

## Multicultural Education Paradigm Based Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia

Abdul Muqtadir. S<sup>1</sup>, St.Warda Hanafie Das<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1-2</sup> University of Muhammadiyah Parepare, Parepare, Indonesia

Email: [mqtdrs@gmail.com](mailto:mqtdrs@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [wardahhadass@gmail.com](mailto:wardahhadass@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract.** *Multicultural education in Indonesia is a response to the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, and languages that exist in this country. This article discusses the paradigm of multicultural education based on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as an approach to creating social harmony and increasing tolerance in a plural society. This approach integrates Islamic values with the principles of multiculturalism to create an educational environment that is inclusive, fair and respectful of differences. Thus, education can serve as a guideline for implementing the educational process in order to progress and become better.*

**Keywords:** *Multicultural education, Islamic Religious Education, tolerance, pluralism, social harmony.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays an important role in shaping the character and morality of the nation's next generation. The PAI-based multicultural education paradigm in Indonesia seeks to integrate Islamic values with respect for diversity in society.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 article 3 clarifies the purpose of education. "National education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the nation's life, aiming to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens" (Guru et al., 2022). Therefore, in realizing educational goals in accordance with Article 3 of the Law, cooperation between components involved in education is needed.

In the reality of life, multicultural Islamic education must be presented to expand the discourse of human religious thought which has so far still maintained religious "egoism" and cultural "ethnocentrism". Therefore, multicultural can also be interpreted as cultural and religious plurality. Thus, if the culture is plural, then humans are required to maintain plurality so that a friendly and peaceful life occurs. Cultural plurality is a social and political interaction between people who have different ways of living and thinking in a society. Ideally, cultural pluralism means a rejection of bigotry, prejudice, racism, tribalism and an inclusive acceptance of existing diversity (Pangesti & Putri, 2023).

Multicultural education in Indonesia refers to an educational approach that recognizes, respects, and celebrates the cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity that exists in society. In the context of Indonesia, which has more than 17,000 islands, hundreds of tribes, and various religions and languages, multicultural education is very relevant to prepare the young generation to coexist harmoniously.

Multicultural education can be integrated through subjects aimed at character building, one of which is through Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Because Islamic Religious Education has a role in helping students to develop views, attitudes, life skills and social attitudes in accordance with Islamic teachings or values. So that multicultural education integrated in PAI subjects can be carried out by discussing themes related to multiculturalism and then associated with verses, norms, and ethnicities.

The attitude of accepting each other, respecting different values, cultures, and beliefs will not automatically develop on its own. Especially because in a person there is a tendency to expect others to be like him. Mutual acceptance and respect will develop quickly if trained and educated in the younger generation in the national education system (Ibrahim, 2008).

Indonesia is known as a country rich in cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity. However, this diversity is often a source of conflict if not managed properly. Education has a strategic role in building awareness of the importance of tolerance and harmony in society. Multicultural education, especially PAI-based, is one of the effective ways to form the character of students who respect differences and are able to coexist harmoniously in the midst of plurality.

The purpose of this study is to discuss the paradigm of multicultural education based on PAI Islamic Religious Education as an approach to create social harmony and increase tolerance in a plural society. This approach integrates Islamic values with the principles of multiculturalism to create an inclusive, fair, and respectful educational environment. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to the development of religious education. In this context, it is important to review the existing literature on multicultural education and PAI.

In closing, the PAI-based multicultural education paradigm in Indonesia plays a very important role in the development of a more developed educational order. The educational process in the future will form a more varied order, collaborate with each other, and integrate with each other to build a more advanced education. By understanding the background of the problem, the facts of the literature, the gaps in research, and the purpose of writing, it is

hoped that this research can provide new insights and contribute to the development of Islamic education in Indonesia.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Multicultural education is an educational approach that respects the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, languages, and traditions in society. This paradigm aims to create equality, justice, and respect for differences. In the Indonesian context, multicultural education is relevant because of the cultural and religious diversity that is the characteristic of the nation. The term multicultural education etymologically consists of two terms, namely education and multicultural (Maslikhah, 2007)

Ali Maksum in his book *Pluralism and Multiculturalism New Paradigm of Education in Indonesia*, stated that multicultural-based education is very helpful for students to understand, accept, and appreciate people from ethnicities, cultures, values, and religions optimally. Therefore, students should be invited directly to see the values of other cultures in order to understand deeply so that they are able to appreciate and respect other cultures. Of course, in this case, we are not hiding other cultures or homogenizing various cultures into one national culture. What is interesting and we must note is that in this multicultural-based education, each culture is accommodated and has its own values, so there needs to be an openness of heart and mind in the relativity of cultural values.

