Multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance in an Indonesian public high school: An ethnographic study

Siti Fatimah, Djunaedi Ghony and Junaidi Mistar
Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

The growing complexity of religious and cultural diversity has increased the need for educational approaches that foster sustainable tolerance among young people. Although multicultural Islamic education has been widely promoted to strengthen social cohesion, empirical evidence explaining how its values are internalised through everyday educational practices remains limited. This study reconstructs an empirically grounded model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance in an Indonesian public vocational high school using an educational ethnography design. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and analysed using Spradley's ethnographic framework. The findings reveal that tolerance develops progressively through two interrelated dimensions: respectful behaviour and appreciative behaviour. Their development is reinforced by the reciprocal interaction of dialogical pedagogy, teacher exemplarity, inclusive institutional culture, and continuous cross-identity interaction. Based on these findings, our study reconstructs a model that conceptualises tolerance as a dynamic socio-cultural process, continuously reproduced through everyday educational practice, rather than as a direct outcome of curriculum implementation. The proposed model extends contemporary scholarship by explaining how sustainable tolerance is socially constructed and maintained within multicultural educational communities.

Introduction

The increasing complexity of religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity has intensified global concerns about fostering tolerance in educational settings. Schools are expected not only to transmit academic knowledge but also to cultivate democratic values, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence among students. Recent studies indicate that tolerance is a socially constructed competence developed through inclusive pedagogy, sustained interaction, and institutional commitment to diversity rather than an individual disposition alone (Sirry et al., 2024; Ackroyd & Elton-Chalcraft, 2025; Emam et al., 2026). These developments position schools as strategic environments for nurturing students who can negotiate differences while maintaining their own religious and cultural identities.

Among various educational approaches, multicultural Islamic Education has emerged as a promising framework for fostering tolerance in plural societies. This approach integrates Islamic values with multicultural principles of equality, justice, empathy, dialogue, and respect for diversity. Recent evidence shows that multicultural Islamic education strengthens social cohesion by encouraging students to perceive diversity as an opportunity for cooperation rather than conflict while promoting the Islamic principle of *rahmatan lil-'alamin* as a foundation for inclusive citizenship (Fahmi et al., 2025; Sutrisno, Solikah & Wardini, 2025; Andang et al., 2026). Consequently, multicultural Islamic

education has gained increasing attention as an educational response to contemporary challenges of intolerance (Djamaluddin et al, 2024; Fauziah et al, 2024; Fitriani, 2023),

Recent studies in Indonesia demonstrate that multicultural Islamic education has been implemented through curriculum integration, hidden curricula, collaborative learning, extracurricular activities, and local cultural values across pesantren (Burga & Damopolii, 2022; Darda et al., 2024), madrasas, and public schools. Ethnographic evidence shows that authentic educational experiences, including collective responsibilities and everyday interaction, are more effective in cultivating tolerance than the transmission of religious knowledge alone (Syarifah et al., 2025; Ju'subaidi et al., 2024; Fahmi et al., 2025; Iqbal & Ridwan, 2025; Muhajir et al., 2025). At the same time, successful implementation depends on teachers' pedagogical competence, dialogical learning, role modelling, and institutional support that consistently reinforce inclusive values (Sirry et al., 2024; Siddik et al., 2025; Habibulloh, 2024; Sholeh et al., 2024; Siregar et al., 2025; Harahap et al., 2026). These findings suggest that tolerance develops through the interaction of pedagogy, school culture, and students' lived experiences rather than through isolated instructional interventions.

Despite these advances, important research gaps remain. Existing studies have largely focused on curriculum implementation, institutional policies, religious moderation programs, or students' attitudes toward diversity, while relatively limited attention has been given to the cultural process through which multicultural Islamic values are internalised and transformed into habitual patterns of tolerant behaviour. Although recent ethnographic studies have begun to explain the contribution of hidden curricula and experiential learning, they have mainly been conducted in pesantren, madrasas, and general public schools (Syarifah et al., 2025; Ju'subaidi et al., 2024; Muhajir et al., 2025). Consequently, little is known about how multicultural Islamic education operates as an integrated educational ecosystem in which pedagogical practice, institutional culture, teacher exemplarity, and students' everyday interactions collectively foster tolerance.

Another important limitation concerns the research setting. Indonesian public vocational high schools remain under-represented in the literature despite accommodating students from diverse religious, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds while preparing them for collaborative professional environments. These characteristics create intensive opportunities for everyday cross-identity interaction that may generate distinctive processes of negotiating diversity and developing social cohesion. Recent reviews explicitly recommend expanding ethnographic research beyond pesantren and conventional secondary schools to better understand multicultural educational practices across different institutional settings (Harahap et al., 2026; Hanif et al., 2025; Syarifah et al., 2025; [Suryana & Hilmi, 2023).

Responding to these limitations, this study employs an educational ethnography approach to examine how multicultural Islamic education is enacted in an Indonesian public vocational high school and how its values are interpreted, internalised, and reproduced through students' everyday social practices. Rather than evaluating curriculum implementation or measuring tolerance as an individual disposition, our study explores

tolerance as a lived social process emerging from the interaction of religious values, dialogical pedagogy, teacher exemplarity, institutional culture, and cross-identity experiences. This perspective responds directly to recent calls for more context-sensitive ethnographic investigations capable of explaining how multicultural educational practices operate within authentic educational settings (Syarifah et al., 2025; Harahap et al., 2026; Sirry et al., 2024).

This study therefore seeks to extend existing scholarship by reconstructing an empirically grounded model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance within the distinctive social environment of an Indonesian public vocational high school. Our proposed model conceptualises tolerance as the product of dynamic interaction among multicultural Islamic values, dialogical pedagogical practices, inclusive institutional structures, school culture, cross-identity social interaction, and students' interpretive processes. Such a perspective contributes to the growing international discourse on multicultural and religious education by offering an integrative ethnographic explanation of how tolerance is socially constructed and sustained in plural educational communities. Guided by this objective, we address the research questions:

(1) How is respectful behaviour demonstrated by students from the perspective of multicultural Islamic education within a multicultural school environment?
(2) How is appreciative behaviour internalised and practised in students' everyday social interactions?
(3) How does the process of internalising multicultural Islamic educational values foster tolerance among students?
(4) How can an empirically grounded model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance be reconstructed based on ethnographic findings from an Indonesian public vocational high school?

