

PROMOTING RELIGIOUS PLURALISM THROUGH ISLAMIC EDUCATION: A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN BALUN TURI, LAMONGAN: A PRISMA-BASED META-ANALYSIS

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Abstrak: Pluralisme agama sangat penting untuk membina kerukunan sosial dalam masyarakat multiagama. Studi ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana kepemimpinan agama dapat meningkatkan pluralisme agama melalui pendidikan Islam di Balun Turi, Lamongan. Dengan menggunakan metodologi PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), penelitian ini secara sistematis mengumpulkan, mengevaluasi, dan mensintesis literatur akademis yang relevan, studi empiris, dan studi kasus untuk menciptakan pemahaman yang menyeluruh tentang topik tersebut. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa para pemimpin agama memainkan peran penting dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai inklusif dalam pendidikan Islam, memfasilitasi dialog antaragama, dan memediasi konflik yang berakar pada perbedaan agama. Selain itu, kolaborasi antara pendidikan formal dan informal secara signifikan membantu dalam mempromosikan pluralisme agama di wilayah tersebut. Studi ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya dukungan kebijakan dalam memperkuat kerangka kerja pendidikan agama, yang pada akhirnya mendorong koeksistensi antaragama yang berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Pluralisme Agama, Pendidikan Islam, Kepemimpinan Agama, Metodologi PRISMA, Masyarakat Multi-Agama.

Abstract: Religious pluralism is essential for fostering social harmony within multi-faith communities. This study explores how religious leadership can enhance religious pluralism through Islamic education in Balun Turi, Lamongan. By employing the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) methodology, this research systematically gathers, evaluates, and synthesizes relevant academic literature, empirical studies, and case studies to create a thorough understanding of the topic. The findings indicate that religious leaders play a crucial role in embedding inclusive values within Islamic education, facilitating interfaith dialogue, and mediating conflicts rooted in religious differences. Additionally, the collaboration between formal and informal education significantly aids in promoting religious pluralism in the region. This study underscores the importance of policy support in strengthening religious education frameworks, ultimately fostering sustainable interfaith coexistence.

Keywords: Religious Pluralism, Islamic Education, Religious Leadership, PRISMA Methodology, Multi-Faith Society.

Introduction

Religious pluralism has become a crucial topic in academic and policy discussions, especially within multicultural and multi-faith societies. In Indonesia, religious diversity is intricately woven into the country's historical, social, and political fabric. With six officially recognized religions and a myriad of local belief systems, Indonesia stands as a notable example of religious pluralism.¹ However, despite a rich history of interfaith coexistence, tensions and conflicts arising from religious differences still occur, highlighting the need for ongoing efforts to foster tolerance and harmony. Islamic education serves as a vital aspect of religious learning, playing an essential role in shaping the minds of the young to value diversity and engage in interfaith dialogue.²

The rich diversity of religions and cultures in Indonesia represents an essential social reality that can be understood through sociological and anthropological perspectives. Rather than being a source of conflict, this social capital should contribute positively to the creation

¹ Bowen, J. R. (2010). *Can Islam Be French? Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State*. Princeton University Press.

² Hefner, R. W. (Ed.). (2011). *Shari'a Politics: Islamic Law and Society in the Modern World*. Indiana University Press.

of a peaceful and harmonious national life.³ It is crucial to cultivate a awareness of religious plurality within society, allowing the positive aspects of this diversity to be realized in meaningful and productive ways. A key component of this effort is to instill a deep understanding of the importance of tolerance and unity, particularly among the younger generation. While the theme of pluralism is not new in the Indonesian context, ongoing exploration of this subject remains essential.

Asserts that the rich tapestry of religions present in Indonesia, along with the various interpretations of those faiths, is an undeniable historical reality.⁴ Pluralism is not merely a tool for overcoming fanaticism, as, but serves a deeper purpose.⁵ It represents a genuine connection among diverse beliefs, fostering meaningful engagement within a framework of civility. Moreover, pluralism is essential for the salvation of humanity itself.

