



Implementation of Multicultural Values in Developing Student Tolerance

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Abstract

Cultivating tolerance attitudes across various groups, including adolescents, is essential for fostering harmony in every aspect of society. This importance is demonstrated in schools throughout Indonesia. SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya exemplify schools that consistently display tolerance, hospitality, and acceptance of diverse ethnicities and cultures. These values are manifested through various activities implemented both curricularly and co-curricularly. This significance necessitates the implementation of this research. The study seeks to analyze and describe the implementation processes conducted by the schools and the impacts experienced by students and the surrounding environment regarding the multicultural value implementation. This research employs a qualitative approach. The researchers reveal the processes and impacts experienced by students and the surrounding environment through data analysis techniques obtained from interviews with school principals, teachers, students, documentation, and in-depth observation. The research findings indicate: 1) the principles of instilling multicultural education values in schools are based on several principles, namely openness, tolerance, unity in diversity, and *Islam rahmatan lil'alam*; 2) the implementation of instilling multicultural education values is patterned into two categories: multicultural knowledge and multicultural feeling. Multicultural knowledge is provided through several activities such as religious activities, Quranic recitation, Islamic holiday celebrations, and PAI subject learning in classrooms. Meanwhile, multicultural feeling is instilled through daily student activities.

Introduction

High school students, including those in SMA/MA/SMK or equivalent institutions, are adolescents undergoing critical phases of self-discovery and heightened social awareness, alongside character formation and religious education (Baharuddin, 2010). In their actions, students sometimes perceive themselves as absolutely correct, particularly when they favor certain groups and adopt exclusive attitudes. Such idealism and fanaticism among students can potentially give rise to rigid and intolerant behavior toward peers who differ from them (Yani et al., 2025; Marpaung et al., 2026; Toman & Eroğlu, 2026).

The emergence of intolerant attitudes stems from a superficial understanding of religious teachings (Kartono et al., 2025; Hanif et al., 2025; Dalmeri et al., 2025). Many students acquire religious knowledge primarily through social media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, and other digital media, engaging only with surface-level interpretations (Arifin et al., 2025; Azra, 2016). The 2023 National Survey Dissemination Report by LSI on Extreme Violence (KE) and interreligious tensions reveals concerning patterns. Although BNPT generally found declining potential for radicalism and terrorism, cases of extreme violence and the spread of radicalism persist. Public attitudes toward extreme violence, tolerance, and religious life in Indonesia indicate that intolerance and discrimination remain present (LSI,

2023). This situation underscores the critical importance of implementing multicultural values across all societal sectors, including among students (Purba et al., 2024; Firdaus & Suwendi, 2025; Devaki et al., 2025).

Given this context, implementing multicultural values in educational institutions becomes essential, particularly when integrated into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. This approach is especially vital considering Indonesia's diverse ethnic groups, cultures, and religions (Sapendi, 2015). Strategies for implementation can be woven into PAI curriculum content, whereby PAI teachers must cultivate students' capacity for tolerance and mutual respect (Al Musyarrofi & Rofiq, 2025).

To prevent intolerant and violent attitudes, students require intensive guidance within the school environment. Schools such as SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya provide comprehensive settings that accommodate students' various activities. Schools serve as central hubs for student engagement in religious activities, social interactions, and skill development. Within these institutions, students from diverse backgrounds receive guidance and knowledge about the importance of respecting others and their opinions, appreciating differences, practicing tolerance, and exercising freedom of action within established norms.

Students at SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya Kudus come from various regions and cultural backgrounds, including Sumbawa, South Kalimantan, Malang, Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi, Bandung, Jepara, Pati, Rembang, and Kudus itself. Rather than creating obstacles, these differences become strengths for developing strong social consciousness. In practice, both SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya follow multicultural education principles, namely (1) democracy, (2) humanity and togetherness, and (3) developing attitudes that acknowledge, accept, and appreciate the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and opinions (Aly, 2011; Evisensia, 2025; Suyarov, 2026).

