

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM IN BUILDING THE VALUES OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AT SMP PIRI 2 YOGYAKARTA

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30983/educative.v8i1.6639>

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Submission: Agustus 08, 2023	Revised: October 21, 2023	Accepted : October 30, 2023	Published: October 30, 2023
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## Abstract

Indonesia is a highly pluralistic nation in every way, including religion. Due to this, Indonesia urgently requires multireligious schools in order to provide an inclusive learning atmosphere for children of all religious origins. In multireligious schools, the Merdeka Curriculum can serve as an excellent bridge to foster tolerance, appreciation, and understanding of religious diversity. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how Piri 2 Middle School in Yogyakarta may incorporate an autonomous curriculum to foster ideals of religious tolerance. The three steps of data analysis used in this qualitative study are data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The procedures were developed by Johnny Saldana, A. Michael Huberman, and Matthew B. Miles. The study's findings demonstrate the three methods used by SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta to execute the Merdeka curriculum and instill the ideals of religious tolerance. First, by taking an inclusive stance; second, by utilising multicultural teaching resources; third, by fostering collaborative learning environments and encouraging active participation from educators, parents, and community members. Schools may foster an inclusive environment, promote respect for cultural diversity, broaden students' worldviews, and produce a generation that is accepting and considerate of cultural differences by implementing these measures.

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Independence, Tolerance, SMP, Piri 2, Yogyakarta

## Abstrak

Indonesia adalah negara yang sangat plural dalam segala hal, termasuk agama. Oleh karena itu, Indonesia sangat membutuhkan sekolah multiagama untuk memberikan suasana pembelajaran inklusif bagi anak-anak semua agama. Di sekolah multi agama, Kurikulum Merdeka dapat menjadi jembatan yang sangat baik untuk menumbuhkan toleransi, penghargaan dan pemahaman terhadap keberagaman agama. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta dapat menerapkan kurikulum otonom untuk menumbuhkan cita-cita toleransi beragama. Tiga langkah analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian kualitatif ini adalah kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Prosedur ini dikembangkan oleh Johnny Saldana, A. Michael Huberman, dan Matthew B. Miles. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan, bahwa implementasi kurikulum merdeka dalam membangun nilai-nilai toleransi beragama di sekolah SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta dilakukan dengan tiga cara. Pertama melalui pendekatan inklusif, kedua dengan menggunakan bahan ajar yang multikultural, ketiga dengan pembelajaran kolaboratif, dan keterlibatan aktif dari guru, siswa, orang tua, dan komunitas. Dengan mengadopsi strategi-strategi tersebut, sekolah dapat menciptakan lingkungan yang inklusif, mendorong penghargaan terhadap keberagaman budaya, memperluas pemahaman siswa tentang dunia, dan membentuk generasi yang toleran dan menghargai perbedaan budaya.

**Kata Kunci:** Kurikulum, Merdeka, Toleran, SMP, Piri 2, Yogyakarta

## Introduction

Indonesia is one of the countries that is high in pluralism in all aspects, including the religious aspects.<sup>1</sup> So multi-religious schools in Indonesia are what Indonesia needs. It aims to create an

inclusive educational environment for students from various religious backgrounds.

In various countries, especially in countries with religiously heterogeneous populations, multi-faith education has become the adopted approach to accommodate religious differences in educational contexts. Education in multi-religious schools can face several challenges or problems covering six things, including religious conflicts, lack of adequate religious understanding and knowledge, religious discrimination, lack of

<sup>1</sup> Erman S. Saragih, "Analysis and Meaning of Almighty Godhead Theology in the Context of Religious Pluralism in Indonesia," *Journal of Theology Cultivation* 2, no. 1 (2018): 1–14, <http://jurnal.stakpntarutung.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal-Teologi-Cultivation>.

availability of adequate resources, imbalance of religious representation, difficulty in integrating religious lessons with secular lessons.<sup>2</sup> The examples of religious conflicts that occur in Indonesia are as follows:

Muslims and Christians conflict in Maluku in 1999-2002 is one example of religious conflict that occurred in Indonesia. The conflict stemmed from tensions between the two religious groups, which culminated in violence and armed fighting. Thousands of people have been killed and many more displaced by the conflict.<sup>3</sup> In addition, conflicts between Muslims and Ahmadiyah also occur in several parts of Indonesia. In 2011, there was a brutal attack on the Ahmadiyah community in Cikeusik, Banten, which left several people dead. The Ahmadiyah group is considered by some Muslims in Indonesia as deviating from the teachings of Islam.<sup>4</sup>

Faith-based conflicts also occur in the form of tensions between Muslims and Hindus in Bali, as well as between Muslims and Buddhists in several regions in Indonesia.<sup>5</sup> Although Indonesia has a rich religious diversity, sometimes religious conflicts can arise due to differences in interpretation, religious practice, and socio-political factors.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to note that since then, many steps have been taken by the Indonesian government and society to encourage interfaith

tolerance and harmony, as well as minimize faith-based conflicts. These efforts include education on religious diversity, interfaith dialogue, and the promotion of diversity values.<sup>7</sup>

All of the above examples show how Indonesia's diversity, if not managed wisely, can lead to conflicts that have the potential to endanger the integrity of the nation. Therefore, it is important to promote tolerance, dialogue and awareness of the importance of respecting differences in order to prevent or overcome conflicts that may arise.