The multicultural education paradigm refers to an approach oriented towards recognition, appreciation, and management of diversity. According to Banks (2009), multicultural education involves reforming the education system to be more inclusive of various cultural backgrounds of students. The main goal is to form individuals who have cross-cultural understanding, empathy for diversity, and adaptability in a pluralistic society.

In this regard, (Arifin, 2018) added that the development of multicultural Islamic education in Islamic educational institutions must pay attention to the multicultural values that have been inherent since the Indonesian nation existed through the Indonesian philosophy of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, such as *Gotong Royong*, among others, accompanying, and appreciating, among others. , is an important capital to develop multicultural Islamic education to become bigger and better, especially in Islamic educational institutions

Koni (2016) explained that the word Multiculturalism means the cultural diversity of each Indonesian society which is diverse and unique. This article examines Multiculturalism and Islamic Religious Education. The discussion is an elaboration of the

position of Islamic Religious Education in the reality of multiculturalism, aspects of Islamic Religious Education that are relevant to diversity and an explanation of how to implement Islamic Religious Education in the midst of existing diversity.

James A. Banks identifies five main dimensions in multicultural education, namely content integration by including cultural perspectives and experiences of minority groups in the curriculum. The process of knowledge construction by encouraging students to understand how cultural background can affect the interpretation of knowledge. Reducing prejudice by developing learning activities that reduce stereotypes and prejudices between cultures. Pedagogical equality by using teaching methods that are responsive to the needs of students from various backgrounds. School and cultural empowerment in creating an educational environment that empowers all parties.

Overall, the foundation of this theory shows that multicultural education is a strategic step to create a harmonious and inclusive society in the midst of diversity. By integrating the values of respect for difference into education, it is hoped that students will not only understand, but also be able to apply multicultural principles in daily life based on Islamic knowledge.

### **3. METHODS**

This study uses a Descriptive Qualitative approach, by searching for the main information and describing it, a systemic overview of the data set, and descriptive elaboration by examining various literature. This research is focused on library research, which is a research that focuses on searching for literature data by digging up literature such as books, scientific journals, magazines, newspapers, documents, and so on to obtain complete data and information.

The main sources of data in this study include accredited academic journals, books written by experts in the field of education and religion, and articles that discuss issues related to multicultural education.

### **4. RESULTS**

#### **A. Basic Concepts of Multicultural Education**

Multicultural education is an approach in education that values diversity and aims to create equality in education for all groups of society. This concept emphasizes the importance of inclusivity, recognition of differences, and intercultural dialogue. In

the Indonesian context, multicultural education must be able to answer the challenges of cultural and religious diversity which is very complex.

Basically, previous learning models related to nationality already existed. However, it is still inadequate as an educational means to appreciate the differences of each tribe, culture, and ethnicity. This can be seen by the emergence of conflicts that often occur in the reality of the life of the nation and the state today. This shows that the understanding of tolerance is still very lacking. (Gofur et al., 2022)

According to Stephen Hill, Representative Director of the United Nations Agency for Education, multicultural education can be said to be successful if the process involves all elements of society. Concretely, education does not only involve teachers or the government, but all elements of society. This is due to the multidimension of aspects of life that are covered in multicultural education (Mahfud Choirul 2005:208).

