

Development of Multicultural Islamic Religious Education Curriculum in Building Religious Moderation at Universitas Islam Kadiri Kediri

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum incorporating multicultural values to foster religious moderation among students. The proposed curriculum integrates principles of cultural diversity and tolerance into PAI learning materials, allowing students to comprehend Islamic teachings while also appreciating and interacting harmoniously with adherents of other religions. Utilizing a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach, this study addresses multicultural education as a relatively new phenomenon in PAI courses, emphasized as an essential competency for both lecturers and students. The phenomenological approach seeks to understand the participants' daily lives and intersubjective experiences, aiming to reveal the meaning of concepts and phenomena as perceived by individuals. Conducted in a natural setting, this approach permits unrestricted interpretation of the phenomenon, granting researchers the freedom to analyze the data comprehensively. The findings indicate that a multicultural PAI curriculum effectively promotes an understanding of religious moderation among students and heightens awareness of the importance of multicultural perspectives in religion. These results are intended to guide educators and policymakers in creating a more inclusive PAI curriculum, thereby supporting the development of a peaceful and harmonious society.

Introduction

In the field of education, the topic of multiculturalism has become a significant area of interest among academics. The concept of multicultural education was initially proposed and debated in the United States and other Western countries during the 1960s. At that time, discrimination against minority groups by the majority population was a pressing issue in America. Consequently, civil rights

Siti Sumadiyah, Sri Wahyuni

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movements emerged with the objective of reducing these discriminatory practices. The emergence of these movements had a notable impact on education. Subsequently, numerous experts developed proposals for educational reform that emphasized tolerance and equality, focusing on aspects of ethnic and cultural diversity (Makmun et al., 2021). Multicultural education is a learning strategy that utilizes students' cultural backgrounds to enhance learning in the classroom and school environment. It aims to support and expand the concepts of culture, difference, equality, and democracy (Hasan, n.d.).

In Indonesia, the discourse on multiculturalism began to grow rapidly in the early 20th century. The topic is often discussed, especially in the political sphere. As is well known, Indonesia is a country with a high level of diversity. Its society consists of various tribes with different customs, cultures, religions, and languages. This diversity, as evidenced by recent events, can trigger social conflict. Examples of such disputes include those between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the government in Aceh, Muslim and Christian communities in Ambon and North Maluku, and local residents and migrants in Kupang, NTT. Furthermore, in West Kalimantan, there have been conflicts between Bugis, Buton, Madurese and Malay Dayak communities. These conflicts demonstrate that Indonesian society is still in the process of fully comprehending and accepting the diversity that exists. (Bahasa et al., n.d.) Currently, Indonesia is not only facing conflicts but also numerous problems caused by extremism. Hasan (2022, p. 30) proposes that radicalism can be divided into two categories: radicalism in the form of ideas (fundamentalism) and radicalism in the form of actions (terrorism). Indonesia is still vulnerable to extremism and terrorism, particularly among teenagers. Consequently, the younger generation is the group most susceptible to radicalism and terrorism, necessitating concerted efforts to counter these pernicious ideologies. Multicultural education has become a pivotal aspect of contemporary education, particularly at the university level, where cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity is an inherent aspect of the academic environment. UNISKA Kediri, as a university committed to advancing quality education, is cognizant of the importance of integrating the concept of multiculturalism into the curriculum to prepare students for the challenges of an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Educational institutions occupy a pivotal role in implementing religious moderation education. Institutions that promote harmonious relations between different groups can reduce religious, ethnic, or racial segregation that exists in society. (Albana, 2023, p. 51).

In the context of UNISKA Kediri, the development of multicultural education is oriented towards implementing inclusive and tolerant values that follow Islamic

teachings while respecting the diversity in society. The primary objective of multicultural education is to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of different cultures, religions, and worldviews and to cultivate a respectful attitude toward others.

