

## Teachers' Understanding and Constraints of Global Diversity Character Learning in Early Childhood Education

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### ABSTRACT

The current research aims to describe teachers' understanding and constraints of global diversity character learning in early childhood education (ECE), especially at the kindergarten level (educational services for children aged 4 – 6 years) seen from several factors, namely: a) kindergarten teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept; b) use of global diversity teaching materials; c) types of global diversity teaching materials; and d) content of global diversity teaching materials. This study is a qualitative study with a descriptive approach. Data were collected through surveys, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The respondents of this study were 55 kindergarten teachers at School Mover who were members of IGTKI Central Java. The data analysis technique used was the Miles and Huberman interactive technique, which included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, conclusion, and data verification. The validity and reliability tests showed that this questionnaire item was valid and reliable. The results show that the majority of kindergarten teachers have a good understanding of the concept of global diversity dimension, use various types and forms of relevant teaching materials, the teaching materials used are from various trusted and varied references, and the content of the teaching materials has met the key elements of global diversity. However, teachers still experience obstacles in teaching materials because the existing teaching materials are less interesting for children. This study suggests the presence of more interesting teaching materials in the form of flipbooks, as flipbooks stimulate children's interest in learning global diversity characters.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education and Culture creates an educational program with Pancasila characteristics through a global diversity character (Widiyanti et al., 2022). Global diversity is a characteristic that needs to be developed in the young generation of Indonesia (Patria & Abduh, 2023; Sabanil et al., 2022) so that students, as the nation's successors, have a national identity (Nurnazhiifa & Dewi, 2021). Global diversity insists that students know and appreciate cultural heritage, communicate across cultures, interact across cultures, and be responsible for diversity (Diputera et al., 2024; Susilawati et al., 2021). Therefore, the global diversity character is the key component of the Pancasila Student Profile (Asmaroini et al., 2024; Rohmah et al., 2023). Fostering a global diversity character is crucial, as the current state of Indonesian education indicates numerous issues associated with character deviations. The perpetrators of these deviations are most of Indonesia's youth, regardless of their educational level (Sabanil et al., 2022).

Through global diversity, Indonesian pupils will be able to preserve ancestral heritage, identity, and locality, and maintain an open mind when dealing with different cultures to support mutual respect and create a new culture that is harmonious with the country's original culture. (Maghfiroh & Umam, 2023; Rusnaini et al., 2021). The global diversity character is also appropriate for globalization, because a good character can protect traditions from the negative sides of globalization. When the influence of globalization becomes stronger, local cultural identities are at risk of disappearing. Conversely, if local culture can survive and is more dominant, globalization can be utilized to advance local culture at the international level (Widhiyanto et al., 2024).

By implementing a global diversity character in preschool, children will understand how to appreciate diversity (Direktorat PAUD, 2022) because early childhood education has a great influence on the development of a person's personality and character (Saputri & Katoningsih, 2023; Widyastuti, 2022) so that character education at an early age will form a positive personality when the child is an adult (Zalukhu et al., 2023). Furthermore, in the regulations of the Minister of Education and Culture number 137 of 2014, it is explained that preschool education should stimulate and maximize children's developmental elements, namely spiritual and ethical principles, cognitive, emotional and social, language, physical motor abilities, and arts (Widyastuti, 2022). Therefore, teachers and early childhood education units are expected to be able to create a multicultural, inclusive environment that respects all children, so that a global diversity profile is created for Indonesian children (Direktorat PAUD, 2022).

Previous research have addressed strategies to strengthen the global diversity character, namely research conducted by Asmaroini et al (2024), Sabanil et al (2022), Indawati (2022), Ghozali (2020), Zahra, et al (2024), and Safitri & Riski (2025). However, teachers' understanding and constraints in learning the character of global diversity are still rarely researched. Whereas teacher's understanding of the subject matter affects the quality of learning and student learning outcomes (Copur-Gencturk, 2021). In addition, the obstacles experienced by teachers in the learning process can cause teaching and learning activities to be suboptimal. To overcome this gap, the researchers conducted a research on teachers' understanding and constraints in learning global diversity character. This research supports previous research conducted by Rizal et al. (2022), Hasni et al. (2024), and Ilma, et al.(2024) which shows the need for better, specific, and practical Pancasila Student Profile teaching materials in early childhood education.

