

Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Learning Multicultural Insight in Improving Religious Tolerance

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Article Info

Article history:

Received 05 04, 2025

Revised 06 22, 2025

Accepted 06 29, 2025

Keywords:

Islamic Religious Education
Multicultural
Religious Tolerance
Inclusive Learning

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning with a multicultural perspective in improving the attitude of religious tolerance of class X students at SMAN 3 Purwokerto. The background of this study is based on the importance of implementing a multicultural approach in religious education to form an inclusive understanding of religious differences in a pluralistic society. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation of PAI teachers and Muslim and non-Muslim students. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of PAI learning with a multicultural perspective significantly encourages an increase in students' understanding of religious diversity, forms an attitude of mutual respect, and encourages the creation of constructive interfaith dialogue. Teachers play an important role in creating an inclusive learning space, while school and parental support also strengthen the learning process. In conclusion, a multicultural approach in PAI learning effectively forms students' attitudes of religious tolerance and can be an important strategy in building a harmonious and inclusive society.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Diversity in Indonesia, including ethnicity, race, religion, and culture, presents both a challenge and an opportunity, particularly within the educational sector. The presence of students from varied religious backgrounds can potentially foster tension or misunderstanding if not managed appropriately, especially in the context of religious moderation (Irbathy et al., 2025). In this regard, the role of educators becomes crucial, as the different levels of religious openness among students can influence their ability to engage with one another constructively. Therefore, fostering tolerance within educational institutions is essential (Aderibigbe et al., 2023; Sardorovna, 2023; Vogt, 1994), as it helps bridge these differences, ensuring that students are equipped to navigate the complexities of religious diversity while promoting peaceful coexistence and mutual respect (Nugroho, 2024). Thus, it becomes increasingly important for schools to integrate practices and strategies that foster religious moderation, ensuring that tolerance is not merely an ideal but a tangible outcome of the educational experience.

Religious tolerance serves as the central focus of this study, with the researcher seeking to demonstrate that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) based on multicultural principles can significantly

enhance students' capacity to respect and appreciate individuals of different faiths (Fauzi, 2021; Firdaus, 2025). Indonesia, as a pluralistic society encompassing five officially recognized religions, presents a unique context in which the promotion of religious tolerance is not merely important, but indeed a necessity (Hefner, 2001). Given the country's diversity, it is imperative that educational strategies foster a sense of understanding and mutual respect among its citizens. One of the most effective approaches to achieving this objective lies in the integration of a multicultural perspective within Islamic Religious Education, which, when implemented appropriately, can facilitate the development of tolerance and harmony in a diverse society (Lestari, 2024). This approach acknowledges the role of education in shaping students' values, providing them with the tools to navigate religious and cultural differences with respect and empathy.

Islamic Religious Education plays a crucial role in promoting interfaith harmony among students. Through a multicultural approach, students can develop a more inclusive understanding of other religions, embrace universal values within Islam, and internalize the importance of peaceful coexistence. SMAN 3 Purwokerto was selected as the research site due to its religiously diverse student population, including non-Muslim students, particularly Christians, which makes it an ideal environment for studying multicultural education in practice (Djazilan & Hariani, 2022).

Previous research by Barsihanor et al explored the implementation of a multicultural-based approach to Islamic Religious Education at SMAN 3 Purwokerto. The study highlighted various strategies used by educators to foster tolerance and interfaith understanding, including interactive classroom techniques, project-based learning, and extracurricular activities such as interfaith forums and visits to places of worship of other religions. While this research offers valuable insights into educational practices that promote religious tolerance, it primarily focuses on descriptive aspects without critically examining the challenges faced by teachers and students in implementing these approaches. Moreover, it lacks an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of such programs in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors over time. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by valuating the outcomes of multicultural religious education in terms of student attitudes, exploring implementation barriers, or comparing practices across different schools (Barsihanor et al., 2024).

