

Institutional Practices of Multicultural Islamic Education in Fostering Conscious Character and Peacebuilding

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ABSTRACT

Multicultural contexts pose persistent challenges to sustaining social harmony and peace, particularly within religiously and culturally diverse societies. While prior studies on Islamic education have largely emphasized theological and pedagogical dimensions, limited attention has been given to how institutional practices of multicultural Islamic education function as a transformative mechanism for character formation. This study investigates the enactment of five core values comprising *taaruf*, *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *taawun*, and *tawazun* within a non-formal adult training institution. The novelty of this research lies in its articulation of how management functions, namely Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling, are reconceptualized into experiential practices and neurospiritual mechanisms involving brainwave deceleration. Data were generated through sustained observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings demonstrate that a conscious character emerges through a structured process where values are embedded in institutional routines and sustained through a collective habituation ecosystem, including digital social networks and ethical commerce. The study contributes to the field by articulating how multicultural Islamic education operates as an experiential institutional practice that links value-based habituation with peace-oriented character transformation in non-formal settings. These findings suggest that institutional practices, rather than abstract normative frameworks, play a decisive role in connecting Islamic educational values with peacebuilding outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's global landscape, societies are increasingly characterized by religious, cultural, and social diversity. While such diversity enriches human interaction and fosters intercultural learning, it can also challenge social harmony and peace (Azkiya et al., 2024; Erawadi & Setiadi, 2024; S et al., 2025; Sechandini et al., 2023; Sirojuddin et al., 2025). Misunderstandings, prejudice, and exclusivist attitudes often lead to social tensions and conflicts, emphasizing the need for educational paradigms that cultivate inclusive awareness, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence (Said, 2025). This complexity is exacerbated by superdiversity and digital polarization, which demand more than passive tolerance (Bulmer & Solomos, 2018; UNESCO, 2021). Education must therefore transition into a robust mechanism for social cohesion (Castles & Miller, 1998; Nieto, 2017). Contemporary scholarship recognizes the need to integrate moral and spiritual dimensions to counteract postmodern identity fragmentation (Gorski, 2013; Modood, 2019). Educators explore holistic approaches that transcend religious boundaries (Banks & Banks, 2020). One prominent approach is multicultural Islamic education, which fosters moral consciousness and social empathy (Fahmi et al., 2025a; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Sodikin et al., 2026; Takunas et al., 2024). This paradigm offers a foundation for navigating pluralistic tensions while maintaining communal integrity.

Within this context, Islamic education plays a strategic role in shaping moral consciousness, social empathy, and ethical responsibility. Traditionally, it was perceived primarily as the transmission of theological doctrines within rigid sectarian boundaries. However, contemporary discourse emphasizes its transformative potential as a medium for conscious character formation and peacebuilding (DeCuir, 2019; Hefner, 2018). This shift necessitates a re-evaluation of how Islamic institutions engage with modernity without losing their ontological essence (Daun & Walford, 2004; Lahmar, 2020). Multicultural Islamic education harmonizes ethical principles with respect for diversity (Dute, 2021; Paisun et al., 2025). By repositioning *Rahmatan lil Alamin* as a foundational philosophy, institutions can cultivate a cosmopolitan Muslim identity that is both pious and inclusive (M. Abdullah et al., 2025; M. A. Abdullah, 2020; Azra & Thaha, 2012; Ilham & Ramadani, 2024; Kader et al., 2024). This paradigm suggests the classroom is a sanctuary for developing a critical conscience (Tan, 2014). Such an approach ensures that religious education contributes to social stability by fostering an ethic of mutual care (El-Mubarak & Hassan, 2021; Encung & Rusydi, 2026). Thus, Islamic education becomes a catalyst for broader societal transformation.

