



Evaluation of Islamic Religious Education: Optimal Approach to Increase Tolerance

Ely Fitriani¹, Kusaeri², Masdar Hilmy³

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sorong, Indonesia¹

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia^{2,3}

elyfitriani@iainsorong.ac.id¹/Corresponding author

kusaeri@uinsa.ac.id²

masdar.hilmy@uinsa.ac.id³

Abstract

Inter-religious tolerance is one of the noble values of Islam that must be maintained and preserved. Efforts to increase tolerance can be made in several ways, one of which is through education. This article, hence, reviews the importance of integrating cultural values in the Islamic religious education curriculum as a strategy to reduce the potential for radicalism and increase intercultural tolerance in Indonesia. The method used in this research is a systematic literature review (SLR) using the Google Scholar and Scopus databases utilizing the Publish or Perish 8 tool with the PRISMA technique. The search results found 332 articles, which were then excluded, resulting in 42 articles being retained for analysis and assessing their quality and relevance according to the research questions. The results of this study revealed that the majority of research focuses on the Indonesian context, which sees an urgent need for tolerance education in pluralistic societies. Diverse research approaches, ranging from the development of multicultural education programs to religious text-based learning models, display the dynamics of teaching tolerance. The findings also highlight the significance of interactive and participatory learning methods and the critical role of local wisdom in tolerance

education. By presenting a comprehensive literature review, this article provides valuable insights for policymakers, educational practitioners, and researchers in designing effective educational strategies to counter radicalism and strengthen intercultural tolerance through Islamic religious education.

Keywords: Evaluation, Islamic Religious Education, Approach, Optimal, Tolerance

A. Introduction

Harmony in diversity is a concept that emphasizes the importance of maintaining balanced relationships among individuals with different cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds (Alam, 2016). Efforts to create harmony in diversity are an important strategy in reducing the potential for radicalism and increasing tolerance between cultures (Galinsky et al., 2015). The significance of reducing the potential for radicalism and increasing intercultural tolerance through the integration of cultural values into the Islamic religious education curriculum cannot be ignored in the current global context (Berglund & Gent, 2019). Moreover, the threat of intolerance, radicalism, and terrorism remains high in Indonesia. Special Detachment (Densus) 88 recorded around 142 terrorism suspects, some of whom were secured from Kebonpedes Sub-district, Sukabumi District. In addition, according to BNPT RI's I-Khub Outlook research in 2023, there are three vulnerable groups of radicalization targets, namely women, adolescents, and children. This is reinforced by research on the potential radicalism index, revealing that the potential for exposure is higher for women, the younger generation, especially Gen Z aged 11-26 years, and those who are active on the internet.

Efforts to reduce the potential for radicalism and increase intercultural tolerance through the integration of cultural values into the Islamic religious education curriculum are a response to the complexity of social and political challenges in the contemporary era (Mumtahanah, 2020). This phenomenon is reflected in countries seeking to change their approach to Islamic religious education to be more inclusive and aim to promote a deep understanding of religion and respect for cultural diversity (Hasyim, 2016). This approach is supported by the opinions of educational and social experts who emphasize the importance of broadening the scope of the Islamic religion curriculum to include a more comprehensive understanding of universal values, such as peace, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue (Santoso & Khisbiyah, 2021). This is done to strengthen an inclusive attitude and form a strong religious identity that is also open to differences.

