

# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTILLING TOLERANCE IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AT ASSALAAM ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL IN MANADO CITY

**Ahmad Junaedy Abuhurairah<sup>1</sup>, Andi Aderus<sup>2</sup>, Muh. Rusli<sup>3</sup>,  
& Moh. Natsir Mahmud<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Institut Agama Islam Negeri Manado, Indonesia

<sup>2,4</sup>Postgraduate Program of Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sultan Amai Gorontalo, Indonesia

Correspondence email: [ahmad.junaedy@iain-manado.ac.id](mailto:ahmad.junaedy@iain-manado.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

This study explores how tolerance is implemented through multicultural education at Assalaam Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren Assalaam) in Manado, a region where the majority of the population is Christian. The research focuses on three key aspects: 1) the concept of fostering tolerance, 2) the practice of promoting tolerance in a multicultural educational setting, and 3) the role of multicultural education in advancing tolerance. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data was gathered through observation, interviews, documentation, and literature review. The analysis employed an interpretive and comparative method, incorporating both phenomenological and Islamic education approaches. The findings indicate that multicultural education at Assalaam Islamic Boarding School effectively promotes tolerance both conceptually and in practice. This is evident through its inclusive curriculum, pluralistic social interactions, and active involvement in broader community activities. Additionally, the implementation of multicultural education has strengthened relationships between the *pesantren* and the Christian community, fostering harmony and encouraging close social collaboration. These results underscore the effectiveness of multicultural education in enhancing social cohesion within a diverse society.

**Keywords:** Multicultural education; tolerance; Assalaam Islamic Boarding School Manado

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, with its remarkable diversity of ethnic groups, religions, cultures, and social backgrounds, serves as a compelling example of a multicultural society. This diversity is woven into the very fabric of the nation, evident in the everyday interactions of its people. It reflects a collective commitment to tolerance and unity, principles rooted in Indonesia's founding ideals, national philosophy, and religious values. Embracing tolerance in such a varied society is essential not only for maintaining harmony but also for laying a strong foundation for future generations, ensuring that differences are both respected and celebrated. The nation's motto, *Bhinneka*

Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity), perfectly encapsulates this vision, underscoring the belief that unity is attainable despite the vast array of differences (Ali, 2009).

Religious teachings, particularly in Islam, the predominant faith in Indonesia, emphasize the importance of diversity. The Qur'an highlights this in Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13), which states:

"O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you," (Al-Qur'an, 2019).

This verse highlights the importance of diversity as a means to foster mutual understanding and respect, emphasizing that true nobility lies in piety and virtue rather than one's ethnic, cultural, or social background. Islamic teachings inherently promote inclusivity, encouraging tolerance and mutual respect among individuals (Hasyim, 2015). These principles are deeply embedded in Indonesia's cultural fabric, shaping interactions within its multicultural society. However, implementing these values, particularly in regions where Muslims are a minority, poses distinct challenges and necessitates targeted educational efforts to strengthen tolerance.

In this context, the role of multicultural education in cultivating tolerance becomes increasingly vital. Education serves as a powerful tool for shaping attitudes and behaviors toward diversity. Islamic boarding schools, or *pondok pesantren*, as traditional educational institutions in Indonesia, hold a central role in this endeavor. These institutions not only teach religious knowledge but also focus on moral and character development. As influential centers of religious and cultural education, *pesantren* can significantly contribute to fostering tolerance and harmonious coexistence, especially in multicultural environments.

Several studies have explored the role of *pesantren* in fostering multicultural values. Rahmat (2019) examined how *pesantren* in Luwu Timur serve as a foundation for cultivating these values, highlighting their potential to foster harmonious relationships with diverse communities. Renaningtyas (2022) investigated the implementation of Islamic multicultural education in *pesantren*, focusing on addressing student behavior and developing a curriculum that promotes tolerance and mutual respect. Aly, (2011) provided insights into how institutions like the Modern Islamic Boarding School Assalaam in Surakarta incorporate multiculturalism into their educational programs, creating an inclusive and harmonious environment for students from various ethnic and religious backgrounds.

While these studies offer valuable insights into the implementation and integration of multicultural education within *pesantren*, they tend to focus on institutions situated in areas where Muslims form the majority or where religious demographics are relatively balanced. Consequently, they often overlook the unique challenges and complexities faced by *pesantren* in regions where Muslims are a minority, such as Manado, North Sulawesi—a predominantly Christian region. In such contexts, the role of *pesantren* in fostering tolerance through multicultural education becomes even more crucial, as they must address not only internal diversity but also navigate inter-religious relations within the wider community.

Although research on multicultural education in *pesantren* has been expanding, there remains a significant gap in understanding how these institutions function and promote tolerance in contexts where Muslims are a minority. Most studies have concentrated on regions where Muslims are the majority or where religious tensions are minimal. However, the unique dynamics in areas like Manado, where *pesantren* operate within a predominantly Christian environment, have received little attention. This oversight highlights a gap in the literature regarding how *pesantren* tailor their educational approaches to cultivate tolerance and harmony in societies where they represent a minority faith.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the unique practices, strategies, and contributions of pesantren in Manado in fostering tolerance through multicultural education. Pesantren Assalaam Manado, as one of the pesantren in Manado city, serves as the primary research destination for this study.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on pesantren operating in a minority context, examining how they not only promote tolerance internally among their students but also extend this spirit to the broader Christian-majority society. The study seeks to understand how Pesantren Assalaam Manado conceptualizes multicultural education, the methods it employs to integrate tolerance into its curricula and daily practices, and how these efforts impact the surrounding community. By doing so, the research offers a comprehensive view of how Islamic educational institutions can serve as bridges for interfaith harmony in diverse environments.