Several studies have explored multicultural value implementation in educational settings across Indonesia, revealing diverse approaches and contexts. Jannah (2025) investigated how multicultural values were integrated into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at Santo Paulus Catholic High School in Jember, where internal tolerance developed through routine Islamic activities while inter-religious tolerance emerged through interfaith gatherings and mutual respect practices. In elementary education, Fita Mustafida (2020) examined SD Taman Harapan Malang, finding that multicultural values were deliberately incorporated into learning materials, methods, and media, transforming PAI classrooms into venues for internalizing tolerance and peace-loving attitudes. Examining post-conflict contexts, Mashuri (2021) studied SMKN 1 and SMAN 3 Poso, where multicultural integration employed formal-textual, social-contextual, contributive-cultural, and additive-thematic approaches, fostering harmonious interactions among students across religions and ethnicities.

Beyond Islamic education, investigations in other subjects demonstrate similar patterns. Agustina & Bidaya (2019) studied Civics Education (PPKn) at SMP Negeri 3 Lingsar, where teachers consciously employed multicultural approaches through non-discriminatory grouping and direct introduction to diversity, resulting in increased social solidarity. Similarly, Nugraha & Salam (2021) examined Social Studies (IPS) at SMP Negeri 2 Blora, where multicultural values were integrated through cross-background group work and discussions emphasizing plurality appreciation, enabling students to experience multiculturalism through daily social interactions rather than merely theoretical understanding.

While these studies provide valuable insights into multicultural value implementation, several research gaps remain. First, existing research predominantly focuses on general education

institutions across various levels, with limited attention to vocational education settings where students often reside within school environments for extended periods. Second, previous studies typically examine either implementation processes or impacts separately, rarely providing comprehensive analysis of both dimensions simultaneously. Third, most research investigates schools in urban areas or specific conflict contexts, leaving underexplored how multicultural values function in vocational schools accommodating students from diverse regional backgrounds within boarding environments where daily interactions occur intensively.

This research addresses these gaps by examining multicultural value implementation in developing tolerance attitudes at SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya Kudus. Based on the discussion above, several questions emerge: How are multicultural values implemented in the student environment? What processes are involved in this implementation? These questions warrant investigation through a study titled “Implementation of Multicultural Values in Developing Student Tolerance at SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya Kudus.”

Methods

This study on implementing multicultural values to develop student tolerance at SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya Kudus employs a qualitative approach. The research aims to explore and reveal the implementation process and models applied within the school environment to enhance tolerant attitudes. Tolerance behaviors examined include how students demonstrate mutual respect, appreciate differing opinions, foster brotherhood, and engage in cooperation. Within this social context, a qualitative approach proves highly relevant to accommodate this investigation. Given its process-oriented focus, the research maintains a naturalistic and inductive character (Nurlaila & Rianti, 2025).

Following Bogdan & Taylor's (1990) framework regarding qualitative research, this study generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from participants and observed behaviors. Researchers do not isolate research subjects or individuals into variables or hypotheses but view them as part of a whole, specifically as conscious human beings with agency. In qualitative research, the natural setting proves essential for researchers to interpret the implementation process authentically (Hamilton & Finley, 2019; May et al., 2022; Ramanadhan et al., 2021).

The researchers will examine and uncover as comprehensively as possible the process of implementing multicultural values to enhance tolerance behavior among students at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus and SMK Duta Karya. Additionally, complete descriptions of the multicultural value implementation process will be presented.

To obtain optimal data, appropriate techniques are necessary to align with research expectations, namely (a) Participant observation; (b) In-depth interviews; and (c) Documentation.

This research draws upon both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data consists of information obtained directly from individuals regarding the research problem (informant sources). Primary data encompasses various cases, whether people, objects, animals, or others serving as research subjects (primary information sources) in collecting research data. Key primary sources include the principals of SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya Kudus, the foundation administrators of SMK Raden Umar Said, and PAI teachers at both institutions.

Secondary data refers to information obtained from second-tier or secondary sources. These secondary sources derive from various literature and references related to the research problem, including books, research reports, academic journals, internet resources, and other materials.

