

## FORMING MULTICULTURAL ATTITUDES OF PROSPECTIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS THROUGH A VALUE INQUIRY-BASED MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION MODEL

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### Abstract

This study aims to describe the form of multicultural attitude of PGSD students of the State University of Surabaya through the application of the Multicultural Education Model based on Value Inquiry. This research uses the Classroom Action Research (PTK) approach which is carried out in two cycles. The research data was obtained from a multicultural attitude with data sources (subjects) of 40 PGSD UNESA students in the Even Semester (IV) of the 2024/2025 Academic Year in the Elementary Social Studies Dimension Development course. The main instrument used was a multicultural attitude observation sheet. The data analysis used is descriptive, quantitative and qualitative, namely presenting numbers and then describing them. The results showed an increase in the average score from 14,575 (72,875%) in cycle I to 16,075 (80,375%) in cycle II. In addition, classical completeness also increased from 72.5% to 92.5%. All indicators experienced an increase in scores, with the highest indicators on the aspects of empathy and social justice. The conclusion of this study shows that the Multicultural Education Model based on Value Inquiry is effective in shaping the multicultural attitude of PGSD Unesa students as a whole, through a dialogical, reflective, and value-based learning process.

### Keywords

Multicultural Attitudes, Multicultural Education, Value inquiry.



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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with a very high level of diversity, including aspects of culture, religion, language, and ethnicity. This diversity is a great potential that can enrich national insight, strengthen national identity, and expand the horizons of social tolerance. However, on the other hand, this diversity also holds the potential for conflict if it is not managed wisely through an appropriate and planned educational approach. In the socio-political context, conflicts with SARA (Ethnicity, Religion, Race, and Intergroup) nuances still often arise, especially when the values of tolerance and social justice are not deeply embedded in society (Lestari & Sa'adah, 2021). Education has a central role as an instrument of social engineering to foster collective awareness of the importance of peaceful coexistence in diversity (Banks, 2020). Therefore, the integration of multicultural values in the education system is a must in order to create a generation that is able to think critically, be inclusive, and respect differences.

Multicultural education has a strategic role as a preventive and transformative approach in shaping a tolerant and inclusive society. According to Gay (2018), as a preventive strategy, multicultural education is able to minimize the potential for social conflict caused by prejudice, discrimination, and identity exclusivism through the internalization of diversity values. Meanwhile, as a transformative strategy, this education encourages students to actively reflect on their social experiences, criticize injustice, and engage in social change that upholds the principles of equality and respect for differences. Educational processes that ignore the multicultural dimension have the potential to create space for the development of exclusive attitudes and narrow fanaticism that are contrary to the principles of diversity (Arisona, 2019). Multicultural education is not only a means of transferring knowledge about diversity, but also a medium of social transformation that encourages active participation in creating a peaceful and civilized society (Goff, 2019). Thus, strengthening multicultural values in the curriculum and learning practices is an urgent need to strengthen the ideological immunity of the younger generation against radical and intolerant influences.

In the context of a multiethnic society like Indonesia, the existence of multicultural education becomes increasingly relevant to develop critical awareness and commitment to pluralism. Research shows that multicultural-based learning can increase social empathy and form an inclusive personality in students at various levels of education (Zamroni et al., 2024). At the higher education level, students of the Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) Study Program, as prospective

educators at the elementary school level, play a strategic role in shaping the character and insight into the diversity of students. To carry out this role optimally, they need to be equipped with a deep understanding, an open attitude, and pedagogical skills oriented towards multicultural values. According to Taylor et al. (2019), primary education is a crucial phase in building the foundation of tolerance, social justice, and respect for diversity, so primary school teachers must be role models and facilitators in building an inclusive and harmonious school culture.

