

Translating Islamic Educational Philosophy into Multicultural Educational Praxis: A Multi-Site Study of Islamic Higher Education in Madura, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines how Islamic educational philosophy is translated into multicultural educational praxis in two private Islamic higher education institutions in Madura, Indonesia. Using a qualitative multi-site case study, data were generated from 44 informants through semi-structured interviews, direct observations, document analysis, and focus group discussions. Analysis proceeded first within each site to identify institution-specific patterns and then across sites to examine convergence and contextual variation. Four interconnected findings emerged. Multicultural education was grounded in *karamah insaniyah*, justice, social responsibility, *ta'dib*, *tarbiyah*, and diversity as *rahmah*. These principles were translated into curriculum, learning outcomes, dialogical pedagogy, case-based discussion, and collaborative learning. Pesantren ethics and Madurese local wisdom mediated inclusive academic relations and the management of difference. Cross-site analysis identified a translational pathway from Islamic philosophical values to multicultural praxis, while revealing distinct institutional configurations: *ta'dib-local wisdom-dialogue* at one site and *ilmu-amal-akhlak-wasathiyah* at the other. Analytically, the study shows how shared philosophical foundations are institutionally mediated into context-specific multicultural practices rather than reproduced through a single uniform model.

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Introduction

Contemporary multicultural higher education faces a substantive tension between expanding openness to cultural, religious, and intellectual diversity and preserving the normative identities through which institutions define their educational purposes. This tension is particularly visible in non-Western higher education, where internationalization and diversity agendas may broaden intercultural engagement but also require institutions to negotiate global academic expectations with locally embedded cultural, moral, and religious commitments (Avolio & Benzaquen, 2024). In Islamic higher education, the challenge is therefore not simply whether diversity should be accommodated, but how difference can be recognized without disconnecting multicultural practice from an institution's Islamic philosophical foundations. Indonesian Islamic higher education illustrates this tension clearly: globalization can expand knowledge exchange and intercultural dialogue while simultaneously generating concerns about the preservation of religious and cultural identity (Achruh & Sukirman, 2024).

Studies further indicate that multiculturalism in Indonesian higher education is shaped by institutional ideology, cultural orientation, curriculum, equality, and internationalization, suggesting that universal commitments to inclusion cannot be implemented independently of institutional

context (Sibawaihi et al., 2025; Sibawaihi & Fernandes, 2023). The unresolved problem, therefore, is how Islamic higher education can translate its own philosophical understandings of humanity, knowledge, morality, and social responsibility into multicultural educational practices that remain simultaneously inclusive, academically open, and religiously grounded.

From the perspective of Islamic educational philosophy, diversity is understood through ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions. Ontologically, humans are dignified and morally responsible; epistemologically, education relates revelation, reason, and lived experience; axiologically, it is directed toward justice, ethics, and social responsibility. Concepts such as *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib* connect these assumptions with educational purposes (Ahmed & Chowdhury, 2025). Equality, tolerance, dignity, and mutual respect guide plural interaction (Abdiyah, 2021), while Qur'anic perspectives frame diversity and justice as foundations of inclusive pedagogy (Espihani et al., 2025). These dimensions serve as a priori sensitizing concepts, distinct from themes emerging inductively from field data.

Research on Indonesian Islamic higher education addresses diversity through religious moderation. Moderate values are transmitted through curricula, religious activities, and institutional practices emphasizing tolerance, non-violence, national commitment, and cultural accommodation (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). Religious moderation is also institutionalized through curriculum, teaching, and evaluation (Mukhibat et al., 2024), while students interpret moderation-related Qur'anic verses and hadiths in university life (Afwadzi et al., 2024). However, religious moderation and multicultural education are related but distinct. The former concerns balanced religious orientations, whereas the latter examines how cultural, religious, social, and intellectual differences are recognized and negotiated across curriculum, pedagogy, and academic relations.

Studies explicitly addressing multiculturalism in Indonesian higher education provide another important body of evidence. Students within Islamic higher education have generally demonstrated positive attitudes toward multicultural education, although differences remain in the depth of their understanding and interpretation of multicultural values (Shafa, 2022). More comprehensive evidence shows that multicultural education in Indonesian State Islamic Universities can be implemented through content integration, equity pedagogy, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, curriculum adaptation, lecturer involvement, campus activities, and institutional centers concerned with equality and inclusion (Sibawaihi et al., 2025). At a broader institutional level, internationalization has also demonstrated that multicultural awareness constitutes an important capacity through which Islamic higher education negotiates increasingly global academic environments (Kamil et al., 2025). Nevertheless, existing studies predominantly investigate student attitudes, institutional strategies, state Islamic universities, or internationalization. They provide limited explanation of how the philosophical assumptions of Islamic education are translated into the everyday multicultural logic of curriculum, teaching, academic interaction, institutional culture, and social relations within private Islamic higher education institutions.

Madura offers a distinctive socio-religious context where Islamic education interacts continuously with local culture, communal traditions, and religious authority. Previous studies converge in showing that this relationship is negotiated rather than culturally homogeneous, although they emphasize different mechanisms. Some highlight cosmopolitan openness and accommodation of local traditions (Rasyidin & Fahrudin, 2024), while others stress religious

activities and intergroup communication in shaping multicultural awareness (Dannur et al., 2023). Other studies foreground coexistence and conflict resolution through justice, deliberation, and brotherhood (Afandi & Sayyi, 2023; Sayyi et al., 2023). Yet how these cultural negotiations become institutional educational practices remains insufficiently explained (Yanto et al., 2024).

