Islam And Multiculturalism: Grounding The Values of Islamic Teachings in the Midst of Diversity

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Article History	Abstract
  Citation: Ahmad Munirul Hakim, Fadhila Sidiq Permana. (2026). Islam And Multiculturalism: Grounding The Values of Islamic Teachings in the Midst of Diversity. UKR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (UKRJAHSS), Volume 2(3), 17-21.	*Religion is often used as a tool to achieve certain political goals, which is certainly reasonable if it is for a good purpose. However, if it is directed towards negative matters and actions that can harm others or different groups, then this is not right. By referencing religion, some circles find it very easy to use claims that sharpen conflicts, slander opponents, and unite militantly in the name of God. Starting from this reality, building mutual trust among followers of different religions becomes very important in reducing violence in the name of religion, inter-religious conflicts, and injustice. This article will elaborate on how Islam teaches the importance of appreciating differences and mutual understanding of diversity. The theme of this literature research is about multiculturalism in Islam and discussions on how to instill the values of Islamic teachings in a diverse society. The results of this research draw a conclusion that Islam teaches the concept of multiculturalism to manage differences and foster the mental maturity of Muslims to understand diversity. The next conclusion is about the need for innovative steps to combine the values of Islamic teachings with various existing cultural systems.* ***Keywords:** Islam, Multiculturalism, Values of Islamic Teachings.*

INTRODUCTION

Discussions about Islam cannot be separated from discussions about religious teachings and social ethics. The Islamic community has been able to present itself in the discourse of the modern era. This is certainly inseparable from the emergence of several Islamic scholars such as Al-Tahtawi, Muhammad Abduh (Rahman, 2024), Rasyid Ridha (Maharani et al., 2022), Prof. Ova Emilia (Chrismawaty et al., 2022), BJ Habiebi (Yafi, 2023), Gus Dur (Permana, 2023), Prof. Muhammad Syafi'i Antonio (Adinugraha & Ghofur, 2017), and others, who are able to showcase their ideas and contributions to the world stage. These figures are some examples who have made significant contributions through their respective fields, including medicine, economics, politics, social issues, technology, and others.

The fact is an undeniable matter that as part of the large community of religious followers in the world, the Islamic community has demonstrated its ability to progress alongside the times. In other words, the influence of the emergence of Islamic scholars has at least made a significant contribution to the development of the world up to now and serves as a motivation for the Islamic community itself to continue to develop its potential.

With these facts, certainly for Muslims around the world, it is appropriate to take pride in their faith and community, while continuously striving to improve knowledge and skills. Therefore, there needs to be self-reflection and ongoing improvements within the Muslim community so that they do not become complacent with the current situation. Muslims must feel that the knowledge and skills they possess are still far from reaching the true vision or ideals of Islam.

In terms of social aspects, Islam is part of the religious multiculturalism that continues to exist today. Although there are teachings of multiculturalism within Islam itself, the reality cannot be denied that various religions in the world are now competing to become 'the one religion top in the world' or the number one religion in the world. This is

certainly an ambition to show the world that this religion is more worthy to follow.

Indeed, when we are faced with the discussion of a religion, we will explain something that is considered explicit or hidden. This certainly cannot be separated from a person's belief in the religion they follow. Thus, that person considers that only their religion can lead to the path of salvation. On the other hand, followers of other religions are often deemed to be wrong and tend to be regarded as misguided.

However, apart from that, when Islam began to reassert its identity on the world stage, there is still considerable opposition from certain groups, especially some circles from the Western world. Some in the Western world, most of whom are not adherents of Islam, more often showcase the negative aspects of the Muslim community (Widjayanti, 2017), In fact, what is actually not characteristic of Islam includes stealing, killing, corruption, and even to the point of being considered terrorism. Of course, this poses a challenge for Muslims to restore the positive image and good name of Islam.

On the other hand, Islam is not a religion that teaches its followers, known as Muslims, to take such actions. Instead, Islam teaches its followers to always improve themselves (Al-Ghazali, 2011), do good to anyone, even to non-Muslims (Permana, 2020). This is explained by Allah Ta'ala in the Quran, that Allah does not forbid us from doing good and being just to those who do not fight us on account of religion and who do not expel us from our homeland. Indeed, Allah likes those who act justly. Indeed, Allah only forbids us from taking as allies those who oppose us solely because of our religious background, who colonize or expel us from our lands, and who assist others in expelling us as close friends. Therefore, whoever takes them as close friends is indeed among the wrongdoers. This explanation is given in the Quran in Surah Al-Mumtahanah, verses 8-9.

