Education in the Digital Age: Navigating Challenges and Cultivating Character Values for the Next Generation

Muhammad Ainur Rosyid\textsuperscript{1}, Kenzaky Mohamad\textsuperscript{2}
\textsuperscript{1}Universitas Nurul Jadid, Probolinggo, East Java, Indonesia
\textsuperscript{2}Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author: rosyidainur45@gmail.com
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Abstract:
This research aims to find out about the challenges of education in the era of society 5.0: strengthening the character values of the digital generation in an effort to strengthen the character values of the digital generation so that they can improve the quality of good character. This research was conducted through a qualitative case study type approach. This research was conducted at the SMAI Miftahul Afkar Institute under the auspices of the Annabrowi Islamic boarding school, Sidopekso village, Kraksaan, Probolinggo, East Java. The data analysis technique in this research uses the Miles and Huberman data analysis model with stages of data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Based on the results of research conducted, it shows that strengthening character values is carried out in several strategies including; instilling character values in every learning activity, optimizing school collaboration with parents, strengthening character values. The implications obtained from strengthening the character values of the digital generation are that schools have good quality students and identities that are easily recognized by the public, and have student graduates with high character.

Key Words: Curriculum, Multicultural, Inclusive, Transformation

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most critical factors in the development of a country (Brunker et al., 2019; Kilis, et al., 2020). Education has a vital role in improving the quality of its human resources (Mustajab et al., 2021). Efforts to improve the quality of education by the times and technology can increase Indonesia's dignity in the eyes of the world (Ramdhan, 2019). Improvements and updates in the field of education must continue to be carried out so that the main goals of Indonesia's national education can be achieved (Rahmat & Yahya, 2021). This increase can be made by updating the educational model in formal learning. Especially in the Islamic education model (Rizqiyah & Karimah, 2020)

Islamic education is a conscious effort to form religiosity in students through Islamic teachings (Suparjo et al., 2021). Islamic education is a place to equip students to get to know the values of diversity. In this context, religion is
known as multiculturalism, where religion sometimes triggers the emergence of social, economic, and other problems amid humanity. In terms of Islamic psychological values, there should be a multicultural education model. In this case, multicultural Islamic education also needs to be touched and entered into by the values of Islamic psychology (Rahmat & Yahya, 2022), because education will always intersect with personality, both educators and students (Zulkarnain & Zubaedi, 2021).

Hasbullah (2016) said that Islamic education should bring calm, comfort, and peace to the world of education. From the beginning, Islam has defined itself as a Rahmatanlillalamin religion, which today, in context, is often misinterpreted and misimplemented in life, including the world of education. The benefits of putting forward indicators of an exclusive educational model can be seen in several ways, namely, the limited space for differences of opinion between teachers and students or between students with one another so that the learning process is indoctrination (Gokbulut et al., 2019). Education focuses only on achieving ritual abilities and monotheistic beliefs with single Islamic education teaching materials, namely right and wrong and good and evil (Muqoyyidin & Widiyaningsih, 2021).

Therefore, to avoid conflicts from developing widely in Indonesia, it would be significant to build multicultural, inclusive awareness through education (Kerr & Mercia, 2016). The discourse on inclusive Islamic education in religion does not mean that all religions are the same and recognize the truth of religions that differ from their beliefs because such an effort is impossible (Pardede 2022).

Tangkitjaroenkun et al., (2022) say that multicultural education is a concept in which a community in a national context can recognize differences, diversity, and pluralism of cultures, races, ethnicities, religions, and so on. A concept that provides an understanding that a plural and the pluralistic nation is a nation filled with diverse cultures, and a multicultural nation is a nation whose ethnic and cultural groups can coexist peacefully, marked by a willingness to respect other cultures (Finkelstein et al. 2021).