Interview participants include Mr. Agam Amintaha, S.Kom (Principal of SMK Raden Umar Said), Mr. H. Andi Arifin, SH (Foundation Administrator of SMK Raden Umar Said), and Mr. Supriyanto, S.Ag (PAI teacher). At SMK Duta Karya Kudus, interviews were conducted with Dr. Muhammad Tho'at, M.Kes (Principal), Mr. Ahmad Mulashofa, S.Sy, and Mr. Ali Faqih, S.Pd.I (PAI teacher), along with several students. Documentation refers to collections of verbal data in written form, representing records of past events. Documents may take the form of written materials, research findings, photographs, artworks, recordings, and similar artifacts.

Data analysis in qualitative research, as explained by Creswell et al. (2007), begins with preparing and organizing data for analysis, followed by reducing the data through coding processes and code summarization, then presenting the data in discussion form. Data validity is established through triangulation techniques. Triangulation represents a data verification technique that utilizes external elements for checking purposes or as comparative measures against the data. The most commonly employed triangulation technique involves verification through alternative sources. In credibility testing, triangulation refers to checking data from various sources through different methods and at different times (Jonsen & Jehn, 2009).

Results and Discussion

The empirical findings presented in this section draw on multiple document types collected across both schools, in addition to the interview and observation data described earlier. These documents consist of the official student code of conduct issued by each school, namely the Peraturan Tata Tertib Peserta Didik at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus (Decree No. 040/Sis/SMK.RUS/VII/2023) and the general code of conduct at SMK Duta Karya Kudus, both outlining rules on discipline, attire, and interpersonal conduct that reflect each school's multicultural commitments. Additional sources include the academic and daily activity schedules of each school, formal descriptions of religious programming such as Peringatan Hari Besar Islam, Istighosah, and the boarding based religious curriculum at Pondok Duta Aswaja, PAI teaching materials used at both schools including materials on strengthening multicultural education and building a moderate school culture, activity reports for the Halal Bihalal event at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus held on 17 May 2025 and the Masa Pengenalan Lingkungan Sekolah at SMK Duta Karya Kudus held on 7 July 2025, and photographic documentation of daily religious practice and student orientation activities at both schools. Each of these sources is referenced throughout the following subsections alongside the corresponding interview and observation data, so that readers can trace which type of evidence underlies a given claim.

The Process of Implementing Multicultural Values

At both schools, the instillation of multicultural values follows a similar underlying process even though the specific vehicles differ. The process begins with institutional openness at the policy level, continues through classroom pedagogy delivered mainly by PAI teachers, and is reinforced through informal daily interaction among students.

At the policy level, the principal of SMK Duta Karya Kudus framed multicultural accommodation as a matter of institutional principle rather than an incidental practice. Reflecting on the school's founding orientation and admission policy, he stated the following.

"Since the beginning, our vision and mission have never been narrowed to a single religion, ethnicity, or race, because the community here is pluralistic. Although the foundation itself is Islamic, the institution remains open to students outside Islam, since this openness reflects a humanitarian principle that does not contradict the law,

and the school facilitates all students accordingly, including through collaborative arrangements that involve the entire student body."

At the classroom level, teaching multicultural values primarily occurs through lessons conducted by PAI teachers, who carry a considerable responsibility for guiding students toward moderate and wise perspectives and behaviors. At SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, this instruction is embedded into every classroom lesson, where students receive religious education through Quranic readings and teachings attended by peers from various backgrounds, and where students are given room to express their thoughts, including matters related to discipline and conduct, before the teacher offers guidance. Mr. Agam Amintaha, S.Kom, Principal of SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, noted that multicultural values are more readily accepted by students once these values are introduced with care rather than imposed directly, since students tend to feel some initial discomfort discussing tolerance until the material is presented in a courteous and thoughtful manner.

The PAI teacher at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus described his own classroom strategy in more concrete terms, favoring discussion based and dialogical methods over one directional lecturing.

"I use discussion and case study methods, along with a dialogical approach, so that students can share their own thinking. When discussing topics related to morality or Islamic history, for example, I invite students to talk about the importance of respecting others despite differing beliefs, and I offer examples of Islamic figures who played a role in maintaining peace."