The reason is that in overcoming the problem of potential radicalism and increasing intercultural tolerance in Islamic religious education, it is necessary to consider several comprehensive alternative solutions. First, revising the Islamic religious education curriculum should be done by integrating learning modules that include a more comprehensive understanding of universal values, such as peace, tolerance, and respect for cultural diversity (Sapdi & Ali, 2022). Second, training for teachers can be conducted, which includes strategies for managing differences in views in the classroom and facilitating open and meaningful discussions about cultural and religious diversity (Tambak, 2021). Third, community programs may be held involving parents, religious leaders, and community leaders as a forum to strengthen tolerance values in the family and community environment (Mustakim et al., 2021). Fourth, dialogue between different religious and cultural groups can be promoted to help break down stereotypes and encourage better understanding between individuals of different backgrounds (Hadi Kusuma & Susilo, 2020). Fifth, regular and planned evaluations need to be carried out so that it is possible to make adjustments and improvements required to achieve the ultimate goal of overcoming the potential for radicalism and increasing intercultural tolerance in Islamic religious education (Yasyakur et al., 2023).

In the Islamic Context of Indonesia, the Multicultural Education Theory developed by figures such as Abdurrahman Wahid is a synthesis between the universal principles of Islam and the multicultural reality of Indonesia (Susanto, 2012). This theory is based on the understanding of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, which must be able to accommodate the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and religions in Indonesia. In its implementation, this theory underscores the development of an Islamic religious education curriculum that focuses not only on ritual and theological aspects but also on social and ethical values that support harmonious life in a plural society (Ismail & W, 2022). This approach involves several key aspects: (1) the development of learning materials that include the contributions of various groups in the formation of national identity, (2) emphasis on the universal values of Islam in line with Pancasila, (3) use of interactive and reflective learning methods, and (4) integration of practical experiences such as interfaith dialog. The goal is to form a generation of Indonesian Muslims with a deep understanding of Islam while being able to become active agents in building social harmony in a diverse society, in line with the concept of Islam Nusantara, which sees Islam as a religion that is adaptive to local wisdom without losing the essence of its teachings (Anwar, 2021).

One of the important aspects of evaluating tolerance education programs is curriculum readiness. It should promote the values of tolerance, justice, and compassion taught in Islam, including teaching the concept of tolerance, the history of tolerance in Indonesia, and its application in daily life. Effective learning methods, including the use of technology and interactive methods, are indispensable to support the teaching of tolerance (Fatah et al., 2023). In addition, relevance to the global context needs to be considered so that students understand the importance of tolerance on a global scale, with participation in interfaith and intercultural dialog expanding their horizons. Building a tolerant school culture is also crucial, making the school an inclusive environment that values differences so that tolerance education can be integrated into students' daily lives and prepare them to become tolerant and positively contributing members of society in the future (Said, 2017).

Various studies have shown that the integration of tolerance values in the education curriculum is essential for building a more inclusive society. However, the challenges in implementing tolerance education are still great, especially in the face of stereotypes, prejudices, and inter-group conflicts. Therefore, there is a need for an in-depth and systematic evaluation of existing tolerance education programs. This study, thus, aims to assess the effectiveness of tolerance education programs in the context of Islamic education by reviewing the importance of the evaluation results in the context of global efforts to overcome radicalism and increase tolerance between cultures. By presenting a comprehensive literature review, this article is expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, educational practitioners, and researchers interested in counteracting potential radicalism and strengthening intercultural tolerance through education.

B. Method

The systematic literature review (SLR) method was applied in this study by presenting a description, review, and analysis of the concepts, forms, and implications of research on tolerance education. To identify, screen, test feasibility, enter data, analyze, and present in narrative form, this research applied the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) technique. The flow is identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion objectively according to the results of the data reviewed in recent articles related to the specified topic (Stewart et al., 2015).

The articles collected were sourced from the Google Scholar and Scopus databases. The Publish or Perish 8 application was utilized as a medium for searching literature in the Google Scholar database. The literature searched was in the form of English-language journal articles published in 2018-2024 with the keyword "tolerant education," and then the literature scan was stored in the form of a Research Information System (RIS) to be checked for data completeness in Zotero reference management. Furthermore, the researchers also collected articles from the Scopus database using the same keywords, namely "tolerant education" in the form of English-language journal articles published in 2018-2024, whose research areas were not limited by researchers and had open access. The search findings obtained 200 articles from Google Scholar and 132 articles from Scopus, with details in Table 1.

