Journal of Social Research

P-ISSN: 2827-9832
E-ISSN: 2828-335x
Vol. 4, No. 12, November 2025
http://ijsr.internationaljournallabs.com/index.php/ijsr

The Level of Multicultural Awareness in High School Teachers Across Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z in South Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the differences in multicultural awareness levels among high school teachers from different generational groups (Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z) in South Jakarta. Using a quantitative comparative approach, this research involved 120 teachers from public and private high schools selected through a cluster sampling technique. Data were collected using a validated multicultural awareness questionnaire comprising 44 items measuring six aspects: respect for differences, awareness of stereotypes and prejudices, use of inclusive teaching methods, utilization of technology and media, traditional experiences and values, and global adaptation and collaboration. Reliability analysis showed high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.953. Descriptive analysis revealed that teachers' multicultural awareness levels were generally high across all generational groups, with Generation X scoring highest (mean = 149.81), followed by Millennials (mean = 148.36) and Generation Z (mean = 148.07). Statistical analysis indicated no significant differences in multicultural awareness levels among the three generational groups. These findings suggest that multicultural awareness is more influenced by professional factors such as teaching experience and participation in training than by generational differences. The study implies that teacher development programs should focus on enhancing multicultural competencies through cross-cultural training and diversity-based pedagogical approaches, regardless of teachers' generational backgrounds.

Keywords: *Teacher; Multicultural Skills; Across Generations*

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INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia has a strategic role in shaping a generation that has character, tolerance, and respects diversity. In an era of globalization marked by increasing social and cultural mobility, schools have become a meeting place for diverse ethnic, religious, linguistic, and valued backgrounds (Ariana et al., 2019; Zhang, 2019). This condition demands the role of teachers who not only function as educators but also as character-building agents who are able to instill multicultural values in students (Banks, 2016).

As professionals, teachers have a moral and social responsibility in realizing equitable and inclusive education (Huh et al., 2015; Hidayat & Syam, 2021; Vassallo, 2014). This is in line with Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, which emphasizes that teachers have a position as professionals with the main tasks of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in formal education (Article 1, paragraph 1). Furthermore, Article 8 emphasizes that teachers are required to have pedagogic, personality, social, and professional competencies to achieve national education goals.

One of the important aspects of teachers' social competence is multicultural awareness, namely the ability to understand, appreciate, and adjust to cultural diversity in the educational environment (Navita, 2014). According to Vacc, DeVaney, and Brendel (2003), cultural awareness is an individual's ability to recognize and understand the influence of culture on

human values and behavior. A teacher who has good cultural awareness will be able to foster empathy and respect for differences in a heterogeneous classroom (Noviyani, 2022).

Moule (2012) stated that multicultural competence includes four main aspects: awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills. Teachers with high multicultural awareness will be able to adjust learning strategies so that all students, regardless of cultural background, have equal learning opportunities. Meanwhile, Efendi (2008) emphasized that the principle of multiculturalism rejects the existence of an intercultural hierarchy, as each culture has the same value and deserves to be appreciated.

In the local context, high school teachers in the South Jakarta area face the reality of high social diversity (Tonbuloglu et al., 2016; Zakiah & Marini, 2023). This region is known as one of the metropolitan areas with people coming from different regions and cultures (Banks et al., 2016; Pratama et al., 2023; Supriatna et al., 2023). This condition requires teachers to have a good level of multicultural awareness in order to build harmonious and inclusive learning interactions, both in public and private schools. In addition to social diversity, the world of education today is also colored by generational diversity among teachers (Imaningrum, 2023; Hariyadi & Rodiyah, 2023). Teachers from Generation X are known to be more stable and experienced, Millennials have an adaptive and collaborative spirit, while Generation Z brings a new perspective with creativity and high-tech skills (Dimock, 2019). These differences in characteristics have the potential to influence the way teachers interpret and implement multicultural values in schools (Calderon, 2025).

Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze *the level of multicultural awareness in high school teachers across Generation X, Millennials, and Gen Z in South Jakarta* among cross-generational teachers (X, Millennial, and Z) in public and private high schools in the South Jakarta area. This research is expected to provide an empirical picture of the extent to which generational differences affect teachers' multicultural awareness. The results are expected to be the basis for the preparation of teacher training programs and strategies for improving social competence in line with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Article 3, which emphasizes that the goal of national education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith, piety, noble character, knowledge, capability, creativity, independence, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Thus, this study emphasizes the importance of strengthening multicultural awareness for cross-generational teachers as a foundation in building an education system that is inclusive, humanist, and in harmony with the spirit of diversity of the Indonesian nation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a comparative descriptive method. This approach was chosen because the study aimed to describe the level of multicultural awareness among teachers and compare it across three generational groups: Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z. The descriptive method presented facts systematically and accurately regarding the characteristics of the population studied, while comparative analysis identified differences in awareness levels between generations.

The population consisted of all public and private high school teachers in the South Jakarta area. Cluster sampling (area sampling) was used due to the wide population coverage across different administrative sub-districts. Ten sub-districts in South Jakarta were included:

Jagakarsa, Pasar Minggu, Cilandak, Pesanggrahan, Kebayoran Lama, Kebayoran Baru, Mampang Prapatan, Pancoran, Tebet, and Setia Budi. Within each sub-district, a school cluster was determined, and teachers were randomly sampled.

The final sample consisted of 120 teachers from public and private schools. Respondents were grouped into three generational categories based on Dimock (2019): Generation X (1965–1980), Millennials (1981–1996), and Generation Z (1997–2012).

The study used a Multicultural Awareness instrument covering six aspects: Respect for Differences, Awareness of Stereotypes and Prejudices, Use of Inclusive Teaching Methods, Use of Technology and Media, Traditional Experiences and Values, and Global Adaptation and Collaboration. The instrument employed a 4-point Likert scale with the options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The four-level scale was chosen to avoid neutral responses and encourage respondents to indicate a clearer position on each statement. The questionnaire included 44 items with a mix of positively and negatively worded statements.

Table 1. Multicultural skill level questionnaire instrument

No. Item	Aspects	Statement Item	Kind	SS	S	TS	STS
1	Respect for Differences	Value every student regardless of cultural background (+)	Positive	4	3	2	1
2		Rarely involve students from different backgrounds in class activities (-)	Negative	1	2	3	4
3		Emphasizing the importance of tolerance in everyday life in class (+)	Positive	…	…	…	…
4		Avoid preferential treatment of students from certain groups (+)	Positive				
5		Believe that cultural diversity enriches the teaching and learning process (+)	Positive				
6		Feel uncomfortable interacting with students who have different cultural backgrounds (-)	Negative				
7		Trying to instill mutual respect between students (+)	Positive				
8		Feel that my cultural values are better than other cultures (-)	Negative				
9	Awareness of Stereotypes & Prejudices	Try not to be influenced by stereotypes when assessing students (+)	Positive				
10		Avoid comments that may offend the student's cultural identity (+)	Positive				
11		Realize that there is still prejudice in the school environment and try to reduce it (+)	Positive				
12		Often judge students based on certain stereotypes (-)	Negative				

No. Item	Aspects	Statement Item	Kind	SS	S	TS	STS
13		Believe all students have the same potential, regardless of their background (+)	Positive				
14		Ignoring the issue of discrimination in the classroom (-)	Positive				
15		Reprimand students who exhibit discriminatory behavior (+)	Positive				
16		Considering some groups of students tend to be more difficult to teach than others (-)					
17	Use of Inclusive Teaching Methods	Associate learning materials with a culture that is close to students (+)	Positive				
18		Using examples from different cultures in learning activities (+)	Positive				
19		Adjust communication styles so that all students can understand (+)	Positive				
20		Giving students the opportunity to share their cultural experiences (+)	Positive				
21		Multicultural learning can increase students' creativity (+)	Positive				
22		Using the same teaching method without considering student differences (-)	Negative				
23		Rarely adapting material to be understood by all students (-)	Negative				
24		Difficulty accommodating differences in students' abilities in learning (-)	Negative				
25	Utilization of Technology & Media	Using digital media to introduce cultural diversity (+)	Positive				
26		Encourage students to search for cross-cultural information through the internet (+)	Positive				
27		Share positive content on social media that fosters tolerance (+)	Positive				
28		Technology is not essential to support multicultural learning (-)	Negative				
29		Believe technology helps broaden students' multicultural understanding (+)	Positive				
30		Reluctant to use digital media to introduce cultural diversity (-)	Negative				
31		Invite students to discuss multicultural issues through online platforms (+)	Positive				

