



## THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: ANALYZING ISLAMIC TEACHINGS IN THE INDONESIAN CONTEXT

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Received: March 23, 2024	Reviewed: April-June 2024	Published: July 7, 2024
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### ABSTRACT

Indonesia's diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural landscape presents challenges in creating an education system that fully embraces multiculturalism. This study explores how Islamic teachings from the Qur'an and Sunnah can enhance multicultural education practices in Indonesia. Utilizing library research methodology, the study analyzes literature to gather qualitative data. A descriptive-analytical approach is used to understand the theological foundations of multicultural education, with data sourced from books, sacred texts, and academic journals. Inductive analysis provides a holistic perspective on these foundations. The findings identify several key principles from the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's practices: equality (al-musawah), justice (al-'adl), compassion (al-rahmah), and tolerance (al-tasamuh). Verses such as QS. Al-Hujurat: 13 emphasize human equality and divine purpose in diversity, QS. An-Nahl: 90 highlights justice and kindness, QS. Ali-Imran: 159 advocates gentleness and forgiveness, and QS. Al-Kafirun: 1-6 promotes respect for religious differences. The Prophet's practices in Medina, including the Charter of Medina, illustrate these principles in fostering cooperation and peaceful coexistence. The research concludes that the Qur'an and the Prophet's teachings provide a robust theological foundation for multicultural education in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Theological Foundation, Multicultural Education, Islamic Education.

### ABSTRAK

Bentang alam etnis, agama, dan budaya Indonesia yang beragam menghadirkan tantangan unik dalam menciptakan sistem pendidikan yang sepenuhnya merangkul multikulturalisme. Studi ini menyelidiki bagaimana ajaran Islam dari Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah dapat meningkatkan praktik pendidikan multikultural di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan metodologi penelitian kepustakaan, studi ini menganalisis literatur yang relevan untuk mengumpulkan data kualitatif. Pendekatan deskriptif-analitis digunakan untuk mengembangkan wawasan tentang dasar-dasar teologis pendidikan multikultural. Pengumpulan data mencakup sumber primer dan sekunder seperti buku, kitab suci, dan jurnal akademis. Analisis induktif digunakan untuk menyajikan dan menarik kesimpulan dari data, memberikan perspektif holistik tentang dasar-dasar teologis pendidikan multikultural. Temuan ini menyoroti beberapa ayat Al-Qur'an dan praktik Nabi Muhammad sebagai dasar untuk mengembangkan pendidikan multikultural. Prinsip-prinsip utama yang diidentifikasi meliputi kesetaraan (al-musawah), keadilan (al-'adl), kasih sayang (al-rahmah), dan toleransi (al-tasamuh). Misalnya, QS. Surat Al-Hujurat: 13 menekankan kesetaraan manusia dan tujuan ilahi di balik keberagaman, sementara QS. An-Nahl: 90 menggarisbawahi keadilan dan kebaikan tanpa diskriminasi. QS. Ali-Imran: 159 menyoroti kelembutan dan pengampunan, dan QS. Al-Kafirun: 1-6 menekankan rasa hormat terhadap perbedaan agama. Selain itu, praktik Nabi di Madinah, seperti Piagam Madinah, menunjukkan penerapan prinsip-prinsip ini dalam mendorong kerja sama dan hidup berdampingan secara damai di antara berbagai kelompok. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa ajaran Al-Qur'an dan praktik Nabi menawarkan landasan teologis yang kuat bagi pendidikan multikultural.

**Kata Kunci:** Landasan Teologis, Pendidikan Multikultural, Pendidikan Islam.



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DOI: 10.24090/jimrf.v13i2.11867, p. 341-353

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a country with extensive ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity, faces unique challenges in developing an education system that embraces and promotes this diversity. Multicultural education in Indonesia is not merely a response to this diversity but also a crucial strategy for strengthening national integration and peaceful coexistence among various communities. In this context, multicultural education is not just a necessity but a mandate to maintain unity amidst diversity (Tilaar, 2004).

Formally, education in Indonesia is regulated by law. For instance, Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 1 Paragraph 1 on the National Education System states that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process that enables students to actively develop their potential. The goal is for students to have spiritual religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the necessary skills for themselves, society, the nation, and the state (Ahmad Fuadi, 2016). However, this law is considered inadequate because many schools and educational institutions still implement discriminatory education. Prejudice, conflict, and violence based on differences in beliefs, opinions, identities, and lifestyles frequently occur. Empirical social facts show that Indonesia is a multicultural society (Nur, 2019).