However, a preliminary study conducted on 40 students of the Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) Program at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (Unesa) revealed a clear gap between conceptual understanding and the internalization of multicultural values. Data from a diagnostic questionnaire showed that only 22.5% of the students demonstrated openness toward differences in cultural and religious backgrounds, while 35% tended to remain passive or neutral, and 42.5% exhibited exclusive tendencies in their responses to issues of diversity. Observations during classroom activities also revealed that approximately 60% of the students did not explicitly integrate inclusive values into their lesson planning or instructional practices. For example, some students used culturally biased learning examples, selected visual representations that lacked diversity, or showed insensitivity when responding to questions related to religious and ethnic differences.

The low level of multicultural attitudes among PGSD (Primary School Teacher Education) students is influenced by several factors, including the lack of direct experience in pluralistic environments, the absence of explicit content on multicultural education in the curriculum, and the lack of instructional models that systematically cultivate multicultural values through reflective learning processes. This is consistent with the findings of Putri et al. (2024), who emphasized that prospective teachers still struggle to translate the concept of multiculturalism into concrete pedagogical practices. Similarly, the study by Nurjannah & Khairani (2024) affirms that the weak integration of diversity values in higher education learning processes is closely related to the low level of multicultural attitudes. According to Skepple (2015), the unpreparedness of prospective teachers to address diversity critically and reflectively can lead to the formation of exclusive, homogeneous learning environments that are unresponsive to the needs of students from diverse backgrounds.

This condition represents both an academic concern and the primary rationale for conducting this research. When PGSD (Primary School Teacher Education) students lack a strong multicultural awareness, it becomes difficult to expect them to serve as transformative agents of

social change in elementary schools. If left unaddressed, this issue not only threatens the success of character education but may also reinforce social exclusion and discrimination within the school environment. Therefore, systematic efforts are needed to strengthen the multicultural attitudes of PGSD students through a more in-depth and reflective approach. This research responds to that need by developing and implementing a Multicultural Education Model based on Value Inquiry as an alternative that can authentically, contextually, and transformatively instill multicultural values in prospective elementary school teachers.

One of the main challenges in the education of prospective teachers is the absence of a systematic and value-based learning model to instill multicultural attitudes in a deep and sustainable manner. Learning approaches that are fragmentary and cognitively oriented alone often fail to form students' critical awareness and social empathy towards the complex reality of diversity. According to Tielman et al. (2022), most teacher education curricula still focus on mastering teaching materials and technical pedagogical skills, while affective aspects and values of diversity have not been explicitly integrated into learning strategies. In fact, learning based on the exploration of human values and social justice is very important to shape the professional identity of prospective teachers as inclusive educators. According to Amri et al (2023), the success of multicultural education is largely determined by the existence of learning models that are able to encourage self-reflection, intercultural dialogue, and value-based moral decision-making. Therefore, pedagogical innovation that emphasizes systematic value inquiry is an urgent need in building multicultural awareness and attitudes of prospective elementary school teachers. One of the main challenges in the education of prospective teachers is the absence of a systematic and value-based learning model to instill multicultural attitudes in a deep and sustainable manner. Learning approaches that are fragmentary and cognitively oriented alone often fail to form students' critical awareness and social empathy towards the complex reality of diversity. According to Tielman et al. (2022), most teacher education curricula still focus on mastering teaching materials and technical pedagogical skills, while affective aspects and values of diversity have not been explicitly integrated into learning strategies. In fact, learning based on the exploration of human values and social justice is very important to shape the professional identity of prospective teachers as inclusive educators. According to Amri et al (2023), the success of multicultural education is largely determined by the existence of learning models that are able to encourage self-reflection, intercultural dialogue, and value-based moral decision-making. Therefore, pedagogical innovation that emphasizes systematic

value inquiry is an urgent need in building multicultural awareness and attitudes of prospective elementary school teachers.