This study aims to explore how the implementation of multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education influences the development of religious tolerance among tenth-grade students at SMAN 3 Purwokerto. It is expected that through this learning approach, students will expand their understanding of both Islam and other religions, develop inclusive attitudes, and build the capacity to engage harmoniously within a diverse religious and cultural environment.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Setting

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 3 Purwokerto, located in Karangsalam Kidul, Kedungbanteng District, Banyumas. This school is known for its commitment to incorporating multicultural values within its educational framework. Notably, the institution includes scholarship recipients from Papua, the majority of whom are non-Muslim, with a predominance of Christian students. This diverse student body provides an ideal setting for exploring the topic of multiculturalism in education. The main objective of this study is to examine how the implementation of multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) contributes to enhancing religious tolerance among students. Data for the research were gathered through a combination of interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, offering a comprehensive view of the impact of multicultural PAI on students' religious tolerance (Jamaluddin et al., 2023).

2.2. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, specifically adopting a descriptive qualitative approach. A case study methodology was applied to explore the specific implementation of Islamic Religious Education at SMA Negeri 3 Purwokerto. The researcher conducted direct observations of both Muslim and non-Muslim students in the school setting to examine how multicultural values are integrated into the PAI curriculum and how these values influence students' perspectives on religious tolerance.

2.3. Data Sources

The informants for this study were selected based on their direct involvement with the implementation of multicultural PAI learning. These informants included PAI teachers, Muslim students, and non-Muslim students. Teachers were chosen based on their role in delivering the Islamic Religious Education curriculum that integrates multicultural principles, while students were selected because their participation in the learning process was essential for understanding the impact of multicultural education on their attitudes towards religious tolerance.

2.4. Data Collection Methods

The researcher employed multiple data collection methods, including observation, interviews, and document analysis. Initially, the researcher conducted exploratory observations in the school environment to familiarize themselves with the setting at SMA Negeri 3 Purwokerto. This was followed by systematic classroom observations of the PAI learning process. The researcher engaged in interactions with students, introduced themselves, and established rapport to facilitate open communication. After the lessons, the researcher conducted interviews with both Muslim and non-Muslim students to gather their perspectives on the multicultural aspects of PAI education. The observation process utilized participant observation, where the researcher actively engaged with the students, ensuring more authentic and objective data collection. On the first day, the researcher interviewed the PAI teacher and followed up on the second day to clarify any gaps in the data. Additionally, the researcher collected contact information from non-Muslim students to facilitate further communication and in-depth data collection.

2.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The researcher utilized several data analysis techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of the influence of multicultural Islamic Education on students' religious tolerance. The following techniques were applied:

2.5.1. Content Analysis

This technique was used to identify, categorize, and analyze recurring themes or patterns from interviews, observations, and documents related to the implementation of multicultural PAI learning. The researcher analyzed interview transcripts, observation notes, and learning materials to identify themes or patterns that pertain to the influence of PAI on students' religious tolerance.

2.5.2. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to identify and analyze emerging themes or patterns in the qualitative data. The researcher systematically read, explored, and organized the data to identify key themes related to multicultural PAI education, such as enhanced appreciation for religious diversity, greater inclusivity in religious understanding, and increased religious tolerance.

2.5.3. Narrative Analysis

Narrative analysis focused on examining personal stories or accounts shared by students regarding their experiences in multicultural Islamic Religious Education. The researcher analyzed these narratives to explore how such experiences influenced students' understanding of and attitudes towards religious tolerance. This approach provided a deeper insight into students' personal meanings and perspectives regarding their participation in multicultural PAI education.

2.5.4. Comparative Analysis

This technique involved comparing data across different groups, such as grade X students, before and after their participation in multicultural PAI learning. The comparison helped identify any changes in students' attitudes, knowledge, or behaviors related to religious tolerance.

