Journal of Educational Research and Practice
Empowering Education Through Research and Practice

Management of Multicultural Education in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Case Study of the Implementation of Inclusivity Values in the Diversity of *Santri*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the management and administration of multicultural education at the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School in dealing with the cultural diversity of santri. Using a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, this study was conducted at the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School, East Kalimantan, in November 2024. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with ustadz (teachers), teachers, boarding school leaders, and santri (students), as well as direct observation and documentation analysis. The results showed that the understanding of multiculturalism among ustadz and santri varied, with ustadz emphasizing the importance of tolerance and unity among santri to prevent cultural conflict. In contrast, santri demonstrated adaptability through using Indonesian as a connecting language and learning the language and dialect of their respective regions. Implementing multiculturalism in Islamic boarding schools takes place naturally through integrating religious values as a unifying element and using Arabic and Indonesian as a means of communication. Despite facing challenges such as limited facilities and differences in the character of santri (Islamic boarding school students), Islamic boarding schools can create an inclusive and harmonious environment through a daily approach based on Islamic values. The conclusion of this study confirms that Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School manages cultural diversity without a formal program specifically for multicultural education. This Islamic boarding school is a real model of how multiculturalism can be effectively applied in daily life, ultimately improving social adaptation, language skills, and attitudes of tolerance among santri.

Keywords: *education management, education administration, multiculturalism, Islamic boarding schools, cultural diversity, inclusivity.*

INTRODUCTION

The management of multicultural education in Islamic boarding schools is considered strategic in fostering the values of inclusiveness among *santri* (Islamic boarding school students). In this context, the implementation of multicultural education at *Al Muqoddas* Islamic Boarding School shows that the planning and implementation of this education is not only carried out formally, but is also part of an annual activity that values national cultural diversity, which is a glue for national unity.[1] In addition, *santri* are given a comprehensive understanding of the attitude of accepting differences through non-formal education based on the cultural diversity in Indonesia.[2,3] Thus, Islamic boarding schools are crucial in internalizing multicultural values among the *santri*.

Islamic boarding schools can also be considered educational institutions that educate *santri* (Islamic boarding school students) to respect ethnic and cultural differences. In applying multicultural education values, *santri* are taught about respect for differences and the importance of intercultural cooperation, which is internalized daily.[4,5] This aligns with an educational philosophy based on the principle that no one is left behind, which aims to minimize the potential for radicalization by providing sufficient training and understanding of tolerance and humanitarian values.[6]

Islamic boarding schools have a unique way of combining local and national values, creating an inclusive teaching atmosphere.[7,8] In certain Islamic boarding schools, the approach to integrating multicultural values in learning focuses on innovative learning methods, which involve the active participation of *santri*.[9] This effort seeks to make Islamic boarding schools a vehicle for fostering multicultural awareness, utilizing the community's strengths and existing local cultural heritage, thus supporting the formation of *santri* with

[1] Malik, Saeful, 2020. "Implementasi manajemen pendidikan multikultural di pondok pesantren al muqoddas sumber kabupaten cirebon", Eduprof: Islamic Education Journal(1), 2:128-148. https://doi.org/10.47453/eduprof.v2i1.34

[2] Indarwati, Karomah, 2018. "Penerapan pendidikan multikultural di pondok pesantren al-muayyad surakarta", Comm-Edu (Community Education Journal)(3), 1:121. https://doi.org/10.22460/comm-edu.v1i3.1358

[3] Maghfiroh, Vira Rodiatul, Mohammad Amir Anwar, Miftahul Huda, and Renti Yasmar, 2023. "Model pendidikan multikultural (telaah hidden curiculum di pondok buntet pesantren cirebon)", Al-I'tibar : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam(1), 10:25-31. https://doi.org/10.30599/jpia.v10i1.2118

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[5] Qodriyah, Khodijatul, Masykuri Bakri, and Djunaidi Ghony, 2024. "The construction of objective consciousness in multicultural society based on pesantren", Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies(4), 50:136-149. https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2024/v50i41319

[6] Marzuki, Marzuki, Miftahuddin Miftahuddin, and Mukhamad Murdiono, 2020. "Multicultural education in salaf pesantren and prevention of religious radicalism in Indonesia", Jurnal Cakrawala Pendidikan(1), 39:12-25. https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v39i1.22900