This study aims to describe teachers' understanding and constraints of global diversity character learning in early childhood education, especially at the kindergarten level (educational services for children aged 4 – 6 years, seen from several factors, namely: a) kindergarten teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept; b) use of global diversity teaching materials; c) types of global diversity teaching materials; and d) content of global diversity teaching materials.

## 2. METHODS

This is a qualitative study using a descriptive approach to describe teachers' understanding and constraints of global diversity characters learning in kindergarten level in terms of four factors, namely:

a) kindergarten teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept; b) use of global diversity teaching materials; c) types of global diversity teaching materials; and d) content of global diversity teaching materials. The informants of this research were 55 kindergarten teachers at School Mover who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The data collection techniques used were survey methods with closed questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The research instruments were interview guides and supporting devices such as stationery, notebooks, and mobile phones.

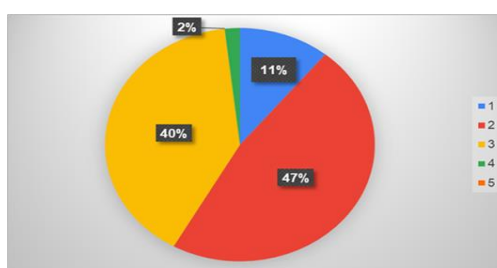
The data analysis techniques used were interactive techniques from Miles et al (2020) namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, data conclusion and verification. At the data collection stage, the researchers did a literature review to collect the information needed for the study, such as the concept of global diversity character and teaching materials of global diversity character. After that, the researchers compiled a questionnaire based on the information obtained from the literature review stage. Next, researchers distributed the questionnaire via a Google Form link to 55 kindergarten teachers who became informants of this research. After that, researchers conducted in-depth interviews to gather data directly from the research informants. At the data reduction stage, the researchers summarized, selected, and focused on the results of data collection focusing on the teachers' understanding of global diversity character, availability of teaching materials, the suitability of the content of teaching materials with the dimensions of global diversity character, the suitability of teaching materials with the characteristics of students and teachers' constraints of global diversity character learning. At the data presentation stage, the researcher presented the data in the form of questionnaire results and interview notes. At the data conclusion and verification stage, the researchers drew conclusions that addressed the research problems, verified, confirmed, and ensured that the conclusions drawn from the data are reliable and accurate.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis in this study focused on four factors, namely: a) kindergarten teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept; b) use of global diversity teaching materials; c) types of global diversity teaching materials; and d) content of global diversity teaching materials.

#### Teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept

Data analysis results related to teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept can be seen in Figure 1.

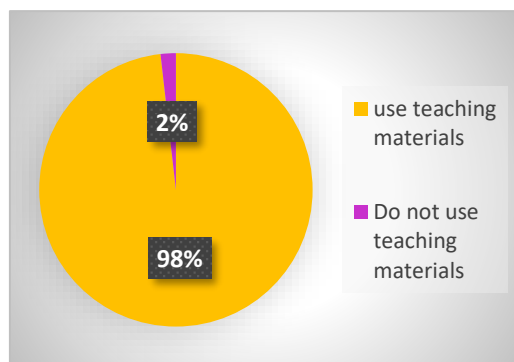


**Figure 1.** Teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept

From the diagram above, it can be concluded that most teachers have a fairly good to very good understanding of the concept of global diversity dimensions, with a percentage of very good 47%, good 40%, and fairly good 11%. Only a few teachers have a very poor understanding, namely 2%.

#### Use of global diversity teaching materials

Data analysis result regarding use of global diversity teaching materials can be seen in Figure 2.

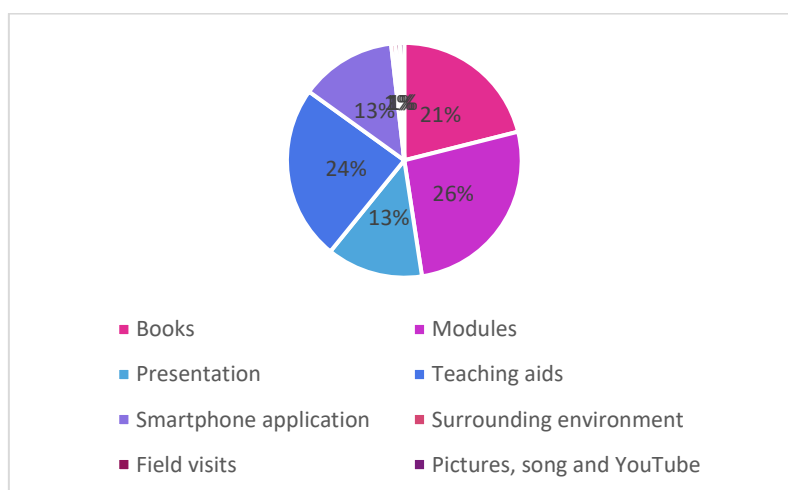


**Figure 2.** Use of global diversity teaching materials

Based on Figure 2, it is known that 98% of kindergarten teachers have used teaching materials in the learning process of global diversity, and only 2% have not used teaching materials in the learning process of the global diversity profile.

