



Paradigma and Programs Multicultural Education in Inclusive Madrasah

Ahmad Dwi Nur Khalim^{1*}, Wensislaus Parut²

¹ IIQ An Nur Yogyakarta, Indonesia

² Pontificia Facoltà Teologica Marianum Roma, Italy

*Correspondence: ahmadkhalim55@gmail.com

Abstract

Multicultural education in inclusive madrasah plays a crucial role in fostering collective awareness of diversity, particularly in Indonesia, a nation renowned for its cultural, ethnic, and religious plurality. Amid the complexities of globalization, inclusive madrasahs hold a strategic position in creating a learning environment that values differences. This study aims to analyze the implementation of multicultural education at MTs Negeri 6 Sleman, which operates as an inclusive madrasah, with a focus on the integration of multicultural values into its curriculum and learning processes. The research employs a qualitative approach using a case study method, with MTs Negeri 6 Sleman as the primary site of investigation. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model, encompassing data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the multicultural education paradigm at MTs Negeri 6 Sleman is rooted in a commitment to creating an inclusive environment that respects cultural, religious, and social diversity. This paradigm is actualized through the integration of multicultural values within the curriculum and teaching approaches that instill empathy, tolerance, and equity. Furthermore, MTs Negeri 6 Sleman successfully incorporates the five dimensions of multicultural education proposed by James A. Banks: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and the empowerment of school culture. The inclusive curriculum at MTs Negeri 6 Sleman facilitates positive interactions among students and between students and teachers, contributing to a harmonious and inclusive educational atmosphere.

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INTRODUCTION

Multicultural education in inclusive madrasahs constitutes a foundational framework for cultivating a collective consciousness regarding the significance of diversity (Hasanuddin, 2024). In an era marked by the increasing complexity of globalization (Dona, 2024), inclusive madrasahs occupy a strategic position in instilling respect for differences across cultural, religious, ethnic, and social dimensions. This educational paradigm

transcends the mere transmission of knowledge, placing equal emphasis on fostering empathy, tolerance, and equity (Karman dkk, 2020). The inclusive environments fostered within these institutions facilitate meaningful interactions among students from diverse backgrounds, effectively transforming multicultural education into an embodied and operational practice within daily classroom dynamics (Dona, 2024). Through such approaches, inclusive madrasahs aim not only to cultivate intellectual aptitude but also to shape individuals equipped with the character to engage with and embrace societal pluralism.

A core element of multicultural education involves the capacity to recognize, comprehend, and value diversity—skills integral to the development of multicultural competence (Bhikhu Parekh, 2007). In Indonesia, a nation characterized by extensive cultural diversity, the implementation of multicultural education at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) level holds critical importance. Introducing multicultural principles early in the educational trajectory enhances students' conceptual understanding while fostering an empathetic disposition toward difference (Raudhah et al., 2024). Consequently, multicultural education at the MTs level serves as an essential platform for preparing students to contribute actively and meaningfully to a heterogeneous society. The institutionalization of multicultural education in MTs aligns with broader efforts to advance inclusive and tolerant educational policies within Indonesia's national education framework (Mubin & Aryanto, 2022).

Embedding multicultural values within MTs students seeks not only to bolster social cohesion but also to mitigate potential conflicts arising from ignorance or a lack of awareness regarding diversity. Policy measures supporting multicultural education must prioritize the establishment of inclusive learning environments where all students are equally valued, irrespective of their backgrounds. Essential to achieving this objective are the development of culturally responsive curricula and the provision of professional development for educators to effectively navigate and manage multicultural classroom settings.

Despite widespread acknowledgment of its significance, the implementation of multicultural education in MTs faces persistent challenges. Many institutions struggle with fully integrating multicultural education into teaching methodologies and the broader educational experience (Arrosyid, 2022). Teachers and students alike require enhanced understanding and practical strategies for incorporating multicultural principles into their interactions. This study aims to critically analyze the paradigms underlying multicultural education in MTs and to identify actionable programs and practices that facilitate its effective implementation.