No. Item	Aspects	Statement Item	Kind	SS	S	TS	STS
32		Reluctant to use online resources that feature diverse cultures (-)	Negative				
33	Traditional Experiences & Values	Using personal experience to explain the importance of respecting differences (+)	Positive				
34		Connecting multicultural education with local wisdom (+)	Positive				
35		Reluctant to associate lessons with local cultural values (-)	Negative				
36		Believing traditional cultural values are important for building tolerance (+)	Positive				
37		Emphasizing the importance of mutual cooperation as a form of multiculturalism (+)	Positive				
38		Trying to maintain the values of tradition while being open to new cultures (+)	Positive				
39		Consider traditional cultural values less relevant to today's learning (-)					
40	Global Adaptation & Collaboration	Used to interacting with people from different backgrounds through digital media (+)	Positive				
41		Reluctant to introduce students to a global culture (-)	Negative				
42		Encourage students to learn from other cultures to expand their global horizons (+)	Positive				
43		Supporting cultural exchange activities as part of learning (+)	Positive				
44		Reluctant to collaborate with parties from outside the school environment (-)	Negative				

Source: Developed by researcher based on Moule's (2012) multicultural competence framework and Vacc et al. (2003)

Based on the results of the instrument validity test, out of 44 items, there were 42 valid items and 2 dropped items. After revision of the 2 items that were dropped, then the validity test was carried out again. The results of the validity test of the 2 dropped items showed validity. The reliability test for multicultural awareness instruments using the formula *Cronbach's Alpha* using the SPSS 20 calculation, the result was a reliability coefficient of 0.953. Thus, it is stated that the instrument of multicultural consciousness is reliable.

Table 2 Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.953	44

Source: Primary data processed by researcher using SPSS 20 (2024)

Data collection was carried out through the distribution of online questionnaires to public and private high school teachers in the South Jakarta area. Respondents were asked to fill out a questionnaire based on their personal experiences and perceptions in dealing with multicultural situations in the school environment. The data analysis technique used in this study is comparative descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the characteristics of the data on each research variable, while comparative analysis was used to identify differences in multicultural awareness levels between groups of teachers' generations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

This research was conducted in public and private high schools in the South Jakarta area by distributing multicultural skills questionnaires. The number of samples obtained in this study was 120 teachers. Furthermore, the teachers who became respondents were grouped into three generation categories referring to the definition of generation according to Dimock (2019), namely Generation X (1965–1980), Millennial Generation (1981–1996), and Generation Z (1997–2012).

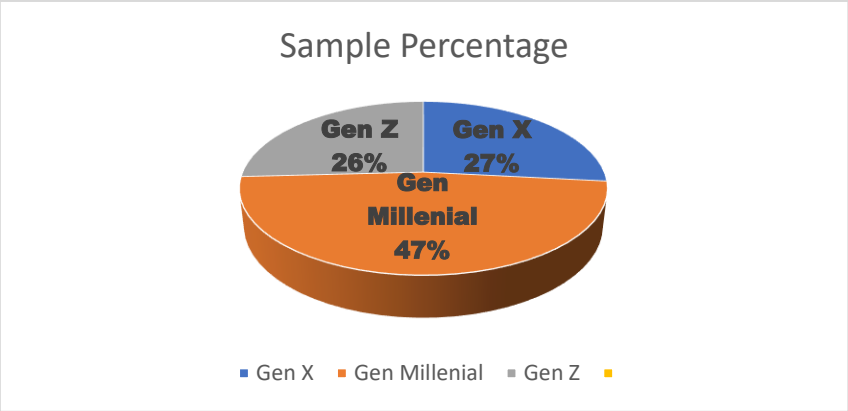

Figure 1. Sample Percentage by Generation
Source: Primary data processed by researcher (2024)

