

INTEGRATING RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE INTO MULTICULTURAL ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A MULTILAYERED LAYERED FRAMEWORK TO PREVENT INTOLERANCE

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Abstract

This study examines how religious tolerance is integrated into multicultural Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju. Using an interpretive qualitative case-study design, the study draws on traceable interview data from nine informants: one principal, three IRE teachers, and five students in Grades X–XII with experience of interreligious interaction. Interviews were conducted from April to May 2025 and analyzed thematically through familiarization, initial coding, categorization, cross-source comparison, theme review, and interpretation. The findings show that tolerance was reported as a multilayered educational process: Islamic identity and respect for religious difference were linked to learning objectives and content, dialogical and collaborative pedagogy, teacher role modelling, inclusive school culture, and students' everyday social experiences. Teachers reported using discussion, case studies, role play, collaborative projects, contextual learning, reflection, and attitude assessment, while students associated tolerance with respect for worship, non-discriminatory speech, cross-religious cooperation, and dialogue in resolving differences. The study contributes to multicultural IRE by conceptualizing tolerance education as an interconnected normative, pedagogical, and institutional mechanism rather than as an isolated topic or method. Because original curriculum documents, complete interview transcripts, and raw observation records were unavailable in the source package, the findings are interpreted as reported practices rather than independently verified implementation or causal effects.

Keywords: *Multicultural Islamic Religious Education; Religious Tolerance; Intolerance Prevention; Dialogical Pedagogy; School Culture.*



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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis integrasi toleransi beragama melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) multikultural di SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju dengan desain studi kasus kualitatif interpretatif. Data wawancara yang dapat ditelusuri berasal dari sembilan informan, yaitu seorang kepala sekolah, tiga guru PAI, dan lima siswa kelas X–XII yang memiliki pengalaman interaksi lintas agama. Wawancara dilaksanakan pada April–Mei 2025 dan dianalisis secara tematik melalui familiarisasi data, pengodean awal, kategorisasi, perbandingan antarsumber, peninjauan tema, dan interpretasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa toleransi dilaporkan bekerja sebagai proses pendidikan berlapis: keteguhan identitas Islam dan penghormatan terhadap perbedaan agama dihubungkan dengan tujuan serta materi pembelajaran, pedagogi dialogis dan kolaboratif, keteladanan guru, budaya sekolah yang inklusif, dan pengalaman sosial siswa. Guru melaporkan penggunaan diskusi, studi kasus, permainan peran, proyek kolaboratif, pembelajaran kontekstual, refleksi, dan penilaian sikap, sedangkan siswa memaknai toleransi sebagai penghormatan terhadap ibadah, penggunaan bahasa nondiskriminatif, kerja sama lintas agama, dan penyelesaian perbedaan melalui dialog. Kontribusi penelitian terletak pada konseptualisasi pendidikan toleransi sebagai mekanisme normatif, pedagogis, dan institusional yang saling terhubung, bukan sebagai materi atau metode yang berdiri sendiri. Karena dokumen kurikulum asli, transkrip wawancara lengkap, dan catatan observasi mentah tidak tersedia dalam berkas sumber, temuan dipahami sebagai praktik yang dilaporkan, bukan implementasi yang telah diverifikasi secara independen atau bukti hubungan kausal.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Agama Islam multikultural; Toleransi Beragama; Pencegahan Intoleransi; Pedagogi Dialogis; Budaya Sekolah.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is characterized by religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural plurality. In this setting, schools function not only as academic institutions but also as social spaces in which students learn how to negotiate difference. Religious tolerance therefore cannot be reduced to passive acceptance of others; it involves listening, respecting rights, cooperating across differences, restraining prejudice, and resolving disagreement without discrimination. Mamlok (2023) argues that tolerance education must move from abstract endorsement to enacted social experience, while cross-national evidence associates intercultural education and attitudes with students' social and well-being outcomes (Basarkod et al., 2024). Tolerance should thus be treated as a social competence that is learned, practiced, and reinforced throughout the educational experience.

Multicultural education provides a framework for treating diversity as a learning resource and a basis for social justice. A meta-analysis of Indonesian

scholarship identifies *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, equality, cultural identity, and social justice as central themes in the country's multicultural-education paradigm (Jayadi et al., 2022). At school level, integrated multicultural learning can strengthen tolerance and social harmony (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021). Yet diversity alone does not guarantee inclusion. Hummelstedt-Djedou et al. (2021) show that multicultural discourse can continue to construct minority groups as 'others' when teachers and institutions fail to address power, stereotypes, and inequality critically. For this reason, multicultural integration needs to be visible consistently in learning objectives, content, pedagogy, assessment, and school culture.