Scholarship connecting multicultural education with Islamic educational philosophy similarly converges on tolerance, equality, justice, dignity, and peaceful coexistence as compatible normative foundations (Abdiyah, 2021). However, studies differ in their conceptual emphasis: some formulate multicultural education through general philosophical principles (Wahyuni et al., 2025). M whereas others reconstruct it through Qur'anic concepts of diversity, justice, and inclusivity (Espihani et al., 2025). Despite these differences, both approaches largely assume that normative compatibility can be translated into educational practice. This assumption remains empirically underexamined, particularly regarding how philosophical commitments are interpreted by institutional actors and materialized through curriculum, pedagogy, academic relations, and institutional culture.

The central gap is a theoretical problem concerning how Islamic philosophical commitments become institutional multicultural practice. Existing explanations tend to attribute inclusive practice to religious moderation, curriculum design, or normative philosophical principles, but rarely clarify how these dimensions interact as a translation mechanism (Mukhibat et al., 2024; Nasir & Rijal, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2025). In Madura, local culture and religious traditions provide an additional explanatory possibility beyond formal institutional policy (Dannur et al., 2023; Sibawaihi et al., 2025). Moreover, literature-based accounts leave uncertain whether multicultural praxis derives primarily from philosophical commitments, institutional arrangements, or their contextual mediation (Abdiyah, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2025). This study therefore examines Islamic educational philosophy as an interpretive architecture linking these competing explanations.

Accordingly, this study examines how Islamic educational philosophy is translated into multicultural educational praxis at Institut Agama Islam Al-Khairat Pamekasan and Institut Bahri Asyiq Galis Bangkalan. It addresses three questions: (1) How are ontological, epistemological, and axiological Islamic commitments interpreted within each institution? (2) How are these commitments translated into curriculum, pedagogy, academic relations, and institutional culture within each site? (3) What shared mechanisms and contextual variations emerge from cross-site comparison in explaining multicultural educational praxis? These questions align the philosophical framework with within-site and cross-site analyses and enable the study to explain how shared Islamic commitments acquire institutionally and culturally distinctive forms.

Method

This study employed a qualitative multi-site case study design to examine how Islamic educational philosophy was translated into multicultural educational praxis in two private Islamic higher education institutions in Madura, Indonesia. Each institution constituted a bounded holistic case, defined by its organizational setting, curriculum, academic practices, and socio-cultural environment. Within each case, evidence was examined across embedded domains comprising curriculum and courses, classroom practices, leadership and institutional policies, academic culture, and student experiences. These domains were not treated as separate cases but were integrated to explain how philosophical commitments were interpreted and enacted institutionally. The analysis proceeded first within each bounded case and subsequently across cases to identify convergent mechanisms,

contextual variations, and institution-specific configurations (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Stake, 2013; Yin, 2017).

T The research was conducted from 5 April to 15 May 2025 at Institut Bahri Asyiq Galis Bangkalan and Institut Agama Islam Al-Khairat Pamekasan. The cases were purposively selected using a theoretical-replication logic: both are private Islamic higher education institutions in Madura with curricula relevant to Islamic educational philosophy and multicultural education, but they differ in organizational scale, academic-level coverage, and curricular configuration. These shared conditions and institutional contrasts enabled examination of whether similar philosophical commitments were translated through comparable or context-specific practices (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Palinkas et al., 2015). Formal permission was obtained under No. 003/LPM-INSTIBA/IV/2025 at Institut Bahri Asyiq and No. A/076.434/LP2M.IAI.Al-Khairat/04/2025 at Institut Agama Islam Al-Khairat.

Participants were selected through purposive criterion-based sampling according to role-specific relevance. Institutional leaders and administrators were eligible when their responsibilities involved governance, curriculum, or academic programs; lecturers were selected for teaching courses relevant to the research focus; and students were included based on direct experience of the corresponding learning and academic environment. The study involved 44 informants: 19 from Institut Bahri Asyiq and 25 from Institut Agama Islam Al-Khairat. Participants holding dual administrative and teaching roles were classified by their primary institutional position for counting purposes, while both roles informed interpretation. Participant adequacy was determined by informational relevance, richness, and analytical sufficiency rather than statistical representation (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Malterud et al., 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015).

Table 1. Distribution of Informants by Institutional Role and Research Site

Research Site	Leaders/Administrators	Lecturers	Undergraduate Students	Postgraduate Students	Total
Institut Bahri Asyiq Galis Bangkalan	3	6	10	–	19
Institut Agama Islam Al-Khairat Pamekasan	8	3	8	6	25
Total	11	9	18	6	44

Data were collected collaboratively by both researchers. The dataset comprised 44 semi-structured individual interviews conducted in Indonesian and lasting 70–155 minutes, alongside direct observations, field notes, informal clarification, and documentary analysis. Ten observations covered four classroom sessions, two campus environments, two religious routines, and two academic events, ranging from 30 to 240 minutes. Ten documents were examined, including curriculum structures, semester learning plans, institutional policies, course materials, and activity reports. Finally, two FGDs were conducted for interpretive verification: eight participants at Site 1 and ten at Site 2, with each session lasting 150 minutes. Multiple sources enabled comparison between reported meanings, observed practices, and institutional documentation (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Yin, 2017).

