

Fostering Tolerance in Teachers' Teaching Strategies through the Use of Materials on Indonesia's Cultural Diversity in Primary Schools

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: 6 April 2026
Revised: 19 April 2026
Accepted: 27 April 2026
Published Online: 28 May 2026

Keywords:

Teaching Strategies, Attitudes of Tolerance, Pancasila Education, Primary Schools.

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's cultural diversity can create challenges among students, making it important to foster tolerance from primary school. Pancasila education plays a key role in developing this attitude. This article describes teachers' strategies for instilling tolerance through classroom learning, along with the challenges and solutions encountered in the process. This study employs a qualitative approach using the case study method. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that teachers' efforts to instil an attitude of tolerance involve establishing routine practices of tolerance in all activities, serving as role models through spontaneous activities, and integrating tolerance into learning activities. Furthermore, the challenges include the diverse nature of students' characters, stemming from outside the school environment; limited time allocated for Pancasila education; and students who are difficult to guide due to a lack of understanding of the importance of tolerance, as well as limitations in facilities and infrastructure. Additionally, teachers overcome these challenges by adopting a more patient approach and providing repeated guidance. Thus, teachers play a vital role in instilling an attitude of tolerance in students through Pancasila education, particularly in the module on 'The Cultural Diversity of My Indonesia'.

How to Cite: Aini, S.N., Dellarosa, M., & Ekanta, A. (2026). Fostering Tolerance in Teachers' Teaching Strategies through the Use of Materials on Indonesia's Cultural Diversity in Primary Schools. *Glocal Praxis in Elementary Education*, 2(1), 29-40.

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Indonesia is renowned for its rich diversity in terms of culture, ethnic groups and religion (Mazyra et al., 2024). Each region has its own unique characteristics. This diversity demonstrates just how varied Indonesia is. Despite this diversity, we remain united as one nation. This is reflected in our motto, 'Bhineka Tunggal Ika', which means 'unity in diversity' (Studies & Bilgiler, 2023). Therefore, as Indonesians, we must live in harmony and coexist peacefully by accepting one another's differences.

However, diversity is often viewed merely as a source of differences that can lead to problems and conflict (Elita et al., 2024). One such incident that has occurred in Indonesia is inter-ethnic conflict. Examples include the conflict between the Dayak and Madurese peoples in Sampit, between the Madurese and Malay peoples in Sambas, and between the Lampung and Balinese peoples in Lampung. Furthermore, there has been a recurrence of conflict between the Madurese and Dayak peoples in Sampit (Suprpto et al., 2025). There are also examples of conflict in Aceh and Papua arising from the fact that the majority religious group holds greater power than the minority religious group. This results in power being used as a tool of oppression, which becomes the dominant factor in perpetuating social inequality (Dellarosa, 2021). This conflict serves as a warning that diversity only harms various parties and jeopardises the nation's unity and cohesion.

There is no doubt that these differences are caused by the intolerance that often arises in a multicultural country such as Indonesia. However, this problem of intolerance can be addressed through education. This is in line with Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System; in Chapter III on the principles of education provision, Article 4(1) states that education shall be conducted in a democratic and equitable manner, free from discrimination, whilst upholding human rights, religious values, cultural values, and the nation's diversity. The purpose of the education system is to minimise intolerance towards differences by instilling a spirit of tolerance within the educational process.

Tolerance is a way of accommodating others in social interactions; as social beings, people must interact not only with their own group, but also with other groups (Fadilah et al., 2024). Tolerance is divided into two categories: active tolerance and passive tolerance (Drajati Ekaningtyas, 2020). Active tolerance can be defined as the ability to directly appreciate and respect cultural and intellectual diversity. For example, participating directly in the cultural activities of other groups. Meanwhile, passive tolerance is defined as an attitude of acceptance that minimises or does not highlight differences, such as respecting neighbours who practise their religion according to their beliefs and not interfering with the cultural traditions of others. Therefore, an attitude of tolerance is vital for schools to teach the values of empathy, togetherness, respect and hard work in order to foster tolerance.