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) occupies a strategic position in this process because it shapes both religious knowledge and students' moral orientation toward others. The evolution of Islamic education policy in Indonesia shows that IRE continually interacts with national priorities, social change, and the demands of a plural society (Kosim et al., 2023). Bibliometric evidence also indicates growing scholarly attention to the relationship between religious education and moderation, while implementation remains an important area for development (Hasan & Juhannis, 2023). Multicultural IRE therefore needs to connect commitment to Islamic identity with the capacity to live responsibly with difference, so that personal piety is accompanied by social piety expressed through dignity, fairness, and respect for the rights of other members of the school community.

Religious moderation offers one framework for translating this orientation into education. Religious moderation among Indonesian Muslims is associated with religiosity and demographic characteristics (Subchi et al., 2022), while knowledge and attitudes contribute to intentions to behave moderately (Latifa et al., 2022). At the secondary-school level, moderation values must be operationalized in forms that students can understand and practice. Mulyana (2023) shows that IRE textbooks contain moderation values, but their educational significance depends on teaching processes and school context. Recent research with Indonesian high-school teachers further suggests that tolerance education is uneven and that limited interreligious learning can constrain the cultivation of tolerance (Sirry et al., 2024). These findings reinforce the need to connect religious knowledge, attitudes, practice, and students' social environments.

Curriculum is a principal instrument for building this connection because it defines learning outcomes, content, experiences, and evaluation. Moderation-oriented curriculum development should connect knowledge, skills, tolerant attitudes, national commitment, rejection of violence, and openness to local culture (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Conversely, integration that remains textual or administrative risks producing shallow understanding. Chotimah et al. (2025) show

that moderation initiatives can become superficial when they depend heavily on top-down policy, theoretical content, and limited instructional time while remaining detached from school culture and students' social realities. Tolerance must therefore be made visible in objectives, materials, learning activities, assessment, and follow-up rather than being treated as a slogan or an isolated subtopic.

Pedagogy determines whether curricular values become meaningful experience. Aderibigbe et al. (2023) report that Islamic education can foster tolerance and respect for diversity when learning provides authentic experience, safe discussion, reflection, and interaction across backgrounds. In Indonesia, a collaborative film-making project showed how students constructed meanings of religious tolerance through shared activity and interreligious contact (Mulya & Aditomo, 2019), while experiential interfaith education in secondary schools has been associated with improved religious literacy, reduced stereotyping, and social inclusion (McCowan, 2017). Learning patterns that combine cognitive, socio-affective, and practical-empirical dimensions are likewise relevant to tolerant attitudes (Junaedi et al., 2023). In IRE, these principles can be translated through discussion, case analysis, role play, collaborative projects, reflection, and engagement with real social dilemmas. The aim is not to blur religious commitments but to help students distinguish doctrinal conviction from discriminatory or coercive behavior.

Institutional experience also matters because multicultural education is sustained through consistent everyday life. Latif and Hafid (2021) show that multicultural attitudes in Islamic educational institutions are cultivated through dialogue, openness, role modelling, and daily social interaction. In a post-conflict setting, Mashuri et al. (2024) similarly demonstrate that multicultural religious education can support sustainable peace when teaching strategies, social relations, and institutional culture reinforce one another. Tolerance education therefore cannot be assigned solely to a single IRE topic. School programs, student organizations, social activities, religious services, communication norms, and conflict-resolution practices need to reinforce the same message so that students experience coherence between the formal curriculum and institutional life.

Teachers are central actors in connecting curriculum with students' experience. Their capacity to understand diversity shapes the examples they select, the discussions they facilitate, the opportunities they provide for student voice, and the way they respond to disagreement. Teachers' cultural intelligence is associated with more positive attitudes toward multicultural education through intercultural sensitivity (Coşkun et al., 2024), and culturally relevant intercultural practices matter when translated into concrete classroom action (Hagenaars et al., 2025). In

IRE, teachers therefore function not merely as transmitters of doctrine but also as dialogue facilitators, moral guides, and role models who are expected to treat students fairly across religious, ethnic, and social differences.