Method

Research design

We employed a qualitative approach using educational ethnography to explore how multicultural Islamic education fosters tolerance in an Indonesian public vocational high school. Educational ethnography was selected because tolerance is a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon that develops through everyday interaction, institutional practices, and value internalisation. This approach enables researchers to understand how multicultural values are interpreted, negotiated, and reproduced within authentic educational settings (Spradley, 1979, 1980; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cohen et al., 2018).

Consistent with the interpretive paradigm, the researcher served as the primary research instrument and participated directly in school activities throughout the fieldwork. Prolonged engagement enabled close interaction with participants and facilitated an in-depth understanding of how teachers and students collectively constructed and practised multicultural values in everyday school life (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Research context and participants

The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Pasuruan, East Java, Indonesia, a public vocational high school established in 1980 and accredited 'A'. The school has been designated as both a 'Centre of Excellence Vocational School' (SMK Pusat Keunggulan) and a 'Regional Public Service Agency Vocational School' (SMK BLUD). It offers eight vocational programs and maintains extensive partnerships with industries and professional certification bodies, providing students with diverse academic and professional learning experiences.

The school accommodates approximately 862 students and 58 teachers. Male students account for approximately 68% of the student population, while male teachers represent about 56% of the teaching staff. Approximately 88% of school members are Muslim, with the remainder consisting of Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist communities. Ethnically, about 73% of students are Javanese, while the remainder are predominantly Madurese and other ethnic groups. Located in the culturally plural Pendalungan region of East Java, the school provides a rich setting for observing everyday intercultural and inter-religious interaction.

The site was purposively selected because it represents a multicultural public vocational school where students from diverse religious, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds interact continuously through classroom learning, vocational practice, extracurricular activities, and collaborative projects. This context offers valuable opportunities for examining how multicultural Islamic values are translated into everyday social practices. Participants were selected purposively and consisted of school leaders, Islamic religious education teachers, and students from different religious backgrounds and vocational programs. Data collection continued until sufficient information was obtained to explain the cultural patterns associated with tolerance formation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cohen et al., 2018).

Data collection

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Participant observation focused on naturally occurring interactions during classroom learning, religious activities, extracurricular programs, school ceremonies, and informal social encounters. Documentary sources, including school policies, curricular documents, institutional reports, photographs, and school archives, were analysed to enrich contextual understanding and support data triangulation. Semi-structured interviews with school leaders, Islamic religious education teachers, and students explored their experiences and interpretations regarding the internalisation of multicultural Islamic values and the development of tolerant behaviour. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian, with translations into English for quotation purposes undertaken by the researchers.

Data analysis

Data were analysed using Spradley's ethnographic analysis, consisting of domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis (Spradley, 1979, 1980). Domain analysis identified key cultural categories related to tolerance and multicultural interaction, while taxonomic analysis organised these categories into broader conceptual relationships. Componential analysis examined similarities and differences among cultural categories, and cultural theme analysis synthesised the findings into overarching explanations of how multicultural Islamic educational values were interpreted, internalised, and enacted in everyday school life. Data analysis was conducted iteratively throughout the fieldwork so that emerging findings continuously informed subsequent observations and interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cohen et al., 2018).

The trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through triangulation, prolonged engagement, member checking, peer debriefing, and maintaining an audit trail. These procedures enhanced the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the findings by ensuring that interpretations remained firmly grounded in participants' lived experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Results and discussion

Respectful behaviour from the perspective of multicultural Islamic education within a multicultural school environment

Respectful behaviour emerged as the most visible expression of tolerance within the multicultural school environment. Rather than representing compliance with institutional rules, respect was constructed as a shared cultural practice through which students recognised the dignity, religious identity, and rights of others in everyday interactions. Ethnographic observations showed that students understood respect as an ethical responsibility rooted in Islamic values while simultaneously acknowledging diversity as a normal feature of school life. Respect therefore functioned not only to prevent conflict but also to create psychological safety and mutual trust among members of the school community. This finding supports recent studies arguing that multicultural Islamic education fosters tolerance most effectively when multicultural values are embedded in everyday educational practice rather than remaining at the level of curriculum discourse (Fahmi et al., 2025; Siddik et al., 2025; Sutrisno, Solikah & Wardini, 2025). The findings further indicate that respectful behaviour constitutes the initial cultural dimension through which multicultural Islamic values are transformed into observable patterns of tolerant behaviour.

One of the clearest manifestations of respectful behaviour was observed during students' religious practices, particularly when Muslim students performed daily prayers. Teachers consistently described this behaviour as emerging from students' collective awareness rather than institutional enforcement. One teacher explained:

> Maintaining tolerance here is not just about not disturbing others. It is more about making sure that everyone feels comfortable in practising their beliefs. For example, when there are students praying, others will automatically lower their voices. Sometimes, without being told, they even remind their friends to be quiet. This is something that grows naturally, not because of formal rules, but because they are used to respecting each other.

Students expressed a similar understanding:

> When I see my friend praying, I feel like I have to respect that moment. It's not because the teacher tells me to, but because it feels wrong if I don't. We are already used to living together like this, so it becomes something natural.

These narratives demonstrate that respect developed through repeated social interaction rather than external regulation. Continuous exposure to multicultural experiences enabled students to internalise sensitivity toward religious difference until respectful behaviour became a habitual response. This finding is consistent with recent ethnographic studies showing that multicultural Islamic education is strengthened through hidden curricula, everyday school routines, and sustained interpersonal interaction rather than formal religious instruction alone (Syarifah et al., 2025; Ju'subaidi et al., 2024; Muhajir et al., 2025). Unlike previous studies emphasising institutional programs, the present findings explain how repeated social interaction transforms multicultural values into students' self-regulated patterns of respectful behaviour.

The internalisation of respect was further reinforced through dialogical pedagogy and teacher exemplarity. Islamic religious education teachers consistently connected Islamic teachings with students' lived experiences, encouraging them to critically reflect on everyday encounters with religious diversity rather than merely memorising doctrinal concepts. One teacher explained:

> In our lessons, we often discuss how Islam teaches respect for differences. I don't just explain the theory, but I ask students to reflect on their daily experiences. Sometimes they share their own stories about interacting with friends of different religions. From there, they begin to understand that respecting others does not weaken their faith, but actually strengthens it.

Students confirmed this experience:

> Before, I thought that respecting other religions might affect my own beliefs. But after discussions in class, I realised that it actually makes me understand my religion better. I become more confident, not less.