The Merdeka Curriculum can be an effective bridge in multi-faith schools to build understanding, appreciation, and tolerance of religious differences. The Merdeka Curriculum is an educational approach that emphasizes student empowerment, learning independence, and 21st century skills development. In the context of multi-faith schools, the Merdeka Curriculum can provide the following benefits: as an inclusive introduction to religion, as an understanding of interreligions, the development of universal values, the development of social and emotional skills, inclusive learning experience.<sup>8</sup>

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in building the values of religious tolerance in schools is an important step in creating a harmonious, inclusive, and respectful society in religious diversity<sup>9</sup>. In Indonesia, as a country with rich religious diversity, education is an effective means to strengthen understanding, respect, and tolerance between religious communities. Curriculum Merdeka is a curriculum concept that aims to develop students' potential and creativity, prepare them to play an active role

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<sup>2</sup> Stephen V. Monsma and J. Christopher Soper, *The Challenge of Pluralism: Church and State in Five Democracies* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), p, 78.

<sup>3</sup> Monsma and Soper.

<sup>4</sup> Dewi Nurrul Maliki, "Resistance of Religious Minorities of the Ahmadiyah Community in Indonesia," *Journal of Social and Political Sciences* 14, no. 1 (2010): 47–62, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.10948>.

<sup>5</sup> Donald Tungkgi and Muhammad Adlin Sila, "Baku Tolong, Torang Samua Basudara: Social Capital and Meeting Point in Managing Ethnoreligious Diversity in the Umoga Transmigration Area, North Sulawesi," *Harmony* 21, No. 1 (2022): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v21i1.608>.

<sup>6</sup> Angga Natalia, "FACTORS CAUSING RADICALISM IN RELIGION (Sociological Study of Religious Pluralism in Indonesia)," *Al-Adyan* 11, no. 1 (2016): 1–11, <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/177630-ID-faktor-faktor-penyebab-radikalisme-dalam.pdf>.

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<sup>7</sup> Amin Maulani, "Learning Transformation in Multicultural Education of Diversity," *Journal of Educational Development: Foundations and Applications* 1, no. 1 (2013): 29–44, <https://doi.org/10.21831/jppfa.v1i1.1049>.

<sup>8</sup> Oktia Anisa Putri and Ifnaldi Nurmal, "And Curriculum Merdeka Belajar, "ACTUALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN DEVELOPMENT," *At-Ta'dib* 14, no. 2 (2022): 190–99.

<sup>9</sup> U. Abdullah Mumin, "Tolerance Education Perspective of Islamic Religious Education (Study of the Content of Learning Approaches in Schools)," *Al-Afkar, Journal for Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (2018): 15–24.

in community life, and encourage holistic and value-based learning<sup>10</sup>. One of the values that must be instilled through this curriculum is the value of religious tolerance.<sup>11</sup>

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in building the values of religious tolerance in schools has several important benefits. First, through education, students can understand and respect religious differences and understand the right of each individual to religion according to their beliefs. This helps create an inclusive school climate and reduces the potential for religious conflict. Second, curricula that promote religious tolerance can help dispel prejudices and negative stereotypes between students of different faiths. This can reduce discrimination and strengthen relationships between individuals from different religious backgrounds. Third, through learning about different religions, students can develop a better understanding of the basic principles, practices, and traditions of other religions. This will help them have a broader perspective and build peace and cooperation between religious communities.

SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta is a multi-religious school, according to the author's observations, but despite this, the school maintains a pleasant and secure atmosphere because of the Merdeka curriculum it uses, as one of the teachers, Mr. H, stated:

“Kurikulum Merdeka ini mas, memberikan kontribusi yang banyak kepada siswa disini yang sebenarnya multi agama. Kontribusi tersebut antara lain mengembangkan empati, menghormati keberagaman agama, memberikan pendidikan hak asasi manusia, dan mengembangkan keterbukaan terhadap pemikiran mereka. Hal ini terlihat mas, berkat kurikulum Merdeka kini mereka tidak lagi mendapat batasan dalam belajar,

padahal berbeda dengan keyakinan mereka.”

