



The Role of AIK Education in Increasing Student Diversity Muhammadiyah University

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Abstract

This study explored the role of Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education (PAIK) in shaping the students' character to be inclusive, tolerant, and integrity-driven within Muhammadiyah Higher Education institutions. Amid the increasing challenges of diversity and multiculturalism, the research highlighted the significance of PAIK in fostering leadership skills, social responsibility, and adaptability among students. Employing a qualitative research method with a library-based approach, this study comprehensively analyzed relevant literature, including books and academic journals, to draw meaningful insights. The findings revealed that PAIK significantly contributed to character development by integrating Islamic teachings and Muhammadiyah values into the students' academic and personal lives. It emphasized the cultivation of moral integrity, leadership qualities, and empathy towards societal dynamics. The study concluded that PAIK not only strengthened the students' religious foundation but also equipped them with essential competencies for navigating modern societal challenges. This research offered a novel perspective on Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah Curriculum (AIK) development and provided practical strategies for fostering diversity and tolerance in higher education, thus serving as a valuable reference for similar educational institutions seeking to achieve holistic student development.

Keywords: Education, Al-Islam Kemuhammadiyah Education, Students Behavior

A. Introduction

Education aims to supply the workforce needed for national progress (Andriyani, 2018). Education must adapt continuously to incorporate new knowledge, skills, and technologies in response to a rapidly changing world (Qutni, Kristiawan, and Fitriani, 2021). According to Article 3 of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System: The main purpose of national education is to cultivate a strong national character and culture, develop skills, and boost the nation's intellectual capacity (Khafidzin et al, 2024). This cultivates the students to be robust, discerning, innovative, self-reliant, influential, and accountable, imbued with a dignified, steadfast commitment to God as paramount (Alinurdin, 2021). Education constitutes a concerted endeavor toward enhancing livelihoods (Rinaldi, 2020).

Indonesia's national education philosophy views humans as creations of Almighty God, possessing inherent individual qualities along with their rights and responsibilities (Badriah, Handayani, et al., 2023). In line with the national philosophy of education, the objective is to unlock the students' potential, nurturing them to become healthy, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens with strong moral character, rooted in faith and reverence for God Almighty (Rukiyati, 2020). Challenges emerge when widespread violence among students reveals a deficiency in character education (Badriah, Zakiyah, et al., 2023). Reports of conflicts, bullying, and crimes involving the students highlight the necessity to enhance moral and ethical education as a means to foster positive and tolerant behavior among them (Luo, 2023).

Juvenile delinquency, which includes vandalism, brawls, participation in motorcycle gangs, smoking, alcohol consumption, drug abuse, theft, and the issue of street children, continues to impact the educational landscape in Indonesia and Malaysia (Rufiatun, 2021). In the past two years, Indonesia has experienced around 15,000 drug-related cases, with 46% involving students or teenagers. In 2016, there were 157 recorded instances of delinquency among the students, which increased to 183 cases in 2017 (Rufiatun, 2021). In addition to the inherent diversity factor, conflicts often arise within the school environment, which serves as a meeting point for individuals from various backgrounds. Considering Indonesia's rich cultural diversity, the potential for conflict is significant (Mukri & Waspiyah, 2023).

The existence of multicultural conflicts in contemporary society highlights the ongoing necessity for attention to multicultural education in Indonesia (Gay,

2019); (Mahmud, 2024); (Adawiyah et al, 2024); (Mohammed & Ali, 2024). According to (Sholahudin, 2019), there are three main challenges to multiculturalism today. First, cultural imperatives arise when individuals strive to embrace the essence of their own culture, a pursuit that can unintentionally increase discrimination and ethnocentrism. Second, globalization presents a challenge by seemingly reducing the unique identities and sovereignty of individual nations.

Schools play a crucial role in teaching multicultural values to students from an early age (Ismail & Zulkarnain, 2023). By instilling principles such as compassion, tolerance, peace, and respect for differences, these values become an essential part of the student's daily behavior, helping to shape their personalities (Wiyanto, 2018). In Indonesia, Islamic education has begun to incorporate multicultural perspectives into religious studies. Successful examples of this multicultural education can be observed at Muhammadiyah campuses. As a result, Muhammadiyah University provides an excellent platform for students to gain a comprehensive understanding of ethnic diversity and develop the skills necessary to navigate and embrace this diversity effectively (Hufron, 2022). Therefore, Muhammadiyah University stands out as an ideal institution for students to gain a deep understanding of ethnic diversity, along with the necessary skills to effectively navigate and embrace such diversity (Alam, 2020); (Mu'ti & Amirrachman, 2021).

