



Building Multicultural Values in Islamic Education

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Abstract

Indonesian society, which is religiously diverse, has a strong tendency toward religious identity and the potential for conflict. One example of a multicultural society is Indonesia. As a result, education is required to realize harmony, and balance in human relations with other humans. This study applied a qualitative approach centered on library research. According to the findings of this study, realizing harmony, and balance between human relationships with Allah *Subahanahu Wa Ta'ala*, human relationships with other humans, and human relationships with other creatures and the environment need adequate knowledge through multicultural Islamic education. In essence, multicultural Islamic education is education that is firmly rooted in the Quran and al-Sunnah by incorporating multiculturalism as one of its educational visions, with several main characters, including inclusive “5 t” (Ta’aruf/ Tasamuh/ Tawasuth/ Ta’awun/ Tawazun), musawamah/egalitarian, democratic, and humanist. In Indonesia, education with a multicultural perspective is important in fostering a sense of togetherness in diversity in order to strengthen national unity and integrity in accordance with the spirit independence of the Indonesian. Because multicultural education always upholds the values of belief, heterogeneity, plurality, and diversity in various aspects of people’s lives, it is expected that it will provide a glimmer of hope in overcoming various societal upheavals.

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INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian archipelago stretches from Sabang to Merauke. Each island has a unique set of customs, cultures, tribes, religions, and beliefs. This diversification results in a distinctiveness encapsulated in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

If well-established, this potential diversity will be a great strength as well as a priceless cultural wealth. This difference, however, has the potential to cause conflict. The issue of Ethnicity, Religion, Race, and Intergroup (SARA), which is the repertoire of the state, can become diverse (multicultural).

Indonesian society, as a plural society composed of various religions, has a strong tendency toward each other's religious identity and the potential for conflict. One example of a multicultural society is Indonesia. Indonesian society is multicultural not only in terms of ethnicity, culture, language, and race, but also in terms of religion. Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism are the religions practiced by the majority of Indonesians today.

The multicultural society of Indonesia has given rise to pluralism and multiculturalism. Pluralism and multiculturalism are concepts that are related but not identical. They are related because both require respecting or tolerating differences. The distinction between the two is found in the object of tolerance. Tolerating more abstract differences such as ideologies, values, and beliefs is what pluralism is all about. Multiculturalism, on the other hand, is concerned with tolerance of more concrete differences such as ethnicity, race, language, and culture.

Because of the absence of similarities and differences that cannot be compromised, conflicts can arise from differences. As a result, Indonesians must recognize the existence of differences in order to avoid problems or conflicts. Because Muslims constitute the majority of Indonesians, multicultural-based Islamic education plays a critical role in developing *khaira umah* (the best civilization).

Several problem formulations are proposed based on the background of the study as described above:

1. What is the urgency of Islamic education?
2. How is multicultural value in Islamic education?
3. How is the development of the civilization through multicultural Islamic education?

METHOD

This study applied a qualitative approach, which means that the data is expressed verbally, not in numbers form, and did not use statistical techniques.

The data analysis of the study was more focused on library research, specifically reading, examining, and reviewing books and writing sources that are closely related to the issues being discussed. Library research or literature can be defined as a series of activities involving library data collection methods, reading, recording, and processing research materials (Muhyiddin et al., 2022).

Data collection techniques were carried out by collecting and studying materials related to the subject of research obtained from books and national and international journals.

After collecting materials relevant to the issues to be discussed in this study, the researcher analyzed and narrated to reach conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Urgency of Islamic Education

Etymologically, Islamic education is known as ta'lim, ta'dib and tarbiyah. Ta'lim is derived from the root word 'allama, which means "teacher." The word al-tadib means banquet or

manners education in Arabic. While the word tarbiyah means to maintain, raise, and educate, it also means to teach (ta'lim) and instill good morals (ta'dib) (Nizar & Hasibuan, 2022).

Islamic education is founded on Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an and al-Hadith. Both bases are developed through ijtihad. Islamic education's highest goals include (Nizar & Hasibuan, 2022).