2.6. Triangulation

Triangulation was used to enhance the validity and reliability of the study's findings by incorporating multiple data sources and research methods. Data from different sources—observations, interviews, and document analysis—were analyzed together to provide a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the implementation of multicultural PAI education and its impact on students' religious tolerance. This triangulation of data sources and methods ensured that the research findings were robust and credible, offering a richer interpretation of the studied phenomena.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning is the process of organizing and implementing methods, strategies, and activities in teaching Islamic Religious Education subjects in educational environments. The main objective of implementing Islamic Religious Education learning is to help students understand Islamic teachings, moral values, ethics, and religious practices holistically. Implementation begins with compiling a comprehensive syllabus. This syllabus must refer to the Islamic Religious Education curriculum set by authorized educational institutions. In addition, there needs to be a selection of relevant teaching materials so that they can apply Islamic values in real contexts.

After that, teachers need to use effective teaching methods by referring to Islamic religious principles. This method involves group discussions, project assignments, and simulations of real-life situations. In addition, teachers can also utilize educational technology, such as multimedia, video, and the internet, to enrich students' learning experiences. In addition to teaching methods, it is also important to create a conducive learning environment. This involves a comfortable classroom setting, utilization of supporting resources such

as libraries or laboratories, and the use of attractive visual media. Learning should encourage active student participation, open discussions, and hands-on experiences that enrich their understanding of Islam.

Furthermore, evaluation and assessment are important components in the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning. Assessment should cover various aspects, including theoretical understanding, practical application, and students attitudes towards religious teachings. Various assessment methods can be used, such as written tests, individual or group projects, presentations, or portfolios. It is important to ensure that the assessment is fair and objective, so that it provides an accurate picture of students' abilities.

In addition, collaboration between Islamic Religious Education teachers and parents of students is needed. Through regular meetings, active communication, and cooperation in developing extracurricular activities based on religion, parents can play a role in supporting Islamic Religious Education learning outside the school environment. Previous studies have explored various approaches to multiculturalism in religious education, including implementing multicultural attitudes in learning and developing a multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education curriculum, and integrating multicultural learning or attitudes in Islamic studies subjects.

Multiculturalism refers to the understanding, appreciation, and acceptance of the diversity of cultures, religions, races, and ethnic backgrounds in a society. It involves an awareness of the values and different perspectives, as well as the ability to interact harmoniously with diverse individuals or groups. In the context of multiculturalism, it is important to understand that each individual has a unique life experience, and this is reflected in their culture and identity. Multiculturalism teaches us to value these differences as a source of richness and promotes equitable social inclusion (Zubaidi, 2024).

Multiculturalism also includes the ability to recognize and overcome prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination that may arise as a result of a lack of understanding or fear of differences. It involves raising awareness of social injustices and disparities that may arise from inequalities in society. In education, multiculturalism is translated as an approach that values and enriches the diversity of students. Teachers play a role in creating an inclusive learning environment and reaching their potential. The curriculum should also reflect diverse perspectives and experiences, and students benefit from learning about different cultures, religions, and traditions (Sechandini et al., 2023). Being multicultural also includes efforts to introduce cultures and then develop effective communication skills among individuals of different backgrounds. It is important to remember that being multicultural is not just about respecting differences, but also about fighting for social justice, equality, and human rights. It involves a commitment to combating discrimination, oppression and injustice that may exist in society. By having a multicultural perspective, we can create an inclusive, harmonious and supportive society. This promotes sustainable social development, where every individual has a fair and equal opportunity to thrive and contribute (Lumbanbatu et al., 2024).

The definition of religious tolerance is an attitude or attitude to respect and appreciate religious differences between individuals or groups. Multicultural research can improve students' religious tolerance. Religious tolerance is a critical aspect in a multicultural society, where individuals from different religions can live side by side with mutual respect and understanding of their differences (Nugroho & Wahyono, 2023). The importance of religious tolerance lies in the ability to create an inclusive environment that respects the diversity of religions and beliefs. In the context of education, Islamic Religious Education learning with a multicultural perspective can contribute significantly to shaping students' attitudes of religious tolerance. Through a multicultural approach, students will be invited to understand and appreciate other religions objectively, without taking sides or showing the superiority of a particular religion. Islamic Religious Education learning with a multicultural perspective encourages students to develop a deep understanding of other religions, create constructive dialogue, and appreciate differences in beliefs.