A comparable pedagogical logic operates at SMK Duta Karya Kudus, where the PAI teacher likewise anchors classroom values in equality, tolerance, democracy, and pluralism, but extends this instruction into direct participation in shared events rather than discussion alone.

"Religious education carries several foundational values, namely equality, tolerance, democracy, and pluralism, and its purpose is to instill tolerance, equality, and inclusion within the community, including within the school itself. In religious or social activities, we frequently involve non-Muslim students in helping to carry out the events, such as during the celebration of Eid al-Adha and the distribution of zakat, or in social activities such as caring for orphans."

This pattern is echoed by Mr. Ali Faqih, PAI teacher at SMK Duta Karya Kudus, who explained that moderate attitudes represent a balanced position in religion that avoids both rigid and permissive extremes, emphasizing tolerance, peace, and appreciation for diversity as the basis for positive interaction both at school and in the wider pluralistic society.

Beyond the classroom, Mr. H. Andi Arifin, SH, Chairman of the SMK Raden Umar Said Foundation, described the one hour religious provision given to students as a foundation students can carry forward once they graduate, allowing them to bring moderate religious attitudes back to their home regions as alumni.

These accounts from school leadership and teachers at both institutions indicate that the process of instilling multicultural values proceeds through a consistent sequence, consisting of institutional policy that establishes openness as a founding principle, classroom pedagogy that translates this openness into discussion and practice, and reinforcement through structured religious accommodation that treats non-Muslim students as full participants rather than exceptions.

Forms of Implementation

While the process described above explains how multicultural values are instilled, the forms this instillation takes differ somewhat between the two schools, reflecting their distinct institutional histories and facilities.

Table 1. School Values and Multicultural Values Integration at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus

No	School Values	Multicultural Values	Description
1	Spiritual values	Values of democracy and justice	Spiritual mentality requires that in carrying out school duties and activities such as upholding truth, justice, and collective welfare, the pursuit of knowledge and character must be grounded in spiritual values
2	Spirituality of advisory board, supervisors, and school administrators	Values of justice	They understand that school is not a place to seek worldly gains and wealth but rather a place to serve and struggle, and that their intention in working at the school is to preserve the institution
3	Togetherness	Tolerance and democracy	Togetherness at school with diverse characters and sociocultural backgrounds is woven under the umbrella of one religion, representing ukhuwah islamiyah, insaniyah, and wathoniyah, that is, brotherhood in Islam, in humanity, and in the homeland

Source: Interview with school leadership and daily observation at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, February to March 2025

Table 2. Daily Disciplinary Activities and Multicultural Values at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus

No	School Discipline	Multicultural Values	Description
1	Congregational Dhuhr prayer	Equality and justice	Mandatory congregational Dhuhr prayer at the prayer room for all students
2	Congregational Dhuha prayer	Equality and justice	Mandatory congregational Dhuha prayer at the prayer room every morning for all students
3	Congregational Quranic recitation	Equality and justice	Mandatory congregational Quranic recitation in the morning for Muslim students
4	Modest dress	Equality and mutual respect	Muslim students are required to dress modestly, and Muslim female students must cover their awrah with hijab, with the exception of non-Muslim students, when conducting all school activities

5	Punctuality	Justice and tolerance	Students become accustomed to managing their time between classroom learning and film animation laboratory practice
6	Socializing	Tolerance and mutual respect	Discussion and socializing with peers accustoms students to interact politely and respectfully
7	Language use	Justice and mutual respect	Habitual use of polite language and courteous interaction

Source: Daily observation and the Peraturan Tata Tertib Peserta Didik, SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus (Decree No. 040/Sis/SMK.RUS/VII/2023)

The forms of implementation at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus draw heavily on its distinctive academic identity as a creative industry oriented school. Daily learning begins at 06.30 with Quranic reading and writing instruction until 07.45, delivered by an instructor from Yayasan Pondok Arwaniyah Kudus who accompanies students three times a week, a program the school treats as a flagship activity since students who succeed in memorizing the Quran receive scholarship support. The school further strengthens multicultural education by inviting academic speakers to reinforce religious moderation, a program that has contributed to the school achieving the highest assessment score in this area among comparable institutions. Instruction in vocational subjects, particularly animation and design, is delivered through a team teaching approach in which two teachers accompany a single program, allowing high achieving students to receive close mentorship that has led to national and international recognition, including a three dimensional animated film produced for broadcast in Turkey.