Multicultural Islamic education is grounded in five core values: *ta'aruf* (mutual understanding), *tawassuth* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *ta'awun* (cooperation), and *tawazun* (balance). When internalized, these values cultivate moral awareness and spiritual balance. However, successful implementation depends heavily on institutional management (Bush, 2003; Fullan, 2020). Prior studies have largely focused on theological dimensions, with limited attention to how management operationalizes these values to foster character transformation in Indonesia (Makmun et al., 2021). Effective management must move toward values-led leadership that embeds multiculturalism into the institutional DNA (Hallinger, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020). Without a systematic approach, these values remain abstract concepts rather than lived experiences (Schein, 2017). Therefore, examining institutional routines is essential for bridging theory and practice (Raihani, 2013). This managerial perspective ensures that educational institutions function as structured environments where multicultural values are practiced daily.

Previous studies on Islamic education have largely focused on its theological and pedagogical dimensions, while its transformative potential for peacebuilding has received limited scholarly attention. Few studies have examined how multicultural Islamic education can serve as a foundation for conscious character transformation that contributes to sustainable peace, particularly within Indonesia's multicultural context (Mahmud et al., 2024; Malikah, 2020; Mariyono, 2024). This gap is critical because peace is a proactive condition requiring systematic character development (Galtung, 1996; Lederach, 2003). To explore these dynamics, this study adopts a phenomenological approach

within non-formal settings that offer pedagogical flexibility for experiential learning (Bajaj, 2015). By focusing on institutional practices, the research examines how education is enacted to internalize ethical values that support peacebuilding (McCandless, 2021). This focus on enactment reveals how routines foster lasting spiritual consciousness (Davies, 2003). Understanding these mechanisms provides insights into how to create resilient social structures through targeted educational interventions.

Conscious character transformation represents the vital nexus between individual spiritual maturity and societal stability. This study argues that managing multicultural Islamic education as an experiential practice bridges value-based habituation with peace-oriented action (Mezirow, 1991). Such transformation involves a holistic evolution of the self, enabling participants to navigate social frictions with empathy (Lederach, 2003; Richmond, 2020). Within education management, the institutional environment functions as a microcosm of a peaceful society (Fahmi et al., 2025b; Giroux, 2020). By elucidating the mechanisms of enactment, this research offers a novel framework for translating abstract religious values into tangible peacebuilding outcomes (Nussbaum, 2013). This inquiry is essential to developing religiously grounded, socially transformative educational models (Freire, 1993). Detailed methodological procedures follow in the Methods section. This conceptualization contributes significantly to the management of diversity within modern Islamic educational landscapes.

METHODS

This study employed a phenomenological research approach to explore participants' lived experiences and perceptions of the management of multicultural Islamic education and its role in fostering conscious character transformation for peace. Phenomenology was selected to capture participants' subjective experiences and the meanings they attach to educational practices within non-formal educational settings (Creswell, 2013). To achieve this, the researcher conducted an in-depth investigation of qualitative data to describe the characteristics, quality, and interrelationships of human resource development within Islamic educational institutions in Pare, Kediri (Bakri, 2003; Bandur, 2016; Ghoni, 2012). By adopting this lens, the study moves beyond surface-level observations to uncover the essence of how institutional innovations and multicultural values are operationalized to build sustainable peace.

The participants were 25 individuals from Griya Kesadaran Yogi (GKY), Pare-Kediri, selected through purposive and snowball sampling to achieve data saturation and depth (Creswell, 2015). This diverse group provided a comprehensive perspective, comprising 15 males (60%) and 10 females (40%), predominantly within the productive age range of 26–45 years. Professionally, the sample was heterogeneous, comprising educators (28%), entrepreneurs (24%), private employees (20%), and students (16%), with most holding higher education degrees (80% at S1 and S2 levels). Although the majority were Muslim (84%), the inclusion of Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu participants (16%) reflects GKY's inclusive, multicultural environment. Representing various roles, it's from active participants and alumni to facilitators and management, this demographic diversity acts as a pedagogical catalyst for internalizing core values such as *ta'aruf*, *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *ta'awun*, and *tawazun* in a pluralistic social context.

