

## Integration of Islamic Religious Education and Local Wisdom in Forming Multicultural Character

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**ABSTRACT.** Indonesia, as a multicultural nation, faces the challenge of increasing intolerance and exclusive attitudes among adolescents, indicating a suboptimal internalization of multicultural values in education. At the madrasah level, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a strategic role in character formation, but its implementation is often normative-doctrinal and poorly connected to students' socio-cultural context. This study aims to analyze the form of collaboration between PAI and local culture in instilling multicultural values at MTs Al Barakah Rojo, examine the ongoing process of value internalization, and formulate an applicable, contextually relevant conceptual model. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Informants included the madrasah principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, other subject teachers, and students. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion, using triangulation of sources and techniques to ensure the validity of the findings. The research results show that the collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture is realized through the integration of Islamic brotherhood values with cooperation, the inculcation of madrasah culture (greetings, deliberation, community service), dialogic learning, socio-religious activities based on local traditions, and teacher role models. This process internalizes values cognitively, affectively, and psychomotorically, thereby forming tolerant, inclusive, empathetic, and moderate students. The implications of this research underscore the importance of an integrative model grounded in the madrasah ecosystem as an effective strategy for strengthening multicultural education and religious moderation.

**Keywords:** Islamic Religious Education; local wisdom; multicultural education; religious moderation; internalization of values.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a multicultural nation, faces serious challenges in maintaining social harmony amidst ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity (Azkiya et al., 2024; Syarif et al., 2024; Yahya et al., 2026). In the educational context, the phenomenon of increasing intolerance among adolescents and the strengthening of exclusive attitudes based on identity indicate that the instillation of multicultural values is not yet fully optimal (Banks, 1993). Qualitatively, various cases of bullying based on differences in background and social stereotypes in the school environment indicate the need for more contextual and integrative educational strategies (Arif et al., 2024; Suryanti et al., 2025; Syaifuddin & Ahwan, 2024). At the madrasah level, Islamic Religious Education (PAI)

plays a strategic role in shaping students' character, but its implementation is often normative-doctrinal and poorly connected to local socio-cultural realities (Awwaliyah & Hafidz, 2024; Irwansuri, 2025; Suhermanto et al., 2024; Supriyanto et al., 2025). Therefore, collaboration between Islamic education and local culture is a crucial issue that requires scientific study.

A number of previous studies have discussed multicultural education from an Islamic Education perspective, especially in the aspects of religious moderation, tolerance, and value-based curriculum development (Harahap, 2025). Other studies have also highlighted the importance of local wisdom in character education in schools and Islamic schools (Ar et al., 2025; Martanti et al., 2026; Mustikamah et al., 2025). However, most of these studies remain conceptual or focus on a single variable, either Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as an instrument for multicultural education or local culture as a source of character values (Qalam et al., 2024). Research that specifically examines the collaborative model between Islamic Education and local culture in learning practices at the junior high school level, especially in the context of real implementation in certain educational units (Belhaj, 2025; Bintang Kejora et al., 2025; Lestari et al., 2025; Rugaiyah & Ma`arif, 2025). Thus, there is a research gap that needs to be filled through more contextual empirical studies.

This research departs from the crucial issue of the strengthening of intolerance and exclusive attitudes based on identity among madrasah adolescents which indicates the suboptimal internalization of multicultural values through Islamic Religious Education (PAI), which in practice still tends to be normative-doctrinal and less connected to the socio-cultural realities of students. Although various previous studies have discussed multicultural education from the perspective of PAI and the importance of local wisdom in character education, most of these studies are still conceptual and position PAI and local culture separately, so they have not presented an integrated collaborative model based on empirical practice at the madrasah tsanawiyah level.

Based on these gaps, this study specifically aims to analyze the form of collaboration between Islamic Religious Education and local culture at MTs Al Barakah Rojo, examine the process of internalizing multicultural values through curriculum integration, habituation of madrasah culture, and social interactions of school residents, and formulate a conceptual model of collaboration that is applicable and contextual in shaping the character of students who are tolerant, inclusive, and moderate.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the process, meaning, and dynamics of collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture in the madrasah context. The focus of the research is not simply to measure outcomes, but also to explore the practices, experiences, and perspectives of educational actors in internalizing multicultural values. With a descriptive approach, the researcher attempts to capture the reality that occurs in the field systematically, factually, and contextually according to the natural conditions in the madrasah environment (Sandu Siyoto, 2015).