[This Merdeka Curriculum makes a lot of contributions to students here who are actually multi-religious, Bro. These contributions include developing empathy, respecting religious diversity, providing human rights education, and developing openness to their thoughts. This can be seen thanks to the Merdeka curriculum, Bro. Now they no longer have limitations in learning, even though it is different from their beliefs].<sup>12</sup>

Mr. Hanif's statement to the author demonstrates how the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta incorporates a lot of activity into the learning process. The author becomes intrigued by this and decides to conduct research at SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta under the title *Implementing an Merdeka curriculum in Building the Values of Religious Tolerance in SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta*.

## Research Method

The research method used was qualitative, which is conducted by plunging into the field to obtain data on the object being studied.<sup>13</sup> Afterward, the writer explores the subject matter of his study through three methods of data gathering that align with the principles of qualitative research: documentation, interviews, and observation.<sup>14</sup> This research method is also called the naturalistic research method because the study is carried out in natural settings. This research was conducted by the author as a research subject at SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta, to know the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in building the values of religious tolerance.

<sup>12</sup> "Hanif had an in-depth interview with the aim of instilling cultural values. 23, 03, 2023" (n.d.).

<sup>13</sup> Khoirul Anam and Suwadi, "The Problems of Educators of Portal Muallim Foundation in North Lombok in Implementing Online Learning Methods During a Pandemic," *Islamic EduKids* 4, No. 2 (2022): 111–25.

<sup>14</sup> Mohamad Anwar Thalib, "Training on Data Collection Techniques in Qualitative Methods for Cultural Accounting Research," *Seandanan: Journal of Community Service* 2, no. 1 (2022): 44–50.

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Fakhri Khusni, Muh Munadi, and Abdul Matin, "Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum at MIN 1 Wonosobo," *Journal of Islamic Education* 12, no. 1 (2022): 60–71.

<sup>11</sup> Mumin, "Tolerance Education Perspectives of Islamic Religious Education (Study of the Content of Learning Approaches in Schools)."

The types of data used in this study were primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly by the author from his research source through an interview process conducted on 3 teachers (Mr. A, Mr. H, and Mr. R) and students of SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta. Then the interview data for the discipline was received from A.

The secondary data refers to data obtained by the author through intermediary media or indirectly. This type of data includes books, notes, journals, and other sources that provide support to this research. Within the framework of this study, the author used an interactive data analysis method based on the approach of Miles and Huberman. This qualitative analysis approach is applied continuously without interruption until the entire analysis process is complete and all data are fulfilled. There are four main stages in this analysis process, namely data collection, data simplification, data presentation, and conclusion-making or verification.<sup>15</sup> The following is a detailed explanation of each of these stages.

First, data collection was carried out by observing the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in building religious tolerance values in SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta. The author also interviewed 2 students, H and A, and 2 PAI teachers, A, and R. Furthermore, after the data is collected, the data reduction stage is carried out. This stage involves selecting and focusing on relevant and significant data, as well as removing unnecessary data. The data is then compiled for further analysis. After data reduction, the data presentation stage is done. At this stage, the processed data is presented in a more structured form, such as in tables, graphs, or narrative sequences that are easier to understand and evaluate.

The last stage of the data analysis process is drawing conclusions and verification. At this

stage, the author combined the data and summarized the main findings that emerged based on the results of the analysis that had been done. Subsequently, a second check was performed to make sure the conclusions matched the data. By using interactive data analysis techniques based on the Miles and Huberman model, the author was able to conduct a structured and thorough analysis of this research data.

## Finding and Discussion

### Finding

#### *Learning methods of the Merdeka curriculum*

The Merdeka Curriculum is an educational concept that encourages more flexible and creative learning, focusing on developing the competence and character of students. In the context of instilling multicultural values in schools, the Merdeka Curriculum can be an effective framework to promote understanding, appreciation, and skills in dealing with differences in culture, religion, and social backgrounds. There are several ways to instill multicultural values at SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta, namely:

First, an inclusive approach. The Merdeka curriculum encourages an inclusive approach that recognizes diversity and strengthens relationships between individuals with different cultural backgrounds.<sup>16</sup> Through the use of diverse teaching materials, resources, and teaching methods that reflect diversity, schools can broaden students' understanding of other people's cultures and lives.<sup>17</sup> The implementation of this curriculum also allows the development of students' self-awareness of their own cultural identity and respect for differences among classmates. This is a method carried out by SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta, because the environment is in the midst of cultural and religious diversity, therefore the emphasis is on an inclusive approach. The benefits of an inclusive approach

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<sup>16</sup> James A. Banks, *Cultural Diversity and Education Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> Bode and S. P. Nieto, *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* (Pearson: 7th Ed, 2018), p. 34

