

Multicultural-Based Islamic Religious Education Learning Methods as an Effort to Prevent Social Conflict

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Abstract

This article examines the concept of multicultural education in the context of Indonesia's diverse society using a literature study approach. The findings show that multicultural education plays a crucial role in fostering awareness of equality, tolerance, justice, and appreciation of cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity. The implementation of multicultural education in academic institutions promotes inclusive learning environments, reduces social discrimination, and strengthens national unity. Nevertheless, several challenges persist, including limited teacher competence in integrating multicultural values and the lack of supporting learning resources. Therefore, reinforcing multicultural education through curriculum innovation, teacher training, and policy support is essential to build a harmonious society rooted in tolerance and solidarity.

Keywords: Multicultural Education, Tolerance, Diversity

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan mengkaji konsep pendidikan multikultural dalam konteks keberagaman bangsa Indonesia melalui pendekatan studi pustaka. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan multikultural berperan penting dalam membangun kesadaran akan kesetaraan, toleransi, keadilan, dan penghargaan terhadap keragaman budaya, etnis, agama, dan bahasa. Penerapan pendidikan multikultural di lembaga pendidikan terbukti mampu menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang inklusif, mengurangi diskriminasi sosial, serta memperkuat persatuan bangsa. Namun demikian, implementasinya masih menghadapi berbagai hambatan, seperti keterbatasan kemampuan guru dalam mengintegrasikan nilai multikultural serta minimnya sumber belajar. Dengan demikian, pendidikan multikultural perlu diperkuat melalui pembaruan kurikulum, peningkatan kompetensi pendidik, dan dukungan kebijakan untuk mewujudkan masyarakat yang harmonis dengan nilai toleransi dan persatuan.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Multikultural, Toleransi, Keberagaman

A. Introduction

Education is a crucial factor that determines the direction and dynamics of social change. It bears the responsibility of fostering a sense of humanity, morality, and personality that foster a peaceful social life through the dissemination of knowledge, insight, and enthusiasm to future generations, including children, adolescents, and young people in particular, as well as the wider community in general. Essentially, education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process that enables students to actively develop their potential, thus developing spiritual and religious strength, self-control, and a mature personality. Education cannot be separated from culture, as the advancement of culture and civilization, reflected in a prosperous, peaceful, creative, productive, and aesthetically pleasing society, is undoubtedly supported by a successful education system. However, education in Indonesia is considered to have insufficiently focused on respecting the diversity of religious beliefs and cultural richness. There is a tendency toward homogenization, systematically introduced through education under the concept of national culture, which places Javanese culture at the center and other cultures at the periphery, even simplifying cultural identities across regions¹.

Indonesia is a country with a very high level of diversity, encompassing ethnicity, culture, and religion. This diversity can trigger conflicts between cultures and between community groups. This is evident in Indonesia's vast territory, which consists of approximately 16,771 islands, both large and small, and a population of approximately 275.77 million. Indonesian society consists of approximately 300 ethnic groups, speaking approximately 200 different languages, and embracing a variety of religions and beliefs, including Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and various other local beliefs².

Indonesia is known as a multicultural nation due to the diversity of races, religions, ethnicities, languages, and social conditions inherent in its society. Indonesia's vast territory is one of the main factors contributing to this high level of diversity. The phrase "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity) describes the character of the Indonesian nation, which is diverse in race, religion, nationality, and culture, and this value should also be reflected in the education system. Multiculturalism holds great potential as an admirable social force if diversity can be synergized to promote national progress. Conversely, diversity can also develop into a source of conflict and violence that threatens the stability of national and state life if not managed appropriately and effectively³.

Winkel views learning as a mental and psychological activity that is carried out consciously and actively through interaction with the environment, so that it can produce changes in aspects of knowledge, skills, as well as values and attitudes⁴. Multicultural education for the Indonesian nation can be a strategic tool to prepare

¹ Mashuri, I. (2020). Pembelajaran PAI berbasis multikultural dalam rangka toleransi umat beragama. *Edupedia: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Dan Pedagogi Islam*, 4(2), 95-103.

