

## **A Review of Culture-Based Learning at Primary Level In Indonesia**

**Yuyun Elizabeth Patras<sup>1</sup>, Ai Juliani<sup>2</sup>, Nina Nurhasanah<sup>3</sup>, Arifin Maksum<sup>4</sup>, Rais Hidayat<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Pakuan Bogor, Indonesia; [yuyunpatras64@gmail.com](mailto:yuyunpatras64@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Pakuan Bogor, Indonesia; [liani.scout@gmail.com](mailto:liani.scout@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia; [nnurhasanah@unj.ac.id](mailto:nnurhasanah@unj.ac.id)

<sup>4</sup> Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia; [arifinmaksum@unj.ac.id](mailto:arifinmaksum@unj.ac.id)

<sup>5</sup> Universitas Pakuan Bogor, Indonesia; [rais72rais@gmail.com](mailto:rais72rais@gmail.com)

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to present a review of culture-based learning in primary school. The result of research have been found in several articles related to the implementation of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) or culture based learning. The findings in these articles were then used as a basis for formulating a new way of discussing culture-based learning (CRT) at the primary school level. The methodology used in this study is a literature search of articles in both Indonesian and English in 2018-2021 sourced from Google Scholar, Scopus.com, and Garuda search sites using the keywords "implementation of culturally responsive teaching", "implementation of culture-based learning". The data analysis procedure was performed based on a qualitative approach. The research results show that culture-based learning or CRT can be implemented in learning resources as an inculcation of ethical, moral and character values of students. The new way that can be done is to implement culture-based learning at the primary school level, which requires commitment from all elements of education and school members to create learning according to students' needs by involving cultural elements.

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### **Corresponding Author:**

Ai Juliani

Universitas Pakuan Bogor, Indonesia; [liani.scout@gmail.com](mailto:liani.scout@gmail.com)

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Culture is a big part of people's lives, especially in Indonesia. Sinulingga et al. (2021) say that culture is an action that is part of a society and has a big effect on how children think as they grow up. Quinzio-Zafran and Wilkins (2020) also explain that culture is much more than things like food, art, music, and celebrations. It also includes ways of thinking, beliefs, and ways of expressing yourself. Culture is everything that makes up a society and has meaning and value.

Indonesia is rich in diversity. One of the existing diversity is ethnic and cultural diversity. Indonesia has over 1,300 ethnic groups of various types, with the population size of each ethnic group

also varying widely, with the Javanese being the most dominant ethnic group. However, the era of globalization has impacted the blurring of culture and cultural identity in Indonesia (Rahmawati et al., 2020). It is also explained that globalization has led to internationalization, including in the field of education, which has led to an increase in diversity in the classroom (Nurhasanah, 2022). It is in line with (Patras et al., 2022), who explained that globalization ultimately also leads to an increase in diversity in the classroom, so teachers should have the opportunity to teach students in classes with a pedagogical focus on multiculturalism.

One aspect that can develop cultural identity as a means of preserving culture, especially for the younger generation, is education (Rahmawati et al., 2020). Education is very fundamental for a sustainable and dynamic life that is continuously needed in life. Education and culture play a very important role in developing the nation's noble values, which affect the formation of students' character and self-confidence based on noble cultural values. In this case, education as an effective pedagogical practice should focus on student achievement and help students accept and affirm their cultural identity (Schirmer & Lockman, 2022).

Culture-based learning was developed by Aikenhead (2000) to create meaningful learning by associating learning with learners' cultural backgrounds. Rahmawati et al (2020) explained that culture is central to how all learning takes place in the classroom, where culturally responsive pedagogy is applied as a bridge connecting students, teachers, schools and society. Teachers need to realize that there is a close relationship between culture and the way students think. The integration of students' cultural backgrounds is an effort to bring students closer to the learning context and students' awareness of their cultural identity. Wahyu (2017) outlines that culture-based features are very necessary for students because implementing culture-based learning will teach an attitude of love for culture and nation.

Quinzio-Zafran & Wilkins (2020) presented a mandate or message that change requires that learners who are racially, ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse have the opportunity to meet their learning challenges with the strength and relevance found in their own cultural frameworks of reference. An optimal learning environment is one that enables students to engage in social interactions that are authentic and relevant to students (Kauko et al., 2022). Therefore, teachers must be prepared with a deep understanding of the specific culture of the students they teach; what influence the culture has on students' learning behaviour; and how to change classroom interactions and instruction to embrace diversity. In addition, teachers must be able to recognize their own cultural beliefs and practices while learning to access other cultures (Pagán, 2022).