This study has three primary objectives: to describe and analyze how the concept of tolerance is applied in multicultural education at Pesantren Assalaam Manado. By addressing these goals, the research aims to contribute both theoretically and practically. The theoretical contribution enriches the discourse on multicultural education and religious tolerance, particularly in contexts where Muslims are a minority. Practically, the study provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and community leaders, offering strategies to effectively promote tolerance and harmony in diverse societies. It also serves as a guide for pesantren administrators and educators in designing inclusive educational programs that emphasize respect for diversity and peaceful coexistence.

Given the increasing diversity and potential for religious and cultural tensions, Pesantren Assalaam Manado play a critical role as institutions of multicultural education. By focusing on the unique setting of pesantren in Manado, this study offers a detailed understanding of how tolerance can be cultivated in minority Muslim communities. It highlights how integrating multicultural values into educational practices enables Pesantren Assalaam Manado to foster harmonious relationships within diverse societies. Consequently, this research not only addresses a gap in existing literature but also provides practical models for promoting tolerance and inclusivity in educational institutions within heterogeneous contexts.

## 2. METHODS

This study employs a descriptive-qualitative methodology with a case study approach, aiming to capture phenomena in a holistic and contextual manner (Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, 1985). Conducted at Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Manado City, the research follows a naturalistic approach based on Lincoln's framework to gain a thorough understanding of the subject. The case study design is utilized in line with Robert Yin's assertion that "how" questions are best addressed through explanatory approaches like case studies (Yin, 1998). Additionally, the study incorporates phenomenology to explore subjective experiences (Creswell, 2007) and phenomenography to identify variations in participants' perceptions. The analysis integrates both deductive and inductive reasoning to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the findings.

This study takes place in Manado City, North Sulawesi, a location selected for its multicultural environment and the presence of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). Known as "The City of Brotherly Love," Manado embraces the slogans *Torang Samua Basudara* (We Are All Brothers and Sisters) and *Torang Samua Ciptaan Tuhan* (We Are All God's Creation) to promote harmony and tolerance among its ethnically and religiously diverse communities (Wenas, 2007). The research focuses on examining how tolerance is fostered in Pesantren Assalaam Manado.

This research utilizes a variety of approaches:

1. Phenomenology seeks to understand the essence of human experiences associated with a particular phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). In this context, it is employed to examine the dynamics of interactions in *pesantren Assalaam's* life.
2. Phenomenography: A qualitative approach used to explore and map variations in perceptions and experiences related to tolerance within a multicultural educational setting (Marton, 1981).
3. Pedagogical: Pertains to educational theories and concepts, with a focus on Islamic education, used to analyze and understand the learning process (Miller, 2002).
4. Historical: Examines past events connected to the current context, emphasizing their influence on modern educational practices (Garraghan, 1946).
5. Psychological: Focuses on understanding individuals' mental states, especially concerning their attitudes toward tolerance and engagement in multicultural interactions (Smith, 2016).
6. Theological-Normative Approach: Examines the religious principles that serve as the foundation for understanding and applying multicultural education in *pesantren Assalaam* (Rahardjo, 2002).
7. Sociological: Examines social life and interactions within a community, providing insight into the formation, evolution, and transformation of social groups (Weber, 1947).
8. Philosophical: Explores the core substance and underlying essence of multicultural education, delving beyond its visible aspects to uncover fundamental truths and principles (Gazalba, 1992).

The data for this study includes both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered through interviews and observations with foundation leaders, *pesantren* administrators, teachers (*ustaz*), students (*santri*), and religious leaders in *Pesantren Assalaam Manado*. Secondary data comprises documents, reports, and literature relevant to the research topic (Bowen, 2009).

The methods for data collection include observation, interviews, document analysis, and a review of relevant literature. Non-systematic observation is used to understand the activities of the students. Informal, unstructured interviews are conducted to uncover deeper insights into the interactions within the *pesantren* (Patton, 2002). Document and literature studies are utilized to complement the data from observations and interviews, offering additional context and helping to cross-check the information.

The researcher serves as the primary instrument in the study, utilizing tools such as a voice recorder, camera, observation forms, and interview guides to ensure focus and depth in data collection (Creswell, 2007). The data is analyzed through an inductive-qualitative approach, which includes three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Matthew B. Miles, 1994). This method helps to uncover patterns and themes, providing a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

The validity of the data is assessed through the following methods: (1) Credibility : Triangulation is used to cross-check data from multiple sources (Denzin, 1978), ensuring the accuracy and depth of the analysis by comparing specific data points with information from other sources; (2) Transferability : A detailed and structured research report is provided, enabling readers to evaluate the relevance of the findings in other contexts (Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, 1985); (3) Dependability : Academic supervisors oversee the research to ensure the consistency and

scientific rigor of the data (Shenton, 2004); and (4) Confirmability : The results are validated by reviewing the collected data and interpretations, which are supported by available materials (Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, 1985). This approach focuses on the characteristics of the data to ensure objective and reliable findings.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **a) Identity of Tolerance in Pesantren Assalaam Manado**

Multicultural education in the pesantren of Manado City creates an environment where both students and teachers actively engage with and reflect the cultural diversity of society. This approach highlights that identity, whether individual or collective, is inherently shaped by cultural contexts (Banks, 2009). The pesantren fosters the understanding that identity is fluid, evolving through both internal and external cultural interactions (Nieto, 2010).

The multicultural approach adopted by the pesantren in Manado emphasizes factors such as cultural, religious, ethnic, and gender diversity (Gay, 2010). According to Mr. H. Usran Mantow, Head of Islamic Education and Pesantren at the Manado Religious Affairs Office, the diversity of human resources—encompassing differences in religion, ethnicity, and gender—forms the foundation of multicultural education in these pesantren (Mantow, 2023). This diversity highlights the equal rights and responsibilities of all students and educators, promoting mutual respect and tolerance within the school environment.