Existing scholarship on multicultural education in Indonesia, particularly within madrasahs and other Islamic educational institutions, has yielded valuable insights. For instance, Mubin and Aryanto investigated the application of multicultural Islamic education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, emphasizing its efficacy in fostering students'

comprehension of social and cultural diversity ([Mubin & Aryanto, 2022](#)). Similarly, Wahyuni et al. examined the integration of multicultural values into the Aqidah Akhlak curriculum at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Azzahra, highlighting its impact on enhancing student tolerance ([Wahyuni et al., 2023](#)). Raudhah et al. underscored the strategic importance of multicultural education in madrasahs for cultivating inclusive character development among students ([Raudhah et al., 2024](#)). In Kalimantan Barat, Syarif et al. identified a significant correlation between students' multicultural knowledge and their contributions to social harmony within schools ([Syarif et al., 2024](#)). Kartika and Setiawati explored multicultural approaches within Social Studies (IPS) education at MTs, demonstrating improvements in students' understanding of cultural and religious diversity ([Nisa Kartika, 2024](#)). At MAN Seluma, Hidayat observed that implementing multicultural education strengthened interfaith harmony among students ([Hidayat, 2023](#)).

While these studies have significantly advanced understanding of multicultural education in Indonesia, notable limitations persist. Much of the existing research has centered on general madrasahs, with minimal focus on inclusive settings that encompass students from diverse cultural and special needs backgrounds. There remains a paucity of studies dedicated to examining the paradigms and programs of multicultural education within inclusive madrasahs, such as MTs Negeri 6 Sleman. Addressing this gap is imperative to advancing the discourse on multicultural education.

This study seeks to explore the paradigms and programs underpinning multicultural education in inclusive madrasahs, with a specific focus on MTs Negeri 6 Sleman. The research aims to address two critical questions: (1) What paradigms of multicultural education are employed at MTs Negeri 6 Sleman? (2) How are multicultural values integrated into the curriculum and pedagogical practices within an institution accommodating students with diverse cultural and special needs backgrounds? The findings of this study are anticipated to contribute meaningful advancements to the literature on multicultural education in Indonesia while offering practical recommendations for educators and policymakers striving to cultivate inclusive and culturally responsive educational environments.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative methodology ([Sugiono, 2000](#)) coupled with field research techniques ([Cohen et al., 2018](#)) to investigate the implementation of multicultural education programs at MTs N 6 Sleman, an inclusive madrasah. This methodological framework enables a nuanced exploration of social phenomena, particularly the behaviors and perceptions of students and educators regarding inclusivity and diversity within the curriculum ([Harahap, 2020](#)). Aligned with the principles of qualitative research, data collected in this study is descriptive in nature, comprising verbal accounts, written documentation, and observed behaviors, all of which illuminate the practical enactment of multicultural education in the everyday context of the madrasah ([Tersiana, 2020](#)).

The research centers on a case study of MTs N 6 Sleman, a setting that facilitates an exhaustive and nuanced examination of lived experiences within its educational environment (Khalim, 2019). Employing a case study design is particularly apt for dissecting the integration of multicultural principles in the madrasah's operations and for scrutinizing the institution's strategies for addressing challenges inherent in implementing inclusive education. Data collection methods encompass semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis (Nugrahani, 2014).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the school principal, teaching staff, and students to probe the practical application of multicultural curricula and identify influencing factors. The semi-structured format offered flexibility, allowing the researcher to pursue deeper inquiry into emergent contextual themes. Non-participant observation was employed to capture the interactions among students from diverse social, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, thereby revealing the operational dynamics of multiculturalism within the madrasah. Complementary to these methods, institutional documents—including curriculum archives, meeting records, and policy directives—were analyzed to provide additional context and depth to the findings.

The data analysis process utilized an interactive model encompassing three critical phases: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion formulation (Cresswell, 2017). Data reduction involved systematically organizing and categorizing data according to predefined thematic frameworks. Subsequently, the data was presented through descriptive narratives and visual schematics to elucidate relationships among thematic categories.