Balun Turi in Lamongan is renowned as a beacon of religious pluralism in Indonesia. The village is home to a rich tapestry of religious communities, including Muslims, Christians, and Hindus, who have lived harmoniously together for generations. This distinctive environment offers a valuable opportunity to examine the role of religious leadership, particularly in the realm of Islamic education, in fostering this enduring pluralism. Religious leaders act as champions of moderation, promoting inclusive interpretations of their faiths and encouraging interfaith dialogue.⁶

In his 2010 work, Rachman presents three key ideas regarding contemporary pluralism, which serve as foundational concepts for analysis in both theology and Islamic history. First, he defines pluralism as an active engagement with diversity and distinction, aimed at fostering a shared civilization. Second, he posits that this definition inherently requires the acceptance of active tolerance towards others. Third, Rachman clarifies that pluralism should not be confused with relativism; a genuine understanding of others leads to a profound recognition of their values.

Consequently, it is essential to recognize that the role of religious education extends beyond merely shaping the religious attitudes of learners in accordance with their own beliefs. It also involves nurturing an openness that does not oppose the existence of other faiths, thereby promoting tolerance.⁷ Education, particularly religious education, proves to be a vital tool in cultivating awareness of religious diversity and instilling inclusive attitudes that steer clear of extremism and anarchism arising from ideological differences.⁸

In Balun Turi, religious education is provided through a combination of formal institutions, like Islamic schools (madrasahs), and informal gatherings known as *pengajian*. The curriculum typically encompasses discussions on interfaith harmony, the principle of *wasatiyyah* (moderation), and the significance of respecting diverse religious beliefs. Religious leaders play a proactive role in promoting these values by organizing collaborative events, fostering dialogue, and addressing religious conflicts through peaceful means.⁹ In light of the

³ Amri et al., 2017: Mohammad Amri, et al. (2017). "The Role of Multicultural Education in Building Religious Tolerance in Indonesia." *Asian Social Science*, 13(6), 165-174.

⁴ Abdullah, T. (1999). "Converging Religious and Cultural Pluralism in Indonesia: An Historical Perspective." In M. Mujiburrahman (Ed.), *Religious Pluralism in Indonesia* (pp. 15-32).

⁵ Madjid, Nurcholish. (2000). "Islam, Doktrin dan Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan dan Kemodernan." Jakarta: Paramadina. Hal. 219

⁶ Berger, P. L. (2014). *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*. Walter de Gruyter.

⁷ Ahmed Tlili, *The Role of Tolerance Education in Diversity Management: A Cultural Historical Activity Theory Perspective*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211060831>

⁸ Rahardjo, M. D. (1985). *Pesantren dan Pembaharuan*. Jakarta: LP3ES. Hal.17

⁹ David R. Smock, *Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War*. https://www.usip.org/publications/2006/01/religious-contributions-peacemaking-when-religion-brings-peace-not-war?utm_source=chatgpt.com

increasing global prevalence of religious extremism, it is essential to understand how religious pluralism is maintained within local contexts.

Numerous studies have underscored the importance of education in promoting interfaith harmony. Putnam and Campbell assert that religious socialization has a profound impact on individuals' perceptions of those from different faiths.¹⁰ In a similar vein, Woodhead (2016) points out that religious education can either reinforce exclusivist beliefs or cultivate a more pluralistic perspective. In Balun Turi, Islamic education is specifically crafted to foster that pluralistic approach, aligning religious teachings with the national ideals of unity in diversity, encapsulated in the phrase *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

Methods

This study uses a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) approach to explore Promoting Religious Pluralism Through Islamic Education: A Study of Religious Leadership in Balun Turi Village, Lamongan. SLR was conducted by following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses) protocol to ensure accuracy in the selection and analysis of literature. The data used in this study were obtained from the Scopus database, which is one of the highly reputable academic databases that includes indexed scientific journals. The search was conducted using relevant keywords, such as interdisciplinary approaches, Islamic education teachers, sustainable development, and teacher competence. In addition, the use of Boolean operators (AND, OR) and filters based on the year of publication and type of document were applied to obtain more specific and relevant results to the research objectives.

Literature selection was carried out through several stages, starting with the initial identification of articles that match the specified keywords. In the first stage, articles indexed in Scopus were examined based on their titles and abstracts to eliminate irrelevant studies. Furthermore, a screening stage was carried out by reading the methods and results sections of each article to ensure that the selected research truly discussed an interdisciplinary approach in developing Islamic Religious Education teacher competencies. The inclusion criteria in this study included articles that discussed the relationship between an interdisciplinary approach and improving Islamic Religious Education teacher competencies, published in reputable academic journals, and available in English or Indonesian. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included articles that only discussed a monodisciplinary approach, were not relevant to Islamic education, and conference papers or editorials that did not contain strong empirical data.

