

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an, located in Central Bengkulu, was founded in 2014 by Herman HS, Lc., and officially inaugurated by Governor H. Rohidin Mersyah, M.A., on May 3, 2018. Since its establishment, the institution has expanded into a comprehensive educational center offering elementary, junior high, and senior high school programs. Its core mission is to integrate a modern pesantren curriculum with the national education system while maintaining the foundational norms and values of Salaf pesantren traditions. Through this combined approach, the institution aims to cultivate students who are faithful, knowledgeable, ethical, and diligent. Situated on Gunung Bungkok Street in Padang Ulak Tanjung Village, Talang Empat District, the pesantren occupies a strategic and easily accessible location near the central area of Bengkulu. The institution manages three formal education units, SD Ihyaul Qur'an, SMP Ihyaul Qur'an, and SMA Ihyaul Qur'an, serving students across multiple grade levels. Despite its

relatively recent establishment, Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an has built a strong academic reputation, demonstrated through various achievements in competitions at local, provincial, and national levels. These accomplishments reflect the pesantren's growing prominence and commitment to educational excellence. The Strategy of Multicultural Islamic Education Implementation In contrast to many pesantren that enforce strict gender segregation (Bruinessen, 1990; Lukens-Bull, 2019), Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an implements an integrated learning system in which male and female students share the same classroom environment. This inclusive arrangement encourages gender-neutral interaction and supports the pesantren's commitment to multicultural Islamic education. Traditional pesantren commonly separate genders not only during classroom instruction but also throughout daily routines (Lukens-Bull & Dhofier, 2000), often to prevent inappropriate interaction or potential moral issues. Some pesantren even reinforce gender-specific identities through highly

structured environments, such as Pesantren Darussalam Gontor Putri and Pesantren Banjarwati Paciran Lamongan (Malihah et al., 2020). In contrast, Pesantren Ihya'ul Qur'an adopts a more flexible and equitable model that aligns with contemporary educational reforms emphasizing inclusivity, gender awareness, and multicultural values. Interview data further illustrate this approach. A member of the pesantren leadership explained that students are not separated in the classroom but are housed in different dormitory areas, with female students placed on the north side of the river and male students on the south side (Ustadz Ali, personal communication, 2023). He noted that this arrangement still allows for meaningful interaction within appropriate limits. The spatial design, an integrated learning environment with separate dormitories, reflects an educational philosophy consistent with Qur'anic values, particularly Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13, which emphasizes human equality and mutual recognition. As Hoon (2017) highlights, such principles encourage positive interactions that promote social harmony, suggesting that the pesantren's model fosters both religious and multicultural development.

Learning based on Multicultural Islamic Education

Pesantren institutions possess distinctive educational characteristics that set them apart from other learning environments, particularly through their reliance on classical Islamic texts authored by scholars from diverse intellectual traditions (Fauzi, 2012). These foundational works typically cover a wide spectrum of Islamic disciplines, such as fiqh, tafsir, adab, history, and Aqidah, which shape students' religious understanding and moral development. At Pesantren Ihya'ul Qur'an, these classical materials are complemented by texts that implicitly support the integration of multicultural values within the learning process. Among the core references used in daily instruction are Hadith al-Arba'in, Safinah al-Najah, Fath al-Qarib, and Ta'lim al-Muta'allim, each contributing to students' spiritual growth while simultaneously fostering respect, discipline, and ethical engagement with diverse peers. Through this combination of classical knowledge and multicultural orientation,

the pesantren cultivates an educational environment that aligns Islamic teachings with inclusive and culturally responsive practices

In formal educational institutions, particularly at the junior and senior high school levels, the curriculum typically comprises general subjects alongside religious studies (diniyah). Since many pesantrens also operate formal schools, they implement a dual curriculum that integrates the pesantren's internal curriculum with the national curriculum. This integrative model is widely practiced across Indonesian pesantrens, where the combination of religious and national curricula has become a distinctive characteristic of their educational framework. Table 2 presents the list of general subjects included in pesantren.