At SMK Duta Karya Kudus, multicultural values are embedded through a somewhat different institutional structure, most notably its integration with the Pondok Duta Aswaja boarding school established at the request of parents for students who wish to deepen their study of Quranic and classical religious texts. Table 3 and Table 4 present the school values and daily disciplinary activities that carry multicultural significance at this institution.

Table 3. School Values and Multicultural Values Integration at SMK Duta Karya Kudus

No	School Values	Multicultural Values	Description
1	Spiritual values	Values of democracy and justice	Spiritual mentality requires that in carrying out school duties and activities such as upholding truth, justice, and collective welfare, the pursuit of knowledge and character must be grounded in spiritual values
2	Spirituality of advisory board, supervisors, and school administrators	Values of justice	They understand that school is not a place to seek worldly gains and wealth but rather a place to serve and struggle, and that their intention in working at the school is to preserve the institution
3	Togetherness	Tolerance and democracy	Togetherness at school with diverse characters and sociocultural backgrounds is woven under the umbrella of one religion, representing ukhuwah islamiyah, insaniyah,

			and wathoniyah, that is, brotherhood in Islam, in humanity, and in the homeland
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Source: Interview with the principal of SMK Duta Karya Kudus and daily observation, February to March 2025

Table 4. Daily Disciplinary Activities and Multicultural Values at SMK Duta Karya Kudus

No	School Discipline	Multicultural Values	Description
1	Congregational Dhuhr prayer	Equality and justice	Mandatory congregational Dhuhr prayer at the prayer room for all students
2	Congregational Dhuha prayer	Equality and justice	Mandatory congregational Dhuha prayer at the prayer room every morning for all students
3	Religious activities and Islamic holidays	Equality and justice	Mandatory participation in religious activities
4	Modest dress	Equality and mutual respect	Muslim students are required to dress modestly, and Muslim female students must cover their awrah with hijab, with the exception of non-Muslim students, when conducting all school activities
5	Punctuality	Justice and tolerance	Students become accustomed to managing their time between classroom learning and laboratory practice
6	Socializing	Tolerance and mutual respect	Discussion and socializing with peers accustoms students to interact politely and respectfully

Source: Daily observation and the general Tata Tertib Umum, SMK Duta Karya Kudus

Beyond daily discipline, SMK Duta Karya Kudus channels multicultural values through several dedicated religious programs, including the Asifa'ul Qolbi hadrah ensemble, an annual thirty day Ramadan intensive program (*pesantren kilat*), and communal pilgrimages to the graves of local religious figures such as R.M.P Sosrokartono as a way of instilling shared spiritual role models. Religious accommodation for non-Muslim students is also formalized through a partnership with SMK Negeri 1 Kudus, which supplies dedicated Catholic and Christian teachers who conduct weekly sessions during regular class hours, with outcomes formally assessed and recorded on student report cards, indicating that this accommodation functions as a structured academic requirement rather than a symbolic gesture. Everything implemented in these early sessions is coordinated with the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Kudus City, occurring once a week and supplementing the daily religious instruction students otherwise receive within their own faith tradition.

Several distinguishing features separate the two schools despite their shared commitment to multicultural values. SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus does not operate its own boarding facility, though it maintains a close relationship with the boarding houses surrounding the school and invites their proprietors to its annual Halal Bihalal celebration, whereas SMK Duta Karya Kudus integrates a boarding school directly into its educational model through Pondok Duta Aswaja, a facility the school regards as one of its distinguishing programs. SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus also maintains a long standing partnership with Djarum Foundation that supplies computing equipment and dedicated animation studio facilities for its design and animation

programs, a level of support that, while also present at SMK Duta Karya Kudus, has not reached comparable scale there. Conversely, SMK Duta Karya Kudus channels its multicultural and religious instruction substantially through its boarding school, while SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus relies more heavily on inviting external academic speakers and maintaining smaller class sizes, with roughly thirty students per class compared to the larger class sizes typical at SMK Duta Karya Kudus.

