

PROPHETIC AND PRACTICAL BRIDGES: TRANSFORMING THE ISLAMIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM TOWARDS MULTICULTURAL REASONING AND TOLERANT CHARACTER IN AN ERA OF DISRUPTION

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Abstract

This study discusses the transformation of the Islamic Education Curriculum through the integration of the prophetic bridge concept with Banks' multicultural education approach to shape the multicultural reasoning and tolerant character of students in an era of disruption. Amidst technological developments, identity polarization, and increasing symptoms of intolerance, the Islamic Education Curriculum curriculum needs to go beyond teaching religious material and emphasize human values, respect for diversity, and the ability to interact in a pluralistic society. Using descriptive qualitative methods through literature review and content analysis of prophetic theory, Banks' multicultural model, and Islamic Education Curriculum curriculum documents, this study analyzes data through reduction, categorization, and interpretation to understand the direction of curriculum change. The results of the study show that combining prophetic values humanization, liberation, and transcendence with Banks' five dimensions of multicultural education enhances the orientation of the curriculum to be more inclusive and relevant to social realities. This integration encourages learning that fosters critical awareness, empathy, the ability to understand differences, and prevents the emergence of exclusive and intolerant behavior. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of two major frameworks as the basis for developing a critical-multicultural Islamic Education curriculum. The implications emphasize the importance of repositioning the Islamic Education curriculum, improving teacher competence, and designing adaptive learning to produce a religious and tolerant generation that is capable of living harmoniously in diversity.

Keywords: Multicultural Reasoning, Praksis Banks, Prophetic Bridge, Transformation of Islamic Education Curriculum, Tolerant Character



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest multicultural country in the world, blessed with diversity in ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations (Artikel, n.d.). This diversity, on the one hand, is a vital asset for the nation, but on the other hand, has the potential to trigger horizontal conflicts (Seni & Budaya, 2021). This potential for conflict is often triggered by primordialism and intolerance that have not been systematically addressed. This complexity is exacerbated by the phenomenon of the era of disruption, defined as a period of rapid, unexpected, and profound fundamental change, primarily driven by digital technology (Nawanti et al., 2024).

In this era, the spread of information and extremist ideologies, including religious hoaxes, has become massive through digital media and social media algorithms, which effectively divide and reinforce polarization (echo chambers) (Baihaki et al., 2025). Given these conditions, Multicultural Education has become a strategic necessity to preserve cultural diversity and prevent disintegration, as it requires a strong cognitive and affective defense mechanism. Multiculturalism itself is an ideology and educational reform movement that aims to create an equal learning environment for all students, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds (Kuwoto et al., 2024). Multicultural Education must be the main tool to combat religious exclusivism, which is prone to causing conflict, and to realize the ideal of social justice in education (Islam et al., 2024).

Multicultural Education has a vital urgency as a means of overcoming conflict issues, starting with an educational approach in schools and educational institutions (Hasanah et al., 2024). The Multicultural Education aims to reform the institutional structure of education, the curriculum, and the teaching process so that all students, regardless of their cultural background, have equal opportunities to succeed (Philosophy et al., 2025). It is also responsible for creating culturally responsive teaching, in which the frame of reference and experiences of students from various backgrounds are used as relevant instructional capital.

Therefore, this study focuses on the transformation of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum as the core solution. Islamic Religious Education, as a subject that shapes character and beliefs, must be changed from a monocultural model to an inclusive one (Nurhasanah et al., n.d.). This transformation is analyzed through a synthesis of two main frameworks:

1. Prophetic bridge: the theological foundation of Islam (the principles of Ta'aruf and moderate religious jurisprudence) that provides ethical and philosophical legitimacy for multiculturalism.
2. Banks' praxis: James A. Banks' holistic reform framework (five dimensions) that provides a practical methodology for implementation in schools.
3. The integration of the prophetic bridge and Banks' praxis is a strategy to transform the Islamic Religious Education curriculum towards the formation of multicultural reasoning

(through critical thinking) and tolerant character (through the reduction of prejudice) in the midst of an era of disruption

Based on the above background, the research questions in this study are how does the prophetic bridge (Islamic theological foundation) provide a philosophical basis for multicultural education, and how can the banks praxis (five dimensions) become a framework for the transformation of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum, and how can the integration of the prophetic bridge and Banks' praxis produce multicultural reasoning and tolerant character in IRE students in the era of disruption.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design applied in this article is a qualitative literature review (Febrianto & Siroj, 2024). This approach was chosen because the main objective of the article is to analyze, define, and synthesize the conceptual framework of Multicultural Education from various expert perspectives, as well as relate it to the challenges of social conflict in Indonesia. This research serves as a conceptual-normative analysis that relates Banks' reform theory to Islamic normative principles.