Multicultural education is critical for Indonesia, one of the world’s largest multicultural countries, because it consists of various kinds of customs with various races, ethnicities, religions, and languages (Rif’an, 2022). Mainly in fostering a sense of national unity and integrity through the spirit of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945 as a milestone in the history of the establishment of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

In the SETARA Institute report, in 2020, there were 180 violations against freedom of religion/belief, with 424 acts of violence. The report stated that violations of freedom of religion and belief in 2020 were spread across 29 provinces in Indonesia, with West Java, East Java, and Aceh as the three provinces with the highest violation rates.
In Probolinggo District, the population of Sumber District is very heterogeneous, especially regarding religion. Based on data from the local district Central Statistics Agency (BPS), of the six religions & beliefs recognized by the government, only adherents of the Confucian faith do not exist in this sub-district with 9 (nine) villages. Adherents of Tenggerese Islam and Hinduism are the most numerous in this sub-district. In detail, in 2020, there will be 19,917 adherents of Islam, three adherents of Catholicism, 17 adherents of Protestantism, one adherent of Buddhism, and 5,720 adherents of Hinduism.

Based on the results of preliminary studies and observations conducted by researchers at SMAN 1 Sumber Sukapura District, the students' backgrounds varied with differences in ethnicity and religion. Students have their uniqueness in various ways that have the potential to cause conflicts and problems. This is what makes it unique in the application of learning in schools. Integrating various multicultural students into an inclusive Islamic learning model makes education more exciting and unique to observe.

In this context, education has a vital role in shaping public life; besides that, it is also believed to play a significant role in shaping politics and culture (Kim, 2020). Thus education is a medium for preparing and shaping social life to become the basis of educational institutions full of idealistic values (Firmansyah, 2022).

Based on the explanation above, there is a need for an inclusive multicultural Islamic-based educational model to reduce horizontal conflicts based on ethnicity, religion, race, and between groups. A multicultural, inclusive Islam-based learning model can be implemented integrally by adjusting the curriculum implemented in schools. Moreover, schools are the basis of diversity in terms of culture, race, ethnicity, religion, and others. This diversity can be accepted as natural and does not cause conflict. So the researcher is interested in researching the model of inclusive Islamic education based on multiculturalism.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This research was conducted at the Educational Institution of SMA Negeri 1 Sumber Sukapura District, Probolinggo, using a qualitative case study type method, carried out in a planned and systematic manner. The method in this research is qualitative research using case studies. Respondents in this study were three people: the principal, the PAI teacher, and the deputy student affairs. To get an overview of the Multicultural-Based Inclusive Islamic Education Model, the researcher used a purposive sampling technique to determine the respondents. Researchers collecting data chose interviews and documentation.

Data analysis started from the data display from the results of interviews, observations, and documentation obtained while in the field. Then the researcher conducted data reduction, sorting and selecting data that had been collected according to a predetermined theme so that that data would be obtained, which
was arranged systematically according to the research focus. The temporary research findings end with the research conclusion as a research finding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the results of an inclusive Islamic education model based on multiculturalism were obtained, including the following:

**Islamic Education Curriculum with an Inclusive-Multicultural Vision**

The vital essence of the conception of multicultural thinking is the recognition and appreciation of the primordial dimensions in social life, both those related to aspects of ethnicity, race, language, skin color, social stratification, and religion, even including political choices and so on to the extent where differences and this diversity is believed to be an important social and cultural capital towards the cohesiveness of social life itself. One of the best media to internalize multicultural education so that awareness is born to maintain social cohesiveness while honing self, social and cultural wisdom none other than the formal learning process at each level of education.

Internalization of multicultural education integrated with Islamic education in practice still leaves various problems related to vision and mission, objectives, implementation strategies, and curriculum content to the minimum capacity of educators who are competent to teach it in the classroom. The most highlighted problem is the unclear epistemological basis of ulum al-din so that the presentation of the material tends to be partial, sectarian, heavily reliant on formal aspects (fiqh minded), and makes thinking patterns increasingly exclusive so that they are intolerant of the diversity of schools of thought, including as well as religious diversity.