Prof. Rukmina, Chairwoman of the Assalaam Manado Foundation, further notes that the diverse backgrounds of the teachers—spanning gender, ethnicity, and culture—play a key role in cultivating tolerance in students. The impact of multicultural education extends beyond formal learning, encouraging acceptance of cultural differences through community interactions (Gonibala, 2023).

The pesantren in Manado exemplify a deep understanding of multicultural education by fostering an inclusive environment for students and teachers from various cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. This demonstrates a core principle of multicultural education: the acceptance and celebration of diversity (Banks, 2009). The findings reveal that identity in the context of the pesantren is fluid, continuously shaped through interactions within the school and the larger society. As Nieto, (2010) suggests, identity is not fixed but evolves through both internal and external cultural exchanges, which is clearly reflected in the practices at these pesantren.

By prioritizing cultural diversity, the pesantren in Manado contribute to the development of students' multicultural competence. This aligns with Gay's theory of culturally responsive teaching, which advocates for educational practices that respect and reflect the cultural diversity of students to ensure meaningful learning experiences (Gay, 2010). The research emphasizes that the pesantren's decision to employ a diverse teaching staff, representing different genders, ethnicities, and religions, plays a key role in fostering a dynamic and multicultural educational environment.

The pesantren's efforts to incorporate diverse resources are also apparent in their extracurricular activities, such as traditional dance classes (e.g., Kabela dance) and language training in foreign languages like Arabic and English, as well as local languages such as Mongondow and Javanese. These activities highlight the pesantren's commitment to creating an inclusive educational setting (Cushner, 2014).

A recent example of this commitment was seen during the National Santri Day Festival (HSN) in 2023, hosted by Pesantren Assalaam Manado and organized by the Forum for Brotherhood Among Pesantren in North Sulawesi. The event saw the participation of both Muslim and non-Muslim community leaders, including Mr. Aldo Sumerah, a Christian village head. This reflected the pesantren's openness to and respect for religious diversity (Sumerah, 2023).

Pesantren in Manado actively promote tolerance by hiring non-Muslim teachers and staff. Prof. Rukmina, Chairwoman of the Assalaam Manado Foundation, highlight that Assalaam pesantren is situated in a Christian-majority area and employs Christian teachers to teach English (Gonibala, 2023). This inclusive approach is further supported by Ustaz Akbar Syukur Indra, who notes the involvement of Christian workers in the pesantren's construction project (Akbar Syukur, 2023).

The inclusion of non-Muslim teachers and workers at the pesantren represents a progressive stance on multicultural education. By welcoming Christian teachers for English instruction and Christian workers for construction tasks, these Islamic institutions are challenging traditional boundaries and fostering inclusivity (Gonibala, 2023; Hamzah, 2023). This practice aligns with the principles of intercultural education, which emphasizes collaboration and interaction between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to build mutual respect and understanding (Cushner, 2014).

The initiatives at the pesantren, such as organizing cultural events, language learning programs, and engaging in community activities, play a key role in fostering tolerance among students. The National Santri Day Festival (HSN), which brings together leaders from various religious backgrounds, exemplifies how pesantren incorporate multicultural values into their educational and community efforts. This approach not only strengthens the importance of diversity but also helps students develop the social skills needed to thrive in a multicultural society (Arif, 2023).

Ustaz Masri Hamzah points out that the multicultural identity of Pesantren Assalaam Manado is not a new concept; it has been a part of the institution since its founding, as evidenced by the inclusion of non-Muslim teachers (Hamzah, 2023). Mrs. Rogaya Udin, Head of the Manado Religious Affairs Office, also emphasizes the pesantren's vital role in promoting multiculturalism by instilling values of diversity, tolerance, and mutual respect (Rogaya Udin, 2023).

Pesantren in Manado are essential in fostering social harmony by embedding values of tolerance and cultural diversity within their educational programs. The active participation of pesantren leaders in community activities, such as welcoming local Christian leaders, highlights their dedication to building positive interfaith relationships (Rogaya Udin, 2023). This practice aligns with UNESCO's concept of "education for social cohesion" (2006), which advocates for education systems as platforms for promoting mutual respect and understanding in diverse communities.

The inclusion of students and staff from various backgrounds demonstrates the pesantren's flexibility and openness to change, showing that multicultural education in these institutions is not just an abstract idea but a lived experience. This commitment to inclusivity and tolerance serves as a model for other educational institutions, especially in regions with diverse cultural and religious populations.

Students like Asti Jumpai and others emphasize how the openness of Pesantren Assalaam Manado fosters active interaction with the surrounding community, facilitating meaningful interfaith dialogue. This engagement illustrates that multicultural education at Pesantren

Assalaam Manado goes beyond theory, serving as a lived practice that nurtures tolerance and mutual understanding within a diverse society (Asti Djumpai, 2023).

The research findings highlight the unique approach to multicultural education at Pesantren Assalaam Manado, where tolerance serves as a cornerstone of the educational experience. At this institution, multicultural education extends beyond formal lessons, permeating daily interactions within a diverse community and cultivating an environment of respect, inclusivity, and harmony.

While the findings show successful implementation, they also point to potential challenges. The pesantren's efforts to integrate Islamic teachings with the promotion of cultural diversity require continuous dialogue and negotiation among community members. The presence of students from different ethnic and religious backgrounds in a predominantly Islamic setting raises questions about how differences in beliefs and practices are addressed within the context of Islamic education.

However, these challenges offer opportunities for pesantren to develop innovative educational strategies that honor religious values while promoting tolerance and mutual understanding. Pesantren Assalaam in Manado is beginning to embrace these opportunities, as seen in its acceptance of non-Muslim teachers and involvement in culturally diverse extracurricular activities. This approach reflects James A. Banks' view that multicultural education should be a transformative process, encouraging critical reflection and action to promote equity and social justice (Banks, 2009).