Table1. Article Findings from Google Scholar and Scopus Databases

No	Keyword	Database	Quantity
1	tolerant education	Google Scholar	200 articles
2	tolerant AND education	Scopus	132 articles
Total			332 articles

In the next step, the researchers identified, through Zotero reference management, articles that indicated duplicate incomplete article attributes, and those in the form of books were removed so that 203 articles remained. The next step then went through the screening process (inclusion and exclusion). In the exclusion stage, articles that did not directly contain the keyword "tolerant education" were excluded. From this process, 100 articles were excluded, leaving 103 articles. Articles that were not in English, as many as 23 articles were excluded, leaving 80 articles. Furthermore, the abstracts of each article that did not specifically indicate tolerance education research were 27 articles excluded, and 11 articles could not be accessed by the journal. As a result, 42 articles were retained to be analyzed and assessed for quality and relevance according to the research questions. The following is the presentation in the PRISMA Flow Diagram:

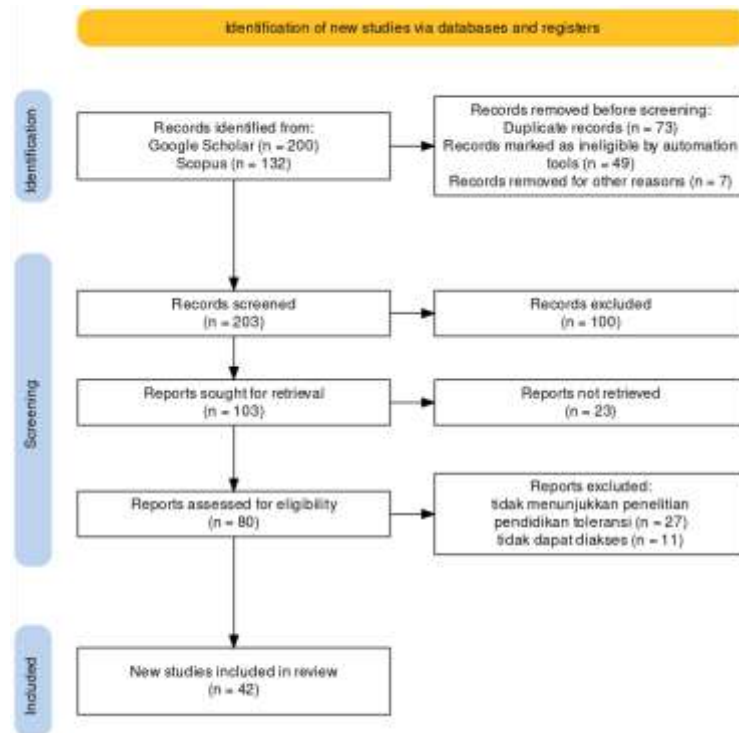


Figure 1. Flow of Tolerance Education Research Article Collection

C. Results and Discussion

1. Distribution and Research Findings on Tolerance Education

Based on the data obtained, in this section, researchers present the results of data from articles that have been traced, collected, identified according to keywords and research questions, and then analyzed and presented in narrative form. Of the 42 articles that have been collected and identified according to the keywords, the distribution of the research is detailed as follows:

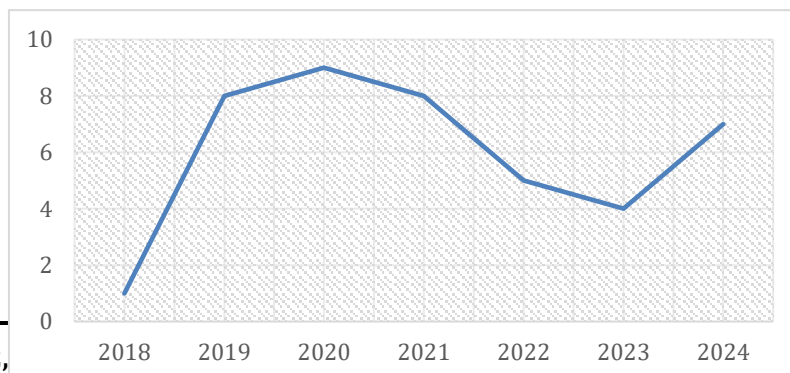


Figure 2: Graph of Research Distribution based on Publication Year

The graph above provides an overview of the distribution of research based on the year of publication. This graph depicts that the number of published studies is increasing from year to year. This illustrates that this field of research is growing and is in demand by researchers. The distribution of research on tolerance education in the 42 journal articles above exhibits significant development and research opportunities. More in-depth scientific studies and targeted follow-up research can help build a more comprehensive understanding of tolerance education and effective strategies for building a harmonious society.

Based on the 42 journal articles above, some significant findings need further study. First, the geographical focus on Indonesia reveals the urgency and special attention to tolerance education in a pluralistic society. The majority of studies (65%) focused on the Indonesian context, reflecting the urgent need to build tolerance in this diverse society. This can be attributed to Indonesia's historical, cultural, and religious complexities that present various challenges in building tolerance between groups.

The geographical focus on Indonesia demonstrates the importance and urgency of tolerance education in a pluralistic society. Indonesia, with its rich ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, faces unique challenges in building a harmonious society (Noor, 2020). Most of the research (65%) focusing on the Indonesian context points to the urgent need to develop and strengthen tolerance education. These studies overall highlight the urgency of teaching tolerance values to people from an early age, given the potential for conflict that can arise from diversity.

Indonesia's cultural diversity also presents challenges in building tolerance (Azizi et al., 2021). With more than 300 ethnic groups, each with its traditions, languages, and customs, the effort to unite Indonesian society within a framework of tolerance is not easy (Sunhaji et al., 2024). Formal education in schools should be able to incorporate tolerance values in its curriculum, not only through religion and civics lessons but also through daily activities that encourage students to appreciate differences. Informal

education at home and in the community also plays an important role in reinforcing these values (Zahro et al., 2022).

Indonesia's religious diversity, with six officially recognized religions and various other faiths, adds another layer of complexity to building tolerance (Fitria & Tanggok, 2020). Each religion has different teachings and practices, which can sometimes be a source of tension if there is no understanding and appreciation of these differences (Holmes, 2014). Therefore, tolerance education should include interfaith understanding, which teaches the importance of mutual respect and understanding of others' beliefs. This effort must be sustainable and involve all elements of society, from religious leaders to the government and civil society organizations (Indriyani et al., 2022).

With a large focus on research on tolerance education in Indonesia, it is expected that effective strategies and methods can be found to overcome this challenge. Educational programs that teach tolerance must continue to be developed, evaluated, and adjusted to dynamic social conditions. Good education will produce a generation that can appreciate differences, coexist in harmony, and make diversity the main strength of the Indonesian nation. This collective effort is essential not only to maintain social stability in the country but also to face various global challenges that are increasingly complex in this modern era.

The second finding, the variation in research approaches, discloses the development of methodologies and theoretical frameworks in tolerance education research. The researchers have used various approaches to develop educational programs that are effective and relevant to the needs of society. One of the approaches used is the development of educational programs such as building tolerance and character (Triyanto & Rejekiningsih, 2020). The importance of tolerance is an integral part of the school curriculum, which can shape students into individuals who can appreciate differences and coexist in diversity.

In addition, the development of a religiosity-based multicultural education program is also one of the main focuses of this research. Saihu (2022) emphasized that a deep understanding of religious values and how they can support tolerance is essential. By integrating religious aspects in multicultural education, students are taught to understand and respect other religious beliefs, reducing the potential for religious-based conflict. The learning model of religious tolerance based on the Qur'an, as developed by Rahmat et al. (2019), shows an effort to utilize religious texts as a source

of tolerance teaching. This approach reviews how the teachings in the Qur'an can be used as a basis for teaching tolerance values to students so that they can apply these values in their daily lives.