Instilling a sense of tolerance is particularly effective during primary school (Haryanti et al., 2023). This is because primary school serves as a vital foundation for character development, particularly in fostering tolerance. One example is the teaching of Pancasila Education in primary schools, a subject that instils a sense of patriotism in a conscious, intelligent and responsible manner, embodying the values essential for cultivating tolerance (Elita et al., 2024). In Pancasila education, the topic of cultural diversity in Indonesia encompasses multicultural education. According to James A. Banks, multicultural education is a way of thinking and perceiving reality, not merely the recognition of differences between various racial, ethnic and cultural groups (Aulia

Putri Wirianty, 2022). Furthermore, it is beneficial for all students, regardless of their cultural, religious or ethnic background, gender or ability, in creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Numerous previous studies concluded that the success of fostering discipline in students is greatly influenced by the example set by teachers of Pancasila Education and their active role in instilling the values of Pancasila through the learning process (Cahya et al., 2024). Elita also concluded that it is very important to instil a sense of tolerance in primary school students so that they can socialise within the community (Elita et al., 2024). In line with the research, Hidayatullah also concluded that classroom learning, joint religious activities, daily routines, the integration of values of tolerance into teaching materials, and the assessment of Islamic and Christian religious education teachers can foster an attitude of tolerance (Hidayatullah, 2025). Previous research has revealed a gap, as it has tended to focus on the role of teachers in general within Religious Education, rather than specifically on Year 5 primary school students in the teaching of Pancasila Education, particularly the module on 'My Indonesia's Diversity'.

Research into fostering tolerance through teaching strategies is crucial in primary schools, as these institutions form the foundation for shaping character and social values, particularly tolerance. It is at this stage that students begin to understand the value of living together peacefully and embracing diversity. In addition to creating an inclusive learning environment, teaching tolerance in primary schools is also vital for equipping students with the social skills they need to thrive in a multicultural society. To help children become more tolerant, open-minded, and capable of accepting differences in ethnicity, religion, race, language, culture, skin colour, and other aspects of life, it is essential to teach tolerance through education in primary schools (Mariyah & Nazaruddin, 2023). Through Pancasila education, it is hoped that students will not only understand the concept of tolerance in theory, but will also be able to apply it in their daily lives. In primary schools, teachers play a vital role as role models in instilling an attitude of tolerance through their behaviour, setting an example, and creating an inclusive classroom environment during Pancasila education lessons on the topic of 'My Indonesian Cultural Diversity'. Therefore, this article will discuss two aspects: strategies for teachers to instil an attitude of tolerance through Pancasila education lessons on the topic of 'My Indonesian Cultural Diversity', and the challenges and solutions encountered in this process.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using the case study method, focusing on the collection of data in the form of words, descriptions and real-life experiences to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies teachers use to instil an attitude of tolerance through Pancasila education lessons on the topic of cultural diversity in Indonesia among primary school students. This approach was chosen with the aim of gaining a deep understanding of the events, situations and actions that actually occur in the field (Hardiansyah, 2010).

This study aims to analyse teachers' strategies, challenges and solutions in fostering an attitude of tolerance through Pancasila education, specifically the 'My Indonesia' cultural diversity module, among Year 5 primary school students. The subject of this study is the Year 5 teacher of

Class Elang at Nusantara Primary School (pseudonym). This pseudonym is used to protect the confidentiality of the research participants' identities. This study was conducted at Nusantara Primary School (pseudonym) because the school possesses cultural diversity reflected in the students' backgrounds.

According to Miles & Huberman, research data is collected through observation, interviews and documentation (Sugiyono, 2022). In this context, the researcher conducted classroom observations to examine Pancasila education activities, interactions between teachers and students, and the strategies teachers employed to instil an attitude of tolerance during the learning process. Subsequently, an interview was conducted with the Year 5 Elang class teacher at Nusantara Primary School, who has 10 years' teaching experience, with the aim of obtaining more in-depth information regarding the challenges faced whilst instilling an attitude of tolerance in the learning process and their solutions. The interview was conducted in a semi-structured manner. The researcher had a written list of questions, but was free to ask follow-up questions to the informant regarding the research issues. Following this, documentation was collected as supporting data in the form of photographs of learning activities to ensure the information obtained was comprehensive and its validity could be verified. The data was then analysed using data reduction, data presentation and the drawing of conclusions to produce a clear picture of the teachers' strategies, the challenges faced and the solutions employed to address them in the Pancasila education learning process on the topic of 'My Indonesian Cultural Diversity' when instilling an attitude of tolerance in students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' Efforts to Foster an Attitude of Tolerance Through Pancasila Education Lessons on Cultural Diversity in Indonesia

Before discussing teachers' efforts to instil an attitude of tolerance through Pancasila Education lessons on cultural diversity in greater detail, it is necessary first to examine the conditions of the school environment where the research was conducted. This study was carried out at Nusantara Primary School. In Indonesia, every primary school must make a tangible contribution to instilling an attitude of tolerance. One such method is to instil an attitude of tolerance in the classroom through Pancasila Education lessons. SD Nusantara was selected as the research location because the school is suitable and appropriate, possessing cultural diversity reflected in the students' backgrounds, which is relevant to the research topic, particularly amongst the students in Class V Elang. The research findings indicate the need for a tangible contribution from teachers to produce future generations who are tolerant and aware of differences through the efforts undertaken. One such effort involves instilling an attitude of tolerance through Pancasila education, particularly in the module on the cultural diversity of Indonesia.