The findings indicate that pesantren in Manado, including Pesantren Assalaam, offer a distinctive model of multicultural education that integrates Islamic principles with a deep respect for cultural diversity. This approach challenges the conventional perception of Islamic boarding schools as homogenous environments and underscores their potential as platforms for intercultural dialogue and learning (Gonibala, 2023). The practices observed in these pesantren show that religious education can coexist with multicultural values, contributing to the broader conversation about education in diverse societies.

Furthermore, the success of Pesantren Assalaam Manado in fostering tolerance and inclusivity highlights the significance of tailoring educational practices to align with local cultural contexts. In Manado, the pesantren's embrace of its multicultural environment mirrors the city's values of "Torang Samua Basudara" (We Are All Brothers and Sisters) and "Torang Semua Ciptaan Tuhan" (We Are All God's Creation). These values have been effectively incorporated into educational practices that help students view diversity as a source of strength (Hamzah, 2023).

The research shows that the Pesantren Assalaam Manado have effectively integrated multicultural education into their practices, underscoring the key role of tolerance and inclusivity. Through a dynamic mix of curricular and extracurricular activities, this pesantren creates an environment where diversity is not only recognized but celebrated. This model offers valuable lessons on how religious educational institutions can foster social harmony and promote positive intercultural interactions in diverse communities.

This study paves the way for further research, such as exploring the long-term effects of multicultural education in pesantren on students' attitudes toward diversity and examining how these practices can be adapted to regions with varying cultural dynamics. Additionally, investigating how Pesantren Assalaam Manado address potential conflicts stemming from cultural and religious differences within their communities could offer valuable insights into the challenges and nuances of implementing multicultural education.

## **b) The Foundations of Tolerance in Pesantren Assalaam Manado**

This study explores how multicultural education is implemented in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Manado City, particularly at Pesantren Assalaam Manado, where there is a strong emphasis on recognizing and appreciating cultural diversity. Multiculturalism, as defined by (Banks, 2009), acknowledges the variety of cultures, with each group or region having its own distinct cultural characteristics. The essence of multiculturalism lies in advocating for equal and fair treatment of all groups, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or culture (Nieto, 2010).

The findings indicate that the multicultural approach in pesantren education in Manado is rooted in three core principles: the equality of human dignity, the recognition of cultural diversity, and respect for differences across cultures (Gay, 2010). By incorporating these values, pesantren foster an environment of tolerance, respect, and inclusivity among students and the wider community. This approach is particularly significant in Manado, where the majority of the population is Christian, and the Muslim students in pesantren represent a minority group.

Pesantren in Manado adopt a multicultural education model that not only respects the local Christian majority but also works to build relationships based on mutual respect and understanding. As KH. Yassir Bachmid explains, this practice aims to earn acceptance and support from the surrounding society, promoting peaceful coexistence (Bachmid, 2023). The Head of the Religious Affairs Office in Manado further underscores that pesantren are not just places for imparting Islamic knowledge but also for cultivating tolerance and respect for differences (Religious Affairs Office, 2023).

In light of the diverse social context of Manado, pesantren incorporate multicultural principles as a necessity. This includes encouraging mutual respect and understanding between different communities, reflecting Islamic teachings that align with values of tolerance and cultural appreciation. For example, Pesantren Assalaam engages in interfaith dialogues and organizes visits to places of worship from other religions to promote better understanding and respect (Elvira Tompoh, 2023).

Moreover, Prof. Rukmina Gonibala notes that multicultural education in Pesantren Assalaam is not just a local policy but also a response to the need for tolerant Islamic preaching (Gonibala, 2023). By incorporating such practices, the pesantren aim to demonstrate that Islam is compatible with values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between different religious communities.

Pesantren in Manado play a crucial role in promoting social harmony by embedding tolerance and respect for cultural diversity within their educational frameworks. According to the Chairman of FKUB (Forum for Religious Harmony), pesantren contribute significantly to maintaining harmonious social relations in Manado, with minimal ethnic or religious conflicts (FKUB (Forum for Religious Harmony), 2023). These initiatives align with the concept of "education for social cohesion," where education acts as a platform for fostering mutual respect and understanding in diverse communities (UNESCO, 2006).

The integration of multicultural values with Islamic teachings is a central aspect of pesantren education in Manado. Ustaz Ramli Makatungkang, Secretary of the Forum for Islamic Boarding Schools in North Sulawesi (FUAPP), highlights that pesantren education, rooted in Islamic principles, naturally incorporates multicultural values. The concept of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy to all creations) forms the foundation of this approach, promoting respect, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity (Makatungkang, 2023).

Similarly, Ustaz Salman Alelo notes that the multicultural education approach at Pesantren Assalaam is deeply rooted in an understanding of the Christian-majority context. The aim is to



instill the values of tolerance and *tasamuh* (open-mindedness) in students, equipping them to navigate a world with respect for cultural and religious differences (Alelo, 2023).

The research findings reveal that pesantren in Manado have effectively embedded tolerance within their educational programs through the principles of multiculturalism. By integrating Islamic teachings with multicultural values, these pesantren create an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect, fostering harmonious relations with the predominantly Christian community.

Additionally, the pesantren's initiatives—such as organizing joint social activities, interfaith dialogues, and employing non-Muslim educators and staff—demonstrate their commitment to fostering cooperation and tolerance. These practices not only build a sense of community among students but also serve as a model for promoting social cohesion in diverse societies.

Despite the successful implementation of these initiatives, the research also highlights ongoing challenges. Balancing Islamic teachings with the promotion of cultural diversity requires continuous dialogue and adaptation within the pesantren community. Furthermore, managing the various ethnic and religious differences within the pesantren poses questions about how these differences are addressed in the context of Islamic education. Nonetheless, the pesantren in Manado have developed effective strategies that contribute to the broader conversation on education in multicultural societies.