Opinion from A (2022), as head of SMA Negeri 1 Sumber, said that multicultural-based Islamic education is one of the flagship programs in our school, with different student backgrounds so that our effective and efficient inclusive education model is applied. B (2022), as deputy head of curriculum, said that the curriculum at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber is by the school’s vision and mission, and one of the inclusive multicultural Islamic education models is in it.

Therefore, the effort to reconstruct Islamic education with a multicultural, inclusive vision is the priority that must be on the agenda. To realize this, the various components involved in the educational process need to be planned in such a way as well as formulate their specific format. Educational components that need to be reconstructed include curriculum design, educational figures (teachers/lecturers), and the effectiveness of learning strategies.

In line with the opinion above, S (2022), as a PAI teacher, said that Islamic education activities at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber refer to the model of Islamic education that has been determined and implemented in this school. Multicultural Inclusive Islamic Education by prioritizing an educational model based on local wisdom for students in mountainous areas.
There are many conceptions of thought to redesign the Islamic education curriculum with an inclusive-multicultural vision so that it is always relevant and contextual to the needs and dynamics of a diverse Indonesian society. First, transforming the philosophical conception of the curriculum with uniform and monolithic genres into a philosophical conception of the curriculum relevant to the vision, mission, and goals at each level of education and educational units. The philosophy of the curriculum should emphasize the importance of building students’ human awareness.

The foundation of curriculum development must be based on a progressive curriculum philosophy, such as the paradigm of humanism, progressivism, and social reconstruction. Second, the curriculum’s theoretical basis, which tends to be more on artificial aspects of data, the reality of facts, and the like, must also be developed at the level of cultivating values, morality, and skills. Third, the conception of the theory of learning is not enough to make theory in learning psychology its axiological basis simply because it allegedly strengthens students’ egocentrism and even tends to be value-free. However, students’ appreciative conceptions must also emerge in their capacity as cultural, social, and political beings, thereby motivating them to actively contribute to society, the nation, and the world. Fourth, students’ learning activities should ideally be based on the learning process at the high isomorphism level to allow them to have social empirical nuances. It is time for a ranking system that only exalts self-egoism and ignores the importance of a group atmosphere to be abolished. Fifth, a varied evaluation that measures three domains of students simultaneously is relevant to the curriculum design being developed.

An inclusive vision can be internalized and reconstructed through a series of religious education content taught in the classroom. First, the explanation of monotheism verses is also associated with the importance of tolerance, and inclusiveness, especially with groups of different religions, namely 1) Material on diversity as sunnatullah and the urgency of fastabiq al-khairat (Sura al-Baqarah [2]: 148). 2) Material that discusses justice and equality (Surat an-Nisa [4]: 135). 3) Material related to relational cohesiveness between religious adherents (Surat al-Mumtahanah [60]: 8-9).

Second, fiqh material, followed by siyasa (governance) fiqh studies in which national concepts were taught which had been exemplified in the era of salafuna as-salihun. The historical context is presented when the Prophet Muhammad led Medina’s multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious community, where the situation was not much different from our society in Indonesia.

Third, the study of morals needs to focus on improving behavior about Allah, the Prophet, fellow human beings, oneself, and the environment, in addition to efforts to internalize the importance of morals as an essential pillar of national life. In this case, a teacher is always required to update his learning methods and set an example (uswah).
Fourth, SKI material exemplifies the Prophet's sincerity in building the social order of Medina (civil), where facts were found regarding his recognition and appreciation for the values of pluralism and tolerance.

Reconstructive efforts of educators with an ideal inclusive-multiculturalist character; First, educators must proactively participate in various training agendas, workshops, seminars, webinars, and various other activities with a multicultural perspective. Second, educators are encouraged to have cross-faith dialogue. So that, between them, there is greeting and trying to be mutually appreciative and tolerant. Third, Increase reading literacy with multicultural educational nuances for educators, both print-based (complex file) and online, such as access to e-books, e-journals, and so on.