The secondary-school context deserves particular attention because adolescence involves identity formation, expanding peer networks, and greater exposure to digital information. Research on Indonesian high-school students indicates that tolerance can develop positively while remaining vulnerable to differences in religious literacy, understanding of diversity, and social environment (Kartono et al., 2024). Normatively, the fiqh of tolerance provides a framework for preserving religious principles while sustaining moderate and peaceful social relations in Southeast Asian societies (Muhajarah & Soebahar, 2024). Schools therefore need proportional religious clarification, critical digital literacy, structured opportunities for cooperation across identities, and dialogical spaces that help students assess exclusive or intolerant narratives rather than accept them uncritically.

SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju provides a context in which students from different religious, cultural, and social backgrounds encounter one another in learning and school activities. Earlier studies have often examined multicultural education, religious moderation, curriculum, teacher perspectives, or interreligious interventions as separate domains (Junaedi et al., 2023; Mulya & Aditomo, 2019; Sirry et al., 2024). Less attention has been given to how normative IRE orientation, curriculum planning, classroom pedagogy, teacher role modelling, school culture, and students' social experience operate together within a single school ecology. This study therefore conceptualizes tolerance integration as a multilayered mechanism formed through the alignment of these elements. It aims to analyze: (1) how teachers frame tolerance in IRE planning; (2) how tolerance is reported to be enacted pedagogically; (3) how school policies and culture reinforce it; and (4) how students interpret and practice tolerance in everyday interaction. Scientifically, the study contributes an integrative analytical account of multicultural IRE in which tolerance is treated as an interconnected normative, pedagogical, and institutional process with potential relevance for preventing intolerance, while carefully distinguishing reported practice from independently observed implementation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed an interpretive qualitative case-study design. A case study was selected because the research focused on a single educational setting, SMA Negeri 1 Mamuju, and sought to understand the integration of religious tolerance through multicultural IRE within its specific policy, classroom, school-

culture, and social-interaction context. This design supports contextual interpretation of participants' meanings and the relationships among institutional and pedagogical components (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

The traceable dataset comprised nine informants: one principal, three IRE teachers, and five students. The IRE teachers held bachelor's or master's degrees and had between two and eleven years of teaching experience. Students were drawn from Grades X, XI, and XII and were purposively selected because they had experience interacting and cooperating with peers of different religions through classroom learning, student organizations, the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), social activities, or extracurricular programs. The principal was interviewed on 23 April 2025, the IRE teachers on 7–12 May 2025, and the students on 14–20 May 2025. Selecting students with cross-religious interaction experience enabled focused exploration of tolerance practices but may also have produced a more positive picture than would be obtained from students who had experienced exclusion or conflict.

The primary data source was semi-structured interviews. Questions for teachers addressed the formulation of tolerance in learning objectives, its connection with content and activities, teaching methods, attitude assessment, role modelling, school culture, implementation constraints, and strategies for managing disagreement. Student interviews explored learning experiences, understandings of tolerance, forms of interreligious interaction, perceived learning benefits, and approaches to resolving differences. The principal interview addressed school policy, vision and mission, character-development programs, support for teachers, religious facilities and services, and mechanisms for handling conflict. A supplementary research narrative was used only as contextual material because its provenance, preparation process, and evidentiary basis could not be fully verified; it was not treated as independent documentary or observational evidence.

The data were analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke (2006). The researcher repeatedly read the available material for familiarization, generated initial codes, grouped related codes into categories, developed provisional themes, reviewed themes against the traceable data, and interpreted relationships among themes. The principal's, teachers', and students' perspectives were compared to identify convergence, divergence, and recurring patterns. Final themes were retained when they were traceable to interview evidence and relevant to the research questions, and were then interpreted through the literature on tolerance education, multicultural education, and IRE. Analytical credibility was strengthened through cross-source comparison and by restricting claims to what the available

evidence supports; the study does not claim independent observational verification of reported classroom or school practices.

Confidentiality was maintained through initials and participant codes. An earlier revision table referred to ten students, but the traceable interview summaries contained only five student initials—AR, NS, FM, CL, and MR—so analysis and attribution were restricted to these five students and no response frequencies were inferred. Material referring to SMA Negeri 12 Semarang was excluded because it did not originate from the research site. Original curriculum documents, assessment rubrics, complete transcripts, and raw classroom-observation records were not available in the source package; consequently, statements about curricular integration and school practice are consistently presented as informant-reported practices rather than as findings from a documentary audit or direct observation. Only de-identified interview material is reported in this article.