- a. To be Allah's most pious servant and to always be in tqrub to Him. The accomplishment of this goal is in a line with the sole purpose of human life and creation, which is to worship Allah Subahanahu Wa Ta'ala.
- b. Delivering and realizing all of the potential of learners in accordance with Islamic values, so that they can become representatives of Allah Subahanahu Wa Ta'ala on earth with these Islamic values.
- c. To guide students to obtain prosperity, happiness, and victory in life, both in this world and in the hereafter, in a harmonious and balanced manner.

Islamic education from an ontological standpoint is an attempt to answer questions about the nature of Islamic education. Philosophically, the nature of Islamic education is an effort to humanize humans in humane ways in order to achieve high human values. While in the context of Islamic education, epistemology examines the complexities, origin, structure, methods, and validity of knowledge in terms of Islam and the axiology of Islamic Education by investigating the nature of the values contained in education, which includes ethics and aesthetics. The value of worship, the value of ihsan, the value of the future, the value of mercy, the value of trust, the value of da'wah, and the value of tasyir / giving good hope to mankind about the future and maintaining the balance or preservation of nature (Muvid, Muhamad Basyrul Zumroti et al., 2020).

The method plays an important role in the process of Islamic Education because it is a meaningful means of subject matter that is arranged in the educational curriculum in such a way that it can be understood or absorbed by students into notions that are functional to their behavior. A subject will be unable to process effectively and efficiently in teaching and learning activities toward educational goals in the absence of a method. The method, as one of the operational components of Islamic education, must have the ability to direct the subject matter to the educational goals to be achieved through the process, whether in formal, non-formal, or informal institutions. Thus, according to the science of Islamic education, a good method is one that has the same or soul as the objectives of Islamic education. In its application, the Islamic education method must pay attention to the principles that can provide appreciation and guidance on the method's implementation. It is hoped that by adhering to these principles, the method of Islamic education will be more effective and efficient by not deviating from the original purpose of Islamic education. The principles of using educational methods include the principles of convenience, continuity, flexibility, and dynamism (Muvid, Muhamad Basyrul Zumroti, et al., 2020).

The scope of Islamic religious education includes harmony and balance in human relations with Allah Subahanahu Wa Ta'ala, human relations with one another, and third human relations with other creatures and the environment. The scope of Islamic religious education is also identical to its aspects because the material contained within it is a combination that complements one another. The scope of Islamic religious education commonly implemented in schools is (a) science of tawhid / faith (b) fiqh science (c) al-Qur'an (d) al-Hadis (e) morals, and (f) Islamic history (Muvid, Muhamad Basyrul Zumroti et al., 2020).

According to the explanation of scope of Islamic education above, Islamic education plays a critical role in achieving harmony and balance between human relations with Allah Subahanahu Wa Ta'ala, human relations with fellow humans, and human relations with other creatures and the environment. As a result, the values contained in Islamic education, one of which is multicultural values, must be applied in order to build people who are rahmatanlilalamin.

2. Multicultural Values in Islamic Education

Before delving into multicultural values/characters in Islamic education, let us define multiculturalism, multicultural education, and multicultural-based Islamic education. The adjective multicultural is derived from two words in English: multi and culture. In general, the word multi means numerous, various, or numerous. While the word culture has several meanings in English, including culture, politeness, and maintenance. The term multiculturalism is derived etymologically from three words: multi (many), kultur (culture), and ism (idea/ideology). Thus, multiculturalism can be defined as an acceptance of the existence of multiple cultures. Essentially, the word recognizes the dignity of human beings who live in communities with their own distinct cultures (Mahfud, 2006). Multiculturalism is a concept that emphasizes the equality of local cultures while acknowledging the rights and existence of other cultures. Tolerance in a cross-cultural context must be maintained and well maintained in the life of a multicultural society, such as Indonesia, through the implementation of a multicultural education system.

According to Yaqin, multicultural education is the process of maturing a person's or group's attitudes and behavior through teaching, training, processes, actions, and procedures for educating that respect plurality and heterogeneity in a humanistic manner. Learners are expected to not only understand and master the subject matter studied, but also to have a strong character that is democratic, pluralist, and humanist (Ainul Yakin, 2005);

Multicultural education is a response to the reality of diverse cultures by developing all potential while respecting plurality and heterogeneity as a result of cultural, ethnic, tribal, and religious diversity (Tarmizi, 2020). Multicultural education encourages people to accept and maintain the reality of national plurality voluntarily. Human dignity must be treated with the utmost respect and appreciation in multicultural education. Three keywords characterize multicultural education: first, the process of developing attitudes and behavior, second, respect for cultural differences and diversity, and third, respect for other cultures.