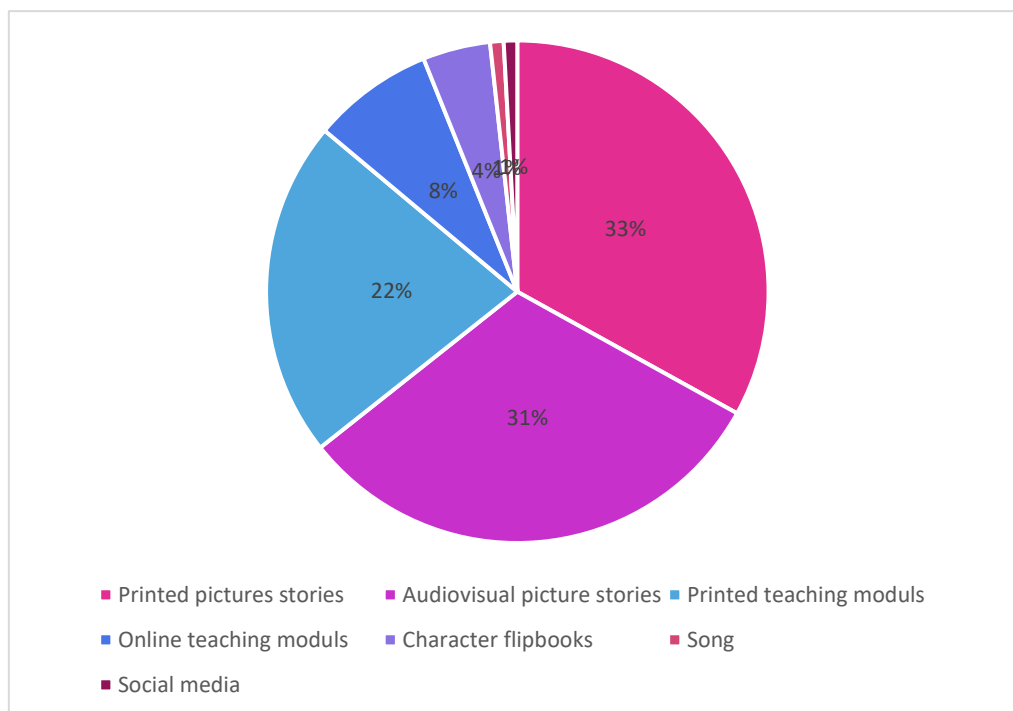
### Types of global diversity teaching materials

Data analysis results regarding types of global diversity teaching materials can be seen in Figure 3. Meanwhile, the form of teaching materials used by teachers can be seen in Figure 4.



**Figure 3.** Types of global diversity teaching materials

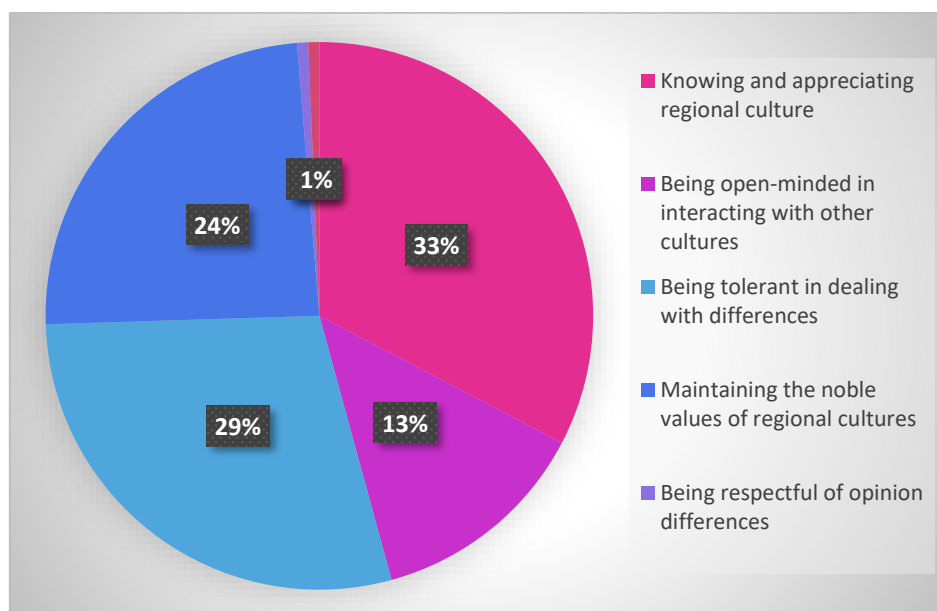
Based on Figure 3, it is known that the teaching materials available and used by kindergarten teachers are pretty varied. Teachers who use teaching materials in the form of books are 21%, modules 26%, presentations/power points 13%, teaching aids 24%, smartphone applications 14%, using the surrounding environment 1%, field visits 1%, using pictures, songs and YouTube 1%.