To instill the multicultural values described above, both schools draw on several shared principles, including openness, tolerance, unity in diversity, and moderate Islam rahmatan lil'alam as a guiding orientation for leadership, values that also align with UNESCO recommendations on intercultural education (UNESCO, 2006), namely tolerance, togetherness, equality, and justice.

Students' Tolerant Behavior

Beyond the disciplinary routines and institutional programs summarized above, direct field observation captured more specific instances of how students from different religious and regional backgrounds interact, cooperate, and support one another in practice. Participant observation conducted at both schools recorded the following pattern of interfaith engagement.

"The head of school provides ample space for each religion to carry out its own activities, and this openness strongly supports the cultivation of multicultural values among students. Religious or social activities are permitted for each group, such as the istighosah prayer session and fundraising for landslide victims in Rahtawu village among Muslim students, as well as the spiritual retreat organized by Christian students. No conflict has occurred along religious, ethnic, or cultural lines, and students consistently help one another whenever a particular religious group is holding an event, extend greetings to one another during each other's religious holidays, and participate together in communal work guided by a shared sense of national unity."

This pattern of cross group support was also evident in the two annual events documented through activity reports at each school. At SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, the Halal Bihalal event held on 17 May 2025 brought together the entire school community, including the foundation board, principal, teachers, students of every faith, administrative staff, security personnel, and janitorial staff, in a shared ritual of greeting one another and asking forgiveness. Rather than being limited to the Muslim majority, the event was explicitly framed as inclusive of all stakeholders regardless of religion, and it doubled as a platform for student expression, with students performing drama, music, poetry readings, and screenings of their own animation projects before the assembled community.

A comparable pattern of cooperative, cross background engagement appeared during the Masa Pengenalan Lingkungan Sekolah (MPLS) orientation held at SMK Duta Karya Kudus on 7 July 2025. Rather than a purely administrative induction, the program was structured around direct field activities in which incoming students worked together under the guidance of teachers to learn the school environment, building early habits of teamwork and critical thinking among peers who had not previously known one another. Photographic documentation of the event, together with records from the Al-Qur'an reading sessions held daily between 06.30 and 07.45 at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, corroborates that these are recurring, structured practices rather than isolated occurrences.

Students themselves described these values in more personal terms, framing tolerance as something practiced in everyday interaction rather than only taught in the classroom. As expressed by a student at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, this practice takes the form of small, consistent gestures toward peers of different faiths.

"When I have a friend of a different religion, I still respect their belief, and I have also greeted friends who were celebrating their own religious holidays, since this is how I show respect for other people's beliefs. The school also has programs such as interfaith discussion sessions and social service activities that involve students from various religious backgrounds, and these programs help us get to know and understand one another better."

The observational, documentary, and interview evidence converge on a consistent picture, namely that mutual respect and cooperation among students manifest concretely through interfaith assistance during religious observances, joint participation in school wide ceremonies regardless of faith background, and collaborative orientation activities that deliberately mix students from different regions and backgrounds from their very first week at school.

Perceived Impact of the Programs

The interview, observation, and documentary evidence discussed above, taken together, point toward a consistent perceived impact at both schools, namely that students currently coexist and cooperate across religious and regional lines without evident tension. This impression was reinforced by Mr. Agam Amintaha, who observed that once multicultural material is introduced with care rather than imposed directly, students who initially seem hesitant about discussing tolerance tend to become receptive to it, suggesting that the manner of delivery shapes how readily students internalize these values.

Field observation across both schools found no recorded incidents of conflict along religious, ethnic, or cultural lines during the study period, alongside consistent patterns of mutual assistance during religious events, shared greetings across faiths during respective holidays, and joint participation in communal activities framed around national unity. Students interviewed for this study likewise described their own conduct in terms consistent with these observations, reporting that they maintain respectful relationships with peers of different faiths, extend greetings during each other's religious celebrations, and take part in interfaith school programs such as discussion sessions and social service activities.