The data collection technique used was documentation or library research (Nafisatur, 2024). The author systematically collected and selected relevant written documents, such as books, scientific journals, and historical/theological documents. The main data sources included:

1. The concept of Multicultural Education and Banks' dimensions
2. The theological/philosophical foundations of Islam (ta'aruf, fiqh of religious moderation)
3. Urgency and national context

The dominant data analysis techniques are content analysis and concept synthesis. The analysis process includes:

1. Data reduction: The author sorted and selected the most relevant quotations, concepts, and arguments related to the main problem formulation (prophetic bridge and banking praxis).
2. Data presentation: Data is presented descriptively and narratively by grouping concepts into coherent themes (for example, dividing theological foundations into prophetic foundations and dividing the dimensions of banks into banks praxis).
3. Conceptual verification/synthesis: The author compares, relates, and synthesizes banks' theory with the views of contemporary Indonesian scholars to draw new conclusions about the transformation of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum.

Thus, this article examines how Islamic sacred values (prophetic bridge) can be systematically integrated into the framework of modern educational reform (praxis banks) to transform Islamic Education, with the aim of producing students who have critical thinking skills and peaceful attitudes in facing the challenges of extremism in the digital world.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Prophetic and Practical Bridge of Banks: Urgency and Foundations

Multicultural Education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and an ongoing process that aims to change the institutional structure of education so that students from diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities to achieve academic success. The urgency of Multicultural Education lies in its role as a fundamental solution to social conflict and inequality, as well as to prepare students to become effective citizens in an increasingly interdependent world (Sari et al., 2025). Multicultural Education is necessary to build awareness of plurality as a modality of national unity in accordance with the spirit of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Albina, 2024).

In addition, Multicultural Education must produce culturally responsive teaching, in which the reference frameworks and experiences of students from various backgrounds are used as instructional capital to make learning more relevant and effective (Saputri et al., 2025). Furthermore, Multicultural Education should not be neutral towards injustice, but should be a force for social transformation and actively challenge discrimination. If we look at the foundations or roots of multicultural education, the theological roots are paramount. The theological roots of multicultural education come from Islamic teachings, which have a strong theological foundation rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith.

This fundamental principle serves as a prophetic bridge that justifies all multicultural educational reforms, including (Ahmad Sirojuddin, 2025):

1. The principle of *ta'aruf* (getting to know one another): The Qur'an emphasizes that the diversity of tribes and nations (*syu'ūban wa qabā'ilā*) is the purpose of human creation so that they may get to know one another (*li ta'ārafū*). This verse firmly rejects ethnocentrism, because the true standard of nobility in the sight of God is piety, not ethnic background.
2. Principle of diversity (ayatullah): Differences in language and skin color are seen as signs of Allah's greatness for people of knowledge (QS. Ar-Rum [30]: 22). This view encourages appreciation and reflection on cultural diversity as a source of wealth and knowledge.
3. Prophetic Practice: Prophet Muhammad exemplified multiculturalism through the Charter of Medina (*Mītsaq al-Madīnah*), which recognized non-Muslim communities as one ummah (community) living side by side, and guaranteed freedom of religion and equal legal protection for all groups. This model demonstrates that Islam structurally recognizes and protects the rights of minorities

The contemporary philosophical foundation, built upon this prophetic bridge, is the jurisprudence of religious moderation (Tanjung, 2025). This philosophy calls for balance (*tawazun*), where students have strong faith in their own religion (internal strength) but at the same time show respect for followers of other religions (Lubuklinggau, 2024).

