

## INTERNALIZATION OF MULTICULTURAL VALUES OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN FOSTERING STUDENT TOLERANCE CHARACTER IN SMK NEGERI 3 SINGKAWANG CITY

Purniadi Putra<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Hafiz<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institut Agama Islam Sultan Muhammad Syafiuddin Sambas, West Kalimantan, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Islam Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia

Email: [purniadiputra@iaisambas.ac.id](mailto:purniadiputra@iaisambas.ac.id)

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**Abstract:** This research aims to explore the internalization of multicultural values in Islamic Religious Education in fostering students' tolerance character. This research uses a qualitative approach with observation, interview and documentation methods. Primary data sources; Islamic Education Teacher, Principal, Waka Kesiswaan, BK Teacher and Students of SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang. The analysis technique used; data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing/verification to identify the value transformation process applied. The results showed that the active involvement of students in joint religious activities, initiatives such as Joint Infaq every Friday, and cultural exchange activities has encouraged the creation of mutual respect without religious or ethnic discrimination. In addition, the zero tolerance policy against discrimination fosters an inclusive and harmonious environment at school. This internalization process can also be seen from the students' ability to resolve conflicts effectively and establish constructive cooperation. The implication of this research emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role in transforming multicultural values to strengthen the character of tolerance, which in turn can

contribute positively to building social harmony in a plural society.

**Keywords:** Islamic Religious Education; Multicultural Values; Tolerance Character.

### INTRODUCTION

The challenges of a heterogeneous society in Indonesia in creating peace of life, minimizing conflict and friction between groups, tribes, groups, communities, adherents and followers of certain religions. Therefore, every citizen must be educated, instilled and fostered with the spirit of peaceful living in diversity, coexistence and mutual respect and appreciation of differences, staying in harmony and cooperating with each other in social affairs, creating a peaceful nation and state life in controlled weather as the strength of the character of the Indonesian nation (Nashohah, 2021). Indonesia is a democracy, so differences in views and interests often occur. Likewise in religion, the state has an important role in ensuring the security of the community to embrace and practice their religion in accordance with the chosen beliefs and beliefs (Abror Mhd., 2020). A previous study showed

that adolescents from multicultural families are at risk and report more psychosocial problems compared to the general population. This suggests that adolescents born into multicultural families are at risk of psychosocial problems compared to the general population (Zubalov et al., 2021) have higher levels of emotional (e.g., depression and suicidal ideation) and behavioral problems (e.g., alcohol and drug use) (Noh & Lee, 2023).

Various cases and events that smelled of SARA (Ethnicity, Religion, Race, and Intergroup) often occur in the country including cases of fights between Madurese and Dayak tribes in West Kalimantan, fights between Makasar tribes and Timorese natives which then developed into friction between Catholicism and Islam, conflicts between Chinese and indigenous ethnicities, and so on. These conflicts occur because of the lack of understanding of each individual or group towards the existing cultural diversity. The conflicts that occur indicate that the Indonesian population does not yet have broad insight into the cultural plurality that exists in this country. Therefore, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of mutual respect between various ethnicities, races, groups, customs and religions (Suprapti, 2020).

Multicultural education must be approached with a learning strategy and curriculum that directs the learning process. Based on the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 (Munir & Jannah, 2021). National education is education based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which is rooted in religious values,

Indonesian national culture, and responsive to the demands of changing times.

Singkawang City was chosen as a research study area on the pattern of transmission of tolerance values because this city represents the plurality that exists in Indonesia. The demographic facts of the population of Singkawang City show that there are at least 17 ethnic groups that inhabit the Singkawang area. This is evidenced by the existence of 17 ethnic groups in Singkawang City which are officially recognized by the Singkawang City government as well as being government partners in building, maintaining and transmitting the value of tolerance between communities in Singkawang City (Rachmawati et al., 2022). For the third time, Singkawang City again won the title of the Most Tolerant City in Indonesia in 2022. This is based on an assessment from the SETARA Institute which released the 2022 Tolerant City Index (IKT) report. The title of the most tolerant city achieved for the third time is dedicated to all levels of society in Singkawang City who have been able to maintain the values of brotherhood, so that we are able to prove as a tolerant city and become an example for the lives of fellow citizens in the big house of Singkawang City (AS, 2023).

According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Singkawang City (Saliro, 2019). As of May 2019, Singkawang City has a total diversity of religious communities recognized in Indonesia. Based on data from the population of Singkawang City, 51.20% are Muslim, 5.35% are Protestant, 7.44% are Catholic, 0.03% are Hindu, 35.49% are Buddhist, and 0.50% are Confucian.

This research was conducted at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang as a research site is unique in its students who are multicultural in terms of religion, social life, ethnicity and language. Another thing is because SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang is a PK SMK and has implemented an independent curriculum. The number of students at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang in terms of religion includes 131 students of Islam, 46 students of Catholicism, 47 students of Protestantism, and 64 students of Buddhism. It is also in accordance with the mission indicators of realizing a cultured school environment, caring for the environment (clean), loving peace (peaceful), discipline, and friendly/communicative (polite).