This research was conducted at MTs Al Barakah Rojo as the research location. This madrasah was chosen because it has diverse social and cultural characteristics of its students and implements various habituation programs based on local religious and cultural values. The location was chosen based on the consideration that MTs Al Barakah Rojo represents Islamic educational practices that strive to integrate local values into learning and school culture, making it relevant to the research focus.

The data sources in this study consisted of the madrasah principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, other subject teachers, and students. The madrasah principal served as a key informant in providing an overview of the institutional policies and vision related to the integration of multicultural values. Islamic Religious Education teachers and other subject teachers provided information on learning practices and the instillation of values in both academic and non-academic activities. Meanwhile, students served as an important data source for understanding the impact and

direct experience of the process of internalizing values taking place in the madrasah. (Sandu Siyoto, 2015).

Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to directly observe the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning process and madrasah culture, which reflects multicultural values. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the perspectives, experiences, and strategies implemented by informants. Documentation in the form of madrasah programs, learning tools, and activity archives was used to strengthen and verify the data obtained. The collected data were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing as proposed by Miles and Huberman. To ensure data validity, this study applied source triangulation and technical triangulation techniques so that the research results have a level of validity and credibility that can be scientifically accounted for. (Meci Nilam sari, 2024).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

Based on data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, this study found several main findings related to the collaboration of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture in instilling multicultural values at MTs Al Barakah Rojo.

### **Forms of Collaboration between PAI and Local Culture**

The first collaboration was realized through the integration of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials with local cultural values, such as linking the concept of Islamic brotherhood with the practice of mutual cooperation, demonstrating that Islamic teachings have the flexibility to be contextualized without losing their normative substance. In learning practices, teachers not only explain *ukhuwah* as a theological concept of brotherhood among Muslims, but also relate it to students' concrete experiences in community life, such as community service cleaning the school environment, helping friends experiencing learning difficulties, or engaging in social activities in the village. This contextualization ensures that PAI materials do not stop at the cognitive level, but move towards a deeper internalization of values in the affective and psychomotor aspects of students.

Interviews with Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at the research locations corroborate these findings. Fitrah, an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher, stated:

"When I explain Islamic brotherhood, I don't just provide the evidence or definition, but I also relate it to the culture of mutual cooperation that students are accustomed to in their villages. So they immediately understand that helping friends or participating in community service is part of Islamic teachings." This statement demonstrates the teacher's pedagogical awareness of utilizing local culture as a bridge to understanding religious values.

Saddam as the principal also added:

"We encourage teachers to relate religious material to good habits that already exist in society, so that students feel that religion is close to their lives."

This finding aligns with research by Pangestuti (2025), which asserts that integrating local wisdom into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning planning and implementation not only increases the relevance of the material but also contributes to developing tolerant and inclusive attitudes in students. When students recognize that religious values can align with local culture, they tend to be more open to diverse social practices that do not conflict with the basic principles of Islamic teachings. (Pangestuti, 2025).

Furthermore, fostering a culture of madrasah familiarity serves as a key pillar in building collaboration among school members, as well as an effective strategy for internalizing the values of religious moderation. Consistently implemented greetings, class discussions, and regular community service activities are not merely ceremonial routines, but rather a structured means of character development. Greetings, for example, are not merely interpreted as a form of politeness

but also represent the values of respect, brotherhood, and openness toward others. Every morning, students are accustomed to greeting teachers and classmates with greetings, which indirectly cultivates friendliness, empathy, and respect for differences.

Classroom deliberations serve as a strategic pedagogical space for instilling democratic attitudes and collective responsibility. In these forums, students are involved in discussing various classroom issues, from task allocation to classroom cleanliness and group assignments. This practice reflects the Islamic principles of tolerance (*tasamuh*) and deliberation (*shura*), which prioritize dialogue and mutual agreement. Meanwhile, regular community service activities not only foster awareness of environmental cleanliness but also instill values of togetherness across students' social backgrounds.