Teachers reinforced these values through consistent everyday behaviour. As one teacher stated:

> We never force students to participate in religious activities that are not part of their beliefs. We give them freedom, but at the same time, we show them how to respect each other. Students observe what we do. If we are consistent, they will follow.

These findings demonstrate that respectful behaviour was cultivated through the interaction of reflective learning and behavioural modelling. Students developed inclusive attitudes because they experienced consistency between what teachers taught and how they behaved. Recent studies similarly identify dialogical pedagogy and teacher exemplarity as essential mechanisms for strengthening multicultural understanding and tolerance (Siregar et al., 2025; Muhja & Shahnaz, 2026; Abdul Cholik & Jannah, 2025; Harahap et al., 2026; Sirry et al., 2024; Habibulloh, 2024). The present study extends this scholarship by showing that pedagogical dialogue and teacher exemplarity function together as cultural mechanisms that transform multicultural Islamic values into shared patterns of respectful behaviour.

Respectful behaviour was further reinforced through an inclusive institutional culture that enabled students from different religious backgrounds to experience equal recognition and participation. Ethnographic observations indicated that students perceived the school as a socially safe environment where religious identity was acknowledged without becoming a source of exclusion. One non-Muslim student explained:

> I feel comfortable here because I can practice my religion without feeling different. My friends don't judge me, and the teachers also support us. It makes me feel accepted.

This testimony illustrates that respect was sustained not only through interpersonal relationships but also through institutional practices that guaranteed psychological safety and equal participation. Such findings are consistent with recent studies emphasising that multicultural Islamic education becomes more effective when school leadership and institutional culture consistently reinforce inclusive educational values (Harahap et al., 2026; Wakano et al., 2025; Sutrisno, Solikah & Wardini, 2025). The present study further demonstrates that institutional inclusivity is reproduced through everyday organisational practices rather than formal regulations alone, allowing respect to become an authentic characteristic of school culture.

Daily symbolic practices also played an important role in strengthening respect. Students routinely exchanged greetings during religious celebrations, demonstrated sensitivity in their communication, and participated in collaborative activities regardless of religious affiliation. These seemingly simple interactions functioned as cultural symbols that reinforced mutual recognition and social solidarity. One student remarked:

> When my friends celebrate their religious holidays, I always say congratulations. For me, it's a simple thing, but it shows that I care about them. And they also do the same to me.

Collaborative learning similarly encouraged students to transcend religious boundaries. As one participant explained:

> When we work in groups, we don't really think about religion. What matters is how we can work together and finish the task. From there, we get closer and understand each other better.

These findings indicate that repeated interaction gradually reduced social distance and enabled students to reinterpret diversity as an ordinary element of cooperative school life.

Similar conclusions have been reported in recent ethnographic studies highlighting hidden curricula, collaborative learning, and authentic intercultural interaction as effective mechanisms for strengthening multicultural competence and tolerance (Syarifah et al., 2025; Ju'subaidi et al., 2024; Fahmi et al., 2025; Iqbal & Ridwan, 2025; Muhajir et al., 2025). The present findings extend this literature by demonstrating that symbolic practices and cross-identity interaction jointly function as cultural processes through which respectful behaviour is continuously negotiated and reproduced.

A particularly compelling example of this process emerged during Ramadan. Non-Muslim students voluntarily adjusted their behaviour to accommodate their Muslim peers who were fasting, not because of institutional rules but because of personal awareness and empathy. One teacher explained:

> During Ramadan, non-Muslim students usually avoid eating in front of their fasting friends. No one tells them to do so, but they understand and respect it.

A non-Muslim student similarly stated:

> I try not to eat in front of my friends who are fasting. I know it's important for them, so I want to respect that. It's just something I feel I should do.

These narratives indicate that respectful behaviour had evolved into an internally regulated ethical disposition grounded in empathy rather than external obligation. Recent studies similarly argue that multicultural Islamic education becomes sustainable when students experience diversity as a shared moral responsibility developed through authentic social interaction (Muhja & Shahnaz, 2026; Fahruddin et al., 2026; Harahap et al., 2026). The present findings further identify empathy as the immediate cultural mechanism linking multicultural Islamic values with spontaneous acts of respect in everyday school life.

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that respectful behaviour is not a fixed personal attribute but a dynamic socio-cultural process continuously reproduced through the reciprocal interaction of multicultural Islamic values, dialogical pedagogy, teacher exemplarity, inclusive institutional culture, symbolic practices, empathy, and sustained cross-identity interaction**.** Unlike previous studies that have generally examined these dimensions separately, the present ethnographic evidence reveals that they operate as an integrated educational ecosystem that progressively constructs respectful behaviour through students' lived experiences. This constitutes the first theoretical contribution of the study by positioning respectful behaviour not merely as an indicator of tolerance but as the foundational cultural dimension from which sustainable tolerance develops. This interpretation also provides the conceptual bridge to the second dimension of the model—appreciative behaviour—which reflects a deeper level of multicultural engagement characterised by actively valuing and strengthening diversity through meaningful social participation.

The internalisation and practice of appreciative behaviour in students' everyday social interactions

Appreciative behaviour emerged as a more advanced dimension of tolerance than respectful behaviour. Whereas respect primarily involved recognising and protecting the rights of others, appreciation reflected students' active willingness to engage with diversity as a source of friendship, cooperation, and mutual learning. Ethnographic observations showed that students no longer viewed religious and cultural differences merely as realities to be accepted but as opportunities to build meaningful social relationships. This finding suggests that multicultural Islamic education extends beyond preventing discrimination by cultivating empathy, reciprocity, and social cohesion through everyday interaction. Similar conclusions have been reported in recent studies demonstrating that multicultural Islamic education strengthens tolerance when students actively participate in inclusive relationships rather than simply coexisting peacefully with others (Fahmi et al., 2025; Sutrisno, Solikah & Wardini, 2025; Muhajir et al., 2025). Our study further demonstrates that appreciation develops as an internalised cultural disposition reinforced through continuous participation in multicultural school life.

Students consistently described a gradual transformation in the way they interpreted religious diversity. Initially, tolerance was understood simply as refraining from disturbing others' religious practices. Over time, however, repeated interaction encouraged genuine friendship across religious boundaries. One student explained:

> At first, I thought respecting others just meant not disturbing them when they were worshipping. But over time, I realised it's more than that. Now I feel comfortable being friends with anyone, regardless of their religion. We joke, study, and spend time together without thinking about those differences.