Data collection was carried out through a multi-method approach involving participant and non-participant observation, structured and unstructured interviews, and document analysis (Ghoni, 2012; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 2007; Sugiyono, 2016). Interview guides were specifically designed to explore perceptions of educational management and the integration of the five core Islamic multicultural values. Simultaneously, observation checklists and document reviews were employed to systematically capture the enactment of these values within the curriculum and institutional policies (Sugiyono, 2016). This rigorous process enabled a holistic collection of information on how institutional routines and reflective monitoring mechanisms facilitate the internalization of moral and spiritual awareness among participants from varied backgrounds.

For the analysis, the study used Creswell's Spiral Analysis, a recursive, iterative process involving organizing, reading, memoing, coding, and generating emergent themes (Creswell, 2013). This approach enabled the researcher to continuously move between data collection and interpretation, refining the understanding of how multicultural Islamic education contributes to character transformation. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher applied triangulation across data sources, conducted member checking with participants, and maintained a detailed audit trail of all research procedures and analytic decisions. Through this systematic spiral, the study articulates a clear link between institutionalized habituation and peace-oriented character outcomes in a non-formal educational landscape.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Multicultural Islamic Educational Management in the Process of Conscious Character Transformation

The management practices at the non-formal Islamic educational institution in Pare, Kediri, reveal a model that transcends conventional administrative routines. Field findings confirm that the institution implements a structured management system through the planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC) stages, grounded entirely in multicultural values. Based on observations, values such as *tawassuth*, *ta'aruf*, *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *ta'awun* are not merely slogans but are integrated into the recruitment system, training modules, and community development (Sismanto et al., 2022; Observation, March 28, 2025). Management here functions as a transformative space where spiritual and interpersonal awareness are intensively nurtured through daily routines designed to build participants' ethical responsibility (Hasyim, 2024).

In the process of character formation, the first stage identified is the strengthening of the cognitive aspect, or moral knowing. Through dialogical sessions and presentations on socio-religious theory, participants gain a deep understanding of pluralistic societal realities. Findings show that participants do not merely understand the definition of tolerance; they can identify real-world challenges in multicultural life (Suparlan, 2002). The initial sessions focus on strengthening self-understanding, guiding participants to reflect on their existence as servants of God amid diversity. This reflective process allows participants to purge negative prejudices and begin internalizing universal values that support peaceful coexistence (Priscilla & Yudhyarta, 2021; Shomali, 2016).

Character transformation continues into the affective stage, or moral feeling, through a systematic brainwave reduction technique. The institution utilizes mindful breathing, body relaxation, and low-frequency music (*binaural beats*) to transition participants from a beta state to alpha or theta frequencies. In this state, participants become more receptive to contemplation and positive emotions. Field findings documented tangible emotional evidence, including profound silence, tears during contemplation, and the release of past memory blocks. This process creates a spiritual honesty that serves as the foundation for *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), where empathy and compassion emerge naturally as deeply felt experiences rather than mere theories (Budiyanto, 2022; Supriatin & Nasution, 2017).



Figure 1 Memory Block Release Session

In the final stage, this transformation manifests as moral action through the practice of habituation. Participants implement *modern uzlah* techniques, including daily journals, tafakkur (deep reflection), and independent breathing exercises, to maintain mental clarity amid modern disruptions (Khoiri, 2021). Observed behavioral changes include increased communicativeness, openness, and greater tolerance toward diversity within the group. These multicultural values are eventually embedded into the organizational culture through group discussions and sustained mentoring sessions. Thus, the management of Islamic education at this institution successfully bridges value-based habituation with peace-oriented social action (Halim, 2021).

Table 1. Summary of Research Findings

Transformation Stage	Managerial & Technical Practice	Observation Results
Institutional Management	Integration of multicultural values into POAC functions.	<i>Tasamuh</i> and <i>Ta'awun</i> act as the operational DNA of the institution.
Moral Knowing	Spiritual dialogue and existential self-reflection.	Participants internalize their essence as servants within a plural society.
Moral Feeling	Brainwave reduction (Alpha/Theta) & Binaural Beats.	Release of emotional blocks, emergence of empathy, and spiritual honesty.
Moral Action	<i>Modern Uzlah</i> , <i>Tafakkur</i> Journaling, & Habituation.	Participants become consistently communicative, inclusive, and tolerant.

