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INTEGRATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM: A MULTIETHNIC CASE STUDY AT STAI KUALA KAPUAS

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ABSTRACTS

Background: The integration of local wisdom in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is an important issue in the context of a multiethnic society so that religious learning is not merely normative, but also contextual to the socio-cultural realities of students. Various studies have made important contributions in examining the integration of local wisdom in Islamic Religious Education learning at the elementary and secondary levels of education, while studies on the practice of such integration in the context of multiethnic universities still open up wider scope for study. **Purpose of the Study:** This article aims to analyze the form and process of integration of local wisdom values of the Dayak, Banjarese, and Javanese ethnic groups in PAI learning at the Sekolah tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas and identify its implications for students' religious understanding. **Methods:** The study used a qualitative approach with a multiethnic case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies of five informants consisting of PAI lecturers, students, academic leaders, and community leaders with purposive sampling techniques, then analyzed using an interactive analysis model. **Results:** The results indicate that the integration of local wisdom is carried out through linking the concepts of Islamic teachings (PAI) with local cultural values, such as the philosophy of Huma Betang, the value of togetherness (baimbai), and the ethics of politeness in the learning process. **Findings** from interviews with five participants show that these principles serve as a meeting point for shared cultural understanding that strengthen inclusive and moderate religious understanding in a multi-ethnic university environment. **Conclusions:** The pluralist-assimilationist approach empowers students not only to preserve their original cultural identity but also to assimilate Islamic culture in achieving an effective and sustainable multicultural education paradigm.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The integration of local wisdom values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is an important strategy for increasing the relevance of learning, strengthening character formation, and developing a contextual and inclusive religious identity in a multiethnic society. Cultural values such as reciprocal cooperation, politeness, deliberation, and local religious traditions align with Islamic moral principles and can be strengthen character formation (Reta Guspani et al., 2025). For example, local wisdom Sundanese culture in Indonesia, values *silih asah, silih asih, dan silih asuh* (SILAS), starting from educational aspects, such as ontological relationships with God, epistemology, openness to knowledge, and axiology to uphold human values . Thus, the integration of local wisdom values in Islamic Religious Education learning not only makes the learning process more contextual and closer to the realities of students' lives, but also contributes to strengthening character, developing inclusive religious attitudes, and forming a religious identity that is in harmony with the cultural values that exist in a multi-ethnic society.

Efforts to contextualize Islamic religious education in a multiethnic society so that it remains relevant and impactful are carried out through culturally familiar educational practices. As found by Moh. Ali Muttaqo et al., 80% of respondents acknowledged positive transformations in their character and discipline through contextual religious teaching (Muttaqo et al., 2025). This condition makes learning more meaningful, further enhances students' understanding of religious and cultural values, while empowering teachers to create a dynamic and inspiring learning environment(Husni, 2024). Therefore, collaboration between teachers, students, the local community, and the involvement of local cultural experts is urgent in creating a more meaningful learning experience(Fajriah Inayati et al., 2024).

The development of learning models that integrate local traditions such as community religious culture, customary values, and socio-religious practices creates a more contextual, meaningful, and relevant learning process for students(Siregar, 2025). For example, socio-religious practices, in research findings on the Integration of Dayak, Banjarese, and Javanese Local Cultures in the Early Childhood Education Curriculum to Support the Pancasila Student Profile in Central Borneo, Indonesia, it is known that the integration of Dayakn, Banjarese, and Javanese local cultures can be an effective means of instilling cultural values into the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) curriculum(Aida et al., 2025). Other forms of culture, such as Dayak cultural wisdom *Kula Pahari*, namely a concept of local Dayak wisdom that emphasizes brotherhood and family values, which are woven into the culture *Huma Betang*(Hamdanah et al., 2025). Thus, the character formation of tolerance, mutual acceptance, and cooperation, as found in harmony between family members of different religions in the *Dayak Ngaju* community (Normuslim, 2020), can be internalized into the Islamic religious education curriculum for students. Thus, the synergy between religious values and local traditions bridges the gap between religious teachings and daily practices(Anggraeni et al., 2023). And becomes a strategic foundation for building a moderate, humanistic religious character rooted in national culture(Arifin et al., 2026).