In the context of this study, the researcher analyzed the influence of multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning on attitudes of tolerance (Fuad & Masuwd, 2023). The data collected will provide an overview of students' attitudes towards other religions before and after participating in the learning. It is hoped that through multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning, students will develop more inclusive, respectful, and tolerant attitudes towards religious differences (Wahyono et al., 2022). They will understand that religion is an individual choice and has diverse values, but still respect the right of each individual to choose their beliefs.

In a multicultural society, religious tolerance is important to create harmony, reduce conflict, and build better relationships between individuals. In an educational setting, religious tolerance also creates a safe space for students to learn, grow, and develop an inclusive understanding of religious differences. Through multicultural religious research and increasing awareness of the importance of religious tolerance among students. The results of the study are able to provide guidance and input for educators in designing learning strategies that encourage better attitudes of religious tolerance in students. Religious tolerance is an important foundation in creating a harmonious society that respects diversity. By strengthening students' understanding and awareness of the importance of religious tolerance through the implementation of multicultural Islamic

Religious Education learning, it is hoped that a more tolerant, respectful, and able to live side by side young generation can be formed in a multicultural society.

From the results of the researcher's observations, interviews and documentation, the following are the research results described in this study:

First, the results of the study show that the implementation of multicultural Islamic Education learning at SMAN 3 Purwokerto has contributed to improving students' understanding of religion in an inclusive manner. Students develop a deeper understanding of other religions, and are able to see similarities between their own religious teachings and those of other religions.

Second, multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning also influences students' appreciation of religious diversity. Through this learning, students are taught that each individual's religion allows them to choose their own beliefs. Students learn to accept and respect the religious beliefs of others without imposing their own views. constructive dialogue and interaction between different religions. Students at SMAN 3 Purwokerto are invited to engage in respectful discussions, broaden their understanding of religion, and build new perspectives on religious diversity.

Fourth, multicultural PAI learning at SMAN 3 Purwokerto emphasizes the importance of human rights in the context of religion. Students are given including the right to freedom of religion, and the importance of upholding these rights in everyday life. This contributes to the development of students' tolerance towards religious differences. Fifth, this study shows that multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning has succeeded in increasing the religious tolerance attitudes of grade X students at SMAN 3 Purwokerto. After participating in this learning, students showed a more open, accepting, and respectful attitude towards religious differences. They are more likely to see religious diversity as a wealth and treat people with different religious beliefs with an inclusive attitude. In addition, this study also shows that multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning provides students with the opportunity to learn and understand other cultures and religious traditions.

Through exploration and discussion of different religious practices, students become more open to differences and have a better understanding of religious plurality. During the learning process, students are also involved in practical activities that encourage interfaith interaction. For example, they participate in visits to different places of worship or hold activities together with students from different religions. This helps students build better relationships with each other and reduce stereotypes or negative prejudices against certain religions (Rohmah et al., 2023). Furthermore, multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning also provides opportunities for students to learn about the history and contributions of religions to the development of society. With a deeper understanding of religious history, students can appreciate the cultural and intellectual heritage that comes from various religious traditions (Patimah, 2022).

During this study, it was also found that the role of teachers is very important in encouraging religious tolerance in the classroom. Teachers must be good examples in respecting religious differences and providing fair opportunities for all students to participate, emphasizing dialogue, open discussion, and in-depth understanding of different religions. In order to ensure the success of implementing multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning, there needs to be support from schools and parents. Schools can provide resources that support inclusive learning that values diversity. Parents also play an important role in providing a positive understanding of religious tolerance and supporting extracurricular activities that broaden students' religious insights (Sumadi et al., 2021). The indicators used to assess students' understanding, attitudes, and behaviors regarding religious tolerance in multicultural Islamic Religious Education are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Indicators of Students' Religious Tolerance in Multicultural Islamic Religious Education