Meaningful learning is created by integrating education and culture into the learning process. Because the culture-based learning process not only transmits culture and cultural embodiment, but uses culture to enable students to create meaning, break the boundaries of imagination, and be creative in achieving a deep understanding of the subjects studied (Sinulingga et al., 2021). This meaningful learning, as explained by (Akmal, 2021) meaningful learning, allows students to learn while doing "learning by doing". In addition, intercultural education can also lead to social changes, such as the erasing of stereotypes and misunderstandings that exist against ethnic minorities (Meléndez-Luces & Couto-Cantero, 2021). It is also explained that teachers who consistently and positively position teaching in relation to students' culture and experiences help create conditions for students to become agents of social change (Ramsay-Jordan, 2020). The opinions of the above experts encourage positive changes to create better education through activities that combine education and culture in one learning sequence.

One approach that requires students to develop 21st-century skills and create meaningful learning related to student culture is the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) approach. Culturally responsive teaching is a learning approach that requires equal rights for every student to receive instruction, regardless of students' cultural background (Murti, 2020). Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is an educational innovation that aims to increase student engagement and motivation. In particular, CRT

incorporates the culture of these students into the school curriculum and makes meaningful connections with the culture of society. CRT as the use of cultural knowledge, previous experiences, frames of reference and performance styles of multi-ethnic students to make learning more meaningful (Isa et al., 2022).

CRT is designed to create contextually meaningful learning by involving cultural elements in learning activities. The diversity that exists in the classroom can be facilitated by culture-based learning that is diverse or multicultural. Something else is also explained (Vavrus, 2012) that CRT is an expression of multicultural education. Through a multicultural teaching approach, a teacher who is culturally responsive contributes to attention to student learning needs as expressed goals to educate students in democratic education. As is well known, there are different types of learners in schools or even classes that have different levels of learning readiness, interests, talents and learning styles (Fadilla et al., 2021). By using the concept of diversity and accepting different learning styles, teachers can more effectively define learning strategies and students can become more confident and satisfied with their learning progress (P. Sari, 2019). In addition, (Hutchison & McAlister-Shields, 2020) explain that teachers should be able to use strategies that build capacity to appreciate the student community and culture, broaden personal cultural beliefs, and build community with students and families, and CRT encourages dialogue and critical thinking between teachers and students Implementing CRT in learning is one way to meet the learning needs of students for existing diversity.

Culturally responsive teaching is a reference for learning approaches because its implementation yields good practices, as explained by Morrison, Robbins, and Rose (2008) in (Vavrus, 2012), including: modelling, scaffolding, and clarification of challenging curriculum, using student strengths as starting points and building on their knowledge fund, investing in and taking personal responsibility for student success. Creating and nurturing collaborative environments, having high behavioural expectations, reshaping the prescribed curriculum, fostering school-community relationships, fostering critical literacy, engaging students in social justice work, making explicit the power dynamics of mainstream society, and sharing power in the classroom. Caingcoy et al. (2022) also explained that the characteristics of CRT are one of the most widely accepted ideas in which teachers recognize the legitimacy of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups as a legacy that influences the character of students; creating meaning between home and school experiences and between academic abstractions and living socio-cultural realities; using a variety of instructional activities linked to different learning style; learning to know and appreciate their own and one another's culture heritage; and incorporating multicultural information, resources and materials into the subjects and skills taught in schools.

This is consistent with several articles on good practices emerging from learning with a CRT or culture-based approach, as evidenced (Bito et al., 2021), that cultural elements can be used in pedagogical mathematics, such as learning media, in addition to content. Another good practice stated by (Akmal, 2021) is that students' active involvement in learning will bring out values instilled through life experiences and a sense of empathy for the environment, so that teachers can convey not only theoretically but also transfer what values have been extracted from learning activities through character education. CRT creates an inclusive learning environment where learners feel safe, can be themselves and feel that their contributions and perspectives are valued and respected (Cheng et al., 2021). Through CRT learning, students also become aware of how to interact with and communicate with other people from different backgrounds (Berlian & Huda, 2022) in order to create a sense of mutual respect. The many good practices that emerge in culture-based learning are very important to study because primary education provides the first foundation for developing students' character. So that, data is obtained in this study on how the implementation of culture-based learning has been carried out in Indonesia? Is there a new way to implement CRT in primary education to make it better?