The curriculum at Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an integrates the national education system with the traditional pesantren curriculum, reflecting its commitment to combining religious and general scientific knowledge within a unified educational framework. All three formal institutions under the pesantren, its elementary, junior high, and senior high schools, are formally registered under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, ensuring compliance with national standards. This dual-curriculum model is consistent with trends in many modern pesantren across Indonesia, where religious and scientific studies are blended to cultivate well-rounded learners. Despite this integration, classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning), which have historically served as the foundation of Salaf pesantren, remain central in the instructional process, as highlighted by Bruinessen (1990). Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an also maintains a structured daily schedule that combines spiritual development, academic instruction, and character formation from early morning until night. Students begin the day with night prayers, Qur'an memorization, and morning vocabulary practice before moving on to hygiene routines and breakfast. Academic learning is divided into morning and afternoon sessions, with breaks for prayer, meals, and rest. Additional religious activities, such as Qur'an review, Tahsin, evening

study periods, and night memorization, reinforce both academic and spiritual learning, while weekly programs such as multilingual khutbah, storytelling, Fiqh studies, and Qur'anic interpretation further support students' holistic development. This structured environment provides continuous opportunities for collaboration and intercultural interaction among students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Shared activities, including Muhadhoroh (public speaking), cooperative tasks, cleanliness duties, and the use of Arabic and English in daily communication, foster teamwork, mutual respect, and effective cross-cultural understanding. As Liddicoat (2014) observes, foreign language learning is often enhanced in multicultural settings, a pattern evident in the pesantren's linguistic practices. Through daily interaction and collective responsibilities, students gradually develop tolerance, respect, and social cohesion, values aligned with the Islamic principle of *tasamuh*, which advocates peaceful coexistence and harmonious community relationships (Hoon, 2017).

Active Use of Foreign Languages The active integration of foreign languages in the pesantren environment begins as soon as new students arrive, where they are encouraged, and in many cases required, to use Arabic and English in daily communication to strengthen linguistic proficiency. Students who fail to follow these language policies may receive sanctions, reinforcing the pesantren's commitment to language discipline. Such practices are typically found in pesantrens that adopt modern and progressive educational models, including institutions such as Pesantren Gontor and contemporary programs that embed the use of foreign languages as part of broader educational reforms (Hamzah & Iqbal, 2023). In support of this approach, one teacher explained that students are expected to use Indonesian, English, and Arabic. However, greater emphasis is placed on the latter two languages because Indonesian is already widely used outside the pesantren. The teacher also noted that students who fail to use Arabic or English may receive disciplinary consequences (Ustadz Ali, personal

communication, 2025). Liddicoat (2014) argues that enforcing the use of a foreign language can also promote multicultural integration among students by fostering shared linguistic practices within a diverse community. Although many students come from regions such as Bengkulu, South Sumatra, and Lampung, they continue to maintain their native languages (Tahir et al., 2020). Thus, the inclusion of Arabic and English in the pesantren context supports students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds by providing extensive and sustained exposure to foreign languages, ultimately enhancing both linguistic competency and intercultural understanding.

Multicultural Values in Extracurricular Activities

Beyond its formal classroom instruction, Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an offers a diverse range of supplementary and extracurricular programs that run from early morning until late evening. These activities embody key principles of multicultural education and provide students with opportunities to engage in collaborative, creative, and character-building experiences. Programs such as scouting, Muhadhoroh (public speaking), Muhimmah Ta'awuniah (collaborative tasks), sports, artistic activities, calligraphy, and haiku writing highlight the pesantren's commitment to nurturing students' social, linguistic, and cultural competencies. Artistic and literary activities, in particular, serve not only as creative outlets but also as educational tools that reflect cultural plurality and foster mutual appreciation among learners from diverse backgrounds.

In addition to internal activities, students actively participate in external competitions, including Qur'an memorization contests, sports tournaments, and various academic or creative events, where many achieve notable success. Engagement in these broader arenas enables students to interact with peers from different schools and cultural communities, thereby expanding their social horizons and enriching their multicultural experiences. Through these encounters, students cultivate greater cultural awareness, develop the ability to appreciate differing perspectives, and strengthen their openness to diverse forms of social and intellectual engagement beyond their daily pesantren environment.