Implementing inclusive and moderate religious values in schools is highly dependent on the dedication and commitment of teachers. Teachers who use an inclusive and moderate approach can teach and practice it with students. In this context, the role of the teacher/lecturer includes; first, the figure of the teacher/lecturer must be able to be democratic and non-discriminatory both in attitude and speech. Second, the teacher/lecturer figure should have high empathy for social issues with a religious tendency, like articulating his empathy for the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Congregation that experienced an attack on a place of worship in early September 2021. Third, the teacher/lecturer figure can emphasize that the substance of religious teachings is to create peace and prosperity for all humanity, so all forms of violence and radicalism are not allowed. Fourth, the teacher/lecturer figure emphasized the importance of dialogue and deliberation as the key to solving problems (problem-solving) for all pluralistic issues that are still occurring in the country, for example, incidents of misdirection against minority sects of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat and cases of criminalization of the Shia group in several regions, although with different conflict escalations.

On the other hand, teachers/lecturers are required to elaborate on various innovative and creative learning methods and strategies, such as lectures, group discussions, field trips, or comparative studies, face to face with network-based applications (online) which are now becoming a trend, such as online applications. Zoom meetings, google meet, WhatsApp groups, and others. Teachers, for example, can invite their students to visit houses of worship and have warm dialogues with administrators or congregations. It can also be scheduled to invite representatives of religious minorities to give lectures and discuss with students so that they can hear each other and share experiences about what they have felt so far. In this way, it is hoped that students will grow in empathy and sensitivity in their hearts to respect other groups as they respect themselves.
Epistemological Transformation Paradigm of National Education

In Indonesia, awareness of the vision and orientation of multicultural education is acknowledged to have shown progress, but it is limited to political jargon and needs to be more consistent. In the opinion of the author, by reading this reality, it is time to transform the epistemological paradigm of the national education system, especially in the context of developing a multiculturalist vision with the zeitgeist of brotherhood, unity, and oneness, or "university" within "diversity" in order to anticipate the strong hegemony of globalization and start the rise of awareness of ethnic identity in other dimensions.

Seeing the vital substance of multicultural education above, it is time for education policymakers in this country, namely the institutions of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion, to disseminate multicultural education subjects. Islamic education in this context transformatively expands the multicultural education paradigm landscape. Inclusive-multicultural education subjects can be integrated with the design of Islamic education materials. Even though technically it is not a separate subject, multicultural education can still be integrated and interconnected in subjects.

A (2022) says that the nature of the educational model refers to the national education system and provides variations with multicultural, inclusive education that adapts to local wisdom. At the regulative level, the paradigm of inclusive-multicultural Islamic education can be applied and is by the principles of administering national education as outlined in Chapter III, article 4 (four) of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, especially in paragraph (1) Education is implemented democratically and fairly and is not discriminatory by upholding human rights, religious values, cultural values, and national pluralism; paragraph (2) education is organized as a systemic unit with an open and multi-meaning system, and paragraph (6) Education is organized by empowering all components of society through participation in the implementation and quality control of education services.

When referring to the forms of religious education as stated in Government Regulation 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Education, religious education’s position is influential in national education. The optimistic tone regarding the strength of religious and religious education suits the nation’s progress in forming Indonesian religious people. However, the next question is how far the contribution of Islamic education is to the nation's progress and, at the same time, strengthens our nationalism and participates proactively in overcoming national problems, including religion-based violence; in the writer’s opinion, this will continue to be tested over time.

The values and curriculum of multicultural education integrated into the national education system have great urgency and significance for the harmony and maintenance of the Bhineka Tunggal Ika spirit. According to S (2022), as an Islamic Religious Education teacher, there is some urgency in integrating
transform multicultural education into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material content, namely as an alternative means of conflict resolution, fortifying students not to be uprooted from their cultural roots, efforts to build gender sensitivity, build attitudes anti-ethnic discrimination, strengthening tolerance, inclusiveness, as well as to minimize various conflicts of interest.