Source: Data Collection, 2025



Figure 2 Brainwave Reduction Process

Establishing Regional Management Boards (DPD)

The research findings indicate that cultivating a conscious character does not end upon the completion of the initial training phase. Instead, it is strategically extended through a multi-dimensional sustainability ecosystem. The institution manages this through the establishment of Regional Management Boards (DPD), which serve as dynamic hubs for continuous value reinforcement. Through structured forums such as periodic seminars, DPD meetings, and RK Sharing sessions, the institution ensures that multicultural values are specifically transitioned from theoretical discourse into lived social practices (Rara, 2024). Observational data reveal that these meetings involve participants from diverse social and religious backgrounds, where they engage in collaborative business mentoring and socio-economic support, effectively operationalizing the concept of a living community (Observation, March 2025).

Furthermore, the institution leverages digital technology to bridge the gap between formal training and daily life. The existence of Alumni WhatsApp groups serves as a virtual extension for habituation. The researcher noted that these digital platforms facilitate a continuous cycle of moral knowing, feeling, and action. In these groups, participants consistently share daily reflections and personal emotional narratives, which strengthen their cognitive grasp of self-awareness. Observations of these digital interactions reveal a high frequency of emotional affirmations and expressions of gratitude among members, fostering deep empathy and a sense of collective belonging. This digital habituation ensures that the spiritual frequency attained during training is maintained through persistent social interaction and mutual reinforcement (Lickona, 2022; Maksalina, 2024).

Beyond social and digital structures, the transformation process is uniquely integrated into a master distributor-distributor system. This economic empowerment model functions as a pragmatic manifestation of character values in the marketplace. Participants do not view the distribution of products merely as a profit-seeking venture; rather, they perceive these items as media for conveying consciousness and holistic well-being to the wider society. Findings from document analysis and interviews confirm that this system encourages moral action through ethical commerce. Distributors act as agents of transformation, promoting healthy living and spiritual integrity, thereby demonstrating that conscious character is sustained when it is rooted in real-world socio-economic utility (Iqbal et al., 2025; Mainuddin et al., 2023).

The Role of Islamic Educational Management in Building a Culture of Institutional Peace

The research finds that Islamic Educational Management (IEM) at the institution serves as the primary engine for cultivating a sustainable culture of peace. Rather than focusing solely on administrative or technical efficiency, the management system intentionally integrates spiritual, emotional, and multicultural dimensions into its daily operations. Observations conducted throughout the training and management cycles reveal that peace is not merely a policy but a lived habituation facilitated through four key management interventions.

First, the institution embeds Spiritual and Emotional Awareness Development into its core routines. Participants are systematically engaged in *tazkiyatun nafs* (soul purification) practices, including mindful breathing, *tafakkur* (contemplative meditation), and reflective dialogue. During field observations, it was noted that these practices directly increased participants' capacity for empathy and appreciation for diversity (Observation, March 2026). The management treats these spiritual exercises as essential *human resource maintenance*, ensuring that members can internalize values like *tawassuth* (moderation) and *tasamuh* (tolerance) at an emotional level (Harahap & Ependi, 2023).

Second, the management utilizes Reflective Practices to transform organizational culture. Daily activities such as awareness journaling and experience-based emotional evaluations are not optional but institutionalized requirements. In group deliberation forums, the researcher observed a high degree of participatory peace, where dialogue and openness were encouraged over hierarchical dominance. This participatory approach ensures that peace emerges naturally through consistent, value-based

social practices rather than being imposed through rigid regulations (Bourdieu, 1990; Qushwa et al., 2024).

Third, the institution applies Inclusive Recruitment and Training. By actively seeking and training human resources from diverse religious and social backgrounds, management creates a microcosm of diversity within the institution. Observation of training sessions showed that the curriculum intentionally forces participants to encounter the other, requiring them to collaborate on cross-cultural projects. This management strategy effectively reduces internal conflict by normalizing diversity as a positive institutional asset (Muhtarom et al., 2020).