Based on the explanation above, the research aims to explore the internalization of multicultural values in Islamic Religious Education in fostering students' tolerance character.

## **METHODS**

The research uses qualitative, namely *field* research (*field research*) (Ruane, 2013). According to Bogdan, this type of qualitative research can be used in understanding and revealing something behind the events that are not yet known at all in the field (C. & Biklen, 1998). The location of this research is at the State Vocational High School 3 Singkawang. The focus of this research seeks to reveal and analyze the process of multicultural value transformation. The research instruments in this case study include using observation, interviews, documentation. As a source of data (informants) in this study, namely the SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang, such as the principal, teachers, school committee and parents of students. While secondary data

is obtained through written literature sources, either books: education, sociology or anthropology, scientific papers, journals, or books. Data analysis techniques include; data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing / verification. While data validity checking techniques with extended participation, triangulation, and members check (Moleong, 2005).

## **RESULT**

### **Multicultural Value Transformation Process in Fostering Tolerance Character**

The multicultural concept is basically a common understanding, so that the procedures and behavior of the actors in one cultural setting will not insist on their respective cultures (Wahid, 2016). The multiculturalism discourse that has heated up lately is less contained in the discussion space in the community, this causes the community to be less sure and often raises various contradictions (A. Lawrence Blum, 2001).

The social function is the main role in fostering inter-religious relations, placing the leaders of religious education institutions as multicultural figures. National education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the nation's life and develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens (Hasyim, 2014). Based on this, the Principal of SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang, Mr. Gunanto (Gunanto, 2024) explaining about value transformation mentioned that:

"Multicultural values have existed for a long time, meaning that the understanding of students in SMK has long developed and has been applied by teachers of SMK 3 Singkawang, besides that our students have multi-ethnicity, multi-religion and multi-customs.

In multicultural education, multicultural values include having a tolerant attitude, empathy and sympathy, accepting differences, understanding each other, having awareness and honesty, and having the spirit of Pancasila. Tolerance is an attitude of respecting other people's beliefs and appreciating their existence around us and not discriminating. Because differences do not have to be hostile. Tolerance also involves the attitude of the soul and the inner consciousness of a person. And if someone has the soul of Pancasila, it will ensure the order and harmony of social life (Muizzuddin, 2021).

This was also conveyed by the Deputy Head of Student Affairs of SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang, Mr. Asnan (Asnan, 2024) he said: The process of transforming multicultural values taught and applied at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang has been running and often students are invited to discuss the importance of tolerance in everyday life through Islamic Religious Education lessons, besides that it is not just understanding but related to application has also been carried out at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang by carrying out religious activities together, even though students are of different religions, different ethnicities but the attitude and behavior of helping each other has been instilled from the start.

This was also added by student William Wijaya (William Wijaya, 2024) who has a different religion and ethnicity

at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang stated that: religious differences do not interfere at all with my beliefs. We also have material related to humans that is the same, so it does not interfere with interfaith learning at school.

With love for the Indonesian homeland we will feel one as our country's motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* "Different but still one". Indonesia consists of about 350 languages, 600 ethnic groups with their own identities, as well as 6 (six) kinds of religions that fall into the major categories namely: Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Of course this is a lot of differences but must still feel one, namely Indonesia (Utomo, 2017). SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang is a school established by the local government which of course this school is a public school that anyone can study and teach there.

This is for the process of transforming the multicultural values of Islamic Religious Education in fostering the character of tolerance at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang Principal Gunanto (Gunanto, 2024) mentioned: To build love for the country, develop attitudes of tolerance, sympathy and empathy for students, build mutual trust and understanding between religious believers, and uphold mutual respect at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang, the school conducts various kinds of religious programs to internalize tolerance values, especially to respect each other in different customs and customs, different cultures.

Strengthening multicultural values should actually be equipped to provide positive energy to students in schools in order to create students who have an understanding of diversity and morals that must be embedded in students. However,

in the learning of Islamic religious education, character building is considered still hampered in supporting inter-religious harmony. This is caused by two things, namely, first, Islamic education is only carried out in a catholic and ritualistic manner without thinking about the relationship between religious symbols and the reality that exists in society. Second, Islamic education ignores three very basic things in education, namely, intellectual or cognitive, emotional or affective, and psychomotor (Hidayati, 2021).

The process of transforming multicultural values of Islamic Religious Education in fostering tolerance character at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang Principal Gunanto (Gunanto, 2024) making cultural exchange program activities he mentioned:

We instill the value of tolerance through various ways. One of them is by providing direct examples from teachers and school staff in appreciating differences. We also conduct cultural exchange programs, where students can learn first-hand about the traditions and customs of other cultural groups. In addition, we have a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination and bullying based on cultural or religious differences .

