

Enhancing Multiculturalism through Culturally Responsive Teaching: Evidence from Local History Learning in Metro City Senior High Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the limited integration of affective dimensions in Indonesian history education, which often prioritizes cognitive mastery over fostering students' multicultural awareness. To address this gap, this research examines the effectiveness of culturally responsive teaching (CRT)-based local history materials in enhancing students' multicultural attitudes. Using a quantitative quasi-experimental design involving 364 senior high school students in Kota Metro, an experimental group taught with CRT-based materials and a control group taught with conventional textbooks were compared. Data were collected using pretests and posttests with a validated Likert-scale instrument measuring tolerance, solidarity, respect for cultural differences, and inclusiveness. The findings reveal a significant improvement in the experimental group's multicultural attitudes, reflected by higher gain scores and strong positive correlations between perceptions of CRT and attitude enhancement. The study concludes that CRT-based history instruction effectively strengthens empathy, intercultural understanding, and civic awareness, offering practical strategies for fostering multicultural competence in Indonesia's classrooms.

Keywords: Culturally responsible teaching, Local history, Multicultural education, National integration

INTRODUCTION

History education plays a crucial role in Indonesia, as it enables students to understand their nation's development while cultivating appreciation for cultural diversity. Beyond transmitting knowledge of past events, history education nurtures values of coexistence and mutual respect among Indonesia's diverse ethnic, social, and cultural communities. Integrating local wisdom into history lessons helps students develop stronger connections to their cultural roots and enhances their sense of belonging (Anggraini et al., 2022). Recent studies further indicate that integrating local cultural values into history education significantly strengthens students' cultural identity and deepens their understanding of cultural diversity (Wijayanti, 2025). However, challenges remain, particularly in secondary schools where history is often taught through rote memorization of dates and facts, limiting students' engagement and critical reflection (Maslahah & Hidayat, 2022). Empirical studies conducted between 2019 and 2025 reveal that learning about local history contributes to the development of multicultural awareness by emphasizing Indonesia's plural society (Kuwoto, 2025). Other research has indicated that local history instruction fosters national identity, mitigates social conflict, and strengthens students' respect for religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity (Miskawi & Sariyatun, 2025). Case studies from Cirebon-Indramayu and Medan have also demonstrated success in cultivating multicultural values through local history education (Tanjung & Darmawan, 2022). Nevertheless, none of these studies have explored the theme of transmigration within local history learning, leaving a significant gap in understanding how such culturally rich narratives can be used to promote multiculturalism in Indonesian classrooms.

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is an educational approach that connects learners' experiences and cultural backgrounds to the curriculum, promoting a rich and inclusive learning environment (Chotimah et al., 2018). In the Indonesian context, CRT emphasizes the integration of local narratives and regional cultures within history learning, allowing students to perceive their historical studies as both relevant and relatable. By utilizing local histories and social experiences, CRT acts as a bridge to understand multicultural values, fostering an educational atmosphere that respects and values diversity (Umasih et al., 2019). This form of pedagogy is vital in Indonesia's heterogeneous society, where various ethnicities and cultural backgrounds coexist, thereby enhancing

students' recognition of cultural plurality and social harmony, which can cultivate a sense of belonging and communal understanding among diverse groups.

Although culturally responsive teaching (CRT) has been widely recognized for its potential to increase students' cultural empathy, engagement, and civic participation, existing studies have focused predominantly on general educational outcomes such as identity affirmation and academic achievement (Ramadhanti, 2019; Shih, 2022; Hadj-Abdou, 2019). Limited attention has been given to its application within subject-specific contexts, particularly history education, and its role in fostering multicultural attitudes. Furthermore, while prior research suggests that integrating local wisdom into learning can promote inclusivity and a sense of belonging among culturally diverse students (Tapung, 2024; Maunah et al., 2018), empirical evidence examining the effectiveness of CRT-based local history instruction remains scarce (Sebbowa & Majani, 2021). This gap highlights the need for systematic investigation into how culturally responsive and contextually grounded history instruction can contribute to the development of multicultural awareness and social cohesion in Indonesia's plural society (Reinecke & Blum, 2018; Boedhihartono et al., 2018).

