

Transformation of Islamic Education Management in Integrating Multiculturalism in Madrasah

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ABSTRACT

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Received: 10 May 2025
Revised: 24 August 2025
Accepted: 31 August 2025
Published: 7 September 2025

This study examines the integration of multiculturalism in Islamic schools and its impact on educational management, exploring how Islamic education can adapt to multicultural societies. The aim is to investigate the transformation of Islamic education management in integrating multiculturalism within Islamic school settings. This research utilizes a qualitative methodology incorporating comprehensive interviews, questionnaire, and observations from multiple Islamic educational institutions. The study indicates that diversity-supporting policies in Islamic educational settings cultivate inclusive learning environments, mitigate cultural conflicts, and deepen students' awareness of diverse backgrounds. This research provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and school administrators in Islamic educational contexts, particularly those operating in multicultural and diverse environments. The study contributes fresh perspectives on multicultural integration in Islamic schools, advancing understanding of how Islamic education can promote intercultural harmony. The research recommends expanding multicultural policies and enhancing teacher training programs to maximize the benefits of Islamic education that embraces multiculturalism, which strengthens intercultural relationships within school communities.



Keywords: *Cultural Diversity Policies; Islamic Education Management; Madrasah Effectiveness; Multiculturalism; Teaching Training.*

 : <https://doi.org/10.47766/idarrah.v9i1.6056>

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INTRODUCTION

The issue of multiculturalism in Islamic schools has become an increasingly relevant phenomenon in the context of a more diverse society, both ethnically, culturally, and religiously (Abidin & Murtadlo, 2020; Mardhiah et al., 2024; Parekh, 2002). In many countries, including Indonesia, this diversity demands the education system to be able to accommodate differences and create an inclusive and harmonious environment (Nadhiroh & Ahmadi, 2024; Sahrudin et al., 2023). At the school level, especially in Islamic educational institutions, a major challenge arises in aligning universal Islamic values with the existing cultural diversity. Without effective management, Islamic schools risk becoming arenas of conflict between students from different backgrounds (Leer et al., 2025; Mardhiah et al., 2024; Sattar et al., 2024).

Previous studies have highlighted the integration of Islamic values in multicultural contexts, but most have remained at the theoretical level and have not sufficiently explored how inclusive management can be implemented in practice. In particular, there is still a lack of research on how inclusive management requires the active involvement of stakeholders—such as teachers, parents, and the local community—in decision-making processes, as well as on how the professional development of teachers can be systematically strengthened to manage classroom diversity effectively. This gap is critical from the perspective of management transformation, because inclusive madrasah management must go beyond curriculum adjustments by transforming leadership, empowering stakeholders, and upgrading teacher competencies. Academically, addressing this gap enriches the literature on Islamic education and multiculturalism by linking inclusive management with concrete managerial practices. Practically, a deeper understanding helps madrasahs to adopt a more adaptive and transformative approach to social change, thus creating an inclusive education system that can respond to the challenges of diversity in contemporary society (Effendi, 2021; Muhyiddin et al., 2022; Sholihuddin, 2020).

Research on Islamic education management and multiculturalism has advanced significantly in recent decades. Scholars have explored the relationship between Islamic education and multiculturalism, emphasizing the role of educational management in creating inclusive environments for students from diverse backgrounds (Limbong et al., 2022; Rindiani et al., 2021; Tarmizi, 2020; Tentiasih & Rizal Rifa'i, 2022; Yani et al., 2020). Four major trends are evident: the integration of Islamic values in multicultural contexts to foster harmony, leadership approaches in managing cultural diversity, curriculum adjustments to incorporate multicultural elements, and efforts to shape school climates that provide safe spaces for all groups. In practical terms, these insights offer valuable implications for Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Labuhanbatu Utara and similar institutions. For example, culturally responsive leadership training can equip principals to manage diversity effectively,

curriculum innovations may integrate Islamic values with multicultural perspectives, and extracurricular activities can foster intergroup dialogue. Such strategies not only enhance students' educational experiences but also reinforce the role of madrasahs as agents of tolerance and social cohesion in plural societies

The first trend in the literature is research focusing on the integration of Islamic values in a multicultural society. This approach typically uses social and religious theories to examine how the fundamental principles of Islam can be applied to strengthen social bonds between different groups (Abidin & Murtadlo, 2020; Sechandini et al., 2023). These studies often use qualitative approaches, with in-depth interviews and case studies in schools with multicultural populations (Qornain et al., 2022; Sarbaini et al., 2024; Supriyatno & Ubabuddin, 2020). The focus of this research is on how Islamic education can be a tool to promote values such as tolerance, mutual understanding, and justice in a diverse society (Fadhilah, 2024; Mukarom et al., 2024). However, this research tends to be limited to basic theory and does not deeply explore the practical aspects of Islamic education management in a multicultural context.