Teacher: "The approach I usually take is, first, to establish a routine or habit; second, to engage in spontaneous activities by setting a direct example; and third, I usually provide guidance and advice at the start of the lesson."

Fostering an Attitude of Tolerance in Everyday Life

Habituation has proven effective because it is carried out repeatedly within the school environment, instilling a sense of tolerance through direct practice in everyday life at school (Alfian et al., 2024). Based on observations in Class V Elang at Nusanatara Primary School and interviews, it is evident that the teacher has encouraged students to engage in routine activities such as shaking hands with other teachers not just their class teacher working together in diverse groups, showing mutual respect and appreciation for their peers' circumstances, and not discriminating against classmates. Furthermore, they provide direct examples to students of how to respect and value others. Consequently, fostering an attitude of tolerance within Pancasila education can enhance students' awareness of the importance of valuing diversity.

For example, in Pancasila education, particularly the module on 'Cultural Diversity in Indonesia', this approach is highly relevant because the module not only emphasises knowledge of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, but also the attitudes required to address these differences (Yuliana & Pratomo, 2024). As shown in **Figure 1**, teachers encourage students to practise the values of tolerance during lessons, by helping others without discrimination, working together and showing mutual respect during discussions about local cultures. In this way, students are taught to respect their peers' differing opinions and not to belittle other cultures. When students learn about the diverse cultures of Indonesia, the cultivation of a tolerant attitude is also evident when they express pride in this diversity without feeling that their own culture is superior. This is in line with the view that diversity is a national treasure that must be preserved by all (Haryono et al., 2024).



Figure 1. Teachers and students discuss Indonesia's cultural diversity

If such incidents occur outside the classroom, teachers encourage students to greet one another politely and to take spontaneous action when they encounter students who display intolerance towards others. Furthermore, teachers encourage the resolution of problems through discussion when differences arise. In addition, this practice also requires cooperation among teachers to instil in students an attitude of mutual respect and consideration through established rules. Consequently, the integration of these practices into Pancasila education becomes an effective strategy as it links the understanding of concepts studied with students' actual behaviour in daily life.

Teachers as Role Models in Fostering an Attitude of Tolerance

The Pancasila education module on 'Cultural Diversity in Indonesia' covers the various forms of diversity found within the Indonesian nation, comprising ethnic diversity, regional languages,

religions and beliefs, as well as regional cultures, which include traditional houses, traditional dress, dances, songs and local specialities (Syawalia, 2021). Furthermore, this material emphasises the significance of unity in diversity through the motto 'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika'. The aim of this material is to ensure that students not only recognise the diversity that exists, but also understand the importance of tolerance in everyday life.

In the daily routines of students, teachers also serve as role models. This is because the Indonesian word for 'teacher' is derived from two Javanese words: 'digugu' and 'ditiru' (Suprpto et al., 2025). The role of a trusted and respected figure requires a teacher to set a good example. Teachers must have a positive influence on students' development. Whatever a teacher says, does or creates will be emulated by students. Based on the observations, the teacher demonstrated respect for all students, regardless of their ethnic or linguistic background. The teacher also gave all students equal opportunities to participate in learning activities.

When differences of opinion arise among students during class discussions, the teacher provides guidance and explains that differences are natural and should be respected. In this regard, the class teacher plays a vital role as a role model in fostering an attitude of tolerance. This approach can be applied to foster a spirit of tolerance among students, which is particularly relevant to Class V Elang, which comprises a diverse group of students from different ethnic backgrounds. Fifteen students are of Madurese ethnicity and 13 are of Javanese ethnicity, as shown in the table below:

Table 1. Students V Class Elang SD Nusantara

No	Ethnic	Students
1	Madurese	15 Students
2	Javanese	13 Students

As shown in **Table 1**, the students in Class V Elang are a diverse group. In this regard, it is apparent that the Madurese ethnic group predominates in this class. Although they differ in terms of ethnicity, physical appearance and background, the teacher endeavours to instil an attitude of tolerance in the classroom through daily practices and by setting an example, so that the students do not cause problems in class. Interview results indicate that the Class V Elang teacher has successfully instilled tolerance in the students. These differences are used as an opportunity to get to know and respect one another. The teachers' exemplary behaviour is also evident when linking the curriculum to real life; for instance, when discussing local culture, the teachers demonstrate pride in all cultures without disparaging any particular one. The teachers also guide students to be open-minded and to value diversity through classroom interactions. This strategy can serve as a model for instilling the importance of living peacefully and respecting one another within a diverse environment.