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<sup>15</sup> Donald Samuel Slamet Santosa and Lilis Irawati, "Pedagogic Competence of Teachers of SMP Negeri 2 Kaloran, Kaloran District, Temanggung Regency," *Ecodynamika Journal* 1, no. 2 (2018): 1–12.



are able to create students' awareness of existing differences.<sup>18</sup>

An inclusive approach is able to shape students' understanding of differences so that a sense of brotherhood has been formed in small spaces, such as classrooms, but is very influential on attitudes toward the community environment. It is proven that there are no conflicts in the name of cultural and religious differences and so on. This is confirmed by A that:

"Sekolah kami tetap menerima perbedaan karena menurut kami pendidikan tidak hanya fokus pada pengajaran ilmu ketuhanan dan eksakta saja, namun juga menjaga hubungan sosial yang memupuk persatuan dalam masyarakat."

[Our school continues to be accepting of differences because we think that education should not only focus on teaching students about the divine and exact sciences but also on maintaining social relationships that foster unity in society].<sup>19</sup>

It makes extremely evident how crucial it is to respect diversity in an inclusive classroom environment. It needs to be done in the social realm with the least amount of habituation.

Second, the use of multicultural learning materials. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum provides opportunities for teachers to integrate teaching materials that cover various cultures, histories, and traditions from various community groups.<sup>20</sup>

Teachers can choose texts, literature, films, and other resources that represent diverse experiences, so students can broaden their understanding of the world and gain a broader perspective. In this regard, teachers can leverage

frameworks such as global perspectives and cross-cultural learning to deliver multicultural lessons.

Multicultural learning is one of the ways that was conducted at SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta to start student understanding through lessons so that students begin to form with students' subjects. There aren't any particular subjects that help kids realise differences at this time; instead, teachers integrate this knowledge into their lessons to help pupils grasp multicultural concepts and find a sense of unity even in their disparities.<sup>21</sup>

Third, collaborative learning. The application of the Merdeka curriculum encourages collaborative learning, where students work together in heterogeneous groups to achieve the learning goals set.<sup>22</sup> In these situations, students with different cultural backgrounds can interact, share knowledge, and learn from each other. This creates opportunities to build relationships of mutual respect and understanding, as well as enhance students' understanding of cultural diversity. Collaborative learning is a means for students of SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta so that it becomes a sense of mutual understanding of differences. It is proven that students of SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta do not discriminate between cultures, ethnicities, and even religions, this is emphasized by Ali (not his real name):

"Kurikulum Merdeka mungkin masih baru yang kita pahami, namun dalam memberikan pemahaman kepada siswa harus selalu berhasil, agar siswa tidak lagi melihat perbedaan dalam hubungan satu sama lain."

[Even if the Independent Curriculum is still in its infancy, it must constantly be effective in educating children so that they will no longer perceive

<sup>18</sup> Murni Winarsih, "Integration Education and Inclusion Education," *Hikmah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 13, No. 2 (2017): 127, <https://doi.org/10.47466/hikmah.v13i2.156>.

<sup>19</sup> "Ardi In-depth Interview on How to Teach Multicultural Values 20.03, 2023." (n.d.).

<sup>20</sup> G. Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice* (London: Teachers College Press, 2018), p. 37.

<sup>21</sup> Sakhat Maulidah, Nurul Qomariyah, and Siti Antika Ririn Pratiwi, "Implications of Multicultural Education on the Religious Mindset of the Millennial Generation," *SOSHUMDIK* 1, No. 4 (2022): 32–42, <https://jurnal2.untagsmg.ac.id/index.php/soshumdik/article/view/95>.

<sup>22</sup> R. T. W. Johnson, *Cooperative Learning in the Classroom* (America: (3rd Ed.), ASCD, 2019), p. 45.

inequalities in their interpersonal relationships].<sup>23</sup>

Fourth, multicultural extracurricular activities. In addition to the core curriculum, schools can also utilize extracurricular activities to strengthen multicultural values. Activities such as cultural clubs, art performances, cultural festivals, and visits to historical places or cultural centers can give students hands-on experience in understanding and appreciating cultural diversity.<sup>24</sup> SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta felt that by engaging in such events, students could extend their perspectives, deepen their comprehension of multicultural values, and cultivate tolerance and respect for individual differences.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in instilling multicultural values in schools involves an inclusive approach, the use of multicultural learning materials, collaborative learning, and extracurricular activities that respect cultural diversity. By engaging students in learning processes that emphasize respect for cultural differences, schools can create an inclusive environment, develop broader understanding, and promote tolerance and respect for diversity in society.