Here are the basic concepts of multicultural education:

#### **a) Appreciation for Diversity**

Multicultural education recognizes and appreciates the diversity of cultures, religions, languages, ethnicities, and genders as assets that enrich society. This creates an atmosphere that supports mutual respect and tolerance. In Islam, plurality built on the original character, individual tendencies, and differences of each party is included in the category of fitrah that has been outlined by Allah swt for all humans. As a light is explained in the Qur'an surah al-Hujurat verse 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

*"O man! Truly, We created you from a man and a woman, and then We made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous. Truly, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing."*

This verse teaches that the diversity of human beings in nations and tribes is God's grace, and the ultimate goal is to know each other, not to enmity with each other. Through multiculturalism, it is hoped that society can create an inclusive atmosphere, where every individual feels accepted and valued without needing to feel threatened or marginalized due to cultural differences or identities. Thus, multiculturalism is not

only about passively acknowledging cultural diversity, but also about encouraging the integration and active participation of every member of society in social, economic, and political life (Melati & Hamdanah, 2024).

Islam emphasizes the importance of tolerance, mutual understanding, and compassion between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH himself gave a real example of how to treat people from various tribes and ethnicities with respect and courtesy. He also emphasized the importance of treating fellow human beings fairly and kindly regardless of cultural or racial background.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

*It means: "And we did not send you (Muhammad), but to be mercy to the universe." (Q.S Al Anbiya: 107)*

In the Islamic perspective, multiculturalism is not only about acknowledging cultural diversity, but also about building harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships between individuals and different cultural groups. Islam emphasizes the importance of cooperation between people to achieve good goals, such as peace, justice, and common prosperity. Therefore, Islam's understanding of multiculturalism requires a willingness to dialogue, communicate, and collaborate with different individuals and cultural groups in order to create a more inclusive and harmonious society.

#### **b) Equality of Opportunity**

This education emphasizes providing equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their cultural or social background. The goal is to reduce inequality in education, social jealousy and trigger conflicts.

Equal opportunity in education is a principle that guarantees that every individual, regardless of social, economic, cultural, religious, gender, or physical background, has equal access to quality education. This principle aims to reduce inequality and provide equal opportunities for all people to develop intellectually, socially, and economically through education.

A deep understanding of multiculturalism and an Islamic perspective on it is an important aspect in forming a strong foundation for society in promoting inclusion, harmony, and justice (I. L Khasanah, & Paryanto, 2023). Through this understanding,

society can enrich themselves in appreciating and respecting diversity, thus enabling the creation of inclusive social spaces for all individuals regardless of cultural, religious, or ethnic background (Alfrida Taruk Ponno et al., 2023. Important Aspects of Equal Opportunity in Education:

**a. Universal Access to Education**

Every child has the right to free and quality basic education, as stipulated in various international treaties, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since the world of education has changed so that it becomes a complex problem, a systems approach must be applied to explain education in the modern era. The school of the future should teach students how to learn from various sources (learn how to learn), Toffler said (1992:4). In the modern world, the lack of the ability to learn is known as the lack of education. Indonesia's future will be characterized by a society that is open to learning and has a strong outlook on life. (Zahra & Arifin, 2024)

**b. Eradication of Discrimination**

The concept of discrimination has been regulated in Law No. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, in Article 1 (3). According to the law, discrimination is any restriction, harassment, or exclusion based directly or indirectly on differences between people within religion, ethnicity, race, ethnic origin, class, social status, economic status, gender, language, belief, policy, resulting in the violation of human rights and the reduction, deviation or loss of recognition, enforcement or exercise of fundamental freedoms in both individual and collective life in politics, economics, law, social, culture and other areas of life. (Updated, 2020)

Discrimination against teachers is the basic support for improving the quality of education. However, in fact, in elementary schools there is a lack of teachers, a lack of professional teachers, and a lack of educators who want to be mutated for certain reasons. This makes students who lose money because they are victims of the lack of education they get. So this can be the opposite of the government's efforts from year to year because this is also not only troublesome for students but also for the government.

There should be no discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, social status, or physical/mental ability in admission or participation in educational institutions.

**c. Equivalent Facilities**

All schools, both in cities and remote areas, must have adequate facilities and infrastructure to support the teaching and learning process. Facilities and infrastructure that support the improvement of the quality of education. However, due to the lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure and far from adequate standards, it results in a non-optimal technology-oriented learning process. In addition to the inadequate school building and the lack of learning space, the classroom is an important component to get conditions in the learning process that can run optimally.