² Gultom, N., & Lubis, S. (2024). Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Multikultural pada Siswa Kelas XI SMA Abdi Negara Binjai. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kewirausahaan*, 12(1), 409-421.

³ Rajabiah, E. K., & Wardan, K. (2024). Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) Berbasis Multikultural. *Rayah Al-Islam*, 8(4), 2845-2859.

⁴ Haq, V. A., & Opstibdawati, S. (2022). Metode Pembelajaran Pendidikan Islam Berbasis Multikultural Dan Berbasis Peserta Didik. *Bunayya: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 3(2), 134-148.

society to face global cultural currents, while simultaneously strengthening national unity among people from diverse cultural backgrounds based on national values as a national identity. Multiculturalism is not only an ideology, but also an instrument for enhancing human dignity and humanity⁵.

B. Literature Review

Multicultural education is an educational approach that places cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and social identity diversity as an integral part of the learning process. This education aims to foster mutual respect, tolerance, and equality among people in a pluralistic society. Multicultural education encourages the creation of an inclusive learning process that provides space for each student to develop their potential without discrimination based on cultural background. Thus, multicultural education is not simply an introduction to different cultures, but also an effort to build critical awareness about the importance of social justice, respect, and equal rights⁶.

In the context of Indonesia's ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity, multicultural education plays a crucial role in maintaining national unity. Multicultural education in Indonesia serves as a means of unifying national identity through the internalization of national values, without eliminating local cultural identities. The implementation of multicultural education in schools is expected to shape tolerant students who respect differences and are able to live side by side peacefully. This aligns with the value of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika," which reflects that diversity is a national asset, not a divider⁷.

Multiculturalism has several key characteristics, including: acceptance of diversity, rejection of discrimination, development of social empathy, and openness to dialogue between cultural groups. This education aims to shape students into democratic, tolerant, critical individuals, and those with an awareness of social equality. The implementation of multicultural education is also aimed at ensuring that students are not only aware of cultural differences but also able to express positive attitudes in social interactions and reject racism, stereotypes, and prejudice⁸.

From a sociological perspective, multicultural education plays a crucial role in creating harmonious social relations in a pluralistic society. Diversity can be a strength when accompanied by constructive communication and mutual respect, but it can also trigger conflict when there is injustice or the dominance of certain cultures. Multicultural education aims to build collective awareness of the need for peaceful coexistence and eliminate practices of cultural exclusivism that can hinder social cohesion⁹.

The values of multicultural education align with Islamic teachings on universal humanity, brotherhood, and equality. Multicultural Islamic education aims to develop students with noble character, moderate attitudes, respect for diverse beliefs, and the ability to live tolerantly in a pluralistic society. Islamic-based schools that implement

⁵ Sujatmiko, T. R., Nadlif, A., & Astutik, A. P. (2022). Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Multikultural Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Jenjang Sekolah Menengah Pertama. *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme*, 4(3), 267-280.

⁶ Sipuan, S., Warsah, I., Amin, A., & Adisel, A. (2022). Pendekatan pendidikan multikultural. *Aksara: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Nonformal*, 8(2), 815-830.

⁷ Wales, R. (2022). Pendidikan Multikultural di Indonesia. *Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan, Seni, Sains Dan Sosial Humaniora*, 1(01).

⁸ Ningsih, I. W., Mayasari, A., & Ruswandi, U. (2022). Konsep pendidikan multikultural di Indonesia. *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 6(1), 1083-1091.

⁹ Latifah, N., Marini, A., & Maksum, A. (2021). Pendidikan multikultural di sekolah dasar (sebuah studi pustaka). *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Nusantara*, 6(2), 42-51.

multicultural principles not only teach religious subjects but also instill the values of peace, dialogue, and respect for differences as the foundation of social life¹⁰.