Semi-structured interviews examined participants’ interpretations of Islamic educational philosophy and how dignity, justice, *adab*, equality, dialogue, and social responsibility were enacted institutionally. Forty-four individual interviews were conducted: at Site 1 with three institutional

leaders, six lecturers, and ten undergraduate students; and at Site 2 with eight institutional leaders, three lecturers, eight undergraduate students, and six postgraduate students. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian and lasted 70–155 minutes. Observations used a common protocol covering academic interaction, pedagogical methods, responses to difference, campus routines, and institutional settings. Ten observation sessions, totaling approximately 18 hours, included four classroom observations, two campus-environment observations, two religious routines, and two academic events. Documentary analysis covered ten documents: two curriculum structures, two RPS, two institutional-policy documents, two course-material sets, one community-service report, and one student-activity report (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Rijali, 2018; Yin, 2017).

Saturation was assessed separately within each site and across participant roles and data sources rather than through a predetermined numerical threshold. At Site 1, recurring evidence increasingly consolidated around *ta'dib*, local wisdom, and dialogue, while Site 2 repeatedly emphasized *ilmu-amal-akhlak*, pesantren heritage, and *wasathiyah*. During later interviews, observations, and document analysis, additional evidence elaborated these categories but did not generate substantively new categories or alter their relationships. Category stability was subsequently checked through a site-specific FGD at each institution, where participants were invited to confirm, clarify, or challenge the preliminary interpretations. No substantial contradictory themes emerged from either discussion. Saturation was therefore defined as category and relationship stability across roles, sources, and sites (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Malterud et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2018).

After within-site categories had stabilized, one FGD was conducted at each site for interpretive verification. Site 1 involved eight previously interviewed participants three institutional leaders/lecturers and five undergraduate students whereas Site 2 involved ten previously interviewed participants four institutional leaders/lecturers, two undergraduate students, and four postgraduate students. Each FGD lasted 150 minutes. Participants were invited to confirm, qualify, or challenge preliminary interpretations rather than produce consensus. Qualifying views were retained analytically; for example, *ta'dib* was clarified as dominant but complementary to *tarbiyah*, while academic formation was emphasized alongside pesantren-based morality. The FGDs therefore refined relationships among existing categories rather than generating new major themes (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Krueger & Casey, 2014; Nowell et al., 2017).

Data analysis proceeded iteratively through data condensation, coding, display, comparison, and verification. Deductive sensitizing constructs derived from the philosophical framework human dignity, knowledge, justice, *adab*, ethical relations, responsibility, equality, and engagement with diversity guided initial attention without predetermining themes. Inductive codes were then generated from recurrent expressions and practices. For example, the statement “*perbedaan adalah rahmat*” was located within the deductive domain of engagement with diversity, coded inductively as *difference-as-rahmah*, grouped into the category *philosophical recognition of diversity*, and developed into the theme *Islamic philosophical foundations for recognizing human dignity and diversity*. Within-site analysis preceded cross-site comparison, which examined how shared philosophical premises were mediated through *ta'dib-local wisdom-dialogue* and *ilmu-amal-akhlak-wasathiyah* configurations (Miles et al., 2013; Rijali, 2018; Stake, 2013).

Trustworthiness was addressed through source and methodological triangulation, cross-researcher interpretation, saturation assessment, FGD-based verification, and systematic

comparison of potentially disconfirming evidence. Particular reflexive attention was required because each researcher was institutionally affiliated with one research site. Such role duality could influence interpretation through institutional familiarity and loyalty, while students or junior colleagues might moderate critical responses because of perceived hierarchical relationships. Accordingly, favorable institutional accounts were not accepted independently but compared with student narratives, classroom observations, documentary evidence, and evidence from the other site. Interpretive disagreements between the researchers were discussed collaboratively, qualifying evidence was retained, and claims were narrowed when evidence did not support stronger interpretations (Berger, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017).

Ethical safeguards focused on voluntary participation, confidentiality, relational responsibility, and protection from perceived institutional pressure. Participants were informed about the research purpose, academic use of the data, confidentiality of responses, voluntary participation, and their right to decline or discontinue participation. Participant codes rather than personal names were used in analytical reporting. Because both researchers were institutionally affiliated with the study sites, voluntariness was emphasized particularly in interactions involving students and institutional colleagues, and participants' statements were not treated as institutional evaluations of individual performance. Formal permissions No. 003/LPM-INSTIBA/IV/2025 and No. A/076.434/LP2M.IAIAI-Khairat/04/2025 constituted administrative authorization to conduct the research and are not presented as equivalent to formal research-ethics committee approval (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Yin, 2017).

Result and Discussion

Result

The findings are organized around the study's three research questions and the within-site and cross-site analytical procedures. Analysis of interviews, observations, institutional documents, and verification FGDs generated four interconnected themes: (1) Islamic philosophical foundations for interpreting human dignity and diversity, (2) curricular and pedagogical translation of philosophical commitments, (3) institutional mediation through pesantren ethics and Madurese local wisdom, and (4) cross-site configurations linking Islamic educational philosophy with multicultural educational praxis. These themes indicate substantial convergence between the two institutions while also revealing differences in emphasis, tensions in interpreting diversity, and distinctive institutional mechanisms through which shared philosophical commitments were enacted.

Islamic Philosophical Foundations for Interpreting Human Dignity and Diversity

The first theme concerns how participants interpreted multicultural education through Islamic philosophical commitments rather than as an exclusively external educational discourse. Across both sites, *karamah insaniyah*, *'adl*, and social responsibility were repeatedly associated with the treatment of difference. At Site 1, one institutional leader explained that "every human being has equal value and dignity before Allah," linking this recognition directly with justice and institutional responsibility (LD-BA-03). At Site 2, the rector similarly stated that "every individual deserves respect," while justice required the absence of discrimination and social responsibility extended these principles beyond individual relationships (LD-AK-01). These accounts were consistent with institutional documents emphasizing dignity, non-discrimination, social responsibility, and inclusive educational treatment.