Tholhah Hasan (Hasan, 2016) defines multicultural Islamic education as “education that is firmly grounded in the Qur'an and al-Sunnah by including multiculturalism as one of its educational visions with several main characters, namely inclusive, egalitarian, democratic, and humanist”.

According to concept from Tholhah Hasan about multicultural Islamic education, there are at least four values (main characters) of multicultural Islamic education, as follow:

a. Inclusive (open), including :

- 1) *Ta'aruf* (cooperative), defined as the process of getting to know, understanding, and accepting one another as the first step in interaction between individuals or groups regardless of religion, belief, culture, skin color, or language differences. *Ta'aruf* is a positive and constructive sign in a plural society that people can live together, respect each other, and accept their differences. *Ta'aruf* becomes a cultural gateway that gives access to the next steps in building a peaceful co-existence through other inclusive characters, namely *tasamuh*, *tawasuth*, *ta'awun*, and *tawazun*.
- 2) *Tasamuh* (tolerant), defined as recognising and respecting differences, both in religious aspects and in various other aspects of life.
- 3) *Tawasuth* (moderate/take the middle path), defined as a religious understanding and practice that is not *ifrath* (excessive) and *tafrith* (reduced religious teachings).
- 4) *Ta'awun* (helping), defined as caring for one another, helping one another, and helping one another in goodness is one of the universally praised social characters; humans, as social creatures, instinctively require *ta'awun* (helping one another). Any country recognizes it as a positive attitude, and any religion recognizes it as a commendable act.
- 5) *Tawazun* (harmony), defined as a well-balanced understanding and practice of religion that encompasses all aspects of life, both worldly and *ukhrawi*, and is firm in stating principles capable of distinguishing between *inhiraf* (deviation) and *ikhtilaf* (difference).

- b. *Musawah* (egalitarian), defined as not discriminating against others because of differences in one's beliefs, traditions, or origins.
- c. Democratic, defined as an attitude that prioritizes and upholds equal rights and obligations, as well as equal treatment among fellow humans.
- d. Humanist, defined as an attitude that yearns for and strives for the realisation of a better living association based on the principles of humanity or an attitude that fights for the interests of fellow human beings.

Multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education is defined as learning about the normativity of Islamic teachings and civilization based on, with a multicultural outlook or character that emphasizes cultural differences.

According to Zakiyuddin Baidhawiy (Zakiyuddin Baidhawiy, 2015), multicultural religious education has at least seven characteristics:

- a. Learning to live in differences, from the differences that exist in life, multicultural education will later teach the development of attitudes of tolerance, empathy, sympathy, emotional maturity, equality in participation, new social contracts, and rules of the game of interreligious life together.
- b. Building mutual trust is one of the most important social capitals in strengthening a community's culture.
- c. In simple terms, it is a set of values or norms shared by a group of people that encourages cooperation among them.
- d. Maintaining mutual understanding; understanding does not always imply agreement. Mutual understanding is the recognition that their values and ours may differ but also be complementary, contributing to a dynamic relationship.
- e. Maintaining mutual respect, this attitude places humans in an equal relationship with no superiority. Respecting and valuing one's fellow humans is a universal value found in all religions around the world.
- f. Open-mindedness, maturity of thought is one of the important goals of education. Education should teach students new ways to think and act. This will result in a willingness to begin an exploration of one's own and others' meaning of self, identity, the world of life, religion, and culture.
- g. A decent and humane life, based on appreciation and interdependence, is only possible in a caring social order. Everyone in society can express gratitude and maintain relationships and attachments. As a result, it is critical to raise awareness about the appreciation and interdependence of humans from various religious traditions.
- h. Conflict resolution and nonviolent reconciliation will always be present in society. However, it must be resolved with a good solution by promoting the value of human brotherhood. It is also necessary to cultivate a reconciliation attitude, which is an effort to build peace through forgiveness.

In simple terms, there are at least seven (seven) multicultural values/characters in Islamic education: (a) appreciating differences, (b) building mutual trust, (c) maintaining mutual understanding and complementarity, (d) upholding mutual respect, (e) being open in thought, (e) appreciation and interdependence, and (f) conflict resolution and reconciliation.