**Figure 4.** The form of teaching materials used by teachers

Regarding the form of teaching materials used by teachers, Figure 4 shows that teaching materials used by teachers to introduce global diversity characters are printed picture stories 33%, audiovisual picture stories 31%, printed teaching modules 22%, online teaching modules 8%, character flipbooks 4%, songs 1%, and social media 1%.

#### Content of global diversity teaching materials



**Figure 5.** Content of global diversity teaching materials

Regarding the content of global diversity teaching materials used in learning in kindergarten, Figure 5 shows that 33% related to material on knowing and appreciating regional culture, 13% material on being open-minded in interacting with other cultures, 29% material on being tolerant in dealing with

differences, 24% material on maintaining the noble values of regional culture, and 1% materials related to Javanese language and being respectful of opinion differences.

Regarding the results of in-depth interviews that were reviewed based on the variety of types, forms, or content of teaching materials used by teachers, it was found that teachers do not currently have access to sources of material that can be used as references and teachers face some obstacles when using teaching materials that address the dimensions of global diversity. These obstacles are: a) children are less interested in the teaching materials used by teachers; b) less concrete teaching aids; c) poor quality of teaching aids; d) relatively few images in the teacher's handbook on global diversity; e) lack of teaching materials that are relevant to the age and development of children; f) teachers have difficulty explaining abstract concepts and g) teachers have difficulty connecting materials to themes.

### ***Discussion: Teachers' understanding and constraints of global diversity character learning in early childhood education***

The learning process to achieve the Pancasila Student Profile at the kindergarten level must be integrated with all aspects of learning. However, this is a challenge for teachers, so teachers must be creative in designing learning materials and implementing fun and integrated learning into children's daily lives (Rasmini & Karta, 2024). Moreover, the Pancasila Student Profile is expected to be implemented effectively to produce a young generation of Indonesians who behave positively, think critically and creatively, and can compete at the national and global levels (Kahfi, 2022; Nurhantara & Utami, 2023). One dimension of the Pancasila Student Profile is global diversity. The implementation of the global diversity dimension is important to improve students' understanding of dealing with differences in culture, religion, and identity (Kuroma & Tirtoni, 2024). This study describes teachers' understanding and constraints of the global diversity character learning at the kindergarten level in terms of several factors, namely: a) kindergarten teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept; b) the use of global diversity teaching materials; c) types of global diversity teaching materials; d) content of global diversity teaching materials.

### **Kindergarten teachers' understanding of the global diversity concept**

The results of this research show that the majority of teachers have a fairly good to very good comprehension of the global diversity concept. This indicates that kindergarten teachers at School Mover already have adequate awareness and knowledge about the significance of global diversity in early childhood education. Teachers understand that the values of global diversity characters taught to children in schools should be integrated into children's daily activities at home and in their surroundings. This is crucial for fostering harmony and tolerance in a society that has diverse cultures (Sutisna et al., 2024).

Global diversity includes not just tolerance for a variety of ethnicities and the Indonesian language (Nurgiansah, 2022), but also being open and accepting of various cultures without infringing on the Indonesian nation's ancestral culture (Wijayanti & Muthali'in, 2023). Schools, as educational institutions, should instill positive character in children from different ethnic and religions (Rohmah et al., 2023). Character education promotes life values like justice, discipline, and respect, and helps students comprehend the importance of positive character in daily life (Zendrato et al., 2020).