The word “pendidikan” in Indonesian translates to “education” in English, which means training and teaching (Oxford, 1991). Education is inherently linked to values. To educate means to instill, implant, and develop

values in students. Meanwhile, “multikultural” comes from “multi,” meaning many, and “cultural,” meaning culture, thus simply referring to cultural diversity.

According to Akhyar Yusuf Lubis, the term “multicultural” refers to the various cultures that collectively form the identity of a culture. From this term arises the concept of multiculturalism, which is an ideology that teaches cultural complexity (Lubis, 2006).

The paradigm of multicultural education is essential to be developed in accordance with Indonesia’s facts and realities. James Banks introduced the concept of multicultural education by identifying five key dimensions: content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and school culture empowerment (Banks, 2019). Multicultural education refers to educational practices that value and accept human diversity in various aspects such as culture, ethnicity, religion, gender, and economic class. The goal of this recognition and acceptance is to enable multicultural societies to contribute to the development of their communities.

The word “culture” is often interpreted as “budaya” in Indonesian. A society that lives together with one cultural pattern is called a monocultural society, and its cultural characteristic is referred to as monocultural. Conversely, a society that can coexist with various cultural patterns is called a multicultural society, with its cultural characteristic referred to as multicultural. The beliefs, norms, and policies that govern collective life are called multiculturalism. When multiculturalism becomes the norm, it is called normative multiculturalism, which

relates to the moral foundation of citizens in a country or nation to act based on mutual agreement (Mania, 2010; Sari and Siregar, 2021).

Therefore, normative multiculturalism requires a mutual agreement in society on how to manage diversity. This can involve creating public policies that support inclusion, education that reflects and values diversity, and collective efforts to address discrimination and injustice. Thus, normative multiculturalism not only acknowledges diversity as part of social reality but also makes it the basis for collective efforts to build a more just and inclusive society.

Multicultural education is expected to be a suitable solution to be implemented in both public and private schools. By adopting this approach, education is expected to reflect the cultural diversity of society, thus fostering a generation tolerant of differences (Baharun and Badriyah, 2020).

Multicultural education plays a crucial role in addressing various challenges in today's diverse classrooms, such as poor academic performance, cultural adaptation issues, and conflict resolution (Avagimyan et al., 2023). Multicultural education is considered an effective solution that can be applied in various types of schools, both public and private. This approach aims for the educational process to fully reflect a culturally diverse society. Multicultural education emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity in society.

In Indonesia, multicultural education is based on principles that recognize and

appreciate differences as sources of learning and growth. These principles also support an educational approach that provides space for all students to develop their understanding and appreciation of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity. As a country with a predominantly Muslim population, Indonesia finds a strong foundation in Islamic values, as outlined in the Quran and Sunnah, which emphasize equality, justice, compassion, and tolerance—the core pillars of multicultural education.

In practice, multicultural education involves developing an inclusive and representative curriculum, training teachers to be sensitive to diversity issues, and creating a school environment that supports and values differences. Through this approach, students are encouraged to understand and appreciate differences and are taught skills to interact effectively and harmoniously with people from various backgrounds.

There are many misunderstandings related to multicultural education due to its weak foundation (Rustam, 2013). From the perspective of Islamic Education Philosophy, the understanding of this concept must be well integrated; otherwise, misinterpretations can occur. The Islamic perspective, based on the Quran and Hadith of Prophet Muhammad, differs from the understanding of multicultural education according to Western paradigms. These differences can conflict with the values upheld in Indonesia (Permana, 2021).

The primary goal of multicultural education is to nurture a new generation that is open and ready to face differences. This generation is expected to have a better

understanding of the importance of diversity in society and be able to contribute to creating an inclusive and tolerant environment. Therefore, multicultural education aims not only to increase students' knowledge about various cultures but also to shape attitudes and behaviors that value diversity, thereby building a more harmonious and united society in diversity.