Finally, Ethical Leadership and Exemplarity serve as the backbone of the peace culture. Leaders within the institution act as role models by demonstrating spiritual integrity in their decision-making. Documentation of board meetings shows that decisions are grounded in the principles of *maslahat* (public benefit) and *musyawarah* (deliberation). This leadership style fosters a climate of high trust, where members feel valued and socially responsible, extending the culture of peace beyond the institution and into the broader community (Basri et al., 2022; Spreitzer, 2007).

Table 2. Management Pillars of Institutional Peace Culture

Management Pillar	Operational & Technical Practices	Observational Evidence
Spiritual & Emotional Awareness	Implementation of <i>tazkiyatun nafs</i> through mindful breathing, <i>tafakkur</i> (meditation), and structured <i>dzikir</i> .	Participants exhibit increased capacity for empathy and appreciation for diversity
Reflective Habituation	Institutionalizing awareness journaling, experience-based emotional evaluations, and group reflection sessions.	The emergence of a peace habituation where dialogue and openness occur naturally without formal imposition
Inclusive Integration	Diverse recruitment of human resources and cross-cultural collaborative training modules.	Normalization of diversity as an institutional asset and a significant reduction in potential internal conflicts
Ethical Leadership	Decision-making based on <i>maslahat</i> (public benefit) and <i>musyawarah</i> (deliberation).	Leaders serve as role models, fostering high relational trust and an organizational climate oriented toward social responsibility

Source: Data Collection, 2025

DISCUSSION

Multicultural Islamic Educational Management in the Process of Conscious Character Transformation

The results of this study reveal that Islamic Educational Management IEM within non formal settings functions as a transformative ecosystem rather than a mere administrative hierarchy. By integrating the five core multicultural values *ta'aruf*, *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *ta'awun*, and *tawazun*, the institution redefines the classic POAC framework, Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling, into a values-led leadership model (Bush, 2003; Hallinger, 2020). This management approach ensures that institutional routines serve as a vehicle for *tazkiyah*, soul purification, effectively bridging the gap between theoretical religious ethics and lived social harmony. In this context, the implementation of POAC demonstrates that educational management is inherently a moral act. Planning is not merely about scheduling but is an enactment of the Quranic mandate in Q.S. Al Hasyr 59:18, which demands a vision for tomorrow that encompasses both worldly social cohesion and spiritual accountability (Masturin, 2024). Consequently, the planning phase involves deliberately selecting diverse participants, ensuring that the Organizing phase creates a microcosm of a pluralistic society. This prevents institutional bias by requiring an encounter with the other in a controlled, safe environment, where diversity is treated as a pedagogical asset rather than a logistical hurdle (Nieto, 2017; Sismanto et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the management style shifts the Actuating and Controlling functions from surveillance toward reflective monitoring. By embedding reflective learning into daily routines, the institution moves away from banking education toward a transformative model in which participants are active agents in their own character formation (Freire, 1993). This aligns with the principles of values-led leadership, where the primary goal of the administrator is to cultivate an organizational culture that embodies the values it teaches (Leithwood et al., 2020). The institutionalization of these values ensures that peacebuilding is not a sporadic event but a systemic outcome of the management process (Halim, 2021). Moreover, the management of non-formal Islamic education offers pedagogical flexibility often absent in formal systems, enabling an Experiential Management approach. Here, the institution's structure, from recruitment to community engagement, functions as a silent curriculum. By aligning institutional processes with the social goals of *rahmatan lil ālamīn*, the management creates a habitus of peace (Bourdieu, 1990), effectively preventing the rhetoric reality gap as values become lived through the institution's operational processes (Clark et al., 2024; Hasyim, 2024; Terry & Rue, 2019).

