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Embracing Diversity through the Implementation of Multicultural Education in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore: A Literature Review

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Abstract: Multicultural education is recognized as a key response to cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity, yet empirical research from Southeast Asia remains limited in international literature. This scoping review examines the extent and nature of empirical studies on multicultural education conducted in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Searches in ERIC, Scopus, and Google Scholar yielded 20 peer-reviewed empirical articles published up to 2023. Descriptive and inductive content analyses were applied to map research characteristics, educational levels, methodologies, and dominant perspectives. The findings indicate that research is largely qualitative, concentrated at the secondary education level, and predominantly focused on teachers' perspectives, followed by students' and principals' views. Across contexts, recurring challenges include limited curricular integration, insufficient teacher preparation, and tensions between multicultural ideals and political or market-driven educational agendas. This review highlights the need for more theoretically grounded and methodologically diverse research to strengthen multicultural education policy and practice in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: diversity, literature review, multicultural education, Southeast Asia

INTRODUCTION

This literature review explores the extent and nature of empirical research on multicultural education conducted in Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. For decades, multicultural education has built on the idea that civil rights and equality are important for every country (Banks, 2009), even though these fields originally emerged in the African American civil rights movement (Banks, 2013). Multicultural education has two sides: advantages and disadvantages. These sides lead to the need for comprehensive international studies to deal with global issues (Aydin, 2013). For three decades, previous research in multicultural education has focused on experiential training methods for assimilating minorities (Arasaratnam, 2013). Multicultural education's advantages include gaining tolerance between two groups, minimizing racism and cultural harmonization, eliminating cultural barriers, and communicating with different cultures. Conversely, promoting similarities in multicultural education could be unplanned and fail to integrate other cultures into the majority.

Southeast Asia comprises eleven countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste) with different histories, geographies, and socioeconomic development levels. However, Southeast Asian countries share similar characteristics, which pose challenges regarding ethnicity and cultural diversity. To address this situation, these countries believe that education would effectively unify people (Arphattananon, 2021). This is because multicultural education can creatively manage

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plurality and try to create equality for all (Arifin & Hermino, 2017). Multicultural education encourages people to be open-minded and think critically to solve problems using different perspectives (Charles et al., 2013).

Nevertheless, implementing multicultural education frequently faces barriers. Four main barriers are the conceptualization of groups, cultural racism, political identity, and transnationalism (Johansson, 2024). Combining one or two barriers hinders unity and triggers societal conflict. Multicultural education's complexity causes these challenges. Multiculturalism has three facets: policies, attitudes, and demographics (Arasaratnam, 2013). It is not only about schools, teachers, and students but also related to the macro environment consisting of government, society, and even the political system in a country.

Although multiculturalism is both a process and a context (Nye, 2007), the need to understand and compare studies across countries remains. Every country has specific challenges related to its background and demographics. In East Asian countries, such as Hong Kong, multicultural education faces crises due to student shortages and neoliberal marketization (Chee, 2011). Conversely, previous literature showed that the political situation and identity are the main difficulties in North America and Europe (Belando-Montoro et al., 2021).

Moreover, exploring multicultural education in Southeast Asian countries also shows various problems. As the largest country in Southeast Asia, Indonesia made multicultural education a second option, not a priority in the market-driven curriculum. This resulted from passive action and unclear guidance from the government on multicultural education implementation (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020). In Malaysia, the country struggles to find an ideal pattern of multicultural construction among three major ethnic groups: Malays, Indians, and Chinese (Ibrahim, 2007). Singapore's main challenge is implementing multiracialism, meritocracy, and economic pragmatism (Ho, 2011). Thailand also faces a gap in the structure of different ethnic groups during its effort to create equality (Arphattananon, 2018).

Despite the notion of a plurality and diversity of Southeast Asian characteristics, research from three countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore) is barely mentioned in international literature reviews on multicultural education (Arphattananon, 2018; Costes-Onishi & Lum, 2015; Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Ho, 2011; Ibrahim, 2007; Jayadi et al., 2022; Raihani, 2018). For example, the most cited review is Ho (2011) an article report published by Routledge. Nonetheless, none of the studies used literature or systematic literature reviews. In this article, we focus on reviewing international empirical research on multicultural education, which, in this context, has no associated or specific terms in the local language of Southeast Asian countries.