From the above background, the authors examine culture-based learning to describe research findings related to the implementation of Culturally Responsive Education (CRT) or culture-based learning at the elementary school level.

## 2. METHODS

The study of culture-based learning at the primary school level was conducted through a literature search with a qualitative research approach. The aim of this research is to find new ways for primary education in Indonesia, especially in culture-based learning or CRT. The criteria for scientific articles used as data are in the form of scientific articles in national and international journals for the period 2018-2021 mapped through Google Scholar, Scopus.com and Garuda sites with the keywords "implementation of culturally responsive education" and "implementation of culture-based learning in primary education". The first search found 34 articles which were then assessed using an inductive analysis approach, finding data compatibility regarding the implementation of culture-based learning in primary education, so that 13 relevant articles were selected and then categorized by authors, titles, years, recommendations, new ways and summarizing the whole article finally finds a new way that can be recommended for the implementation of culture-based learning at the primary education level.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The literature search is performed by selecting articles that support the study and are consistent with the study being researched. After conducting a literature search of several articles on the implementation of culture-based learning at the primary school level, the results are presented in the following table.

**Table 1.** Table of Findings and Discussion

No.	Writer	Title	Year	Concept and Practice	Recommendation	New Way
1.	Petra Kristi Mulyani	Tracing the World's Culture in the US Elementary School Students' Literature	2019	The primary school curriculum is now integrated with multicultural education. School has provided support in implementing multicultural values. American education includes knowledge of other continents and countries. History shows multiculturalism knowledge can be devised and embedded in the school system.	Multicultural education should not be implemented by teaching it as one of the subjects in school. It can be done by making it as part of the ethics and morals of the school system. Multicultural education not only includes domestic culture, but can also involve the culture of other countries to enrich students' literature.	Multicultural implementation education requires commitment from all educational elements and school members to deliver education that can meet the learning needs of students as a whole.
2.	Azamul Fadhy Noor Muhammad, Marsigit, Marsigit, Soeharto Soeharto.	Learning the concept of two-dimensional figure through Borobudur artifacts for lower graders of	2021	Teachers need to contextualize math learning by connecting math content to culture and practical experiences of low-	Math concepts taught in elementary schools should be relevant to students' personalities	Culture-based learning can not only be performed in one cultural element, but all elements can be

		elementary school mathematics		ranking students at the primary school level.	experience in everyday life, this may relate to cultural elements present in the environment.	combined in mathematics learning, such as traditional games, regional dances as learning media in mathematics.
3	Hilmiati Heri Suwignyo Djoko Saryono Roekhan	Examining the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Materials (CRTM) of Sasak culture literature using Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)	2019	CRT strategies allow students to relate concepts and real-life experiences to culture. Learning objectives are optimally achieved with a cultural approach, custom and local wisdom that grows and develops in the community. Cultural wealth as a valuable asset to be preserved, is an effort to preserve culture through education.	The Sasak culture becomes fulfilled with the implementation of CRTM starting with understanding short stories, taking values in novels and judging novels.	CRT implementation can be done in all tribes and cultures, it can even be done multiculturally by applying content differentiation learning (not only Sasak culture but also cultures from other regions).
4.	Ega Gradini Firmansyah B	Measuring Students' Mathematical Literacy in Culturally Responsive Mathematics Classroom	2019	Mathematics is no longer a tool but a human activity (Morgan, 2001). It is very important to teach math as an activity relevant to real circumstances, namely contextual with the daily life of students.	The mathematics curriculum should focus on the role of mathematics in socio-cultural contexts with related ideas and concepts ethnomathematics to solve contextual problems.	Numerical literacy can be linked to different cultural elements so that children not only become proficient in math, but also gain new insights in a cultural context. This can be done, for example, through the traditional sondah game to learn flat
5	Sulistiyani Puteri Ramadhani, Arita Marini,	Implementasi Pendidikan Multikultural Dilihat dari Perspektif Guru,	2021	School is a suitable educational facility to introduce multicultural differences.	During the learning process, the teacher creates a climate that forms a	Implementing culture-based education not only teaches students, but