Numerous prior studies on history education in Indonesia have focused predominantly on cognitive aspects, such as the comprehension of chronological sequences and factual details of historical events. However, there has been limited emphasis on the affective dimension, particularly concerning the development of attitudes toward multiculturalism and intercultural understanding. The prevailing pedagogical approach remains largely teacher centered and fails to systematically connect historical content with students' sociocultural experiences (Djono et al., 2021; Nurizka et al., 2020). Concurrently, research on culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in Indonesia is generally confined to the realms of multicultural education and character development (Umasih et al., 2019; Chotimah et al., 2018), without specific application to particular subject areas such as local history. Local history, however, presents significant potential as an educational medium to reinforce multicultural awareness and social harmony, especially through themes rich in cross-cultural social interactions, such as transmigration (Maslahah & Hidayat, 2022). To date, research that integrates the CRT approach into the teaching of the local history of transmigration to cultivate students' multicultural attitudes is lacking, and quantitative evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of CRT-based instructional materials in this context is lacking.

This study introduces an innovative concept by integrating two significant fields into a singular history learning model, aiming to enhance students' multicultural attitudes. This approach innovates teaching by utilizing the history of transmigration as a symbol of intercultural interaction and social cohesion in Indonesia. It also serves as a platform for implementing culturally responsive teaching (CRT) values, such as inclusivity, equality, and respect for

diversity (Chotimah et al., 2018; Utomo et al., 2023). Empirically, this study provides new evidence through its quasi-experimental design, testing the effectiveness of CRT-based teaching materials in improving multicultural awareness and attitudes, a topic infrequently explored in history education (Ye & Shih, 2021). A further novelty of this study is its setting in Metro City, an area renowned for its ethnic and cultural diversity because of its history of transmigration, making it an apt context for examining the relationship between CRT and students' multicultural development (Kuwoto, 2025). In terms of practicality, this study offers a model of CRT-based history teaching materials and learning strategies that educators can employ to reinforce multicultural values and social cohesion in schools. Theoretically, the findings of this study contribute to the discourse on culturally responsive pedagogy by extending its application to history education and the development of multicultural citizenship values in Indonesia (Sebbowa & Majani, 2021).

1. Is there a significant difference in multicultural attitudes between students who receive CRT-based local history instruction and those who receive conventional instruction?
2. To what extent do students' multicultural attitudes improve following CRT-based local history instruction?
3. Does CRT-based local history instruction significantly affect students' multicultural attitudes after we control for pretest scores?
4. Is there a significant relationship between students' perceptions of CRT-based instruction and their improvement in multicultural attitudes?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Principles and Pedagogical Foundations

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is grounded in the theoretical work of Ladson-Billings and Gay, who conceptualize teaching as a culturally situated practice that recognizes students' cultural identities as assets in the learning process (Saito-Stehberger, 2022). CRT emphasizes key principles such as cultural relevance, equity, inclusion, and empowerment, aiming to bridge students' lived experiences with academic content. Through this approach, learning becomes more meaningful and engaging, as students are encouraged to connect their sociocultural backgrounds with disciplinary knowledge (Abdalla & Moussa, 2024). In the context of history education, CRT shifts instruction from a content-centered orientation toward a more reflective and participatory process, enabling students to interpret historical narratives through their own cultural perspectives (Abacioglu et al., 2019; Anyichie & Butler, 2023). Such an approach fosters not only cognitive understanding but also affective engagement, particularly in the development of empathy, perspective-taking, and intercultural

awareness (Cruz et al., 2019). Furthermore, effective implementation of CRT requires systematic teacher preparation that develops cultural competence, equity literacy, and critical self-reflection, enabling educators to respond effectively to diverse learners and create inclusive learning environments (Ghaemi & Boroushaki, 2025).