The discussion on multicultural Islamic education has been explored by several researchers. Ahmad Rois delves into this theme in the *Episteme* journal, exploring Amin Abdullah's thoughts (Rois, 2013). Mansur, in his research, also discusses multicultural Islamic education but focuses more on its curriculum (Mansur, 2016). Meanwhile, Dali reviews multicultural Islamic education in a more general theme, recommending that subjects include tolerance, cultural and religious differences, the dangers of discrimination, conflict resolution, democracy, and plurality (Dali, 2017). Masduki and Malikah present the theological foundation of multicultural Islamic education by referring to Quranic verses that form the basis for developing a multicultural Islamic education paradigm (Masduki and Malikah, 2021).

This study aims to delve deeper into how the Quran and Sunnah can serve as a foundation for strengthening multicultural education practices in Indonesia. The Quran offers various teachings on the importance of appreciating differences, as reflected in verses promoting equality and social justice (QS. Al-Hujurat: 13; QS. An-Nahl: 90). Furthermore, the practice of Prophet Muhammad in Medina demonstrates the practical

implementation of these principles in a highly diverse society, leading to the formation of an inclusive and tolerant community.

Thus, this study shows that the Quran and Sunnah not only provide a theological and moral foundation for multicultural education but also offer concrete practices that can be adopted to nurture a generation that values diversity, coexists peacefully, and contributes to creating a just and inclusive society.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a literature research method combined with a descriptive-analytical approach to examine and analyze relevant literature on the subject matter. The data collection techniques involve utilizing primary and secondary sources such as books, scriptures, and scientific journals related to the research focus.

The data collection process was conducted by establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and quality of the sources used. The selected literature was then analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques, which involved a coding process to identify main themes and subthemes.

Data analysis was performed inductively, beginning with data collection, followed by data presentation through tables or conceptual maps, and simultaneous conclusion drawing. This inductive approach aims to comprehensively explain the ideological foundation of multicultural education and to identify and develop underlying themes in theological concepts

related to the implementation of multicultural education.

This research aims to explore and analyze theological concepts and the implementation of multicultural education in various contexts. Thus, this study is expected to provide a strong theoretical foundation and practical guidance for the implementation of multicultural education.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Quranic Verses and Prophetic Practices as Theological Foundations for Multicultural Islamic Education

This study identified several Quranic verses and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that can serve as the theological foundation for developing multicultural Islamic education. Multicultural Islamic education is based on the principles of equality (al-musawah), justice (al-'adl), compassion (al-rahmah), tolerance (al-tasamuh), and the practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Medina, which demonstrate the tangible implementation of these principles.

First, Equality (al-Musawah). One of the verses that explain equality is Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ  
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ.

*“O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous*

*of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware.”* (Surah Al-Hujurat: 13)

In this verse, Al-Maraghi explains the unity of human origin, thus questioning the act of mocking one another. If the origin of humanity is the same, why should one mock another? Allah created humans from various tribes so that they may know and help each other (Al-Maraghi 1993). Quraish Shihab elucidates that this verse teaches the manners of interaction among humans, not just within the same gender or specific groups. This is emphasized in the beginning of the verse which uses the phrase “yaa ayyuhannaas.” Quraish Shihab also stresses that cultural and tribal differences are intended to encourage mutual assistance and complementarity among people. He underscores the meaning of equality in this verse, whether between men and women, among human descendants, or among tribes (Shihab 2002). Sayyid Quthb discusses this verse by emphasizing that differences in skin color, language, and race are not considerations for Allah; the only criterion Allah considers is the piety possessed by humans (Quthb 2014).

This verse, QS. Al-Hujurat: 13, contains several important messages that profoundly reflect Islam’s vision of human diversity and the values that should guide human interaction, especially in the context of multiculturalism. Firstly, this verse explicitly states that Allah created humans from a male and a female, and made them into nations and tribes. This affirms that ethnic and cultural diversity is part of divine design and must be respected as part of Allah’s decree. Secondly, diversity is not without purpose; its goal is “so that you may know one another.” This

highlights the positive value of diversity: to promote understanding and harmony among humans. Education and interactions that appreciate and explore this diversity can enrich society and reduce prejudice. Finally, this verse establishes that honor in the eyes of Allah is not determined by ethnic origin, wealth, or social status, but by piety—righteousness and fear of Allah. This is a powerful egalitarian statement that challenges any notion of inherent superiority of one group over another based on their ethnic or cultural origins.

Thus, QS. Al-Hujurat: 13 provides a robust theological foundation for a multicultural approach within society and educational systems, encouraging an appreciation of diversity and respectful interactions as pathways towards a more harmonious and socially prosperous life.