In summary, depending on the scope of the review articles or the year of publication, research from Southeast Asian nations is included in some of the reviews and studies above. However, given the multicultural education described above, we hypothesize that there is more empirical research on multicultural education in Southeast Asian countries. We realize that some research may be written in Southeast Asian languages or published in Southeast Asian educational journals, which are not captured by international databases. Therefore, the purpose of the present article is to review research on multicultural education conducted in three Southeast Asian countries and thus gain an overview of the body of empirical research literature. We carry out a literature review strategy, which is appropriate when the body of literature has not yet been comprehensively reviewed and there is a need to investigate the extent, range, and nature of research to identify knowledge gaps (Arasaratnam, 2013; Munn et al., 2018). Hence, the present literature review addresses the following research question: What is the extent and nature of the empirical research on multicultural education conducted in Southeast Asian countries?

Multiculturalism in Indonesia

Studies about multiculturalism in Indonesia have been limited to themes related to religion (Hoon, 2013, 2017), gender (Parker, 2011), and ethnicity, such as the Chinese minority (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020). The history of multiculturalism in Indonesia was influenced by colonialism, the political situation before its independence in 1945, and the New Order regime. Historically, since Indonesia was liberated from Dutch and Japanese colonization, there has been

an increase in political activity, beginning with the Old Order regime, the New Order regime, and the current reformation phase. There is a surge in the multicultural education movement from assimilation to multiculturalism during these political events and periods. In the context of Indonesian communities, multiculturalism has emerged. This expanding trend contributes to intercultural education's acceptance and legitimacy. The indicator is that multicultural education is ingrained in Indonesia's laws, policies, and core beliefs (Jayadi et al., 2022).

During the New Order regime, which lasted from 1966 to 1998, Chinese identity was suppressed because the state saw it as a security danger associated with Communism. The People's Republic of China and, by extension, ethnic Chinese in Indonesia were allegedly involved in the failed coup in September 1965. Following the coup, the country experienced a wave of anti-Communist and anti-Chinese sentiment. The ethnic Chinese—their culture, religion, significance in the nation's economy, and basic existence—were dubbed the 'Chinese Problem' by New Order politicians (Hoon, 2013).

The post-New Order era is marked by significant legislative reforms, including the repeal of several discriminatory laws on citizenship and religious and cultural expressions about ethnic Chinese. These include repealing laws prohibiting the study of the Chinese language and declaring the Chinese New Year a national holiday, which only applies to Chinese Indonesians (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020). To deal with this 'difficult' minority, the government enacted a military-backed assimilation program that prohibited all displays of Chinese in public, including Chinese names, schools, organizations, media, and cultural practices. The Chinese were forced to abandon their culture and customs to accept what the government saw as the 'Indonesian' identity.

Multiculturalism in Malaysia

The Malay Peninsula has a lengthy history of colonization, dating back to the Portuguese capture of Malacca in 1511. The Dutch took over power from the Portuguese a century later. Later, in 1874, the British gained complete control of the Malay Peninsula until independence in 1957. Each of these colonial powers had its own methods of dealing with and administering the Malay Peninsula's state and people. The British strategies of "foreign labor importation" and "divide and rule" impacted the distribution of economic resources and the structuring of society. The authoritarian stance in British judgments is considered a pattern for Malaysia's current political scenario (Ibrahim, 2007). The British 'foreign labor importation' program resulted in the arrival of Chinese and Indians to work in the mining and rubber industries. This flood of foreign laborers occurred quickly and over a short period. By the early twentieth century, immigrant laborers outnumbered the local Malay population.

The British also used the 'divide and rule' tactic when it came to situating local Malay people and foreign laborers. The Chinese were largely concentrated in mining districts and urban centers, while the Indians lived in estate areas. The Malays, on the other hand, were primarily concentrated in rural regions, working as farmers and fishermen, with some Malay elites settling in urban areas to work alongside British Government personnel (Noor & Leong, 2013). In other words, because the multiethnic society was divided into economic sectors, interactions with one another were limited to the functional level (such as buying and selling at the market) rather than the social level (of interaction and getting to know one another).