3. Development of Civilization Through Multicultural Islamic Education

The typology of Indonesian society is a multicultural society so Indonesia needs multicultural education. Therefore, multicultural education is the values of Islam itself which is inclusive.

Multicultural education is a type of education that employs strategies and concepts based on the utilization of societal diversity, particularly student diversity, such as ethnic diversity, culture, language, religion, social status, gender, ability, age, and race. Most importantly, it aims

to raise students' awareness of the importance of always acting in a humanist, pluralist, and democratic manner (Mania, 2010).

Multiculturalism education has the following characteristics: (1) it aims to form cultural human beings and create a cultured society; and (2) it teaches noble human values, national values, and group or ethnic values. (3) democratically appreciates aspects of the nation's culture's differences and diversity; (4) evaluation and assessment of children's behavior, including perception, appreciation, and action toward other cultures (Mania, 2010).

The multicultural education discourse is intended to respond to the impact of globalisation development and the phenomenon of ethnic, socio-cultural conflicts, which frequently appear among Indonesian communities with multicultural faces (Widiuseno, 2013). While multicultural education has several components, (Fahrurrozz, 2023) the first is learning to live with differences. Education has become more focused on the three pillars of education, namely increasing knowledge, providing life skills, and emphasizing how to become a person based on framework of students' thinking. In reality, the three pillars are less successful in responding to the conditions of an increasingly globalised society in an ever-changing life. As a result, one strategic pillar is required: learning to respect differences in order to build interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. Second, cultivating mutual trust, mutual understanding, and mutual respect. These three things are a logical result of pluralism, so education that promotes togetherness as well as the development of tolerant, democratic attitudes and equal rights is required. Third, be open-minded. Education should provide new knowledge about how to think and act, as well as adopt and adapt to new and different cultures, and then respond with an open mind rather than appearing exclusive. Fourth, there is gratitude and interdependence. This quality fosters a caring social order in which all members of society can express mutual appreciation and maintain close social relations, attachments, cohesion, and interrelationships. After all, humans cannot survive in the absence of dynamic social ties. Fifth, there is the issue of conflict resolution and violent reconciliation. Conflict must be avoided in various ways, and education must serve as a means of conflict resolution. Conflict resolution is insufficient without reconciliation, which is an effort to achieve peace through forgiveness.

Multicultural education is a driving force in upholding democracy, humanism, and pluralism through schools, campuses, and other educational institutions (Mania, 2010). As a result, the multicultural Indonesian nation now requires education that serves as a medium for cultural transformation and knowledge transformation. So far, education in Indonesia has been more focused on its role as a medium for knowledge transformation (Widiuseno, 2013).

The multicultural education paradigm fosters learner attitudes that value and respect ethnic, religious, and cultural differences in society. Furthermore, multicultural education teaches students these differences in ethnicity, religion, and culture, among other things, are not obstacles to learning and working together. It becomes a driving force to compete in the good for the common life when differences are charged with national solidarity (Widiuseno, 2013).

Learners from various groups of the population are guided through multicultural education to become acquainted with each other's various religions, cultures, ways of life, customs, and habits. By teaching multicultural education, learners are guided to understand and apply the meaning of *bhinneka tunggal ika* as early as possible (Asroni, Ahmad dan Ma'rifah, 2013).

When viewed as an approach, multicultural education is very suitable for Indonesia's heterogeneous society, particularly during the implementation of autonomy and decentralisation, which began in 1999/2000 and has yet to meet the expectations of all parties (Widiuseno, 2013).

In Indonesia, multicultural education is especially important in fostering a sense of togetherness in diversity in order to strengthen national unity in accordance with the spirit of independence in 1945. Promoting democratic values, equality, and participation in education. If done correctly, the development of multicultural education is in accordance with the philosophical principles of the Indonesian nation, in line with the spirit of *bhinneka tunggal ika*

(unity in diversity) to realize the unity that most people desire, and the mediator is “tolerance” (Widiuseno, 2013).

According to Azyumardi Azra, as cited by Ruslan Ibrahim, the multicultural education curriculum should include topics such as tolerance, ethno-cultural and religious differences, the dangers of discrimination, conflict resolution and mediation, human rights, democracy and plurality, universal humanity, and other topics pertinent to the context of plurality (Ibrahim, 2008).