Value Inquiry is a learning approach designed to encourage learners to explore values critically through a process of dialog, reflection, and responsible moral decision-making. This approach is rooted in the view that education is not just a process of information transfer, but also a means of character building and individual ethical awareness in dealing with complex social dilemmas (Lickona, 19992). In the context of multicultural education, Value Inquiry has high relevance because it is able to activate students' ability to analyze various cultural perspectives, formulate values of justice and tolerance, and make decisions based on inclusive moral considerations. This model also involves higher-order thinking processes that demand argumentative skills and empathy for differences (Espedal & Carlsen, 2024). Furthermore, Value Inquiry allows students to internalize multicultural values more deeply as they are directly involved in contextual and reflective learning situations. Thus, this approach is a potential pedagogical strategy in supporting the transformation of multicultural attitudes of prospective elementary school teachers.

The potential of the Value Inquiry approach in shaping multicultural attitudes lies in its ability to facilitate students' understand of the complexity of diversity in depth through reflective and dialogical learning experiences. By involving students in the investigation of social issues and real value dilemmas, this approach encourages the creation of critical awareness of the dynamics of cultural, religious, and social identity differences in a pluralistic society. The open and participatory process of value inquiry allows students to develop empathy for other groups, strengthen tolerance for different views, and foster commitment to the principles of social justice (Niemi & Multisilta, 2016). In addition, students' active involvement in assessing, comparing, and formulating values independently strengthens their capacity to make inclusive and responsible moral decisions (Entwistle, 2023). In the context of prospective teacher education, this approach can shape a pedagogical ethos that favors diversity and equality.

Seeing the urgency of strengthening multicultural attitudes among prospective teacher students, research is needed that specifically integrates the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in the learning process within the PGSD Study Program. This integration is important to ensure that the learning process not only conveys the concept of diversity normatively but also builds value awareness through reflective, contextual, and morally nuanced learning

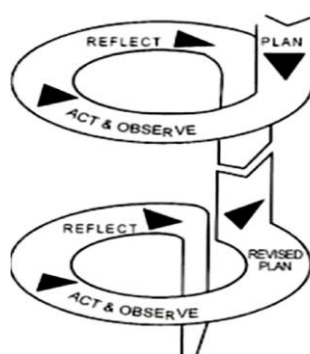
experiences. Although some previous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of multicultural education and value-based approaches separately, studies that combine the two in one pedagogical framework are still very limited, especially in the context of elementary school prospective teacher education (Jalwis & Habibi, 2019; Sadler, 2023). Thus, the purpose of this study is to describe the form of multicultural attitudes of prospective elementary school teachers with the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model.

## METHOD

This study used a type of Classroom Action Research (CAR), which is a form of participatory action research that emphasizes cyclic reflection on action, so as to produce meaningful understanding and change in educational practice (Kemmis et al., 2013). In line with the opinion of Burns (2019), PTK provides space for educators to become agents of change in their own classrooms by developing learning interventions that are reflective and based on the actual needs of students.

The research location was carried out in the Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) Study Program at Surabaya State University. This is based on UNESA PGSD students who have a diversity of cultural, social, and regional backgrounds that are representative enough to study the dynamics of multicultural attitudes in the context of basic education. This is a strategic potential in the application of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model, because students in this environment are not only faced with theoretical learning, but also direct cross-cultural interaction in the academic process and campus life.

In the context of this research, the use of PTK is very relevant because it allows lecturers as researchers to implement and directly observe the effectiveness of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in shaping the multicultural attitudes of PGSD students. The stages of PTK can be seen in the figure below.



**Figure 1.** Stages of Classroom Action Research (CAR) (Kemmis et al., 2013)

In this study, the target population was all PGSD UNESA students. According to Kapenieks (2016), in educational research, population selection must consider the relevance of subject characteristics to research objectives. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which is a deliberate sampling technique based on certain considerations in accordance with the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2022). The research sample consisted of VI semester PGSD students, who were considered to have sufficient academic and social campus experience to reflect attitudes towards diversity, so as to be able to provide relevant data in measuring multicultural attitudes.