C. Method

This article uses a literature review method, a research approach that relies on searching, reading, and critically analyzing various written sources relevant to the topic of study. Literature review is conducted by collecting data and information from books, scientific journals, research reports, and other academic documents to generate a comprehensive conceptual understanding without direct fieldwork. Literature review is a crucial part of research because it plays a role in building a solid theoretical foundation, clarifying study variables, and identifying research gaps that can be further developed¹¹.

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This method is widely used in educational studies, including research on multicultural education. Literature reviews are effective for exploring the application of multicultural education concepts in elementary schools through discussion of previous research findings, without the need for field data collection. This approach allows researchers to develop a comprehensive overview of learning strategies, implementation models, and the obstacles faced by educational institutions in implementing multicultural values¹³.

Methodologically, literature studies fall into the qualitative research category because their primary focus is on interpreting and interpreting theoretical sources. Qualitative research methods based on literature studies emphasize the interpretation of scientific sources to construct logical conclusions without statistical analysis¹⁴. Through these stages, researchers develop conceptual and argumentative descriptions that support the academic formulation of the study's findings. Literature review can stand alone as a research method or be combined with field research. Although it does not involve field observations, literature review still has scientific validity because all findings are compiled from credible sources that have undergone an academic process. Therefore, this method is considered effective for analyzing social and educational

¹⁰ Dwiyani, A. (2023). Pendidikan Islam Multikultural di Sekolah. *Darajat: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 6(1), 68-78.

¹¹ Amruddin, S. P. (2022). Paradigma kuantitatif, teori dan studi pustaka. *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif Dan Kualitatif*,

¹² Kurniawan, B., Dwikoranto, D., & Marsini, M. (2023). Implementasi problem based learning untuk meningkatkan pemahaman konsep siswa: Studi pustaka: Implementation of problem based learning to improve students' concept understanding: Literature review. *Practice of The Science of Teaching Journal: Jurnal Praktisi Pendidikan*, 2(1), 27-36.

¹³ Adlini, M. N., Dinda, A. H., Yulinda, S., Chotimah, O., & Merliyana, S. J. (2022). Metode penelitian kualitatif studi pustaka. *Jurnal Edumaspu*, 6(1), 974-980.

¹⁴ Latifah, N., Marini, A., & Maksum, A. (2021). Pendidikan multikultural di sekolah dasar (sebuah studi pustaka). *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Nusantara*, 6(2), 42-51.

phenomena, especially when researchers want to emphasize strengthening theory and mapping scientific knowledge¹⁵.

D. Result And Discussion

In the article entitled "Multicultural Education as a Foundation for Empowering Students with Special Needs in Elementary Schools" using a literature study research method with a descriptive-analytical approach to examine various publications related to inclusive education in elementary schools¹⁶. The results of the study show that the implementation of multicultural education is able to create a learning environment that accepts diversity and provides full support for students with special needs, so that they obtain effective educational opportunities through improving social skills, communication, and learning independence¹⁷.

Through the article "Strengthening Multicultural Education as an Effort to Increase Understanding and Appreciation of Indonesian Cultural Diversity at SB Permai Penang" applying qualitative methods in a community service program that observes the practice of learning Indonesian culture¹⁸. The results of the study show that a holistic approach based on arts, culture, language, and educational technology has succeeded in increasing students' understanding and appreciation of Indonesian culture and forming an attitude of respect for diversity, so this learning strategy is important to be implemented in a multicultural environment¹⁹.