Fitrah, in this case the Islamic Religious Education teacher, shows that this habit is designed as part of a character education strategy based on religious moderation:

"We deliberately incorporate greetings and discussions in class because they're the simplest way to instill mutual respect. Children learn that differences of opinion are natural and should be resolved through dialogue."

This statement shows the existence of reflective awareness of teachers in integrating daily practices with moderate Islamic values.

Yulianti as the Deputy Head of Madrasah for Student Affairs also emphasized:

"We encourage all students to participate in regular community service and student council (OSIS) activities, regardless of their organizational or group background. This is where they learn about togetherness and discipline."

This is in line with the findings of a study conducted by UIN Malang which analyzed that the habituation of tolerance and discipline by Islamic Religious Education teachers plays a significant role in building a peaceful school environment, especially when supported by an integrated thematic curriculum and the active involvement of student organizations such as the Student Council.

Muh Rido, one of the students, said:

"If there's a problem in class, we usually discuss it first. The teacher just provides guidance. So we feel valued."

This statement shows that the habit of deliberation not only forms a tolerant attitude, but also strengthens a sense of belonging to the class community.

This collaboration is also clearly reflected in the implementation of religious and social activities based on local culture, such as the commemoration of Islamic holidays combined with local traditions and community service activities. These practices demonstrate the active role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in madrasas in integrating noble values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, tolerance, and courtesy into the educational process, not only through classroom learning but also through extracurricular activities. (Khoirul Huda, 2025).

Through students' direct involvement in these activities, the values of religious moderation can be instilled contextually and practically in everyday life. Ultimately, the Islamic Religious Education teachers' exemplary behavior serves as a foundation for collaboration, demonstrated through openness, fairness, and respect for students' diverse backgrounds.

### **The Process of Internalizing Multicultural Values**

The internalization of multicultural values at MTs Al Barakah Rojo is implemented through dialogic and participatory learning strategies designed to create a space for equal and reflective interaction between students. Teachers position students not as passive recipients of material, but as active subjects invited to express their views, experiences, and perspectives regarding cultural diversity and religious practices. In this process, the classroom becomes a lively dialogue space, where differences are not seen as threats, but rather as sources of shared learning. This strategy is

realized through heterogeneous group discussions deliberately formed based on the students' diverse social, cultural, and character backgrounds. Each group is given a contextual issue, such as the practice of tolerance in the community, local traditions that intersect with Islamic teachings, or attitudes toward religious differences.

Through this mechanism, students learn to listen, express their opinions politely, and find common ground in emerging differences. This process aligns with Abdul Halim's (2025) findings, which emphasize that integrating dialogue into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum can foster inclusive attitudes in students, especially when reinforced by extracurricular activities and a school culture that supports cross-cultural interactions. (Abdul Halim, 2025).

According to Fitrah in an interview:

"In the lesson on tolerance, I deliberately divided the groups randomly so they wouldn't just discuss with their close friends. From that, they learned that everyone has a different perspective, and that should be respected."

This statement shows that learning design is indeed directed at creating interactions across differences in a conscious and planned manner.

Heterogeneous group discussions are an effective means of developing students' cognitive and affective aspects, as they provide space for them to exchange ideas, consider different perspectives, and build shared understanding. In this process, students not only practice critical thinking regarding the Islamic Religious Education material they are studying, but also learn to appreciate differences of opinion as part of normal social dynamics. The values of brotherhood and mutual cooperation are naturally internalized when students are required to work together in groups with diverse backgrounds, both in terms of academic ability, character, and religious perspectives. (Wibowo & Salfadilah, 2025).

The application of learning strategies such as facilitation and skill development in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) group discussions has been proven to strengthen religious moderation. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding the discussion to maintain inclusiveness, while simultaneously training students in social skills such as empathy, assertive communication, and conflict resolution. Through reflection on differences of opinion or potential cultural conflicts that arise in discussions, students learn to find shared solutions without prioritizing exclusivity. (Maulana et al., 2024) This process produces students who are not only tolerant but also adaptive in facing the reality of diversity in the wider social environment.

An interview with Fitrah, a religious education teacher, reinforced these findings. She stated: "When students discuss in diverse groups, differences in how they understand the material often emerge. I don't immediately condemn or condemn them, but instead encourage them to respond to each other. From this process, they learn that differences aren't meant to be debated harshly, but rather to find a compromise."