[7] Inawati, Wahdan Arum, Fajra Octrina, and Rr. Sri Saraswati, 2023. "Penguatan tata kelola pada entitas berorientasi non laba di pondok pesantren modern assuruur kabupaten bandung", Jurnal Abdimas Mandiri(3), 6. https://doi.org/10.36982/jam.v6i3.2706

[8] Tamyiz, Tamyiz, Duski Ibrahim, and Munir Munir, 2023. "Implementing multicultural education at boarding school: comparative study", AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan(3), 15. https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i3.853

[9] Muhajir, As'aril, Ngainun Naim, Agus Zaenul Fitri, and Asrop Safi'i, 2020. "Approach to the development of multicultural education curriculum in darul hikmah modern islamic boarding school tulungagung, indonesia", Universal Journal of Educational Research(5), 8:1842-1847. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.080520

tolerant and inclusive characters.[10] According to data from the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia in the 2023 academic year shows a significant figure, with the following details:[11]
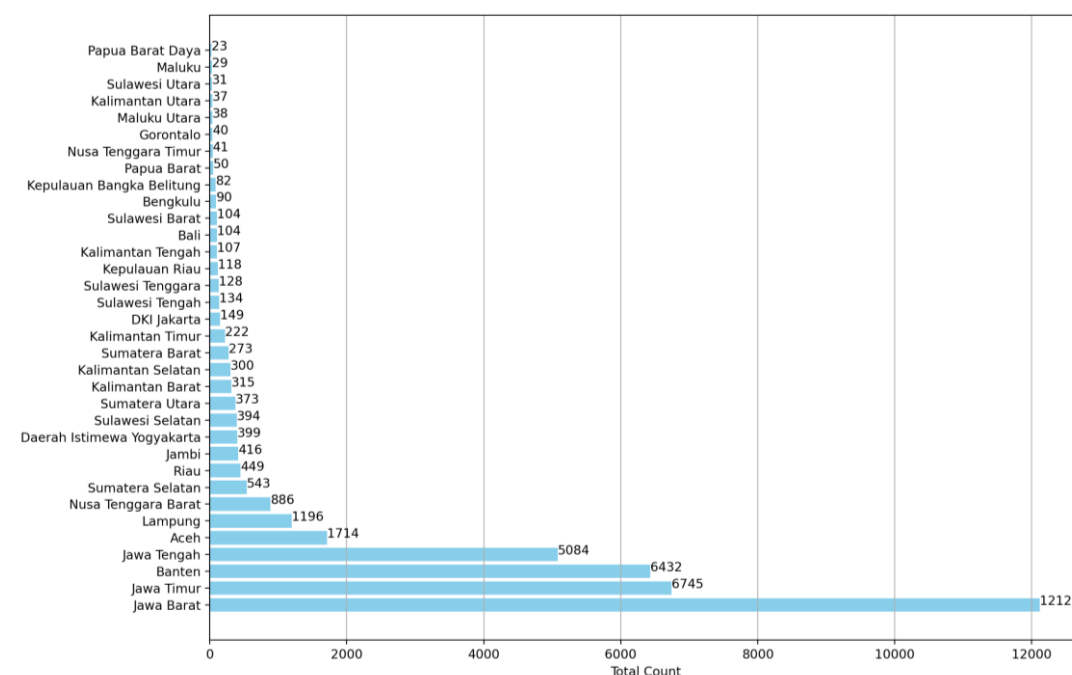
Figure 1. Distribution of Total Books and Other Items by Province in Indonesia (2023)

The graph illustrates the distribution of total books and other items across various provinces in Indonesia for 2023. It highlights significant disparities, with Java, particularly Jawa Barat, showing the highest total count, while provinces like Maluku and Papua Barat Daya have much lower totals. This indicates a concentration of resources in certain regions, which may reflect population density, educational infrastructure, or regional funding differences. Looking at the above data, we cannot deny that Islamic boarding schools function as religious educational institutions and as a meeting place for various cultures brought by *santri*s from different regions. The *santri*s bring their respective cultural backgrounds and traditions, which interact and assimilate into the boarding school environment. This makes Islamic boarding schools a miniature of the cultural diversity that exists in Indonesia.

Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School is a concrete example of how cultural diversity is managed and administered in the context of multicultural education. Through good management and administration, this Islamic boarding school has succeeded in creating an inclusive and harmonious environment, where the values of diversity are respected and upheld. This study will examine how the management and administration of multicultural education is implemented at Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School, as well as its impact on

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[10] Halim, Abdul, 2023. "Internalization of islamic boarding school life values in forming multicultural attitudes of santri", EDU-RELIGIA : Jurnal Keagamaan Dan Pembelajarannya(1), 6:104-115. https://doi.org/10.52166/edu-religia.v6i1.5058

[11] Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. (2024). Jumlah Pondok Pesantren Menurut Tipe. Diakses pada 26 Desember 2024, dari https://satudata.kemenag.go.id/dataset/detail/jumlah-pondok-pesantren-menurut-tipe.

the teaching and learning process and the daily life of the *santri* (Islamic boarding school students).[12,13]

Cultural diversity in Islamic boarding schools is increasingly prominent with the increasing number of *santri* (Islamic boarding school students) coming from various regions and diverse social backgrounds. This presents significant educational management and administration challenges, especially in creating an inclusive and harmonious learning environment. In this context, multicultural education is crucial because it can strengthen the values of tolerance, social cohesion, and effective communication among *santri*. Studies show that implementing effective multicultural education strategies in schools can increase tolerance and respect for cultural diversity among students, encouraging social cohesion in diverse societies such as Indonesia.[14] Therefore, this study focuses on how the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School manages cultural diversity through comprehensive administrative and managerial strategies.

Managing diversity in Islamic boarding schools requires an inclusive strategy, which includes an intercultural communication approach and positive social interaction among *santri*. Research shows that multicultural education reduces the potential for cultural conflict and creates awareness of diversity among *santri*.[15,16] This approach teaches *santri* to understand, respect, and accept differences, which can foster mutual respect and support.[17] Non-formal approaches such as social interaction groups can contribute to this effort, strengthening relationships between *santri* from various backgrounds.[18] Furthermore, this study seeks to bridge the gap in the literature by exploring the practice of multicultural education integrated into the daily life of Islamic boarding schools. The management of Islamic boarding schools needs to pay attention to how existing policies and practices can support an inclusive learning environment. Schools, including Islamic boarding schools, are important in facilitating multicultural education through activities that encourage intercultural dialogue and character building.[19] Thus, this study provides insights into the

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[12]Adiyono, A., Nurohman, D., & Harun, M. (2024). The Socioanthropology of Islamic Education: Integrating Social, Cultural, and Anthropological Perspectives. *Al-Banjari: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, *23*(1), 28-50. https://doi.org/10.18592/albanjari.v23i1.13605

[13]Ayuba, J. O. (2023). Islamic Education Ideology of Pesantren: A Case Study in Hidayatullah Pesantren Balikpapan. *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *18*(2), 99-116. https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi.v18i2.10186

[14] Baihaqi, M. 2021. Implementation of multicultural education in Indonesia. *EDUTEC: Journal of Education And Technology*, *4*(3), 504-526.; Baidhawy, Z. (2013). Building harmony and peace through multiculturalist theology-based religious education: An alternative for contemporary Indonesia. In *Peace education and religious plurality* (pp. 1-16). Routledge.

[15] Baidhawy, Z. (2013). Building harmony and peace through multiculturalist theology-based religious education: An alternative for contemporary Indonesia. In *Peace education and religious plurality* (pp. 1-16). Routledge.