The transition from Moral Knowing to Moral Feeling in this study makes a significant contribution to the field of neuro-spiritual education by demonstrating how this evolution is facilitated by the brain's physiological state. While Lickona emphasizes the importance of knowing and feeling, this study shows that the use of brainwave reduction techniques, specifically Alpha and Theta frequencies, serves as a modern bridge to Al Ghazali's concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (Addakhil et al., n.d.; Mainuddin et al., 2023; Qasserras, 2024). When the brain enters these slower frequencies, the ego defensiveness of the Beta state, often associated with prejudice and cognitive biases, can be overcome, allowing for a deeper internalization of multicultural values (Budiyanto, 2022; Shomali, 2016). This scientific approach provides a contemporary validation of the prophetic tradition of *uzlah* seclusion, echoing the Prophet Muhammad PBUH's retreat to the Cave of *Hira* to cleanse the heart from social distractions. Similarly, by utilizing binaural beats and mindful breathing, participants engage in a modern form of *uzlah* that purifies their *qalb*, or heart, from exclusivist attitudes, suggesting that character transformation is a neuroplastic process in which the brain is rewired for empathy (Khoiri, 2021; Supriatin & Nasution, 2017).

Additionally, this study counters the bias of purely cognitive character education by focusing on the Feeling stage through deep contemplation, thereby addressing the affective domain of the human experience (Budiyono et al., 2024; Danuwara & Giyoto, 2024; Hasanah & Husna, 2025; Salamah et al., 2025). This ensures that multicultural values are not just stored as data but felt as a moral imperative. As participants experience spiritual honesty in the Alpha Theta state, they begin to see the other not as a threat but as a fellow creation of God, reaching the core of *ta'aruf*, mutual understanding that goes beyond superficial recognition to a deep ontological relationship (Lickona, 2009; Priscilla & Yudhyarta, 2021). This transformation reaches its zenith in Moral Action, framed as a collective Hijrah. Unlike a purely individualistic spiritual journey, the management at GKY ensures that transformation scales into a community ecosystem through Regional Management Boards, DPD, and digital alumni groups, which act as a modern *Ukhuwah* solidarity network. This mirrors the Prophet's strategy in Medina, where faith was translated into a civilization of peace through structured social interaction and shared responsibility (Hidayat, 2020; Nurdiyanto et al., 2024).

Collective habituation is crucial for preventing value decay once formal training ends. The use of WhatsApp groups for daily reflections and affirmations creates a digital halaqah that sustains participants' spiritual frequency in their everyday lives. This community-based management approach fulfills the need for a support system in character education, where the individual remains accountable to the group (Lickona, 2022). It successfully shifts the focus from individual piety to collective civility, ensuring that *tasamuh* and *ta'awun* become the standard operating procedure for all alumni (Khasani, 2014; Mezirow, 1991). Finally, the integration of economic empowerment through the distributor system provides a pragmatic dimension to Moral Action. By embedding ethical commerce into the alumni network, the institution demonstrates that conscious character must manifest in the

marketplace, preventing the bias of escapist spirituality by rooting the experience in real world socio economic activity. Participants learn that being a conscious character means being an ethical distributor and a compassionate neighbor, proving that Islamic Educational Management can successfully translate abstract religious principles into tangible peace-oriented social and economic outcomes (Iqbal et al., 2025; Mainuddin et al., 2023).

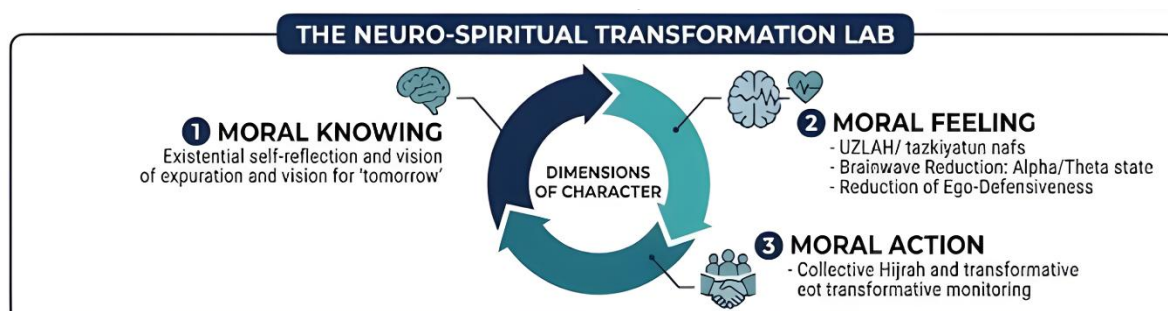


Figure 3 Concious Character Transformation

Establishing Regional Management Boards (DPD)