Based on several previous studies, the integration of local wisdom values in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has been shown to significantly contribute to increasing the relevance of learning, strengthening character formation, and building a contextual and inclusive religious identity. This integration is implemented through

curriculum development, the development of teaching materials, and the application of learning methods grounded in local culture and students' social experiences. Accommodating cultural values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and tolerance in educational practices can enhance religious understanding while fostering moderate religious attitudes. Contextual learning based on local wisdom can strengthen the connection between religious teachings and social realities, resulting in a more meaningful and applicable learning process.

Based on the analysis of previous findings, this study attempts to combine the concepts of pluralism and assimilationism with the Islamic religious education curriculum, namely an idea about maintaining original ethnic identity and *common culture* and understand other ethnic cultures. As in the theory *pluralist-asimiliasionist ideology* developed by James A. Banks assumed, “*although ethnic groups and ethnic communities play an important role in the socialization of individuals, individuals are also strongly influenced by the broader common culture during their early socialization, even if they never leave their ethnic communities*”(Banks, 1975a). According to Banks, understood, the educational curriculum is not enough to just maintain the original ethnic culture or merge cultures into one, but the curriculum is able to maintain the original ethnic culture without ethnocentrism and is able to understand other ethnic cultures and solve socio-religious problems.

Initial observations indicate that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education at the Islamic College Kuala Kapuas takes place in a multi-ethnic social environment, where lecturers, students, and educational staff come from diverse cultural backgrounds, particularly the Dayak, Banjarese, and Javanese ethnicities. This diversity gives rise to dynamic cultural interactions in academic life, both in the learning process, classroom discussions, and student activities. However, Islamic Religious Education learning practices still tend to focus on delivering normative religious material and have not optimally integrated the values of local wisdom that have developed within the local community. In fact, the local wisdom of these three ethnicities contains social values such as tolerance, togetherness, and respect for differences that align with the principles of Islamic teachings. This fact provides both an opportunity and a need for an in-depth analysis of the integration of local wisdom in Islamic Religious Education learning as a more contextual, inclusive, and relevant approach to the multi-ethnic social reality of the Kuala Kapuas Islamic College (Observasi Awal Penelitian, 2026)

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the integration of local wisdom values into Islamic Religious Education learning at the *Sekolah tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas* while also examining the form, process, and implications of this integration for the formation of students' character and religious identity. Moreover, this study is expected to provide practical implications for educators and Islamic higher education institutions in developing contextual, culturally responsive, and inclusive approaches to Islamic Religious Education within multi-ethnic academic environments. The findings may also serve as a reference for integrating local cultural values into teaching methods aimed at strengthening students' moderate religious attitudes, promoting tolerance, and improving intercultural understanding. Therefore, the research questions posed in this article are: *How is the integration of local wisdom values of the Dayak, Banjarese, and Javanese ethnic groups in Islamic Religious Education*

learning at Islamic College Kuala Kapuas in building contextual and inclusive religious understanding?

B. METHOD

This article is a field research type with a descriptive-qualitative method using a multi-ethnic case study design, to describe the integration of local wisdom values in Islamic Religious Education learning at the Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas based on the theory pluralist–assimilationist ideology proposed by James A. Banks and multicultural education perspective. The research was conducted in an Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas environment with students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, particularly Dayak, Banjarese, and Javanese. The informants in the research this amounts to 5 informants who selected using the technique purposive sampling. The informants consisted of lecturers in charge of Islamic Religious Education courses, students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program who came from Dayak, Banjar, and Javanese ethnic backgrounds, Academic Leaders, parents of students, and community leaders who understand cultural practices and socio-religious life within the Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas. Research data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Data validity was ensured through source data triangulation techniques. Then, they were analyzed using an interactive analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. The research process and data analysis procedures in this study followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, as illustrated in Figure 1.