Praksis Banks; Five Dimensions of Curriculum Reform

James A. Banks proposes five dimensions that form a framework for the total and structured implementation of Multicultural Education. This practice must be specifically integrated into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum to achieve multicultural reasoning and tolerant character (Tomia et al., n.d.):

1. Content integration: The extent to which teachers use data, facts, and information from different cultures, races, ethnicities, and social groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, and theories in their subjects. In Islamic Religious Education, this means introducing the history of Islam in various parts of the world (the archipelago, China) and enriching the curriculum with local wisdom so that Islamic teachings are relevant and not alienated from the local culture.
2. Knowledge construction: Focuses on how teachers help students understand, investigate, and determine how cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the way knowledge is constructed. This dimension is very important for building Multicultural Reasoning in Islamic Religious Education, by training students to think *ushuliyah* (basic principles) and not just *furu'iyyah* (branches), so that they are aware that differences in interpretation in *fiqh* are inevitable and influenced by culture and time
3. Prejudice reduction: Focus on modifying students' racial attitudes through teaching methods and materials to develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. The goal is to build empathy and correct negative stereotypes. This is implemented to shape tolerant character through cooperative learning and open dialogue about discrimination issues in the classroom, as well as through school for tolerance programs that involve interfaith/interreligious dialogue.

4. Equity pedagogy: Teachers modify their teaching methods in ways that facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, gender, and socioeconomic groups. This pedagogy requires teachers to recognize and respond to students' different learning styles and cultural characteristics. Islamic Religious Education teachers must use culturally responsive pedagogy by linking Islamic teachings (e.g., the concept of tawakkal) to the cultural frame of reference of the students' origins.
5. Empowering school culture and social structure: Restructure school culture and organization, such as grouping and naming practices, to ensure racial and social justice. Islamic schools should review rules (e.g., uniforms) and grouping practices (honors vs. regular classes) to ensure social justice, creating an inclusive, empowering school culture.

Transformation of the Islamic Education Curriculum Towards Multicultural Reasoning and Tolerant Character in the Era of Disruption

The implementation of multicultural-based Islamic Religious Education requires the integration of the five dimensions of banks' practices, with a prophetic foundation as its spirit (Pendidikan et al., 2025). This transformation of Islamic Religious Education directly responds to the challenges of the era of disruption, where the spread of information and extremist ideologies on social media requires a cognitive and affective defense, through the following changes.

1. Transformation of multicultural reasoning through knowledge construction

In this case, Islamic Religious Education teachers actively encourage students to critically question sources of teachings and examine historical contexts. This approach is in line with the goal of knowledge construction, which seeks to instill awareness that religious knowledge is contextual and not monolithic, steering students away from takfiri (excommunication) and exclusivist views. In this case, Islamic Religious Education teachers can ask critical questions, for example, about the emergence of a fatwa, compare the views of different Islamic groups (madhhabs), and then ask students to see the multicultural values upheld by the ulama so that they maintain an attitude of respect for diversity (Halim, 2022).

2. Strengthening tolerant character through reducing prejudice

Schools, through Islamic Religious Education teachers, can implement cooperative learning in heterogeneous groups, which has been proven to significantly reduce prejudice. Instilling the concept of religious moderation, which emphasizes tolerance and anti-violence through Islamic Religious Education activities, ensures that students build positive relationships based on fairness and respect. The concept of religious moderation in schools can begin by emphasizing habits that are in line with the characteristics of religious moderation, especially anti-violence.

Islamic Religious Education teachers can create special anti-violence teams in each class, ensuring harmony within the class and school environment where students are heterogeneous, for example, of different ethnicities, religions, or cultures. Islamic Religious Education teachers can facilitate various cross-cultural dialogues through speech or oration competitions that reinforce multicultural values that promote justice, respect, tolerance, and so on. Holding annual school festivals that showcase the diverse cultures of each region can also be an option for reducing prejudice and reinforcing multicultural values.

3. Transformation of Islamic Religious Education curriculum content through integration (content integration)

Content integration in Islamic Religious Education is carried out by incorporating material, examples, and data that reflect diversity in Islam and Islam's contribution to global civilization, while respecting local culture. This effort ensures that the curriculum does not only focus on one school of thought or Arab-centric traditions, but embraces the richness of Islamic and local traditions. Islamic Religious Education teachers not only teach the pillars of Islam and faith, but also introduce the history of Islam in various parts of the world (for

example, the role of Walisongo, Islam in China, or Islam in Africa) to show the diversity of interpretations and manifestations of Islamic culture. The Islamic Religious Education curriculum must be enriched with local wisdom so that Islamic teachings feel relevant and are not alienated from the local culture, such as incorporating the values of tolerance contained in Minangkabau or Javanese customs that are in line with Islamic values (tawazun).