The second trend is research emphasizing leadership in Islamic education management as a key factor in managing cultural and religious diversity in schools. This research generally uses transformational leadership approaches and case studies to understand how school leaders and Islamic education managers implement policies that accommodate students from various backgrounds (R'boul, 2021a, 2021b; Uzunboyu & Altay, 2021). The research methods often involve observation and interviews to understand everyday practices in managing this diversity. However, this research often focuses only on leadership at the micro level (schools), without considering broader factors such as national policies or larger communities.

The third trend is research focusing on the management of the Islamic education curriculum to create a learning environment that accommodates diversity. This research focuses on analyzing existing curricula and how well they incorporate multicultural values (Maulidiah et al., 2023; St. Rodliyah, 2022). Researchers often use content analysis or curriculum evaluation approaches, examining textbooks, teaching materials, and teaching methods (Ginting et al., 2023; Patimah, 2022). The Islamic education curriculum includes topics related to pluralism and multiculturalism (Firmansyah, 2021; Jamaluddin et al., 2023). However, many of these studies fail to address how these curricula are implemented in daily practice in Islamic schools and how they affect students' attitudes and behavior.

Although previous research has made significant contributions to understanding the relationship between Islamic education and multiculturalism, there are notable gaps. First, many studies neglect the integration of these three aspects—Islamic values, educational leadership, and the curriculum—into a holistic managerial framework. Second, most studies focus on theoretical approaches or

micro-level research without examining macro dimensions that influence Islamic education management in a multicultural context. Third, there is a lack of practical evaluation of policies implemented in Islamic schools in facing multicultural challenges, which is a gap that has not been sufficiently addressed in the existing literature (Aulia Fitri et al., 2022; Fadhli et al., 2024).

Previous research on Islamic education management and multiculturalism already exists, but most is still limited to basic theory or discusses only one aspect, such as curriculum or leadership in a multicultural context (Asror, 2022; Su'ad, 2017; Tarmizi, 2020). Some studies focus on the integration of Islamic values in multicultural societies but have not deeply explored how Islamic education management, as a structured system, can provide the transformation needed to holistically accommodate this diversity (Limpong et al., 2022; Sunarno et al., 2023; Tentiasih & Rizal Rifa'i, 2022). The main gap in previous research is the lack of attention to how managerial practices can be translated into policies and concrete actions in madrasahs. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the integration of multiculturalism in Islamic education management, focusing on policy, leadership, and student interactions in schools.

This study aims to address the shortcomings of previous research by focusing on how Islamic education management can transform to integrate multiculturalism within the context of schools. Specifically, this study discusses how Islamic education management must adjust its strategies, such as curriculum design, teacher training, and madrasah climate management, to support the creation of an inclusive learning environment that values diversity. Additionally, this study examines the role of leadership in Islamic education to ensure that multicultural principles are consistently applied across all aspects of school management.

This urgency is particularly evident in MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara, which serves students from diverse backgrounds, tribes, races, ethnicities, cultures, and languages. The school faces challenges such as potential segregation among student groups, difficulties in implementing a multicultural curriculum, and limited leadership strategies to harmonize Islamic values with local cultural diversity. Without effective managerial practices, these challenges risk undermining the madrasah's role as an inclusive educational institution. Therefore, this study aims to fill the research gap by examining how Islamic education management in MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara can integrate multicultural principles through policy, leadership, and student interactions, thereby transforming the madrasah into a model of inclusive Islamic education in plural societies.