No	Research Result Indicators
1.	Students are able to explain the beliefs and practices of other religions accurately.
2.	Students can identify similarities and differences between the teachings of their own religion and other religions.
3.	Students are able to understand that religions have diverse values and are worthy of respect.
4.	Students demonstrate an attitude of respect and appreciation for religious differences.
5.	Students do not complicate or restrict the religious freedom rights of others.
6.	Students can identify the benefits of religious diversity in enriching community life.
7.	Students actively participate in interfaith dialogue with students from different religious backgrounds.
8.	Students can express their opinions while respecting the religious views of others
9.	Students avoid using language or actions that could hurt or demean other religions.
10.	Students understand and respect human rights in religious freedom.
11.	Students demonstrate concern for the protection of human rights in a religious context
12.	Students are able to identify human rights violations related to religion and find appropriate solutions.
13.	Students demonstrate an open, accepting, and inclusive attitude towards religious differences.
14.	Students treat students of other religions with respect and fairness.
15.	Students avoid prejudice and discrimination based on religion.

The indicator table above provides an explanation of the aspects of learning that need to be evaluated to measure the impact of the implementation of multicultural PAI learning on religious tolerance of class X students at SMAN 3 Purwokerto. Each indicator can be analyzed separately to find out how changes and developments occur in students' attitudes, knowledge, and behavior related to religious tolerance. However, it must be acknowledged that there are still several challenges in implementing multicultural PAI learning. One of them is the existence of resistance or disagreement from some parties who still maintain narrow views on religion. Therefore, supporting steps such as training for teachers, inter-stakeholder dialogue, and broader advocacy are needed to strengthen this approach. In conclusion, the implementation of multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning at SMAN 3 Purwokerto has brought a positive impact in increasing religious tolerance of grade X students. Students experienced changes in understanding, appreciation, and attitudes towards religious differences. The results of this study contribute to the understanding of the effectiveness of a multicultural approach in increasing religious tolerance in the context of education. In addition, these results can also be used to develop a curriculum in education.

4. CONCLUSION

There are several important findings that emerged from the data analysis. First, students who follow learning with a multicultural approach tend to have a better understanding of religious and cultural diversity. Teaching with this approach. In addition, multicultural learning also needs to be expanded into other aspects of the school curriculum, so as to broaden students understanding and experience of religious and cultural diversity. Multicultural learning in Islamic Religious Education also increases students' awareness of social and humanitarian issues involving religion. They learn to critically analyze these problems, and seek solutions that respect individual rights without violating religious principles. Thus, this study makes an important contribution to the development of religious education oriented to cultural diversity. Religious tolerance obtained through a multicultural approach in Islamic Religious Education learning will help create a more harmonious and inclusive society, where diversity is valued and used as a source of strength. Students' understanding, appreciation, and attitudes towards religious differences. Students are better able to appreciate diversity, interact constructively, and demonstrate inclusive attitudes towards other religions. These results indicate that multicultural Islamic Religious Education learning can be an effective means of promoting religious tolerance in schools. The conclusion of this study is the importance of a multicultural approach in Islamic Religious Education learning to improve students' religious tolerance. Through inclusive understanding, respect for diversity, constructive interaction, and awareness of human rights in the context of religion, students can grow into individuals who are able to live harmoniously in a multicultural society. In conclusion, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning with a multicultural perspective at SMAN 3 Purwokerto has had a positive impact in increasing the religious tolerance of class X students. Through an inclusive, interactive approach and the use of diverse learning resources, students can gain a better understanding of other religions and build a strong attitude of tolerance. With the enrichment of activities and appropriate evaluations, students can apply the values of tolerance in everyday life, so as to create a harmonious, inclusive society full of religious tolerance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training at Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri State Islamic University of Purwokerto for their academic guidance and support throughout the research process. Special thanks are also extended to the teachers and students of SMAN 3 Purwokerto, whose participation made this study possible.

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