Conclusions were drawn inductively, integrating multiple data sources to ensure a comprehensive and unbiased interpretation of the findings. To further enhance the analytical depth, the study incorporated a literature review focusing on policy documents related to inclusive education programs and institutional responses to these policies. This facilitated a critical examination of the interplay between power dynamics, agency, and social structures in the implementation of inclusive education at the madrasah. The findings aim to contribute substantive insights into the praxis of multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman and its broader implications for fostering Islamic moderation within Islamic educational institutions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Paradigm of Multicultural Education at MTs N 6 Sleman (Three Critical Dimensions) *Commitment and Vision of the Madrasah*

The implementation of multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman is firmly grounded in the institution's dedication to fostering an environment that upholds cultural, religious, and social diversity within the broader Indonesian context. This commitment aligns with the madrasah's vision of cultivating healthy, exceptional, inclusive, globally-oriented, child-friendly, and environmentally-conscious Muslim individuals. Central to this vision is the

creation of a learning atmosphere that facilitates character development, enabling students to navigate a pluralistic society with harmony and mutual respect. To achieve this, the madrasah prioritizes educational practices that not only emphasize academic excellence but also nurture tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity (Observation, June 2024). Documentation corroborates this vision, underscoring its inclusive and globally aware orientation, which seeks to equip students with the competence to interact meaningfully across diverse cultural, religious, and social settings. Multicultural education serves as the cornerstone for actualizing this vision.

Baker (Baker, 1994) and Pai (Pai, 1990) assert that multicultural education aims to foster awareness and cultivate a positive disposition toward culturally diverse societies. This objective holds particular relevance for MTs N 6 Sleman, whose students hail from varied regions and backgrounds. The madrasah's approach to multicultural education is designed to instill a deep understanding of living harmoniously and respectfully within diversity.

This is operationalized through daily activities such as classroom discussions on tolerance (tasamuh), visits to orphanages, and the "Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila dan Rahmatan lil 'Alamin" (P5P2RA) initiative (Observation, June 2024). The Operational Curriculum of the Madrasah (Kurikulum Operasional Madrasah, or KOM) exemplifies the institution's systematic integration of multicultural principles.

This curriculum embeds multicultural values across all disciplines, notably in Citizenship Education (PPKn), which underscores the importance of respecting societal differences. Through this framework, students are encouraged to engage with concepts of tolerance, empathy, and the respect for divergent beliefs. Teaching modules are carefully crafted to incorporate multicultural perspectives, ensuring students not only understand these values theoretically but also practice them in their daily interactions (Observation, June 2024).

Kymlicka posits that multicultural education emphasizes the recognition of individual cultural contributions to societal well-being (Kymlicka, 1999). This principle is manifest in the madrasah's policies that prioritize equality among all students, irrespective of their socio-cultural backgrounds. A notable illustration of this ethos is found in the Adiwiyata and scouting programs at MTs N 6 Sleman. These initiatives engage students in environmental and humanitarian projects, fostering collaboration that transcends individual differences. Such activities not only impart lessons on environmental stewardship but also reinforce values of solidarity, cooperation, and respect for individual contributions (Observation, June 2024). The multicultural framework at MTs N 6 Sleman also seeks to counteract prejudices and dismantle stereotypes that may hinder harmonious student relations. Baker underscores the necessity of providing equitable opportunities to all learners, regardless of background (Baker, 1994).

This principle is actualized through inclusive classroom policies at the madrasah, which have moved away from segregating students based on academic performance or

specific needs. Instead, a unified, inclusive approach enables students with diverse capabilities to learn within a supportive environment. Anang Sumarna, Vice Principal for Curriculum, emphasizes that this inclusivity is pivotal in achieving the madrasah's vision of global awareness and appreciation for diversity (Interview, 2024). The "Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila dan Penguatan Profil Rahmatan lil 'Alamin" (P5P2RA) is another critical initiative designed to nurture tolerant, inclusive, and nationalist character among students.

Embedded within the Merdeka Curriculum, this program encourages participation in activities such as community service, interfaith dialogues, and cultural arts performances. For example, during community service projects, students collaborate with members of various religious and ethnic communities near the madrasah. These experiences foster practical understanding of respecting and embracing differences while reinforcing the unity inherent in diversity (Interview, 2024).