The subjects of this study were forty PGSD students in the fourth semester of the even academic year 2024/2025 who were taught in the SD Social Studies Dimension Development course. The selection of this research subject is based on complementary theoretical and practical considerations. Theoretically, PGSD students are in a crucial phase in the process of forming a professional identity as prospective primary-level educators. In this phase, they not only develop pedagogical and academic competencies, but also form the foundation of professional values, attitudes, and ethics that will be brought into future teaching practices (Shulman, 2004). Practically, PGSD students are a group that will directly deal with a multicultural school environment, both in terms of ethnic background, religion, language, and socio-economic status of students. Research shows that teachers who do not have multicultural attitude readiness tend to ignore student differences in learning and risk creating a non-inclusive classroom environment (Gay, 2018). Thus, the intervention of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model is very important to be given from this stage because elementary school teachers are the main actors in introducing, instilling, and modeling the values of diversity to students from an early age.

Data collection in this study used observation techniques. According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), observation is a systematic process of recording patterns of subject behavior in a particular context, either as a direct participant or as a passive observer. This technique allows researchers to obtain data that is authentic, contextual, and reflective of ongoing dynamics. Multicultural attitudes as an affective domain are often more visible in real practice than just through verbal statements. Therefore, observation is a relevant technique to capture the expression of these attitudes.

The use of observation techniques in this study will be directed through structured observation sheet instruments designed based on indicators of multicultural attitudes. The instrument and scoring can be seen in the following table.

**Table 1.** Multicultural Attitude Indicators and Scoring

Indicators	Scoring				
	1	2	3	4	5
Willingness to accept different cultural and religious backgrounds	Rejects or shows discriminatory attitudes towards cultural and religious differences	Tends to ignore differences; low tolerance	Accepts differences, but does not actively show acceptance	Appreciates and accepts differences; begins to show inclusive behavior	Actively and consistently shows acceptance and support for diversity
Openness to intercultural dialog	Avoid discussion with individuals from different backgrounds	Passive in cross-cultural dialogue, only listening	Engage in dialogue when directed; not yet taking initiative	Actively engage in discussion; respect different opinions	Enthusiastic, actively asking questions and initiating cross-cultural interactions
Ability to express empathy and social justice	Does not show concern for social issues or injustice	Is aware of issues, but shows no reaction	Expresses general empathy for social issues	Shows empathy and supports justice in discussions	Actively advocates for justice and shows real concern for inequality
Reflective attitude in addressing diversity issues	Unable to reflect on diversity issues	Shallow reflection, limited to personal point of view	Moderate reflection, including several points of view	Critical reflection by linking diversity issues to social and educational contexts	Deep reflection, considering many perspectives, and showing positive attitude change

With a systematic and structured observation sheet, researchers can evaluate the process of internalizing multicultural attitudes in the learning process through the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model more objectively and contextually.

After the data on students' multicultural attitudes were collected, the analysis was carried out to determine individual completeness. The following is the formula used.

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Description:

P= Student multicultural attitude score

*f* = Score obtained

*N* = Maximum score



In determining the classical completeness of students' multicultural attitudes, researchers used the following criteria.

**Table 2.** Classical Completeness Criteria for Multicultural Attitudes

Percentage	Criteria
80 - 100	Excellent
66 - 79	Good
56 - 65	Fair
0 - 55	Deficient

Source: Arikunto (2010)

Indicators of success can be achieved if (1) Students are individually complete by obtaining a multicultural attitude score  $\geq 75$ ; (2) Classical completeness is achieved when all students in the class can complete with a percentage of  $\geq 80\%$ .

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings (Cycle I)

In the implementation of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in cycle I, the researcher assigned five peers as observers. Each observer observed eight students during the learning process, where observations focused on indicators of multicultural attitudes. The observation results can be seen in the following table.