In addition, concrete actions to implement the Merdeka curriculum and instill multicultural values in schools can include: First, the development of the School Teacher Training Program needs to organize a teacher training program that focuses on understanding and skills regarding multicultural approaches in learning. Such training may include multicultural teaching strategies, the use of diverse teaching materials, and inclusive classroom management. By improving teachers' understanding and skills, they can more effectively guide students in appreciating and respecting cultural diversity.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> "Ali In-depth Interview Related Subjects 23.03.2023." (n.d.).

<sup>24</sup> N. Chinn P. C. and Sarrasin, *Learning and Teaching in Cultural Contexts: Cross-Cultural Considerations in Educational Research and Practice*. (Mexico: Routledge, 2019), p, 54.

<sup>25</sup> T.A. M Villegas and Lucas, "The Culturally Responsive Teacher. In *Handbook of Research on Teacher*

This development is carried out by SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta because before entering the realm of students and learning, at least the teacher should have an understanding of differences that must be respected.

Every lesson plan should include a clear objective to introduce multicultural values to students. Teachers can plan classroom activities involving discussions, case studies, and projects that promote an understanding of cultural diversity. In addition, teachers can create opportunities to incorporate multicultural perspectives in core subjects, such as history, language, art, and literature. The integration of multicultural values becomes a place so that students understand the differences that exist and must be respected.<sup>26</sup>

Third, school evaluation and monitoring. It needs to evaluate the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum and the effectiveness of the multicultural values program that has been implemented.<sup>27</sup> Such evaluations may involve student surveys, classroom observations, and discussions with teachers and school staff. By monitoring progress and providing feedback, schools can continually improve the approaches and strategies used to instill multicultural values.

Fourth, Formation of Discussion and Understanding Groups Schools can form discussion and understanding groups consisting of students, teachers, and school staff. The group aims to facilitate open dialogue and mutual understanding between members of the school community who come from different cultural backgrounds. Discussions can involve topics such as stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, or personal experiences of dealing with cultural differences. Through open and honest dialogue,

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*Education*" (English: Enduring Questions in Changing Contexts, 2019).

<sup>26</sup> Marianus Mantovanny Talung, "Multicultural Education and Its Relevance for Strengthening Indonesian Nationalism," *Health Insights 1 1* (Bandung: Pustaka Firdaus, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> Nuhraini Palipung, *Implementation of Multicultural Education in Inclusion School of Taman Muda Elementary School Ibu Panyiatan Tamansiswa Yogyakarta*, (Yogyakarta: Student Library, 2016).

students can learn from the experiences of others and build a deeper understanding of diversity.

Fifth, School Cultural Exchange Programs can develop cultural exchange programs with other schools or communities that have different cultural backgrounds. This kind of program allows students to interact directly with students from other cultures, learn about their traditions, and deepen their understanding of cultural diversity. Cultural exchange can also involve visits to historical sites, museums, or cultural centers to enrich students' learning experiences.<sup>28</sup>

Schools need to actively recognize and reward cultural contributions brought by students from diverse backgrounds. This can be done through awards, recognition in school events, or special awards programs that honor students' achievements and contributions in promoting multicultural understanding. By valuing students' contributions, the school sends an important message about the importance of diversity and respect for different cultural values.

When implementing the Merdeka Curriculum and instilling multicultural values in schools, it is important to continue to follow a holistic and integrated approach. A holistic approach in instilling multicultural values is one that involves understanding and integrating multicultural values in all aspects of life and context. The holistic approach views multiculturalism as something that is not only limited to cultural diversity, but also includes social, political, economic, and psychological dimensions.<sup>29</sup> In the context of education, this holistic approach aims to promote appreciation, understanding, and cooperation between individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

The integrated approach to instilling multicultural values is an approach that integrates understanding and appreciation of cultural

diversity in all aspects of education.<sup>30</sup> This approach aims to create an inclusive educational environment, respect differences, and strengthen understanding of multicultural values among students. An integrated approach to instilling multicultural values involves several strategies that can be applied to curriculum, teaching methods, school policies, and relationships between schools, families, and communities.

The above explanation is a form of way to instill multicultural values through a Merdeka curriculum, this affects the students of SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta as a sustainable effort and requires commitment and collaboration from all stakeholders. By adopting these measures, schools can create intimate relationships with differences in ethnicity, ethnicity, culture, and even religion. SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta is not only seen as a way of respecting but also as a form of actualization of each other so that mutual respect is not only in the school room but also in the social environment of the community. In accordance with the statement of the teacher of SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta Hanif (not his real name), namely:

"Pemahaman terhadap nilai-nilai multikultural kami sebut bukan sekedar pembelajaran, namun dengan harapan agar siswa mampu mengaktualisasikannya di masyarakat karena siswa akan bersentuhan dengan orang-orang yang mempunyai latar belakang dan budaya yang berbeda."