The relationship between *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib* provided a second interpretive layer. Participants generally regarded the two concepts as complementary, but *ta'dib* was more visible in descriptions of daily institutional practice. At Site 1, this emphasis was explicitly related to pesantren traditions of respect, politeness, morality, and responsibility. However, the evidence did not indicate that intellectual development was subordinated entirely to moral formation. During the Site 1 FGD, participants clarified that *ta'dib* functioned as an ethical foundation while *tarbiyah* remained necessary for intellectual and academic development. A similar qualification appeared at Site 2, where an institutional participant emphasized, “We are not just a pesantren; we are a university. Our students need both solid academic grounding and moral formation” (LD-AK-04). Thus, the relationship was better characterized as negotiated complementarity than as the simple dominance of one concept over another.

Participants also differed in how strongly they emphasized the positive meaning of diversity. Several lecturers characterized difference as *rahmah* and *sunnatullah*, but institutional leaders at both sites simultaneously recognized its potential to create tension. A Site 1 leader stated that diversity “is essentially a blessing,” yet added that it “can trigger conflict if it is not accompanied by intellectual maturity” (LD-BA-01). At Site 2, the rector similarly described difference as “both a blessing and a challenge,” requiring careful management to prevent conflict (LD-AK-01). This ambivalence is important because it shows that multicultural praxis did not emerge from an unrestricted celebration of difference. Rather, diversity was considered legitimate when accompanied by ethical restraint, dialogue, and continued commitment to Islamic identity.

At Site 2, this boundary was articulated particularly through *wasathiyah*. Participants described it as avoiding both rigidity and excessive liberalization while maintaining openness toward diversity. One participant explained that *wasathiyah* meant “being open to diversity while maintaining our core Islamic identity” (LD-AK-10). Consequently, multiculturalism was not interpreted as relativizing all religious commitments; it was understood as an ethical capacity to engage difference while remaining rooted in an Islamic normative framework.

Table 2. Cross-Site Philosophical Foundations of Multicultural Education

Philosophical dimension	Site 1: Bahri Asyiq	Site 2: Al-Khairat	Cross-site interpretation
Karamah insaniyah	Equal dignity and non-discrimination	Respect and equal institutional treatment	Human dignity provides a normative basis for recognizing difference
'Adl	Equitable and proportional treatment	Equality, fairness, and transparent treatment	Justice operationalizes dignity in institutional relationships
Social responsibility	Socially responsive graduates	Linked with ilmu–amal–akhlak	Multicultural concern extends beyond interpersonal tolerance
Tarbiyah–ta'dib	Strong pesantren-based ta'dib, alongside academic development	Moral formation integrated with academic excellence	Ethical and intellectual formation are complementary
Interpretation of diversity	Rahmah and sunnatullah, but also a potential source of conflict	Rahmah and challenge requiring wasathiyah	Diversity is valued but normatively and dialogically negotiated

Curricular and Pedagogical Translation of Philosophical Commitments

The second theme shows that philosophical commitments were reflected in both formal curricular structures and classroom practices. Documentary analysis at Site 1 identified Islamic Educational Philosophy, Multicultural Islamic Education, Curriculum Development, and Sociology of Education as relevant curricular spaces. The Multicultural Islamic Education RPS included pluralism, interfaith dialogue, conflict resolution, and Madurese local wisdom, while its pedagogical strategies included discussion, case analysis, and project-based learning. At Site 2, curriculum and RPS documents similarly incorporated Multicultural Islamic Education, Curriculum Development, and Islamic Educational Philosophy, including postgraduate learning that emphasized critical analysis, Islamic perspectives on diversity, policy analysis, and program design.

Classroom observation provided evidence of how these curricular commitments were enacted. At Site 1, an observed Multicultural Islamic Education class addressed contested practices of *tahlilan* and *ziarah kubur*. Students presented opposing positions, after which the lecturer redirected discussion from competing truth claims to the evidentiary and methodological grounds of each position: “What evidence do you use? ... what method of *istinbath* do you use?” The lecturer later explained that disagreement resulted from “different methods” rather than hostile intentions. This episode indicates that dialogical pedagogy involved epistemological examination of disagreement rather than an expectation of doctrinal uniformity.

The observation also revealed a qualification to the otherwise inclusive account. More vocal students initially dominated the Site 1 discussion, requiring lecturer intervention to ensure that quieter students could participate. Similarly, at Site 2, discussion of pluralism became sufficiently heated for the lecturer to redirect participants toward arguments rather than personal attacks. These episodes suggest that inclusive dialogue was not automatically produced by diversity itself; it depended on active pedagogical facilitation and classroom regulation.

Site 2 also displayed boundaries around pluralism. During an observed class, one group argued that religious tolerance had “certain limits,” while the lecturer emphasized that the presence of a spectrum of Islamic views did not require abandoning mutual respect. The closing message was to “maintain mutual respect and avoid extreme attitudes.” An Islamic Philosophy class further connected diversity with classical Islamic intellectual traditions through textual analysis of Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Ghazali. Thus, the cross-site pedagogical pattern was not simply the teaching of tolerance but the structured examination of disagreement, its epistemological sources, and its ethical boundaries.