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants

Group	Code/Initials	Number	Key characteristics	Interview date
Principal	KS-01	1	Female; master's degree; 6 years in the position	23 April 2025
IRE teachers	G-01, G-02, G-03	3	Bachelor's–master's degrees; 2–11 years of teaching experience	7–12 May 2025
Students	AR, NS, FM, CL, MR	5	Grades X–XII; purposively selected for experience of interreligious interaction	14–20 May 2025

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Multicultural Islamic Religious Education as an Integrative Orientation

Interview evidence indicates that informants understood multicultural IRE as an educational orientation that links the strengthening of Islamic identity with the capacity to live harmoniously in a plural society. The principal described IRE not only as a means of mastering religious knowledge but also as a vehicle for character formation in which differences of religion, culture, ethnicity, and social background become contexts for practicing Islamic values in social relations.

The multicultural orientation was not described as religious relativism or the mixing of doctrines. Teachers emphasized commitment to Islamic belief while encouraging students to distinguish the domain of faith from the domain of social relations. In social life, students were expected to respect others' right to worship, cooperate in shared matters, avoid discrimination, and treat members of the school community fairly. This reported position connects *tasamuh* with civic responsibility and frames IRE as supporting both personal and social piety.

A supplementary research narrative stated that IRE content was oriented toward compassion, justice, and goodness. Because the original learning documents and raw observation notes were unavailable, this material is used only as contextual support for interview accounts rather than as independent documentary evidence. Conceptually, such values can link Islamic sources with life in a plural society, consistent with multicultural education that treats diversity as a source of learning and moral experience (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021; Jayadi et al., 2022).

Accordingly, multicultural IRE in this case is best understood as an interpretive framework shaping how informants described learning goals, content, methods, activities, and expected student conduct. The evidence supports a reported multilayered orientation, but without original planning documents and observation records it cannot establish that all components operate as a fully verified curriculum system.

Integrating Tolerance into IRE Planning and Learning Structure

Teachers reported that tolerance was positioned as a cross-cutting value rather than as a stand-alone topic. They linked it to learning objectives and to elements of Qur'an and Hadith, Akhlaq, and Islamic Civilization History. In lessons on *tasamuh* and moral conduct, the stated goal extended beyond defining concepts to respecting difference, maintaining social harmony, and cooperating in shared social matters. Teachers also related these orientations to faith and noble character, global diversity, and mutual cooperation within the Pancasila Student Profile framework.

Teacher interview summaries indicated that tolerance was reportedly connected with objectives, content, classroom activities, and attitude assessment. This pattern suggests an intended alignment among curricular elements and is consistent with the argument that moderation curricula require coherence across planning, implementation, and evaluation (Mukhibat et al., 2024). However, because lesson modules, assessment rubrics, and original curriculum documents were unavailable, the consistency of this alignment could not be independently audited.

Teachers defined tolerance as respecting the right of others to profess and practice their religion without discrimination or coercion. At the same time, they emphasized doctrinal boundaries: tolerance was not described as mixing teachings, equating all beliefs, or participating in another religion's worship. This clarification was considered important because students were reported to enter lessons with different prior understandings—some interpreting tolerance too broadly as participation in another religion's ritual life and others too narrowly as a reason to limit ordinary social interaction. IRE was therefore presented as a space for clarifying the distinction between religious commitment and social respect.

The interview material suggests that teachers used tolerance as a lens for connecting Qur'anic verses, hadith, moral conduct, Islamic history, social relations, and civic responsibility. Yet because original lesson plans and curriculum documents were not available, this finding should be read as teacher-reported curricular practice rather than as the result of a formal curriculum audit.

Across the three teacher interviews, G-01, G-02, and G-03 consistently reported that tolerance was not taught only as a separate topic but was connected with Qur'an and Hadith, Akhlaq, and Islamic Civilization History (teacher interviews, 7–12 May 2025).

Varied, Dialogical, and Collaborative Pedagogy

Teachers reported using group discussion, case studies, question-and-answer sessions, presentations, role play, collaborative projects, group work, contextual learning, and reflection. The situations discussed reportedly included respect for worship, non-discriminatory language, cooperation in assignments, differences of opinion, and the evaluation of religious information encountered in students' social environments and on social media. These methods were intended to bring the concept of tolerance closer to students' lived experience.