**Table 3.** Student Multicultural Attitude Score Cycle I

No	Student	Multicultural Attitude				Score	Conversion	Description	
		Indicator Score						Completed	No
		A	B	C	D				
1	OA	5	3	5	4	17	85	√	
2	RN	3	5	4	3	15	75	√	
3	JAZ	4	4	3	5	16	80	√	
4	TS	2	3	4	4	13	65		√
5	RO	3	4	3	4	14	70	√	
6	MRNA	4	5	3	5	17	85	√	
7	FAT	4	3	4	3	14	70	√	
8	NUS	3	4	5	4	16	80	√	
9	NFA	4	2	3	2	11	55		√
10	LR	3	4	2	4	13	65		√
11	AA	4	3	4	3	14	70	√	
12	KNP	3	4	5	4	16	80	√	
13	VRS	2	4	3	3	12	60		√
14	RVH	4	4	3	4	15	75	√	
15	RNR	5	3	5	4	17	85	√	
16	INA	3	4	3	3	13	65		√
17	NNC	3	4	3	4	14	70	√	
18	BRP	5	3	4	5	17	85	√	
19	TZKW	3	5	4	3	15	75	√	

No	Student	Multicultural Attitude				Score	Conversion	Description	
		Indicator Score						Completed	No
		A	B	C	D				
20	FCI	3	3	3	2	11	55		√
21	MAAR	4	4	3	3	14	70	√	
22	RJJ	2	4	4	3	13	65		√
23	FFS	5	4	3	5	17	85	√	
24	CAP	4	5	4	3	16	80	√	
25	MNIA	4	3	3	5	15	75	√	
26	ASP	3	2	4	3	12	60		√
27	RPR	4	4	2	4	14	70	√	
28	HNK	5	4	5	3	17	85	√	
29	MBA	3	3	5	4	15	75	√	
30	BA	4	2	4	3	13	65		√
31	EIK	4	4	4	4	16	80	√	
32	HAH	3	4	4	4	15	75	√	
33	MDI	4	3	2	3	12	60		√
34	HMNL	3	4	4	3	14	70	√	
35	AJQS	4	5	4	3	16	80	√	
36	BRNW	5	4	3	5	17	85	√	
37	ANY	4	3	5	2	14	70	√	
38	MAA	3	3	4	2	12	60		√
39	APA	5	3	3	4	15	75	√	
40	SNJ	4	3	4	5	16	80	√	
Total		147	145	147	144	583	2915		
Average		3,67	3,62	3,67	3,6	14,575	72,875		
		5	5	5					

Description:

A= Willingness to accept different cultural and religious backgrounds

B= Openness to intercultural dialog

C= Ability to express empathy and social justice

D= Reflective attitude in addressing diversity issues

Based on Table 3, the average value of students' multicultural attitudes is 14.575 or 72.875. While the average value based on indicators are (1) Willingness to accept differences in cultural and religious backgrounds obtained an average of 3.675; (2) Openness to intercultural dialog obtained an average of 3.625; (3) Ability to express empathy and social justice obtained an average of 3.675; and (4) Reflective attitude in addressing diversity issues obtained an average of 3.6. The classical completeness reached 72.5% (29 students) with good criteria, but this has not yet reached the maximum criteria (very good  $\geq 80\%$ ), which is the target of the research success indicator, so there are still eleven students (27.5%) who have not shown optimal mastery of multicultural attitudes.

When viewed by indicator, the average score shows a slight variation, with the highest score on the indicator of willingness to accept cultural and religious differences (3.675) and empathy and social justice (3.675), and the lowest score on the indicator of reflective attitude towards diversity

issues (3.6) and openness to intercultural dialogue (3.625). This shows that although students are relatively open and inclusive in accepting differences, there are still limitations in the aspects of active involvement in cross-cultural dialogue and the ability to critically reflect on social diversity issues.

This limitation can be caused by several factors. First, in the implementation of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model, reflection sessions and intercultural discussions have not been facilitated in depth and structured, so students have not been encouraged to express opinions critically and openly. Second, some students show a tendency to be passive in group discussions, which hinders the emergence of cross-perspective dialog dynamics that are at the core of the Value Inquiry approach. Third, the time allocation available in learning activities in cycle I may not be enough to encourage the internalization of values thoroughly, especially in forming reflective awareness of complex issues such as discrimination, stereotypes, or social injustice.