[We call the understanding of multicultural values not just as learning, but with the hope that students will be able to actualize in the community because students will come into contact with people who have different backgrounds and cultures].<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Y. Lee, C. D., & Majors, *Equity and Multicultural Education: Personal and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World*. (Teachers College Press., 2017), p, 34

<sup>29</sup> Atin Supriatin, *Implementation of Multicultural Education in Education Practice in Indonesia* (America: Elementary, 2017), p, 78.

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<sup>30</sup> Murzal, "MULTICULTURAL VALUES IN LEARNING ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (PAI) IN SCHOOLS (Study of Efforts to Build Student Character at SMKN 1 Gerung Kec. Gerung Kab. West Lombok)," *Kalam Journal* 6, No. 2 (2018), <https://www.lsamaaceh.com/journal/index.php/kalam/article/view/47>.

<sup>31</sup> Hanif had an in-depth interview with the aim of instilling cultural values. 23, 03, 2023.

From students' responses to the multicultural values of the current era of globalization, society is faced with an increasingly multicultural environment. Schools as educational institutions have an important role in shaping understanding and acceptance of cultural, religious, and social background diversity. In this discussion, we will explore students' responses to multicultural values in schools, including the factors that influence their responses, and the benefits of promoting multicultural values in the school environment.

Acceptance of multicultural values lessons in schools is an important step in preparing students to live in an increasingly diverse society. By adopting a multicultural approach in curriculum and learning environments, students can develop a better understanding of cultural diversity, improve interpersonal skills, and become skilled global citizens.<sup>32</sup> Implementation of this approach requires support from a wide range of sources, including international law, inclusive curricula, teacher training, collaboration with local communities, and supportive extracurricular activities related to multicultural values.

### ***Factors Influencing Student Response to Multicultural Values:***

#### **Multicultural Education**

Schools that provide curriculum and learning approaches that support multicultural understanding can influence students' responses to diversity.<sup>33</sup> Multicultural education includes materials that discuss the cultures, religions, histories, and traditions of various ethnic groups or cultures. So that students know about the diversity that exists and are able to respect it because students are aware and aware of the differences that exist. Multicultural education becomes a place to apply students' social relationships, even with the local community. This is instilled by SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta with a

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<sup>32</sup> Sipuan Sipuan et al., "Multicultural Education Approaches," *Literacy: Journal of Non-formal Education* 8, No. 2 (2022): 815, <https://doi.org/10.37905/aksara.8.2.815-830.2022>.

<sup>33</sup> Banks, *Cultural Diversity and Education Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching* (London, 2018), p, 45.

common hope in knitting peace and not creating students against differences. In accordance with Rido's statement (not his real name), namely:

" Pendidikan multikultural kami berikan bukan sekedar untuk dipelajari, namun kami menaruh harapan besar terhadap pemahaman peserta didik agar tidak terjebak dalam keindahan dan kesempatan dalam memahami perbedaan."

[We provide multicultural education not just to be learned, but we have high hopes for students' understanding so as not to get caught up in beauty and narrowness in understanding differences].<sup>34</sup>

#### **Personal Experience**

Students' personal experiences, such as interactions with classmates who have different cultural backgrounds, trips to multicultural places, or participation in cultural events, can influence their response to multicultural values. The understanding that has been gained by students can create a strong personality in understanding differences. This is what happened at SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta so that students who already have these safeguards will practice in the social community. In addition, personal experience is a form of application and even a reflection of individuals in interacting with peers and the local community.

#### **Family Values**

The values instilled by families also play an important role in shaping students' responses to multiculturalism. Students who grow up in families that value diversity tend to have positive attitudes toward multicultural values at school. In addition to the above factors, the role of the family environment is also one indicator of students being open to differences so that the school atmosphere becomes a place for peace between students. Despite the multicultural values that SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta has instilled, if the

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<sup>34</sup> "Ridho In-depth Interview Related to Multicultural Education, 23.03, 2023. 15:00 WIB" (n.d.).



family environment itself ignores these values, it will not be felt by the community because students have direct contact with their families, and this will become a pattern that is recorded in the family. person.

### ***Student Response to Multicultural Values***

#### **Acceptance and Tolerance**

Students who respond positively to multicultural values will be more open to differences, appreciate diversity, and show tolerance towards classmates with different cultural backgrounds. This is expected by the school of SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta because it is so important to instill cultural values since it does not rule out the possibility that students who do not understand and do not even know about the values made will commit arrogance and significant destruction, such as brawls, discrimination and damage on behalf of the majority. The importance of instilling knowledge of multicultural values in students.