The pesantren in Manado provide a unique model of multicultural education, combining Islamic values with a deep respect for cultural diversity. This approach has helped them establish peaceful and cooperative relations with the Christian-majority society in Manado, offering a valuable example for other educational institutions in culturally diverse regions. Through their efforts, the pesantren show that religious education can coexist with multicultural values, reinforcing the importance of tolerance and understanding for harmonious living in a diverse world.

The integration of multicultural values with Islamic teachings is a fundamental aspect of pesantren education in Manado. Ustaz Ramli Makatungkang, Secretary of the Forum for Islamic Boarding Schools in North Sulawesi (FUAPP), highlights that pesantren education, rooted in Islamic principles, naturally embraces multicultural education. The Islamic concept of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a mercy to all creatures) serves as the foundation for this approach, emphasizing respect, tolerance, and the appreciation of diversity (Makatungkang, 2023).

In a similar vein, Ustaz Salman Alelo points out that the multicultural approach at Pesantren Assalaam Manado is shaped by an understanding of the surrounding Christian-majority community. The objective is to instill values of tolerance and *tasamuh* (open-mindedness) among students, equipping them to navigate daily life with respect for religious and cultural differences (Alelo, 2023).

Research findings reveal that Pesantren Assalaam Manado has effectively incorporated tolerance through the principles of multicultural education. This pesantren takes a rational and pragmatic approach to fostering tolerance, blending Islamic values with multicultural principles to create an inclusive and respectful environment. This strategy has been successful in maintaining harmonious relationships with the predominantly Christian community around the Pesantren Assalaam Manado.

Moreover, the pesantren's initiatives—such as joint social activities, interfaith dialogues, and employing non-Muslim educators and staff—demonstrate their commitment to tolerance and cooperation. These practices not only strengthen the sense of community among students but

also showcase the positive role pesantrens can play in promoting social cohesion in a diverse society.

While the findings highlight successful implementation, they also reveal ongoing challenges. Balancing Islamic teachings with the promotion of cultural diversity requires continuous dialogue and adaptation within the pesantren community. Additionally, the presence of students from various ethnic and religious backgrounds raises questions about how differences in beliefs are managed in the context of Islamic education. Despite these challenges, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado has developed effective strategies that contribute to the broader discourse on education in multicultural societies.

The Pesantren Assalaam Manado offer a unique model of multicultural education, merging Islamic values with a profound respect for cultural diversity. This approach has helped them establish peaceful and cooperative relationships with the Christian-majority community in Manado, serving as an exemplary practice for educational institutions in other regions with diverse cultural dynamics. Through these efforts, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado not only show that religious education can coexist with multicultural values but also reinforce the notion that tolerance and understanding are essential for peaceful living in diverse societies.

### **c) Understanding Tolerance in Pesantren Assalaam Manado**

This study explores how tolerance is fostered at Assalaam Islamic boarding school (Pesantren Assalaam) in Manado City through multicultural education. Multicultural education aims to cultivate a mindset and behavior that values diversity, including differences in norms, values, and cultural practices (Banks, 2009). Professor Rukmina Gonibala stresses that emphasizing tolerance in Pesantren Assalaam Manado is essential to help students (santri) appreciate cultural, religious, and social diversity (Gonibala, 2023). KH. Muyassir Arif adds that this diversity, understood as *sunnatullah* (God's design), creates a positive environment that encourages santri to respect others and their difference (Arif, 2023).

In Manado, the concept of tolerance is deeply embedded in multicultural education, aligning with Islamic values of equality and justice. Syuaib Sulaiman notes that pesantren not only educate santri through texts but also guide them to understand the context, nurturing a mindset of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy to all creation) (Sulaiman, 2023). This approach aligns with the idea that education should promote human dignity and embrace diversity in all its forms—ethnic, cultural, religious, and social (Rahman, 2022).

The implementation of multicultural education in pesantren creates an environment where all individuals, regardless of their background, are treated equally. KH. Muyassir Arif emphasizes that humans are born into a world rich in cultural and religious diversity, contributing to a dynamic and progressive society. Therefore, structured and continuous education is essential to nurture this diversity (Arif, 2023).

From another perspective, KH. Muyassir Arif highlights that fostering tolerance strengthens the bonds of brotherhood, leading to harmonious interactions among santri from diverse backgrounds. This approach rejects racial discrimination and radicalism, reflecting the pesantren's vision of producing a Qurani generation with *wasathiyah* (moderation) characteristics (Arif, 2023).

Pesantren in Manado adopt an inclusive approach, welcoming staff and students from various cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Mrs. Rogaya Udin explains that this approach emphasizes equality, respect for diversity, and commitment to social justice, creating an environment conducive to growth and mutual understanding (Rogaya Udin, 2023). Similarly, Pesantren Assalaam Manado promotes inclusivity by involving individuals from different cultural

and religious backgrounds, teaching santri to live harmoniously despite their differences (Sri Wahyuni Hasan, 2023). The education provided in pesantren focuses on tolerance without compromising religious values, cultivating a mindset among santri that values diversity and discourages intolerance.

Despite facing societal challenges, Pesantren Assalaam Manado remains dedicated to promoting tolerance. The pesantren serves as a model for interfaith and intercultural dialogue, even in situations of potential conflict. For instance, when tensions arose between groups in Bitung over a religious issue, swift and effective action prevented escalation, demonstrating a deep understanding of tolerance within the community.

The findings of this research suggest that Pesantren Assalaam Manado is effectively implementing multicultural education principles to nurture a culture of tolerance and inclusivity. By integrating Islamic teachings with multicultural values, the pesantren lays a strong foundation for promoting respect for diversity. Pesantren Assalaam Manado has successfully created an educational environment that embodies the concept of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy to all creation), where students learn to appreciate and respect cultural, ethnic, and religious differences.