Multicultural Awareness Level

The results of the descriptive analysis of 120 respondents showed that the average level of multicultural awareness of teachers was 148.61 with a minimum score of 127 and a maximum of 176. A standard deviation value of 14.79 indicates that the data spread is within a reasonable range. This indicates that most teachers have a relatively uniform level of multicultural awareness.

Table 3. Descriptive Overall Statistic Sample

Descriptive Statistics								
	N	**Range**	**Min**	**Max**	**Mean**		**Hours of deviation**	**Variance**
	Statistic	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Std. Error**	**Statistic**	**Statistic**
TOTAL	120	49.00	127.00	176.00	1.486.104	168.587	1.479.345	218.846
Valid N (listwise)	120							

Source: Primary data processed by researcher (2024)

Based on these results, the teacher's level of multicultural awareness is in the medium to high category, as shown in the following classification:

Table 4. Score Classification

Category	Formula	Score Range	Interpretation
High	> Mean + 1 SD	> 163.40	Multicultural awareness is excellent
Medium	Mean ± 1 SD	133.82 – 163.40	Multicultural awareness is good enough
Low	< Mean - 1 SD	< 133.82	Multicultural awareness is still weak

Source: Classification developed by researcher based on mean and standard deviation (2024)

Based on the score classification, most teachers have scores in the range of 133.82–163.40, indicating that teachers' multicultural awareness is quite good to high. This shows that high school teachers in South Jakarta generally have a positive understanding, attitude and behavior towards cultural diversity, but still need to be strengthened through multicultural training programs and cross-cultural activities in schools.

Analysis by Generation

Descriptive analysis by generation group shows the following results:

Table 5 Descriptive analysis by generation

Generation	n	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Generation X	32	149.81	17.80	127	176
Millennial Generation	57	148.36	13.67	128	176
Generation Z	31	148.07	15.82	130	176
Total	**120**				

Source: Primary data processed by researcher (2024)

Based on the table above, generation X has the highest average score of 149.81, followed by the Millennial generation with an average score of 148.36 and generation Z with an average score of 148.07. The difference between groups is relatively small, i.e. less than two points, showing that the level of multicultural awareness between generations of teachers is relatively even.

Cross-generational yield comparison bar chart

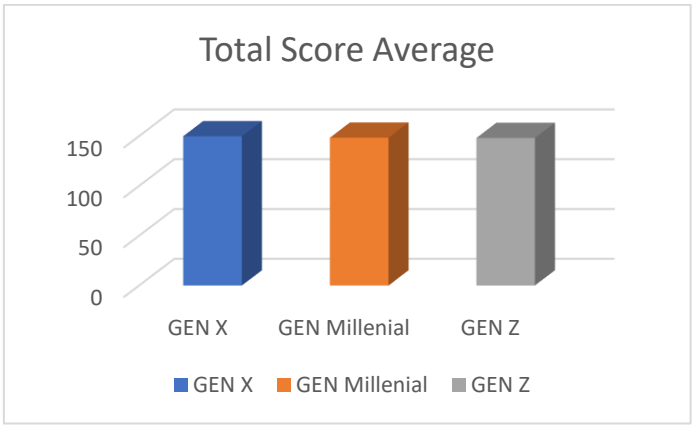

Figure 2. Average Total Multicultural Skills Score per Generation

Source: Primary data processed by researcher (2024)

This pattern shows that teachers' multicultural skill levels are relatively evenly distributed across generational groups. This means that teachers from Generation X who are more senior and young teachers from Millennial and Generation Z have equal abilities in understanding, appreciating, and managing cultural diversity in the educational environment. This phenomenon shows that multicultural skills are not merely the result of age or generational differences, but are professional competencies built through education, training, and teaching experience. In addition, the similarity in the average score also reflects the effectiveness of teacher education and training policies in Indonesia that have consistently instilled multicultural values.