In the article "Inequality in Educational Accessibility from a Multicultural Education Perspective" using a literature review method by analyzing the legal basis and previous research regarding the right to access education²⁰. This study found that the gap in access to education in Indonesia still occurs due to geographical, economic and family environmental factors, while multicultural education plays an important role in designing policies and implementing fairer educational practices and eliminating social discrimination²¹.

through research entitled "The Concept of Multicultural Education in Muhammadiyah Educational Institutions" using library research methods to examine the ideas of Prof. Dr. Abdul Mu'ti, M.Ed regarding the implementation of multicultural education in Muhammadiyah²². The research results confirm that Muhammadiyah,

¹⁵ Darmalaksana, W. (2020). Metode penelitian kualitatif studi pustaka dan studi lapangan. Pre-Print Digital Library UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

¹⁶ Rini Cahyani Setyawati et al., "Pendidikan Multikultural Sebagai Landasan Untuk PEMBERDAYAAN SISWA KEBUTUHAN KHUSUS DI SD : STUDI LITERATUR" 9 (2024): 1243–1248.

¹⁷ Setyawati, R. C., Zakiah, L., Saputri, D. A., Ramadhani, N. S., & Maulidina, C. A. (2024). Pendidikan Multikultural Sebagai Landasan untuk PEMBERDAYAAN SISWA KEBUTUHAN KHUSUS DI SD: STUDI LITERATUR. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 9(2), 1243–1248.

¹⁸ Nurul Widya Tanaya, Alief Laela Cahyaningtyas, and Alya Rifa Nurjanah, "Penguatan Pendidikan Multikultural Sebagai Upaya Meningkatkan Pemahaman Dan Apresiasi Terhadap Keberagaman Budaya Indonesia Di SB Permai Penang" 6, no. 2 (2024): 131–140.

¹⁹ Minsih, Tanaya, N. W., Cahyaningtyas, A. L., Nurjanah, A. R., Helzi, Utami, R. D., & Fitriyya, M. (2024). Penguatan Pendidikan Multikultural sebagai Upaya Meningkatkan Pemahaman dan Apresiasi terhadap Keberagaman Budaya Indonesia di SB Permai Penang. *Buletin KKN Pendidikan*, 6(2), 131–140.

²⁰ Muhammad Saiful Anwar, "Ketimpangan Aksesibilitas Pendidikan Multikultural Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif" 13, no. 1 (2022): 1–15.

²¹ Anwar, M. S. (2022). Ketimpangan Aksesibilitas Pendidikan dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Multikultural. *Foundasia*, 13(1), 1–15.

²² Abdul Basit, "Konsep Pendidikan Multikultural Di Lembaga Pendidikan Muhammadiyah : " 5, no. 1 (2022).

despite its modern Islamic character, adopts the principle of acceptance of religious and social plurality, and is able to play a role as an educational movement that responds to the challenges of social diversity in both majority and non-Muslim minority areas²³.

In the article "Implementation of Multicultural Education in PKN to Foster Tolerance and Nationalism in Elementary School Students" using a descriptive qualitative approach through interviews, observations, and documentation²⁴. The results of the study show that Citizenship Education integrated with multicultural values can improve students' understanding of tolerance, diversity, and unity, although there are still obstacles in the form of limited learning resources and teacher training; however, the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) project has proven effective in building an attitude of nationalism from an early age²⁵.

In the article "Basic Concepts of Multicultural Education" using the literature review method to explore the conceptual basis of multicultural education in the context of a pluralistic Indonesian society²⁶. The study concluded that multiculturalism must be accommodated in the national education system, especially through the curriculum, so that citizens can appreciate cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity fairly based on the principle of equality²⁷.

Basic Concepts of Multicultural Education

Multicultural education began to develop around the 1930s after the end of World War II, marked by the birth of various new nations and the strengthening of democratic systems. In the 1950s in the United States, Banks and Cherry highlighted the existence of discrimination in the education system due to the continued unequal treatment of white and black children, as well as discriminatory treatment of people with disabilities. This situation gave rise to an anti-discrimination movement that later developed into multicultural education.

In Indonesia, multicultural education is implemented as part of the school institutional system. Multicultural education is a reform movement aimed at creating an equal educational environment for all students. Generally, education is understood as the process of shaping the attitudes and behavior of individuals and groups through learning and training. Meanwhile, the term multiculturalism is defined as cultural diversity.