This statement shows that group discussions are used as a reflective space to build moderate attitudes and mutual respect.

The moderate and respectful attitudes developed through classroom discussions are then reinforced through students' direct involvement in various social activities within the madrasah. Activities such as community service, community service, and commemorations of religious holidays play a crucial role in strengthening the psychomotor dimension of internalizing religious values through concrete practices of empathy and social solidarity. Through these direct experiences, students not only cognitively understand the value of caring but also practice it in concrete actions that impact their surroundings. Active participation in these inclusive activities contributes to the formation of intercultural social relations, where students interact with diverse social and cultural backgrounds, so that the value of tolerance does not stop at the level of discourse but is manifested in everyday attitudes and behaviors. (Bata et al., 2022).

This approach strategically creates a harmonious, mutually respectful, and civilized madrasa climate, as is the practice of the Blessed Friday program which is able to foster a sense of togetherness and give rise to an appreciation of diversity as an integral part of community life.

The internalization process is complemented by post-learning reflection on values, where students reflect on their experiences to connect cognitive knowledge, affective attitudes, and psychomotor behaviors into holistic character. Teachers and students in an inclusive Islamic Religious Education (PAI) environment reinforce social ethics and pluralism, with supporting factors such as institutional support and contextual materials. This holistic approach ensures the sustainable internalization of multicultural values through the optimization of inclusive religious activities.

### **Implications for Student Character**

The collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture at MTs Al Barakah Rojo has proven to contribute positively to increasing tolerance and mutual respect among students. The integration of Islamic values with cultural practices deeply rooted in the community makes learning more contextual and easier for students to understand. The value of tolerance is not only conveyed theoretically but also internalized through the students' real-life experiences within the madrasah environment.

The application of local values such as mutual cooperation combined with the concept of Islamic brotherhood serves as an important foundation in shaping students' perspectives on diversity. The value of mutual cooperation, deeply rooted in the culture of the community, is not only interpreted as collective work but also as a social learning space that emphasizes togetherness, mutual assistance, and a sense of collective responsibility. When these values are integrated with the principles of Islamic brotherhood in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, students are encouraged to understand differences not as a source of conflict, but as a natural part of living together that must be addressed with mutual respect. This finding aligns with Marpaung, who emphasized that internalizing local values based on collaboration can strengthen students' empathy and openness in a multicultural context.

Through various collaborative activities, both in the classroom and at the madrasah, students learn to work together regardless of social background, culture, or individual character differences. In this process, the interactions that develop allow students to get to know each other, understand each other's ways of thinking, and adapt their attitudes to achieve shared goals. According to Fitrah:

"When children are involved in group work or cooperative activities, I see them starting to help each other without favoritism. From this, they learn that success is achieved together, not individually."

This shows that collaborative practice is an effective medium in instilling the values of togetherness and solidarity among students who have different backgrounds.

Furthermore, this participatory learning experience helps students develop empathy, openness, and the ability to interact harmoniously in diverse situations. (Hanum, 2024) This is reinforced by a statement from one of the students in an interview who said:

"When it comes to community service or group assignments, we have to understand each other. Even if we have different opinions or habits, we still have to work together to get the job done."

This confirms that the integration of local values of mutual cooperation and Islamic brotherhood is not only understood normatively, but is internalized through real experience, thus forming the character of students who are inclusive and adaptive in a pluralistic social life.

This finding aligns with Harahap's research, which confirms that integrating local wisdom into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teaching in madrasahs significantly contributes to shaping students' inclusive attitudes. The local wisdom presented in the learning process serves not only as a cultural context but also as a medium for internalizing Islamic values that are friendly, moderate, and respectful of diversity. Through the application of group discussions, case studies, and communal activities based on local culture, students are encouraged to get to know each other,

build open dialogue, and learn to appreciate differences in perspectives and socio-cultural backgrounds. This kind of interaction directly strengthens the affective and social dimensions of Islamic religious education, as students not only develop a cognitive understanding of religion but also cultivate empathy, openness, and the ability to live harmoniously in a pluralistic society.