Through inclusive education, children will be able to appreciate differences and have a broader perspective, resulting in wise leaders, peace, and a stronger nation through cooperation between cultures and religions (Rohmah et al., 2023). Therefore, teachers are responsible for forming students' character of global diversity (Hadi et al., 2022) because global diversity character does not exist and grows naturally in humans (Rijadi et al., 2023). Suppose teachers grasp the concept of global diversity. In that case, the learning process of global diversity will run as it should, and the character of global diversity will be achieved. Thus, to reach the Pancasila Student Profile, teachers must understand the concept of global variety (Astari et al., 2023).

The character of global diversity requires students to appreciate and interact with many cultures while retaining their own (Patria & Abduh, 2023). Furthermore, the character of global diversity emphasizes the significance of mutual understanding, tolerance, and cooperation in creating a more peaceful and sustainable world (Rijadi et al., 2023). The global diversity component includes the following elements: knowing and appreciating culture, intercultural engagement and communication, as well as reflection and responsibility toward experiences of diversity and social justice (Hasni et al., 2024).

Knowing and respecting culture implies that Pancasila students can recognize, identify, and characterize different kinds of groups based on their behavior, gender, communication methods, and culture. Furthermore, students may define the process of developing their self-identification and group identity, as well as assess how to behave as members of social groups at various levels, such as local, regional, national, and global. Intercultural engagement and communication entails Pancasila students communicating with other cultures on an equal footing while paying attention to, understanding, and accepting the differences and uniqueness of each culture as a wealth of perspectives, resulting in mutual understanding and empathy. Reflection and responsibility for the experience of diversity and social justice imply that Pancasila students avoid prejudice and stereotypes about different cultures, such as bullying, intolerance, and violence, by learning about cultural diversity and gaining direct experience interacting with diversity, resulting in an equal and harmonious life for all (Kemendikbud, 2022).

### **Use of global diversity teaching materials**

Teaching materials should be adjusted to the curriculum, student conditions, and class demands (Asrial et al., 2021). Therefore, to promote the success of the Pancasila Student Profile, educational materials must be integrated with the Pancasila Student Profile, making them relevant to Indonesia's social, cultural, and religious contexts (Anisa et al., 2024). By integrating the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile into teaching materials, it is intended that students can implement the meaning of these dimensions in students' interactions with their surroundings (Anisa et al., 2024). This research reveals that almost all kindergarten teachers at the School Mover use global diversity teaching materials during the learning process, and very few teachers do not use teaching materials in the global diversity profile learning process due to a lack of suitable teaching materials. Teaching materials play an important role in determining the learning process (Ashfarina et al., 2023; Magdalena et al., 2020; Wirdalena & Mayar, 2022), influencing the management of plurality in the classroom and improving students' abilities (Anas et al., 2020; Eguren & De-Belaunde, 2021).

### **Types of global diversity teaching materials**

It is important to know what resources teachers use in the learning process and teachers' knowledge of these resources (Eguren & De-Belaunde, 2021). Teachers must select easy-to-understand and attractive teaching materials to ensure that students learn the material effectively (Asrial et al., 2021; Sumiati & Tirtayani, 2021). In this digital era, the appropriate teaching materials are interactive since interactive teaching materials prioritize active learning, are compatible with students' diverse learning styles, and have the potential to increase educational quality (Kang et al., 2024; Lasekan et al., 2024). Interactive teaching materials have been proven to improve educational outcomes and students' perceptions of the teaching quality (Li & Wang, 2024). Previous research has demonstrated that teaching materials in the form of multimedia presentations, digital simulations, gamification learning tools, and interactive assessments are effective approaches to promoting student engagement in the learning process (Khanal, 2024).

The findings of this study show that kindergarten teachers used interactive teaching materials to teach global diversity characters, specifically digital applications via smartphones, which is 43%. The use of proper applications can help children develop, while narrative and drawing apps can boost children's creativity (Yadav & Chakraborty, 2022). This is consistent with the notion of Saputri & Katoningsih (2023) which states that developing engaging and enjoyable learning activities is critical for the development of a global diversity character in early childhood. This is also consistent with what