[16] Afida, R. A. D., Aimah, S., & Hussen, B. T. E. (2024). Building Harmony in Diversity: Pesantren Strategies to Resolve Cultural Conflicts in Non-Muslim Communities. *Journal of Islamic Education Research*, *5*(3), 265-280. https://doi.org/10.35719/jier.v5i3.453

[17] Huda, M. (2024). Strengthening Religious Moderation Through the Core Values of Islamic Boarding School Education. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, *8*(1), 59-71. https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i1.458

[18] Afida, R. A. D., Aimah, S., & Hussen, B. T. E. (2024). Building Harmony in Diversity: Pesantren Strategies to Resolve Cultural Conflicts in Non-Muslim Communities. *Journal of Islamic Education Research*, *5*(3), 265-280. https://doi.org/10.35719/jier.v5i3.453

[19] Raihani, R. (2018). Education for multicultural citizens in Indonesia: policies and practices. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *48*(6), 992-1009. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2017.1399250

management of multicultural education in Islamic boarding schools and concrete recommendations for improving the effectiveness of managing cultural diversity in education.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to understand phenomena in depth in their natural context.[20] The descriptive method was chosen because it allows researchers to describe and analyze how multicultural education is managed at *Nurul Muhibbin* Islamic Boarding School without direct intervention. The focus of this study is to reveal the patterns, interactions, and strategies used by the pesantren in managing the diversity of *santri*. This research took place during November 2024, at the *Nurul Muhibbin* Islamic Boarding School located on Jalan Sultan Hasanuddin, Gang Muhibbin, Tanah Grogot Village, Tanah Grogot District, Paser Regency, East Kalimantan. This location was chosen because of the diversity of the *santri*'s cultural backgrounds, which allows for a deeper exploration of the practice of multiculturalism in the pesantren environment.

Data was collected through three main techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the understanding of teachers, boarding school leaders, and *santri* (Islamic boarding school students) regarding the values of multiculturalism and the challenges they face in their daily lives at the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). Direct observations were made of *santri* activities, patterns of social interaction, language use, and diversity dynamics within the *pesantren* environment. In addition, documentation in the form of *pesantren* profiles, photos of activities, and field notes was used to reinforce the findings from interviews and observations. The data obtained came from purposively selected informants, namely one *ustadz* (teacher) who understood *pesantren* policies and six *santri* (students) from the Wustha and Ulya levels who came from various regions and had been residing in the *pesantren* for at least one year.

Data analysis was done through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion.[21] The collected data were reduced by sorting information relevant to the research focus, then organized in thematic form for further analysis. The data is presented by compiling the findings as descriptive narratives describing *Pesantren* interaction patterns and diversity management strategies. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on patterns that emerge in the data to understand how *pesantren* manage the cultural diversity of *santri* and apply multicultural values in everyday life. Through this approach, the research is expected to provide a clearer picture of the practice of multicultural education at Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School.

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[20] Creswell, J. W. (2014**).** *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
[21] Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

DISCUSSION

Result

Before discussing the understanding of multiculturalism among *ustadz* (Islamic teachers) and *santri* (Islamic students), it is important to understand the social and cultural context of the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School as an Islamic-based learning environment that accommodates students from various regions in Indonesia. This diversity of cultural backgrounds creates a unique social dynamic, where daily interactions between *santri*, *ustadz*, and fellow *santri* are the primary means of shaping multicultural awareness. Islamic boarding schools function not only as places of religious learning but also as a forum for socialization that instills tolerance, togetherness, and respect for differences. The education system and boarding school life allow *santri* to experience cultural diversity firsthand, indirectly contributing to an inclusive attitude and acceptance of differences. However, even though this interaction occurs naturally, no formal program explicitly teaches the concept of multiculturalism, so the understanding of santri is formed more through daily experience than a systematic academic approach.

Understanding of Multiculturalism Among *Ustadz* and *Santri*

The research found that the *ustadz* and *santri* at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin have diverse understandings of multiculturalism. *Ustadz* emphasized the importance of tolerance and unity among students to prevent cultural conflicts. Meanwhile, *santri*, who come from various cultural backgrounds, demonstrated adaptability by using Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language for communication and learning their peers' different local languages and dialects.