The development of multicultural education at UNISKA Kediri encompasses a number of crucial elements, including the theoretical and conceptual aspects of multiculturalism and an analysis of social interactions involving students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. This approach is designed to provide students with a deeper understanding of the application of multicultural Islamic education values in a multicultural context at UNISKA Kediri.

Furthermore, active learning strategies, such as group discussions, collaborative projects, and field trips, are employed to enhance students' comprehension and empathy toward diversity. Additionally, evaluation and assessment emphasizing students' capacity to adapt and contribute in a multicultural environment indicate the efficacy of this multicultural PAI curriculum development. Therefore, the intention of UNISKA Kediri is that the development of multicultural Islamic education will serve as a robust foundation for students to become inclusive, empathetic, and prepared to confront the challenges of a diverse global world.

In light of this background, this research focuses on 1) The form of multiculturalism at Kadirī Islamic University Kediri. 2) What learning strategies are employed in delivering multicultural Islamic education at UNISKA Kediri? 3) What approach model is used in developing the curriculum for multicultural Islamic education at UNISKA Kediri?

Method

The methodology employed in this research is qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. This research adopted a phenomenological approach due to its relevance to a novel phenomenon in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) study programmes, which is becoming increasingly apparent and being encouraged as an essential component of modern education. The phenomenological approach employed in this study is designed to elucidate the lived experiences of participants and the subjective realities they encounter in their daily lives (their lifeworlds). Phenomenological research aims to elucidate the significance of concepts and phenomena as perceived by individuals with varying degrees of awareness. Conducting phenomenological research in a natural context allows for the interpretation and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation to be free from limitations, and the researcher is able to analyze the data collected without restriction.

Siti Sumadiyah, Sri Wahyuni

Development of Multicultural Islamic Religious Education Curriculum in Building Religious Moderation at Universitas Islam Kadirī Kediri

Result and Discussion

1. The phenomenon of multiculturalism at Kadiri Islamic University (UNISKA) Kediri

The phenomenon of multiculturalism at Kadiri Islamic University (UNISKA) in Kediri is defined as a condition in which various cultural, religious, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds coexist within the campus environment. UNISKA Kediri, like many other universities, has a diverse student, lecturer, and staff population comprising individuals from a range of cultural, religious, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. The phenomenon of multiculturalism at UNISKA Kediri can be observed in the following ways:

- a. **Student Diversity:** The student body at UNISKA Kediri comprises individuals with diverse religious affiliations, linguistic backgrounds, and cultural traditions. Additionally, the student body at UNISKA Kediri comprises individuals hailing from many geographical regions, with a notable proportion originating from abroad.
- b. **Social Interaction:** Students, lecturers, and staff with diverse backgrounds engage in academic and non-academic activities, such as discussions, seminars, and student organization activities.
- c. **University Policies:** Besides its diverse student body, UNISKA Kediri has policies to support multiculturalism. These include programs designed to promote inclusiveness, tolerance, and intercultural dialogue.
- d. **Curriculum:** The curriculum of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and other courses may emphasize the importance of understanding and appreciating cultural and religious differences. The undergraduate program at UNISKA comprises five Islamic religion courses, each with nine credit loads. Furthermore, state defense and Pancasila courses include content pertaining to multicultural values.
- e. **Rusunawa activities:** One of the objectives of Rusunawa activities is to foster a multicultural character among students, with the intention that they will be able to interact and adapt to all forms of diversity that exist in their environment.
- f. **The Role of the Student Community:** The student community at UNISKA Kediri has the potential to play an instrumental role in fostering dialogue and collaboration between students from diverse backgrounds through the establishment of student organizations and study groups. SMEs at UNISKA Kediri will be able to foster an attitude of religious moderation, given the diversity of students with different religious, ethnic, cultural, and other

backgrounds (Husna & Wahyuni, 2021).

Studying multiculturalism at UNISKA Kediri can provide insight into how the campus can support a harmonious and inclusive life for all its members. To protect all groups, regardless of religion, culture, ethnicity, or other factors.