The term "multicultural education" is not explicitly mentioned in the National Education System Law. However, Law Number 2 concerning the National Education System affirms that every child has the right to receive education and instruction. Furthermore, Article 5 Paragraph 2 explains that children with developmental disabilities or special conditions have the right to receive special education. Therefore, although the term "multicultural education" is not explicitly stated, the substance of the National Education System Law points to the principle of multicultural education: education for every child without exception.

²³ Taofik, I., & Basit, A. (2022). Konsep Pendidikan Multikultural di Lembaga Pendidikan Muhammadiyah. *Misykat Al-Anwar: Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Masyarakat*, 5(1).

²⁴ Syurya Muhammad Nur, "Eduscience : Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan PENERAPAN PENDIDIKAN ANTI KORUPSI KEPADA SISWA SEKOLAH DASAR," *Jurnal Eduscience* 6 (2021): 111.

²⁵ Nurmansyah, D., & Muttaqin, M. F. (2024). Implementasi Pendidikan Multikultural dalam PKN untuk Menumbuhkan Toleransi dan Nasionalisme Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Journal of Islamic Primary Education*, 5(2), 92–101.

²⁶ Universitas Islam and Negeri Uin, "KONSEP DASAR PENDIDIKAN MULTIKULTURAL" 1, no. 4 (2022).

²⁷ Gofur, M. A., Auliya, M. F. R., & Nursikin, M. (2022). Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Multikultural. *Sinar Dunia: Jurnal Riset Sosial Humaniora dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, 1(4), 124–142.

The primary goal of multicultural education is to foster empathy, respect, and appreciation regardless of differences in religion, ethnicity, race, culture, or tribe. Frans Magnis Suseno emphasized that multicultural education aims to broaden perspectives and open understanding of the world and its diversity, transcending boundaries of difference so that every human being is seen as one big human family. Despite our many differences, we still share common ideals.

The goals of multicultural education include the following “First, developing ethnic and cultural knowledge. Multicultural education provides an understanding of the history, language, culture, social, economic, and political conditions, and critical events of various community groups. Second, psychological and personality development. Multicultural education encourages the formation of a positive self-image, pride in identity, and self-awareness, which contribute to students’ intellectual, academic, and social achievements. Third, clarifying and internalizing values. Multicultural education instills the values of justice, freedom, democracy, respect for diversity, and an understanding that cultural differences are strengths, not weaknesses. Fourth, developing multicultural competencies. Students are trained to understand other cultures without abandoning their own cultural values through direct learning experiences and interactions with diverse environments. Fifth, strengthening basic skills. Multicultural education can improve reading, writing, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills through learning materials and methods relevant to students from different cultural backgrounds”²⁸.

Components of Multicultural Education

For multicultural education to work effectively, all elements of the school must be integrated, as the school is a social system. This means that change strategies must be designed to reform the school environment as a whole (Jun). Content integration involves using examples and materials from various cultural groups to illustrate concepts and principles within a discipline. The opportunities for integrating multicultural materials are broader in social studies, language arts, and music than in mathematics and science. The process of knowledge construction depends on the teacher. Teachers’ positive attitudes toward multicultural education and their competence in understanding diversity are crucial in building tolerance and mutual respect within the learning environment.

First, prejudice reduction is achieved through learning and school activities that encourage students to develop positive attitudes toward different ethnic, racial, and cultural groups. Second, equity pedagogy requires teachers in every discipline to review learning methods to reflect the principle of fairness for all students. Third, the social structure of the school must reflect gender, ethnic, racial, and social class equality as part of the school culture.