It is narrated that Allah loves gentleness in all matters, and the verse above teaches us to be kind and friendly to others from any religious background who have good character and to those who show respect or appreciation to us (Al-Qusyairi, 2007). Seeing the reality of Indonesia, which has a diverse population from various religious backgrounds such as Islam, Catholicism, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and others, an attitude of tolerance among religious communities and a sense of mutual respect for differences in traditions between religions is very important to foster, as this is in the interest of nurturing the unity and integrity of the nation (Lestari, 2020). The attitude of mutual respect, understanding, and honoring those differences is known as the concept of multiculturalism (Abidin, 2016).

Basically, if we discuss multiculturalism, we will talk about cultural differences and differences in traditions or religious ritual practices (Suparlan, 2002). Starting from this point, there should be maturity in thinking or acting to better understand and respect other religions with a wise attitude. This means that the existence of differences among each religion must be well preserved. Islam is different from Christianity, different from Hinduism, different from Buddhism, and so on.

If we examine more deeply, in Islam there are actually teachings about multiculturalism. Because of this multiculturalism, especially in the realm of interfaith relations, it is important for Muslims to continue to try to present themselves with positive actions and by building relevant and constructive global discourses. In this way, the world community will recognize a better image of Islam and understand that Muslims also play an important role in progress and change.

In this article, the author will attempt to elaborate on the theme of Islam and Multiculturalism. This writing aims to ground the values of Islamic teachings in the midst of diversity. This research uses library research methods, employing a comparative method between case studies and a theory (Suyanto & Sutinah, 2015). and choosing a thematic discourse writing model, where the author will first try to build a concept about Islam and Multiculturalism, then we will elaborate on several effective implementations of Islamic values to ground the teachings of Islam amidst the existing diversity.

METHOD

The preparation of this article uses library methods from various books, articles from various journals, and articles from websites (Nur Khaliq & Pangestu, 2025). The purpose of literature research is to build a deep understanding of the theme being studied, to identify and analyze various perspectives on the research topic, and to draw a conclusion from the findings in the study (Abdurrahman, 2024). This article can be categorized as a thematic interpretation with a social ethical model (*adabi ijtima'i*), where the meaning of the Qur'an is studied in depth and then linked or analyzed using the existing social realities and cultural systems (Al-Dzahabi, 2000).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Islam and Multiculturalism

The word Islam linguistically means 'to submit.' Islam comes from the Arabic verb 'salima,' which means safe. From that word, the verb 'aslama' is also formed, which means to surrender oneself or to have an attitude of submission and obedience (Abdur Rohman & Sungkono, 2022). Islam means peace, safety, mercy, and love. Islam

as a mercy for the universe is to embody peace and love for all creatures. A true Muslim always spreads love not only to humans but also to the universe. A true Muslim will not cause harm, for the Quran has reminded not to do harm (Fariadi, 2023).

Multiculturalism itself comes from the words multi (plural) and cultural (about culture). Multi-culturalism implies the recognition of the reality of cultural diversity, which includes both traditional diversity such as ethnic, racial, or religious diversity, as well as the diversity of forms of life (subcultures) that continue to emerge at every stage of the history of society. The term multiculturalism is generally accepted positively by Indonesian society. This is certainly related to the reality of Indonesian society that is pluralistic.

The emergence of the multiculturalism ideology originated from the need for recognition of cultural diversity, which is a daily reality for many nations, including Indonesia. Therefore, multiculturalism should be understood as an ideology, serving as a tool or medium to enhance appreciation for the equality of all humans and their humanity, which operationally manifests through social institutions, namely culture as a guide to the daily lives of a group of people. In this context, multiculturalism is a concept that acknowledges cultural diversity. We can see the strong principles of equality and recognition in various definitions of multiculturalism.

According to ST. Nugroho, the understanding of multiculturalism is divided into five typologies: First, isolationist multiculturalism, where various cultural groups in society live autonomously and engage in minimal interaction with one another. Second, accommodative multiculturalism, which is a society that has a dominant culture that makes certain adjustments and accommodations for the needs of minority cultures. Third, autonomist multiculturalism, which refers to a plural society where the main cultural groups strive to achieve equality with the dominant culture and desire an autonomous life within a politically acceptable framework.

Fourth, critical/interactive multiculturalism, which refers to a plural society where cultural groups are not too concerned with autonomous cultural life, but are more inclined to create a collective creation that reflects and affirms their distinctive perspectives. Fifth, cosmopolitan multiculturalism, which is a plural society that seeks to completely eliminate cultural boundaries in order to create a society where each individual is no longer tied to a specific culture, but freely engages in intercultural experiments while simultaneously developing their own cultural life (Salim, 2022).