When the Malay Peninsula attained independence in 1957, foreign workers were given the choice of leaving or staying. Many people elected to stay and were granted citizenship. In exchange, the Chinese and Indians had to recognize the 'social contract' that established the Malays' special privileges, the Malay language as the national language, and Islam as the national religion. Thus, the conferred citizenship and the 'social contract' became the foundation of government for the newly independent multicultural Malay Peninsula, which has remained so for the past 50 years. During the postcolonial period, government policies considered society's multiethnic character to ensure equitable opportunity for all (Ibrahim, 2007).

Multiculturalism in Singapore

Singapore is a small island republic with a population of around 4.8 million crammed into 640 square kilometers. Singapore is a multi-racial, multi-lingual, and multi-religious city-state. It is a society of immigrants in a relatively new autonomous democratic republic. Most of the population consists of Chinese, Malays, Indians, and others (CMIO); others are mostly Europeans and Eurasians. The racial groupings have a relative ratio of 77:14:8:1, respectively (Ho, 2011). While English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil are the four official languages of Singapore, other dialects are spoken, including Hokkien, Teochew, and Cantonese by Chinese citizens and Gujarati and Punjabi by Indian citizens. Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism are among the religions practiced in Singapore. As a result, the CMIO model as a racial representation is an oversimplification of the population's variety, even by language and religion, because it suggests that each of the four primary groups is homogeneous, which is incorrect (Noor & Leong, 2013).

Multicultural education is not a widely discussed issue in Singapore. While the government has successfully maintained peace and harmony through its political, social, and economic programs and special days, it needs to address the issue thoroughly. Because Singaporeans are becoming more aware of global concerns and events due to globalization and the internet, it is becoming increasingly vital for Singapore to include multicultural education in schools. Teachers and students can use global concerns and events in the classroom to promote multicultural understanding and tolerance in Singaporean society (Karuppiah & Berthelsen, 2011).

METHOD

In line with our purpose of investigating the extent and nature of empirical studies on multicultural education in Southeast Asian countries, we applied scoping review strategies to search, select, and analyze studies (Munn et al., 2018). This approach allows researchers to have an evidence synthesis of one topic that is increasingly being utilized internationally (Peters et al., 2021).

A literature review is an evidence synthesis that aims to find and map relevant evidence that fulfills pre-defined inclusion criteria for the topic, field, context, concept, or issue under consideration. A literature review's review question is often broader than that of a regular, systematic review. Literature reviews may incorporate a variety of evidence kinds (for example, different research methodologies, primary research, reviews, and non-empirical evidence). Because literature reviews strive to generate a complete overview of the evidence rather than a quantitative or qualitative synthesis of data, methodological appraisal or risk of bias evaluation of the sources included in a literature review is frequently unnecessary. Literature reviews locate and chart relevant literature that meets established inclusion criteria to address specified objective(s) and review question(s) regarding important concepts, theories, facts, and evidence gaps. Literature reviews differ from 'evidence maps,' which are figural or graphical representations of the outcomes of a broad and systematic search to identify gaps in knowledge and future research needs, frequently employing a searchable database (Peters et al., 2021).

Search Strategy

The search strategy for collecting the articles included in the review can consist of sequential phases: identifying potentially relevant studies, selecting based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, and analyzing the selected articles. The search and selection process was carried out as teamwork between the authors, which is recommended for literature reviews. The search strategy consisted of two phases, which are described in further detail below:

Phase 1—Identification of Potentially Relevant Articles

The identification phase involved database searches. For the database searches, we used one search string in English. The English string included three components: (1) 'multicultural education' and all its associated terms, (2) school levels—from early education to tertiary education, and (3) Southeast Asian countries. Both authors performed individual English searches in the ERIC, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases. We used the keywords 'multicultural education

AND Indonesia OR Malaysia OR Singapore' to start the search in the Publish or Perish application. The first database searches were undertaken in May 2023 and then updated in June 2023. This resulted in the identification of 36 potentially relevant studies.