has been discovered by Gunawan et al. (2024) which indicates that Generation Alpha is highly receptive to digital content presented in an audio-visual format with engaging and accessible features. In addition to using smartphones, teachers used additional teaching materials, such as books, modules, presentations, and teaching aids, to balance the learning styles of all children. With sufficient teaching materials, the process of teaching and learning can operate efficiently and effectively, leading to improved student learning results (Asrial et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, teachers mostly use printed and audiovisual image stories as teaching materials. Storybooks that rely mostly on pictures rather than language are thought to be more fascinating and successful for students aged 4-6 years old because storybooks promote optimal brain development. Furthermore, picture books can pique children's enthusiasm for learning and help children develop their reading abilities (Oberman, 2023). Story media with a composition of pictures that are more dominant than writing will be easier to consume, preventing children from becoming bored soon. Through attractive illustrations, full of color, it can make it easy for children to know and understand the contents of the story (Okayanti et al., 2023). Moreover, picture stories have an essential role in both children's learning and daily lives. When children interact with the information and images, children have a unique opportunity to construct meaning through these complex sentences and diverse elements. Picture stories are a bridge for children to get to know literature, providing insights and stories that broaden children's views of children's lives while providing opportunities to understand the lives of others (Crawford et al., 2024). Stories told to children can develop children's emotional intelligence, instill values of empathy, and increase feelings, understanding, and empathy (Ding et al., 2021; Mardiyah et al., 2020). Thus, illustrated stories are effective in visualizing the concept of diversity in an interesting and easy-to-understand way for children.

Regarding the sources of teaching materials used by teachers, this research result reveals that teachers used teaching materials from various sources such as the Ministry of Education and Culture, the internet, story books, P5 modules, PKP training, PMM, KKG, PSP, PMO, webinars and workshops, and social media. With these various sources, teachers can vary the teaching materials so that children are always enthusiastic about participating in global diversity learning. This diversification of sources shows that kindergarten teachers are trying hard to enrich their teaching materials and ensure that they deliver the latest and applicable knowledge (Munawar et al., 2020; Sulanjari et al., 2021). The outcomes of the present study align with the research carried out by Fauzi and Khusuma (2020) which found that teachers modify teaching materials from various sources. Using various teaching materials that are integrated with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile will facilitate the learning process according to government recommendations (Munir et al., 2024; Wulandari et al., 2024).

### **Content of global diversity teaching materials**

This research reveals that the content of the teaching materials has fulfilled three key components that are important in achieving the Pancasila Student Profile that is oriented towards global diversity, namely knowing and appreciating culture, intercultural engagement, and communication, as well as reflection and responsibility for diversity experiences. In this study, teachers have included the content of knowing and appreciating regional culture which is important to instill a sense of love and appreciation for local culture since early years; teachers have included the content of being open-minded when dealing with other cultures where this is important to form an inclusive and adaptive attitude in a multicultural environment; teachers have integrated the character of being tolerant in dealing with differences so that mutual respect and acceptance for diversity is created; teachers have included the content of maintaining the noble values of regional culture so that local cultural values are maintained and respected; teachers try to teach the local language, namely Javanese, and the attitude of respecting differences in opinion.

As noted in the preceding part, in-depth interviews revealed that there are still numerous obstacles in developing teaching materials that can be used as references for teaching global diversity characters. To address this issue, teachers expect the availability of flipbooks as teaching materials on global



diversity character. Flipbooks are multimedia that include images, sounds, and animation, as well as interactive aspects that make the material more fascinating and portable (Dewi & Wibawa, 2024; Irwan et al., 2024; Rahmawati & Purwati, 2025). With an attractive and practical appearance, flipbooks can attract children's interest in the learning process of global diversity characters. This supports previous research conducted by Rizal et al (2022), Hasni et al (2024), and Ilma, et al (2024) which shows the need for better, specific, and practical Pancasila Student profile teaching materials in early childhood education. The need for better teaching materials demonstrates that there is an increased awareness of teaching materials that address student diversity and equality, as well as instructor professionalism (Campbell & Lee, 2021). The findings of this study are also consistent with the research findings of Rohmah et al. (2023) who found that several factors influence global diversity, such as competent teachers who can implement relevant learning strategies and a supportive environment.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research highlights teachers' understanding and constraints of global diversity character learning in kindergarten. The findings reveal that the majority of kindergarten teachers have a good comprehension of the global diversity concept, use various types and forms of relevant teaching materials on global diversity characters, use teaching materials from reliable and varied references, and the content of the teaching materials fulfills the key elements of global diversity. The constraints experienced by teachers are: a) students being less interested in the teaching materials used by teachers; b) less concrete teaching aids; c) poor quality of teaching aids; d) relatively few pictures in the teacher's handbook on global diversity; e) lack of teaching materials that are relevant to the age and development of children; f) teachers have difficulty explaining abstract concepts and g) teachers have difficulty linking materials to themes.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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