In Islam, the values of teachings about multiculturalism are explained in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوباً وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind, indeed We have created you male and female. Then We made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most righteous among you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. (QS. Al-Hujurat: 13)

The verse explains the importance of knowing one another and teaches not to pride oneself on one's ancestry or group. It also explains that the measure of honor is the level of piety, marked by the maturity of the soul and noble character (Al-Baidhawi, n.d.). By getting to know each other, an individual or group will not easily hold negative prejudices against others or other groups. In the previous verse, namely QS. Al-Hujurat verse 12, it is explained to stay away from unclear prejudices. Negative prejudices often trigger various evils, which will give rise to hostility or conflict (Al-Razi, 2012).

Grounding the Values of Islamic Teachings in the Midst of Pluralism

Religion is often misused as a tool to achieve goals. By referring to religion, some groups can easily obtain a basis for claims that only serve to sharpen conflicts, slander opponents, and rally militarily in the name of God. Starting from this reality, building mutual trust among religious communities becomes very important to reduce violence in the name of religion, inter-religious conflict, and injustice.

Some ways to foster mutual trust and build peaceful relationships among religious communities include eliminating misunderstandings, easing traumatic memories, removing hostile stereotypes, building cooperation between groups or individuals, reflecting on shared aspects, and taking concrete steps towards reconciliation (Kung, 2010).

The differences or diversity around us should not make us worried and disturbed. Because it is impossible for God to create diversity in this country without a clear reason or just for fun. Diversity does not always lead to conflict and disputes, as long as the society has the maturity to accept diversity and is able to manage differences. We also do not need to be obsessed with uniformity among nations, because that is not a measure of the welfare and harmony of a nation. In fact, the contemporary reality shows that there are very few countries whose populations consist of only one uniform ethnic group (Kabakoran, 2019).

In addressing the reality of the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and religions around us, we must certainly convey religious values with full wisdom and promote an attitude that has its own charm to inspire others to think reflectively, rather than displaying attitudes that provoke negative

reactions from other groups. Therefore, in the Qur'an, Allah the Almighty says:

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُۗ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ

Invite (people) to the path of your Lord with wisdom (knowledge) and good advice or counsel, and argue with them in the best method. Indeed, your Lord is the Most Knowing of who has gone astray from His path and He knows best who has been guided. (QS. An-Nahl: 125)

The term 'hikmah' in that verse means knowledge, and then the command to invite people to the path of God can be interpreted as a form of encouragement for certain students to reflect on and understand various truths (Al-Hanafi, 2001). The verse also contains an encouragement to discuss or dialogue in a good way. If we refer to Gus Dur's thoughts, there is the concept of Islamic Cosmopolitanism and the Indigenization of Islam. Islamic Cosmopolitanism is a concept about the openness of Islam to dialogue with external civilizations. Meanwhile, the Indigenization of Islam is a concrete form of this open attitude, characterized by the ability of the Islamic community to blend and integrate the values of Islamic teachings with local culture (Wijaya, 2014).

Grounding the teachings of Islam amidst cultural diversity and religious differences will not be optimal if it is only done through religious pulpits or religious event gatherings. Therefore, the values of religious teachings must be instilled using various innovative steps, and the role and function of religion must also be broadened to be felt by various groups. The function of religion should be able to drive the integration of religious values and culture; religion must also provide legitimization power to distinguish which social systems are good or worthy of following and which social systems are bad or must be abandoned. Religion should also function to resolve various problems faced by society (Marzali, 2016).

The essence of religious teachings must be applicable to alleviate the burdens of human life, must function to maintain solidarity and care for unity, and must be able to permeate every applicable law or public policy (Marzali, 2016). When that has been achieved, the teachings of Islam will be more accepted by a pluralistic society. Therefore, we do not need to change the Pancasila ideology, which has become the foundation of the state, into an Islamic state, because what is important is how to make the teachings of Islam shape the character of the nation and its society.

CONCLUSION

Islam and multiculturalism are concepts about the teachings for living peacefully amidst differences and about how Islam teaches us to respect or even recognize the diversity that exists. Grounding the values of Islamic teachings in the midst of the plurality of tribes, cultures, and religions must be done with wise steps and attitudes. The function of Islamic teachings is not merely as a formal identity, but must be broadened in scope so that it can permeate into the life of society. This requires innovative implementation, so that Islam can interact with other cultures and the values of Islamic teachings can blend with societal culture.

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