Commencement Ceremony

The annual

commencement ceremony at Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an High School is held during the graduation of junior high (9th grade) or senior high (11th grade) students. Beyond its academic purpose, the event functions as a cultural celebration featuring a variety of student art performances. Much like the tradition at Pesantren Gontor, reflecting the influence of the principal's alumni background, the highlight of the ceremony is the Art Stage, also known as Panggung Gembira. This program showcases Qur'anic recitation (tahfidz al-Qur'an), traditional dances, hadrahmusical ensembles, theatrical performances, and other artistic displays. The event is highly collaborative, involving students from both genders along with teachers (ustadzand

ustadzah) and pesantren administrators, and requires substantial institutional planning and support. During the farewell ceremony, students present a diverse array of regional dances that reflect Indonesia's rich cultural heritage, such as the Saman dance from Aceh, the Andun dance from Bengkulu, and the Genjringan performance from Palembang, South Sumatra. These artistic expressions, harmoniously staged together, demonstrate the pesantren's commitment to cultural integration and embody the principles of multicultural education (Heniwaty, 2018; Pradana, 2018). Collaborative efforts among dormitory groups, such as residents of the Bersatu dormitory, further symbolize the dismantling of ethnic, cultural, and hierarchical barriers within the school community. Broadcast live through the pesantren's media platform, IQTV, the event publicly showcases unity, collective identity, and the successful practice of multicultural Islamic education within the pesantren environment. The Dimension of Multicultural Islamic Education in Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an employs a series of strategies to embed and sustain multicultural Islamic education across academic, social, and extracurricular domains. These efforts, summarized in Figure 1, demonstrate the institution's systematic commitment to nurturing tolerance, cooperation, cultural appreciation, and global-mindedness. Figure 1. Dimensions of Multicultural Islamic Education at the Pesantren of Ihyaul Qur'an Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an demonstrates a distinctly multicultural environment due to its openness to students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Bengkulu Province itself embodies rich cultural heterogeneity, consisting of ethnic groups such as Rejang, Serawai, and Lembak, each maintaining its own language and traditions. The Rejang community, for instance, uses the Rejang language written in the traditional Kaganga script, whereas Serawai and Lembak speakers uphold their linguistic identities as markers of cultural heritage. This diversity reflects the unique sociocultural character of Bengkulu, where no single mother tongue dominates; instead, each ethnic group preserves its linguistic tradition in everyday life (Diana, 2023). In contrast to many pesantren that strictly segregate male and female students, Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an adopts a more integrated learning system, allowing both genders to interact within shared educational spaces while maintaining Islamic ethical boundaries. This model enables natural communication, reduces prejudice, and builds trust among students from different families, regions, and ethnicities. This inclusive approach aligns with Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13), which emphasizes that human diversity, across gender, ethnicity, and tribe, exists so that individuals may know and understand one another. As Rasyid et al. (2022) affirm, differenc

becomes a basis for cooperation and collective well-being rather than division. Through such interaction, students learn the Qur'anic value of ta'arafu, which calls for intentional, benevolent engagement with others. To enhance intercultural unity, Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an implements a linguistic environment in which Arabic and English serve as the primary languages of daily communication and instruction. Indonesian is not emphasized because it poses no communicative barrier; it is already the students' shared lingua franca. This multilingual policy encourages interaction across diverse