The main argument to be tested is that through changes in managerial policies – particularly in curriculum, teacher training, and leadership policies – Islamic schools can more effectively manage student diversity. Moreover, this research will also examine the relationship between the implementation of multicultural-based

managerial strategies and student engagement, intercultural cooperation, and the reduction of conflicts related to cultural and religious differences. Therefore, this study is expected to provide practical recommendations for the future management of Islamic schools.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study design to gain a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic education management integrates multicultural principles in practice (Cresswell, 2012; Yin, 2018). The unit of analysis is MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara, with a focus on policies implemented by the head of the madrasah, the curriculum applied, and the social interactions between teachers and students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The case study design allows the research to examine the managerial system and educational policies within their real-life context, particularly in how they facilitate an inclusive climate and support diversity in the school environment.

Data for this study were collected from multiple sources to ensure richness and validity. Primary data were obtained through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Observations were conducted to capture the implementation of multicultural policies in daily school activities and interactions among students of different backgrounds. This observation was conducted throughout the year 2024-2025 at MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara. In-depth interviews were carried out with the head of the madrasah, teachers, and students to explore their perceptions and experiences regarding multicultural education policies (Cuddeback et al., 2023; Fridiyanto et al., 2020; Marilyn Lichtman, 2010). Subsequently, there were 6 people recorded as informants for this study, although the number of unrecorded informants exceeded. FGDs with groups of students provided additional insights into collective perspectives on multicultural practices and challenges. Secondary data, including policy documents, curricula, annual reports, and relevant online news articles, were also analyzed to complement and triangulate the findings (Haryono, 2023; Muhajirin et al., 2024; Rofiah & Burhan Bungin, 2024).

The qualitative data analysis process involved two main stages. First, data from observations, interviews, and FGDs were thematically analyzed to identify patterns and themes related to diversity management at the madrasah (Arifin, 2021; Rusandi & Muhammad Rusli, 2021). This analysis sought to reveal how various elements, such as leadership and teacher-student interactions, contributed to building an inclusive environment. Second, triangulation across interview, observation, and document data was rigorously applied to strengthen the validity and credibility of the research findings. By comparing information from multiple sources, the study ensured that conclusions were grounded in robust and consistent evidence, thereby providing a

comprehensive account of how Islamic education management is effectively implemented in a multicultural context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

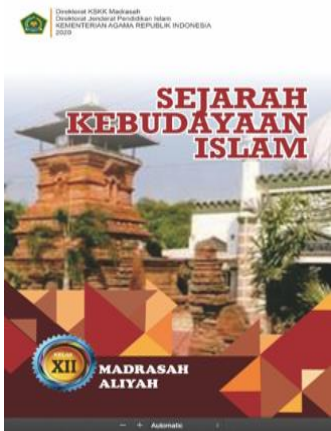
Results

Forming an Accommodative Curriculum in Madrasahs

Forming an accommodative curriculum in madrasahs is crucial in creating an inclusive educational environment that values cultural diversity. The curriculum must incorporate culturally responsive materials that enable students to engage in learning experiences that reflect and honor their social and cultural backgrounds. In the context of extracurricular activities, madrasahs should offer a variety of programs that can develop the potential of students from diverse backgrounds, such as arts, sports, and social activities that respect differences. Textbooks should be developed with cultural sensitivity, guaranteeing that materials are free from prejudice and encompass various cultural viewpoints. With an accommodative curriculum, madrasahs can foster an environment that supports students' personal development, respects differences, and nurtures mutual respect among students. This context can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Accommodative Curriculum

Curriculum	Figure	Description
Culturally Based		Curriculum Policy that Embraces Cultural Differences Among Students This photo was taken during the Arts and Culture Festival event at <i>MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara</i> on August, 2024.
Extracurricular-Based Curriculum Policy in the Implementation of Teaching and Learning at Madrasah		Curriculum Policy that Embraces Differences in Ethnicity, Language, and Social Groups Among Students This photo was taken during an extracurricular activity at <i>MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara</i> June, 2024.