Local History and Multicultural Learning

The integration of local history within a CRT framework further strengthens its relevance in multicultural contexts. Local history provides concrete representations of social interactions, cultural encounters, and processes of coexistence, making abstract values such as tolerance and social cohesion more tangible for students. Multicultural education emphasizes the importance of fostering understanding, acceptance, and respect for cultural diversity as essential foundations for inclusive learning environments (Lee, 2025). When local historical narratives are taught through culturally responsive approaches, students are encouraged to reflect on their identities while appreciating the perspectives of others (Chotimah et al., 2018; Anggraini et al., 2022). This pedagogical integration enables history learning to function as a medium for developing multicultural attitudes, including respect for diversity, social solidarity, and inclusive thinking (Maslahah & Hidayat, 2022). Moreover, by emphasizing narratives of interethnic interaction and shared experiences, CRT-based local history instruction promotes critical reflection on diversity and supports the construction of a more inclusive social understanding (Irdiyansyah et al., 2025).

The theoretical connection between culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and multicultural attitudes is predicated on the notion that when educational practices acknowledge and incorporate students' cultural backgrounds, there is an increase in empathy, cross-cultural appreciation, and emotional engagement during the learning process. CRT functions as a conduit between students' personal experiences and academic content, facilitating the creation of shared meaning and reinforcing multicultural values through pertinent social contexts. Within history education, the integration of local history, particularly narratives of transmigration, provides a relevant sociocultural context through which students can explore interethnic interactions, social cohesion, and cultural diversity (Saito-Stehberger, 2022; Hidayatuloh, 2020). This approach allows students to critically engage with historical experiences while internalizing values such as tolerance, solidarity, and mutual respect, which constitute key dimensions of multicultural attitudes. Guided by this theoretical framework, the present study conceptualizes the independent variable (X) as CRT-based instructional materials characterized by cultural relevance, inclusivity, and reflective learning processes, while the dependent variable (Y) is defined as students' multicultural attitudes, encompassing tolerance, social solidarity, and respect for cultural diversity (Maslahah & Hidayat, 2022).

Theoretical Links between CRT, Multicultural Attitudes and Study Contributions

Studies have shown that culturally responsive teaching (CRT) enhances students' engagement, cultural understanding, and sense of inclusion in diverse learning environments. By connecting curriculum content to students' cultural backgrounds, CRT increases motivation and meaningful participation in classroom learning (Saito-Stehberger, 2022). It enables teachers to use students' diverse experiences as learning assets, fostering inclusivity and mutual respect among peers (Nurizka et al., 2020). This inclusive pedagogy is essential for creating learning spaces that value diversity and prepare students to interact effectively across cultural boundaries. This perspective is supported by previous research indicating that social and cultural capital, including students' exposure to diverse cultural experiences and social interactions, plays a significant role in shaping tolerance in multicultural settings (Mustafida et al., 2025).

However, studies on local history education in Indonesia often emphasize nationalism and a cognitive understanding of identity while neglecting the affective dimensions that cultivate empathy, solidarity, and respect for diversity (Wardhana et al., 2020). Such limitations constrain students' ability to develop multicultural awareness and emotional engagement with history. Integrating CRT into local history instruction offers a promising solution by embedding cultural relevance and emotional resonance into historical learning (Umasih et al., 2019; Saito-Stehberger, 2022). Through this approach, students can internalize values of tolerance and intercultural understanding, experiencing history as a living, relational process rather than a static record of events. This study seeks to bridge that gap by developing and empirically testing a CRT-based model for teaching local history of transmigration, using a quasi-experimental design to provide quantitative evidence on the effectiveness of CRT in enhancing multicultural attitudes. Conducted in a metro city, this research contributes both practical and theoretical insights. In practice, it offers a model in which history teachers can adapt to foster empathy, inclusion, and multicultural appreciation in their classrooms. Theoretically, it extends the discourse of culturally responsive pedagogy within the context of history education, highlighting its role in strengthening civic and multicultural values in Indonesia's plural society.