Based on the results of the study, the study of multicultural awareness is very relevant in the current educational context. Cultural awareness has an important role for high school teachers who deal with students from diverse social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity requires teachers to have the ability to understand differences, be open, and foster tolerance in the school environment (Banks, 2015). Teachers who have a high cultural awareness will be better able to create an inclusive classroom atmosphere, appreciate diversity, and encourage positive interaction between students. On the other hand, low cultural awareness can hinder the creation of a harmonious relationship between teachers and students (Huda, Nubatonis, & Ruswandi, 2020).

The results of this study show that the level of cultural awareness and multicultural skills of high school teachers still needs to be improved through training and professional development. Competency enhancement programs such as multicultural training, cross-cultural workshops, or collaborative activities between schools can be an effective means to broaden horizons and strengthen openness to differences (Fatmawati, Dewi, & Wuryandani, 2023). This finding is in line with previous research that emphasizes that teachers' cultural awareness still needs to be strengthened so that education can run more inclusive and effective (Jamalong, 2021).

Overall, this study illustrates that multicultural awareness is an important foundation for high school teachers in building a fair, inclusive, and respect-oriented learning process for cultural differences. Therefore, increasing multicultural understanding and practice among teachers needs to be a priority in efforts to strengthen character education in Indonesia.

Multicultural awareness is the ability of individuals to recognize, understand, and assess how culture influences human values, mindsets, and behavior. Through this awareness, a person is able to see beyond one's own point of view and realize the existence of cultural values and customs that are different from one's culture. Cultural awareness makes individuals more open to diversity, understands that each cultural value and practice has its own social context, and avoids judging other cultures based on their own cultural standards (Noviyani, 2022). In the context of education, cultural awareness is an important element that high school teachers need to have.

Teachers play a role not only as transmitters of knowledge, but also as character builders who instill the values of tolerance, empathy, and mutual respect in a multicultural school environment. Cultural awareness encourages teachers to be more sensitive to the differences in students' backgrounds, both in terms of ethnicity, religion, and socio-economy, so that learning interactions can take place more fairly and inclusive.

According to Efendi (2008), the principle of multiculturalism emphasizes equality and rejects hierarchies between cultures — there is no higher or lower culture. This view reinforces the importance of teachers to treat all students equally, without bias in certain cultural values. Moule (2012) developed four components of multicultural competence that can be a guideline for educators, namely:

1. *Awareness* of self-reaction to cultural differences.
2. *Attitude*: A positive belief in diversity and a willingness to respect the cultural values of others.
3. *Knowledge:* Understanding of culture, values, and social norms to reduce prejudice
4. *Skills*: The ability to communicate and interact effectively between cultures.

By integrating these four aspects, teachers can create a learning environment that is more tolerant and respects diversity. As explained by Sue *et al.* (1992), multicultural competence includes three main dimensions: awareness, knowledge, and skills. Awareness means that teachers understand the cultural differences between themselves and students. Knowledge includes an in-depth understanding of students' diverse cultural backgrounds. Skills require teachers to interact and communicate without prejudice and to be able to adjust learning approaches according to the cultural context of students.

These three competencies must be possessed by teachers in secondary schools who have students with diverse backgrounds. Teachers who have high cultural awareness will find it easier to establish positive communication, create an inclusive classroom atmosphere, and develop the values of tolerance and mutual respect among students. Thus, multicultural competence is the key for high school teachers in building an equitable education that respects cultural diversity.

CONCLUSION

A study of 120 public and private high school teachers in South Jakarta across Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z found no significant generational differences in multicultural skills, with all groups showing similarly high levels. Instead, professional factors—such as teaching experience, training participation, and a supportive school environment—played a more decisive role in shaping multicultural competence. This suggests that efforts to enhance teachers' multicultural skills can be applied broadly rather than tailored by generation. Future research could explore the specific impact of different types of professional development and school environments on multicultural competency growth to optimize training programs effectively.

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