Another student reflected:

> Before, I was a bit hesitant to interact closely with friends from different religions because I was afraid of saying something wrong. But here, I learned that differences are normal. Now I see them as something interesting, not something to avoid.

These narratives indicate that appreciation developed through sustained interpersonal encounters that gradually transformed diversity from a potential source of tension into a shared social resource. This finding corroborates recent ethnographic research showing that multicultural educational experiences reshape students' understanding of difference through authentic participation rather than formal instruction alone (Syarifah et al., 2025; Ju'subaidi et al., 2024; Iqbal & Ridwan, 2025). Unlike previous studies that mainly emphasise institutional initiatives, the present findings reveal that appreciation emerges because students continuously reinterpret diversity through relationships characterised by trust, familiarity, and mutual acceptance.

The internalisation of appreciative behaviour was further strengthened through dialogical learning and collaborative educational experiences. Islamic religious education teachers consistently encouraged students to connect Islamic values of equality, justice, and

empathy with their own multicultural experiences rather than treating these values as abstract religious concepts. One teacher explained:

> We teach students that differences are part of God's design, so they should not be rejected but understood. In class discussions, I often ask them how they feel when interacting with friends from different backgrounds. From there, they begin to realise that everyone deserves equal respect.

Students confirmed the influence of this approach:

> In class, we are often invited to share our experiences. It makes me realise that what I feel is also felt by others. That's why I try to be more open and accepting.

Outside the classroom, collaborative learning further reinforced these values. One student explained:

> When we work in groups, we don't choose friends based on religion. Sometimes we even forget who is from which religion because we are too focused on completing the task together. From there, we become closer.

Another student added:

> Working together makes us understand each other better. We see how our friends think, how they solve problems, and it builds trust.

These findings demonstrate that appreciation was cultivated through the combination of reflective dialogue and sustained collaboration. Students gradually moved beyond recognising diversity toward actively valuing it through shared responsibility and collective achievement. Recent studies similarly emphasise dialogical pedagogy, collaborative learning, and experiential interaction as effective mechanisms for strengthening multicultural understanding and tolerance (Siregar et al., 2025; Muhja & Shahnaz, 2026; Abdul Cholik & Jannah, 2025; Harahap et al., 2026; Sholeh et al., 2024; Fahruddin et al., 2026). The present study extends this scholarship by demonstrating that appreciation develops as a socially practised disposition in which empathy, cooperation, and interpersonal trust become integral elements of students' everyday multicultural experiences.

The development of appreciative behaviour was further sustained by an inclusive institutional culture that fostered students' sense of belonging regardless of religious background. Rather than emphasising religious differences, the school encouraged equal participation in academic, extracurricular, and social activities, enabling students to perceive themselves as members of a shared educational community. One non-Muslim student explained:

> Here, I don't feel like a minority. I feel like I am part of the school community. My friends treat me the same way, and that makes me more confident to interact with them.

This testimony indicates that appreciation developed because institutional practices consistently reinforced equality and social inclusion. Similar findings have been reported

in recent studies arguing that multicultural Islamic education becomes more sustainable when school leadership and organisational culture normalise diversity within everyday educational life (Harahap et al., 2026; Wakano et al., 2025; Sutrisno, Solikah & Wardini, 2025). The present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that institutional inclusivity encourages students to construct a shared social identity in which diversity becomes an ordinary and valued aspect of school culture.

Appreciative behaviour was also expressed through students' voluntary participation in activities supporting peers from different religious backgrounds. Non-Muslim students willingly assisted in organising Ramadan activities, while students from different faiths actively supported one another during various social and cultural events. One teacher explained:

> When we have activities related to Ramadan, some non-Muslim students help prepare things. We never ask them to do it, but they offer themselves. For them, it's not about religion, but about helping their friends.

A student similarly stated:

> I helped my friends prepare for Ramadan activities because I wanted to support them. Even though I'm not fasting, I feel happy to be involved.

Students likewise demonstrated appreciation through everyday communication by carefully choosing language and humour that respected religious differences while reminding one another whenever conversations risked becoming offensive. As one student explained:

> We are careful when joking, especially about religion. We know that some jokes can hurt others, so we try to avoid that. It's about respecting feelings.

Another participant added:

> If someone says something that might offend others, usually their friends will remind them. Not in a harsh way, but as a way to keep things respectful.

These findings demonstrate that appreciation was translated into concrete acts of solidarity and collective self-regulation sustained by shared ethical responsibility rather than institutional supervision. Recent studies similarly conclude that multicultural Islamic education strengthens social cohesion when students voluntarily support one another through collaborative participation and authentic social engagement (Fahmi et al., 2025; Fahruddin et al., 2026; Muhajir et al., 2025). The present study further shows that students themselves function as active cultural agents who continuously reproduce inclusive norms through everyday peer interaction, complementing previous studies that primarily emphasised teacher agency and curriculum integration (Sirry et al., 2024; Siregar et al., 2025).

Viewed ethnographically, appreciative behaviour represents the second developmental dimension of the reconstructed model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance. Whereas respectful behaviour establishes recognition of others' rights and identities, appreciative behaviour transforms that recognition into active social engagement characterised by empathy, solidarity, collaboration, and collective responsibility. This constitutes the second theoretical contribution of the study by demonstrating that tolerance develops through sequential cultural processes rather than emerging as a single educational outcome. The findings therefore suggest that sustainable tolerance is achieved when students move beyond respecting diversity to actively valuing it as a shared social resource for building inclusive and cohesive multicultural school communities. This interpretation provides the conceptual foundation for the following section, which explains how multicultural Islamic educational values are internalised through interconnected pedagogical, institutional, and cultural processes.

The internalisation process of multicultural Islamic educational values in fostering students' tolerance

The ethnographic findings demonstrate that students' tolerance developed not through isolated instructional activities but through a continuous process in which multicultural Islamic educational values became embedded in everyday school life. Students gradually internalised these values through repeated experiences of empathy, cooperation, mutual respect, and shared responsibility across religious and cultural differences. Rather than understanding tolerance as an abstract moral principle, they interpreted it as a practical way of living together within a multicultural educational community. This finding indicates that multicultural Islamic education functions as a comprehensive cultural system integrating religious values, pedagogy, institutional practices, and interpersonal relationships into students' daily experiences. Similar conclusions have been reported in recent studies showing that multicultural Islamic education is most effective when values are internalised through authentic educational experiences rather than cognitive transmission alone (Fahmi et al., 2025; Siddik et al., 2025; Sutrisno, Solikah & Wardini, 2025). The present study further demonstrates that value internalisation represents a dynamic cultural process through which repeated participation gradually transforms educational values into students' ethical dispositions.