Textbook-Based Curriculum Policy in the Implementation of Teaching and Learning at Madrasah		Curriculum Policy that Accommodates Textbooks in the Implementation of Teaching and Learning at MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara. This book can be accessed online at the following website: https://sikurma.kemenag.go.id/portal/Buku/view_book/OW93K0o5Vk5IVDNnTFJQUjZxZnArZz09
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The implementation of managerial policies in Islamic education that integrate multiculturalism is evident in the management of a more inclusive curriculum. In an interview with the Vice Principal for Curriculum at MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara, it was explained:

“We integrate material about cultural differences in every subject, not just in religious studies, but across all subjects. This is reflected in the textbooks used by the madrasah, which accommodate local wisdom in Indonesia.”
(P2.ZH/20/04/2025)

This information indicates that the multicultural-accommodating curriculum is integrated into every aspect of learning, not just religious subjects. It emphasizes that the updated curriculum provides room for students to better understand and appreciate diversity within the context of Islamic education. The study also found that after the curriculum changes, incidents of intercultural conflict at the school significantly decreased. The data show that a more inclusive curriculum plays a significant role in creating a more harmonious atmosphere at the madrasah, supporting the development of intercultural understanding among students. Data indicates that the change in the curriculum is an important step toward creating a safer and more open educational environment for all cultures and religions.

The transformation in Islamic education management integrating multiculturalism can be seen in observations at three Islamic schools that were part of the study. This transformation can be mapped into three interrelated stages. First, the policy initiation stage, in which madrasah leaders introduce inclusive policies such as anti-bullying regulations, non-discriminatory student admissions, and multicultural-based curricular revisions. Second, the capacity-building stage, focusing on strengthening teacher competencies through professional development, training modules on managing cultural diversity, and fostering culturally responsive pedagogy. Third, the institutionalization stage, where inclusive practices become

embedded in the school culture through stakeholder participation, extracurricular programs promoting tolerance, and continuous monitoring to ensure sustainability. These stages demonstrate that transformation in Islamic education management is not an immediate outcome but a gradual process of aligning vision, human resources, and institutional culture with the principles of multiculturalism and inclusive education.

“We have started incorporating lessons on diversity into every subject, and we try to link every subject to multiculturalism. For example, in Islamic cultural history lessons related to Hajj, the Prophet Muhammad’s speech during the farewell pilgrimage, where he said, ‘Arabs are not superior to non-Arabs,’ this helps students understand the existing differences.” (P1.NBS/20/04/2025)

This data illustrates that managerial policies focused on diversity can create a more inclusive environment. The pattern observed is an increase in student acceptance of diversity, a reduction in bullying conflicts between students, and a strengthening of intercultural relationships in the classroom. Follow-up interviews with teachers and students also confirm that the multicultural approach in Islamic education management has increased student involvement in school activities that engage diverse cultural backgrounds.

“We have group discussions where students introduce their own cultures, activities such as flag-raising, drum band, and other group-based activities. This opens their eyes to diversity.” (P3.SR/21/04/2025) “In my Arabic language class, I always emphasize that learning Arabic is not just about studying Islamic religion, but also about learning history, literature, and cultural traditions from various Arabic-speaking countries, which differ in customs, traditions, and social anthropology perspectives.” (P4.LN/21/04/2025)

Based on interview responses, it reflects that changes in curriculum and extracurricular activities have strengthened the integration of different cultural groups. The data reveals that multicultural values in madrasah policies have improved the quality of interactions among students, with an increased awareness of the importance of tolerance.

“There has been a reduction in intercultural conflicts, teasing that leads to physical violence, and verbal bullying after the multicultural program was implemented. Our data shows a significant decrease in incidents of tension and violence between student groups from different ethnic and social backgrounds.” (P5.MR/21/04/2025) “I am a chemistry teacher, and in chemistry practice, I often design group tasks or collaborative assignments for experiments. This gives students the opportunity to collaborate with friends from diverse backgrounds, which helps reduce stereotypes and prejudices that may arise from cultural differences and social status. Through these collaborative tasks, they

learn to respect one another, communicate effectively, and work as a team without regard to the identities attached to them.” (P3.SR/21/04/2025)

This information demonstrates that managerial policies integrating multiculturalism through extracurricular activities and the integration of subjects at the madrasah have reduced tensions between groups that may have arisen due to cultural differences. The data reveals that the implementation of this policy has strengthened the school's climate, making it safer and more open to intercultural collaboration. This creates a more conducive environment for all students, regardless of cultural or religious differences.