The success of learning also depends on the availability of relevant learning resources. Ani (2019) stated that learning resources must be practical, easy to obtain, do not require special equipment, are not expensive, and do not require special skills. Therefore, it is necessary to organize a program to provide adequate and relevant learning resources. A supportive learning environment is also a key factor. Utamingtyas (2021) emphasized that a comfortable, quiet, and distraction-free learning environment as well as natural light sources can help students feel comfortable and motivated to learn (Updated, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to make efforts to create a conducive learning environment.

**d. Support for Vulnerable Groups**

Education is the main thing owned by people with disabilities. With the right to education, it can improve the standard of living of people with disabilities. Not only that, if people with disabilities get access to education, it is possible that the status of disabilities as marginalized people will change and they have the opportunity to be equal to other humans. The importance of the involvement of people with disabilities in the world of education is due to the fact that it can be one of the inclusion efforts to hack discrimination. It is through education that they can interact and participate directly in the community (Dayanti, Fitria, 2022).

Provide special assistance, such as student scholarships, affirmative programs, or physical accessibility for people with disabilities, to ensure that vulnerable groups can access education equally.

#### e. Opportunities to Continue Education

All individuals should have an equal opportunity to continue their education to a higher level based on ability and achievement, without financial or social barriers.

One of the efforts to increase the number of students to continue to higher education is by providing motivation, monitoring and an intensive approach so that students are interested in continuing their education (Rahamavati & Sha Shaak, 2022). Therefore, it is hoped that there will be enthusiasm for students in going through the process and being able to continue their education.

#### f. Progressive Government Policies

The government, as the most responsible party in the field of education, should act responsively and progressively in policy-making, so that it can answer the major challenges of the industrial revolution 4.0 as quickly as possible. especially to increase the quantity and quality of Indonesian human resources (Santika, 2021). Given that government policies in the field of education certainly have a significant influence on the learning process which will later boil down to human resources as the output it produces.

The government is required to be sensitive, responsive, and fast in designing a grand design of prospective and futuristic education policies whose direction or orientation is able to prepare Indonesian people to become human resources who are not only resilient and reliable, but also have good character supported by high productivity, creativity, and innovation in facing fierce competition or global competition in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. Ini (Asher, 2022). Therefore, the government must implement policies that encourage equal distribution of education, such as inclusive education programs, school zoning, or education subsidies.

The Challenges in Realizing Equal Opportunities:

- 1) **Economic Inequality:** Children from poor families often face cost barriers.
- 2) **Low Awareness:** Some people still do not realize the importance of education, especially for girls.
- 3) **Infrastructure Limitations:** Remote areas often lack schools, teachers, and facilities.
- 4) **Covert Discrimination:** There are still stereotypes that affect educational policies or practices.

With the joint efforts of the government, the community, and educational institutions, equality of opportunity in education can be realized, so that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. So it is necessary to develop in this realm.

### **c) Curriculum Inclusivity**

In multicultural education, the curriculum is designed to include perspectives from different cultural groups, so that learners can understand the world from a broader perspective (Kholish et al., 2022). Inclusivity in the curriculum refers to efforts to ensure that all learners, regardless of their background, ability, culture, gender, religion, or special needs, receive equal and meaningful learning opportunities.

The implementation of learning in inclusive schools is adjusted to the needs of students and refers to the applicable curriculum and learning guidelines for students with special needs so that the inclusive education curriculum, even though it uses the regular school curriculum (national curriculum), needs to be modified in accordance with the stage of inclusive student development by considering its characteristics and level of intelligence. (Sahrudin et al., 2023)

Here are some of the essential elements that include inclusivity in the curriculum:

#### **1) Diverse and Representative Content**

Diverse perspectives, namely learning materials must include viewpoints from various cultures, ethnic groups, and genders to respect the diversity of students. Positive representation, namely that the educational curriculum must show a fair and positive representation of minority groups or those who are often marginalized.