On the basis of the theoretical framework of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and prior empirical evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Compared with those receiving conventional instruction, students receiving CRT-based local history instruction demonstrate significantly stronger multicultural attitudes.

H2: Students' multicultural attitudes significantly improve after they participate in CRT-based local history instruction.

H3: CRT-based local history instruction will have a significant positive effect on students' multicultural attitudes after the pretest scores are controlled.

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between students' perceptions of CRT-based instruction and their improvement in multicultural attitudes.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control group design (Djafar et al., 2021). This design was selected because field constraints precluded full randomization of participants while still allowing for comparative analysis between the experimental and control groups (Creswell, 2014). The experimental group received an intervention involving the use of local history teaching materials grounded in culturally responsive teaching (CRT), whereas the control group engaged with conventional teaching materials. Both groups underwent pretests and posttests to assess changes in multicultural attitudes, encompassing dimensions of tolerance, solidarity, and appreciation of cultural diversity. The research design followed a pretest–posttest control group structure, in which the experimental group (O_1-X-O_2) received CRT-based instruction, while the control group (O_3-C-O_4) received conventional teaching.

The intervention was conducted over 4–6 learning sessions. The experimental group received CRT-based local history materials on transmigration, whereas the control group used conventional textbooks aligned with the national curriculum. Instruction in the experimental group employed student-centered activities incorporating local cultural contexts, including observations, cross-cultural discussions, and reflective tasks. Prior to the intervention, the teachers in both groups were trained to ensure consistency in instructional duration, content, and learning objectives, thereby maintaining procedural equivalence.

Sample and Sampling Strategy

The study population included all senior high school students in Metro city enrolled in Indonesian history courses. The sample included two schools with comparable accreditation levels, social backgrounds, and ethnic diversity. Purposive sampling was applied on the basis of school accessibility and parity of contextual conditions (Smith, 2023). A total of 364 students participated and were divided into two groups: the experimental group was instructed on the use of CRT-based local history teaching materials, while the control group was taught with conventional history materials. Data collection occurred in three sequential phases: pretest, treatment, and posttest. The pretest measured students'

multicultural attitudes prior to the intervention. The treatment phase involved the implementation of CRT-based instructional materials for the experimental group, whereas the control group received traditional instruction. The posttest evaluated changes in *multicultural attitudes* following the learning intervention.

Research Instruments

The research instrument consisted of a five-point Likert scale (1–5) questionnaire comprising 50 items designed to assess students' multicultural attitudes. The instrument covered seven key indicators, including (1) tolerance of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity; (2) respect for individual rights and dignity; (3) solidarity and cross-cultural cooperation; (4) empathic and open cross-cultural communication; (5) adherence to social norms that uphold equality and justice; (6) appreciation of cultural diversity as part of national identity; and (7) the ability to maintain social harmony amidst differences. Each indicator was represented by approximately 7–8 items to ensure balanced measurement across dimensions. The instrument grid was developed on the basis of established frameworks of multicultural education and adapted from previous studies (Kuwoto, 2025; Abacioglu et al., 2019; White & Shin, 2017). Content validity was established through expert judgment involving three specialists in history education, multicultural education, and educational measurement. In addition, construct validity was supported by alignment with validated theoretical frameworks capturing key affective dimensions of intercultural understanding. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha indicated high internal consistency, with a coefficient of $\alpha = 0.89$. Additionally, for the experimental group, an observation checklist was employed to monitor the fidelity of CRT-based instructional implementation as complementary qualitative data.