The arts and culture curriculum, spearheaded by Alif, provides a platform for students to explore and celebrate Indonesia's rich cultural heritage. The annual cultural week showcases performances of traditional dances, music, folk dramas, and customs from various regions. This initiative not only deepens students' appreciation of the nation's cultural wealth but also instills pride in their individual cultural identities. Consequently, students come to view diversity as a collective asset to be cherished and preserved (Interview, 2024). Faculty-designed teaching modules further underscore the integration of multicultural principles into everyday learning (J. Banks, 1984). In Islamic Cultural History (*Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam*), for instance, students examine the contributions of various ethnic groups to the development of Islamic civilization in Indonesia. Teachers such as Zein Widodo (*Fikih*) and Nurhuda Muttaqin (*Science*) emphasize critical engagement with how cultural interactions shape knowledge and societal progress. This approach aligns with Pai's emphasis on the importance of understanding the cultural dimensions that influence knowledge transmission and reception (Pai, 1990).

At MTs N 6 Sleman, multicultural education transcends theoretical discourse to become a lived reality, embedded in institutional policies and programs that champion diversity and inclusivity. This vision reflects McAllister and Irvine's insights on the centrality of empathy in education, encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions that support learners from varied backgrounds (McAllister & Irvine, 2002). Similarly, Laughton et al. emphasize the creation of inclusive learning environments characterized by mutual support and collaboration (Laughton et al., 2024).

Moreover, the Islamic values articulated by Aderibigbe et al. reinforce the principles of tolerance and respect for diversity as essential educational objectives (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). Through these concerted efforts, MTs N 6 Sleman cultivates a secure and inclusive learning environment, complemented by real-world contextual learning tasks. Ultimately, this approach equips students to appreciate diversity while preparing them to emerge as

intellectually capable, ethically grounded, and socially adaptive individuals ready to navigate a complex and multifaceted world.

The Essence of Multicultural Education at MTs N 6 Sleman

Multicultural education at the junior high school level serves as a critical framework for fostering unity amidst the diverse spectrums of ethnicity, race, religion, culture, and other societal differences (Blum, 2014) (Todor, 2015). This pedagogical approach is meticulously designed to cultivate empathy, respect, and an appreciation for diversity among students, regardless of their cultural or religious identities (Mansir & Wadham, 2021). Parekh emphasizes that the foundation of a cohesive society lies in individuals' ability to coexist harmoniously within diverse environments, supported by a constitutionally equitable and impartial framework (Bhikhu Parekh, 2007). At MTs N 6 Sleman, this paradigm is operationalized through a suite of activities that promote cross-cultural engagement, including facilitated discussions, art-based initiatives, and collaborative social programs. These experiences are structured to enable students to comprehend and internalize the value of differences, fostering inclusivity and openness as central tenets of their worldview.

The implementation of multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman also functions as an intervention to mitigate social prejudices that have the potential to escalate into conflict. By embedding a robust understanding of the necessity of respecting differences, students are guided towards cultivating inclusive perspectives and mutual respect (Triyono, 2017). Pedagogical strategies at MTs N 6 Sleman encompass structured programs that actively encourage cross-cultural dialogue and artistic collaboration, facilitating cooperative engagements among students from varied backgrounds. These initiatives transcend theoretical instruction on diversity by offering practical, real-world applications, enabling students to actively practice tolerance and empathy. Such practices align seamlessly with the institutional vision to develop academically excellent students who simultaneously embody strong moral character, particularly with respect to valuing diversity.

Another cornerstone of multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman lies in nurturing empathy and fostering a profound respect for the beliefs of others. By embedding multicultural principles within both the formal curriculum and daily routines, the institution fosters a broadened societal perspective among students. This educational framework positions students as potential agents of transformative change within their communities, contributing meaningfully to the cultivation of an inclusive and harmonious society.

As mandated by Article 4 of Law No. 20 of 2003, multicultural education significantly accelerates the development of student identities characterized by inclusivity, tolerance, and democratic values (Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). This mandate is particularly pivotal in shaping a generation equipped not

only with a nuanced understanding of diversity but also with the capacity to navigate and thrive within pluralistic societal contexts.