The program of building moderate Islamic thought through dialogue-argumentative methods, such as the one conducted by Yahya and Rahmat (2021), is also one of the innovative approaches in tolerance education research. This dialog-argumentative approach is crucial to build a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the concept of tolerance in Islam (Rusydiyah et al., 2023), as well as to promote moderate thinking that supports social harmony (Alhashmi et al., 2020). Another interesting approach is the application of local wisdom in tolerance education programs. Amin et al. (2022) show that local wisdom, which contains values of understanding and tolerance passed down from generation to generation, can be a rich source for tolerance education. By integrating local knowledge into the curriculum, students can learn from long-established traditions and practices in their communities, which support the values of tolerance and harmony.

Policy analysis (Raihani, 2018), a comparative study (Mappiasse, 2022), and discourse analysis (Ali et al., 2020) add a new dimension to tolerance education research. These approaches showcase that tolerance research is no longer confined to one method but continues to develop and adapt to various contexts and research questions. Policy analysis helps understand how education policies can support or hinder efforts to build tolerance. Comparative studies allow researchers to look at best practices from different contexts, while discourse analysis helps reveal how tolerance is discussed and framed in various texts and social contexts. Overall, these variations in research approaches demonstrate the dynamism and innovation in the field of tolerance education research.

The third finding, namely the expansion of tolerance research outside Indonesia, exposes a global form of understanding and improving tolerance education. Although the majority of research focuses on Indonesia, several studies from international journals examine tolerance in a broader context. This denotes that tolerance is not only a local issue but also a global concern amidst increasing polarization and intolerance in various parts of the world (Verkuyten et al., 2019). These studies provide a broader and deeper perspective on how tolerance can be promoted and practiced in various cultural and social contexts.

Furthermore, global research on tolerance also reveals that the approach used must be adaptive and contextual. No one approach can be applied universally because each society has its dynamics and challenges. Research in various parts of the world shows that the most successful tolerance education programs are those that can adapt to the local context, taking into account the cultural, historical, and social values of the local community. Therefore, Indonesia needs to develop tolerance education programs that are not only based on local experiences but also integrate best practices from around the world.

Ultimately, the findings from international research provide opportunities for further research that is more comprehensive and contextualized to build a tolerant and harmonious society in Indonesia and, indeed, around the world. By broadening the scope of research and adopting approaches that have proven successful in different countries, Indonesia can develop more effective strategies to promote tolerance. This will not only benefit Indonesian society itself but can also make a positive contribution to global efforts to tackle intolerance and promote world peace. Continued and collaborative research between different countries will be key to achieving this goal, creating a more tolerant and harmonious world for all.

2. Relevance of Research Findings to Islamic Education Evaluation

Tolerance is one of the fundamental values that need to be instilled early on in students so that they are able to coexist peacefully and harmoniously (Huda et al., 2023). Tolerance education is an important part of Islamic education in Indonesia (Ikhwan et al., 2023). Islamic education evaluation needs to ensure that tolerance values are thoroughly integrated into all aspects of education (T. R. Hakim, 2022). Thus, Islamic education can contribute to building a generation that is tolerant, noble, and able to coexist peacefully and harmoniously in a pluralistic society with various ethnic, religious, and cultural differences.

Evaluation of Islamic education needs to ensure that tolerance education becomes an integral part of all aspects of education, from the curriculum and learning methods to school activities (Ghazali, 2016). Tolerance should not only be an addition or complement but should be a key element inherent in every aspect of education. This is crucial to building a harmonious and peaceful society, especially in the context of the diversity that exists in Indonesia (Anwar, 2021). To achieve this goal, several steps can be taken to integrate tolerance values effectively.