Data collection procedures

Data collection was conducted in three sequential stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. Initially, a pretest was administered to both the experimental and control groups to assess the baseline levels of students' multicultural attitudes. The treatment phase was implemented over 4–6 learning sessions (90 minutes per session), during which the experimental group received CRT-based local history instruction focusing on transmigration themes, including interethnic interaction, cultural diversity, and social integration, while the control group used conventional textbooks aligned with the national curriculum. The instructional procedures in the experimental group were structured into three stages: the introduction of local historical narratives, guided group discussions analyzing cultural interactions, and reflective activities connecting historical content to students' sociocultural experiences. The intervention was delivered through student-centered strategies, including collaborative learning, cross-cultural dialog, contextual problem-solving, and reflective writing, to promote

engagement and intercultural understanding. To ensure procedural consistency, teachers in both groups received prior training to standardize instructional duration, content, and learning objectives, while the fidelity of CRT implementation was monitored using an observation checklist assessing cultural relevance, student engagement, and inclusivity. Following the intervention, a posttest was administered to evaluate changes in students’ multicultural attitudes.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis included the calculation of the mean, standard deviation, and percentage change in scores to illustrate overall data patterns and trends. Prior to hypothesis testing, assumption tests were performed, including a normality test using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method and a homogeneity test using Levene’s test. Inferential analysis employed an independent sample t-test to examine differences in the gain scores of *multicultural attitudes* between the experimental and control groups. When pretest score disparities existed, ANCOVA was applied to control for initial group differences. The interpretation of effect sizes followed the standard criteria proposed by Cohen, where values of 0.2 indicate small effects, 0.5 indicate medium effects, and 0.8 indicate large effects (Fikrat-Wevers et al., 2021).

RESULTS

The data collection process was conducted in three sequential stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. The sample consisted of 364 students, divided equally into two groups: the experimental group, which engaged with local history teaching materials based on culturally responsive teaching (CRT), and the control group, which received conventional instruction. Prior to the treatment, both groups completed a pretest designed to assess multicultural attitudes, utilizing a five-point Likert scale (1–5) questionnaire consisting of 50 statements. Following the instructional intervention, a posttest was administered to evaluate the change in multicultural attitudes after exposure to CRT-based learning. All the research procedures were carried out as planned, with no missing data, ensuring a complete analysis of the entire sample (N = 364).

Table 1. Distribution of Research Samples

Group	Number of Students	Percentage	Treatment
Experimental	182	50.0%	CRT-based local history materials
Control	182	50.0%	Conventional history materials
Total	364	100%	-

The sample distribution demonstrated a balanced allocation between the experimental and control groups, each comprising 182 students (50%). Both groups were drawn from schools with similar accreditation levels, sociocultural backgrounds, and ethnic diversity, thereby satisfying the comparability requirement inherent to a quasi-experimental design. This equivalence ensured that the evaluation of the effectiveness of the CRT on students' multicultural attitudes was valid, representative, and unbiased.

Descriptive Statistics of Students' Multicultural Attitudes

This section provides an overview of students' multicultural attitudes before and after the intervention in both the experimental and control groups. A descriptive analysis was conducted on the total scores of multicultural attitudes, which included seven primary indicators: tolerance toward diversity, respect for cultural rights and differences, social solidarity and cooperation, intercultural communication, adherence to inclusive norms, appreciation of cultural diversity, and maintenance of social harmony. The statistical measures presented include the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores, and normalized gain (N-Gain) to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. The N-gain was calculated using the Hake formula to determine the proportion of actual improvement relative to the maximum potential gain.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Multicultural Attitudes

Group	Test	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N-Gain	Category
Experimental	Pretest	182	168.45	18.32	125	210	–	–
	Posttest	182	202.00	16.55	158	238	0.59	Medium
	Gain	182	33.55	15.76	5	75	–	–
Control	Pretest	182	167.80	19.15	120	208	–	–
	Posttest	182	176.30	17.88	135	218	0.15	Low
	Gain	182	8.50	12.87	-10	45	–	–