Implementation of Inclusive Attitudes in Madrasah Management

The integration of inclusive principles in madrasah leadership plays a crucial role in empowering the madrasah community, including the improvement of teacher quality and the involvement of parents and the wider community. Compared with previous research, which has often been limited to discussing inclusive practices either at the curriculum level or through general leadership models, this study offers a more comprehensive analysis of inclusive madrasah management by integrating three dimensions simultaneously: teacher professional development, stakeholder empowerment, and the practical implementation of multicultural leadership policies. The focus on MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara provides an empirical contribution that highlights how inclusive management is operationalized in a real institutional context, bridging the gap between theoretical discussions of inclusivity and practical managerial strategies. This positioning reinforces the state of the art of this research, showing that inclusive management in Islamic schools is not only about curriculum content but also about holistic managerial transformation involving leadership, policy, and community participation. This context can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Inclusive Approaches to Madrasah Management

Policy	Figure	Description
Based on the Improvement of Human Resources among Social Studies Teachers.		The principal's policy to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills regarding differences and diversity is truly a blessing from Allah SWT. This photo was taken during a human resource development training activity held at <i>MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara</i> in Medan in December 2024.

Based on Human Resource Development for Teachers.		The principal's policy of sending teachers to upgrade their skills through a program organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of North Sumatra is commendable. This photo was taken in Medan Sunggal from March 10 to 15, 2025.
Based on Human Resource Development for Chemistry Teachers.		The principal's policy to send teachers to attend training in Medan is a proactive step toward professional development. This photo was taken in Medan Sunggal during March 10–15, 2025.
Based on Madrasah Community Empowerment.	 	The madrasah's managerial policy in empowering the madrasah community (Madrasah Committee), including parents and the wider society. With an inclusive approach, the madrasah management encourages the involvement of parents and the community in decision-making related to educational policies and promotes the values of transparency in madrasah activities. This photo was taken in April 2024 at MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara.

The transformation of management in the Islamic educational institution, *MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara*, can be observed in the application of leadership that supports multicultural policies.

"We emphasize teacher training to understand and manage cultural diversity in the classroom. At our madrasah, we promote acceptance of differences in all aspects of school life, including new student admission policies, teaching, and extracurricular activities. We also ensure that the madrasah is a safe space that supports all students, as reflected in our anti-bullying policy, protection of minority rights, and prevention of discrimination. Once again, we ensure that the madrasah supports the creation of a safe and comfortable environment." (P1.NBS/20/04/2025)

Based on interview data, this evidence suggests that Islamic educational administration within the madrasah, which proactively implements multicultural policies, has enhanced teachers' capacity to create an environment that supports

diversity. It shows that teacher training is a key element in managerial transformation, which directly impacts the success of multicultural policies.

"Inclusive or open attitudes in managing the madrasah empower the madrasah community, including parents and the local community. With an inclusive attitude, the management of the madrasah encourages the involvement of parents and the community in decision-making related to educational policies and promotes values of openness in school activities. This helps foster a closer relationship between the madrasah and the surrounding community, which, in turn, supports achieving better educational goals." (P6.KM/21/04/2025)

Teachers who participated in the training acknowledged that they adapted more inclusive teaching strategies that respect differences after attending the training. As one teacher stated:

"Managerial policies focused on developing teachers' competencies in minimizing stereotypes, prejudices, and in respecting, accepting, recognizing, and honoring differences are a '*Sunnatullah*' (divine practice). This has had a significant impact on creating a more inclusive quality of teaching." (P1.NBS/20/04/2025)

This information highlights the close relationship between Islamic educational leadership and teachers' ability to create an environment that is more open to diversity.

Discussion

The results of the research indicate that Islamic education policies centered on multicultural values effectively cultivate more tolerant and harmonious learning environment. Specifically, the study reveals three main findings: First, the implementation of policies supporting multiculturalism reduces intergroup conflicts in madrasahs; second, leadership supporting multicultural policies plays a key role in enhancing teachers' preparedness to manage diversity; third, a curriculum that includes multicultural values significantly contributes to students' understanding of cultural differences. Therefore, this research provides evidence that Islamic education management responsive to multiculturalism can improve the social climate in madrasahs (Rahmah & Fadhli, 2021).