Discussion and case analysis were described as spaces in which students could examine the boundary between conviction and social relations. Role play was used to encourage perspective-taking, while collaborative projects required students to work toward shared goals across religious differences. Rather than simply supplying answers, teachers reported asking students to explain their reasoning, listen to other views, and choose actions that preserve religious commitment while respecting others' rights. This pattern is consistent with tolerance as a practical competence learned through engagement with difference (Mamlok, 2023), with authentic Islamic learning that connects values to real situations (Aderibigbe et al., 2023), and with experiential interfaith approaches that emphasize contact, dialogue, and cooperation (McCowan, 2017; Mulya & Aditomo, 2019).

Teachers also reported using compassion, justice, and goodness as ethical principles when discussing life in a plural society. These values were linked to Islamic sources and used to help students translate normative teachings into everyday judgment and behavior. Because no raw classroom-observation records were available, the article does not claim to have observed the frequency, fidelity, or classroom effects of these practices directly.

Students reported that discussion, question-and-answer activities, and concrete cases helped them understand the material and articulate their views. Retrospectively, they also described the lessons as helping clarify the distinction between social respect and the mixing of religious beliefs. Because the study did not employ pre- and post-measures, these accounts represent students' perceived learning benefits rather than causal evidence of attitude change.

Teachers further reported using end-of-lesson reflection, self-assessment, and peer assessment to consider the application of tolerant attitudes. The relevant rubrics and assessment results were not available in the source package, so implementation consistency could not be independently evaluated. Teachers also noted the challenge of making examples and language accessible to students with different cultural backgrounds, experiences, and levels of religious understanding. The five traceable students—AR, NS, FM, CL, and MR—expressed a convergent understanding that tolerance involves respecting others without mixing one's own religious beliefs with those of others (student interviews, 14–20 May 2025).

Teachers as Educators, Guides, and Role Models

IRE teachers described their role in three interrelated functions: transmitting knowledge, guiding attitudes, and modelling conduct. As knowledge providers, they explained *tasamuh*, moderation, religious rights, shared ethical values, and doctrinal boundaries. As guides, they facilitated discussion, clarified interpretations they considered inaccurate, and helped students manage disagreement through communication. As role models, they reported attempting to treat students fairly, use respectful language, respect members of the school community from other religions, and avoid discrimination based on ethnicity or cultural background.

From the informants' perspective, role modelling reduces the distance between normative messages and school life. Equal treatment, willingness to listen, and non-degrading language were presented as concrete examples of tolerance. This is consistent with evidence that cultural intelligence and intercultural sensitivity shape teachers' orientations toward multicultural education (Coşkun et al., 2024) and that culturally relevant intercultural actions in classrooms can matter more than abstract declarations of diversity (Hagenaars et al., 2025). Because direct

observation was not available, conclusions about modelling remain bounded to reported practice.

Teachers also described themselves as filters and interpreters of religious information. Social media was identified as a source of messages that could be incomplete, decontextualized, or potentially intolerant. Teachers therefore saw a need to help students examine context, distinguish religious firmness from hostility, and interpret Islamic teachings more comprehensively. This role is increasingly important because students' religious learning comes not only from school but also from family, peers, communities, and digital platforms. G-01, G-02, and G-03 all identified teacher role modelling as one of the most important ways of cultivating tolerance (teacher interviews, 7–12 May 2025).

School Policy and Culture as Reinforcement

The principal reported that inclusivity, safety, respect for diversity, and non-discriminatory treatment were guiding principles in school policy. Although the phrase 'religious tolerance' was not always reported as explicit wording in the school's vision and mission, the principle was associated with noble character, respect for Pancasila, mutual respect, and acceptance of diversity. According to informants, these orientations were reinforced through habituation, P5 activities, social programs, ceremonies, student organizations, community service, extracurricular activities, and opportunities for students to practice their respective religions.

The principal also reported a twice-monthly 'Friday Worship' program in which students were guided by teachers of their respective religions. Informants interpreted the program as providing space for strengthening religious identity without imposing one ritual practice on all students. Because schedules, guidelines, and implementation records were not available, the description is presented as a principal-reported school practice rather than independently verified documentary evidence.

Informants described a tolerant school culture in terms of respectful communication, respect for worship, cross-religious cooperation, and dialogical or persuasive approaches to disagreement. The principal also described coordination among religion teachers, counseling teachers, homeroom teachers, and school management. This pattern can be interpreted as a multilayered preventive mechanism, although its effectiveness was not measured through case records, direct observation, or longitudinal comparison.