Phase 2—Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Along with reading the abstracts of the 36 articles, we developed and refined the inclusion and exclusion criteria shown in Table 1 to select articles aligned with the review's aim and the research question. For example, to operationalize the criterion in Table 1, the main focus is to investigate multicultural education, which had to appear in the purpose of the study, research questions, and results. Consequently, articles in which the focus on multicultural education was unclear were excluded. This iterative process resulted in 20 articles to be included in further analysis.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
• The main focus is to investigate multicultural education in three countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. • Studies situated in early education, primary school, secondary school, or tertiary school in the three Southeast Asian countries. • Description of methods for collecting and analyzing empirical data. • Peer-reviewed journal articles.	• The main focus is to investigate multicultural education in three countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. • Articles that mention multicultural education without having three countries as the main focus or purpose. • Studies from teacher education or non-formal education. • The article that presents empirical examples without describing the research methods. • Book chapters, reports, conference papers, and grey literature.

Phase 3—Analysis of Included Articles

To answer the research question and characterize the empirical research on multicultural education conducted in Southeast Asia, descriptive and content analyses were performed on the 20 selected studies, as recommended for literature reviews (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). The descriptive analysis considered the country where the research was conducted, the subject matter or theme in focus for multicultural education, the participants (teachers, students, and documents), the school levels, and the methodological approach. The content analysis was conducted inductively to identify the prevailing perspectives revealed in the aims and research questions offered in the selected articles. This categorization of the articles is qualitative and hence influenced by our understanding and interpretation of the content, which may represent a possible limitation of the study results.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Most of the 20 included studies were conducted in Indonesia (14), followed by Malaysia (3) and Singapore (3). Table 2 provides an overview of the 20 studies and findings from the descriptive and content analysis. Further details from the descriptive analysis and the conclusions of the content analysis are presented below.

Results from Descriptive Analysis

Table 2 shows that the largest group of studies (7 of 20) was conducted in secondary education. This means that implementing multicultural education aims to support students' learning within several school backgrounds, such as Islamic and Chinese Christian schools (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Hoon, 2013; Malla et al., 2021). Researchers mostly adopted teachers' perspectives to explore the correlation between curriculum understanding and multicultural competencies (Muhajir et al., 2020; Setyowati et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2016).

The qualitative approach dominated (n = 11), and the empirical data were collected mainly from teachers. The methods used for data collection were primarily interviews and observation.

School leaders or principals rarely participated in studies on multicultural education but were included in two Indonesian studies (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Lubis et al., 2009). Two of the three studies from Singapore used a qualitative approach to explore students' perspectives of multicultural education.

Moreover, five of the eight quantitative studies were conducted in Indonesia and focused on religious background. All Malaysian studies used the quantitative approach, and teachers were the participants in three different levels of schools: early education (Phoon et al., 2013), primary education (Wong et al., 2016), and tertiary education (Haque et al., 2017). Only one study described its approach as mixed methods, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis. Costes-Onishi and Lum (2015) quantitatively analyzed thirty teacher self-report questionnaires to measure teaching approaches and assessment methods. This was followed up by collecting qualitative data by interviewing and observing five teachers.

Table 2. Characteristics of the included studies

Authors	Country	School levels	Approach	Data collection techniques	Category
Hoon (2013)	Indonesia	Secondary school	Qualitative	Interview, observation, and focused group discussion	Students' perspective
Marzuki et al. (2020)	Indonesia	Religious school	Qualitative	Interview, observation, focused group discussion, and documentation	Students' perspective
Raihani (2018)	Indonesia	Secondary school	Qualitative	Interview and focused group discussion	Teachers' perspective
Lubis et al. (2009)	Indonesia	Religious school	Qualitative	Interview and observation	Principals' perspective
Hasan and Suwarni (2012)	Indonesia	Early education school	Qualitative	Literature review, interview, and observation	Teachers' perspective
Harjatanaya and Hoon (2020)	Indonesia	Secondary school	Qualitative	Interview	Principals' perspective
Diem and Abdullah (2020)	Indonesia	Tertiary school	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Teachers' perspective
Fios et al. (2017)	Indonesia	Tertiary school	Qualitative	Literature review and interview	Students' perspective
Noor et al. (2021)	Indonesia	Secondary school	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Students' perspective
Malla et al. (2021)	Indonesia	Secondary school	Qualitative	Interview	Teachers' perspective
Muhajir et al. (2020)	Indonesia	Religious school	Qualitative	Interview, observation, and documentation	Teachers' perspective
Setyowati et al. (2022)	Indonesia	Not specified	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Teachers' perspective