The findings of this study reveal that the sustainability of conscious character transformation is deeply rooted in the transition from individual spiritual experiences to a systematic collective habituation. This process demonstrates that Islamic Educational Management (IEM) at this institution functions as a living ecosystem that nurtures human potential long after the formal training concludes (Sismanto et al., 2022). By moving beyond administrative compliance, the institution ensures that multicultural values are not merely taught as abstract concepts but are lived through a structured social and economic environment (Hasan, 2003).

The establishment of Regional Management Boards (DPD) represents a sophisticated application of the organizing function (*al tanzīm*) within the framework of Islamic management. This organizational structure serves as the primary vehicle for institutionalizing *ukhuwah* (solidarity) among alumni, effectively addressing the fundamental human need for belonging and self-actualization (Rara, 2024). In this context, character formation is treated as a social endeavor that requires a safe space or a support system where individuals can voice their challenges and share their spiritual inspirations. This managerial strategy directly operationalizes the five core values of multicultural Islamic education: *ta'aruf*, *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *ta'awun*, and *tawazun*, in which social and business collaborations serve as a medium for reinforcing these values (Hasan, 2003). Consequently, the DPD model ensures that moral feeling is collectively maintained, transforming individual piety into a social habitus in which moderation and balance become the group's standard operating procedure (Hasyim, 2024). This structure prevents the decay of values by providing a continuous environment of empathy and mutual support, proving that strategic organizing is a critical pillar in sustaining character education (Bush, 2003).

In the modern digital landscape, the institution leverages WhatsApp groups as a strategic tool for actuating continuous character development. This approach represents a contemporary contextualization of the Prophetic strategy of *halaqah* (learning circles), in which the community remains grounded in a shared vision and mutual advice regardless of physical distance (Nurdiyanto et al., 2024). By utilizing these digital platforms, the institution maintains the spiritual frequency of its participants through a daily cycle of reflections and emotional affirmations (Maksalina, 2024). This digital interaction effectively integrates the three dimensions of character: moral knowing is reinforced through sharing socio-religious theories, moral feeling is deepened through expressions of empathy and gratitude, and moral action is habitualized through consistent reminders to practice breathing exercises and positive verbalizations (Lickona, 2022). This finding suggests that technology, when managed with a spiritual orientation, functions as an extension of the *uzlah* (spiritual seclusion) process,

allowing participants to clarify their emotions and purify their intentions amidst the distractions of the modern world (Khoiri, 2021). Thus, alumni WhatsApp groups serve as miniature spiritual societies that uphold civility and self-awareness in a virtual space, bridging the gap between formal training and daily life.

The integration of a Master Distributor and Distributor system is perhaps the most innovative aspect of the institution management approach, as it bridges the gap between spiritual retreat and market reality. This system transforms the character transformation process into a pragmatic manifestation of ethical commerce, where multicultural values are used as economic capital (Mainuddin et al., 2023; Masuud et al., 2025). From a neurotheological perspective, this practice prevents escapist spirituality by rooting the transformative experience in real-world socio-economic utility (Budiyanto, 2022). Participants do not view the distribution of products merely as profit-seeking activities but rather associate these products with a broader mission to foster consciousness and holistic well-being in society (Iqbal et al., 2025). This aligns with the historical archetype of Umar ibn al-Khattab, whose profound inner transformation resulted in a leadership style characterized by compassion and justice in public affairs (Hidayat, 2020; Sahayu et al., 2026; Triyono et al., 2023; Yuliana et al., 2025). By embedding spiritual integrity into the marketplace, the institution demonstrates that moral action is most authentic when it serves the public good (*maslahat*). This holistic model proves that Islamic Educational Management can successfully translate abstract religious principles into tangible peace-oriented social and economic outcomes (Halim, 2021).