A tangible manifestation of multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman is evident in its extracurricular programming. Weekly activities, including the “*Halaqah Takhasus 6*”, unite students from diverse geographical, cognitive, and grade-level backgrounds in collaborative training environments. These initiatives not only expose students to a multiplicity of perspectives but also foster empathy and solidarity through shared endeavors. Concurrently, these programs inculcate an enduring appreciation and respect for interpersonal differences. This educational paradigm effectively underscores the importance of social cohesion and solidarity within pluralistic societal frameworks. By habituating students to engage constructively within multicultural environments, the institution equips them with the resilience and adaptability required to navigate complex social dynamics in their future endeavors.

In sum, the multicultural education paradigm at MTs N 6 Sleman contributes profoundly to cultivating a generation adept at thriving within an increasingly interconnected and pluralistic global society. Beyond fostering a profound intellectual appreciation for diversity, this framework prepares students to actively participate in the creation of equitable, inclusive, and harmonious communities. Through the deliberate and comprehensive application of multicultural education principles, MTs N 6 Sleman empowers students to embrace diversity as a collective strength, reinforce societal unity, and advocate for diversity as a cornerstone of a brighter, more equitable future.

Principles of Multicultural Education at MTs N 6 Sleman

The multicultural education framework at MTs N 6 Sleman is rooted in a set of foundational principles designed to equip students with the skills and awareness necessary to navigate an increasingly diverse and interconnected society. These principles underscore the importance of equity-focused pedagogy, the cultivation of intellectually proficient and culturally cognizant individuals, and a strategic approach to addressing the complexities of globalization. Tilaar identifies three core principles of multicultural education that are particularly applicable to the MTs context: (a) multicultural education is predicated on the principle of human equity pedagogy, (b) it aims to develop intellectually capable individuals with comprehensive mastery of knowledge, and (c) it advocates for a nuanced engagement with globalization that acknowledges its potential benefits while addressing its inherent challenges (Tilaar, 2004).

The principle of equity pedagogy serves as a cornerstone for fostering an inclusive educational environment at MTs N 6 Sleman. Equity in education entails ensuring that all students, regardless of their social, cultural, or academic backgrounds, have access to equal opportunities for success (Tilaar, 1998). For example, MTs N 6 Sleman has adopted inclusive classroom practices to accommodate students with varying needs, such as those with low vision or dyslexia, enabling them to learn alongside their peers (Observations, 2024). These practices not only mitigate academic segregation but also promote mutual respect and

understanding among students. By prioritizing equitable treatment, the institution effectively cultivates empathy and solidarity—key attributes central to the ethos of multicultural education. Beyond equity, multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman aspires to produce individuals who are both intellectually adept and culturally informed. As Tilaar asserts, the ultimate objective of multicultural education is to empower individuals to attain and apply knowledge to its fullest potential (Tilaar, 2003).

This aspiration is realized through the integration of multicultural values into the curriculum, offering students insights into diverse cultural contributions. For instance, the Islamic Cultural History (*Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam*) curriculum explores the roles of various ethnic groups, including Arabs, Persians, and Malays, in disseminating Islam throughout Indonesia (Interviews, 2024). Such pedagogical approaches illuminate the enriching impact of cultural diversity on knowledge and history, fostering an appreciation for diversity as a vital component of intellectual development.

The third principle—leveraging multicultural education as a proactive response to globalization—is vital in preparing students for the multifaceted challenges of an increasingly interconnected world. In a global era marked by escalating social and cultural complexities, adaptability emerges as a critical determinant of success (Ngardi, 2018). MTs N 6 Sleman equips students to engage with globalization constructively rather than fearfully. Through thoughtfully designed learning activities, students critically evaluate the dual impacts of globalization. For instance, the "*Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila & Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin*" (P5P2RA) fosters dialogue on global issues such as climate change, social inequities, and cultural conflicts. These discussions enhance students' critical thinking abilities and adaptive capacities, equipping them to address global challenges with competence and confidence.