#### **2) Learner-Centered Approach**

Differentiated learning is that the curriculum must be designed to meet the various learning needs of students, including those who are talented, have special needs, or learn in a certain style (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). And students are directed to actively participate by involving students in the learning process so that they feel heard and appreciated.

#### **3) Inclusive Language**

In the scope of education, it must avoid discriminatory or exclusive language and concepts, but use neutral language and respect the gender, culture, and religious identity of students.

#### **4) Accessibility**

Teaching materials or materials should be available in a variety of formats, such as audio, braille, or easy-to-read text. Meanwhile, school facilities and infrastructure must support accessibility for students with disabilities, including classrooms, libraries, and play areas.

#### **5) Development of Tolerance and Empathy Values**

The curriculum should include character education that encourages learners to understand and appreciate differences as well as collaborative activities that involve learners from different backgrounds.

#### **6) Community Engagement**

Education should involve parents, communities, and other stakeholders in curriculum development to be more relevant and inclusive by holding activities that promote cultural diversity, such as cultural days or international exhibitions.

#### **7) Fair Assessment**

Use a variety of evaluation methods to accommodate different learning styles. Avoid biased judgments against certain backgrounds. To realize an inclusive curriculum, teacher training, continuous evaluation of the curriculum, and support from national education policies are needed. This approach ensures that all learners feel welcomed, valued, and able to develop to their potential.

#### **d) Development of Self-Identity and Social Awareness**

This education helps learners recognize and understand their own cultural identity while respecting the identities of others. In addition, students are invited to be aware of social injustices that may exist in society and play an active role in overcoming them (Rosyad & Indramayu, 2020). This is very necessary so that students can develop their emotional aspects in facing various social challenges. Various social problems make a person mature in making decisions, but it is necessary to be provided with knowledge in preparing themselves.

Students need to be equipped with principles to be the basis for making decisions. The principles that are embedded in students will lead to clear goals (Second, 2023). Meanwhile, without principles, it is easy to be distracted and fall into things that can endanger themselves and their future. Treatment in the community is an influence that can be a learning for students to develop their potential.

Students in the process of providing information must be detected early on regarding their potential, as a strength to face the challenges of the times in the era of

globalization development. Students must be equipped with skills or skills, especially in the scope of technology as a provision to be able to manage social challenges. Therefore, students must be able to have principles as a development of self-identity and have the ability to live socially.

### **Strategies for Developing Self-Identity and Social Awareness**

- 1) Character Education:** Instilling noble values through formal curriculum and extracurricular activities.
- 2) Mentoring and Counseling:** Supporting individuals through mentorship that helps them understand and overcome personal challenges.
- 3) Social Activities:** Involve individuals in community service programs or social projects.
- 4) Use of Technology:** Raising awareness of global issues through social media and digital learning platforms.

Individuals who have a deep understanding of themselves tend to understand others more easily and contribute positively to society. The process of social interaction helps to enrich an individual's identity through new experiences and perspectives. Education and training that focuses on values such as tolerance, cooperation, and social responsibility can help develop these two aspects.

#### **e) Dialogue-Based Teaching**

It is a learning method that emphasizes interaction and active communication between educators and students through dialogue. This approach aims to create a collaborative, critical, and reflective learning atmosphere, by placing students as active subjects in the learning process. Multicultural education encourages intercultural interaction and dialogue in the classroom. This allows learners to learn from the experiences and perspectives of others, as well as improve cross-cultural communication skills.

With active participation in discussions and practical activities, learners are able to see the immediate relevance of theoretical concepts to the situations they face in their daily lives. They not only understand the theory conceptually, but can also internalize it into actions that they can apply in real contexts. Thus, they become more empowered in overcoming challenges and solving problems in their own society (Sunarsi et al., 2024).

Overall, active participation in dialogue and continuous learning brings significant benefits to participants, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding

of theoretical concepts and apply them effectively in practical contexts (Gani & Hidayat, 2023). This not only provides individual benefits, but also contributes to the improvement of the overall condition of society.

The characteristics of dialogue-based teaching:

**1) Two-Way Interaction**

Dialogue is carried out reciprocally between educators and students, or between fellow students. This allows for the exchange of ideas, ideas, and experiences.