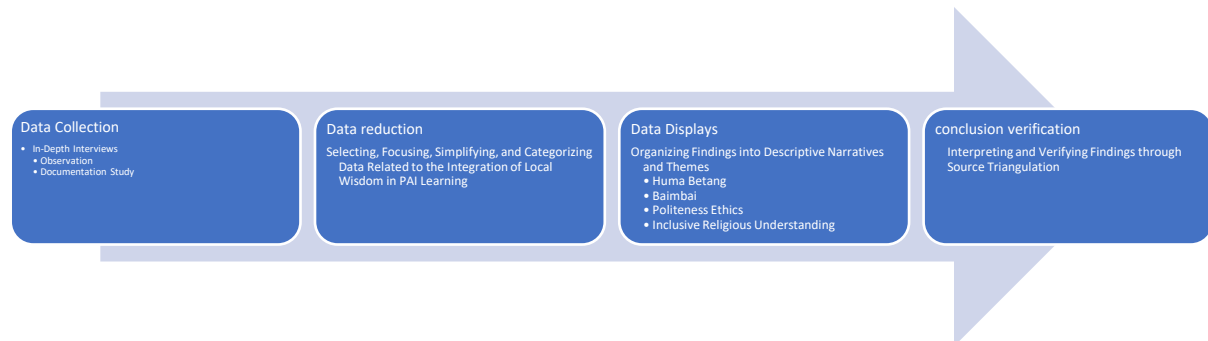


Figure 1. Workflow Diagram

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Field findings It is known that the application of local wisdom values is carried out by connecting Islamic teachings with the cultural and social practices of the community. The lecturer explained that in several lecture materials, cultural elements from the Dayak, Banjar, and Javanese tribes are often used as examples to explain the concept of the relationship between values Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah islamiyah*) with philosophy *Huma Betang*, the concept of *thaharah* with tradition *Bapalas* as well the relationship between prayer discipline and *unggah-ungguh* of Javanese culture. So, the learning process becomes more relevant because students can understand religious

teachings easily linking it to the social and cultural realities they experience every day as stated in the learning plan(Dokumen RPS, 2026)

"In several Fiqh Ibadah lecture sessions, I often connect the learning content to local culture to help students better understand the concept of worship. For example, when discussing thaharah, I relate it to the Bapalas tradition in Banjar culture, which signifies self-purification value relationship concept Islamic brotherhood with philosophy Huma Betang and the relationship between prayer discipline and values manners of Javanese culture"(Infoman D-PAI, personal communication, 2026).

Also found The diverse racial backgrounds in the classroom provided a learning experience that enhanced their understanding of cultural differences. Students reported that classroom conversations often included cultural experiences from each race, creating opportunities for discussion and mutual understanding. *"The value of baimbai in Banjar culture, which means togetherness, is actually similar to the concept of brotherhood in Islam"* (Informan 1-M, personal communication, 2026) Students from various races also revealed that many of the cultural values they adhere to are similar to Islamic teachings, such as respecting others, maintaining togetherness (baimbai), and solving problems through deliberation (hapakat).

"In our classroom, we have students from Dayak, Banjar, and Javanese descent. During discussions, the instructors often ask us to explain the traditions of our respective regions. From this experience, we realized that values like togetherness and deliberation are indeed present in our culture and align with Islamic principles."(Informan 2-M, personal communication, 2026) (Informan 2-M, personal communication, 2026)



Figure 2. Data collection process through interviews with students and lecturers

Stated by academic leaders that ethnic diversity among students is considered a resource that can enhance the experience learning. The study program encourages lecturers to design relevant learning by utilizing local cultural values as teaching materials through the syllabus and lesson plan (WKA, personal communication, 2026)



Figure 3. Data Collection Process Through Interviews with Academic and Institutional Leaders

Views from community leaders regarding *common culture* which grows in Islamic college contains principles that are in line with Islamic teachings (*Islamic value*), such as a sense of togetherness, respect for each other, and a sense of brotherhood. These principles are transmitted through social traditions and routine practices of community life. Therefore, the integration of local wisdom into religious education is considered crucial for strengthening religious understanding that is appropriate to the context and relevance of social life.