The internalisation process began with the integration of multicultural Islamic values into classroom learning. Teachers consistently connected Islamic teachings on justice, compassion, equality, and respect for humanity with situations encountered in students' everyday interactions. Rather than presenting these principles as doctrinal knowledge, teachers encouraged students to interpret their own multicultural experiences. One teacher explained:

> We do not simply explain verses or religious concepts. We always ask students how those teachings relate to their daily interactions with friends from different backgrounds. That way, they understand that Islamic values should be practised in real life, not only remembered for examinations.

Students similarly acknowledged this experience:

> The discussions in class helped me realise that respecting people from different religions is not separate from my faith. It is actually part of practising my religion properly.

These findings indicate that value internalisation occurred because students continuously connected religious understanding with authentic social experience. Recent studies likewise emphasise that contextual learning, reflective dialogue, and the integration of multicultural values into Islamic Religious Education significantly strengthen inclusive attitudes (Siregar et al., 2025; Muhja & Shahnaz, 2026; Abdul Cholik & Jannah, 2025). Unlike previous studies focusing primarily on curriculum implementation, the present ethnographic evidence explains the cultural mechanism through which students reconstruct the meaning of Islamic teachings within multicultural educational practice.

The process was further strengthened through teachers' consistent role modelling. Throughout the fieldwork, teachers demonstrated fairness, openness, and respect toward students from different religious backgrounds, enabling students to observe the practical application of multicultural Islamic values beyond classroom instruction. One teacher explained:

> Students pay more attention to what we do than to what we say. If we teach respect but behave differently, they will notice immediately. That is why we try to demonstrate the same values in every interaction, whether inside or outside the classroom.

Students similarly recognised the importance of teachers' behaviour:

> When we see our teachers treating everyone fairly regardless of religion, we feel that respecting others is something natural. We learn more from their behaviour than from the lesson itself.

These narratives demonstrate that behavioural consistency enabled students to connect religious principles with everyday educational practice. Similar findings identify teacher agency and role modelling as important determinants of tolerance because students continuously construct their understanding of diversity by observing teachers' responses to difference (Harahap et al., 2026; Sirry et al., 2024; Habibulloh, 2024). The present study extends this literature by demonstrating that teacher exemplarity functions as a cultural mechanism through which multicultural Islamic values become socially legitimate and gradually embedded within students' everyday behavioural repertoires.

The internalisation process was further reinforced through an inclusive institutional culture that consistently translated multicultural Islamic values into everyday educational practice. School ceremonies, collaborative learning, extracurricular programs, and informal interactions created continuous opportunities for students to experience cooperation across religious and cultural differences. Rather than treating tolerance as a separate educational program, the school embedded multicultural values within the normal rhythm of institutional life, allowing students to encounter diversity in authentic situations. One student reflected:

> The more we work together, the less we think about our religious differences. What becomes important is how we help each other and complete our responsibilities together.

This statement illustrates that multicultural values became internalised because students repeatedly experienced the practical benefits of inclusive interaction. Such findings reinforce recent studies highlighting experiential learning and sustained intercultural engagement as effective pathways for strengthening tolerance and social cohesion (Fahmi et al., 2025; Iqbal & Ridwan, 2025; Muhajir et al., 2025). They also support evidence that institutional culture becomes more effective when inclusive values are consistently reinforced through everyday organisational practices rather than isolated programs (Wakano et al., 2025; Fahruddin et al., 2026; Harahap et al., 2026). Our study extends this literature by demonstrating that repeated cross-identity interaction functions as the social catalyst linking pedagogy, institutional culture, and individual value formation into a coherent multicultural learning process.

Viewed ethnographically, the findings indicate that multicultural Islamic educational values were internalised through the continuous interaction of pedagogical, institutional, cultural, and interpersonal dimensions. Students repeatedly negotiated differences, demonstrated empathy, cooperated across religious boundaries, and reflected on the ethical implications of their everyday experiences. These recurring encounters gradually transformed multicultural Islamic values from externally introduced concepts into internally accepted moral commitments that guided students' behaviour. This interpretation supports recent scholarship arguing that sustainable tolerance develops when multicultural education integrates curriculum, institutional culture, and authentic social interaction into a unified educational experience rather than treating them as separate interventions (Fahruddin et al., 2026; Muhja & Shahnaz, 2026; Wakano et al., 2025). The present findings further demonstrate that teachers, school leaders, institutional routines, collaborative activities, and peer interaction function collectively as interconnected cultural agents continuously reproducing multicultural values within everyday school life. This interpretation extends recent ethnographic studies that have primarily examined hidden curricula or institutional culture as separate determinants of tolerance (Syarifah et al., 2025; Ju'subaidi et al., 2024; Harahap et al., 2026).

This integrated interpretation represents the third theoretical contribution of the study. Previous scholarship has generally explained the internalisation of multicultural values by focusing on individual components such as curriculum implementation, teacher competence, hidden curriculum, or religious moderation programs. The present ethnographic findings instead demonstrate that these dimensions operate as mutually reinforcing elements within a dynamic process of value internalisation. The findings suggest that multicultural Islamic educational values are progressively internalised through dialogical pedagogy, strengthened by teacher exemplarity, institutionalised within an inclusive school culture, reinforced through continuous cross-identity interaction, and ultimately manifested in respectful and appreciative behaviour that sustains students' tolerance. This integrated process provides a more comprehensive explanation of how multicultural Islamic education operates within everyday school life and offers an

empirically grounded framework that extends contemporary scholarship on multicultural and religious education. It also establishes the empirical foundation for the reconstructed model presented in the following section, which synthesises these interconnected processes into a comprehensive framework explaining how multicultural Islamic education fosters sustainable tolerance in an Indonesian public vocational high school.