First, tolerance values can be integrated into the curriculum through various subjects, such as Islamic Religious Education, Civic Education, and History. According to Mustafida (2020), these subjects are highly relevant to insert material about tolerance. For example, in Islamic religious education, students can learn Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of tolerance and respect for differences. Meanwhile, in Civic Education, students can learn about the rights and obligations of tolerant citizens, as well as the significance of maintaining harmony in a diverse society.

Materials on tolerance can also include basic concepts of tolerance, the history of tolerance in Indonesia, and ways to apply tolerance in everyday life (Yasi et al., 2019). Teaching the concept of tolerance from an early age is vital for forming tolerant attitudes and behaviors among students (Roman S. et al., 2018). In addition, studying the history of tolerance in Indonesia can provide a deeper understanding of how tolerance has become part of the nation's culture and history. This can help students appreciate the efforts that their predecessors have made to maintain harmony and peace.

Second, the learning methods used should support the teaching of tolerance and can help strengthen the implementation of tolerance education in schools and communities (Fitri, 2023). To achieve this goal, interactive and participatory learning methods are indispensable. Methods such as group discussions, simulations, and case studies not only make the learning process more interesting and dynamic but also give students the opportunity to apply the concepts of tolerance in a real context (Casmara, 2018). In group discussions, for example, students are invited to share their views and listen to the opinions of others; this can open their minds to differences and teach them the importance of mutual respect. Through this, students can learn how to work with others who have different views and backgrounds.

Additionally, simulations and case studies allow students to experience and solve problems they may face in their daily lives related to intolerance. Thus, they not only learn theoretically but also develop practical skills to face and resolve conflicts constructively (Dalimunthe, 2023). This learning method can also help students develop communication skills and empathy, which are essential in building a tolerant attitude (Muhtarom et al., 2024). Through such a learning approach, tolerance education can be implemented more effectively and have a positive impact both at school and in the wider community.

Third, Islamic education in Indonesia has the potential to contribute to building tolerance at the global level (Saihu, 2022). This can be done by developing a curriculum that emphasizes universal values of tolerance, conducting interfaith and intercultural dialogues, and becoming an example for other countries in showing how Islam can be practiced with tolerance and moderation. Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has a moral responsibility and strategic opportunity to show how Islam can be practiced with tolerance and moderation (Khasanah et al., 2023). Islamic education that emphasizes the values of tolerance can be a model for other countries in creating a harmonious society that respects differences (Alhashmi et al., 2020).

Islamic education in Indonesia can play an important role in promoting interfaith and intercultural dialog. This dialog is prominent for building understanding and mutual respect between different groups of people. In addition, Indonesia has the opportunity to serve as an example to other countries in showing how Islam can be practiced with tolerance and moderation (Ahmadi et al., 2022). By implementing educational programs that successfully promote tolerance, Indonesia can share its experience and knowledge with other countries. This can be done through international cooperation, such as holding a global conference on tolerance education or by sending education experts to help other countries develop similar programs. Indonesia can show that Islam is a religion that supports peace, respect for human rights, and interfaith harmony.

Fourth, in addition to the integration of tolerance values in the curriculum, it is important to build a tolerant school culture (Fakhrudin et al., 2023). Building a tolerant school culture involves not only changes at the formal learning level but also creating an environment that supports and values differences in all aspects of school life. This means that schools should be places where all students feel welcome and valued, regardless of their cultural, religious, or social background (Gusti, 2021). To achieve this, schools need to create an environment that respects differences and upholds human values. This can start by implementing anti-discrimination policies and ensuring that all forms of intolerance and harassment are dealt with firmly.