Therefore, the results in cycle I indicate the need to optimize the implementation of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in cycle II. Improvements need to focus on improving the quality of intercultural dialog facilitation, strengthening personal and group reflection activities, and providing stimuli in the form of real cases that are more relevant and trigger students' critical responses. This intervention is expected to encourage the achievement of multicultural attitudes that are not only numerically good, but also affective and behavioral.

## FINDINGS (Cycle II)

In the application of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in cycle II, the researcher again assigned five peers as observers. Each observer observed eight students during the learning process, where observations focused on indicators of multicultural attitudes. The observation results can be seen in the following table.

**Table 4.** Student Multicultural Attitude Score Cycle II

No	Student	Multicultural Attitude				Score	Conversion	Description	
		Indicator Score						Completed	No
		A	B	C	D				
1	OA	5	4	5	4	18	90	√	
2	RN	3	5	4	4	16	80	√	
3	JAZ	4	4	4	5	17	85	√	
4	TS	4	3	4	4	15	75	√	
5	RO	3	4	4	4	15	75	√	
6	MRNA	4	5	4	5	18	90	√	
7	FAT	4	4	4	4	16	80	√	
8	NUS	4	4	5	4	17	85	√	
9	NFA	4	3	3	3	13	65		√

No	Student	Multicultural Attitude				Score	Conversion	Description	
		Indicator Score						Completed	No
		A	B	C	D				
10	LR	4	4	3	4	15	75	√	
11	AA	4	4	4	4	16	80	√	
12	KNP	4	4	5	4	17	85	√	
13	VRS	4	4	3	4	15	75	√	
14	RVH	4	4	4	4	16	80	√	
15	RNR	5	4	5	4	18	90	√	√
16	INA	3	4	3	3	13	65		
17	NNC	3	4	4	4	15	75	√	
18	BRP	5	4	4	5	18	90	√	
19	TZKW	3	5	4	4	16	80	√	
20	FCI	4	3	3	3	13	65		√
21	MAAR	4	4	4	3	15	75	√	
22	RJJ	3	4	4	4	15	75	√	
23	FFS	5	4	4	5	18	90	√	
24	CAP	4	5	4	4	17	85	√	
25	MNIA	4	3	4	5	16	80	√	
26	ASP	4	4	4	3	15	75	√	
27	RPR	4	4	4	4	16	80	√	
28	HNK	5	4	5	4	18	90	√	
29	MBA	4	3	5	4	16	80	√	
30	BA	4	4	4	3	15	75	√	
31	EIK	4	4	4	5	17	85	√	
32	HAH	5	4	4	4	17	85	√	
33	MDI	4	4	4	4	16	80	√	
34	HMNL	4	4	4	3	15	75	√	
35	AJQS	4	5	4	4	17	85	√	
36	BRNW	5	4	4	5	18	90	√	
37	ANY	4	4	5	3	16	80	√	
38	MAA	3	4	4	4	15	75	√	
39	APA	5	4	4	4	17	85	√	
40	SNJ	4	4	4	5	17	85	√	
Total		161	160	162	160	643	3215		
Average		4,02							
		5	4	4,05	4	16,075	80,375		

Description:

A= Willingness to accept different cultural and religious backgrounds

B= Openness to intercultural dialog

C= Ability to express empathy and social justice

D= Reflective attitude in addressing diversity issues

Based on Table 4 above, the average value of students' multicultural attitudes is 16.075 or 80.375. While the average value based on indicators is (1) Willingness to accept differences in cultural and religious backgrounds obtained an average of 4.025; (2) Openness to intercultural dialog obtained an average of 4; (3) Ability to express empathy and social justice obtained an average of

4.05; and (4) Reflective attitude in addressing diversity issues obtained an average of 4. The classical completeness reached 92.5% (37 students) with very good criteria, and this has reached the maximum criteria (very good  $\geq 80\%$ ), which is the target indicator of research success, so there are only three students (7.5%) who have not shown optimal mastery of multicultural attitudes.