**Table 1.** Understanding of multiculturalism among *Ustadz* and *Santri*

Respondents	Understanding of Multiculturalism
Ustadz	Emphasize tolerance, unity, and religious values as the foundation of multiculturalism.
Santri	Adaptation through language, daily interactions, and acceptance of different cultures

Source: Interview Data, 2024

Implementation of Multiculturalism in *Pesantren*

Multiculturalism is implemented naturally at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin through religious values that serve as a unifying factor. Using Arabic and Bahasa Indonesia as primary languages helps bridge cultural differences. Additionally, social interactions in daily *pesantren* life foster inclusivity without formal multicultural education programs.
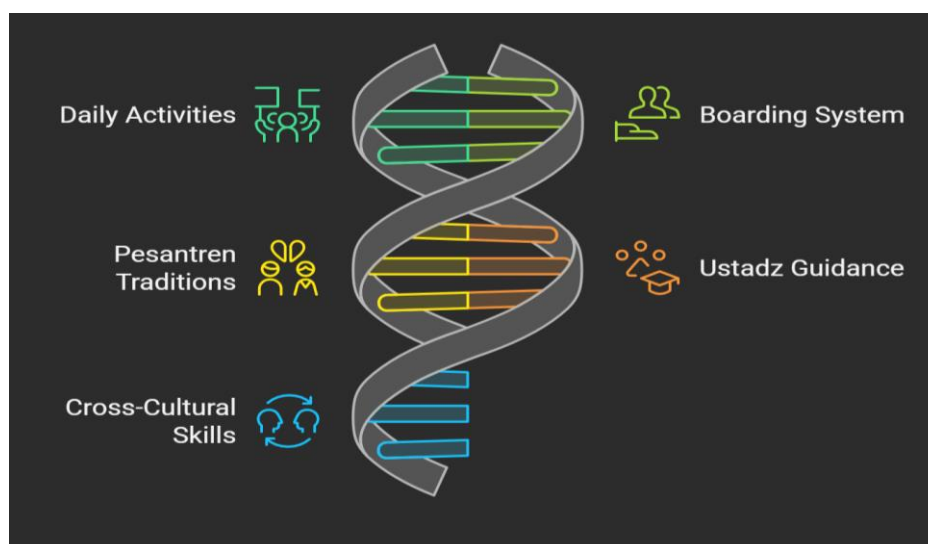
Figure 2. Daily Multicultural Interactions at the *Pesantren*

Figure 1 shows that the application of multiculturalism at the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School is also reflected in various daily activities, such as the division of cleaning duties, religious activities, and scientific discussions involving *santri* from various cultural backgrounds. The boarding system, which groups *santri* randomly regardless of their region of origin, also accelerates the process of cultural adaptation and blending. *Pesantren* traditions, such as deliberation and *halaqah*, are important means of building mutual respect and teaching the values of tolerance. In addition, the involvement of *ustadz* (Islamic teachers) in guiding *santri* (Islamic students) to resolve potential conflicts through deliberation also strengthens the culture of harmony in the *pesantren* environment. With this approach, *santri* not only learn to accept differences, but also develop cross-cultural communication skills that are important for community life in the era of globalization.

Challenges in Managing Cultural Diversity

Although *Nurul Muhibbin* Islamic Boarding School has succeeded in creating an inclusive environment, there are still challenges in managing the cultural diversity of the *santri*. One of the main challenges is the limited facilities, as the *pesantren* does not yet have adequate infrastructure to support formal multicultural education programs, such as special discussion rooms or learning materials that focus on cultural diversity. In addition, differences in behavior and social habits among *santri* are also a challenge, especially for those who come from regions with different norms and customs.

Table 2. Key Challenges in Managing Multicultural Education

Challenge	Description
Limited Facilities	Lack of dedicated spaces for cultural exchange activities
Behavioral Differences	Difficulty in adapting to different customs and social habits

Source: Observational Data, 2024

Some *Santri* find it challenging to adjust to the style of communication, patterns of interaction, or rules applied in *pesantren*. However, these challenges can be gradually overcome through daily interactions, *Ustadz* (religious teachers) guidance, and joint activities that strengthen a sense of togetherness and tolerance among *santri*.