**2) Focus on Questions**

Dialogue-based teaching often begins with open-ended questions that encourage students to think critically, provide opinions, and explore relevant answers.

**3) Student Empowerment**

Students are encouraged to be more active, independent, and responsible for their own learning process.

**4) Creating a Collaborative Environment**

The learning atmosphere is designed to be comfortable for discussion, without fear of coming up with ideas or making mistakes.

**5) Appreciation for Diversity of Thought**

Every student's view or opinion is appreciated, so that an inclusive atmosphere is created and supports the development of thinking.

The benefits of dialogue-based teaching aim to improve critical and analytical thinking skills. Students are taught to be actively involved in the learning process, help build effective communication skills, develop students' confidence to convey ideas, and foster an open attitude to diverse perspectives. The implementation of dialogue-based teaching:

**1) Creating Stimulus Questions**

Educators can start with questions that are relevant and challenge students' thinking.

**2) Facilitating Discussion**

Educators act as facilitators who help keep the discussion focused without over-directing.

**3) Encouraging Active Participation**

All students are given the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

#### **4) Integrating Reflection**

After the dialogue, students are invited to reflect on the learning process, identify the lessons they have learned, and how they can be applied.

for application in various educational contexts, especially those that aim to form critical, creative, and collaborative learners. Dialogue-based teaching is suitable

#### **f) Global and Local Perspectives**

Multicultural education not only focuses on local diversity, but also helps learners understand global issues, such as migration, intercultural conflicts, and human rights.

#### **g) Empowerment**

This education aims to empower individuals to be able to contribute positively in a multicultural society, as well as to be agents of change that promote social justice and peace.

### **B. Islamic Religious Education in a Multicultural Context**

PAI has a strategic position in shaping the character and morals of students. In the context of multicultural education, PAI can be a medium to instill universal Islamic values such as justice, tolerance, compassion, and brotherhood. The integration of Islamic values with the principles of multiculturalism can strengthen students' awareness of the importance of respecting differences and establishing harmony in a pluralistic society (Nasri, 2024).

Islamic Religious Education in a multicultural context is an educational approach that aims to provide an inclusive and relevant understanding of religion to the cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity in society. This context is important because the diversity in Indonesia, which is one of the countries with the largest multicultural population in the world, presents challenges and opportunities for the Islamic religious education process. (Nasri & Tabibuddin, 2023)

Here are some important points about Islamic Religious Education in a multicultural context:

#### **a. Basic Principles of Multicultural Islamic Education**

This concept holds fast to noble values or humanist attitudes, tolerance, mutual respect, and respect for others among the academic community. The concept of multiculturalism as a learning approach can create various materials in religious education to instill the value of tolerance. This approach is able to value the diversity of students and also to promote diversity awareness (Abzar, 2024).

- 1) **Tolerance:** Teaching students to respect the differences in beliefs, cultures, and traditions of others. (Wahid, 2024)
- 2) **Inclusivity:** Providing space for all individuals to feel respected in their diversity.
- 3) **Equality:** Eliminating discrimination based on ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup differences.

**b. The Purpose of Islamic Education in a Multicultural Context**

- 1) Forming the character of students who have noble character and respect diversity.
- 2) Equipping students with a deep understanding of Islam as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy for all nature).
- 3) Preventing the development of radicalism and intolerance in society.

**c. Approaches in Multicultural Islamic Education**

- 1) **Intercultural Dialogue:** Opening a discussion space between students to share cultural and religious experiences.
- 2) **Comparative Studies:** Introduce learners to different religious and cultural traditions to foster mutual respect.
- 3) **Character Education:** Instilling Islamic moral values that support social harmony.

**d. Challenges and Solutions**

1) **Challenges:**

- Lack of understanding of teachers about the importance of multicultural education.
- There is an attitude of exclusivism in some communities.

2) **Solution:**

- Training for educators to understand and implement multicultural education.
- Integrating multicultural values in the Islamic religious education curriculum.