2. Strategies of lecturers teaching Islamic religion courses in learning Multicultural Islamic Education

Islamic Religious Education must not remain static, as it was 50 years ago, given the significant advancements in cultural, economic, entertainment, and trade interactions in the intervening period. In essence, Islamic religious education derives from Islam's fundamental tenets, espoused in the Qur'an and Al-Hadith. This subject matter is then developed through a process of *ijtihad* by scholars to create more detailed content. The primary objective of this subject is not merely to ensure students' comprehension of various Islamic teachings but to facilitate students' ability to apply these teachings in their daily lives. (Junaidi & Suryanto, 2022, p. 33).

The Multicultural Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning strategy is an approach to teaching Islamic Religious Education that emphasizes the cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity of students while simultaneously promoting the values of tolerance, inclusiveness, and respect for differences. This strategy aims to enhance students' comprehension of diversity within Islam and the broader society while fostering mutual respect among individuals from disparate backgrounds. In this context, lecturers must be able to convey the values of Multicultural Islamic Education throughout the learning process. This ensures that Multicultural Islamic Education is not merely a theoretical concept but a process that is actively pursued. (Abdurrahmansyah, 2017, p. 84).

The learning strategy of multicultural PAI is analogous to that of other subjects. In essence, the strategy is no different from learning strategies in general, which are procedures and methods employed by instructors to facilitate multicultural education learning for students. However, what distinguishes it from other strategies is that multicultural learning focuses on forming and critically analyzing student attitudes. Consequently, the strategies employed are designed to facilitate the formation of attitudes and personalities that reflect multicultural values.

The learning strategies developed should facilitate students' engagement with the social reality of their environment. In this manner, individual differences can become a collective strength, and students become accustomed to interacting with diverse ethnicities, cultures, languages, social and economic conditions, intellectual levels, religions, and other aspects. Some learning methods that can be applied include:

- a. The Problem-Solving Strategy in Multicultural Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning employs a pedagogical approach that prioritizes resolving issues within religious, cultural, and social diversity. This strategy aims to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills, empathy, and the capacity to understand and overcome differences. To facilitate learning models, students are presented with case studies or scenarios that exemplify multicultural challenges in everyday life. Students are encouraged to analyze the problem from various perspectives and identify solutions that align with Islamic values (Siregar, 2022).
- b. A study visit is a pedagogical approach that entails visiting a specific location outside the classroom. The objective is to study the object in question to achieve the learning outcomes that have been established. Such study visits are typically conducted by religious lecturers or those teaching courses related to multicultural insights, such as state defense and Pancasila. The objective is to provide students with a more profound and meaningful understanding of the subject matter. (Mas'udi, 2021).
- c. Group Discussion: Group discussions facilitate the sharing of diverse perspectives and the identification of collaborative solutions. This process facilitates the comprehension of disparate perspectives and the appreciation of diversity. Using case studies within the context of group discussion facilitates the formation of an understanding of diversity in togetherness. (Nim, 2009, p. 6)
- d. Collaborative Project: Students collaborate on a project addressing multicultural issues. The project may entail research, data collection, or the implementation of a social campaign in support of inclusivity and tolerance. This assignment is typically conducted once every semester.
- e. Interdisciplinary approach: Integrating PAI learning with other subjects, such as history, sociology, or language, can provide a more comprehensive context for addressing multicultural issues. In every discussion, religious studies lecturers offer insights from a variety of perspectives.
- f. Role Scenarios: Students may engage in simulations or dramas that address multicultural issues. This enables them to empathize with the experiences of others and to consider a range of potential solutions. In various specific activities, students are assigned the role of a character, for instance, during Rusunawa activities, art performances, or in the form of college assignments, which may entail the creation of animated videos about diversity.

Applying problem-solving strategies in multicultural PAI learning enables students to learn to deal with differences positively and constructively, thereby developing the ability to adapt to various multicultural situations.