Adaptation Strategies for Fostering Inclusivity

Language unification is one of the main strategies the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School implements in managing cultural diversity. Indonesian is the primary language in everyday communication to ensure that *santri* (Islamic students) from various regions can interact without language barriers. In addition, Arabic is also introduced intensively in religious studies, functioning not only as a means of communication in understanding Islamic teachings but also as a unifying element among *santri*. By applying this approach, Islamic boarding schools have successfully reduced communication gaps and created a more inclusive learning environment, where each student has the same opportunity to acquire religious knowledge and build harmonious social relationships.
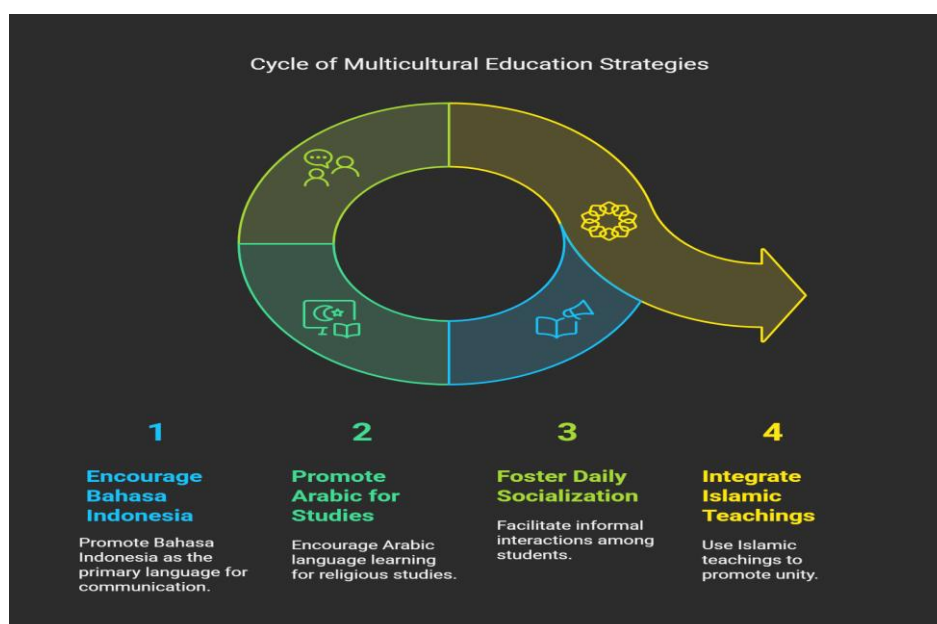

Figure 3. Cycle of Multicultural Education Strategies

Discussion

The Role of Islamic Values in Shaping Multicultural Awareness

Islamic values are crucial in shaping multicultural awareness at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin, emphasizing tolerance, respect, and unity. Rahman (2020) points out that these Islamic principles not only guide the behavior of *santri* but also serve as the foundation for harmonious coexistence among students from diverse cultural backgrounds. This supports Abdullah's (2019) findings that *pesantren* significantly contribute to promoting pluralism

within an Islamic framework,[22] Creating an environment where differences among students are recognized and celebrated. The *pesantren* operates as a microcosm of Indonesia, fostering a communal identity grounded in shared religious convictions that transcend cultural divides.[23,24]

Using Bahasa Indonesia and Arabic as primary languages further enhances the multicultural learning environment, acting as a bridge to reduce social and cultural barriers among students. This linguistic adaptation encourages effective communication and interaction within the diverse student body, facilitating a deeper understanding of each other's cultural backgrounds.[25] Moreover, the *pesantren*'s emphasis on collective worship and joint activities plays a significant role in building social bonds and minimizing cultural tensions. Group prayers and communal events foster collaboration and reinforce the Islamic values underpinning the institution's ethos, promoting religious moderation and mutual respect among the students.[26,27]

Integrating multicultural education within Islamic teachings at *pesantren* reflects a broader commitment to nurturing inclusive communities.[28] *Pesantren* acts as an incubator for individuals capable of appreciating diversity while maintaining their religious identities.[29] Additionally, the roles of educators and prominent community leaders at *pesantren* further underscore the importance of contextualizing multicultural education within local cultural landscapes, ensuring resonance with the values and norms of the surrounding society.[30,31] This way, Pondok Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin exemplifies how Islamic values can cultivate a strong multicultural awareness among students.

Challenges in Implementing Multicultural Education in *Pesantren*

Despite naturally integrating multicultural values, the Nurul Muhibbin Islamic boarding school faces various facilities and behavioral adaptation challenges. This *pesantren* has no specific program dedicated to multicultural education, making it challenging to address

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[22] Abdullah, M. (2019). *Pesantren and Pluralism: The Role of Islamic Boarding Schools in Promoting Multicultural Education in Indonesia.* Journal of Islamic Studies, 25(3), 245-262.