The descriptive findings show that the experimental group experienced an average score increase of 33.55 points (from 168.45 to 202.00), with an N-Gain of 0.59, categorized as medium. In contrast, the control group exhibited an increase of only 8.50 points (from 167.80 to 176.30), with an N-Gain of 0.15, categorized as low. The gain observed in the experimental group was nearly four times greater than that in the control group. These results indicate that CRT-based local history materials are more effective at promoting positive affective development among students, particularly in terms of cultivating multicultural attitudes that encompass tolerance, empathy, and social solidarity. This outcome aligns with the research hypothesis that culturally contextualized learning enhances students' emotional engagement and cognitive connection to diverse

values, thereby strengthening their appreciation of cultural pluralism in the classroom setting.

Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Results

To answer the first and second research questions, two types of statistical analyses were conducted. First, a paired sample t-test was used to assess improvements in multicultural attitudes within each group (by comparing the pretest and posttest scores of the same participants). Second, an independent sample t-test was employed to compare posttest scores between the experimental and control groups to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in outcomes. The hypotheses tested were as follows:

H₀: There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest or between the experimental and control groups.

H₁: There is a significant difference.

The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$, and H₀ was rejected when the p value was < 0.05 .

Table 3. Results of the t-tests for the experimental and control groups

Group	Test	Mean	SD	t	df	p value	Cohen's d
Experimental	Pretest	168.45	18.32	-28.74	181	<0.001	2.13
	Posttest	202.00	16.55				
Control	Pretest	167.80	19.15	-8.92	181	<0.001	0.66
	Posttest	176.30	17.88				
Posttest Comparison	Experimental	202.00	16.55	11.38	362	<0.001	1.19
	Control	176.30	17.88				

The results revealed that both groups experienced significant improvements in multicultural attitudes from the pretest to the posttest ($p < 0.001$). However, the increase observed in the experimental group ($M_{diff} = 33.45$; $d = 2.13$) was substantially greater than that in the control group ($M_{diff} = 8.50$; $d = 0.66$). Furthermore, the results of the independent t-test comparing posttest means revealed that the experimental group ($M = 202.00$) scored significantly higher than the control group ($M = 176.30$), with a mean difference of 25.70 points ($t = 11.38$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 1.19$). The large effect size (Cohen's $d > 0.8$) indicates that the CRT-based local history materials strongly and meaningfully enhanced students' multicultural attitudes, particularly in terms of fostering greater tolerance, empathy, and intercultural understanding. These findings confirm that compared with traditional, textbook-oriented instruction,

culturally responsive and contextually relevant pedagogy is more effective at nurturing multicultural dispositions.

ANCOVA Test Results

To ensure that the observed posttest differences between the experimental and control groups were not influenced by variations in initial abilities, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted, using pretest scores as a covariate. This procedure statistically controls for baseline disparities, allowing for a more accurate estimation of the true treatment effect attributed to the CRT-based instructional materials. The hypotheses tested were as follows:

H₀: There is no significant difference in posttest scores between groups after controlling for pretest scores.

H₁: A significant difference exists between groups after the pretest scores are controlled.

Table 4. ANCOVA Test on Posttest Scores Controlling Pretest

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p value	Partial η^2
Pretest (Covariate)	1,248.35	1	1,248.35	4.23	0.041	0.012
Group (Treatment)	32,854.72	1	32,854.72	111.38	<0.001	0.236
Error	106,489.18	361	294.99	–	–	–
Total	140,592.25	363	–	–	–	–

The ANCOVA findings revealed that, after pretest scores were statistically controlled for, the treatment variable (CRT-based vs. conventional instruction) had a highly significant effect on posttest outcomes ($F = 111.38$; $p < 0.001$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.236$). While the pretest scores showed a statistically significant but small effect ($F = 4.23$; $p = 0.041$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.012$), this indicated that students’ initial abilities explained only 1.2% of the variance in the posttest results. In contrast, the CRT treatment accounted for 23.6% of the variance, demonstrating a substantial effect size and confirming the strength of the intervention. These results affirm that the effectiveness of CRT-based local history materials in enhancing students’ multicultural attitudes is not dependent on their initial level of multicultural awareness. The findings underscore the robust pedagogical influence of culturally grounded instruction, which promotes empathy, respect for diversity, and intercultural understanding across different student backgrounds independent of prior dispositions.