The implementation of multicultural education in Islamic education can be taught at various levels and institutions of formal Islamic education, and can also be applied and taught outside formal education, such as pesantren, recitation, and others. The implementation of multicultural education in formal Islamic education does not violate or deny the doctrine and history of Islam, because as previously described, the Qur’an contains the values of multiculturalism and the Prophet Muhammad *shallallahu alaihi wasallam* himself implemented multicultural values in Medina.

Multicultural education can be implemented in formal education by incorporating multicultural perspectives into relevant curriculum materials such as religion, civic education, sociology, or other relevant materials. Furthermore, it can be implemented using various learning approaches, methods, and models such as discussions, group assignments, and contextual teaching and learning (Asroni, Ahmad Dan Ma’rifah, 2013).

The implementation of multicultural education outside of formal Islamic education, such as majelis taklim, requires habituation because there is a perception that majelis taklim recitation and study is less multi and fanatical mazhab. However, this does not imply that it is difficult; all that is required is familiarity with reciting and studying fiqh from various madhhabs, reciting and studying aqidah from various schools, reading the Qur’an with qiroah 7, reciting and studying Islamic science in various ways from various points of view, all of which are intended to carry out education and teaching by including multicultural values in every subject matter and learning approach (Sopiah, 2010).

Outside of formal education, multicultural education content can be implemented by instilling multicultural values in education carried out independently by the family and/or the environment. Multicultural education insights can be implemented by training institutions, community learning activities, study groups, and majelis taklim through multicultural trainings, studies, and recitations that are not blindly fanatical to one understanding or knowledge, and that do not foster primordialism and mono-ethnic values. Instead, education is carried out from an early age by emphasizing openness, togetherness, and tolerance (Sopiah, 2010).

Multicultural education can be considered for implementation in Indonesia because, first and foremost, multicultural education has always existed in Indonesia. The Indonesian national philosophy is *bhinneka tunggal ika* (unity in diversity), mutual cooperation, and mutual respect. Various tribes in Indonesia can coexist, and foreign tribes such as ethnic Chinese, Arabs, Europeans, and Africans who come to Indonesia can adapt and acculturate with indigenous tribes in Indonesia. Second, multicultural education offers a ray of hope for overcoming various community upheavals because multicultural education always upholds the values of faith, heterogeneity, plurality, and diversity in various aspects of community life. Third, multicultural education is opposed to business education. At the moment, educational institutions, both schools and universities, are competing to make their educational institutions profitable. The goal is to raise the standard of student services. Whereas real education for the Indonesian people is education that must accommodate all types of intelligence, also known as multiple intelligences (Mania, 2010).

CONCLUSION

Religious identity and potential conflict are strong in Indonesian society, which is made up of various religions. Indonesia exemplifies a multicultural society. Indonesian society is

multicultural not only in terms of ethnicity, culture, language, and race, but also in terms of religion. Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism are the religions practiced by the majority of Indonesians today.

In order to build togetherness in the midst of differences in various aspects of life, a precise adhesive is required so that the explosion of differences gives birth to beauty and harmony rather than divisions that lead to great losses for humanity. The adhesive at issue is multicultural Islamic education.

Multicultural Islamic education is essentially education that is firmly rooted in the Qur'an and al-Sunnah by incorporating multiculturalism as one of its educational visions, with several main characters/values, namely inclusive, including the "5T" (ta'aruf, tasamuh, tawasuth, ta'awun, and tawazun), musawah, democratic, and humanist.

Multiculturalism-minded education in Indonesia is critical in fostering a sense of togetherness in diversity in order to strengthen national unity in accordance with the spirit of independence. The Indonesian nation's philosophy is *bhinneka tunggal ika* (unity in diversity), mutual cooperation, and mutual respect. Various tribes in Indonesia can coexist, and foreign tribes that come to Indonesia, such as ethnic Chinese, Arabs, Europeans, and Africans, can adapt and acculturate with indigenous tribes in Indonesia. Through multicultural Islamic education is expected to provide a glimmer of hope in overcoming various community turmoil because multicultural education always upholds the values of faith, heterogeneity, plurality, diversity of various aspects of community life.

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