The impact of this collaboration is reflected in the creation of a conducive and supportive learning climate within the madrasah. Students demonstrate a tendency to support and collaborate with one another, and there is a decrease in prejudice based on differences in social and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the integration of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture not only strengthens religious understanding but also plays a crucial role in developing inclusive and moderate student character.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study indicate that the collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture at MTs Al Barakah Rojo plays a significant role in instilling multicultural values in students. The integration of Islamic values with local wisdom makes PAI learning more contextual and relevant to students' social realities. This approach strengthens PAI's function as a means of developing moderate character that is oriented not only toward cognitive aspects but also affective and social aspects.

The integration of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) materials with local cultural values, such as linking the concept of Islamic brotherhood with the practice of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) within society, demonstrates that Islamic teachings can be flexibly contextualized without losing their normative substance and fundamental principles (Ayyubi et al., 2025; Rofiq, 2025). This approach allows Islamic values to be understood not merely as theoretical concepts but also to be internalized through social practices that are close to the realities of students' lives. When students see the value of brotherhood reflected in the daily activities of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), religious understanding becomes more meaningful and easier to internalize (Ahwan & Karfida, 2025; Kuncorowati et al., 2025; Lellya et al., 2026).

These findings strengthen the research results of Pangestuti (2025) which confirms that the integration of local wisdom in the planning and implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning can increase the relevance of learning materials while forming a tolerant attitude in students (Pangestuti, 2025). By linking religious teachings with local culture, students are encouraged to understand that Islamic values are *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for all the universe) and align with the principles of togetherness and mutual respect in a pluralistic society. This contextual learning process also opens up space for dialogue and reflection, enabling students to connect their social experiences with the moral messages contained in Islamic teachings.

Local culture serves not only as a backdrop or complement to learning, but also as a strategic pedagogical medium for bridging religious values with students' social experiences. Through this approach, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning contributes to developing students who are not only normatively religious but also possess social sensitivity, inclusive attitudes, and the ability to adapt to diverse social life.

The implementation of these values is then reinforced through the consistent inculcation of madrasah culture throughout school life. Practices such as greetings as a symbol of respect, class discussions as a space for dialogue and shared decision-making, and regular community service as a manifestation of mutual cooperation serve as strategic instruments in internalizing multicultural values. These practices create a conducive and inclusive learning environment, where students learn to respect differences, work together, and build harmonious social relationships. The values of tolerance and togetherness are not taught merely verbally but are lived out through ongoing, daily practices.

The inculcation of madrasah cultural practices, such as greetings, class discussions, and regular community service, serves as a strategic tool in internalizing multicultural values. These practices create a conducive and inclusive learning environment, enabling the sustainable internalization of values of tolerance and togetherness.

Furthermore, religious and social activities based on local culture serve as important practical spaces for students to implement multicultural values in a concrete and contextual manner. If Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning and madrasah culture serve as normative foundations and daily habits, then these religious and social activities become vehicles for actualizing values in broader social life (Fathoni et al., 2024; Ismail et al., 2023; Siregar et al., 2025). Activities such as commemorating Islamic holidays combined with local traditions, praying together, and communal social service not only strengthen students' religious understanding but also foster collective awareness of the importance of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and caring for others regardless of background (Ramadhina Qurrota Ayun et al., 2025).

Through direct involvement in these activities, students learn to apply the values of tolerance and empathy in real-life situations, interact with various elements of society, and understand that religious practices can be in harmony with local wisdom. This process strengthens respect for differences while developing students' social sensitivity to the reality of diversity in their surroundings. These findings support Khoirul Huda's (2025) view, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration between madrasahs and the community in strengthening religious moderation. This synergy enables the values instilled through madrasah learning and culture to be maintained in the broader social space, so that religious moderation does not stop at the institutional level but grows as a shared awareness in community life (Khoirul Huda, 2025).

The exemplary behavior of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers has emerged as a determining factor in the success of the collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning and local culture, which has been built through various programs and madrasah practices. Teachers' fair, open, and consistent attitudes in respecting differences not only reinforce the values taught conceptually but also provide concrete models for students in applying multicultural values in everyday life. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers serve not merely as transmitters of religious material but also as agents of character formation that continuously influence students' ways of thinking, behaving, and interacting socially. The exemplary behavior displayed by teachers reinforces the values of religious moderation that have previously been instilled through local culture and madrasah practices (Abdullah et al., 2025; Ibda et al., 2024; Ilham & Ramadani, 2024; Kurniawan et al., 2025; Mahmudah et al., 2025).