Correlation between Students' Perception of CRT and Integration Attitudes

To address the fourth research question, a Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between students' perceptions of the implementation of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and their gain scores in multicultural attitudes. Student perceptions were measured using a structured questionnaire that assessed three key aspects of CRT implementation: cultural relevance, active engagement, and identity validation in learning. The analysis was conducted exclusively on the experimental group (N = 182), which received the CRT-based instructional treatment.

Table 5. Correlation between Students' Perception of CRT and National Integration Attitudes

Variable	Mean	SD	r	p value	Interpretation
Perception of CRT Implementation	87.45	10.28	0.624	<0.001	Strong Positive Correlation
Gain Score of Multicultural Attitudes	33.55	15.76	–	–	–

The results revealed a strong positive correlation between students' perceptions of CRT implementation and their improvement in multicultural attitudes ($r = 0.624$; $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.389$) indicated that approximately 38.9% of the variation in the increase in multicultural attitudes could be explained by students' positive perceptions of CRT-based learning.

These findings align with culturally responsive teaching theory, which posits that when students perceive learning as culturally affirming, relevant, and participatory, their emotional engagement and intercultural empathy increase (Schirmer & Lockman, 2022; Parkhouse et al., 2022). The stronger students perceive that their cultural identity and lived experiences are acknowledged and respected, the greater their motivation and capacity to internalize multicultural values such as tolerance, equity, and social solidarity. The effectiveness of CRT-based local history instruction extends beyond material design, depending on how students perceive and experience culturally inclusive pedagogies. The strong correlation between perception and outcome underscores that CRT fosters meaningful, affective engagement, enabling students to construct shared understanding and mutual respect within multicultural settings. In summary, the results consistently demonstrate that CRT-based history learning not only improves students' multicultural attitudes quantitatively but also nurtures culturally grounded learning experiences that are socially and pedagogically transformative.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study demonstrate that compared with conventional history lessons, the use of CRT-based local history instruction significantly enhances students' multicultural attitudes. Students who were exposed to CRT-based learning exhibited higher levels of tolerance, social solidarity, and appreciation for cultural diversity. This improvement is attributed to the cultural relevance of the lessons, which connects learning content to students' lived experiences and sociocultural identities, thereby deepening their engagement and understanding. The results suggest that history education grounded in students' cultural contexts fosters greater empathy and reflective awareness, helping them internalize the values of coexistence and mutual respect within a diverse society. These findings are supported by recent research demonstrating that sustained professional development in culturally responsive teaching significantly improves teachers' attitudes and instructional practices while fostering more inclusive learning environments through asset-based perspectives (Uribe-Zarain et al., 2025). These findings are consistent with those of earlier studies demonstrating that experiential multicultural learning fosters students' critical awareness and empathy through direct engagement with diverse cultural contexts (Pace, 2019). A wide range of studies have confirmed the effectiveness of CRT in these areas. The CRT aims to validate students' cultural identities and engage culturally and linguistically diverse learners (Saito-Stehberger, 2022). It emphasizes cultural relevance and identity affirmation as central principles (Singh, 2025), with cultural validation recognized as a key mechanism of effective CRT practices (Irdiyansyah et al., 2025).

Moreover, CRT has been shown to increase student engagement and academic achievement (Abacioglu et al., 2019). Empirical classroom research involving culturally diverse learners reported elevated levels of engagement and motivation when CRT strategies were implemented (Anyichie & Butler, 2023), while further studies confirmed the consistent positive impact of CRT on student participation and inclusivity (Balarajasekhar & Suma, 2024). Nonetheless, most of this evidence derives from small-scale classroom studies rather than large experimental trials, indicating a need for more extensive quantitative validation. These findings provide empirical support for H1 and H2, indicating that compared with conventional instruction, CRT-based local history instruction not only results in significantly greater multicultural attitudes but also leads to meaningful improvements in students' attitudes following the intervention.