A supplementary research narrative described student participation in school activities without discrimination and a learning atmosphere intended to be

comfortable for all students. Because raw observation records and the provenance of that narrative could not be verified, it is treated only as contextual material consistent with parts of the interview evidence and not as an independent observation finding.

"The school gives every student the freedom to practice worship according to his or her religion and belief and ensures that there is no discrimination or action that could trigger intolerance." (KS-01, interview, 23 April 2025)

Manifestations of Tolerance in Students' Experiences

Students described tolerance through concrete actions: befriending, learning with, and cooperating with peers of different religions; not disturbing worship; avoiding ridicule of others' beliefs; maintaining respectful speech; respecting opinions; and helping peers without religious discrimination. They linked these experiences to group assignments, student organizations, P5, extracurricular activities, social service, ceremonies, competitions, and everyday friendship. These accounts show how students interpreted tolerance, but they do not establish behavioral consistency through observation.

Students perceived IRE as helping clarify their understanding of tolerance. Their accounts emphasized not only respect for others but also the boundary between respecting difference and mixing beliefs, the rejection of religious coercion, and the importance of cooperation in constructive matters. Because the study did not collect before-and-after data, these statements cannot be interpreted as evidence that IRE caused attitude change. They are nevertheless compatible with research showing that Islamic educational principles, authentic experience, and meaningful social interaction can support tolerance-related knowledge and practice (Aderibigbe et al., 2023; Junaedi et al., 2023; Kartono et al., 2024).

Students did not report major religion-based conflicts. The differences they described generally involved communication misunderstandings or disagreements within groups, which they said they attempted to address by listening, communicating calmly, and seeking solutions without immediately blaming others. The absence of reported major conflict does not demonstrate the absence of intolerance because the study did not include direct observation, formal incident records, or purposeful sampling of students who may have experienced exclusion or discrimination.

Cooperation, social contact, respect for worship, and dialogue can therefore be interpreted as potential protective conditions against stereotyping, social distance, exclusionary interaction, and degrading language. Within this study, however, they

indicate plausible preventive mechanisms rather than measured reductions in intolerance. This distinction is consistent with research showing that structured interreligious contact and experiential learning can reduce stereotypes and create opportunities for inclusive interaction while still requiring careful evaluation (McCowan, 2017; Tondok et al., 2022).

AR, NS, FM, CL, and MR consistently reported that religious difference did not prevent friendship, learning together, or cooperation in school activities (student interviews, 14–20 May 2025).

Implementation Challenges and Strengthening Agenda

Five challenges emerged from the interview material. First, students' prior understandings were reported to vary: some were said to equate tolerance with mixing beliefs, whereas others interpreted it so narrowly that ordinary social interaction could be restricted. Second, family, peer networks, and social media were seen as sources that could either reinforce or weaken school learning. Third, IRE instructional time was considered limited even though attitude formation requires repetition. Fourth, examples and language need to be accessible to students with diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences. Fifth, reports of curricular integration and student interaction were not supported by original curriculum documents or raw observation records.

The findings suggest six strengthening priorities. First, schools should map tolerance explicitly across learning outcomes, objectives, content, activities, and assessment. Second, teachers need professional development in dialogical pedagogy, role play, collaborative projects, differentiated learning, case analysis, digital religious literacy, and responses to discriminatory speech. Third, attitude assessment should use explicit indicators such as respect for the right to worship, cooperation across identities, non-discriminatory language, openness to different views, and constructive conflict resolution.

Fourth, sustained cross-group collaboration should be embedded in social projects, community service, environmental programs, arts, literacy, or student leadership. Fifth, schools need early-detection and response mechanisms for ridicule, exclusion, coercive use of symbols, hate speech, and intolerant digital content. Sixth, implementation should be documented through lesson-module audits, assessment rubrics, attitude journals, observation notes, and case follow-up records so that future evaluations are not dependent primarily on participants' retrospective perceptions.

Overall, the reported findings form a multilayered mechanism. Multicultural IRE provides normative direction; curriculum planning links values with objectives,

content, activities, and assessment; pedagogy creates opportunities for dialogue and cooperation; teacher role modelling gives values social credibility; school culture extends tolerant experience beyond the classroom; and students' social interactions become an arena for everyday enactment. The contribution lies in showing that coherence across these layers may be more educationally consequential than the existence of any single tolerance program. Nevertheless, this relationship remains an interpretive pattern derived from informant reports rather than causal evidence or independently observed implementation.