	Arifin Maksum	Kepala Sekolah dan Kegiatan Peserta didik di Sekolah Dasar			multicultural orientation that focuses on social and cultural justice for students, so that the teacher must transform himself into a multicultural person and have a multicultural learning design that does not focus on cognitive values alone.	teachers, principals and staff to enrich their understanding of culture so that they can present interesting and contextual learning.
6	Gregorius Sebo Bito, Fredy	Ethnomathematics: Musical Instrumen In Ja'i Dances For Culturally Responsive Teaching In Elementary	2020	Each region has a unique intellectual property that must be preserved on an ongoing basis.	One way to preserve traditional dance is to teach math, using traditional dance as content and context for math learning	Dancing is a fun thing. Learning math through different regional dances is very positive. The types of dances can be adapted to each region or are multicultural in nature. For example, the corner lesson in performing the floor pattern in the manuk dadali dance.
7.	Gregorius Sebo Bito Fredy Wawan Herry Setyawan	Ethnomathematics: Design Of Sabuk Tradisional (Keru) Bajawa as A Learning Media For Elementary School	2021	The teaching and learning process can be successful and meaningful if it uses a design that is close to the learner, namely the cultural context.	Cultural elements have diverse mathematical content in schools. In addition to content, cultural elements in mathematics pedagogy can be used as learning media. In terms of different content or learning materials for mathematics, the traditional Bajawa belt (Keru) contains elements	Traditional belt media (Keru) is just 1 of many cultural property designs so that other properties can be used as math learning media from both local and cross- cultural cultures to create differentiated learning.

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					of geometry, such as points, lines, angles; the concept of parallel lines, intersecting lines, the concept of simple plane shapes, the concept of area and the concept of symmetry. In addition to the geometric content, the traditional Bajawa belt also incorporates the concepts of multiplication, addition, and number patterns. From a math pedagogy perspective, Keru is a traditional Bajawa belt that can be used as a medium for teaching math in elementary schools.
8.	Emi Sulistri, Eti Sunarsih, dan Erdi Guna Utama	Pengembangan Buku Saku Digital Berbasis Etnosains di Sekolah Dasar Kota Singkawang	2020	Cultural education and local excellence provide opportunities for units of study to develop competencies in line with student characteristics, encouraging teachers to develop learning by using local wisdom as a teaching tool.	Ethno science-based digital pocketbooks are expected to contribute to students' understanding of local culture and wisdom by teaching science with topical themes and their displacement, making it easier to understand concepts. Making digital pocketbooks is a new learning resource for students, then it can become a school inventory and can be included in a digital library or distributed via link or barcode, so that it can be a reference sources of learning for all students wherever they are.
9.	Atika Ulya Akmal, Lia , Tuti Lestari , Azmi Asra ,	Analisis Etnosains dalam Pembelajaran IPA di Sekolah Dasar	2020	Culture-based learning is very necessary for students, because by	Ethno-science as cultural knowledge also teaches children to Culture-based learning, especially ethno-sciences, can be

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	Effendy , Festiyed, Skunda	Kota Padang dan Bukittinggi		applying culture-based learning the student will be taught an attitude of love for culture and nation, so ethno-science based learning will introduce the students to possibilities of a region that the students will be more familiar with their regional culture.	be tolerant of fellow friends with different cultural backgrounds. The learning process is effective when ethno science is integrated into learning themes as the main theme of learning. For example, cultural knowledge related to traditional rituals, traditional medicinal plants, traditional houses and other cultural knowledge relevant to the learning theme.	integrated not only through learning media, but can also be integrated into teaching materials and evaluation or assessment questions.
10.	Mia Zultrianti Sari , Yani Fitriyani, Dwi Amalia	Analisis Bahan Ajar Keragaman Suku Bangsa dan Budaya dalam Implementasi Karakter Toleransi di Sekolah Dasar	2020	An ideal education requires several preparations to be made by educators, including teaching materials to strengthen students' understanding.	Teaching material with ethnic and cultural diversity can increase the tolerance character of students.	Tolerance character teaching can be implemented not only through teaching materials, but also through lesson plans, media, and assessments.
11.	Dwi Kurniasih & Andika Arisetyawan	Integrasi Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Baduy Pada Bahan Ajar Tematik Kelas 4 Sekolah Dasar	2019	Thematic teaching material contains from different subjects to a theme. Based on the competence of each subject, the correct subjects are selected and concluded in a specific theme. What kind of topics should be addressed in order to realize the transfer of values and knowledge? Which culture can be integrated in a thematic teaching material? Both topics	The integration of the local wisdom of the Baduy people within the ethnographic framework of the economic system, the art system and the religious system contain values in the form of conservation, humility and mutual cooperation in thematic teaching materials.	Integrating local wisdom into teaching materials is important in culture-based learning, each cultural value should be explored more deeply so that students learn fully.