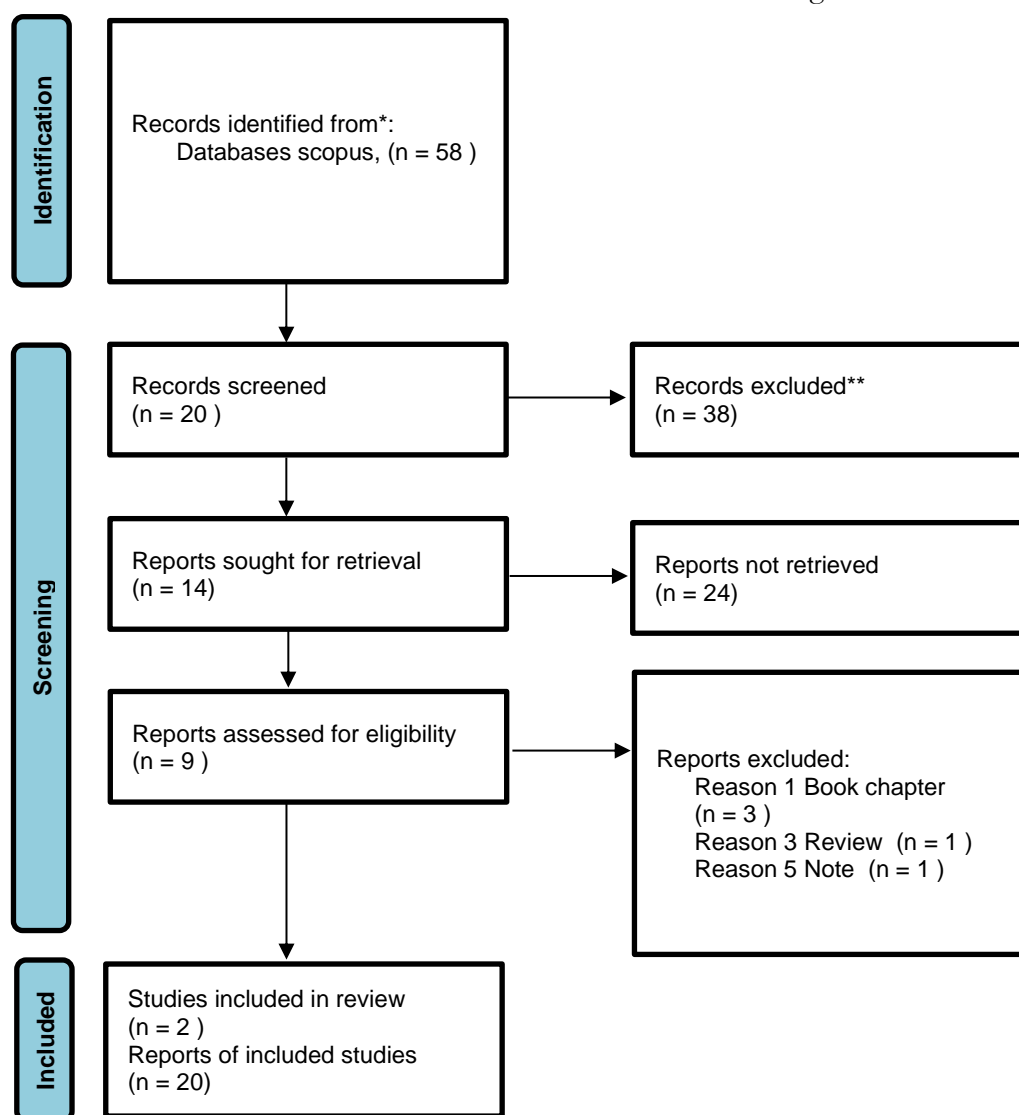
To ensure transparency and replication in literature analysis, this study followed the workflow that had been set out in PRISMA. The PRISMA diagram was used to illustrate the stages of article selection, starting from the number of articles found in the initial search, the number of articles eliminated, and the final number of articles analyzed further. The selected articles were then analyzed qualitatively to identify key themes that emerged in previous studies related to the interdisciplinary approach in improving the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers. Data analysis was conducted using the thematic analysis method, where findings from various studies were categorized based on patterns and concepts that emerged repeatedly. With this approach, this study is expected to provide comprehensive insights into the contribution of the interdisciplinary approach to the quality of Islamic Religious Education teacher education and its relevance in sustainable development.