Because the data collected for this study reflect conditions observed within a single period rather than a comparison across time, these findings are best understood as evidence of a currently harmonious and cooperative student climate rather than as evidence of a change in student attitudes over time. What the evidence supports directly is that students at both schools presently demonstrate willingness to interact, cooperate, and extend mutual respect toward peers from different religious and regional backgrounds, without indication of mutual suspicion or exclusionary behavior, consistent with the multicultural values instilled through the processes and programs described in the preceding sections.

Having presented the empirical findings across the process, forms, student behavior, and perceived impact of multicultural value instillation at both schools, this section interprets those findings through two complementary theoretical lenses, namely James A. Banks' framework for multicultural curriculum reform and Thomas Lickona's model of character formation.

Banks (1989) proposes four approaches that can be employed in multicultural education. The contributions approach involves selecting from mandatory textbooks or recommending

specific activities such as national and religious holidays from various cultures, aiming to enhance knowledge of group diversity through distinctive content, such as combining religious holidays with national heroism days. The additive approach involves adding content, themes, and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its basic structure, for instance incorporating literature by and about people from various cultures into the mainstream curriculum, using themes such as coexistence, mutual respect, and mutual understanding as enrichment material. The transformation approach differs in that the curriculum is deliberately redesigned to incorporate concepts, issues, and problems related to multiculturalism, approached through comparative methods that open perspectives from culturally different groups. Finally, the social action approach combines the transformative approach with activities oriented toward social change, aiming to enrich students' skills in conflict resolution, religious reconciliation, and cultural empowerment, engaging students in both understanding and acting on social issues.

Read against this framework, the findings presented in the Forms of Implementation section indicate that neither SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus nor SMK Duta Karya Kudus has yet developed a curriculum specifically designed around multicultural education values. The programs documented in Table 1 through Table 4, together with the religious and disciplinary activities described in the forms of implementation, function primarily as enrichment content layered onto an existing curriculum rather than as a deliberate curricular transformation. This places both schools at the additive approach stage in Banks' typology. The activities identified across the findings, consisting of school life orientation, religious celebrations, Quranic recitation, and PAI classroom instruction, can be grouped into two broader categories, namely multicultural knowledge and multicultural application, both of which direct students toward the multicultural action Banks associates with the transformative and social action stages, even though the curricular structure itself has not yet advanced that far.

Thomas Lickona (1993) offers a complementary lens through his model of character formation, which identifies three interconnected components, namely moral knowing, related to cognitive aspects, moral feeling, related to affective aspects, and moral action, related to psychomotor aspects. Applied to the findings presented above, multicultural knowledge corresponds to moral knowing and is delivered through the programs described in the Process of Implementing Multicultural Values section, such as school life orientation, religious activities including Islamic holiday celebrations, Quranic recitation, and the weekly Quranic completion ceremony. Multicultural feeling corresponds to moral feeling and is cultivated through daily activities and the semester long Student Day program required of all students in grades X, XI, and XII, conducted each morning from 07.00 to 08.00 through Quranic and religious learning. The observed and reported behaviors documented in the Students' Tolerant Behavior section, including interfaith assistance during religious events, joint participation in Halal Bihalal and MPLS activities, and the everyday gestures of respect described by students themselves, correspond to moral action, the component Lickona treats as the ultimate expression of internalized character.