In terms of indicators, all aspects of multicultural attitudes experienced an increase in scores to above 4, with details of (1) Willingness to accept differences in cultural and religious backgrounds (4.025), (2) Openness to intercultural dialog (4), (3) Ability to express empathy and social justice (4.050), and (4) Reflective attitude in addressing diversity issues (4). Compared to cycle I, where the scores per indicator were still in the range of 3.6-3.675, these results show an even increase in all dimensions of multicultural attitudes, both from the aspects of acceptance, openness, empathy, and reflection.

Classical completeness also showed a significant increase, from 72.5% (29 students) in cycle I to 92.5% (37 students) in cycle II. This indicates that the majority of students have reached the “very good” category in showing multicultural attitudes, exceeding the minimum limit of success of the action set, which is  $\geq 80\%$ . Only three students (7.5%) remained who had not reached the category, and this number was much smaller than in the previous cycle.

The success in cycle II is inseparable from the improvement of actions taken based on reflection in cycle I. The increase occurred due to the strengthening of the implementation of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model, especially through (a) Facilitation of more structured intercultural dialogue, (b) Presentation of relevant case studies and encouraging empathy and social awareness, and (c) Reflective activities that are more in-depth and associated with students' real experiences. With this approach, the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model is not only a pedagogical tool, but also a transformative vehicle in shaping inclusive attitudes and in favor of diversity.

With the achievement of success indicators in cycle II, it can be concluded that the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model applied is effective in shaping the multicultural attitudes of PGSD students significantly. These results also strengthen the contribution of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in teacher education as a strategic learning model to foster essential socio-cultural competencies in a multicultural era.

## **Discussion**

The results showed that the application of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model had a positive impact on increasing the multicultural attitudes of PGSD students on all indicators observed. This increase reflects the success of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model in stimulating students' affective dimensions, especially in the aspects of acceptance of diversity, openness to dialogue, social empathy, and critical reflection. The following discussion outlines the achievements per indicator associated with the theory and results of previous research.

### **Willingness to Accept Cultural and Religious Differences**

This indicator showed an increase from an average of 3.675 in cycle I to 4.025 in cycle II, with an increase of 0.35 points. This shows that students are increasingly able to show an open and inclusive attitude towards the diversity of cultural and religious backgrounds. In the context of multicultural education, Banks (2015) emphasizes that acceptance of differences is the main foundation in the formation of a democratic society that upholds plurality. This success is supported by the use of the Value Inquiry approach that places students in value-based problematic situations, thus encouraging them to interpret the importance of respect for diversity more personally and contextually. Previous research also shows that value-based learning and reflective experiences can improve students' social sensitivity towards culturally and religiously different groups (Chen & Hu, 2023). In addition, in the context of multicultural Indonesia, accepting differences is a prerequisite for creating inclusive, fair, and peaceful learning spaces (A'la, 2019). PGSD students as prospective educators need to be equipped with this ability from an early age so that they can become agents of change in building tolerance and solidarity in heterogeneous classrooms.

### **Openness to Intercultural Dialog**

The average score of this indicator increased from 3.625 to 4, or an increase of 0.375 points. This increase indicates the success of learning in forming cross-cultural dialogue skills, which are part of intercultural competence as described by Deardorff (2020). Activities in cycle II involving cross-background group discussions, social case studies, and reflective forums have created a safe space for students to share and actively listen to differences. Zúñiga's (2007) research shows that intercultural dialogue facilitated with a value approach can increase cross-identity understanding and significantly reduce stereotypes. In the Indonesian context, the need for intercultural dialogue is increasingly urgent as identity-based social tensions rise. Therefore, teacher education should be

directed to internalize multicultural values as part of professional competence (Agustian et al., 2018). Another study by Hafizd et al (2025) also reinforces these findings, that students involved in value-based learning and intercultural contemplation showed an increase in dialogic, tolerant, and non-judgmental attitudes. The findings of this study indicate that openness to intercultural dialogue not only can be developed but also must be nurtured sustainably through pedagogical practices that place differences as a source of meaningful learning.

