



Implementation of a Diversity Corner to Enhance Elementary School Students' Social Skills

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: 2025-12-08 Revised: 2026-01-15 Published: 2026-02-15 Keywords: <i>Diversity Corner;</i> <i>Social Skills;</i> <i>Elementary School.</i>	Social skills are essential competencies that need to be developed in elementary school students to support positive social interaction, cooperation, and respect for diversity in everyday life. However, classroom learning practices indicate that students' social skills, particularly in terms of cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication, still require improvement. This study aims to analyze the implementation of a Diversity Corner as a learning strategy to enhance elementary school students' social skills. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research stages included planning the Diversity Corner, implementing diversity-based learning activities, and evaluating the development of students' social skills. The results indicate that the implementation of a Diversity Corner creates an inclusive and participatory learning environment. Students demonstrated improvements in cooperation, empathy, and positive interpersonal communication skills. Therefore, the implementation of a Diversity Corner contributes positively as a contextual learning strategy in fostering elementary school students' social skills.

Artikel Info	Abstrak
Sejarah Artikel Diterima: 2025-12-08 Direvisi: 2026-01-15 Dipublikasi: 2026-02-15 Kata kunci: <i>Sudut Keberagaman;</i> <i>Keterampilan Sosial;</i> <i>Sekolah Dasar.</i>	Keterampilan sosial merupakan kompetensi esensial yang perlu dikembangkan pada siswa sekolah dasar untuk mendukung interaksi sosial yang positif, kerja sama, serta sikap saling menghargai keberagaman dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Namun, praktik pembelajaran di kelas menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan sosial siswa, khususnya dalam aspek kerja sama, empati, dan komunikasi interpersonal, masih memerlukan peningkatan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi Sudut Keberagaman sebagai strategi pembelajaran dalam meningkatkan keterampilan sosial siswa sekolah dasar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Tahapan penelitian meliputi perencanaan sudut keberagaman, pelaksanaan kegiatan pembelajaran berbasis keberagaman, serta evaluasi perkembangan keterampilan sosial siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi sudut keberagaman mampu menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang inklusif dan partisipatif. Siswa menunjukkan peningkatan dalam kerja sama, empati, serta kemampuan komunikasi interpersonal yang positif. Dengan demikian, Implementasi Sudut Keberagaman berkontribusi positif sebagai strategi pembelajaran kontekstual dalam menumbuhkan keterampilan sosial siswa sekolah dasar.

I. INTRODUCTION

Primary education represents a fundamental stage in the development of students' character and competencies, encompassing not only cognitive aspects but also social and affective dimensions. One of the essential competencies that needs to be fostered at the elementary school level is social skills, which include the ability to cooperate, demonstrate empathy, communicate effectively, and respect diversity in everyday life (Saputra, 2024; Ugobueze, 2024; Sitepu et al., 2024). Social skills serve as a crucial foundation for students to engage positively with their social environment, both within the school context and in an increasingly diverse society.

Therefore, the development of social skills from an early age constitutes an integral component of the goals of primary education.

In the context of a multicultural society, social skills play a strategic role in fostering tolerant attitudes and mutual respect. Diversity in cultural, religious, and social backgrounds requires students to possess strong social adaptability in order to coexist harmoniously (Vega et al., 2024; Ortiz, 2024). However, numerous studies indicate that learning practices in elementary schools remain predominantly oriented toward the achievement of academic outcomes, while the development of social skills has not yet become a primary focus in classroom

instruction (Halimah et al., 2025; Supratman et al., 2025). This condition highlights a gap between the goals of holistic education and the realities of classroom practice.

Classroom learning practices also reveal that elementary school students' social skills—particularly in the areas of cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication—still require improvement. Students often experience difficulties in group work, show limited ability to understand peers' feelings and perspectives, and are not yet accustomed to expressing their opinions in a polite and effective manner (Sari et al., 2025). Teacher-centered and one-way instructional approaches further limit opportunities for students to engage actively and practice social skills through direct interaction (Llorent & Varo-Millán, 2022). As a result, students' potential for social development has not been optimally facilitated.

In line with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile emphasizes the dimensions of global diversity and mutual cooperation as competencies that should be developed through meaningful learning experiences. The development of social skills constitutes an essential component of this effort, as these skills enable students to practice Pancasila values in their daily lives (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Therefore, learning strategies are needed that are capable of integrating values of diversity into students' learning activities in a concrete and contextual manner.