Integrating the Value of Tolerance into Pancasila Education

The cultivation of tolerance is also achieved by integrating the values of tolerance into Pancasila education lessons, particularly in the module on 'My Indonesia's Cultural Diversity'. In these lessons, teachers explain to students the diversity of ethnic groups, cultures and languages

found in Indonesia. Teachers first identify the cultural diversity present within the class. Then, once identified, these are integrated into the teaching material. After that, the teacher selects the appropriate teaching method, as outlined in the following interview:

Researcher: "How does the teacher select or adapt the material to make it relevant to the cultural diversity of my country, Indonesia, in order to foster an attitude of tolerance?"

Teacher: "Well, as I mentioned earlier, I first identify the cultural diversity present in the class. Then, once I've identified it, I integrate it into the teaching material. After that, I choose the appropriate teaching methods. For example, discussions and games."

According to the research findings, teachers do not merely present the 'My Indonesia's Diversity' curriculum in a theoretical manner, but also put it into practice. The use of a variety of interactive and engaging teaching methods and resources can instil an attitude of tolerance (Petra et al., 2025). For example, a crossword puzzle containing material on Indonesian Culture as shown in **Figure 2**. Through this activity, students are encouraged to learn about the provinces and capital cities of Indonesia. Furthermore, discussions and group activities are implemented through cultural guessing games in Indonesia. In this, students are divided into mixed-background groups so they can work together with peers from different cultural backgrounds; each group then learns about and guesses the culture of other regions. This learning approach can strengthen students' understanding of tolerance in diversity (Cahyan & Wahana, 2025). In addition, teachers use group activities involving drawing Indonesian cultural elements. In these activities, students work together to draw various cultural elements, such as traditional clothing, traditional houses, or regional dances. Thus, learning that involves creative and collaborative activities is effective in fostering a spirit of tolerance among elementary school students (Yuliana & Pratomo, 2024). These activities not only enhance students' knowledge but also foster a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect for differing views, and respect for cultural diversity. Furthermore, these teaching methods help students understand cultural diversity whilst instilling a sense of tolerance.



Figure 2. Educational Materials on the Cultural Diversity of My Indonesia

In certain situations, differences of opinion often arise among students when they compare the cultures of their respective regions. In such circumstances, the teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding the students to resolve their differences through discussion (Cahya et al., 2024). Through

discussion, students are taught that differences of opinion are normal and can be resolved through constructive dialogue without causing conflict.

This is consistent with research indicating that Pancasila education plays a vital role in instilling the values of tolerance and diversity in primary school students. The diversity of students' backgrounds in Class V Elang is also evident from the documentation in **Figure 3**. The cultivation of tolerance is closely linked to the 'Cultural Diversity in My Indonesia' module within the Pancasila Education curriculum, as this subject plays a vital role in instilling the value of tolerance in primary school students (Afni et al., 2025). Indonesia is a nation characterised by a vast diversity of ethnic groups, cultures, languages and customs (Mazya et al., 2024). This diversity constitutes the nation's wealth, which every citizen must understand and appreciate. Therefore, through Pancasila Education lessons, students are introduced to the various forms of cultural diversity found in Indonesia so that they develop an attitude of tolerance namely, mutual respect and appreciation for differences. Pancasila education aims to shape students into citizens of character, with a tolerant attitude, and capable of living harmoniously alongside others in a diverse society (Jayadi & Winata, 2025).



Figure 3. Students working together in group assignment

Furthermore, learning about cultural diversity also helps students understand that differences are an integral part of life in Indonesian society (Dharma et al., 2023). Through this understanding, students are expected to develop an open attitude towards differences and avoid discriminatory behaviour towards others. The values of Pancasila, particularly the values of unity and humanity, can be instilled in students through learning that emphasises respect for diversity. Therefore, teachers play a vital role in integrating cultural diversity content into Pancasila education lessons so that students can gain a deeper understanding of tolerance and apply it in their daily lives within the school environment and the wider community (Sabillah et al., 2024).

Challenges and Solutions in Fostering an Attitude of Tolerance

In the process of instilling a sense of tolerance in students, teachers also face a number of challenges. Below is an interview between the researcher and Ms Elang, a Year 5 teacher:

Researcher: "Do you face any personal challenges when instilling a sense of tolerance in your students?"

Teacher: "Yes, ma'am, usually the challenge comes from the students' diverse personalities. Some bring their personalities from their home environment into school. I mean, less desirable traits. So, this makes the process of instilling

tolerance require patience and a more intensive approach.”