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				and culture should both be considered when creating teaching materials where the teaching materials contain interesting topics as well as values and culture that are still relevant to current conditions.		
12.	Ida Rosihah , Aan Subhan Pamungkas	Pengembangan Media Pembelajaran Scrapbook Berbasis Konteks Budaya Banten Pada Mata Pelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial Di Sekolah Dasar	2018	Choosing the right media that is appropriate to attract student's learning enthusiasm can facilitate students' absorption or understanding of the teacher-delivered learning. In addition, the choice of learning media also has a major impact on the achievement of student learning outcomes. Interesting learning media can help students feel comfortable and happy during the learning process. By using the media, the students can play an active role in the learning process, so that the learning turn into student-centered learning not teacher-centered learning anymore.	Scrapbook media based on Banten cultural context, developed for third grade students of SD Negeri Banjar Agung 4, are well suited for use in social science learning in natural and artificial environmental materials.	The content of the scrapbook on natural and artificial environmental materials can be adapted from different cultures (not only Banten culture), so that it further strengthens understanding, and also inserts the character of love for the motherland and presents differentiated learning.
13.	Hera Deswita, Suyitno Muslim	Malay Etnomathematic of Riau and Riau Islands: Systematic Literature Review	2021	The usefulness of math will be felt by learning math from the culture of local students. It provides students with rich opportunities to focus on what is relevant to the real world and make meaningful connections between different disciplines	Culture-Based Learning in Mathematics uses ethno mathematics related to Riau and Riau Malaysian culture with respect to geometric material.	Integrating two or more cultures into learning creates multicultural learning to enrich students' literature.

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(Bazinet, R., &  
Marshall, A. M, 2015).

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Based on the above findings, several issues should be discussed regarding the implementation of CRT in primary education, including 1) the importance of teachers' understanding and skills regarding cultural diversity in the classroom, as in the article; 2) the commitment and role of all educational elements in schools to create CRT learning; 3) learning using the CRT approach is not only cognitively oriented but also character building; 4) the implementation of CRT is not only in teaching materials or media, but in all learning resources, including planning and assessment. The detailed explanation is as follows:

### ***3.1 The importance of teachers' insights and skills in the implementation of CRT***

Related to the importance of the teacher's understanding and skills regarding the cultural diversity that exists in the classroom is an important thing that the teacher must possess. This is also explained by (Sulistri et al., 2020) that teachers need to understand the characteristics and diversity that exist in the classroom they teach. "These suggestions are just examples of the knowledge and skills needed to prepare educators to work more effectively with students who are not part of the US. ethnic, racial and cultural mainstream. This preparation requires a more in-depth understanding of the specific cultures of different ethnic groups, how they influence learning behaviours and how classroom interactions and instruction can be changed to embrace these differences" (Cultural, 2002). This explanation emphasizes that teachers need to know about the diversity of students in the classroom so that they can all be embraced. This is also explained by (Quinzio-Zafran & Wilkins, 2020), that implementing culturally responsive education requires several things, including: socio-cultural awareness, attitude, commitment and skills, constructivist views, knowledge of the student's life, and culturally responsive education.

Bitto & Fredy (2020) also explained that teachers are expected to be able to enrich knowledge (mathematics) in educational practice to perform culturally responsive learning. Of course, from the various explanations above, the teacher should carefully prepare everything possible to facilitate all learning needs of students without any discrimination.

### ***3.2 The commitment and role of all educational elements in schools to create CRT learning***

With regard to the importance of the commitment and role of the teacher and all elements of education in developing culture-based and multicultural learning, as explained by (Mulyani, 2019) that multicultural learning is not only about teaching world culture to students. Implementation of multicultural education requires school commitment to change curriculum, materials, learning styles, attitudes, norms and perceptions of teachers, students, staff and school management. It's not easy to do. Many will complain that they are unprepared and limited in multicultural concepts and knowledge. Primary school stakeholders recognize their need to have the same rights as other people, despite differences of race, class or gender. Not only do teachers play a role in culture-based learning, but school principals and even staff also contribute.