Pesantren Assalaam takes a proactive approach by engaging students in activities that highlight the importance of harmony and mutual respect. This is evident in practices such as interfaith dialogues, welcoming educators from various backgrounds, and encouraging santri to interact with the surrounding Christian-majority community. These initiatives align with the broader goals of multicultural education, which seeks to prepare individuals to live in a pluralistic society while avoiding discrimination and conflict (Gay, 2010).

However, the findings also reveal some challenges. While Pesantren Assalaam Manado has made significant strides in promoting tolerance, it must continuously navigate the complexities of teaching Islamic values alongside fostering inclusivity. This delicate balance requires ongoing effort, as emphasized by Ustaz Akbar, who underscores the importance of upholding equality while maintaining the pesantren's Islamic identity (Akbar Syukur, 2023).

The success of Pesantren Assalaam Manado in promoting tolerance has broader implications for multicultural education in Indonesia. By integrating religious education with multicultural values, these pesantren provide a model for how educational institutions can foster social harmony. The practices observed in Manado's pesantren could serve as a model for other regions, especially those with diverse cultural and religious populations.

The findings also suggest that the pesantren's efforts contribute to social cohesion in Manado. The community's ability to effectively manage potential conflicts, as seen in the Bitung case, highlights the positive impact of the pesantren's educational approach. This shows that instilling tolerance through multicultural education is not just an academic endeavor but a vital practice with tangible societal benefits.

In conclusion, the concept of tolerance at Pesantren Assalaam Manado is both theoretical and practical, reflecting a deep commitment to Islamic teachings and the principles of multicultural education. By fostering an environment of inclusivity and equality, Pesantren Assalaam Manado plays a key role in promoting tolerance and mutual respect among students. These practices not only foster internal harmony within the pesantren but also contribute to broader societal peace in Manado, offering valuable insights for the implementation of multicultural education in other diverse settings.

#### **d) Arguments for the Practice of Tolerance in Pesantren Assalaam Manado**

This research examines how Assalaam Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren Assalaam Manado) practices tolerance through its implementation of multicultural education. This approach includes students from various genders, ethnicities, races, cultures, social statuses, and religions, with a focus on cultural pluralism grounded in equality and diversity principles (Banks, 2009). Multicultural education aims to foster positive attitudes toward diversity in students, helping to create a society that can live together harmoniously (Baidhaw, 2005).

In Pesantren Assalaam Manado, tolerance is viewed as essential for promoting harmony in the midst of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. According to H. Usran Mantow, the pesantren is dedicated to promoting fraternity and tolerance regardless of religious or cultural backgrounds. This approach aligns with Manado's local culture, which values diversity, harmony, and dialogue (Mantow, 2023). By implementing multicultural education, Pesantren Assalaam not only supports these values but also reflects its desire for recognition and acceptance within the predominantly Christian community around it.

Various pesantren in Manado have adopted multicultural education as a model for religious tolerance. For example, Pesantren Assalaam Manado works to set a positive example of religious tolerance by encouraging peaceful coexistence with the surrounding community, which holds different beliefs. This effort is part of their mission to embody *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy to all creation) and to promote *dawah* (Islamic outreach) that encourages understanding and harmony.

Similarly, Pesantren Assalaam Manado focuses on teaching students the importance of tolerance, aiming to create a generation that can live harmoniously with others. In doing so, they encourage their students to respect differences and practice tolerance in their daily lives (Makalalag, 2023; Dadue, 2023). Pesantren Assalaam also embraces this vision, aiming to prepare students for global interactions while maintaining Islamic values and national identity (Sri Wahyuni Hasan, 2023).

Pesantren in Manado view multicultural education as a way to understand and manage cultural diversity. Baidhaw (2005) describes multicultural education as "the art of managing diversity and the politics of difference," highlighting the importance of recognizing and appreciating the range of cultural and religious practices in society. By practicing multicultural education, these pesantren aim to build bridges between cultures and promote universal values that transcend individual cultural boundaries.

Prof. Rukmina Gonibala points out that the role of Islamic education is to restore individuals to their true nature, free from oppression and ignorance. Multicultural education in the Pesantren Assalaam Manado emphasizes internal perspectives on cultural practices, comparative analysis of different cultures, and rational evaluation of similarities and differences, ultimately striving for more humane relationships (Gonibala, 2023).

The findings show that Pesantren Assalaam Manado intentionally adopt multicultural education to foster a tolerant and inclusive environment. They treat this practice as both an art and a political statement, recognizing the diversity within society and advocating for mutual respect. By promoting these values, the pesantren aim to set an example of peaceful coexistence for the wider community, demonstrating how Islamic education can coexist with multicultural values.

A key motivator for this approach is the need for social acceptance in a predominantly Christian society. The Pesantren Assalaam's openness to religious diversity is seen as a strategy to bridge differences and encourage peaceful coexistence. By teaching students to respect others'

beliefs, this Pesantren Assalaam Manado contribute to the overall social harmony of Manado, where diverse religious and cultural groups coexist.

Another significant aspect is the Pesantren Assalaam Manado effort to prepare students for global interaction while maintaining their Islamic identity and national values. The inclusive practices in this Pesantren Assalaam Manado align with the broader goals of multicultural education, which seeks to dismantle barriers of discrimination and xenophobia. The findings suggest that through tolerance, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado actively combat cultural and religious fanaticism, promoting a more pluralistic society.

The commitment to tolerance and harmony within the Pesantren Assalaam Manado also reflects a broader effort to uphold the ideals of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) and strengthen national unity. By fostering understanding and acceptance of diversity, this Pesantren Assalaam Manado aim to cultivate a generation of students who can live peacefully in a multicultural society. This is consistent with the views of educational theorists like (Baidhaw, 2005), who argue that multicultural education is essential for navigating the complexities of social, political, and economic realities in diverse societies.