According to Rinaldi Datunsolang, that in the cultivation of multicultural values there are several characteristics as follows: (1) The goal is to form "people and culture" and create a cultured society, (2) the teaching material contains noble human values, national values, and ethnic group values (cultural), (3) the method used is a democratic method that can appreciate aspects of the differences and diversity of the nation's culture and ethnic groups (multiculturalism), the

evaluation is determined by the assessment of student behavior which includes: perception, appreciation, and action towards other cultures (Datunsolang, 2022).

Based on the results of interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang that teachers face challenges in fostering the character of tolerance in students in a diverse environment such as "The main challenge we face is overcoming prejudices and stereotypes that may have been embedded in students from the family or community environment. We also face difficulties in balancing respect for specific cultural values with universal principles such as gender equality and human rights. However, we continuously strive to overcome these challenges through open dialog and culturally sensitive approaches.

According to Kim (Utami, 2015), the intercultural adaptation process is an interactive process that develops through the communication activities of individual migrants with their new socio-cultural environment. Intercultural adaptation is reflected in the suitability of immigrant communication patterns with communication patterns expected or agreed upon by the local community and culture. Vice versa, the suitability of this communication pattern also supports intercultural adaptation.

According to Nurudin (Karim, 2016), between communication and culture is very closely related, where one of the important functions in communication is cultural transmission, it is inevitable and will always be present in various forms of communication that have an impact on



individual acceptance. Likewise, some forms of communication become part of individual experience and knowledge. Through this individual then communication becomes part of the collective experience of groups, publics, audiences of various types and individuals part of a mass. This is a collective experience that is reflected back through forms of communication, not only through mass media, but also in art, science and society. Legacy then is the impact of previous cultural and societal accumulations that have become part of human rights. It is transmitted by individuals, parents, peers, primary or secondary groups, and educational processes. The communication culture is routinely modified by new experiences.

## **DISCUSSION**

The transformation of multicultural values in education is a strategic effort to foster the character of tolerance, especially in an environment that has cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity (Apriani, 2022; Ikhwanisyah et al., 2023). Multicultural education emphasizes the importance of understanding and appreciating differences through the educational process. Banks (Banks, 1997), developed five dimensions of multicultural education, namely incorporating content, constructivist processes, reducing prejudice, promoting equality, and empowering school culture. These dimensions emphasize the importance of designing an inclusive curriculum that can facilitate learners to recognize values from different cultures. The implementation of character education in lessons, especially Islamic Religious Education (PAI), helps to instill values such as tolerance, harmony

and caring. By including tolerance values in the curriculum, students not only learn cognitively, but also emotionally and morally, which in turn can strengthen mutual respect between religions and cultures.

The transformation of character values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is important in shaping the personality of students with character, both humanistically and religiously. This transformation involves several steps and approaches designed to instill Islamic moral and ethical values into students' personalities.

**Humanist-Religious Approach:** PAI learning should prioritize values such as respect, compassion, and honesty. This approach helps learners develop a good relationship with God (*hablun min Allah*) and a good relationship with fellow humans (*hablun min al-nas*) (Firmansyah et al., 2024; Said et al., 2018).

**Renewal of Learning Methods:** Interactive and inclusive learning is important to ensure that Islamic values are effectively absorbed. This transformation requires adaptive methods, such as group discussions, case studies, and role plays, so that students can more easily understand and apply Islamic values (Atiqoh, 2017; Firmansyah et al., 2023).

**Integration of Character Values in the Curriculum:** PAI learning needs to integrate national character values, such as patriotism and discipline, which are implemented through a holistic curriculum. This can increase students' awareness of their responsibilities as noble citizens (Ayoub et al., 2014; Mashuri, 2021).

**Gradual Approach in Changing Behavior:** The application of character

values is not instantaneous, but needs a gradual process to change behavior. In this case, the role of educators is crucial in providing good and consistent examples to motivate students towards the expected changes (Bakri et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Purnama, 2020). Transformation in PAI learning does not only focus on religious knowledge, but also emphasizes the application of these values in daily life to form a strong character.

### CONCLUSIONS

This research shows that the process of multicultural value transformation by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang is successful in shaping the tolerance character of students who are multiethnic, multireligious, and multicultural. Through teaching Islamic Religious Education, students are not only given an understanding of the importance of tolerance but also the opportunity to apply it in everyday life. Joint religious activities, regardless of religious and cultural differences, successfully foster an attitude of mutual help and respect among students. Additional programs such as the *Joint Infaq* every Friday, which is attended by all students regardless of religion or ethnicity, as well as cultural exchange activities provide direct experience for students to appreciate differences. The *zero tolerance* policy towards religious or cultural-based discrimination and bullying further strengthens the school's commitment to instilling tolerance values. This multicultural value transformation effectively shapes an inclusive environment, encourages empathy, and enhances social harmony among students,

thus making the school a strong platform for tolerance character development in a diverse society.

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