Various instructional strategies have been developed to enhance students' social skills, including cooperative learning and contextual learning approaches. Research indicates that learning models which provide opportunities for active social interaction can improve students' cooperation, empathy, and communication skills (Johnson & Johnson, 2017; Slavin, 2018). However, the effectiveness of these approaches largely depends on how teachers design inclusive and participatory learning environments. Learning environments that support social interaction have been shown to increase student engagement and strengthen social skills development (OECD, 2021).

One learning strategy considered relevant to these needs is the implementation of the Diversity Corner. The Diversity Corner is a learning space within the classroom designed to display and introduce various aspects of diversity through visual media, reading materials, cultural

artifacts, and interactive learning activities. The presence of a Diversity Corner enables students to learn about differences in a concrete and contextual manner while simultaneously encouraging meaningful social interaction (Sirait et al., 2024; Hidayat et al., 2025). Thus, the Diversity Corner functions not merely as a decorative element of the classroom but as an active learning medium integrated into the instructional process.

Recent studies indicate that the use of learning corners in classrooms can enhance student participation and social skills. A study by Saputri (2024) found that the regular and structured use of classroom learning corners encourages student engagement in literacy activities, which in turn influences students' social interactions and learning habits. Social studies instruction that integrates learning corners has also been shown to improve students' social skills, including cooperation, discussion, and active participation (Rahmawati, 2025). Other studies further demonstrate that diversity-based learning fosters empathy and mutual respect among students in elementary school settings (Solichah, 2025; Halimah et al., 2025; Wanudyastuti et al., 2025). Nevertheless, research that specifically examines the implementation of the Diversity Corner as a learning strategy to enhance elementary school students' social skills remains relatively limited.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the Diversity Corner as a contextual learning strategy that is systematically designed and implemented through the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation in everyday classroom instruction. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize diversity-based learning in a general sense, this study positions the Diversity Corner as the central learning activity that directly promotes students' social interaction. Furthermore, this study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation process of the Diversity Corner and its impact on the development of students' social skills (Creswell, 2013).

This study adopts a qualitative approach, as it is considered appropriate for providing a comprehensive depiction of classroom learning dynamics and social interactions. Through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation, the study seeks to reveal how the Diversity Corner is implemented and how students respond to this learning strategy within the authentic context of elementary school

instruction. Accordingly, this research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of diversity-based learning studies and practically to support teachers in designing contextual learning strategies aimed at fostering elementary school students' social skills.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Diversity Corner in enhancing elementary school students' social skills. The research was conducted at SD Negeri Wiru 01 and involved Phase A students in Grades I and II, along with classroom teachers directly engaged in the instructional process. Participants were selected based on accessibility and relevance to the research objectives.

Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth teacher interviews, and documentation, including field notes, photographs of learning activities, and samples of students' work. The research stages consisted of planning the Diversity Corner, implementing diversity-based learning activities, and evaluating students' social skills development in terms of cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication. Data analysis followed qualitative procedures of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Creswell, 2013) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation process and its impact on students' social skills.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Results

The results of this study comprehensively describe the implementation of the Diversity Corner in enhancing the social skills of Grade I students at SD Negeri Wiru 01. The findings are presented according to the stages of the research, including the planning of Diversity Corner activities, the implementation of diversity-based learning, the evaluation of students' social skills development, and the responses of teachers and students to the application of the Diversity Corner.

The planning stage constituted the initial phase that determined the success of the Diversity Corner implementation. Based on preliminary observations and interviews with classroom teachers, it was found that students in Grades I and II demonstrated varied levels of social skills, with some students experiencing difficulties in cooperation,

empathy, and positive communication. In response to these findings, teachers designed the Diversity Corner as a contextual learning strategy tailored to the developmental characteristics of Grade I and II students.

The planning of the Diversity Corner involved the determination of activity objectives, the selection of learning materials, classroom space arrangement, and the design of learning activities. The primary objective was to foster students' social skills through learning experiences that emphasized cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication. The selected materials were aligned with learning themes and reflected social and cultural diversity, such as images of children from diverse backgrounds, illustrated storybooks themed around friendship and tolerance, and students' work related to themselves and their immediate environment.