Moreover, the multicultural education model at MTs N 6 Sleman emphasizes skill development across critical dimensions, including creativity, productivity, independence, and collaboration. These competencies are indispensable for addressing the socio-economic challenges posed by globalization. In alignment with KMA No. 183 of 2019 on Core Competencies and Graduate Competency Standards (SKL), MTs students are expected to demonstrate creative, critical, and independent thinking while excelling in collaborative and communicative endeavors.

By adhering to these principles, MTs N 6 Sleman ensures that its students not only excel academically but also possess the social and interpersonal skills necessary to thrive in multicultural environments (KMA Nomor 183 Tahun 2019, 2019). The absence of multicultural education principles would hinder students' ability to adapt to evolving social, national, and global contexts. Conversely, by embedding these principles into its educational framework, MTs N 6 Sleman prepares students to become proactive global citizens, capable of fostering inclusive societies.

This approach aligns seamlessly with the institution's vision of developing globally aware and inclusive Muslim individuals who excel academically while contributing to

social harmony within their communities. In conclusion, the multicultural education paradigm at MTs N 6 Sleman transcends mere knowledge transfer by fostering holistic character development to address global challenges. By embracing the principles of equity, intellectual empowerment, and globalization readiness, the institution has successfully cultivated an inclusive and responsive learning environment. This comprehensive approach to multicultural education significantly contributes to building a more equitable, peaceful, and diverse society while equipping students to meet the demands of an increasingly globalized world.

Multicultural Education Programs at MTs N 6 Sleman

Multicultural education at MTs N 6 Sleman is implemented through carefully designed programs based on the five dimensions of multicultural education identified by James Banks ([J. A. Banks, 1999](#)). These dimensions provide a framework for teachers and staff to develop initiatives that address student diversity and foster an inclusive learning environment. To realize the school's vision and mission, these programs are aligned with educational goals aimed at shaping individuals into tolerant, morally upright Muslims with a global and inclusive perspective. Below is an explanation of the five dimensions:

Content Integration

Content integration encapsulates the deliberate incorporation of examples, narratives, and materials from diverse cultural contexts to elucidate key concepts ([J. A. Banks & Cherry A. McGee, 2017](#)) within the educational process. At MTs N 6 Sleman, this pedagogical approach is systematically embedded in Indonesian language instruction, wherein students engage in critical analyses of literary works originating from various regions of the archipelago. For instance, Yeti Islamawati, a distinguished Indonesian language educator, integrates poetry and folklore from Sumatra, Java, and Papua into her curriculum. This strategy facilitates an enriched understanding and appreciation of Indonesia's extensive cultural mosaic, aligning with the institution's broader vision of cultivating globally aware and culturally literate students (Interview, 2024).

Moreover, content integration is further operationalized at MTs N 6 Sleman through extracurricular initiatives such as the annual cultural week. This event serves as an immersive platform where students are exposed to traditional art forms, including the Saman dance from Aceh and the Kuda Lumping dance from Yogyakarta. Such programs empower students to celebrate their cultural identities while fostering an understanding of Indonesia's broader cultural heterogeneity. By engaging deeply with artistic and literary expressions from diverse regions, students not only develop an intrinsic appreciation of their own heritage but also recognize the contributions and values embedded in other cultural traditions, reinforcing the notion of a unified national identity. This pedagogical method underscores the value of diversity as a cornerstone of national cohesion and nurtures a contextualized learning environment that instills pride and respect for multiculturalism.

The integration of diverse cultural content within the curriculum also plays an instrumental role in cultivating students' character, particularly by fostering inclusivity and tolerance. Through the use of equitable and representative learning materials, students acquire essential social competencies necessary for navigating and thriving within pluralistic and interconnected global societies. This aligns seamlessly with the foundational objectives of multicultural education, which aspire to construct harmonious, inclusive communities while simultaneously enhancing students' cognitive and socio-emotional development. By adopting such an integrative educational framework, MTs N 6 Sleman not only advances its institutional mission but also prepares its students to address the complexities and opportunities inherent in an increasingly diverse global landscape.