Students' accounts were consistent with this interpretation but should not be read as evidence of measured educational effectiveness. Students at both sites described themselves as becoming more open, mature, or appreciative of difference through courses, student organizations, and interaction with peers. At Site 1, for example, one student described differences in religious-organizational affiliation and even regional Madurese dialect as initial challenges that were subsequently negotiated through campus interaction. At Site 2, a postgraduate student characterized different professional and religious perspectives as challenging but intellectually productive. These self-reports therefore represent perceived educational experiences rather than independently measured changes in attitudes.

Table 3. Curricular and Pedagogical Translation across the Two Sites

Educational component	Site 1 evidence	Site 2 evidence	Cross-site interpretation	Educational component
Curriculum and RPS	Philosophy, multicultural education, curriculum, sociology; explicit diversity topics	Undergraduate/post graduate multicultural and philosophical courses	Multicultural concerns appear in formal curricular structures	Curriculum and RPS
Case-based learning	<i>Tahlilan</i> , <i>ziarah kubur</i> , madhhab and local religious differences	Pluralism, inclusivism, religious difference	Concrete disagreement becomes material for academic inquiry	Case-based learning
Dialogical pedagogy	Case discussion, Socratic questioning, reflection	Discussion, concept mapping, textual analysis	Difference is examined through argument rather than personal positioning	Dialogical pedagogy
Collaborative learning	Heterogeneous grouping and participatory discussion	Deliberately mixed discussion groups	Interaction across difference is pedagogically structured	Collaborative learning
Philosophical contextualization	Human dignity, <i>ta'dib</i> , Islamic educational thought	Epistemology of diversity and classical Islamic philosophy	Multicultural questions are situated within Islamic intellectual traditions	Philosophical contextualization

Institutional Mediation through Pesantren Ethics and Madurese Local Wisdom

The third theme indicates that the translation of philosophical commitments was not confined to curriculum and classroom instruction. Participants described equal opportunities for participation, respectful language, transparent assessment, dialogue, *tabayyun*, and deliberation as expectations within academic relationships. Institutional leaders also described respected religious figures as potential mediators when differences became difficult to manage. These practices suggest that multicultural praxis was embedded within institutional relationships, although the strong pesantren orientation also introduced a hierarchical dimension.

This hierarchy constitutes an important counter-interpretation. At Site 1, an institutional leader explicitly described the institution as influenced by a Madurese-pesantren culture that strongly respects authority and explained that lecturer–student relations partly resemble the spiritual relationship between *kiai* and *santri*. The data therefore do not support interpreting campus dialogue as entirely horizontal or authority-free. Rather, the evidence indicates an attempt to combine academic disagreement with established norms of *ta'dzim* and *adab*. No observation documented overt suppression of student disagreement, but respect for authority formed a meaningful boundary within which disagreement was expected to occur.

Madurese local wisdom constituted another mediating element. The spelling *rampa' naong jalikhong* is retained consistently because this is the form used in the research transcripts. Its meaning in this study is participant-defined rather than presented as an independent linguistic or

ethnographic translation. Institutional participants described it as a local philosophy oriented toward *kedamaian dan kebersamaan* peace and togetherness and connected it with inclusive communication and harmonious campus relations. At Site 1, the verification FGD further clarified that its incorporation into educational practice was deliberate and was viewed as compatible with Islamic values.

Pesantren ethics and local-cultural mediation were also visible in everyday environments. Observation at Site 1 identified tolerance and brotherhood messages around the mosque, multicultural and local-cultural resources in the library, and students interacting in shared spaces. At Site 2, moderation and tolerance messages were displayed and students interacted informally in mixed groups. Religious routines at both sites brought lecturers, staff, and students together, while seminars on religious moderation and multicultural Islamic education provided additional academic spaces for discussing pluralism, local wisdom, and difference. These observations supported but did not independently prove the institutional accounts of an inclusive campus culture.

Table 4. Institutional and Cultural Mediation of Multicultural Praxis

Practice domain	Evidence across sites	Analytical relevance
Academic communication	Equal participation, respectful language, transparent assessment	Links dignity and justice with everyday academic relations
Management of disagreement	Dialogue, <i>tabayyun</i> , deliberation, academic forums, respected mediators	Provides institutional procedures for negotiating tension
Pesantren ethics	<i>Adab</i> , <i>ta'dzim</i> , humility, <i>ukhuwah</i> , responsibility	Provides an ethical framework, while retaining hierarchical authority
Madurese local wisdom	<i>Rampa' naong jalikhong</i> , participant-defined as peace and togetherness	Culturally contextualizes harmony-oriented interaction
Religious routines	Prayer, <i>shalawat</i> , <i>tahlilan</i> , <i>istighosah</i> , religious gatherings	Creates shared institutional spaces
Student and community activities	Organizations, seminars, social service, KKN	Extends interaction beyond formal classroom settings
Institutional policy	Equal access, scholarships, non-discrimination, transparent treatment	Connects philosophical justice with organizational arrangements
Campus environment	Moderation/tolerance messages and common spaces	Symbolically reinforces institutional norms

Cross-Site Interpretive Architecture of Multicultural Educational Praxis

Cross-site comparison did not establish a temporal process in which one stage caused the next. Rather, it identified a logical-analytic configuration of mutually related domains. Across both institutions, philosophical interpretations of dignity, justice, responsibility, *ta'dib*, and diversity were associated with curricular content, dialogical pedagogy, academic relationships, pesantren ethics, and local-cultural practices. These domains were observed concurrently during the fieldwork and should therefore be understood as an interpretive architecture rather than a developmental sequence.