However, the research also reveals challenges in implementing such an inclusive approach. Balancing Islamic teachings with the values of multiculturalism requires careful navigation and ongoing effort. The pesantren must continuously adapt to ensure that their educational practices uphold the principles of equality and respect for differences while maintaining their religious identity.

The Pesantren Assalaam Manado approach to promoting tolerance through multicultural education carries broader implications. By demonstrating that Islamic education can foster inclusivity and mutual respect, this pesantren offer a model for other educational institutions in similarly diverse environments. The practices Pesantren Assalaam Manado suggest that education can be a powerful tool for bridging cultural divides and nurturing peaceful coexistence.

In conclusion, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado implement multicultural education to promote tolerance and harmony in a diverse society. Their approach is rooted in Islamic teachings and a commitment to the principles of equality and respect for diversity. By embracing multicultural education, this Pesantren Assalaam Manado work towards building bridges between different cultural and religious communities, showing that peaceful coexistence is achievable through education.

#### **e) Main Focus of Tolerance Implementation in Pesantren Assalaam Manado**

This research examines how Assalaam Islamic boarding school (pesantren) in Manado emphasizes the promotion of tolerance through multicultural education. Multiculturalism is a philosophy that embraces and celebrates diversity and equality, viewing society as a mosaic of different cultures (Banks, 2009). In the educational context, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado prioritize valuing diversity and fostering unity among their students.

The Pesantren Assalaam Manado base their educational approach on acknowledging differences while highlighting commonalities. As Prof. Rukmina Gonibala from Pesantren Assalaam Manado explains, the goal is for each student to cultivate a tolerant mindset, maintain harmonious relationships, and not let differences become obstacles. This approach is particularly important as the pesantren operate as a minority within a predominantly non-Muslim community, underscoring the need to respect the majority while promoting mutual understanding (Gonibala, 2023).

The focus on multicultural education in these pesantren's aligns with the broader historical context of multiculturalism, which arose in response to minority assimilation policies in the 1960s, advocating for justice and recognition of minority groups (Will Kymlicka, 1995). In Manado, pesantren like Pesantren Assalaam Manado actively teach students to accept differences as part of Allah's design, reinforcing the importance of tolerance and harmony (Hamzah, 2023).

By adopting multiculturalism, the pesantren in Manado contribute to fostering a harmonious, peaceful religious environment. Ibu Rogaya Udin, Head of Kemenag Manado (Religious Affairs Office), notes that these pesantren create a space for various religious and cultural expressions, enabling students to appreciate and understand differences. This approach encourages social harmony and strengthens community unity, ensuring that religious and cultural diversity does not lead to division or intolerance (Rogaya Udin, 2023).

The implementation of multicultural education in these pesantren includes practices that promote tolerance. For instance, at Pesantren Assalaam Manado, students are encouraged to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. Ahmad Samsi explains that students undertake internships in various settings, including Christian-affiliated hospitals, where they learn to practice respect, politeness, and tolerance towards non-Muslim supervisors (Samsi, 2023).

Further emphasizing this commitment, Yessi Permata observes that during final exams, Christian teachers are invited as examiners, and students treat them with the same respect as their Muslim teachers. These interactions reflect the students' internalization of multicultural values, underscoring the importance of respecting diversity within the educational environment (Permata, 2023).

To promote tolerance, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado employ various strategies, including the internalization of democratic values, equality, justice, and respect for cultural diversity. According to Ustazah Murni, the application of multicultural education aligns with Indonesia's foundational philosophy of Pancasila and its motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). At Pesantren Assalaam Manado, students are taught the "5S" principles (*Sapa, Senyum, Salam, Sopan, Santun*—Greet, Smile, Say Hello, Be Polite, Courteous), which encourage respect for others regardless of their background (Dadue, 2023). This approach helps students develop respectful behavior, fostering an inclusive environment within the pesantren.

Ustaz Tasliman adds that greeting and showing respect has become a tradition at the pesantren, helping to establish a positive culture in a diverse environment. Through daily practices, students learn to appreciate differences and the significance of tolerance (Tasliman, 2023). Sri Wahyuni further illustrates how students engage in community activities, such as helping victims of natural disasters and demonstrating kindness to non-Muslims during religious events (Sri Wahyuni Hasan, 2023).

The findings show this Pesantren Assalaam Manado strongly emphasize the implementation of tolerance through multicultural education, focusing on respect, equality, and harmony. This approach is a strategic response to the pesantren's minority status in a predominantly Christian society, promoting a coexistence model rooted in both Islamic teachings and multicultural principles.

The educational strategies employed, such as the "5S" principles and engagement with diverse cultural and religious groups, demonstrate a proactive effort to nurture students' attitudes toward inclusivity and mutual respect. By providing a platform for various cultural expressions, the pesantren create an environment where differences are celebrated rather than seen as barriers.

Moreover, the practice of involving non-Muslim teachers and engaging with the broader community reflects the Pesantren Assalaam Manado commitment to embedding multicultural values within their educational framework. This aligns with James A. Banks's concept of multicultural education as a process aimed at people from all backgrounds, striving to combat injustice and promote an inclusive curriculum (Banks, 2008).

The research suggests that the Pesantren Assalaam Manado focus on tolerance through multicultural education has broader social implications. By nurturing students who are open-minded and respectful of diversity, this pesantren play a key role in promoting a harmonious and peaceful society in Manado. Their approach serves as a model for other educational institutions, illustrating how Islamic education can coexist with multiculturalism to foster unity in a diverse society.