"In the Kapuas culture, perhaps similar to other regencies in Central Kalimantan, whether Dayak, Banjar, or Javanese, the values of togetherness and mutual respect are part of everyday life. For example, in the tradition of deliberation (hapakat), people are accustomed to resolving problems together through kinship. These values are actually very much in line with Islamic teachings on brotherhood and togetherness"(TM, personal communication, 2026).



Figure 4. Documentation of research interview activities of the MUI Management of Kapuas Regency



Figure 5. Situation of Implementation of Observation of Deliberation Activities

Analysis/Discussion

The findings on the integration of local wisdom values of the Dayak, Banjar, and Javanese ethnic groups in Islamic Religious Education learning at *Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas* in building contextual and inclusive religious understanding refer to the multicultural education theory by James A. Banks. Banks explains:

“Multicultural education is also a reform movement that is trying to change the schools and other educational institutions so that students from all social-class, gender, racial, language, and cultural groups will have equal opportunities to learn”(Banks & Banks, 2020).

Multicultural education is a systematic reform of the curriculum designed to provide students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds with the opportunity to understand their own cultural identity while simultaneously fostering an appreciation for the cultures of others. However, in the practice of multicultural education, although teachers recognize multiculturalism well primarily through ethnic differences, religion, and language, they feel a substantial gap between policy expectations and class realities (Afifuddin et al., 2025). Therefore, ongoing practices are still in a tug-of-war between approaches pluralist which recognizes the diversity of cultural identities and assimilationist approach which emphasizes unification within a more dominant value framework. Thus, in the pluralist-assimilationist theory, the basic assumption is that even though individuals come from ethnic groups such as Javanese, Dayak or Banjar, the influence of *common culture* At the Islamic College Kuala Kapuas, the socialization process remains strong from the beginning, even when individuals are within their own ethnic group or community. As Banks states:

“The pluralist- assimilationist assumes that while the ethnic group and the ethnic community are very important in the socialization of individuals, individuals are strongly influenced by the common culture during-their early socialization, even if they never leave the ethnic community or enclave”(Banks, 1975b).

Banks describes five dimensions of multicultural education, which include (1) *content integration*, (2) *the knowledge construction process*, (3) *prejudice reduction*, (4) *an equity pedagogy*, and (5) *an empowering school culture and social structure*(Banks & Banks, 2020). The analysis of the five dimensions of multicultural education proposed by James A. Banks is based on the findings of. *First*, dimensions *content integration* This is reflected in the lecturers' efforts to incorporate Dayak, Banjarese, and Javanese cultural values into Islamic Religious Education learning materials. This is evident in the use of Islamic philosophy *Huma Betang* to explain the concept *Islamic brotherhood*, association of traditions Passengers under discussion purity, and the use of ethical values such as upload-upload in discussing manners and behavior in worship. *Second*, dimensions *knowledge construction process* This is evident in the classroom discussion process involving students from various ethnic backgrounds so that they can reflect on their respective cultural experiences in understanding Islamic values. This process allows for the formation of a religious understanding that is more contextual through diverse cultural perspectives. *Third*, dimensions *prejudice reduction* This can be seen from the interactions between multi-ethnic students which encourage mutual respect

and reduce stereotypes between cultural groups. Fourth, the dimension *equity pedagogy* reflected in learning strategies that provide equal opportunities for students from various ethnic backgrounds to convey their cultural experiences in the learning process. Finally, the fifth dimension, *empowering school culture and social structure* This is reflected in institutional support through academic policies that encourage the integration of local cultural values into the curriculum and the implementation of various academic activities that bring together students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. This is illustrated as follows:

Table 1. Dimensions of multicultural education from Banks' perspective

No	Banks Dimensions	Conceptual Description	Implementation in Islamic Education Learning
1	<i>Content Integration</i>	Integration of various culture in learning materials	Lecturers integrate Dayak cultural values, Banjar, and Javanese such as Huma Betang, Bapalas, and manners in Islamic Religious Education materials.
2	<i>Knowledge Construction Process</i>	The process of understanding how is the culture influence knowledge	Multi-ethnic discussion help students reflect on cultural experiences so that understanding of Islam becomes contextual.
3	<i>Prejudice Reduction</i>	Reducing prejudice between groups	Multi-ethnic interaction encourage an attitude of mutual respect and reduce stereotypes culture.
4	<i>Equity Pedagogy</i>	Learning that provide equal opportunities	The lecturer gave equal opportunities for all students to share cultural experiences.
5	<i>Empowering School Culture</i>	The culture and structure of the school Support diversity	Campus policies and academic activities support integration local culture and interaction multiethnic.

The main outcomes of the implementation of multicultural education dimensions in Islamic Religious Education learning are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Outcomes of Multicultural Education Dimensions

Banks' Dimensions	Implementation in PAI Learning	Key Outcomes
Content Integration	Integration of Huma Betang, Bapalas, and unggah-ungguh into learning materials	Students understand Islamic teachings through local cultural contexts
Knowledge Construction Process	Multi-ethnic classroom discussions	Students develop contextual and reflective religious understanding
Prejudice Reduction	Interaction among Dayak, Banjar, and Javanese students	Increased mutual respect and reduced cultural stereotypes
Equity Pedagogy	Equal opportunities for students to share cultural experiences	Inclusive participation in classroom learning
Empowering School Culture	Institutional support and multicultural academic activities	Strengthened moderate religious attitudes and intercultural understanding

Thus, the integration of local wisdom in Islamic Religious Education learning at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas not only functions as a strategy for contextualizing teaching materials, but also becomes a means to build an inclusive educational environment, respect cultural diversity, and strengthen moderate religious understanding in a multi-ethnic society. So through the five dimensions of multicultural education, teachers are able to implement learning that is relevant to the cultural background of students (Eun Jeong Jun, 2016) and is also in line with Islamic principles such as equality, justice, tolerance, and values *rahmatan lil alamin* (Anggraeni et al., 2023; Irfan et al., 2025). This results in two main dynamics occurring in schools: successfully creating a positive social environment and providing a form of symbolic empowerment through cultural programs and the performance of school activities with students' authentic cultural identities (Putri & Suharjanto, 2025). Thus, multicultural education can also influence the formation of school structures and curriculum implementation in the educational environment (Tamang, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Local cultural values that are understood as signs of differences in ethnic identity actually function as cultural meeting points (*common cultural ground*) which strengthens the points of understanding in Islamic teachings (*kalimatun sawa'*) among academics. The findings indicate that local wisdom is not merely a social backdrop for the learning process but also serves as an integrative tool that harmoniously bridges ethnic and religious identities in a multiethnic university environment. Therefore, the integration of local wisdom into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning has the

potential to be developed as an effective learning model for building religious education that is contextual, inclusive, and relevant to the realities of a pluralistic society.

The limitations of this study are, *First*, The relatively limited number of informants and the focus of the research, which was only conducted at one Islamic university, namely Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Kuala Kapuas, means that the findings of this study cannot be generalized widely in the context of other universities that have different socio-cultural characteristics. *Second*, This study focuses more on the integration of local wisdom values into the Islamic Religious Education learning process, thus not thoroughly examining the long-term impact of this integration on changes in students' religious attitudes and social behavior. A recommendation for further research is to expand the research location to several other Islamic universities with multiethnic studies based on the university's unique characteristics.

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Author contributions: Arbainsyah held responsibility for devising conceptual framework. Both Hamdanah and Normuslim functioned as an academic supervisor and offered direction regarding manuscript's substance. Olis ensured consistency and adherence to the journal's formatting template.

Data availability: Both collected and analyzed data were available from corresponding author upon reasonable request

Disclaimer: opinions expressed in this article were author's own

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