**e. The Role of Teachers in Multicultural Education**

- 1) Teachers as facilitators who are able to create a learning environment that respects diversity.
- 2) Teachers are role models in being tolerant and inclusive.
- 3) Teachers as agents of social change who can educate the community about the importance of living in harmony.

**f. Integration in the Curriculum**

- 1) Include material that includes the history of harmonious relations between religions in Indonesia.
- 2) Teaching universal Islamic values that support peace, justice, and well-being.

Islamic Religious Education in a multicultural context plays an important role in creating a generation that is tolerant, inclusive, and able to coexist in diversity. Through this approach, Islamic education can be a vehicle to build a harmonious and civilized society.

### **C. Implementation in Schools**

The implementation of multicultural education in educational units can strengthen students about the importance of mutual respect for each other, respect for cultural, ethnic, religious, ethnic, racial, and socio-cultural differences in the economic, educational, and socio-cultural levels of the Indonesian nation, so that social conflicts can be prevented from an early age (Abidin, 2016).

Multicultural education can keep up with the subject matter that has been eating away at students' minds which results in humanist values and students' identities being eroded over time (Alberth Supriyanto Manurung, Arifin Maskum, 2022). Therefore, it is very important to implement multicultural education in educational units. The implementation of this paradigm requires support from various parties, including the government, schools, teachers, and the community. Some of the steps that can be taken include:

- a. **Teacher Training:** PAI teachers are trained to understand the concept of multiculturalism and how to integrate it in learning.
- b. **Development of Teaching Materials:** Preparation of teaching materials that are relevant to the context of multiculturalism and Islamic values.
- c. **Extracurricular Activities:** Organize activities that promote intercultural dialogue and tolerance.
- d. **Character-Based Evaluation:** Assessment of students is not only cognitive-based but also character and attitude towards diversity.

### **D. Challenges and solutions**

While this paradigm has many benefits, its implementation is not free from challenges, such as:

- a. **Obstacles to Teacher Understanding:** Many teachers do not fully understand the concept of multicultural education.
- b. **Local Cultural Resistance:** Some community groups may feel that this concept is contrary to local traditions.
- c. **Lack of Policy Support:** Educational policies that support PAI-based multicultural education are still limited.

- d. Lack of Resources and Infrastructure: Schools often lack the resources to support multicultural education programs.

Solution:

- a. Intensive Training for Teachers: Provide ongoing training to improve teachers' understanding of multicultural education.
- b. Socialization to the Community: Educating the public about the importance of multicultural education to support social harmony.
- c. Strengthening Education Policy: The government needs to develop policies that are more supportive of PAI-based multicultural education.
- d. Resource Provision: Increasing the allocation of funds and infrastructure development to support the program.

To overcome these challenges, joint efforts from various parties are needed, such as the government, schools, teachers, parents, and the community. The government needs to issue policies that support the implementation of multicultural education and Islamic education (Nursanti & Mayerni, 2023). Schools need to provide adequate resources and infrastructure. Teachers need to participate in training and professional development to improve their competence in integrating these two types of education (Megawati, 2020). Parents need to provide support and encouragement to their children to learn about cultural and religious diversity (Supriatin & Nasution, 2017). And finally, society needs to create an environment that is conducive to the growth of tolerance and respect for differences.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

### **A. The Context of Multicultural Education in Indonesia**

As a country with extraordinary cultural and religious diversity, multicultural education in Indonesia is very relevant to prevent social conflicts. Through the PAI-based education paradigm, it is hoped that students will be able to coexist harmoniously in a plural society.

### **B. Integration of Islamic Values and Multiculturalism**

PAI-based education offers a holistic approach that not only recognizes diversity but also encourages collaboration between people to achieve common goals. Universal Islamic values such as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* combined with the principles of multiculturalism, create a solid foundation for creating an inclusive society.

### C. The Role of the Curriculum as an Instrument of Transformation

Inclusivity in the educational curriculum allows students from diverse backgrounds to feel welcome and valued. By including diverse materials, such as the history of harmonious interreligious relations in Indonesia, students are invited to see the world from a broader perspective.