The Diversity Corner was arranged in one area of the classroom that was easily accessible to students. The corner was equipped with a small bookshelf containing storybooks, a display board for showcasing students' work, and child-friendly visual media. In addition, teachers designed learning activities that actively utilized the Diversity Corner, including shared reading, small-group discussions, storytelling, and simple reflection activities. This planning aimed to ensure that the Diversity Corner functioned not merely as classroom decoration but as a central learning space that actively encouraged students' social interaction.

During the implementation stage, the Diversity Corner was integrated into classroom learning activities. Teachers utilized the Diversity Corner across various phases of instruction, from the opening to the closing activities. At the beginning of the lesson, teachers invited students to observe the materials displayed in the Diversity Corner and posed guiding questions to stimulate students' curiosity. This activity helped students recognize differences and initiate social interaction in a natural manner.

In the main learning activities, students were engaged in small-group tasks that used the Diversity Corner as a learning resource. Students jointly read illustrated stories about their immediate environment, such as family, school friends, and the home environment, discussed the content of the stories, and collaborated to complete group assignments. Teachers acted as facilitators by guiding

discussions and providing reinforcement for positive social behaviors demonstrated by the students. During the closing activities, students were encouraged to engage in simple reflection by sharing their learning experiences and expressing their feelings during interactions with peers.

Observational data indicated that students showed high levels of enthusiasm toward the use of the Diversity Corner. Students were actively engaged with the available learning materials and participated in group discussions. Peer interactions increased, as evidenced by cooperation, shared roles, and more open communication among students.

The implementation of the Diversity Corner demonstrated the development of students' social skills in three main aspects, namely cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication. In terms of cooperation, students began to show improved ability to work in groups. They shared tasks, helped one another, and made efforts to complete learning activities collaboratively. Students who had previously been passive became more willing to engage and showed more active participation.

In the aspect of empathy, students demonstrated increased concern for their peers. This was reflected in behaviors such as helping classmates who experienced difficulties, waiting for their turn to speak, and showing respect for differences. Through stories and discussions conducted in the Diversity Corner, students learned to understand the feelings and perspectives of others.

Interpersonal communication skills also showed positive development. Students became more accustomed to expressing their opinions orally using more polite and clear language. In addition, students demonstrated improved listening skills, as indicated by their attentiveness when peers were speaking and their ability to provide relevant responses.

Interview results indicated that teachers perceived the Diversity Corner as an effective learning strategy for creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Teachers reported that students became more comfortable interacting with one another and displayed more positive social behaviors. They also noted that the Diversity Corner facilitated the integration of diversity values into classroom instruction without adding to the curricular load.

Furthermore, students' responses to the Diversity Corner were positive. Based on observations and brief interviews, students stated that they enjoyed learning in the Diversity Corner due to the presence of attractive pictures and books. They felt happier working with their peers and more confident in speaking during discussions. Several students mentioned that they particularly enjoyed shared reading and storytelling activities in the Diversity Corner because these activities allowed them to exchange stories and experiences. These responses indicate that the Diversity Corner provided learning experiences that were both enjoyable and meaningful for students.

Overall, the findings indicate that the implementation of the Diversity Corner at SD Negeri Wiru 01 successfully created an inclusive and participatory learning environment. Through systematic planning and consistent implementation, the Diversity Corner contributed positively to the enhancement of Grade I students' social skills, particularly in the areas of cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication.

B. Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that the implementation of the Diversity Corner in Grade I and II at SD Negeri Wiru 01 contributes positively to the improvement of students' social skills, particularly in the aspects of cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication. These findings emphasize that social skills do not develop automatically but need to be facilitated through contextual learning strategies and a learning environment that supports social interaction. This is consistent with the view that primary education plays a strategic role in developing students' social competencies as part of early character formation, especially through learning activities that integrate diversity values and social interaction. (Sitepu et al., 2024; Saputra, 2024).

The improvement in the aspect of cooperation demonstrated by students through group activities in the Diversity Corner reinforces previous research findings indicating that cooperative learning and learning environments that encourage active interaction can enhance elementary school students' ability to work collaboratively (Johnson & Johnson, 2017; Sari et al., 2025). The Diversity Corner provides opportunities

for students to share roles, support one another, and complete tasks collaboratively. This indicates that the use of classroom space as a center for learning activities plays an important role in fostering social skills, as emphasized by the OECD (2021), which states that inclusive and participatory learning environments support the development of learners' social and emotional skills.