¹⁰ Putnam, R. D., & Campbell, D. E. (2010). *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*. Simon & Schuster.

Results And Discussion

Based on the search in the Scopus database, 58 articles were found that were relevant to the specified keywords. After the screening stage, the number of articles filtered became 20, while 38 other articles were eliminated because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Furthermore, in the retrieval stage, 14 reports were selected for further analysis, but 24 reports were not obtained due to limited access or irrelevance. In the final stage, 9 reports were assessed for eligibility, with 20 reports finally included in the systematic analysis, while 30 others were excluded for reasons such as *book chapters* (3 reports), *reviews* (3 reports), and *short notes* (1 report). From the final analysis, 2 main studies were obtained which were the focus of this study. similar to the Prisma form below :

Identification of studies via databases and registers



Dengan perincian prisma sebagai berikut:

Subject	Inclution	Exclution
Year	2019-2023	Before 2019
Subject Area	Art and humanities	Social Sciences
Document Type	article	Book Note Review
Publication Stage	final	

Language	English	Non english
Open Access	All open access	Gold Green Bronze

This study found that religious figures play an important role in instilling the values of pluralism in Islamic education. They act as facilitators in interfaith dialogue and as mediators in conflicts based on religious differences. In addition, this study also revealed that collaboration between formal and informal education makes a significant contribution to encouraging religious pluralism. Islamic education is not only taught through madrasahs or Islamic schools, but also through informal religious studies that discuss harmony between religious communities. The curriculum in Islamic education in the Balun Turi area includes the concept of *wasatiyyah* (moderation) and the importance of respecting religious diversity. Furthermore, the results of the study emphasize that policy support is needed to strengthen Islamic education based on pluralism. With supportive policies, Islamic education can be an effective means to reduce religious extremism and strengthen social harmony. Religious education is not just learning about beliefs, but also how individuals can interact and live side by side with adherents of other religions peacefully. Therefore, education that prioritizes tolerance and openness is very important in building a harmonious society. Based on the results of the analysis using PRISMA, this study identified 58 articles from the Scopus database, and only 20 articles passed the screening stage due to their relevance to the research topic. Of these, only 2 primary studies were the focus of further analysis. Articles that did not pass the selection were excluded for various reasons, such as not being scientific journals, only being short notes, or being part of a book. The main conclusion of this study is that inclusive Islamic religious leadership and education can be the main tools in strengthening religious pluralism and preventing religious-based conflicts. By teaching moderation and tolerance, Islamic education can contribute to creating sustainable interfaith coexistence, especially in societies with high diversity such as in Balun Turi, Lamongan.

Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of the role of religious leadership in promoting religious pluralism through Islamic education in Balun Turi, Lamongan. The findings show that religious leaders play a key role in instilling inclusive values, facilitating interfaith dialogue, and resolving conflicts based on religious differences. In addition, this study also confirms that the combination of formal and informal education contributes significantly to creating a more tolerant and harmonious environment.

Islamic education taught through madrasahs and informal *pengajian* plays a key role in internalizing the concept of *wasatiyyah* (moderation) and the importance of respecting diversity. This strengthens the awareness that religious education is not only an understanding of religious doctrine, but also an important tool in building an inclusive and peaceful society.

Policy support is a crucial factor in strengthening religious education based on pluralism. With supportive policies, Islamic education can be an effective instrument in reducing religious extremism and strengthening social harmony. In addition, the systematic approach in this study, through the PRISMA method, shows that out of 58 articles identified, only 20 articles were relevant and 2 primary studies were the focus of the analysis. Overall, this study confirms that inclusive religious leadership and tolerance-based Islamic education can be effective strategies in maintaining diversity and interfaith coexistence. By implementing the concept of pluralism in education, society can build a more harmonious and sustainable life.

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