### **Ability to Express Empathy and Social Justice**

This indicator increased from an average of 3.675 to 4.05, or an increase of 0.375 points. This increase indicates that students are beginning to show higher awareness and concern for social inequality and justice issues. In line with the theory of ethnocultural empathy developed by Rasool et al. (2011), empathy for other groups is a cognitive and emotional ability that can be developed through experience-based and value-based education. In the context of the Value Inquiry Multicultural Education Model, students are not only invited to understand the value of justice theoretically, but also to reflect on it in real situations and ethical discussions. This is relevant to the results of Agustian's research (2014), which shows that multicultural education based on dialogue and values can significantly increase the social sensitivity of prospective teacher students. Mayo (2025) asserts that humanistic education that nurtures empathy and moral sensitivity is an absolute requirement for forming democratic and ethical citizens in a pluralistic society. The statement by Judijanto (2025) also reinforces that student involvement in value activities and cross-cultural social experiences has a direct impact on increasing awareness of justice and impartiality. Thus, the increase in scores on this indicator not only reflects the successful implementation of the model, but also shows the urgency of the importance of integrating a value approach in teacher education in multicultural and socially complex Indonesia.

### **Reflective Attitude in Addressing Diversity Issues**

The score of this indicator increased the most compared to other indicators, from 3.6 to 4, with a difference of 0.4 points. This shows that students' ability to critically reflect on diversity issues has developed significantly. According to Brookfield (2017), critical reflection is a process in which individuals re-examine assumptions, values, and attitudes held in a broader social context. The Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model provides the right forum for honing reflection, because students are invited to assess and consider various value perspectives in social dilemmas. This finding is also reinforced by the results of Tonbuloglu's study (2016), which shows that value

reflection in multicultural learning can strengthen students' moral commitment and cross-cultural awareness. In addition, Jennings' (2020) study also shows that value-based multicultural learning can shape cross-cultural reflective awareness and strengthen moral commitment to social justice. Similarly, research by Goodwin (2020) confirms that teacher education students who are trained to reflect on their biases, privileges, and social positions will be better prepared to teach in a multicultural society and promote justice in the classroom. In the context of PGSD students, this ability is very important because elementary school teachers are key actors in shaping the value of inclusiveness from an early age.

Overall, the increase in scores across all four indicators indicates that the Multicultural Education Model based on Value Inquiry is effective in shaping the multicultural attitudes of PGSD students, not only in terms of cognitive knowledge but also in the affective and behavioral domains. Interactive, reflective, and value-based learning has created a learning environment that fosters tolerance, empathy, and social responsibility among students as future teachers who are prepared to face diversity in real classroom settings. This aligns with the findings of Akkari & Maleq (2020), who state that multicultural education systematically integrated into teacher training curricula can develop cross-cultural understanding and ethical engagement in social issues. Thus, learning that facilitates critical reflection and value-based dialogue has proven effective in encouraging attitudinal change toward differences and fostering a social justice orientation within the teaching profession.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of two cycles of action, it was found that the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model is effective in forming and improving the multicultural attitudes of PGSD students gradually and comprehensively. In cycle I, students' multicultural attitudes were in the "good" category with an average score of 14.575 (72.875%) and a classical completion of 72.5%. While in cycle II, there was a significant increase, marked by an average score increasing to 16.075 (80.375%) and classical completion reaching 92.5%. The four indicators of multicultural attitudes, namely the willingness to accept differences in cultural and religious backgrounds, openness to intercultural dialogue, the ability to express empathy and social justice, and a reflective attitude towards diversity issues, all experienced a consistent increase in value from cycle I to cycle II.



The implementation of the Value Inquiry-based Multicultural Education Model has been proven to provide a dialogical, reflective, and value-based learning space, thus encouraging students to not only understand diversity cognitively but also internalize multicultural values in attitudes and behavior. Thus, it can be concluded that the form of multicultural attitudes formed through this model includes open, inclusive, empathetic, and critical attitudes towards diversity issues, which are very relevant to the basic competencies of prospective teachers in the era of a multicultural society.

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