*Second*, Justice (al-'Adl). According to Masduki, there are approximately 56 verses in the Qur'an that explain justice, which undoubtedly highlights the importance of upholding and respecting the principle of justice in all circumstances and situations for Muslims (Masduki and Malika, 2021). The command to act justly towards everyone is, among others, mentioned in Surah An-Nahl, verse 90:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ  
وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ  
تَذَكَّرُونَ.

*“Indeed, Allah commands justice, kindness, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and transgression. He instructs you so that you may take heed.”* (An-Nahl: 90)

Justice, as a theological concept, is not only a fundamental moral imperative but also an essential foundation for establishing inclusive and meaningful multicultural educational practices. In various theological traditions, justice is often understood as a manifestation of the divine nature, which demands balance, harmony, and equality among all creations. For instance, in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions, justice is a divine command reflecting God's just and loving nature (Rohman, Zulaiha, and Taufiq 2023).

In the context of multicultural education, the verse from Surah An-Nahl: 90 embodies key values that can form the basis for developing an inclusive and harmonious educational environment. The command to act justly necessitates that individuals respect differences and treat everyone equally, without discrimination based on race, religion, or cultural background. Acts of kindness and giving to relatives can be interpreted as encouragement to help one another and build positive relationships among students from diverse backgrounds. The prohibition of indecency, wrongdoing, and hostility underscores the importance of maintaining attitudes and actions that respect the dignity of every individual and prevent any behavior that disrupts harmony and unity. By applying these teachings, multicultural education can foster a generation that is tolerant, empathetic, and capable of coexisting in a diverse society.

Theological justice compels us to view every individual as a creation of God with equal dignity and worth. This means that everyone, regardless of cultural, ethnic,

religious, or social background, should be treated with respect and given equal opportunities in all aspects of life, including education.

From a multicultural educational perspective, justice means creating a learning environment that values and celebrates diversity. Education should be a medium where the values of justice, equality, and respect for differences are integrated into the curriculum, pedagogy, and daily interactions. This includes recognizing and eliminating various forms of discrimination, both structural and interpersonal.

By grounding multicultural educational practices in the principles of theological justice, we encourage the creation of a more harmonious and tolerant society. Just education helps students understand and appreciate differences, develop empathy, and build the capacity to interact with others fairly and constructively. This not only prepares them to become responsible global citizens but also advances the spiritual mission of many religious traditions that teach love, respect for others, and the pursuit of common good.

Therefore, integrating theological justice into multicultural educational practices is a necessity that not only enriches the learning experience but also strengthens our moral and spiritual foundation as a diverse global community.

*Third, Compassion (Ar-Rahmah).* Among the numerous verses that discuss compassion is Surah Ali Imran, verse 159,

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ  
الْقَلْبِ لَآتَقَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ  
اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ.

*“Thus, it is by the mercy of Allah that you are gentle with them. If you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have certainly distanced themselves from you. So, pardon them, seek forgiveness for them, and consult with them in the matters at hand [matters of warfare and worldly affairs]. Then, when you have made a firm decision, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.” (Ali-Imran: 159)*

The essence of this verse elucidates the dimensions of gentleness, forgiveness, and consultation as integral aspects of compassion. Gentleness and a non-harsh demeanor are key to maintaining good relationships and preventing division. In the context of multicultural education, this implies that educators must be gentle and understanding, forgiving mistakes, and always engaging in dialogue and consultation to address differences. This principle of compassion forms the ideological foundation of multicultural education by emphasizing the importance of respecting differences, fostering inclusivity, and resolving conflicts peacefully.

In multicultural education, values such as gentleness, forgiveness, and attentiveness in leadership and social interaction are paramount, as emphasized by scholars like Ibn Kathir, Al-Qurtubi, and Fakhruddin al-Razi. These values align with the principles of multiculturalism, promoting respect for diverse beliefs and encouraging peaceful

coexistence among individuals from different backgrounds (Rosyad, 2019).

In a hadith, it is mentioned that Allah will not show mercy to those who do not show mercy to others. The Prophet Muhammad said:

عَنْ جَرِيرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ النَّاسَ.

*“Allah will not have mercy on those who do not show mercy to humanity”* (Hadith narrated by Muslim).

In multicultural education, the principle of compassion serves as a critical theological foundation. This hadith emphasizes the social responsibility to create a compassionate environment. In an educational context, this means that educators and students must show mutual affection and support for one another. The implementation of this teaching includes concrete actions such as respecting each other, understanding differences, assisting those in need, and avoiding discriminatory or harsh behavior.