Authors	Country	School levels	Approach	Data collection techniques	Category
Normuslim (2021)	Indonesia	Not specified	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Teachers' perspective
Amalia et al. (2019)	Indonesia	Secondary school	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Students' perspective
Karuppiah and Berthelsen (2011)	Singapore	Tertiary school	Qualitative	Open-ended questionnaire	Students' perspective
Costes-Onishi and Lum (2015)	Singapore	Primary school	Mixed methods	Interview, observation, focused group discussion, questionnaire	Teachers' perspective
Ho (2011)	Singapore	Secondary school	Qualitative	Document and interview	Students' perspective
Wong et al. (2016)	Malaysia	Primary school	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Teachers' perspective
Phoon et al. (2013)	Malaysia	Early education school	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Teachers' perspective
Haque et al. (2017)	Malaysia	Tertiary school	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Teachers' perspective
Total (N = 20)	Indonesia (14), Singapore (3), Malaysia (3)	Early education (2), Primary education (2), Secondary education (7), Tertiary education (4), Religious education (3), Not specified (2)	Mixed methods (1), Qualitative (11), Quantitative (8)		Principals' perspective (2), Student's perspective (7), Teacher's perspective (11)

Results of the Content Analysis

The content analysis resulted in three broad categories: teachers', students', and principals' perspectives. Although each article is assigned to one category based on its aim and research questions, some may address more than one of the three themes. For example, a study may include student and teacher perspectives, but because student perspectives are not emphasized in the article's aims and research question, it was categorized as 'teachers' perspectives.'

Teachers' Perspectives

The category of teachers' perspectives was applied to studies investigating teachers' experiences and views of multicultural education, such as opportunities and obstacles regarding teaching and learning. Eleven studies were assigned to this category, mostly based on questionnaires or self-report assessments. In Indonesia, teachers reported struggles with implementing multicultural education, and not all teachers understand the importance of teaching multicultural education to students. They argued that it was not mandated in the curriculum, that the overloaded curriculum hindered them from inserting other materials or topics, and that the pressure of the National Evaluation forced them to focus on the preparation (Raihani, 2018).

Multicultural education in Indonesia is commonly embodied with a religious theme. Most of the studies aimed to explore the implementation of multicultural education in a society

dominated by Muslims (Malla et al., 2021; Muhajir et al., 2020). Also, implementing government policies in early education must be distinct from the ecological context. The majority of the Indonesian tribes have an open pattern society. Communities with this pattern have modern and wide world interactions, thus growing rapidly and becoming metro societies. This community openly accepted the government proposals in formal, informal, or non-formal education (Hasan & Suwarni, 2012). Another study revealed a correlation between curriculum development methodologies and multicultural education, emphasizing the government's role (Setyowati et al., 2022).

Preschool teachers in Malaysia revealed their current multicultural education methods and the problems they faced when adopting multicultural education. While many teachers claimed to have adopted multicultural education, a deeper review found that most utilized the tourist or contributor approach to multicultural education, focusing on the external expressions of culture (Phoon et al., 2013). However, many teachers reported needing more multicultural training at the primary level (Wong et al., 2016). These problems also appear in Singapore because of the struggle to change the mindset on diversity, the need for exercise and skills in diverse traditions, and the need to reconcile with the Western-centric mindset (Costes-Onishi & Lum, 2015).