The relationship explored in this research shows that transformation in Islamic education management integrating multiculturalism directly impacts the perceptions and behaviors of students, teachers, and the head of the madrasah toward diversity (Arfa & Lasaiba, 2022; Rudianto, 2023; Zamani & Inayatul Ilahiyah, 2019). One reason why this policy is successful is the in-depth teacher training on managing cultural

diversity, which improves their ability to manage classrooms inclusively. Thus, the implementation of this policy focuses not only on the curriculum but also on the readiness of human resources to accommodate differences (Kolik, 2022; Sari, 2018; Zebua & Anwar, 2022). Moreover, the integration of multicultural values in the curriculum raises students' awareness about the importance of tolerance, which in turn reduces cultural conflicts (Tentiasih & Rizal Rifa'i, 2022). Therefore, the results of this study show that changes in policies and managerial practices in Islamic schools have a significant positive impact on social interactions among students.

Compared to previous studies, the findings of this research align with the importance of integrating multicultural values into Islamic education. Some previous studies also indicate that effective diversity management can reduce intergroup tensions (Kolik, 2022). However, this research differs in its more holistic managerial approach, which does not only focus on the curriculum or leadership but also on human resource development, namely teachers (Basirun & Turimah, 2022; Sofiah Sinaga et al., 2021a, 2021b). Most prior research has emphasized theoretical aspects or policies without examining their practical implementation in schools. This study provides empirical evidence on how the policies and training implemented by the head of the madrasah can tangibly improve the quality of inclusive education (Asbari et al., 2020; Nuh, 2023; Omayra, 2021). Therefore, this research fills the gap in the literature by highlighting the importance of synergy between policies, curriculum, and human resource management.

The significance of the results of this study is that Islamic education at MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara must accommodate cultural diversity to create an environment that is not only safe but also fosters a deeper understanding of universal Islamic values such as tolerance and peace. Socially, this research shows that inclusive Islamic education plays an important role in building solidarity among students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Nadhiroh & Ahmadi, 2024; Sahrudin et al., 2023). Historically, this reflects a development in Islamic education thinking, where education was previously often seen as separated by religion and culture, but now Islamic education can be a tool to strengthen social ties among different groups (Juniarni, 2022; Novi Ariyanti et al, 2021). Ideologically, these results support the vision of Islam as *rahmatan lil-alamin*, which speaks not only of mercy toward fellow Muslims but to all of humanity.



Figure 1: Inclusive Teaching Quality

When teachers are competent in handling diversity and free from prejudices, the quality of teaching naturally improves. An inclusive teaching approach ensures that every student, regardless of their background, ability, or perceived difference, feels valued, understood, and has equal opportunities to learn and thrive. Catering to the diverse learning styles and needs of students -holistic student development-. Instilling values of compassion, empathy, and justice in students -nurturing moral character (Akhlaq)-. Fostering a sense of belonging and unity (*ukhuwwah*) among students and staff, reflecting the universal brotherhood taught in Islam - community building. When students feel safe and respected, they are more open to learning -effective knowledge transfer-.

Most Islamic schools in Indonesia still apply an administrative change model, where policies are implemented in a linear and procedural manner, often limited to compliance with regulations. Such approaches generally emphasize technical adjustments—such as modifying curricula or organizing periodic teacher training—without necessarily transforming the institutional vision or culture. In contrast, the case of study demonstrates a transformational change model, where change is not only administrative but also strategic and cultural. The head of the madrasah redefines the institutional vision by embedding multicultural values into policy frameworks, restructures decision-making to include teachers, parents, and the local community, and invests in sustainable human resource development through continuous teacher training.

This multidimensional transformation reflects a deeper shift that transcends mere compliance, positioning the madrasah as an agent of social cohesion and tolerance in a plural society. Thus, compared to the majority of Islamic schools that often treat multiculturalism as an *add-on*, MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara illustrates how inclusive management can become a holistic and transformational practice, aligning with broader theories of organizational change and contributing fresh insights into Islamic education management.

Table 3: Comparative Overview Previous Studies vs. This Research (State of the Art)

Aspect of Study	Focus of Previous Research	Findings of This Research	Novelty
Vision & Policy	Many studies discuss the integration of Islamic values into multicultural curricula at a theoretical level (Mumtahanah, 2020; Sismanto et al., 2022).	The madrasah principal implemented inclusive policies in practice: non-discriminatory student admissions, anti-bullying regulations, and protection of minority rights.	Demonstrates a vision and policy transformation that moves from theoretical frameworks to practical application, aligning with the transformational change model.

