson emphasizes that multiculturalism must be fundamentally integrated throughout the entire curriculum planning process, rather than treated as merely additive. He strategically links multiculturalism with constructivism (learners constructing knowledge) and education reform (quality improvement and equity enhancement). However, applying Henson's theory within the Indonesian context requires critical examination and adaptation. Rooted in Western (United States) contexts, Henson's theory may not fully encompass Indonesia's unique societal complexities. Several potential critiques include: The Pancasila Context: Henson's theory may require enrichment through deeper integration of Pancasila as Indonesia's philosophical foundation, which inherently recognizes diversity and unity (Hartinah *et al.*, 2023; Jayadi *et al.*, 2022). The operational integration of Pancasila values into multicultural curriculum planning according to Henson's principles requires further scholarly examination.

The religious dynamics in Indonesia exhibit complex interfaith relations. Henson's theory may require adaptation to specifically address how curricula can effectively facilitate interreligious understanding and tolerance, moving beyond mere acknowledgment of general cultural diversity (Slamet *et al.*, 2021; Hartinah *et al.*, 2023; Suyurno *et al.*, 2024). Indonesia's existing capacities and resources continue to face limitations in financial resources, infrastructure, and availability of trained teachers, particularly in remote areas. Henson's theory requires adaptation to provide realistic implementation guidance under such resource-constrained conditions. Local resistance to multicultural education may stem from various stakeholders with differing rationales, including conservative worldviews or concerns about the erosion of local identities (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021). Henson's theory requires supplementation with specific strategies to address such resistance within Indonesia's socio-cultural context.

The development of an inclusive and multicultural-oriented curriculum could represent a significant step forward (Mubarok, 2021). Nevertheless, Henson's principles of dynamic, inclusive, and student-centered curriculum planning remain highly relevant. His emphasis on engaging all stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, administrators) in the curriculum planning process and the crucial importance of teacher professional development are particularly vital for the Indonesian context. Multicultural education serves as a form of consciousness-raising about cultural diversity, human rights, and the reduction or elimination of such prejudices to cultivate a more just and progressive society (Baihaqi, 2021). Furthermore, multicultural education should be viewed as an instrument for building a just and peaceful society. It extends beyond merely incorporating cultural content into curricula to

encompass the restructuring of power relations within education systems to make them more inclusive and democratic (Gerson, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The integration of multiculturalism into curriculum and inclusive learning represents an imperative and non-negotiable urgency for Indonesian education, given the nation's diversity and accompanying potential challenges. Reflections from Kenneth T. Henson's theoretical framework provide a robust foundation regarding the critical importance of comprehensively integrating multiculturalism within curriculum planning to create inclusive learning environments that support all students. The urgency of multiculturalism in Indonesia's educational curriculum becomes particularly critical given the nation's rich diversity and potential conflicts that may arise from insufficient cross-cultural understanding. Kenneth T. Henson's theoretical contributions on curriculum planning which systematically integrate multiculturalism, constructivism, and educational reform provide a substantively relevant and valuable framework for addressing these multifaceted challenges. While the implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia currently faces various obstacles, existing opportunities and initiatives offer promising prospects for future progress. The benefits of multicultural education for students and social harmony in Indonesia are substantial, including enhanced cross-cultural understanding, development of tolerance and empathy, strengthening of an inclusive national identity, and prevention of social conflicts. The proposed solution to address the challenges of implementing multicultural education in Indonesia involves comprehensive and ongoing training on multicultural education principles and practices, particularly in contexts with limited resources such as teaching materials and funding.

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