In line with this role model, the process of internalizing multicultural values through dialogic and participatory learning has proven effective in building inclusive understanding in students. Heterogeneous group discussions facilitated by teachers create space for students to interact constructively, exchange perspectives, and critically and proportionately reflect on differences. Through this process, students not only learn to express their opinions but also learn to listen, respect others' perspectives, and find common ground in diversity. This finding is consistent with research by Abdul Halim (2025), which shows that a dialogic approach to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning significantly contributes to strengthening tolerant and moderate attitudes in madrasah environments (Amalia et al., 2025; Fuad et al., 2024; Gokcekuyu, 2023).

Students' direct involvement in various socio-religious activities is an important reinforcement in the psychomotor dimension of internalizing multicultural values instilled through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and madrasah culture (Aziz et al., 2024; Wijaya Mulya & Salvi, 2025). Through these real-life experiences, students not only understand the concepts of tolerance, empathy, and social concern at the cognitive level but also learn to implement them concretely in everyday social actions. Activities such as community service, religious holiday commemorations, and local culture-based solidarity programs provide students with space to interact directly with diverse social environments, thus internalizing the values of togetherness and respect for differences more deeply.

This participatory experience complements the dialogic learning process in the classroom, as students are exposed to real-life situations that demand cooperation, communication, and mutual respect. In this context, students learn that Islamic Religious Education values do not stop at normative understanding but must be realized in social practices that positively impact the surrounding environment. This finding aligns with the research of Bata et al. (2022), which asserts that active participation in inclusive social activities contributes significantly to the formation of harmonious and civilized social relations (Bata et al., 2022).

The implications of the collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture are not only evident in the cognitive aspects of students, but are also clearly reflected in changes in their attitudes and character in their daily lives within the madrasah environment and in society. Internalizing religious values combined with local wisdom encourages students to interpret religious teachings in a more contextual, humanistic, and relevant way to the social realities they face. This is evident in the increasing tolerance in interpersonal interactions, the growth of empathy for the differences in the socio-cultural conditions of peers, and the strengthening of mutual respect amidst the diverse backgrounds present in the madrasah.

Furthermore, the reduction in prejudice based on differences in social background, culture, and local traditions demonstrates that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning processes integrated with local culture can reduce exclusive attitudes and potential conflicts stemming from stereotypes. Students no longer view differences as threats, but rather as social realities that need to be understood and appreciated. Integrating Islamic values with positive local cultural practices is an effective means of instilling the principles of religious moderation, inclusive attitudes, and an awareness of the importance of peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society.

**Table 1** Results of the research findings

<b>Main Dimensions</b>	<b>Implementation Form</b>	<b>Internalization Process</b>	<b>Impact on Students</b>	<b>Theoretical Contributions</b>
<b>Curricular Integration</b>	The association of Islamic brotherhood with mutual cooperation	Cognitive through contextual explanations and case studies	Understanding religion is more relevant, contextual, and moderate	The shift from material integration to social practical integration
<b>Madrasa Culture</b>	Greetings, class meetings, routine community service	Affective through habituation and reflective dialogue	Tolerance, inclusive attitude, democratic	Religious moderation based on value ecosystem
<b>Socio-Religious Activities</b>	PHBI based on local traditions, social service	Psychomotor through direct social practice	Empathy, solidarity, prejudice reduction	Contextual-transformative PAI model
<b>Teacher's Exemplary Behavior</b>	Fair, open attitude, respect for differences	Reflective through interaction and real examples	Internalization of the values of moderation and peaceful conflict resolution	A holistic approach based on role models
<b>Dialogic Learning</b>	Heterogeneous group discussions and deliberations	Integrative (cognitive-affective-psychomotor)	Conflict resolution and adaptive capabilities to diversity	An ecosystemic approach between class, madrasa culture, and society

The findings of this study confirm that the collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture at MTs Al Barakah Rojo is not merely complementary, but functions integratively in shaping students' multicultural values. Unlike some previous literature that tends to position local wisdom as a supporting element in PAI learning, the results of this study show that local culture plays a primary pedagogical role that actively bridges normative Islamic

values with students' social experiences. Thus, the position of these findings broadens the conceptual framework of contextual PAI learning from mere "integration of material" to "integration of social practice" which has a direct impact on the formation of moderate character.