The findings of this study align with and reinforce global evidence demonstrating that culturally responsible teaching fosters student engagement, multicultural awareness, and social inclusion in diverse educational settings (Kuwoto, 2025). Consistent with prior research, the present study shows that culturally responsive local history learning enables students to connect academic

knowledge with their cultural and social realities, thereby cultivating empathy, intercultural understanding, and appreciation of diversity, key dimensions of multicultural attitudes (Hidayatuloh, 2020). The novelty of this research lies in its integration of CRT with the local history of transmigration, a theme rarely examined through quantitative experimental methods in Indonesian education. This integration provides empirical evidence that CRT's impact on students' affective and civic development is pedagogical in nature rather than dependent on preexisting ability differences.

Furthermore, the significant effect identified through ANCOVA supports H3, confirming that the impact of CRT-based instruction on multicultural attitudes remains robust even after initial differences in students' pretest scores are controlled. In addition, the observed strong positive correlation between students' perceptions of CRT and their improvement in multicultural attitudes provides clear support for H4, reinforcing the role of perceived cultural relevance and engagement in enhancing affective learning outcomes. The positive correlation between students' perceptions of CRT implementation and their gains in multicultural attitudes validates the theoretical tenets of student agency and cultural empowerment as core outcomes of culturally responsive pedagogy (Irdiyansyah et al., 2025). Collectively, these findings extend the theoretical and practical scope of culturally responsive pedagogy within history education, offering an evidence-based framework for strengthening empathy, inclusivity, and multicultural values in diverse classroom contexts.

The results of this study have significant theoretical and practical implications for advancing culturally responsive pedagogy in history education. Theoretically, the findings enrich the discourse on *culturally responsive pedagogy* by providing empirical evidence of its effectiveness in promoting the affective dimensions of learning, particularly the development of multicultural attitudes, within the Indonesian educational context. These findings support previous assertions that CRT functions as a pedagogical framework capable of connecting students' cultural identities with academic content, thereby fostering engagement, empathy, and the internalization of civic and moral values (Abdalla & Moussa, 2024). Taken together, these findings demonstrate a consistent pattern in which all the proposed hypotheses (H1–H4) are empirically supported, thereby strengthening the theoretical and practical validity of CRT as an effective pedagogical approach for fostering multicultural attitudes in history education.

In conclusion, these findings underscore the transformative potential of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in history education. CRT-based local history learning not only enhances students' multicultural attitudes but also connects academic content with cultural identity and lived experience. This study provides both empirical and theoretical evidence that culturally grounded instruction serves as a catalyst for empathy, inclusivity, and intercultural understanding, which are essential components for fostering social cohesion in

Indonesia's pluralistic society. Collectively, these findings contribute to theoretical advancement while offering practical insights for educators seeking to strengthen multicultural awareness and civic unity through historically informed, culturally responsive pedagogies.

IMPLICATIONS

In practice, this study provides valuable insights for educators, indicating that CRT-based instructional materials can be effectively employed to nurture empathy, intercultural understanding, and appreciation for diversity in history classrooms (Chotimah et al., 2018; Anggraini et al., 2022). By embedding local narratives such as the history of transmigration within culturally responsive lessons, teachers can transform history learning into a dynamic process of identity formation and intercultural dialog. Such an approach allows students to see history not only as a sequence of events but also as a mirror of shared human experience that reflects coexistence and respect across cultures. Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study employed a quasi-experimental design without full randomization and was conducted within a single sociocultural context (Metro City), which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study measured short-term outcomes and did not examine longitudinal changes in students' multicultural attitudes.

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