Reconstructing an empirically grounded model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance

The ethnographic findings demonstrate that tolerance cannot be understood solely as the outcome of curriculum implementation or religious instruction. Instead, it emerged as a dynamic socio-cultural process constructed through the continuous interaction of pedagogical practice, institutional culture, teacher exemplarity, students' lived experiences, and sustained cross-identity interaction. Through repeated participation in educational situations requiring empathy, cooperation, and shared responsibility, students gradually transformed multicultural Islamic values into everyday behavioural dispositions. These findings suggest that tolerance is socially constructed through authentic educational experiences rather than merely transmitted through formal instruction. This interpretation extends recent studies that have primarily examined curriculum integration, religious moderation, or hidden curricula as separate determinants of tolerance (Fahmi et al., 2025; Harahap et al., 2026; Syarifah et al., 2025). The present study instead demonstrates that these dimensions function as interconnected components within a broader educational ecosystem that continuously reproduces tolerant behaviour.

The reconstructed model conceptualises multicultural Islamic education as a reciprocal educational system rather than a linear instructional process. As illustrated in Figure 1**,** multicultural Islamic values constitute the normative foundation that guides every educational activity. These values are operationalised through dialogical pedagogy**,** enabling students to critically interpret Islamic teachings within their multicultural experiences. Their internalisation is reinforced through teacher exemplarity, which provides behavioural consistency between instructional discourse and everyday practice, and through an inclusive school culture that ensures equality, psychological safety, and meaningful participation, regardless of religious background. Continuous cross-identity interaction within classrooms, vocational learning, extracurricular activities, and informal peer relationships enables students to experience empathy, cooperation, and mutual responsibility in authentic social settings. Repeated participation in these experiences gradually develops respectful behaviour, which subsequently evolves into appreciative behaviour, culminating in sustainable tolerance. The model further demonstrates that these behavioural dimensions reinforce the multicultural culture of the school, creating a continuous feedback loop through which tolerance is reproduced across everyday educational life.

Unlike linear approaches that position curriculum implementation as the principal determinant of tolerance, the reconstructed model explains that relationships among these components are reciprocal and mutually reinforcing. Dialogical pedagogy initiates students' understanding of multicultural values, but successful internalisation depends

upon teacher exemplarity, institutional inclusivity, and continuous social interaction. Respectful and appreciative behaviour subsequently strengthen the multicultural culture of the school, which in turn supports future pedagogical practice. This cyclical process explains how students gradually develop stable patterns of inclusive behaviour despite broader social environments characterised by identity polarisation and religious contestation. Tolerance therefore emerges as a continuously reproduced cultural process rather than a one-time educational achievement.

The proposed model also advances current scholarship on multicultural Islamic education by integrating educational dimensions that previous studies have generally examined independently. Existing research has explained tolerance through multicultural curriculum integration (Siddik et al., 2025), hidden curriculum practices (Syarifah et al., 2025), teacher agency (Harahap et al., 2026), institutional multiculturalism (Wakano et al., 2025), or social cohesion fostered through multicultural Islamic education (Fahmi et al., 2025). While these studies provide important insights, they do not sufficiently explain how these educational dimensions interact to produce sustainable behavioural transformation. Our addresses this limitation by proposing an integrated ethnographic model in which pedagogical, institutional, interpersonal, and cultural dimensions operate simultaneously within a mutually reinforcing educational ecosystem.

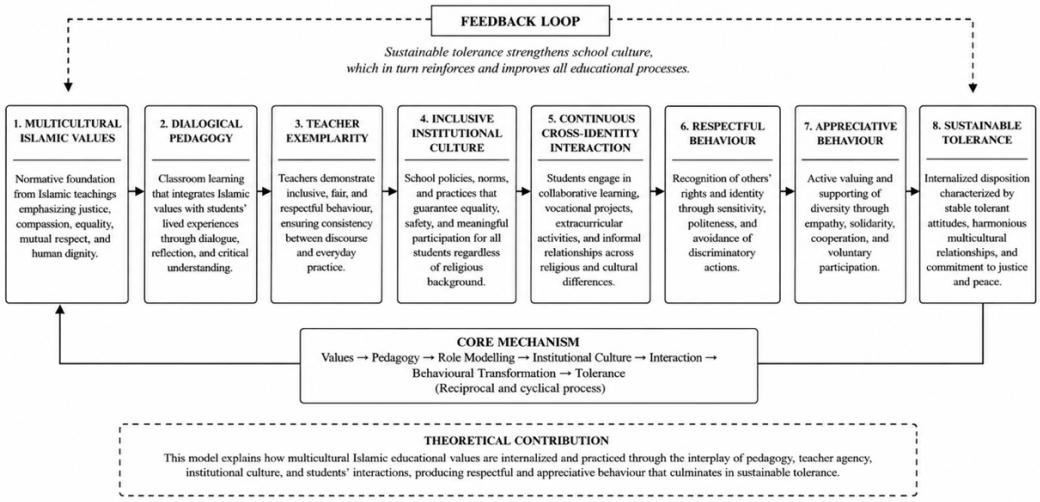

Figure 1: Reconstructed model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance: An ethnographically *grounded dynamic process*
(use web or PDF reader 'zoom in' function to read)

This reconstruction offers three principal theoretical contributions. First, it reconceptualises tolerance as a dynamic cultural process rather than a static educational outcome. Second, it identifies respectful behaviour and appreciative behaviour as two sequential yet interdependent dimensions through which tolerance progressively develops. Third, it advances an empirically grounded ethnographic model demonstrating that sustainable tolerance emerges when multicultural Islamic values are continuously

reinforced through dialogical pedagogy, teacher exemplarity, inclusive institutional culture, and sustained cross-identity interaction. These contributions extend contemporary scholarship by explaining not only whether multicultural Islamic education promotes tolerance, but also *how, why, and through which interconnected educational processes tolerance is socially constructed and sustained* within an Indonesian public vocational high school.

Conclusion

This ethnographic study demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education fosters students' tolerance through a continuous process of value internalisation embedded in everyday school life rather than through isolated instructional activities. Tolerance developed progressively through two interrelated behavioural dimensions: respectful behaviour, which enables students to recognise and protect the rights and identities of others, and appreciative behaviour, which encourages empathy, solidarity, collaboration, and active engagement across religious differences. These behavioural dimensions emerged through the reciprocal interaction of dialogical pedagogy, teacher exemplarity, inclusive institutional culture, and continuous cross-identity interaction, transforming multicultural Islamic values into students' everyday social practices.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study is the reconstruction of an empirically grounded model of multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance. Unlike previous studies that have examined curriculum implementation, hidden curriculum, teacher agency, or institutional culture separately, the proposed model conceptualises tolerance as a dynamic socio-cultural process produced through the interconnected operation of pedagogical, institutional, interpersonal, and cultural dimensions. The model further explains that sustainable tolerance develops sequentially through respectful and appreciative behaviour, providing a more comprehensive explanation of how tolerance is socially constructed within multicultural educational communities.