In conclusion, the core of tolerance implementation at Pesantren Assalaam Manado revolves around promoting respect for diversity and fostering harmony through multicultural education. This approach reflects the pesantren's commitment to Islamic teachings while serving as a strategic means of integrating with the predominantly Christian community. The success of this Pesantren Assalaam Manado in instilling multicultural values in their students offers a valuable framework for building inclusive societies.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Conceptually, the implementation of multicultural education at Pesantren Assalaam Manado, aimed at fostering a sense of tolerance in a predominantly Christian region, can be seen through its diverse human resources, including aspects such as religion, culture, ethnicity, class, gender, and social status. This diversity includes non-Muslim teachers and construction workers (Christians), as well as students from various cultural backgrounds. The teaching materials at the pesantren are designed to be inclusive and promote tolerance, employing diverse approaches and learning strategies, along with a comprehensive evaluation model. Additionally, the Pesantren Assalaam Manado environment itself reflects pluralism. The approach to multicultural education at Pesantren Assalaam Manado is not merely a reaction to societal diversity but a strategic tool for engaging with a varied community. The pesantren values differences and emphasizes shared values, with the aim of nurturing students who develop tolerant attitudes and behaviors, and who maintain a sense of brotherhood (*ukhuwah*) regardless of differences. In essence, the concept of multicultural education at Pesantren Assalaam in Manado is aligned with the broader concept of promoting mutual respect in diversity. Multicultural education at this pesantren is rooted in the values of tolerance, naturally fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect.

#### **REFERENCES**

- Akbar Syukur. (2023). Kabid. Pendidikan dan Pengajaran Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Al-Qur'an, L. P. M. (2019). *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya (I)*. BALITBANG DIKLAT KEMENAG RI.
- Alelo, S. (2023). Pembina Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Ali, M. (2009). *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika: The Philosophy of Unity in Diversity in Indonesia*. Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia.

- Aly, A. (2011). Pendidikan Islam Multikultural Di Pesantren: Telaah Terhadap Kurikulum Pondok Pesantren Modern Islam Assalam Surakarta. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Arif, M. (2023). Ketua Forum Ukhuwah Antar Pondok Pesantren Se-Sulawesi Utara (FUAPP). In Interview.
- Asti Djumpai. (2023). Santri Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Bachmid, Y. (2023). Ketua Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) Kota Manado. Interview.
- Baidhawiy, Z. (2005). Reinvensi Islam Multikultural (M. Thoyibi (ed.)). PSB-PS-UMS.
- Banks, J. A. (2008). An Introduction to Multicultural Education. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Banks, J. A. (2009). Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives. Allyn and Bacon Press.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as A Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Cushner, K. (2014). *Human Diversity in Education: An Intercultural Approach*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Dadue, M. (2023). Kepala Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*. McGraw-Hill.
- Elvira Tompoh. (2023). Guru Whiz English Courses Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- FKUB (Forum for Religious Harmony). (2023). Research interview data.
- Garraghan, G. J. (1946). *A Guide to Historical Method*. Fordham University Press.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice (II)*. Teacher College, Columbia University.
- Gazalba, S. (1992). *Sistematika Filsafat (VI)*. Bulan Bintang.
- Gonibala, R. (2023). Ketua Yayasan Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Hamzah, M. (2023). Sekretaris Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Hasyim, H. (2015). *Islamic Teachings on Tolerance and Diversity*. Islamic University of Indonesia Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Makalalag, C. D. (2023). Kepala Asrama dan Bendahara Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Makatunggang, R. (2023). Sekretaris Forum Ukhuwah Antar Pondok Pesantren Sulawesi Utara (FUAPP). Interview.
- Mantow, U. (2023). Kasie Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama Kota Manado. Interview.
- Marton, F. (1981). Phenomenography—Describing Conceptions of The World Around Us. *Instructional Science*, 10(2), 177–200.
- Matthew B. Miles, A. M. H. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. SAGE Publications.
- Miller, P. H. (2002). *Theories of Developmental Psychology*. Worth Publisher.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Sage Publications.
- Nieto, S. (2010). *The Light in Their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities*. Multicultural Education Series. Teachers College Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. Sage Publication.
- Permata, Y. (2023). Waka Kurikulum SMK Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Rahardjo, M. (2002). *Sosiologi Agama*. Rajawali Pers.
- Rahman, K. (2022). Leadership and Multicultural Environment; Kyai's Power and Authority Contest at Pondok Pesantren. *AL-TANZIM: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(3), 643–654.



- Rahmat. (2019). Keberagaman Pesantren sebagai Basis Penanaman Nilai-nilai Pendidikan Multikultural, Studi Pelaksanaan Toleransi pada Pesantren di Kabupaten Luwu Timur. Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Alauddin.
- Religious Affairs Office. (2023). Manado City.
- Renaningtyas, P. C. (2022). Pembelajaran Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Islam Multikultura Sebagai Upaya Penyelesaian Kenakalan Santri Di Pesantren Nurul Islam Antirogo Dan Al-Qodiri Jember. Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA).
- Rogaya Udin. (2023). Kepala Kantor Kementerian Agama Kota Manado. Interview.
- Samsi, A. (2023). Kepala Sekolah SMK Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies For Ensuring Trustworthiness In Qualitative Research Projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63–75.
- Smith, J. A. (2016). *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*. SAGE Publications.
- Sri Wahyuni Hasan. (2023). Waka Kurikulum MTs Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- Sulaiman, S. (2023). Sekretaris Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) Kota Manado. Interview.
- Sumerah, A. K. E. (2023). Kepala Kelurahan Kec. Bailang Manado. Interview.
- Tasliman. (2023). Kep. Madrasah Assalaam Pondok Pesantren Assalaam Manado. Interview.
- UNESCO. (2006). *Education for Social Cohesion*. UNESCO Publishing.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory Of Social And Economic Organization*. Free Press.
- Wenas, J. (2007). *Manado Kota Toleransi*. Publishing Center.
- Will Kymlicka. (1995). *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Clarendon Press.
- Yin, R. (1898). *Case Study Research*. SAGE Publications.