This is emphasized in Gus Dur's concept of the indigenization of Islam, namely that Islamic values must be internalized without neglecting the diverse local cultural context. This transformation will provide a holistic understanding of Islam, ensuring that students see Islam as *rahmatan lil-ālamīn* that respects plurality. In this era of disruption, the integration of digital media to reinforce multicultural values can also be a contextual choice. Teachers can utilize digital media to strengthen multicultural understanding or conduct various campaigns to reinforce cultural aspects that emphasize unity.

4. Transforming teaching methods through equity pedagogy

Equity pedagogy requires Islamic Religious Education teachers to modify their teaching methods to be responsive to the diversity of students' learning styles and socio-cultural backgrounds. Islamic Religious Education teachers must apply culturally responsive pedagogy in which they relate Islamic teachings to the cultural frame of reference of their students. In practice, teachers can use a variety of teaching methods (e.g., group discussions, visual presentations, community-based project assignments) to facilitate the academic achievement of all students, especially those from vulnerable groups.

This adjustment helps reduce the achievement gap, which is often influenced by socioeconomic and cultural factors, because the subject matter becomes more meaningful and easier to understand. For example, Islamic education teachers can explain the concept of *tawakkal* (surrender) using relevant folk tales or local mythology, rather than only stories from the Middle East, so that this theological concept is internalized in a contextual manner. This is also in line with recommendations to promote harmony through the implementation of multicultural education.

5. Institutional strengthening through empowering school culture and social structures

This dimension focuses on reforming the entire Islamic school environment to create an inclusive culture that values diversity and provides fair opportunities for all. This reform includes (Ananda et al., 2025):

- Policy revisions can be made by reviewing rules (e.g., school uniforms) and grouping practices (separation of elite vs. regular classes) to ensure social justice and the absence of hidden discrimination. Policies must guarantee that every student, regardless of their ethnic, religious, or social background, has equal access to quality education.
- Heterogeneous participation: ensuring that symbols, activity calendars, and facility names reflect the ethnic, gender, and social diversity that exists in the school.
- Diversity Committee: Schools can establish a Diversity and Equity Committee consisting of representatives of teachers, students, and parents from diverse backgrounds to actively monitor and revise school policies that may be unintentionally discriminatory. The goal is to create an empowering school culture where all students feel valued and have equal opportunities to thrive.

Overall, the transformation of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum based on a synthesis of prophetic bridges and banks practices is a strategic necessity in this era of disruption. Prophetic bridges (the foundations of *ta'aruf* and moderate religious jurisprudence) serve as the ethical spirit that motivates reform, providing theological legitimacy to diversity. Meanwhile, Banks' praxis provides a five-dimensional methodological framework for translating these values into concrete pedagogical and institutional actions. Through the construction of knowledge, Islamic Religious Education has succeeded in forming a critical

multicultural discourse against religious textual bias, and through the reduction of prejudice and equitable pedagogy, Islamic Religious Education has produced tolerant characters by familiarizing them with anti-violence and socio-cultural justice in the classroom. This transformation is institutionally reinforced through the empowerment of school culture, ensuring that Islamic Religious Education functions as a vital cognitive and affective defense, transforming Indonesia's plurality from a potential conflict into an integrated and just national strength.

CONCLUSION

Multicultural Education is a strategic necessity and fundamental solution for Indonesia to reduce conflicts based on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations and the threat of disintegration. MC is not merely supplementary material, but a reform movement that must be implemented comprehensively. The prophetic bridge of Islam (the principles of ta'aruf and moderate religious jurisprudence) provides a theological foundation, while the praxis of banks (five dimensions) provides a specific methodology for the Islamic Religious Education curriculum to achieve multicultural reasoning and tolerant character amid the challenges of disruption. The ultimate goal of PM is to create educational equality and transform the nation's plurality from a source of conflict into a key asset, in line with the spirit of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.

From this study, the author recommends restructuring the curriculum and training for Islamic Religious Education teachers, whereby the government (through the Ministry of Religious Affairs) must revise the Islamic Religious Education curriculum to explicitly include the five dimensions of Multicultural Education banks (especially knowledge construction and prejudice reduction). In addition, certified training is mandatory for all Islamic Religious Education teachers to implement culturally responsive teaching, ensuring that they are able to adapt teaching methods to the diversity of students' backgrounds. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen an inclusive Islamic school culture where each Islamic educational institution restructures its internal culture and policies (for example, reviewing uniform regulations, student grouping practices, and mechanisms for reporting discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations) to ensure social justice, so that Multicultural Education is not only a theory in the classroom but also a real practice in the school environment.

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