The findings offer practical implications for schools seeking to strengthen tolerance by emphasising dialogical learning, teacher role modelling, inclusive institutional culture, and meaningful cross-identity interaction as complementary educational strategies. Future research should examine the applicability of the reconstructed model across different educational levels and sociocultural contexts to evaluate its broader transferability and theoretical robustness.

References

Abdul Cholik, A. & Jannah, M. (2025). Multicultural Islamic education: Innovation in strengthening tolerance in secondary schools. *JISEI: Journal of Islamic Studies and Educational Innovation*, 1(2), 160-173. https://doi.org/10.61094/jisei.v1i2.55

Ackroyd, R. & Elton-Chalcraft, S. (2025). Teachers' constructions of mutual respect and tolerance through the lens of religious education: Fundamental British values – propaganda or longstanding aims of RE? *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, online first. https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2025.2501816

Andang, Sadat, A., Sapiruddin, Agustinasari, Sudarsana, I. P. E., Sudarsana, I. P. E., Ferdiansyah, Syakur, A. A. & Noge, D. (2026). Multicultural education in Indonesia: A systematic review and bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 13(3), 80-111. https://doi.org/10.66815/ejecs/2911

Burga, M. A. & Damopolii, M. (2022). Reinforcing religious moderation through local culture-based pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 145-162. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i2.19879

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539

Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications. https://collegepublishing.sagepub.com/products/qualitative-inquiry-and-research-design-4-246896

Darda, A., Maulaya, R. D., Izzati, D., Alamin, N. S. & Lhegina, A. Q. (2026). The mechanism of religious tolerant formation through integrated curriculum Pesantren of Darul Istiqomah for Female Campus Bondowoso. *International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application*, 9(1), 316-327. https://doi.org/10.31764/ijeca.v9i1.38386

Djamaluddin, B., Bahri, S., Halim, A., Nurlailah & 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

Emam, M. M., Eid, G., Ahmed Hassanein, E. E., Hemdan, A., Al-Salmi, L., Ismael, M. & Al Qalhati, A. (2026). Bridging belief and action: The mediating roles of teacher religiosity and agency in the relationship between cultural humility and multicultural teaching in Arab educational contexts. *School Psychology International*, 47(4), 388-412. https://doi.org/10.1177/01430343261421238

Fathunnajih, Sumiarti, Kurniati, R., Hamidah, N. & Syahbudi, A. (2025). Integration of religious moderation into the Indonesian Islamic religious education curriculum: Literature review. *Sosioedukasi: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan dan Sosial*, 14(1), 209-216. https://doi.org/10.36526/sosioedukasi.v14i1.5302

Fahmi, M., Nuruzzaman, M. A., Hilmy, M., Alfiyah, H. Y., Nadlir, N., Aziz, N. A. A. & Huriyah, L. (2025). Multicultural Islamic education as strategy for strengthening social cohesion in Islamic School. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(1), 154-175. https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v8i1.67

Fahruddin, A. H., Afandi, A., Rahman, M., Masrufah, M., Mo'tasim, M. & Musthofa, I. (2026). Love Curriculum in Islamic education: Fostering tolerance and religious moderation. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 7(2), 338-355. https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v7i2.2519

Fauziah, N., Zakiah, L., Jannah, H. M., Elifas, L. & Safitri, N. (2024). The role of teachers in developing multicultural education of religious tolerance in primary schools: Literature study. *Jurnal Bidang Pendidikan Dasar*, 8(1), 86-95. https://doi.org/10.21067/jbpd.v8i1.9958

Fitriani, M. I. (2023). Islamic religious education and interreligious tolerance in a multi-religious country: Challenges, typological implications, and the proposed strategy. *Ulumuna*, 27(1), 416-448. https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v27i1.765

Habibulloh, M. (2024). The role of Islamic education in building interreligious tolerance in Indonesia. *International Journal of Education Management and Religion*, 1(2). https://doi.org/10.71305/ijemr.v1i2.103

Hanif, A., Syarifudin, E. & Muhtarom, A. (2025). Integration of religious moderation in Islamic education: Challenges and opportunities in the digital era. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 14(1), 49-66. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/401216016

Harahap, M. A., Lubis, L. & Arsyad, J. (2026). Pedagogies of pluralism: Teacher agency in fostering religious moderation among multifaith students. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 7(3), 868-882. https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v7i3.3012

Huda, M. (2025). Teaching tolerance through literature: A study in English language classrooms in Indonesian Islamic higher education. https://doi.org/10.63028/10067/2128400151162165141

Iqbal, M. & Ridwan, W. (2025). Multicultural Islamic education Through learning experiences of diverse students in pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 12(1), 1-14. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v12i1.49097

Ju'subaidi, J., Lindgren, T., Mujahidin, A. & Rofiq, A. C. (2024). A model of transformative religious education: Teaching and learning Islam in Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Indonesia. *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, 23(1), article 6. https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol23.iss1.art6

Latif, M. & Hafid, E. (2021). Multicultural attitudes in an Islamic boarding school of South Sulawesi – Indonesia. *Cogent Education*, 8(1), article 1968736. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2021.1968736

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications. https://au.sagepub.com/en-gb/anz/book/naturalistic-inquiry

Muhajir, M., Kultsum, U., Choiri, M. M., Mustonah, S., Kulkarni, H. & Karim, A. (2025). Integrating multicultural values to foster tolerance and inclusivity in Islamic religious education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(1), 17-32. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i1.44607

Muharridha, A., Juliani, Selvira, S., Mulia, K. M. & Hasibuan, N. H. (2025). The role of Islamic religious education curriculum in building religious tolerance in the school environment. *Journal of Contemporary Gender and Child Studies*, 4(1), 274-282. https://doi.org/10.61253/jcgcs.v4i1.292

Muhja, Z. A. & Shahnaz, L. (2026). Developing a culture of tolerance through Islamic religious education. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 10(1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v10i1.304

Ok, A. H., Al-Farabi, M. & Firmansyah, F. (2023). Internalization of multicultural Islamic education values in high school students. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 3(3), 221-228. https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v3i3.265

Ridho, A., Kholisol Muhlis, R., Lailaturrohmah, L., Kholifatul Alam, F. & Yaacob, M. (2025). Integration of religious moderation in Islamic curriculum to strengthen inclusive religious literacy and support SDGs in the era of social polarisation. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(4), 1169-1182. https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v6i4.2491