Table 2. Thematic Findings and Implications for Preventing Intolerance

Theme	Primary empirical evidence	Analytical meaning	Preventive implication
Multicultural IRE orientation	Informants linked Islamic identity with respect for religious, cultural, and social differences.	Diversity was interpreted as a context for enacting Islamic moral values.	May reduce exclusivism in social relations when consistently practiced.
Curricular integration	Teachers reported connecting tolerance with objectives, Qur'an-Hadith, Akhlaq, Islamic history, and attitude assessment.	Tolerance was positioned as a cross-component value; original documents were unavailable for independent verification.	May reduce reliance on incidental tolerance teaching if curricular alignment is sustained.
Dialogical pedagogy	Teachers reported discussion, case studies, role play, projects, contextual learning, and reflection.	Methods create opportunities to listen, reason, take perspectives, and cooperate.	May correct misconceptions and build skills for managing difference.
Ethical values	Compassion, justice, and goodness were reported as being connected with Islamic sources.	Ethical values bridge normative religious teaching and social relations.	May discourage degrading language and unfair treatment.
Teacher role modelling	Teachers emphasized fairness, respectful speech, clarification of information, and constructive management of disagreement.	Value messages gain credibility through educator conduct; direct observation was unavailable.	May prevent normalization of discriminatory language and unequal treatment.
School culture	Informants reported P5, social activities, student organizations, extracurricular programs, community service, ceremonies, and Friday Worship.	The school was reported to provide shared experiences while allowing religious identity to be maintained.	May strengthen contact, equality, belonging, and perceived safety.
Student practices	Students described cross-religious cooperation, respect for worship, careful speech, and dialogue.	Tolerance was interpreted as everyday social conduct; behavioral consistency was not directly observed.	Suggests potential protective conditions against social distance and conflict.

Theme	Primary empirical evidence	Analytical meaning	Preventive implication
Challenges	Conceptual misunderstandings, social media, limited time, material accessibility, and incomplete empirical documentation.	Learning operates amid multiple value sources and evidentiary constraints.	Requires differentiation, digital literacy, family partnership, and documented evaluation.

Discussion

Tolerance Integration as a Multilayered Educational Mechanism

The findings suggest that tolerance is not formed through a single topic or method but through the relationship among multicultural IRE orientation, curriculum planning, classroom pedagogy, teacher role modelling, school culture, and students' social experience. This extends approaches that treat multicultural education primarily as curricular content. In Indonesian schools, integrated multicultural learning requires coherence between curriculum, teaching practice, and the institutional environment (Budirahayu & Saud, 2021), while the broader multicultural-education literature emphasizes a paradigm that shapes both learning structures and social relations (Jayadi et al., 2022). The present study adds a case-based explanation of how normative, pedagogical, and institutional layers are reported to reinforce one another within IRE.

Multicultural IRE, Religious Moderation, and the Boundaries of Tolerance

Teachers in this study combined commitment to religious identity with respect for the rights of people from other religions. This pattern is consistent with religious moderation as an orientation that connects commitment with fairness, non-extremism, and openness to shared social life (Subchi et al., 2022). It also supports the argument that IRE content can strengthen moderation when respect, balance, and non-violence are translated into learning practice (Mulyana, 2023). At the same time, informants' insistence that tolerance does not mean mixing beliefs aligns with the fiqh of tolerance, which differentiates doctrinal commitment from the obligation to maintain peaceful and just social relations (Muhajarah & Soebahar, 2024). This clarification matters because inaccurate understandings of tolerance can weaken moderation education; appropriate knowledge and attitudes remain prerequisites for moderate behavioral intentions (Latifa et al., 2022).

Dialogical and Collaborative Pedagogy as Lived Tolerance

Group discussion, case studies, role play, collaborative projects, and reflection allow students to move beyond definitions and examine tolerance in social

situations. This finding reinforces evidence that Islamic education can cultivate respect for diversity when learners are given opportunities for dialogue, authentic experience, and meaningful interaction (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). It also converges with studies in which collaborative interreligious tasks and experiential dialogue provided opportunities to challenge stereotypes and develop religious literacy (McCowan, 2017; Mulya & Aditomo, 2019). Junaedi et al. (2023) similarly emphasize the value of combining cognitive, socio-affective, and practical-empirical learning patterns. In this sense, the pedagogical strategies reported in the present case can be understood as a pathway through which tolerance moves from declarative knowledge toward social competence.