The Knowledge Construction Process

The Knowledge Construction Process underscores the pedagogical imperative for educators to facilitate student comprehension of the cultural underpinnings that shape the construction of knowledge. At MTs N 6 Sleman, this dimension is operationalized across disciplines such as Social Studies (IPS) and Civic Education (PPKn). In PPKn, students are systematically guided to interrogate concepts like democracy and human rights within the sociocultural and historical framework of Indonesia. Through critical analysis, students explore the historical trajectories and cultural dynamics that inform the operationalization of these principles within the Indonesian context, as well as their practical implications for contemporary life (Interview, 2024). In a complementary vein, educators like Zein Widodo, a *Fiqh* instructor, implement dialogic pedagogies to illuminate the culturally contingent nature of Islamic jurisprudence. Students are encouraged to scrutinize the variances in Islamic legal interpretations across different cultural milieus, such as those of Indonesia, Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia (Interview, 2024).

These discourses cultivate an understanding that religious epistemologies are inherently influenced by cultural norms and values, thereby fostering intellectual openness and intercultural sensitivity among students. This process is further exemplified in "*Akidah Akhlak*" instruction, where the integration of multicultural education serves as a vehicle to instill an ethos of tolerance and appreciation for diversity. The curriculum transcends the mere inculcation of ethical principles within an Islamic framework by embedding respect for pluralistic identities encompassing cultural, ethnic, and religious dimensions (Interview, 2024). This pedagogical approach aligns with the promotion of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), as articulated by Khalim (Khalim, 2020), wherein students are guided to engage in complex reasoning that elucidates the foundational rationale behind ethical behavior. Such an approach equips students to apply these values proactively in their social contexts.

By emphasizing *the Knowledge Construction Process*, MTs N 6 Sleman provides students with a meta-cognitive framework to discern that knowledge is rarely neutral or objective, but is often mediated by specific cultural perspectives. The institution's strategic application of this dimension across various subjects empowers students to navigate and appreciate the

multiplicity of interpretations inherent in both secular and religious domains. For instance, in linking concepts such as democracy and human rights to Indonesia's historical and cultural realities, students are encouraged to critically interrogate the foundational assumptions underlying these constructs. This engagement fosters advanced critical thinking capacities, heightens awareness of cultural biases embedded in knowledge systems, and inculcates an ethos of pluralism. Ultimately, this paradigm equips students with the intellectual and ethical competencies necessary for navigating and contributing to a diverse and interconnected global society.

Prejudice Reduction

Prejudice reduction endeavors to attenuate biases among students by employing pedagogical strategies rooted in inclusivity. At MTs N 6 Sleman, this approach is operationalized through conflict simulation exercises, wherein students adopt roles representing individuals from diverse ethnic and religious contexts. These immersive activities are designed to cultivate empathy and facilitate a profound comprehension of alternate perspectives. Empirical observations underscore the efficacy of this program in enabling students to confront and deconstruct entrenched stereotypes and prejudices against particular social groups. Conflict simulation is embedded within MTs N 6 Sleman's broader framework of *Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila and Proyek Penguatan Rahmatan lil 'Alamin (P5P2RA)*.

These initiatives are further augmented by socially oriented activities, including community service projects, "*Jumat Sehat*", "*Jumat Bersih*", and ecological awareness programs, all of which actively engage the surrounding community. By facilitating meaningful interactions among students from varied backgrounds through these simulations and projects, the program effectively enhances empathy, fosters a deeper understanding of diversity, and nurtures attitudes of inclusivity. The school's commitment to fostering an environment that celebrates diversity while actively reducing stereotypes and biases exemplifies a progressive model for promoting educational inclusivity.

The prejudice reduction initiatives at MTs N 6 Sleman, particularly through the integration of conflict simulation activities and P5P2RA projects, provide a robust framework for multicultural education. By engaging in these simulations, students are exposed to the lived experiences of individuals from disparate cultural and religious backgrounds, thereby nurturing empathy and fostering an inclusive worldview. These initiatives further facilitate cross-cultural interaction and collaborative efforts, which serve to mitigate prejudice while reinforcing the principles of inclusivity, tolerance, and democratic engagement. Consequently, the program equips students with the critical skills and values necessary to contribute meaningfully to the creation of a more equitable and harmonious society.