Students' Perspectives

Seven studies examined multicultural education's ideal practices and potentials from students' perspectives: five from Indonesia and two from Singapore. No research from Malaysia was found in this category. From the student's side, the implications of multicultural education include some subjects, such as citizenship education, religious practice, and religious-local education (Marzuki et al., 2020). Students should acquire indicators of multicultural education because they are fully conscious of the need to better understand tolerance for population diversity, in addition to racism, hate crimes, prejudice, and discrimination (Noor et al., 2021).

However, the ambitious goals of the multicultural curriculum in Singapore are tempered by how this information is presented in the textbooks. First, social studies textbooks condense these highly controversial and contentious case studies into a simple linear narrative. Historical facts are simple, and the curriculum needs counter-narratives. More importantly, as demonstrated by the student's responses, merely including global case studies is insufficient to promote critical thinking and global and cosmopolitan perspectives. The curriculum should, therefore, focus more on developing students' critical understanding of international political, economic, and social structures and issues, such as human rights. Second, these complex and controversial issues are presented abstractly and academically in textbooks. Little attempt is made to engage the student's interests and emotions and to encourage them to be active national and global citizens (Ho, 2011).

Principals' Perspectives

The category of principals' perspectives was applied to studies investigating principals' experiences and views of multicultural education. Two studies were assigned to this category, both using qualitative and interview techniques. School leaders realize that implementing multicultural education requires the cooperation of stakeholders. Transformation is needed to implement 'ideal' multicultural education: self-transformation and society's transformation (Lubis et al., 2009). However, the transformation commonly faces barriers. One of the problems is due to the label or stigma of exclusivist characters associated with one ethnicity (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020).

Discussion

Aside from the inherent limitations of inadequate knowledge and practice of multicultural education in Indonesia, concerns confronting schools in the increasingly complicated age of globalization have also affected multicultural education implementation. Contrary to the utopian concept that schools are neutral learning institutions that welcome students from all backgrounds, many schools, particularly privately owned ones, are market-driven and mostly decided by parental choice. Because parental preference frequently revolves around academic success to prepare students for a competitive worldwide and globalized job market, multicultural education

often becomes a marketing gimmick, a nice-to-have, rather than an important aspect of the school (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Maulidiah et al., 2023).

Multicultural challenges persisted, confirming that multicultural education in Indonesia requires continued attention. This is partly due to the community's uneven distribution of educational services and the poor implementation of multicultural education. Fair distribution of the quality of education services, as well as the execution of a complete multicultural education, can boost multicultural education's successes (Mappaenre et al., 2023). Because multiculturalism promotes cultural inequality, it cannot be linked with the idea of ethnic variety or ethnic culture that distinguishes a plural society. In terms of societal conflict, multiculturalism is a new paradigm in the quest to restore ties among individuals who afterward constantly live in a conflict-ridden environment (Zamroni et al., 2020).

Malaysian culture is traditionally characterized by ethnic and religious affinity. As a result, the primary issue for multicultural education is to give equitable chances to all ethnic and religious groups while establishing a cohesive Malaysian nation. This balancing effort of fostering oneness across many cultures while retaining their qualities is undoubtedly difficult. Another significant problem is keeping up with the rapidly evolving fields of science and technology, as well as information and communication technology (Ibrahim, 2007; Malakolunthu, 2010).

Conversely, multicultural policies succeed in Singapore partially because the dominant race already has an advantage. Still, the principles that support acceptance of variety have weakened as people feel threatened by immigration, as shown in Singapore's example. The huge influx of immigrants and rising socioeconomic inequality have prompted the creation of a new social compact that prioritizes social cohesion above economic progress. Singapore's previous success formula for managing ethnic diversity will be challenged once more in the context of immigrant acculturation (Karuppiah & Berthelsen, 2011; Noor et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

This literature review has found considerable empirical research on multicultural education in early, primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, published up to 2023. The studies mainly report the perspectives of teachers, students, and principals. These identified features allowed us to suggest areas for further research that can contribute to broadening, for instance, by including psychological development perspectives on multicultural education, researching learning processes across the classroom and outdoor settings, and how digital tools can support multicultural education. There is also a need for future review studies to evaluate the quality of the research on multicultural education, especially in Southeast Asian countries.

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