#### **Awareness of Social Justice**

Multicultural education can help students understand social justice issues, such as discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice. A positive response will give birth to critical attitudes towards injustice and a spirit to overcome social differences and inequalities. This must be instilled early because student changes will occur at the level of what is known and learned.

#### **Collaboration and Reciprocal Learning**

Students who respond positively to multicultural values tend to be more open to working with classmates from different cultural backgrounds. They will appreciate the opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and knowledge.

### ***Benefits of Promoting Multicultural Values in Schools***

Promoting multicultural values in schools has a number of significant benefits, both for students and society as a whole:

#### **Interpersonal Skills Development**

Learning and appreciating multicultural values helps students develop strong interpersonal skills. They learn to communicate effectively, collaborate in teamwork, and appreciate the perspectives of others. These skills are invaluable in an increasingly global and diverse work environment.

#### **Increased Cultural Understanding and Diversity**

Through multicultural education, students can develop a deeper understanding of the cultures, religions, histories, and traditions of different ethnic or cultural groups. It helps dispel stereotypes and prejudices and promotes respect for diversity.

#### **Build the Power of Identity and Self-Acceptance**

In an environment that promotes multiculturalism, students from different cultural backgrounds feel welcome and valued. This helps them build a positive identity force and boosts their confidence. They learn to accept and be proud of their own cultural background while appreciating the diversity of others.

#### **Preparation for a Global Society**

Understanding and appreciating multicultural values is a very important skill in today's global society. Students who are familiar with cultural diversity and ready to interact with people from different backgrounds will be better equipped to take on the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly connected world.

#### **Encourage Empathy and Respect for Differences**

Through multicultural experiences at school, students can develop deeper empathy for the experiences and perspectives of others. They learn to see the world in a different light and value diversity as a valuable asset.

#### **Helps Prevent Conflict and Violence**

Multicultural education can play a role in preventing conflict and violence caused by

incomprehension and injustice. By promoting multicultural values, students can learn to appreciate differences, seek common ground, and build peace in their communities.

### Improve the Quality of Education

A Merdeka curriculum can promote multicultural values, the school creates an inclusive environment and encourages the active participation of all students. This positively impacts the overall quality of education, increases learning motivation, and enriches the educational experience. Promoting multicultural values in schools has far-reaching benefits, from the development of interpersonal skills to preparation for an increasingly connected global society. By implementing inclusive multicultural education, schools can play an important role in shaping a generation that is able to appreciate and respond positively to cultural, religious, and social background diversity.

The above explanation is a student's response to multicultural values that can change even more open to differences and tolerance. Students have a form of relay in making a social change that has an impact on the sustainability of the school environment. In addition, the cultivation of multicultural values is also a place to create harmony and socialize and religion.

### Discussion

The explanation above is the cultivation of multicultural values based on a Merdeka curriculum, so it can be concluded that the way of instilling multicultural values in SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta schools is through an inclusive approach, multicultural teaching materials, collaborative learning, and active involvement from teachers, students, parents, and the community. By adopting these strategies, schools can create an inclusive environment, encourage appreciation of cultural diversity, broaden students' understanding of the world, and form a generation that is tolerant and respectful of cultural differences.

The learning method used by SMP Negeri 1 Amparita school is an approach in the learning process such as an inclusive approach so that students are able to accept the differences that exist in the school environment, besides that the inclusive approach makes students open themselves to communicate with each other well. This Inclusive Approach is one of the strategies in learning because in this approach students can blend in with others even though they have special needs. This was once discussed by Holifurrahman about the inclusive method, he explained that this inclusive method is one of the strategies so that students with special needs are able to follow learning as usual.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, schools practice this method so that students can adapt to the environment and other students. This is in line with research conducted by Asep Supena on Inclusive Methodide.<sup>36</sup> So SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta inclusive learning method is not new in the world of education.

In addition, the learning method actualized by SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta uses Multicultural Learning Materials that build student awareness of existing differences into a strong unity between students and even all teaching staff. Multicurricular learning is one of the strategies carried out as a place for students to express differences in the environment. In line with research conducted by Ambar Sri Lestari that multicultural learning makes students blend in with differences, both culture and ethnicity in the school environment.<sup>37</sup> In addition, similar research was rigid by Misroh Sulaswari who explained the

<sup>35</sup> Holifurrahman Holifurrahman, "Curriculum Modification in Inclusive Education Practices at SD Al-Firdaus," *Inclusion* 7, No. 2 (2020): 271, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ijds.070205>.

<sup>36</sup> Asep Supena, "Inclusive Education Model for Mentally Impaired Students in Elementary Schools," *PARAMETER: Journal of Education, State University of Jakarta* 29, no. 2 (2017): 145–55, <https://doi.org/10.21009/parameter.292.03>.