The Role of Islamic Educational Management in Building a Culture of Institutional Peace

The findings of this study underscore that institutional peace within the context of Islamic education is not merely a passive state of non-conflict, but a deliberate structural and relational outcome of Transformative Islamic Educational Management. By moving beyond the technical-administrative trap of modern management, which often prioritizes mechanical efficiency over the human essence, the institution creates a holistic environment that actively facilitates conscious character transformation. This approach demonstrates that peace must be managed through the systematic integration of ethical, spiritual, and social dimensions into every institutional function, ensuring that the *rahmatan lil-ālamīn* vision becomes a tangible organizational reality (Halim, 2021; Ma'arif et al., 2024; Minarti et al., 2025; Salim et al., 2024).

The management's decision to integrate *tazkiyatun nafs* (soul purification) into daily routines represents a profound shift from traditional human resource maintenance to a neuro-spiritual approach to human development. By facilitating practices such as mindful breathing and reflective dialogue, the institution effectively cultivates the emotional intelligence required for sustained social harmony. This process ensures that spiritual awareness serves as the functional foundation for ethical behavior and peaceful interpersonal relationships, rather than merely a theological concept. Character formation is fundamentally incomplete without fostering moral sensitivity and inner reflection. Therefore, the management's role is to provide a spiritual infrastructure that allows participants to move from cognitive understanding to emotional internalization, where empathy and compassion become reflexive responses to diversity (Harahap & Ependi, 2023; Qushwa et al., 2024).

This institutionalized reflection, in turn, creates a durable, peaceful habitus among all members of the organization. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1990) theory of habitus, this study posits that the institution has successfully cultivated a set of transposable dispositions that guide members' thinking, feelings, and actions within the shared organizational space. Through the constant practice of awareness journaling and experience-based emotional evaluations, peace emerges naturally as a learned instinct rather than a set of rules imposed from the top down (Bourdieu, 1990). By creating a participatory environment where dialogue and openness are prioritized, the management ensures that the institutional culture is a product of consistent, value-based social practices. This transformation of organizational culture demonstrates that institutional peace is most resilient when embedded in the daily routines and collective subconscious of its members (Arisman et al., 2020; Muhtarom et al., 2020).

The sustainability of this peace culture ultimately rests on a leadership framework grounded in exemplarity (*uswah*) and deliberation (*musyawarah*). This study finds that ethical leadership acts as the primary catalyst for institutional trust, shifting the organizational dynamic from hierarchical dominance to relational collaboration. When decision-making processes are transparently grounded in the paradigm of *maslahat* (public benefit), leaders foster a climate of psychological safety where members feel empowered to contribute to social harmony (Basri et al., 2022). This leadership style mirrors the Prophetic model, in which authority is exercised through service and moral integrity rather than through structural power. Consequently, the institution functions as a resilient social ecosystem where leadership and management work in tandem to ensure that multicultural values are not merely abstract ideals but actively embodied in every peer interaction and institutional policy, thereby creating a lasting legacy of peace.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore how multicultural Islamic education is practiced institutionally to foster conscious character transformation and support peacebuilding in multicultural contexts. The findings indicate that conscious character formation emerges through the consistent enactment of multicultural Islamic values within institutional practices rather than through abstract normative frameworks. Participants' experiences show that integrating *ta'aruf*, *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *ta'awun*, and *tawazun* across recruitment, training, coaching, and community-oriented activities creates conditions that foster moral awareness, reflective self-regulation, and social responsibility.

Rather than positioning educational management as a technical system, this study demonstrates that institutional practices function as a value-mediated process through which ethical and spiritual orientations are internalized over time. The contribution of this study lies in clarifying how value-based practices operate in non-formal Islamic education settings to connect individual character development with everyday peace-oriented social interactions.

Future studies may extend this inquiry by examining the sustainability of these practices over longer periods, exploring their transferability to formal educational contexts, and conducting comparative research across diverse cultural or religious settings. Such studies could further refine the understanding of how institutional educational practices contribute to peacebuilding in pluralistic societies.

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