This reality confirms that the agenda to reconstruct Islamic education to fortify our students is urgent. At the epistemological level, the PAI curriculum must be directed to shape the character of pluralist-multicultural students. The PAI curriculum should cover topics such as tolerance, diversity, dangers of discrimination, human rights, democracy, and other relevant subjects. Then at the ontological level, the form (form) of the PAI curriculum should no longer be aimed at individual students according to their religion and sich but aimed at them collectively based on the diversity of their respective religions.

PAI teachers ideally have a set of knowledge and multicultural, inclusive awareness so that when explaining PAI material, they try to emphasize the importance of the social education process to their students. Another thing that is no less important is the creativity of educators to design and use appropriate learning methods and media so that they can motivate their students to take seriously what they have said. Furthermore, at the axiological level, the evaluation of PAI learning is not sufficiently based on cognitive and psychomotor abilities alone but also includes students' affective abilities. The assessment standards should have a deep and substantive dimension, namely the attitude and awareness of students about their religious teachings and their inclusiveness towards different groups of others.

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<th>Transformative Model Relevance</th>
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The relevance of the transformative model must be read holistically and in its entirety in the context of the paradigmatic reconstruction of multicultural education in the country. First, the term right to culture. In this context, multicultural education must not deny the local cultural identity of the Indonesian people in its vision of realizing an Indonesian civil society that is competitive at the global level. Second, Indonesian culture is a Weltanschauung, so over time, it continues to experience a gradual process to form a new value system (value system). In Tilaar’s opinion, realizing a value system is impossible except through a good educational process at the national level. It is in the process of Indonesian culture that it becomes this that it is hoped that it will give
birth to a broader value system, namely Indonesianness. Third, the normative conception of multicultural education must be understood in becoming it and should be pursued by staying within existing local cultural identities. Fourth, the philosophical typology of multicultural education is a social reconstruction paradigm in which the educational value is far from fanaticism, religious and ethnic fundamentalism, and xenophobic practices. Fifth, the new pedagogy that should be applied in multicultural education is the pedagogy of empowerment and pedagogy of equity. Globally, the two types of pedagogy offered by Tilaar refer to the importance of empowerment and equality in cultural diversity to eliminate primordial ethnic, religious, and individual diversity barriers, and so on. Sixth, multicultural education is relevant to the vision of the future of the Indonesian nation as well as ethics in the nation. Therefore, in practice, this education must be articulated within the framework of developing the nation’s ethical principles, which are reconstructed from the plurality of social and cultural components of the nation’s children.

The development of multicultural education can be guided by the MPR Decree Number VI/VII/MPR/2001 concerning the Future Vision of Indonesia and the Ethics of National Life. At this level, Tilaar reiterated the importance of revitalizing character education at the primary level, which is also integrated with religious education as handled by Law no. 20 of 2003.

CONCLUSION

In particular, the process of Islamic education will be effective and optimal by using an appropriate educational model based on multiculturalism. Inclusive Islamic education by modifying a multicultural-based educational model, wherein a national context can recognize differences, diversity, and pluralism of cultures, races, ethnicities, religions, and so on.

At SMA Negeri 1 Sumber Sukapura District, Probolinggo, in an inclusive Islamic education model based on multiculturalism by implementing an Islamic education curriculum with an inclusive-multicultural vision and the epistemological transformation paradigm of national education. This means that the Islamic education model varies by adjusting existing local wisdom and modifying a multicultural-based educational model to run effectively and efficiently.

Implications that can be made for improvements in education. The results and research will likely impact improving the multicultural-based inclusive Islamic education model. Limitations The research conducted by the researcher is aware that there are still shortcomings, but the researcher tried his best to conduct this research. So that further research is needed on managing student-centered-based effective learning through knowledge sharing to complement previous research.
REFERENCES