Retnasari’s research shows that the implementation of multicultural education can be done through building an understanding of diversity based on an inclusive paradigm, integrating multicultural-based PPKn education into intracurricular and co-curricular activities, and through teacher discipline. Multicultural learning must be implemented both in the classroom and in the school environment to build critical awareness of teachers and students towards social issues. Teachers act as demonstrators, class managers, mediators, and evaluators; while students act as

²⁸ Rizqiyati, Z., Kurniawan, R., Inayati, M., & Syarif, Z. (2024). Pendidikan Multikultural Dalam Undang-Undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional. *Bestari: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 5(2), 264-280.

subjects of education. Teachers who have experience in developing multicultural-based curriculum tend to be more successful in its implementation.

Multicultural Education and Its Prospects in Indonesia

Simply put, multiculturalism means cultural diversity. Three terms are often used to describe diverse societies—plurality, diversity, and multiculturalism. While all three describe the absence of uniformity, multiculturalism emphasizes the acceptance of diversity as a unified whole, regardless of differences in identity. Plurality simply describes the reality that society consists of many groups, while multiculturalism emphasizes the importance of equal treatment for these groups. Thus, multiculturalism demands a politics of recognition: the recognition and protection of all social, cultural, religious, and ethnic differences.

In modern society, differences arise due to:

First, subcultural diversity, differences in lifestyles and cultural values; Second, perspective diversity, differences in perspectives and assessments of the dominant culture; and Third, communal diversity, distinctive lifestyles based on communal identity.

Multiculturalism functions as a strategy for managing diversity to maintain social harmony. However, ambiguity arises when multiculturalism shifts into an ideology that seeks to dominate other discourses. A critical question arises: can multiculturalism remain inclusive without excluding other ideologies? Challenges also arise when multiculturalism is reduced to merely the pluralism of aspects evident in the religious context in Indonesia. The theological structure of society also determines the acceptance of multiculturalism's values, as reflected in:

First, exclusive theology: the most closed, assuming only one truth;

Second, apologetic theology: more moderate but still maintains truth claims; Third, inclusive theology: recognizing the truth of other parties but still placing their theology as primary; Fourth, syncretic theology: mixing the teachings of various theologies so that they are considered the same²⁹.

History of Multicultural Education

The idea of multicultural education emerged after World War II, amid growing awareness of human rights, national independence from colonialism, anti-racism, and increased global mobility, which led to pluralism in Europe and America. Multicultural education then developed in response to the increasing diversity in schools and demands for equal rights for all groups. Historically, multicultural education emerged from social, economic, political, and intellectual contexts, not spontaneously. The melting pot theory, initially developed in America by J. Hector St. John De Crevecoeur, described the blending of various cultures into a "new humanity," but this concept still had a monocultural perspective because it required a complete fusion of cultures.

Democratic countries like the United States and Canada implemented multicultural education to eliminate racial discrimination between whites and blacks and to maintain national integrity. After its independence on July 4, 1776, America recognized the diversity of its population and sought to find social strategies to build national unity through educational institutions³⁰.

²⁹ Panuntun, S., & Aziz, A. (2023). Pendidikan multikulturalisme dan prospeknya di indonesia. *Syntax Idea*, 5(8), 1046-1058.

³⁰ Ningsih, I. W., Mayasari, A., & Ruswandi, U. (2022). Konsep pendidikan multikultural di Indonesia. *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 6(1), 1083-1091.

Conclusion

Multicultural education is a highly relevant and strategic approach for Indonesia, a country with a high level of ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic, and social identity diversity. Literature reviews show that the implementation of multicultural education serves not only as a means of introducing different cultures but also as an instrument for building collective awareness regarding the importance of social justice, tolerance, empathy, and equality in social interactions. Multicultural education has been proven to create an inclusive learning environment, encourage students to respect differences, and foster attitudes of anti-violence and anti-discrimination. However, the implementation of multicultural education still faces several obstacles, such as limited teacher training, a lack of learning resources, and persistent social stereotypes in society. Therefore, multicultural education needs to be continuously strengthened through curriculum innovation, teacher training, development of learning media, and integration of values of tolerance in various subjects to be able to address the challenges of diversity while strengthening national unity.

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