### D. Implementation Challenges

- a. **Local cultural resistance:** Some communities feel that the principles of multiculturalism are contrary to their traditions.
- b. **Lack of resources:** Schools in remote areas often lack facilities that support multicultural education.
- c. **Lack of teacher competence:** Many teachers do not understand the importance of this paradigm and therefore require further training.

### E. Solutions to Overcome Challenges

- a. **Teacher training:** Provide intensive training to teachers to understand and implement multicultural education.
- b. **Socialization to the community:** Educating the public about the importance of tolerance and diversity.
- c. **Progressive education policy:** Governments need to increase support through resource allocation and development of educational infrastructure.

### F. The Long-Term Potential of PAI-Based Multicultural Education

With proper implementation, this paradigm can shape a young generation that:

- a. **Tolerant and strong-willed:** Have the ability to coexist peacefully in the midst of diversity.
- b. **Contribute to social harmony:** Able to be an agent of change in creating a more equitable and inclusive society.

### G. Conclusion of the Discussion

PAI-based multicultural education is the answer to the challenge of diversity in Indonesia. With the integration of Islamic values and the principles of multiculturalism, this education system not only forms individuals who believe but also have a tolerant, just, and inclusive character. Commitment from all stakeholders is urgently needed to realize this paradigm in the national education system.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Multicultural education and Islamic education have an important role in building the next generation that is tolerant and respectful of diversity. The integration of these two types of education is expected to produce a generation of Muslims who are not only faithful and noble, but also tolerant and able to coexist peacefully in a pluralistic society. Islamic educational institutions must strengthen multiculturalism-based curricula, train teachers to apply inclusive learning methods, and involve diverse communities in school activities. The development of multicultural education in Islamic educational institutions requires long-term commitment from all stakeholders to ensure the creation of a tolerant and mutually respectful society.

The PAI-based multicultural education paradigm in Indonesia plays a very important role in the development of a more developed educational order. The educational process in the future will form a more varied order, collaborate with each other, and integrate with each other to build a more advanced education.

The PAI-based multicultural education paradigm in Indonesia offers a relevant approach to building social harmony in the midst of the diversity of society. By integrating Islamic values and the principles of multiculturalism, education can be an effective means to form a generation that is tolerant, inclusive, and has a strong character. Thus, commitment from all stakeholders is needed to realize this paradigm in the national education system

## 7. LIMITATION

### A. Focus on Literature Studies

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach based on literature review (library research), so that the findings are more theoretical and less in-depth in the context of direct application in the field. The results tend to depend on the validity and relevance of the literature sources used.

### B. Limitations of Empirical Data

This article does not involve empirical data such as interviews, observations, or field surveys. This limits the ability to directly test the effectiveness of the implementation of the PAI-based multicultural education paradigm in various educational units.

### C. Generalizing Context

This study generalizes the application of PAI-based multicultural education without taking into account the variation in geographical conditions, local culture, and the level of readiness of educational infrastructure in various regions in Indonesia. This can affect

the relevance and effectiveness of the implementation of the concept in a particular region.

#### **D. Lack of Discussion of Technical Aspects**

This article does not elaborate on technical strategies or practical guidelines for teachers or educational institutions to integrate the values of multiculturalism into PAI-based learning. This makes it difficult for readers to translate theoretical concepts into practice.

#### **E. Challenges in Under-Explored Implementation**

Although challenges such as local cultural resistance and lack of teacher competence are mentioned, the solutions offered tend to be general and do not identify specific steps that can be taken by the various parties involved.

#### **F. Limitations of Policy Role Analysis**

This article does not provide an in-depth analysis of the role of government policies in supporting PAI-based multicultural education. For example, it does not discuss how school zoning, education subsidies, or inclusive policies can strengthen the implementation of this concept.

#### **G. Lack of Evaluation of the Existing Curriculum**

This article does not discuss the extent to which the current educational curriculum already supports the principle of multiculturalism. It is important to determine if a revision of the curriculum is necessary or if there are elements that can be optimized.

#### **H. Lack of Stakeholder Involvement**

Discussions about stakeholder involvement such as communities, parents, and non-governmental organizations are less explored in detail. In fact, support from various parties is important for the success of the multicultural education paradigm.

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