Structure & School Culture	Prior studies often limit their scope to micro-level leadership within schools without involving broader communities (D. DeMatthews et al., 2020; D. E. DeMatthews et al., 2021; Lumban Gaol, 2023).	The madrasah engages parents, the school committee, and the wider community in decision-making, fostering participatory and transparent school culture.	Provides empirical evidence that inclusive management entails community empowerment as part of structural and cultural transformation.
Teacher Professional Development	Previous research highlights multicultural curricula but rarely emphasizes teacher capacity building (Choi & Lee, 2020; Gillespie et al., 2025; Lash et al., 2022).	Teachers participated in professional training (social studies, chemistry, Ministry of Religious Affairs programs), resulting in more inclusive teaching strategies and reduced stereotyping.	Shows that teacher professional development is central to managerial transformation, a core element of human resource transformation.
School Climate & Social Impact	Earlier studies mainly focus on theoretical notions of tolerance and social harmony (Bardach et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023).	Concrete outcomes include reduced intergroup conflict, stronger student solidarity, and the creation of a safe school environment.	Provides empirical evidence that the integration of policies, leadership, and human resources directly shapes the school climate.
Approach to Change	Generally administrative in nature: curriculum adjustments or compliance with national policies (Khalil et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2023).	Combines policy vision, participatory structures, and teacher capacity building to produce sustainable and deep organizational transformation.	Positions this research as an example of the transformational change model in madrasah management.

The implications of these findings indicate that Islamic education integrating multiculturalism not only benefits in shaping students' character but also plays a significant role in creating a more tolerant and harmonious society (Fadhli et al., 2024). Its positive function is to reduce social tensions, strengthen solidarity among students from diverse backgrounds, and create a learning environment that supports more open learning processes (Effendi, 2021; Musfira et al., 2022; Zainiyati, S.H, 2007). However, dysfunctions that may arise include the inability of some educational institutions to fully implement this policy due to resource limitations or resistance to change from certain parties (Jalaluddin & Tahar, 2022; Naldi et al., 2024). Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to overcome these barriers so that the integration of multiculturalism in Islamic education can proceed effectively.



Figure 2: The Action Plan for Strengthening Inclusive Islamic Education

Figure 2 illustrates the action plan for strengthening inclusive Islamic education requires more concrete and measurable strategies. First, teacher training should adopt specific modules, such as *“Managing Multicultural Classrooms”* (covering conflict resolution, anti-bullying strategies, and culturally responsive pedagogy) and *“Teaching Religious Values in Plural Societies.”* These modules can be evaluated through pre- and post-training assessments of teachers’ competencies in classroom management. Second, the curriculum should be updated by including dedicated topics on *intercultural dialogue, tolerance in Islamic history, and case studies of local cultural diversity*, integrated into Islamic Studies and Social Sciences subjects. Curriculum effectiveness can be measured through students’ performance in project-based learning tasks that require collaboration across cultural groups. Third, the school climate should be monitored using measurable indicators, such as a targeted 30% reduction in bullying and discriminatory incidents within one academic year, as recorded in the school’s disciplinary reports. Fourth, from a policy perspective, the allocation of resources should prioritize continuous professional development programs, teacher exchange visits to other multicultural schools, and the development of multicultural teaching materials. By implementing these concrete measures, madrasahs are not only better positioned to foster inclusivity but can also demonstrate clear, evidence-based improvements in promoting a more tolerant and harmonious society.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic education management integrating multiculturalism contributes to creating a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment at MAN 2 Labuhanbatu Utara. The analysis shows that policies supporting cultural diversity have reduced intercultural tensions and strengthened students' understanding of differences. Leadership that promotes multicultural principles, combined with teacher training in managing diverse classrooms, has been essential in fostering a supportive school climate. Likewise, curriculum structures that incorporate multicultural values have raised students' awareness of tolerance and respect. The main contribution of this study lies in showing the interconnection between managerial policies, multicultural curriculum, and teacher development in shaping inclusive education practices. Through qualitative evidence obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation, the findings confirm that inclusive leadership and systematic training can influence students' and teachers' acceptance of diversity in practical, day-to-day school life. While this study provides valuable insights, its scope is limited to one madrasah context, so the results cannot be generalized to all Islamic schools. Moreover, the research has not yet fully captured the long-term effects of inclusive policies on students' character development. Future studies should therefore involve multiple madrasahs with diverse contexts and assess the sustained impact of multicultural education policies.

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