backgrounds and supports the development of linguistic competence (Liddicoat, 2014). The mastery of Arabic, especially for students aspiring to pursue studies in the Middle East, has proven effective, as demonstrated by nineteen alumni who gained admission to universities across the Middle East in 2024 and an additional five students accepted to Al-Azhar University in Cairo in 2025. Increasingly, students also pursue studies at Indonesian state universities and European institutions, evidencing the global opportunities enabled by multilingual education. Extracurricular activities play a vital role in cultivating intercultural understanding within the pesantren. Activities such as scouting, Muhadhoroh (public speaking), Muhimmah Ta'awuniah (collaborative tasks), sports, calligraphy, and creative arts reinforce multicultural values while supporting skill development and preventing issues such as bullying or intolerance. Continuous supervision by teachers helps maintain discipline and strengthen the pesantren's multicultural environment. These activities foster daily productivity, collaboration, and social cohesion among students from diverse backgrounds. Graduation ceremonies and arts performances serve as major venues for expressing multicultural values in Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an. When planned on a large scale, these events significantly enhance students' creativity and showcase the harmonious coexistence of spirituality and artistic expression, demonstrating that religion and culture complement one another (Lukens). Much like Pesantren Darussalam Gontor's celebrated Panggung Gembira, Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an incorporates theatrical plays, hadrah, and regional dances such as the Saman dance (Aceh), Andun (Bengkulu), and Genjringan (Palembang), reaffirming Indonesia's cultural richness (Sista et al., 2019; Hamzah & Iqbal, 2023). Extensive social media coverage amplifies their impact, enhancing public appreciation. Through these events, local arts and traditions foster social cohesion and reduce prejudice, demonstrating the transformative potential of multicultural education within Islamic boarding schools (Mubin, 2023). The success of these performances also reflects the pesantren's growing adaptability and modernization. The findings of this study can be interpreted through Banks' (2008) and Nieto's (2017) multicultural education frameworks, which highlight core components such as equity pedagogy, content integration, prejudice reduction, and the creation of empowering school cultures. When examined through these lenses, Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an demonstrates a learning environment that intentionally cultivates respect for diversity and social justice. This aligns with broader literature showing that Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia have increasingly adopted multicultural approaches to strengthen tolerance and inclusivity (Hamdan & Fadli, 2022; Rasyid et al., 2022). Within this study, multicultural practice is not treated as an isolated pedagogical technique but rather as a foundational whole-school orientation that shapes governance, learning processes, and student socialization. Complementing these Western-derived frameworks, Islamic pedagogical principles, particularly tasamuh (tolerance), ta'aruf (mutual recognition), adl (justice), and ukhuwah (brotherhood), serve as the theological and ethical basis for multicultural engagement in the pesantren. Classical and contemporary Islamic scholars have emphasized that diversity is divinely intended, a theme reflected in Qur'anic teachings such as Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13). These values are operationalized in pesantren settings through daily routines, communa

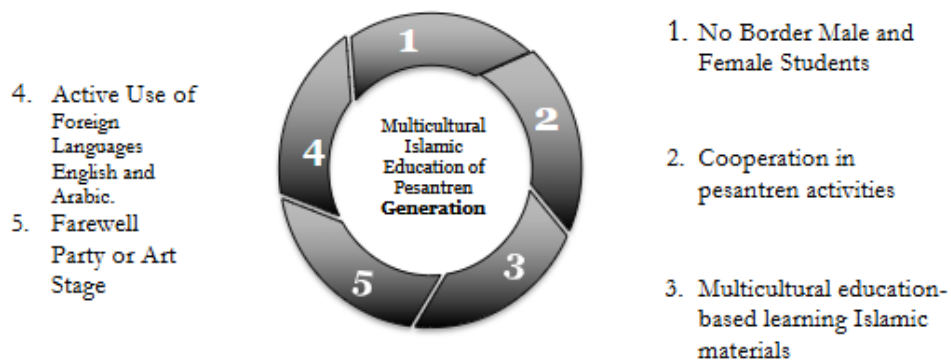


Figure 1. Dimensions of Multicultural Islamic Education at the Pesantren of Ihyaul Qur'an