Site 1 was characterized by a stronger analytical configuration around *ta'dib*–*local wisdom*–*dialogue*. The Site 1 FGD supported the interpretation that *ta'dib* was prominent in institutional practice, local wisdom was deliberately incorporated, and dialogue provided the preferred

mechanism for negotiating disagreement. Yet the FGD also qualified this pattern by emphasizing that *tarbiyah* and academic development remained necessary. Thus, the configuration does not indicate a simple progression from *ta'dib* to dialogue; it represents a cluster of mutually reinforcing institutional emphases.

Site 2 displayed a related but distinct configuration around *ilmu-amal-akhlak*, *pesantren heritage*, and *wasathiyah*. Participants connected multicultural responsibility to the institutional integration of knowledge, practice, and morality, while *wasathiyah* articulated the boundary between openness to diversity and preservation of Islamic identity. The Site 2 FGD also introduced an important qualification: participants insisted that the institution's *pesantren* heritage should not obscure its university-level academic responsibilities. This reinforces the interpretation that multicultural praxis was produced through negotiation among religious-philosophical commitments, institutional identity, and academic expectations rather than through a single philosophical principle.

The cross-site finding can therefore be represented as an interpretive model of relationships among philosophical, curricular, pedagogical, cultural, and institutional domains. It should not be presented as evidence that institutions move chronologically through a fixed series of stages.

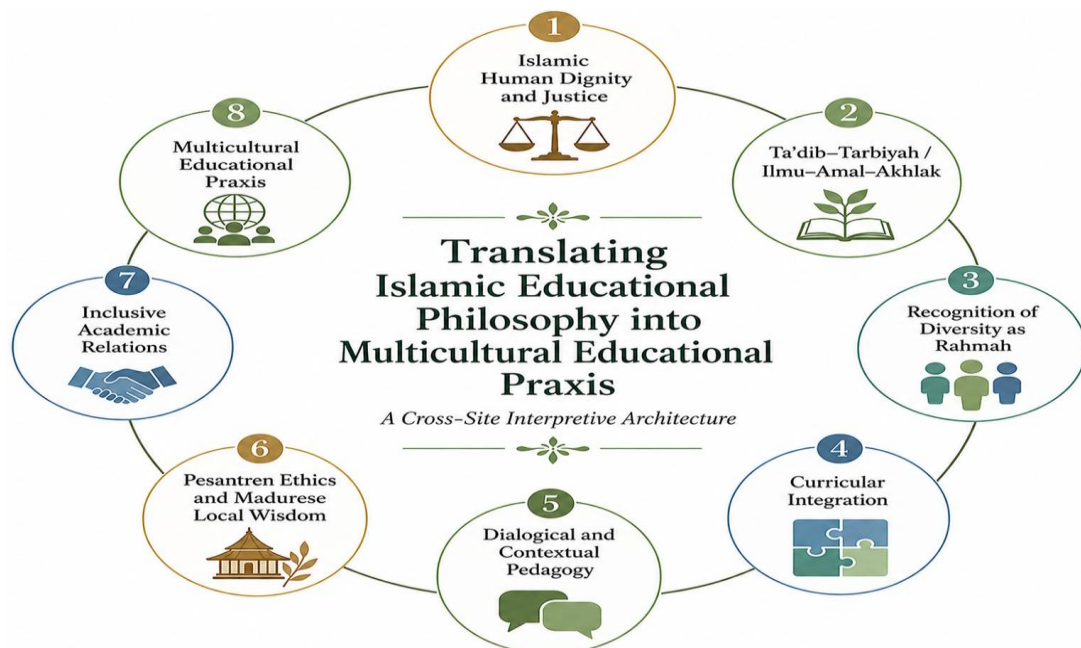


Figure 1. Cross-Site Interpretive Architecture Linking Islamic Educational Philosophy and Multicultural Educational Praxis

The figure represents logical-analytic relationships identified through within-site and cross-site comparison. It does not indicate a temporal sequence, causal progression, or developmental stages.

Table 5. Cross-Site Interpretive Architecture Linking Islamic Educational Philosophy and Multicultural Praxis

Analytical domain	Shared cross-site pattern	Site 1 emphasis	Site 2 emphasis
Philosophical foundations	Dignity, justice, responsibility	<i>Karamah insaniyah</i> , <i>ta'dib</i> , ethical responsibility	Dignity and <i>ilmu-amal-akhlak</i>
Educational orientation	Intellectual and moral formation	Strong <i>pesantren</i> -based <i>ta'dib</i>	Moral formation with explicit academic excellence

Interpretation of diversity	<i>Rahmah</i> and <i>sunnatullah</i> , alongside recognition of tension	Difference requires dialogue	Difference negotiated through <i>wasathiyah</i>
Curricular enactment	Explicit and implicit integration	Philosophy, multicultural education, curriculum, sociology	Undergraduate and postgraduate curricular integration
Pedagogical enactment	Dialogue, cases, collaborative inquiry	Local religious controversies and Socratic questioning	Pluralism, inclusivism, textual analysis
Cultural mediation	Pesantren ethics and Madurese context	<i>Rampa' naong jalikhong, adab, ukhuwah</i>	Pesantren heritage, local harmony, <i>wasathiyah</i>
Institutional enactment	Inclusive academic relations and community engagement	Dialogue and collective activities	Integration across academic and community practices
Overall configuration	Islamic philosophy is associated with lived institutional multicultural praxis	<i>Ta'dib-local wisdom-dialogue</i>	<i>Ilmu-amal-akhlak-wasathiyah-inclusive praxis</i>