[23] Siyono, H., Sulaiman, I., & Marzuki, A. (2022). *Pesantren as a Microcosm of Indonesia: Examining Multicultural Practices within Islamic Education.* Indonesian Journal of Multicultural Studies, 6(2), 112-129.

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[28] Mariyono, D. (2024). Indonesian mosaic: the essential need for multicultural education. *Quality Education for All*, *1*(1), 301-325. https://doi.org/10.1108/QEA-05-2024-0042

[29] Tan, C. (2012). *Islamic education and indoctrination: The case in Indonesia*. Routledge.

[30] Achruh, A., & Sukirman, S. (2024). An analysis of Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions in the era of globalization. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *23*(9), 78-102. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.9.5

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cultural differences systematically.[32] This finding aligns with research by Hidayat & Fauzan (2020), who observed that *pesantren* often prioritize religious education over structured multicultural programs. Limitations in curriculum development and infrastructure facility capacity also prevent *santri* from understanding and appreciating differences in greater depth.[33,34]

Another challenge is behavioral adaptation, as students from different backgrounds bring diverse social norms and expectations. Hofstede's (1991) cultural dimension theory explains that individuals with different cultural orientations can experience initial difficulties adjusting to a new environment. However, the communal lifestyle in *pesantren*, which includes shared worship and community activities, provides opportunities for *santri* to interact and adapt gradually. This shows that informal social interaction can be an effective multicultural educational tool, strengthening relationships between *santri* and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in cultural diversity.[35] Shows that positive interactions between students from different backgrounds can lead to better understanding and reduce cultural tensions.[36]

Although Nurul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School has adopted multicultural values, more targeted and systematic efforts are still needed to overcome this challenge. Developing a multicultural education program and improving facilities will create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all *santri*. By involving an educational approach combining religious knowledge and understanding diversity, *pesantren* can contribute more to forming tolerant and respectful individuals in a pluralistic society.[37]

Implications for Islamic Education and Multicultural Pedagogy

The findings from this study highlight crucial implications for Islamic education, particularly regarding integrating multicultural pedagogy within *pesantren* settings. As cultural diversity within Islamic educational institutions continues to grow, it becomes essential for *pesantren* to adopt more structured approaches to multicultural education while still preserving their traditional values. Underscores the importance of embedding multicultural education within the curriculum and educational institutions' overarching policies and practices. This holistic integration can significantly enhance the learning

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[32] Budiman, M., Al Farisi, S., & Utsany, R. (2025). Muhammadiyah's Contribution to Shaping Progressive Islam in the Nusantara and Contemporary World. *NuMAS: The Journal of Nusantara Malay Archipelago Scholars*, *1*(1), 15-32. https://doi.org/10.63088/numasv1i17

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[36] Thijs, J., & Verkuyten, M. (2014). School ethnic diversity and students' interethnic relations. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *84*(1), 1-21. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12032

[37] Gani, A., Irsyady, K. A., & Siregar, F. M. (2020, December). Religion, Education, and Pluralism. In *4th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2020)* (pp. 1-6). Atlantis Press. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201215.001