In addition to cooperation, the aspect of empathy also showed significant development. Through picture stories, simple discussions, and reflection activities in the Diversity Corner, students learned to understand their peers' feelings and perspectives. These findings are consistent with studies in multicultural education indicating that learning experiences that explicitly present diversity can foster empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect among elementary school students (Halimah et al., 2025; Sirait et al., 2024). The Diversity Corner provides direct learning experiences that allow students to interact with differences, enabling empathy to be not only conceptually understood but also practiced in everyday social life.

The development of students' interpersonal communication, characterized by increased confidence in speaking, listening skills, the use of polite language, and the ability to respond to peers' opinions, indicates that the Diversity Corner functions as an effective contextual learning medium. These findings support the view that children's social communication skills develop optimally when learning provides opportunities for dialogue and direct interaction among learners (Ugobueze, 2024; Wanudyastuti et al., 2025). In this context, the Diversity Corner facilitates two-way communication among students, enabling them to become not merely passive listeners but active participants in the learning process.

The alignment between the research findings and national education policy is also evident. The implementation of the Diversity Corner is consistent with the objectives of strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, particularly in the dimensions of global diversity and mutual cooperation (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Through activities in the Diversity Corner, students learn to respect differences, collaborate, and communicate positively. These values represent essential competencies that need to

be developed from primary education as part of the formation of democratic and inclusive citizens (Llorent et al., 2022; Rahmawati, 2025).

Teachers' positive responses to the Diversity Corner further reinforce the finding that the teacher's role as a facilitator is crucial to the success of learning strategies. Teachers play a role not only in designing and providing the Diversity Corner but also in reinforcing positive social behaviors demonstrated by students. This is in line with Saputra's (2024) view, which emphasizes that in context-based learning, interactions among teachers, learners, and the learning environment are key factors in achieving learning objectives. Teachers' consistency in utilizing the Diversity Corner ensures that this strategy is not merely a temporary innovation but an integral part of the daily learning process.

Students' responses, reflected in feelings of enjoyment, enthusiasm, and comfort when learning in the Diversity Corner, also serve as important indicators of the strategy's success. Positive student responses indicate that the Diversity Corner is able to create a pleasant and meaningful learning atmosphere. These findings are consistent with research on the use of classroom learning corners, which shows that thematic learning corners can enhance engagement, social interaction, and learning motivation among elementary school students (Saputri & Rochmiyati, 2024; Rahmawati, 2025). When students feel comfortable and interested, the internalization of social and diversity values occurs more effectively (Solichah, 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, the results of this study support the view that environment- and socially contextualized learning plays an important role in the development of students' social skills. The Diversity Corner serves as a bridge between abstract concepts of diversity and the concrete learning experiences encountered by students. This is consistent with studies on multicultural education and social skills that emphasize the importance of direct experiences in helping learners understand, accept, and appreciate differences within diverse social and cultural contexts (Ortiz-Marcos et al., 2024; Vega et al., 2024).

Overall, this discussion demonstrates that the implementation of the Diversity Corner not only contributes to the improvement of students' social skills but also supports the

creation of an inclusive, participatory learning environment aligned with national education policy demands. Therefore, the Diversity Corner can be regarded as a relevant and applicable contextual learning strategy for fostering elementary school students' social skills in a sustainable manner.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

The implementation of the Diversity Corner as a contextual learning strategy has been shown to contribute positively to the improvement of elementary school students' social skills. The results of the study indicate increases in the aspects of cooperation, empathy, and interpersonal communication through well-planned and sustained diversity-based learning activities. The Diversity Corner is able to create an inclusive and participatory learning environment, allowing students to feel comfortable interacting and expressing their opinions in a positive manner. Therefore, the Diversity Corner can be considered an effective alternative learning strategy for fostering elementary school students' social skills while simultaneously supporting character development in accordance with Pancasila values.

B. Suggestion

The implementation of the Diversity Corner needs to be continuously supported by teachers and schools to ensure its consistent application. Future research is recommended to examine the implementation of the Diversity Corner in different contexts and educational levels in order to strengthen its scholarly contribution to the field of primary education.

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