Sholeh, M. I., Azah, N., Arifin, Z., Rosyidi, H., Sokip, S., Syafi'i, A. & Sahri, S. (2024). Development of a multicultural curriculum to enhance student tolerance in senior high school. *IJE : Interdisciplinary Journal of Education*, 2(3), 163-176. https://doi.org/10.61277/ije.v2i3.147

Siddik, M. F., Qorib, M. & Lubis, R. R. (2025). Integration of multicultural values in Islamic education learning at schools. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 15(1), 89-105. https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v15i1.2646

Siregar, B., Agustia, N. R. & Harahap, A. S. (2025). Multicultural approach in Islamic religious education curriculum as an effort to strengthen content of tolerance and religious

moderation. *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(2), 484-498. https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v6i2.1299
Sirry, M., Suyanto, B., Sugihartati, R., Kartono, D. T. & Yani, M. T. (2024). Teachers' perspectives on tolerance education in Indonesian high schools. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 46(4), 505-519. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2024.2345213
Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. Waveland Press. https://www.waveland.com/browse.php?t=688
Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Waveland Press. https://www.waveland.com/browse.php?t=689
Suryana, D. & Hilmi, F. (2023). Educating for moderation: Internalization of Islamic values in shaping religious tolerance in vocational high schools. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15, 2, 2543-2550. https://alishlah.ahfpublishing.id/alishlah/article/view/3285/1669
Sutrisno, Solikah, I. & Wardini, S. U. (2025). Multicultural Islamic education in fostering tolerance: Strategies and challenges in Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Learning Sciences*, 5(1), 39-58. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/391534933
Syarifah, Maskuri, Mistar, J., Anwar, S. & Azizah, N. (2025). Fostering tolerance through the hidden curriculum: An ethnographic study of inclusive education in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*. 6(4), 603-617. https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i4.1960
Wahyono, S. B., Budiningsih, A., Suyantiningsih, S. & Rahmadonna, S. (2022). Multicultural education and religious tolerance: Elementary school teachers' understanding of multicultural education in Yogyakarta. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 60(2), 467-508. https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.602.467-508
Wakano, A., Ernas, S., Said'ah, U., Lapele, F. & Prihono, E. W. (2025). Beyond rhetoric and resistance: Institutional pathways of multiculturalism in Islamic higher education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(2), 293-306. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i2.50392
Yudin, F., Nugraha, E., Syarifudin, E. & Wasehudin, W. (2025). Building religious moderation through Islamic religious education: A study of high school teachers in Banten Indonesia. *Jurnal EDUCATIO: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 11(1), 66-73. https://doi.org/10.29210/1202525523

Appendix 1: Some additional references

This appendix provides some additional references that were not cited in the article text but are retained here in recognition of valuable relevance for the article's literature review paragraphs.

Burga, M. A. & Damopolii, M. (2022). Reinforcing religious moderation through local culture-based pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 145-162. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i2.19879
Darda, A., Maulaya, R. D., Izzati, D., Alamin, N. S. & Lhegina, A. Q. (2026). The mechanism of religious tolerant formation through integrated curriculum Pesantren of Darul Istiqomah for Female Campus Bondowoso. *International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application*, 9(1), 316-327. https://doi.org/10.31764/ijeca.v9i1.38386
Latif, M. & Hafid, E. (2021). Multicultural attitudes in an Islamic boarding school of South Sulawesi – Indonesia. *Cogent Education*, 8(1), article 1968736. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2021.1968736
Muhajir, M., Kultsum, U., Choiri, M. M., Mustonah, S., Kulkarni, H. & Karim, A. (2025). Integrating multicultural values to foster tolerance and inclusivity in Islamic religious education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(1), 17-32. https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i1.44607

Muharridha, A., Juliani, Selvira, S., Mulia, K. M. & Hasibuan, N. H. (2025). The role of Islamic religious education curriculum in building religious tolerance in the school environment. *Journal of Contemporary Gender and Child Studies*, 4(1), 274-282. https://doi.org/10.61253/jcgcs.v4i1.292

Ok, A. H., Al-Farabi, M. & Firmansyah, F. (2023). Internalization of multicultural Islamic education values in high school students. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 3(3), 221-228. https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v3i3.265

Ridho, A., Kholisol Muhlis, R., Lailaturrohmah, L., Kholifatul Alam, F. & Yaacob, M. (2025). Integration of religious moderation in Islamic curriculum to strengthen inclusive religious literacy and support SDGs in the era of social polarisation. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(4), 1169-1182. https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v6i4.2491

Wahyono, S. B., Budiningsih, A., Suyantiningsih, S. & Rahmadonna, S. (2022). Multicultural education and religious tolerance: Elementary school teachers' understanding of multicultural education in Yogyakarta. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 60(2), 467-508. https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.602.467-508

Yudin, F., Nugraha, E., Syarifudin, E. & Wasehudin, W. (2025). Building religious moderation through Islamic religious education: A study of high school teachers in Banten Indonesia. *Jurnal EDUCATIO: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 11(1), 66-73. https://doi.org/10.29210/1202525523

Dr Siti Fatimah (corresponding author) is a graduate of the Doctoral Program in Islamic Religious Education at Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia. Her research interests include multicultural Islamic education, religious moderation, character education, educational ethnography, and Islamic educational thought. Her recent work focuses on fostering tolerance and inclusive educational practices in multicultural school settings.
Email: stfatimah.mgt@gmail.com

Dr Djunaidi Ghony is Professor of Islamic Religious Education at Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia. His academic expertise includes educational research methodology, qualitative and ethnographic research, multicultural Islamic education, and educational philosophy. He has authored numerous scholarly books and journal articles on Islamic education and research methodology.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3439-6859
Email: akufanani@gmail.com

Dr Junaidi Mistar is Professor of English Language Education at Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia, where he currently serves as Rector. His research interests include English language teaching, educational research methodology, applied linguistics, and higher education development. He has published extensively in international journals and actively contributes to educational quality enhancement and internationalisation initiatives.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4421-6474
Email: j.mistar@unisma.ac.id

Please cite as: Fatimah, S., Ghony, D. & Mistar, J. (2026). Multicultural Islamic education for fostering tolerance in an Indonesian public high school: An ethnographic study. *Issues in Educational Research*, 36(3), 930-950.
http://www.iier.org.au/iier36/fatimah.pdf