### ***3.3 CRT focuses not only on cognitive but also on character-building***

As for learning using the CRT approach, it is not only cognitively oriented but also character-building. This is conveyed by (Ramadhani et al., 2020) that teachers create a climate during the learning process that forms a multicultural focus that focuses on social and cultural justice for students, so teachers need to transform themselves into individuals who are multicultural. and have a learning design based on multiculturalism that does not focus solely on cognitive values. Indonesian characters that students must have, such as understanding differences between ethnic groups, language cultures

and race that exist in the social environment. This is also reinforced by (Rosihah & Pamungkas, 2018) that learning outcomes are not only cognitively proficient, but also affectively. This in the context of realizing competitive citizens by not eliminating the character of the Indonesian nation. In addition, it produces citizens who are sensitive to the problems that arise in society both locally and globally. M. Z. Sari et al. (2020) also added that the success or failure of achieving educational goals strongly depends on the teaching materials used. Therefore, the teacher as a facilitator should be able to develop different characters in each lesson, including the character of tolerance through teaching materials of ethnic and cultural diversity. In this case, it is very clear that the output of culture-based learning is expected not only from the developing cognitive domain, but also from the affective and psychomotor development, especially how it respects the diversity that exists in Indonesia and even in the world.

### **3.4 CRT includes all learning equipment**

Finally, CRT implementation is not just about teaching materials or media, but about all learning resources, including planning and assessment. It is clear that the use of ethnoscience or culture-based learning at the primary school level is still very minimal. This is seen from 3 aspects, namely: Learning lesson plans, teaching materials used and exam questions that are given to students (Akmal, 2021). It is very important for teachers to prepare comprehensive learning resources that include cultural elements. Students' daily experiences can also be a source of learning, as explained (Muhammad et al., 2021) that teachers need to contextualize learning by connecting content to culture and students' real-life experiences. This was also stated by (Kurniasih & Arisetyawan, 2019) that creating teaching materials based on local wisdom can use a product model that includes three phases, namely: planning, development and assessment. In addition, it is emphasized that it is a necessity and a challenge for a teacher to choose lesson plans, teaching methods, teaching materials and media that are in accordance with the cultural factors of students (Muhson, 2015).

Teaching materials or learning content can be designed based on everyday phenomena related to culture. Teachers should have the ability to explore everyday phenomena in cultural elements as learning content (Bito & Fredy, 2020). In line with the above statement, (Gradini & Firmansyah, 2020) explains the importance of teaching as an activity relevant to real conditions, namely contextual with students' daily life, namely culture. Culture-based learning will make goals easier to achieve because students engage in contextual learning. This is also explained by (Suwignyo & Saryono, 2019) that learning goals are optimally achieved with the approach of culture, custom and local wisdom that grows and develops in society. Apart from that, cultural learning will make meaningful connections between different disciplines (Hayati et al., 2020). Culture-based contextual learning will make students feel close to their culture and even other cultures. All cultural elements can be integrated into learning resources, not just in the form of content, but can be incorporated as media and even assessment and evaluation to create meaningful learning.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Cultural Based Learning or Cultural Responsive Education (CRT) is a positive thing in developing character and cognitive values. This is in line with the diversity that exists in Indonesia, so that a variety of learning content can be implemented in CRT. CRT is a good teaching approach that should be developed with a diversity of cultures so that multicultural learning can take place. Based on content analysis studies of several articles on "culturally responsive teaching in primary education", it is illustrated that the implementation of CRT elicits good practices that need further development, both in terms of cognitive and character. The adoption of CRT is not easy, it certainly needs commitment, increased teacher knowledge and skills in presenting fun and meaningful learning so teachers really need to recognize the diversity in their classrooms. In addition, the support of all parts of education and the school community is important. CRT implementation can take the form of lesson planning,

media, teaching materials, and even assessment and evaluation. The implications of these findings are that primary school teachers are expected to continue to improve their competence in presenting culture-based learning to create meaningful, contextual learning and facilitate diversity without discrimination against students. The limitations of this study are that there is no comparison regarding the implementation of culture-based learning in foreign schools, so references are still needed to strengthen CRT implementation. In the future, this research can be developed by using additional references from teaching abroad to supplement the literature on the success of culture-based learning at the primary school level.

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