Equity Pedagogy: Advancing Inclusivity and Educational Justice

Equity pedagogy necessitates the deliberate adaptation of instructional practices to address the diverse needs of learners from varied cultural and social backgrounds. At MTs N 6 Sleman, educators exemplify this approach through the implementation of pedagogical strategies that ensure equitable opportunities for student success. For instance, in science education, Nurhuda Muttaqin employs project-based learning models that emphasize collaboration within heterogeneous groups. These groups are intentionally composed of students with diverse academic abilities, fostering peer-to-peer learning and mutual support. Such an inclusive strategy underscores the fundamental principles of equity and justice within the educational framework. Pedagogical practices at MTs N 6 Sleman, such as group projects and structured debates, actively engage students in discussions on socially pertinent themes, including tolerance, inclusivity, and social cohesion.

These methodologies are designed to transcend social, cultural, and academic barriers, enabling all students to contribute meaningfully. Teachers serve as facilitators in cultivating a democratic and participatory learning environment, encouraging students to engage with diverse perspectives, refine critical thinking, collaborate effectively, and bolster self-confidence. These efforts align seamlessly with the institution's vision of fostering an environment characterized by excellence, inclusivity, and holistic well-being. This equity-focused approach extends beyond the realm of academic performance, aiming to nurture students who embody an appreciation for diversity and a commitment to fairness. By customizing instructional strategies to address the distinct needs of their students, educators at MTs N 6 Sleman ensure equitable access to educational resources and opportunities, thereby enhancing both cognitive and social outcomes. This pedagogical philosophy reflects the essence of multicultural education, which values each student's individuality and potential while equipping them with the competencies necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and diverse global society.

Empowering School Culture and Social Structure

The concept of an empowering school culture and social structure entails the creation of an inclusive educational environment that prioritizes the equitable representation and active participation of students from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. At MTs N 6 Sleman, this approach is operationalized through initiatives such as the *Organisasi Siswa Intra Sekolah (OSIS)*, which systematically involves students in the strategic planning and implementation of school activities. By facilitating the inclusion of students from varied backgrounds in decision-making processes, the school fosters a profound sense of agency and belonging among its students. MTs N 6 Sleman exemplifies the effective application of multicultural education by integrating the five dimensions articulated by Banks, as evidenced through programs like *Adiwiyata* and *OSIS*. The *Adiwiyata* program, in particular, serves as a cornerstone for environmental education, emphasizing sustainable practices through initiatives such as bottle recycling drives, the establishment and

maintenance of greenhouses, and the systematic management of organic waste. These initiatives not only reinforce environmental stewardship but also empower students to engage collaboratively in shaping a school culture that embodies inclusivity and empowerment, aligned with the institution's vision of nurturing healthy, accomplished, and globally aware Muslim individuals.

By cultivating a school environment attuned to the complexities of diversity, MTs N 6 Sleman advances a culture characterized by equity, inclusivity, and mutual respect. This strategy extends beyond the enhancement of academic performance, contributing to the holistic development of students as individuals prepared to navigate and contribute to a pluralistic and interconnected global society. Through the deliberate incorporation of culturally diverse content, critical pedagogical frameworks, prejudice reduction strategies, and equitable teaching practices, the institution establishes a dynamic learning ecosystem. This ecosystem holistically supports students' academic and social growth, fortifying their sense of belonging, accountability, and social cohesion within the broader school community.

CONCLUSION

MTs N 6 Sleman's multicultural education framework reflects its strong dedication to fostering an inclusive and tolerant school environment that values diversity. This approach supports the school's vision of nurturing globally minded students capable of thriving in a pluralistic world. By integrating multicultural principles into both curriculum and teaching methods, the school emphasizes character development, empathy, and collaboration among students from diverse backgrounds, including those with special needs. Programs like the P5P2RA initiative play a vital role in promoting tolerance and equality through cross-cultural engagement. Drawing from James A. Banks' five dimensions of multicultural education, the school implements content integration through culturally rich subjects, fosters critical awareness of cultural influences in knowledge construction, reduces prejudice through empathy-building activities, promotes equity in teaching practices, and cultivates an inclusive school culture through student-led and community-based initiatives. Altogether, this holistic strategy prepares students to actively and respectfully engage in today's multicultural society.

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