In the field of multicultural education, the principle of compassion functions as a crucial theological foundation, underscoring social responsibility and the creation of a nurturing environment (Efruan and Dami 2019). This principle is reinforced by a hadith that highlights the importance of fostering a loving community where educators and students alike demonstrate affection and support for each other (Prasetyo 2020).

The practical implementation of these teachings involves actions such as promoting mutual respect, embracing differences,

helping those in need, and refraining from discriminatory or harsh behavior. By integrating these values into educational practices, individuals can contribute to a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment that celebrates diversity and upholds the principles of compassion and empathy.

By establishing the principle of compassion as a theological foundation, multicultural education can cultivate universal human values, build a sense of solidarity, and strengthen social bonds among diverse individuals. This aligns with Islamic teachings that encourage followers to be *rahmatan lil ‘alamin*, or a mercy to all creation.

*Fourth, Tolerance (Al-Tasamuh).* The principle of tolerance is a fundamental foundation in the development of multicultural education, which is not solely based on theological values. Several verses in the Qur’an emphasize the importance of and promote this principle of tolerance, including QS. Al-Baqarah: 256, QS. Al-Mumtahanah: 8-9, QS. Al-An’ām: 108, and QS. Al-Kafirun: 1-6.

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ (1) لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ (2) وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ (3) وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ (4) وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ (5) لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِي دِينِي (6).

*“Say (O Muhammad), “O disbelievers! I will not worship what you worship, nor will you worship what I worship. I shall never worship what you worship, nor will you ever worship what I worship. For you is your religion, and for me is mine.”* (QS. Al-Kafirun: 1-6).

Tolerance in Islam is a form of proportional and non-excessive tolerance.



One of the principles emphasized is that tolerance must not exceed reasonable limits, such as mixing Islamic rituals or beliefs with those of other religions. Tolerance in Islam delineates a clear boundary between Islam and other religions, rather than blurring this line by blending various religious teachings in the name of tolerance.

Furthermore, students' perceptions of multicultural education play a crucial role, with factors such as understanding differences, building trust, and promoting tolerance contributing to the positive implementation of multiculturalism in educational settings (Alkhofifah, Sabarudin, and Wanto 2022).

Wahbah al-Zuhaili, in his *Tafsir al-Munir*, explains that Surah al-Kafirun is a declaration of the separation of Islam from the religion of the polytheists (*al-barâ'ah*) and a command to dedicate worship solely to Allah. He also emphasizes that this verse applies universally, not only to the polytheists of the Prophet Muhammad's time but also to all polytheists throughout all ages (Al-Zuhaili 2013).

Wahbah al-Zuhaili provides an in-depth explanation of Surah al-Kafirun, one of the chapters in the Qur'an. He elucidates that this chapter is a clear declaration of the separation between Islam and the religion practiced by the polytheists, those who associate others with Allah. The term "*al-barâ'ah*" is used to describe this separation, indicating that Muslims do not engage in or adopt the religious practices of the polytheists.

Additionally, Wahbah al-Zuhaili underscores that Surah al-Kafirun contains a

command to devote worship exclusively to Allah. This means that the worship and devotion of Muslims must be purely directed to Allah, without being tainted by elements of polytheism or other beliefs. In this context, sincerity in worship becomes the core message of the chapter.

By instilling the values reflected in Surah al-Kafirun, multicultural education can help shape individuals who are tolerant and capable of living peacefully and harmoniously in a diverse society. This verse teaches that respecting differences is part of Islamic teachings, aligning with efforts to create a more peaceful and tolerant world.

Moreover, Wahbah al-Zuhaili asserts that the verses in Surah al-Kafirun are universally applicable and not limited to the polytheists of the Prophet Muhammad's era. The teachings and principles contained in this chapter are relevant to all polytheists of every age. This means that the message of separation and exclusive worship conveyed in this chapter remains applicable throughout time and is directed at every individual who associates others with Allah.

Thus, Wahbah al-Zuhaili's explanation highlights the importance of purifying faith and religious practices in Islam, emphasizing Islam's firm stance against polytheism, whether in the past, present, or future.