activities, and interpersonal relationships, supporting Hefner's (2018) argument that Indonesian Islamic education has long fostered pluralist ethics. In this pesantren, Islamic pedagogy reinforces the moral obligation of respecting differences, providing a spiritual framework that strengthens multicultural practices promoted by Banks and Nieto. The findings also show that the pesantren's institutional structure reflects Banks' concept of school culture reform, in which the entire organizational ecosystem is designed to minimize prejudice and promote equitable participation. This is visible in policies regulating gender interaction, language use, conflict resolution, and student discipline. Such structural reforms parallel insights from research on pesantren models that balance modernity and tradition while promoting social inclusivity (Hamzah & Iqbal, 2023; Lukens-Bull, 2001). The pesantren's multilingual environment, rooted in Arabic and English language learning practices, supports intercultural mediation and pragmatic competence, resonating with Liddicoat's (2014) work on language learning as a means for intercultural understanding. These features collectively create a microcosm of multicultural coexistence where students from diverse backgrounds can thrive. Within the curriculum, the pesantren combines national educational standards with classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning), enabling what Banks (2008) frames as content integration, the deliberate inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives into teaching materials. This curricular approach echoes earlier observations that Indonesian pesantren adapt both local wisdom and global knowledge to prepare students for contemporary challenges (Bruinessen, 1990; Lukens-Bull, 2019). Aligning with Nieto's (2017) emphasis on affirming diversity, learning materials highlight values such as humanity, cooperation, justice, and deliberation, which are core tenets of both multicultural pedagogy and Islamic ethics. This integrative approach ensures that multicultural ideas are neither foreign nor imposed but harmonized with Islamic identity and tradition. Classroom interactions and extracurricular activities further illustrate the implementation of equity pedagogy, where learning experiences are structured to support the success of all students regardless of their cultural or linguistic backgrounds. Activities such as joint language learning, collaborative service projects, and mixed-ethnicity dormitory life nurture solidarity and reduce intergroup tension. These findings resonate with studies showing that intentional contact and shared activities promote multicultural acceptance and social capital among youth (An et al., 2025; Syarif et al., 2024). The pesantren context amplifies these outcomes through spiritual discipline, communal worship, and shared moral expectations, fostering a cohesive and empathetic student community. Taken together, these findings indicate that Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an embodies the synthesis of multicultural education theory and Islamic pedagogical principles. By nurturing empowered learners (Banks, 2008) who are also shaped into insan kamil, holistically developed individuals grounded in Islamic ethics, the pesantren provides an exemplary model of multicultural Islamic education in contemporary Indonesia. Its success supports broader national discourses on religious moderation (Zaluchu et al., 2025) and contributes to the ongoing scholarly discussion on how Islamic boarding schools can promote pluralism, harmony, and intercultural understanding (Paisun et al., 2025; Ramdhani et al., 2021). This integrated framework helps explain how the pesantren effectively reduces prejudice, strengthens students' intercultural competence, and sustains a culture of peace rooted in both pedagogical innovation and Islamic moral values. The present study offers several important contributions to the growing body of research on multicultural Islamic education, particularly within the pesantren context. By examining the curricular practices, linguistic policies, extracurricular activities, and socio-cultural dynamics at Pesantren Ihyaul Qur'an, this study provides an empirically grounded account of

how multicultural values are embedded in both formal and informal learning spaces. The findings expand current understandings of how pesantren can function as inclusive, intercultural learning environments that promote ta'arafu, tolerance, and global-mindedness, values that align with contemporary educational demands. Moreover, this study contributes methodologically by integrating document analysis, observation, and interviews, offering a multimodal perspective that captures the complexity of multicultural practices in Islamic boarding schools. These insights can inform policymakers, educators, and pesantren leaders seeking to strengthen multicultural approaches within Islamic education systems in Indonesia and beyond. Despite these contributions, the study is not without limitations. First, the findings are based on a single pesantren, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other Islamic boarding schools with different cultural, geographic, or organizational characteristics. Second, the scope of the study emphasizes observable practices and institutional policies, leaving less room for longitudinal analysis of

students' long-term attitudes and behavioral changes related to multiculturalism. Future research could broaden the sample by including multiple pesantren across diverse regions to capture wider variations in multicultural implementation. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to examine how exposure to multicultural Islamic education influences students' identity development, intergroup attitudes, and academic trajectories over time. Additionally, comparative studies between pesantren and non-pesantren Islamic schools may offer deeper insights into how different institutional models shape multicultural educational outcomes