<sup>37</sup> Ambar Sri Lestari, "Application of Technology-Based Multicultural Learning with a Constructivist Approach," *Zawiyah Journal of Islamic Thought* 1, no. 1 (2015): 59–78, <https://ejournal.iainkendari.ac.id/index.php/zawiyah/article/view/401>.

virtues of multicultural learning.<sup>38</sup> So that this method can become a character for students at SMP Peri 2 Yogyakarta.

The learning method realized above is a form of Merdeka curriculum effort in providing a response to students and being able to build student character in viewing the importance of the world of education. In addition, SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta also uses the method of forming a Discussion and Understanding Group, this can help students to open their mindset to the surrounding situation. Discussion groups can unite the mindsets of different students into one view that can build change. This method has been researched by Samadi that discussion groups are able to make students think more broadly than just listening from the teacher. Therefore, this method is able to make students explore more knowledge from the outside. In addition, the discussion group method can make students interact well between students and even between teachers. Similar research was conducted by S.S Pua Luka, I.M Candiasa and K.Y.E Aryanto that forming discussion groups can be one way to open students' imaginations.<sup>39</sup> This is also done by SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta.

The above explanations elicit student responses to multicultural value lessons in schools is an important step in preparing students to live in an increasingly diverse society. By adopting a multicultural approach in curriculum and learning environments, students can develop a better understanding of cultural diversity, improve interpersonal skills, and become skilled global citizens. Implementation of this approach requires

support from a wide range of references, including international law, inclusive curricula, teacher training, collaboration with local communities, and extracurricular activities that support multiculturalism. Independent cricket is one of the learning methods that develops student creativity in the learning process.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, SMP Piri 2 Yogyakarta applies the Merdeka curriculum as a reference in the learning process.

The response for the author as a researcher, the Merdeka curriculum in adopting a multicultural approach in the curriculum and learning environment must also be implemented in schools indiscriminately. Both private schools are based on Islam, and private schools are based on non-Islam. So that religion is no longer an obstacle for students to receive education in school. This is because so far, schools with religious pluralism have only been glued to state schools. It causes religion as if it be a barrier for students to demand knowledge. Research conducted by Rz. Ricky Satria Wiranata that the concept of pluralism in the scope of schools becomes confusing if the curriculum used does not refer to planting in the understanding of pluralism.<sup>41</sup> This is a common anxiety for researchers in the world of education.

As a research conducted by Muhammad Yunus, with the title Implementation of Religious Tolerance Values in Islamic Religious Education Learning (Study at SMP Negeri 1 Amparita, Tellu Limpoekab. Sidrap). In this study, the object of this research is found in state schools, and what becomes a parameter is Islamic education books. Of course, the research conducted with research conducted by the author is much different, because the research conducted by the author which is a parameter for fostering religious

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<sup>38</sup> Misroh Sulaswari, "Instilling Multicultural Education through a Behavior Modification Learning Model in Social Studies Subjects (Case Study of Smp Muhammadiyah 5 Kayen, Pati Regency, Central Java)," *IJTIMAIYA Journal* 2, no. 2 (2018): 32–51, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/ji.v2i2.4295>.

<sup>39</sup> S S Pua Luka, I M Candiasa, and K Y E Aryanto, "Analysis of Student Panel Discussion Group Formation Using Fuzzy C-Means and K-Means Algorithms," *Journal of Technology and Vocational Education* 16, no. 2 (2019): 267–77, <https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/JPTK/article/view/18913>.

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<sup>40</sup> Resmi Widaningsih, Asep Hery Herrawam, and Prihatini, "CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM IN DRIVING SCHOOLS," *Scientific Journal of Basic Education* 08 (2023): p, 67, <https://www.journal.unpas.ac.id/index.php/pendas>.

<sup>41</sup> Rz. Ricky Satria Wiranata, "Challenges, Prospects and Roles of Pesantren in Character Education in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 Era," *Al-Manar* 8, No. 1 (2019): 61–92, <https://doi.org/10.36668/jal.v8i1.99>.

pluralism is a Merdeka curriculum. Although both examine the pluralistic attitude of religion between the research conducted by the author and the research conducted with him.

### Conclusion

The explanation above explains that SMP Peri 2 Yogyakarta has a learning method in instilling tolerance values such as inclusive teaching, multicultural learning, and collaborative teaching. So that students can understand and even apply in the school and community environment. Because with this method students are able to become more open and teachers can pay attention to student development well. The method carried out by the SMP 2 Piri 2 Yogyakarta school received a response from students who made the school environment a place to respect each other and a place to seek good knowledge as well. In addition to tolerance, Piri 2 Yogyakarta students are also able to understand the importance of multicultural values as a basis for living together because of the methods carried out by the school. This is a mutual benefit not only for students but also for the community in the school environment.

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