Teacher Role Modelling and Consistency of Practice

Informants positioned teachers as knowledge providers, attitude guides, and role models. This indicates that tolerance education depends on consistency between what is taught and how teachers interact with students. Cultural intelligence and intercultural sensitivity are related to teachers' multicultural-education attitudes (Coşkun et al., 2024), while culturally relevant intercultural actions can make diversity principles visible in everyday classroom practice (Hagenaars et al., 2025). Teacher-focused research in Indonesian high schools also underscores the central role of educators in shaping how tolerance is understood and taught (Sirry et al., 2024). In the present study, listening to students, using non-degrading language, and treating learners equitably function as a reported hidden curriculum that reinforces formal tolerance messages.

School Culture as Reinforcement and a Space for Preventing Intolerance

Non-discriminatory policy, respect for worship, respectful communication, and shared activities were reported to create an environment in which tolerance could be practiced repeatedly. This is consistent with evidence that multicultural attitudes develop through dialogue, openness, role modelling, and institutional experience (Latif & Hafid, 2021). Intercultural education is also associated with students' sense of belonging and social outcomes (Basarkod et al., 2024), while Indonesian high-school tolerance is shaped by social interaction and the surrounding environment (Kartono et al., 2024). In this case, school policy can therefore be interpreted not merely as administration but as part of a potential protective environment against stereotyping, exclusion, and degrading speech. This interpretation also supports the view that multicultural religious education contributes to peacebuilding when classroom learning and everyday institutional practice are connected (Mashuri et al., 2024).

Implementation Challenges, Evidentiary Boundaries, and Implications

Although informants described predominantly positive practices, the study also identified uneven prior understandings among students, exposure to religious messages through social media, limited attitude-assessment evidence, and incomplete documentation of tolerance integration. These findings caution against equating reported policy or teaching intention with verified implementation. Moderation initiatives can remain symbolic when they are not supported by curriculum tools, evaluation, and teacher capacity (Chotimah et al., 2025), and multicultural discourse may still reproduce 'othering' if institutional practice is not critically inclusive (Hummelstedt-Djedou et al., 2021). The present evidence also has clear limits: it comes from one school and nine traceable informants, the student sample was purposively selected for cross-religious interaction experience, and original curriculum documents, complete transcripts, assessment records, and raw classroom-observation notes were unavailable. The study therefore offers a contextual and theoretically informed explanation of reported practice rather than statistical generalization, an audit of curriculum implementation, or proof that intolerance decreased. Future research should triangulate interviews with lesson documents, direct classroom and school observations, incident or counseling records where ethically appropriate, broader student sampling including less-positive experiences, and longitudinal measures of tolerance-related attitudes and behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that informants understood the integration of religious tolerance through multicultural IRE as a relationship among religious orientation, curriculum planning, pedagogical practice, teacher role modelling, school culture, and students' social experience. Teachers reported connecting tolerance with learning objectives, content, activities, and attitude assessment and implementing it through discussion, case studies, role play, collaborative projects, contextual learning, and reflection. The principal and teachers described inclusive policy, religious services, student activities, and dialogue-based conflict management as reinforcing classroom messages, while students associated tolerance with respect for worship, respectful speech, interreligious cooperation, and dialogical resolution of disagreement.

The study's scientific contribution is the conceptualization of tolerance integration as a multilayered educational mechanism rather than the outcome of a single topic, method, or school program. Multicultural IRE may acquire preventive value when normative messages are aligned with dialogical pedagogy, educator role

modelling, school policy, and students' everyday social interactions. Practically, schools should map tolerance across learning outcomes and assessment, strengthen teacher competence in dialogical pedagogy and digital religious literacy, sustain cross-group collaborative programs, and document implementation systematically so that future evaluation can move beyond perception-based evidence.

The conclusions must be read within the evidence boundaries. Only nine informants were traceable in the source package, and the purposive student sample may overrepresent positive cross-religious experiences. Original curriculum documents, raw observation notes, complete transcripts, assessment evidence, and longitudinal measures were unavailable. The study therefore describes reported practices and meanings rather than verified implementation, causal change, or the measured effectiveness of intolerance prevention. Future studies should use multi-source triangulation, direct observation, documentary analysis, broader and more diverse student sampling, and longitudinal or intervention designs to test the consistency, transfer, and durability of tolerance-related learning over time.

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