experience, fostering an environment where students from diverse backgrounds can coexist peacefully and productively.[38]
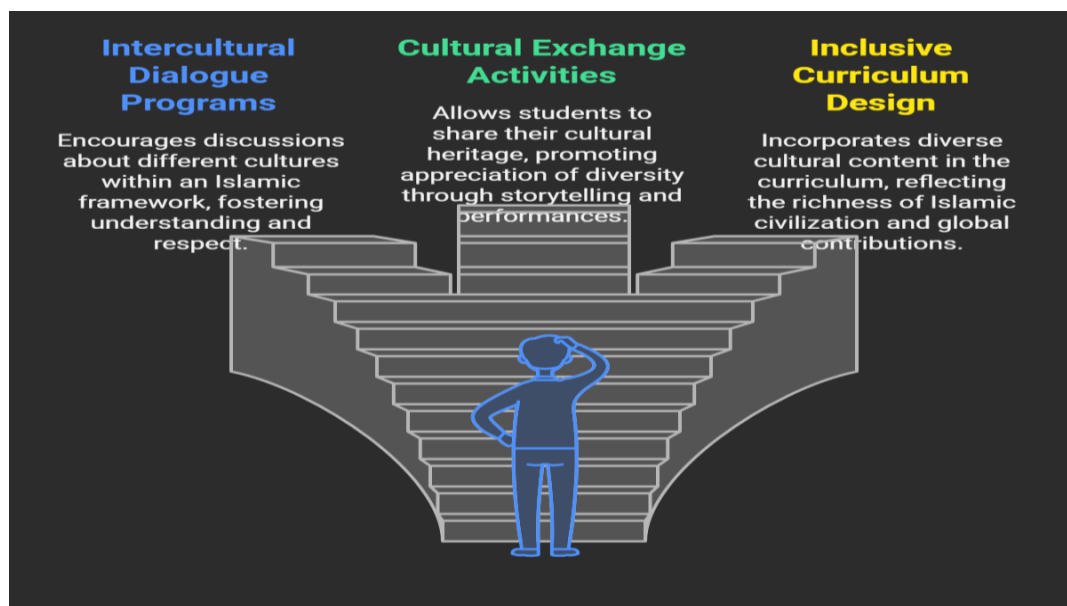
Figure 4. How to enhance cultural diversity in education?

Furthermore, the findings suggest that the existing structures in *pesantren* may benefit from establishing specific multicultural programs to address the unique needs of a varied student body. For instance, incorporating activities that promote cultural understanding and respect among students can bridge gaps caused by cultural differences.[39] Additionally, *pesantren* must foster an atmosphere that encourages dialogue about multicultural issues and equips students with the knowledge and competencies necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. As suggested,[40] Implementing multicultural values within Islamic Religious Education can enrich the curricular framework and prepare students to engage effectively with the diversity of modern society.[41] Ultimately, embracing these strategies will contribute to developing a more inclusive educational environment and align with Islam's core values that advocate for understanding and harmony among all people.

CONCLUSION

Data were analyzed descriptively, and the research results concluded that multicultural values were naturally integrated into Pondok Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin because religious

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[38] Djamaluddin, B., Bahri, S., Halim, A., & Chabibi, M. (2024). Deradicalization through multicultural Islamic religious education at the islamic university. Nazhruna Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 7(3), 646-663. https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i3.34

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teachings, language unification, and socialization in daily life were influential and seemed to support this.Pondok Pesantren Nurul Muhibbin. Indeed, without any formal multicultural education in the *pesantren*, this Islamic boarding school presents harmonious interaction in diversity. The *pesantren* promotes using Bahasa Indonesia for daily communication and Arabic for religious studies to minimize linguistic barriers and foster unity among the students. A modular system of human networks led by a sense of belonging allocates each individual in comparative communities, which promote social interaction through communal activities (social attachment), and serve mutual understanding and a state of peaceful coexistence (through cultural attachment), resulting in the reduction of cultural conflict (they are more wealthy), which strengthens the informal multicultural education.

However, the research also highlights that challenges still need to be addressed. The limited facilities make it easier for the structured multicultural programs, while the behavioral differences among the students sometimes make it hard for them to tolerate the cultural differences. However, it noted that while the *pesantren* had addressed such issues informally, a more formalized program with solution-oriented educational workshops or focused intercultural dialogue initiatives would help further facilitate these issues. If these challenges arise, the multicultural values could be implemented comprehensively and sustainably in *pesantren*.

These findings imply that *pesantren* can also play a vital role as an effective model of multicultural education, especially in a culturally diverse environment, including religious-based institutions. It also supports the notion that Islamic values are pivotal in promoting inclusivity, tolerance, and social cohesion among the student population. Future studies might investigate how the informal multicultural education students receive affects their outlook and relationships outside the *pesantren* setting. Furthermore, comparative studies between *pesantren* that implement structured multicultural programs and those that do not would provide richer insights into their effectiveness. These studies provide important insights into multiculturalism in *pesantren*; however, results based on a single case study generally lack direct generalizability, suggesting the need for broader investigation of these establishments. It will be important to maximize the potential of *pesantren* as inclusive educational institutions in Indonesia by strengthening *pesantren*'s role in multicultural education, through support for policy and improvements in its facilities.

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