Discussion

The findings indicate that translating Islamic educational philosophy into multicultural educational praxis in Islamic higher education in Madura involves more than incorporating tolerance, pluralism, or religious moderation into particular courses. Four interconnected findings address the research questions. First, participants interpreted multicultural education through *karamah insaniyah*, justice, social responsibility, *ta'dib*, and *tarbiyah*. Second, these philosophical commitments were reflected in curriculum and pedagogical practices that treated disagreement as an object of academic inquiry. Third, pesantren ethics and Madurese local wisdom mediated how these commitments were enacted within academic relationships. Fourth, cross-site comparison identified an interpretive architecture rather than a developmental sequence: Site 1 emphasized *ta'dib-local wisdom-dialogue*, whereas Site 2 more explicitly articulated *ilmu-amal-akhlak-wasathiyah*. The findings therefore suggest that Islamic educational philosophy provides normative and interpretive resources whose institutional expression is mediated by curriculum, pedagogy, authority relations, local culture, and organizational practices rather than translated automatically or uniformly into multicultural praxis.

The philosophical foundation identified in this study supports recent attempts to understand education in Muslim contexts through interconnected concepts derived from an Islamic worldview. Contemporary Islamic educational philosophy emphasizes that *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib* should not be treated as isolated terminologies but as related concepts through which educational aims, knowledge, ethical formation, and human development can be interpreted coherently (Ahmed & Chowdhury, 2025). The present study extends this argument empirically, while avoiding the claim that *ta'dib* alone produces multicultural practice. Instead, *ta'dib* provided an ethical vocabulary through which dignity, respectful interaction, and responsibility were interpreted alongside academic formation. Human dignity was associated with non-discrimination, equitable treatment, and recognition of students from different organizational, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds. This is consistent with philosophical accounts locating justice, tolerance, equality, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence within multicultural Islamic education (Sayyi et al., 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2025). The contribution lies not merely in reaffirming compatibility between Islam and multiculturalism, but in showing how philosophical commitments are interpreted through particular institutional arrangements and therefore acquire context-specific forms.

The curricular and pedagogical findings likewise suggest that philosophical commitments become institutionally visible when formal curriculum and classroom interaction are considered together. Previous research has shown that religious moderation can be incorporated through curriculum development, learning materials, and evaluation within Islamic higher education (Mukhibat et al., 2024), while multicultural education in Indonesian Islamic universities has been associated with content integration, equity-oriented pedagogy, knowledge construction, curriculum adaptation, lecturer involvement, and campus culture (Sibawaihi et al., 2025). Dialogical and reflective approaches have similarly connected moderation-related concepts with students' experiences through cases, projects, and participatory learning (Ihwanah et al., 2025; Karnadi et al., 2023). The present findings qualify these accounts by showing that dialogue was neither automatically harmonious nor uniformly inclusive. Discussions of *tahlilan*, *ziarah kubur*, pluralism, and religious interpretation generated competing positions, occasionally heated interaction, and unequal participation. Their analytical significance lies in how lecturers redirected these tensions toward evidence, methods of reasoning, and the epistemological bases of disagreement. Multicultural pedagogy was therefore enacted through the structured management of difference rather than through the absence of contestation.

This interpretation is particularly important because dialogical pedagogy did not require students to relinquish religious commitments or regard all positions as equivalent. Students were encouraged to distinguish disagreement with an argument from rejection of the person presenting it. This corresponds with evidence that religious education can foster respect for plurality when learners engage difference through dialogue and meaningful interaction rather than through one-directional instruction alone (Rukiyanto et al., 2025). Beyond the Indonesian Islamic context, research on dialogical pedagogy also demonstrates that encounters with different perspectives remain shaped by unequal participation, institutional conditions, and the capacity of educators to manage tension (Soye, 2024). The Madurese cases add a distinctive boundary condition to this international discussion: *adab* may facilitate respectful disagreement by regulating language and interpersonal conduct, but respect for lecturers and *pesantren*-derived authority may simultaneously constrain how freely dissenting or minority positions are expressed. The data did not document systematic suppression of dissent, yet the authority-sensitive character of interaction means that apparent harmony should not automatically be interpreted as unrestricted dialogical equality.

The integration of *pesantren* traditions and Madurese local wisdom further differentiates these findings from approaches that understand multicultural education mainly through universal principles or formal policy. Previous scholarship shows that institutional ideology and cultural orientation influence how universities interpret multiculturalism and internationalization (Sibawaihi & Fernandes, 2023). Research on culturally rooted education similarly indicates that local wisdom can become an educational resource when incorporated into curriculum, pedagogy, institutional culture, and social practice (Mu'ti & Amirrachman, 2021). In the present study, *rampa' naong jalikhong*, *pesantren*-based *adab*, *ukhuwah*, *tabayyun*, and respect for teachers did not operate merely as curricular content. They functioned as locally meaningful vocabularies through which dignity, harmony, responsibility, and the management of difference were understood. However, *rampa' naong jalikhong* should be interpreted cautiously: the meaning used here derives from participants' own explanations of peace and togetherness rather than from an independent linguistic

validation of the expression. The FGDs consequently served to clarify how participants understood this local principle and its relationship with institutional practice, rather than to establish consensus as proof of validity.