This same three part structure applies to tolerance attitudes specifically. Attitude theory more broadly treats tolerance as operating across cognitive, affective, and conative levels, and these levels can be arranged into a hierarchy consisting of receiving, in which a person willingly attends to a given stimulus, responding, in which a person acts on what has been received regardless of whether that action is fully correct, valuing, in which a person invites others to engage with or discuss an issue, and responsibility, in which a person accepts accountability for the choices made (Pakambanan et al., 2023). The receiving and responding levels sit within the cognitive realm, since both involve attending to and acting on stimuli without yet requiring

emotional investment. The valuing level bridges the affective and conative realms, since inviting others into discussion reflects emotional engagement while also marking the first step toward sustained action, and the responsibility level then represents the conative realm in its fullest form (Rajaloe et al., 2025). When multicultural education stops at the level of knowledge alone, the resulting tolerance attitude tends to remain confined to the cognitive realm, that is, students know tolerance matters without necessarily feeling or acting on it (Izzati et al., 2019). When instillation extends into multicultural feeling and multicultural action, however, tolerance moves into the affective and conative realms, where students move beyond simply recognizing the importance of tolerance toward experiencing and enacting it directly, corresponding to moral action in Lickona's framework (Suradi et al., 2022).

Educational institutions and religious organizations more broadly function as influential sites for shaping such attitudes, since they lay much of the foundation for how individuals come to understand right and wrong, permissible and impermissible conduct (Falah & Hasiolan, 2025; Karlina et al., 2023). Within this broader understanding, tolerance can be defined as an attitude that acknowledges each person's freedom to hold and express their own opinions on a given matter (Ismail & Nugraha, 2024).

Reading the findings through both frameworks together clarifies why the perceived impact described in the Perceived Impact of the Programs section takes the shape it does. The absence of recorded conflict, the consistent pattern of interfaith assistance, and the students' own descriptions of respectful daily conduct are best understood not as isolated behaviors but as the conative, moral action layer that both theories treat as the endpoint of a longer process that begins with institutional openness and classroom instruction and moves through daily practice toward internalized disposition. This theoretical reading also explains why the study frames its findings as a description of current tolerant conduct rather than as evidence of change over time, since both Banks and Lickona describe multicultural or character development as a layered process building toward action, not as a before and after transformation, and the single period data collected for this study captures the students at a point within that layered process rather than across two points in time.

Conclusion

Based on the description and analysis of implementing multicultural values in developing tolerance attitudes at SMK Raden Umar Said and SMK Duta Karya Kudus, the following conclusions are drawn below.

The implementation of instilling multicultural education values proceeds through a process consisting of institutional policy, classroom pedagogy, and daily reinforcement, resulting in activities that encompass multicultural knowledge and multicultural feeling. Multicultural knowledge refers to activities that convey understanding about multicultural education values, provided to students at both schools through school life orientation for new students, religious activities, Quranic recitation, and PAI subjects in class. Multicultural feeling, understood as the affective dimension of this instillation, is cultivated through daily activities together with the Student Day program conducted at both schools. Through this combination of activities, students' multicultural knowledge is reinforced by affective engagement, supporting their understanding that multiculturalism reflects the reality surrounding them and warrants a positive response. The intended outcome of this instillation is that students are able to live together harmoniously across their differences, maintaining mutual respect and appreciation for one another despite variation in religious and regional background. The specific values instilled differ somewhat in emphasis between the two schools, with SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus placing particular weight on tolerance, democracy, equality, and justice through its team

teaching approach and academic speaker program, and SMK Duta Karya Kudus placing particular weight on the same values through its boarding based religious curriculum at Pondok Duta Aswaja, though both schools converge on the same underlying principles of openness, tolerance, unity in diversity, and moderate Islam rahmatan lil'alamin.

Instilling multicultural education values is associated with a currently harmonious pattern of tolerance attitudes among students at both schools, evident in students' willingness to interact and cooperate with peers from different religious and regional backgrounds without indication of mutual suspicion or exclusionary behavior. This pattern was consistently supported across the interview, observation, and documentary evidence gathered for this study, including the absence of recorded interfaith conflict, the joint participation of students across faiths in events such as Halal Bihalal and MPLS, and students' own accounts of extending respect and greetings to peers of different religions. These tolerance attitudes constitute part of moral action in Lickona's framework, in which living together harmoniously depends on each student holding a genuinely tolerant disposition rather than merely knowing that tolerance is important. As the data collected for this study reflect a single period rather than a comparison across time, this conclusion is presented as a description of the tolerant conduct currently observed at both schools, and future research employing a longitudinal design would be needed to establish whether and how such attitudes shift over the course of students' enrollment.

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