Researcher: “Are there any other challenges, ma’am?”

Teacher: “That’s it, ma’am—time. The time allocated for Pancasila Education is only 4 lessons per week. So, it’s very limited and not very effective.”

Researcher: “Do you personally face any other challenges in instilling a sense of tolerance amidst the various dynamics of this class?”

Teacher: “Yes, there are, ma’am. Some students are easy to guide, whilst others are still difficult to guide and do not fully understand the importance of tolerance, or are not fully aware of tolerance itself.”

Researcher: “So, does the availability of facilities and resources also pose a challenge when delivering lessons on cultural diversity to instil an attitude of tolerance?”

Teacher: “Yes, the availability of facilities and resources here does have a significant impact on delivering lessons to instil an attitude of tolerance. Generally speaking, the facilities are adequate, ma’am. However, there are limitations, such as a lack of teaching materials. So this means the delivery of the material isn’t always optimal. But I still try to adapt and make the most of the available resources so that the learning objectives are still met. For example, like yesterday, I had prepared learning materials on a laptop to display via a projector. But the problem was that there were only a limited number of LCD screens here, so I didn’t get a turn. So, I didn’t use those learning materials that day. So, I looked for other methods or learning materials.”

Based on the results of interviews with Year 5 teachers at SD Nusantara, there are challenges faced by teachers in instilling an attitude of tolerance through Pancasila Education lessons, particularly in the module on ‘My Indonesian Cultural Diversity’. These include the diverse nature of the students, the limited time allocated to Pancasila Education, the fact that some students remain difficult to guide, and the lack of adequate facilities and resources. The diverse nature of the students is one of the challenges in the process of instilling an attitude of tolerance. This is because students come from different family and community backgrounds, which influences their behaviour at school. Some students still display a lack of respect for their peers because they do not yet fully understand the importance of tolerance, making them difficult to guide.

Furthermore, the limited time allocated to Pancasila Education lessons also poses a challenge for teachers in instilling a deeper understanding of tolerance. Teachers must adapt their lessons to the available time, meaning that not all aspects of tolerance within the cultural diversity curriculum can be discussed in detail during every session. Additionally, the lack of facilities and resources to support learning can result in students failing to grasp the deeper meaning of tolerance. There are also other obstacles, namely the environment outside school. For example, the family environment and social circles sometimes do not fully support the instilling of tolerance values at school. Thus, environmental factors and limitations in facilities and infrastructure can influence the instilling of tolerant attitudes in students (Dewi et al., 2024).

To address these challenges, the teacher implemented several solutions. Below is an interview between the researcher and the Year 5 teacher, Ms Elang:

Researcher: "Given these challenges, how have you personally gone about overcoming them, Ms Elang?"

Teacher: "I tackle them by being even more patient and providing repeated guidance. The most important thing is to set a good example for the children. Then, I adapt my teaching methods to suit the class situation and the students' personalities. I usually adopt a more persuasive approach, particularly with students who are difficult to guide. Besides that, I make the most of the available teaching resources and materials – that's all."

One way of doing this is by adopting a more patient approach towards students and providing repeated guidance so that they can understand the importance of respecting differences. Teachers also strive to create a conducive classroom atmosphere so that students can learn to respect one another and work together with classmates from different cultural backgrounds. This consistent approach helps students understand that diversity is an integral part of society that must be valued. Furthermore, they make the most of the available facilities and resources.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion outlined above, it can be concluded that teachers play a vital role in instilling an attitude of tolerance in students through Pancasila education lessons on the topic of 'My Indonesian Cultural Diversity'. The instilling of a tolerant attitude is carried out through the cultivation of mutual respect in daily school activities, teachers setting an example through spontaneous actions when interacting with students, and integrating a tolerant attitude into classroom learning activities. Through these various efforts, Year 5 students from different backgrounds can learn to respect one another, work together, and understand diversity as part of community life.

However, in practice, teachers also face several challenges, such as the diverse nature of students' characters due to influences from outside the school environment, time constraints in Pancasila education lessons, the presence of students who are difficult to guide because they do not yet fully understand the importance of tolerance and its supporting mechanisms, as well as a lack of facilities and infrastructure. To overcome these challenges, teachers adopt a more patient approach towards students and provide repeated guidance and practice so that students can understand and apply a tolerant attitude in their daily lives, create a conducive classroom atmosphere, and make the most of the available facilities and resources.

Acknowledgments

The researcher would like to express their gratitude to all those who contributed to and supported the smooth completion of this research. The researcher would also like to thank the School for providing the opportunity, guidance and necessary information that enabled this research to be successfully completed.

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