The role of *wasathiyah*, particularly at Site 2, also refines rather than replaces the literature on religious moderation. Islamic higher education has frequently been positioned as an institutional arena for promoting tolerance, non-violence, national commitment, accommodation of local culture, and moderate Islamic orientations (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). Student reception of Qur'anic and prophetic texts can contribute to moderate religious understanding, while studies of intolerance emphasize that moderation depends on educators, curricula, activities, and institutional environments rather than textbook content alone (Afwadzi et al., 2024; Muhaemin et al., 2023; Sayyi et al., 2023). In the present study, *wasathiyah* operated as one normative dimension within a broader multicultural educational configuration. Participants associated it with remaining rooted in Islamic identity while avoiding intellectual closure and extremism. The integration of *ilmu*, *amal*, and *akhlak* further located engagement with diversity within knowledge, conduct, and moral responsibility. Nevertheless, these accounts represent institutional interpretations rather than evidence that such orientations necessarily produce more tolerant behavior. This distinction is essential because the study did not directly measure behavioral change or long-term multicultural competence.

The conceptual contribution of the study therefore lies more modestly and specifically in identifying a cross-site interpretive architecture linking philosophical, curricular, pedagogical, cultural, relational, and institutional domains. Existing studies have identified curriculum integration, equity pedagogy, lecturer roles, institutional activities, and empowering campus culture as dimensions of multicultural education (Sibawaihi et al., 2025), while Islamic educational philosophy has provided conceptual frameworks for reconsidering educational purposes from within Islamic intellectual traditions (Ahmed & Chowdhury, 2025; Dannur et al., 2023). The present study brings these domains into empirical relation without claiming that they constitute a fixed causal sequence. Figure 1 should therefore be read as a logical-analytic representation of simultaneously observed relationships rather than a temporal pathway. An alternative interpretation remains possible: inclusive practices may be shaped as much by institutional leadership, curriculum policy, religious-moderation programs, lecturers' pedagogical choices, and pesantren socialization as by Islamic educational philosophy itself. The model consequently proposes mediated association rather than philosophical determinism, and its applicability depends on institutional and cultural conditions.

Practically, the findings suggest that multicultural education should not be reduced to a stand-alone course or occasional seminar. Curricular inclusion remains relevant, but the two cases indicate that philosophical commitments are also reflected through lecturer communication, assessment practices, management of disagreement, religious activities, student organizations, institutional policies, and community engagement. This implication is consistent with evidence that multicultural education is institutionally supported when curriculum, campus culture, lecturer roles, and equality-oriented structures operate together (Sibawaihi et al., 2025). It also supports research showing that culturally rooted educational systems can strengthen inclusivity when local wisdom is treated as an educational resource rather than as symbolic decoration (Mu'ti & Amirrachman, 2021). Transferability, however, requires distinguishing general from context-specific elements. Human dignity, justice, dialogical engagement, and ethical responsibility may plausibly inform other Islamic

higher-education contexts, whereas *rampa' naong jalikhong*, particular forms of pesantren authority, and the configurations of *ta'dib* and *wasathiyah* identified here remain closely connected to Madurese institutional and cultural settings.

Several limitations further delimit these interpretations. The study involved only two purposively selected private Islamic higher education institutions, and the fieldwork covered a relatively short period; therefore, the findings represent situated institutional patterns rather than evidence of developmental change. Diversity was predominantly intra-Muslim and socio-cultural, including differences in religious organizations, pesantren backgrounds, interpretations, local traditions, socioeconomic positions, and academic experiences, limiting transferability to institutions characterized by substantial interreligious or international diversity. The researchers' institutional affiliations may also have encouraged socially desirable accounts of harmony, particularly where hierarchical lecturer–student relationships were involved, despite collaborative fieldwork, triangulation, disconfirming-evidence checks, and FGD-based clarification. Observation likewise captured selected institutional situations rather than all everyday interactions, and no longitudinal evidence established sustained changes in student attitudes or behavior. Future studies should therefore examine which elements of this interpretive architecture persist across public and private Islamic universities, more religiously heterogeneous settings, and different cultural contexts, with the most important empirical test being whether longitudinal evidence confirms relationships between philosophical interpretation, institutional enactment, and students' actual multicultural practices.

Conclusion

This study shows that Islamic educational philosophy is translated into multicultural educational praxis through the interaction of philosophical commitments, curriculum, pedagogy, institutional relations, pesantren ethics, and local cultural mediation. Across the two sites, *karamah insaniyah*, justice, social responsibility, *ta'dib*, *tarbiyah*, and diversity as *rahmah* and *sunnatullah* provided normative and interpretive resources for understanding difference. These commitments were reflected in curricular content, dialogical learning, academic relationships, and institutional practices, but their expression was not uniform. Site 1 emphasized *ta'dib*, local wisdom, and dialogue, whereas Site 2 more explicitly articulated *ilmu–amal–akhlak* and *wasathiyah*. The findings therefore support a cross-site interpretive architecture in which Islamic philosophical values are institutionally mediated rather than automatically converted into multicultural practice.

The study contributes a context-sensitive explanation of how philosophy, pedagogy, culture, and institutional practice are related within private Islamic higher education in Madura. Its transferability is necessarily limited by the predominantly intra-Muslim and socio-cultural diversity of the two sites, the short fieldwork period, and the researchers' institutional affiliations. Elements such as human dignity, justice, ethical responsibility, and dialogical engagement may be relevant beyond Madura, whereas pesantren authority patterns, *rampa' naong jalikhong*, and the specific configurations of *ta'dib* and *wasathiyah* remain strongly context-dependent. The most important next empirical test is therefore to examine, through longitudinal and comparative research in more religiously diverse Islamic higher-education settings, whether these interpretive relationships persist and whether they are associated with observable changes in students' multicultural attitudes and practices.

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