### **The Practices of Prophet Muhammad in Medina**

The leadership of Prophet Muhammad in establishing a multicultural community in 7th-century Medina serves as an exemplary model of inclusive practices and remarkable tolerance (Wildan 2023). Through the Charter

of Medina, the Prophet promoted justice, unity, and respect for diversity, laying the groundwork for the harmonious coexistence of various ethnic and religious groups. His communication skills and ability to persuade people from different backgrounds to live together peacefully underscore the importance of multicultural education and social integration (Hasrat Efendi Samosir, Effiati Juliana Hasibuan, and Tappil Rambe 2023). The teachings derived from the Prophet's actions emphasize the significance of preserving cultural and traditional diversity while fostering mutual respect and understanding among communities, reflecting a source of inspiration for contemporary multicultural education efforts (Rahman et al. 2023).

The theological foundations exemplified by Prophet Muhammad include several key principles. Firstly, the Principle of Tawhid (Monotheism) emphasizes the unity of humankind under one God, implying that unity and equality among people are fundamental. This principle teaches that every individual, regardless of their ethnic or religious background, holds equal value in the eyes of God.

Secondly, the teachings on Justice ('Adl) highlight the importance of justice in social relations, as emphasized in the Qur'an (QS 4:135). Prophet Muhammad implemented this principle by ensuring that the rights of all individuals were respected and protected, regardless of their religious or ethnic affiliations.

Thirdly, Compassion and Mercy (ar-Rahmah) is a central teaching in Islam, advocating mercy for all creation (rahmatan lil

'alamin). Prophet Muhammad applied this concept in his daily life by showing compassion and respect to all people, including those who did not follow Islam.

Prophet Muhammad's detailed application of multicultural principles during his leadership in Medina encompasses several key aspects of managing and integrating a diverse community (Fadly 2018). After migrating to Medina, Prophet Muhammad encountered a highly diverse society, including people from various tribes, religions, and ethnic backgrounds. At that time, Medina was a meeting point for many groups, including the native Jewish population and other Arab tribes.

One of Prophet Muhammad's significant actions in promoting multiculturalism was the creation of the Charter of Medina. This document, often considered the first written constitution, established a framework for governance and social interaction among the different religious and ethnic groups in Medina. The Charter guaranteed the rights and freedoms of all groups, including the right to worship and manage their internal affairs.

Prophet Muhammad specifically managed relations with the Jewish community in Medina. Despite some of them being skeptical or even openly opposing his leadership, he endeavored to ensure they were treated justly and their rights were protected. The Charter of Medina included provisions stating that the Jews of Medina were "one community" with the Muslims, with equal duties and rights.

Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of cooperation and peaceful coexistence among different groups. He taught that all residents of Medina should work together to defend the city from external attacks and support one another in times of difficulty. This reflects a multicultural approach to managing diversity, aiming not only for tolerance but also for active integration and mutual support.

Prophet Muhammad's practices in managing a multicultural society were not merely political actions but were also deeply rooted in Islamic theology. He implemented Qur'anic principles of diversity and equality, demonstrating that Islam recognizes and respects human diversity as part of divine will. Through these practices, Prophet Muhammad not only taught tolerance and acceptance but also the importance of an actively cooperative multicultural society in achieving higher goals, such as social harmony and collective well-being.

## CONCLUSION

This study significantly demonstrates that specific Quranic verses and the practices of Prophet Muhammad (saw) can serve as a robust theological foundation for developing Islamic multicultural education based on the principles of equality (al-musawah), justice (al-'adl), compassion (al-rahmah), and tolerance (al-tasamuh). The research reveals that verses such as QS. Al-Hujurat: 13 and QS. An-Nahl: 90 endorse the importance of diversity and justice in education. Additionally, QS. Ali-Imran: 159 and QS. Al-Kafirun: 1-6 emphasize the values of gentleness, forgiveness, and respect for

different beliefs. The multicultural practices of Prophet Muhammad in Medina, exemplified by the Charter of Medina, illustrate the practical application of these principles, which are relevant for shaping diverse and inclusive societies.

The practical implications of this study indicate that by instilling the values of equality, justice, compassion, and tolerance in the Islamic education curriculum, educational institutions can cultivate more tolerant individuals who appreciate diversity. This is crucial for creating a harmonious and inclusive society. Furthermore, this research paves the way for further exploration of the application of these values in various educational and social contexts.

Therefore, the findings of this study make a significant contribution to the literature on Islamic multicultural education, offering a theological and practical framework for developing a more inclusive and just curriculum.

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