Comparatively, Pangestuti's research (2025) emphasized that the integration of local wisdom in the planning and implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning can increase the relevance of the material and foster a tolerant attitude (Pangestuti, 2025). The findings at MTs Al Barakah Rojo align with these conclusions, but provide additional confirmation that the relevance of learning lies not only in the curriculum planning aspect, but also in the consistency of value implementation within the madrasah culture and the daily practices of students. In other words, while previous literature has focused more on the pedagogical dimension in the classroom, this study emphasizes the ecosystemic dimension, namely the integration between Islamic Religious Education learning, the madrasah's institutional culture, and social practices based on local culture.

Compared to studies that place religious moderation as the primary outcome of the normative-doctrinal approach to Islamic Religious Education (PAI), the findings of this study demonstrate significant differences in the mechanisms of value internalization. Religious moderation is formed not only through strengthening theological discourse, but primarily through social habits such as deliberation, community service, and communal activities based on local traditions. These findings confirm that the internalization of multicultural values is more effective when students directly experience the practice of togetherness across differences, rather than simply receiving normative explanations of tolerance. Thus, this study critiques the PAI approach, which is overly oriented toward the transmission of religious knowledge, and offers an alternative, more practical and transformative model.

Overall, this study confirms the findings, enriching previous literature by positioning the collaboration of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture as a holistic, integrative model connecting curricular, cultural, pedagogical, and social practical dimensions. The difference with some previous literature lies in the emphasis that multicultural education in madrasas is not sufficiently developed through conceptual and normative approaches alone, but requires a living ecosystem of values through habituation, exemplary behavior, and social participation based on local wisdom (Paisun et al., 2025; Prasetyo et al., 2025). Thus, the findings of this study provide a new empirical contribution to the development of a contextual multicultural education model in madrasas, particularly at the junior high school level, while also offering conceptual reinforcement for the implementation of religious moderation in the context of a pluralistic society.

## **CONCLUSION**

The collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture at MTs Al Barakah Rojo plays a significant role in instilling multicultural values in students. The integration of Islamic values with local wisdom makes PAI learning more contextual and meaningful, thus impacting not only an increase in cognitive understanding of religion, but also on the formation of affective attitudes and moderate social behavior. The main findings of the study indicate that the internalization of the values of tolerance, empathy, inclusivity, and religious moderation takes place more effectively through an integrative approach that combines PAI learning in the classroom, habituation of madrasah culture, teacher role models, and student involvement in socio-religious activities based on local culture. The concrete impact of this collaboration is reflected in the reduction of social prejudice, increased mutual respect, and a strengthened awareness of peaceful coexistence amidst diversity.

In terms of scientific contribution, this study enriches the study of Islamic education and multicultural education by offering an integrative model of collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture that is holistic. Unlike some previous literature that positions local wisdom as a supporting element of learning, the findings of this study emphasize the position of local culture as the primary pedagogical medium in bridging normative Islamic values with students' social experiences. Another important contribution lies in strengthening the ecosystemic perspective

in multicultural education in madrasas, namely the integration between the curricular dimensions, institutional culture, dialogic pedagogical practices, teacher role models, and student social participation. Thus, this study provides an empirical foundation for the development of a contextual multicultural education model in madrasas at the junior high school level, while also strengthening the conceptual framework for the implementation of religious moderation based on local wisdom.

However, the findings of this study have several limitations. First, the study was conducted in a single madrasah institutional context, so generalization of the findings to other madrasahs with different socio-cultural characteristics requires caution. Second, the research focused more on the process dimension and qualitative implications of value formation, so quantitative measurements related to the level of change in students' attitudes of tolerance, empathy, and religious moderation have not been comprehensively described. Third, this study has not yet deeply explored the dynamics of challenges in implementing collaboration between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and local culture, such as resistance to certain cultural practices or limited educator competence in managing contextual learning. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the scope of locations, use a mixed methods approach, and explore inhibiting and supporting factors in more depth so that this collaboration model can be tested and developed more comprehensively in various madrasah contexts.

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