3. Development Approach of Multicultural Islamic Education Curriculum at UNISKA Kediri

This paper describes and explains the development approach of the multicultural Islamic education curriculum at UNISKA Kediri. UNISKA Kediri remains dedicated to the provision of relevant and high-quality education. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), there is an urgent need to develop a curriculum that prioritizes in-depth religious understanding and integrates multicultural values. This approach aims to equip students with the ability to interact effectively in a culturally and religiously diverse society.

The Multicultural Islamic Education curriculum represents an educational development initiative that incorporates the principles of multiculturalism into the teaching and learning of Islamic Education. The primary objective of this curriculum is to cultivate tolerance, mutual understanding, and harmonious coexistence amidst differences. This approach acknowledges that Indonesia is a country with a vast cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity, and that religious education should reflect this reality.

At UNISKA, the approach employed for developing the Multicultural Islamic Education Curriculum is the Humanist approach. The humanist approach to education emphasizes the importance of developing individual potential holistically, encompassing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. In the context of multicultural Islamic religious education (PAI), this approach is concerned with the holistic development of students, equipping them with the capacity to appreciate and respect cultural and religious diversity. The following paragraphs will present some key elements and strategies that can be employed in the humanist approach to developing a multicultural PAI curriculum.

- a. **Learner-Centered:** The humanist approach places students at the center of the learning process. In this approach, lecturers act as facilitators, assisting students in identifying personal meaning in their learning and relating it to their life experiences. In multicultural PAI, this entails providing students with an opportunity to examine and comprehend the manner in which Islamic teachings can be applied in the context of their diverse lives.
- b. **Development of Self-Potential:** The primary objective of the humanist approach is the full development of students' potential. This encompasses intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual growth. In multicultural PAI, the curriculum is designed to facilitate students' comprehension of and appreciation for diversity

and develop the empathy and social skills necessary for harmonious coexistence in a multicultural society.

- c. **Experiential Learning:** The humanist approach significantly emphasizes the value of learning through direct experience. In the context of multicultural PAI, this can manifest as activities such as visits to places of worship of different religions, participation in interfaith dialogue, or community service projects involving different cultural and religious groups. Such experiences facilitate the development of a more profound comprehension and appreciation of diversity.
- d. **Development of Social and Emotional Skills:** The humanist approach places significant emphasis on developing social and emotional skills, including empathy, cooperation, and communication. In multicultural PAI, the curriculum is designed to facilitate the development of these skills through collaborative activities, group discussions, and reflective exercises. Students are encouraged to comprehend the emotions and perspectives of others and to learn how to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- e. **Reflection and Self-Awareness:** Reflection is a crucial aspect of the humanist approach. Students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences, understand their values, and consider how those values interact with Islamic teachings and cultural diversity. Using reflective journals, small group discussions, and meditation can facilitate the reflection process.
- f. **Meaningful Learning:** The humanist approach places great emphasis on meaningful learning. This implies that the subject matter should be pertinent to the student's lives and facilitate their comprehension of the world around them. In multicultural PAI, the curriculum is designed to facilitate the integration of Islamic teachings with contemporary issues and social realities students encounter. This encompasses subjects such as social justice, human rights, and the role of religion in a multicultural society.
- g. **Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment:** The humanist approach emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment where all students feel valued and supported in their learning process. It is the responsibility of the teacher to foster a classroom environment that is conducive to open communication and a safe space for students to share their views and experiences. In multicultural PAI, this implies valuing and celebrating cultural and religious diversity within the classroom.

Conclusion

Developing the Multicultural Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at Kadiri Islamic University is a constructive contribution to fostering harmony and diversity among students. The integration of multicultural values in the teaching of Islamic Religious Education enables students to gain a deeper understanding of and respect for the diverse beliefs and cultures within the student body. This creates a more inclusive and harmonious environment, facilitating enhanced interaction between students from disparate backgrounds. Consequently, a multicultural PAI curriculum not only enables the attainment of academic objectives but also fortifies social cohesion and fraternity and equips students with the capacity to engage in a heterogeneous society with a tolerant and open disposition

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