Providing equal opportunities for all students to participate in school activities is essential to building a culture of tolerance. Teachers and school staff should model tolerant and inclusive behavior, show how to resolve conflicts peacefully, and respect differences. Involving parents and the community in these efforts will reinforce the

message of tolerance and create a supportive environment outside of school (Istianah et al., 2023). By integrating the values of tolerance into the curriculum and building a supportive school culture, an educational environment that is truly inclusive and respectful of differences can be created. These steps will not only help students develop tolerant attitudes and empathy but also prepare them to become positive contributing members of society in the future (A. R. Hakim et al., 2022). Furthermore, researchers describe important aspects in evaluating the effectiveness of the Islamic tolerance education program in Table 2.

Table 2. Aspects of Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Tolerance Education Program

Aspects of Islamic Education Evaluation	The Value of Islamic Education	Aspects of Knowledge Assessment	Aspects of Attitude Assessment	Aspects of Skill Assessment
Readiness of Curriculum	Promote the values of tolerance, justice, and compassion taught in Islam.	Understand the concept of tolerance, the history of tolerance in Indonesia, and its application in everyday life.	Respecting differences and upholding human values taught in Islam	Apply the values of tolerance in daily interactions and different situations.
Effectiveness of Learning Methods	Encourage students to practice Islamic values in daily life through effective learning methods.	Use technology and various interactive learning methods to understand and apply tolerance values.	Demonstrate an open and responsive attitude to diversity in the learning environment.	Able to communicate effectively, cooperate with people from different backgrounds, and resolve conflicts peacefully.
Relevance to the Global Context	Showing that Islam is a religion that teaches peace, harmony, and tolerance between religious communities	Participate in interfaith and intercultural dialogues to understand and respect differences between individuals and groups.	Promote tolerance, harmony, and peace in a global context.	Contribute to building harmonious relationships between people of different religions and cultures.

Tolerance School Culture	Affirming the importance of implementing Islamic values in an inclusive and tolerant educational environment	the of Islamic inclusive tolerant	Practicing tolerance and fairness in inter-individual relationships in the school environment	Value diversity and treat all individuals with fairness and respect.	Building harmonious interpersonal relationships and managing conflict wisely
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The table above provides a comprehensive overview of the important aspects to consider in evaluating Islamic tolerance education programs. By paying attention to these aspects, an effective program can be developed and implemented to foster tolerance values among students and build a more harmonious and peaceful society. The evaluation of Islamic education in Indonesia emphasizes the importance of integrating the values of tolerance, justice, and compassion in all aspects of education. Islamic education also has an important role in showing that Islam is a religion that teaches peace and harmony, both at the national and global levels. Thus, Islamic education in Indonesia can not only form a tolerant and noble generation but also make a positive contribution to promoting tolerance and harmony around the world.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of research on tolerance education, attention to this topic has increased over time. The distribution of research from year to year exhibits a positive trend, with the number of publications continuing to grow. This indicates that this area of research is receiving significant interest from researchers and shows promising developments. Of the 42 articles examined, most focus on the Indonesian context, reflecting the urgency and importance of tolerance education in this highly diverse society. As many as 65% of the studies emphasized the Indonesian context, indicating the urgent need to develop effective tolerance education programs to deal with the challenges of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity.

Indonesia's diversity, with more than 300 ethnic groups and various religions, demands a comprehensive and inclusive approach to tolerance education. Formal education in schools should be able to integrate tolerance values into its curriculum, including in subjects such as Islamic Religious Education and Civic Education. In addition, interactive and participatory learning methods, such as group discussions and simulations, are essential to teach students how to appreciate differences and work together with others from different backgrounds. Informal education at home and in

the community also plays an important role in reinforcing these values, creating a supportive environment outside of school.

Global research on tolerance showcases that the approach should be adaptive and contextual. There is no one universal approach that can be applied everywhere, as each society has its dynamics and challenges. In Indonesia, it is important to develop tolerance education programs that are not only based on local experiences but also integrate best practices from various countries. This effort can strengthen Indonesia's capacity to promote tolerance and harmony both at the national and global levels. Thus, Islamic education in Indonesia not only shapes a tolerant and noble generation but also contributes positively to promoting tolerance and harmony around the world.

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