To verify the authenticity of this research, the researchers conducted an analysis using the VosViewer and Publish or Perish applications (Novia et al., 2022). They entered the keywords "The Role of AIK Education in Increasing the Student Diversity," which yielded a total of 400 published articles. A detailed breakdown of these articles is provided below:

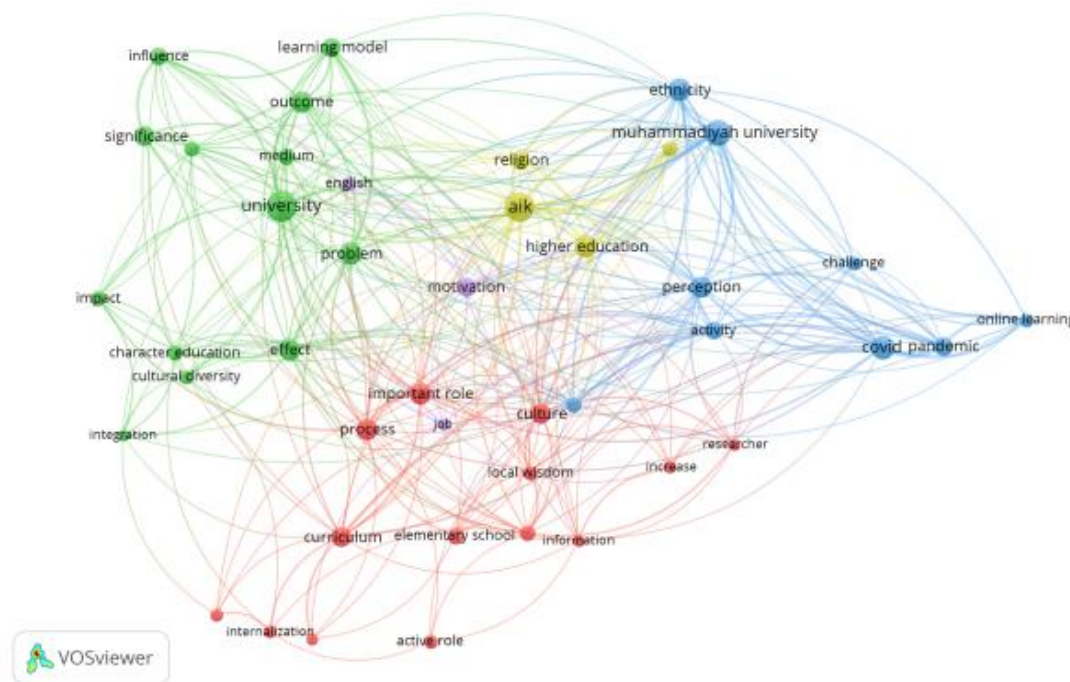


Figure 1. Analysis Vosviewer

The image above showcases several prominent keywords extracted from the successfully published articles. Among them, three keywords stand out as particularly relevant to this research: "Muhammadiyah University," highlighted with a blue circle, "AIK," indicated by a golden yellow circle, and "Character Education," marked with a green circle. Notably, the keyword "Multiculturalism" was absent, despite being a key aspect researchers intend to explore in this study. This absence suggests a gap in the existing literature. Consequently, this research can be considered novel in its exploration of previously underrepresented themes.

In a study titled "The Implementation of AIK for Building Student Character at Muhammadiyah Metro University." (Dacholfany & Iswati, 2021), The AIK curriculum has been identified as playing a crucial role in the character development of students. This curriculum is designed to integrate Islamic and Muhammadiyah values into the learning process, benefiting both Muslim and non-Muslim students. AIK provides a strong foundation in spirituality, morals, and intellectual growth by teaching essential values such as faith, ethics, worship, social interactions (muamalah), and the relationship between Islam and science.

This contrasts with the findings of (Ritonga, 2023) titled Implementation of AIK and Arabic Language in Supporting the Realization of Wasathiyah Islam at

PTMA in Indonesia. Research indicates that incorporating Ahl al-Kitab (AIK) and the Arabic language into Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTMA) has a significant impact on realizing Wasathiyah Islam in Indonesia. This integration is facilitated through the curriculum of AIK I, AIK II, AIK III, and AIK IV, which emphasize reinforcing values related to faith, morality, interpersonal relations (mu'amalah), humanity, and the principles of Muhammadiyah. Additionally, the curriculum addresses social, spiritual, and intellectual needs in line with contemporary developments. The combination of AIK and Arabic language education shapes PTMA graduates, equipping them with characteristics such as a moderate mindset, a commitment to avoiding extreme, radical, or liberal actions, a strong sense of identity, generosity, leadership skills, and a concern for the welfare of the community and the nation.

The first study investigates non-Muslim perceptions of AIK learning, highlighting its role in promoting diversity. Conversely, the second study also examines AIK learning but focuses on Muhammadiyah universities without specifically addressing diversity. Instead, it emphasizes the implementation of AIK and Arabic education in Muhammadiyah higher education institutions. Consequently, it can be concluded that the researcher's study is relatively novel in its emphasis on diversity within the AIK learning framework, distinguishing it from previous research that primarily focused on the implementation of AIK and Arabic learning without highlighting diversity aspects.

This study introduces novelty by exploring the role of Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education in shaping the students' character to be inclusive and tolerant of diversity within Muhammadiyah Higher Education institutions (Husnaini et al., 2021). Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on the implementation of AIK in religious education, this research specifically highlights how AIK can be integrated as a character education model that is adaptive to multicultural challenges in the modern era (Farida & Humaidi, 2024). Through this approach, the study offers a new perspective on AIK curriculum development, emphasizing not only the reinforcement of Islamic and Kemuhammadiyah values but also the cultivation of leadership skills, social responsibility, and the ability to adapt to diversity.

This research aims to explore the role of Muhammadiyah Islamic education in fostering diversity among Muhammadiyah university students (Badriah, Handayani, et al., 2023). The study's significance lies in its investigation of how contemporary influences shape the students' attitudes and perceptions towards

diversity, amidst the prevalent societal divisions. Despite the challenges posed by the modern era, Muhammadiyah institutions persist in upholding and imparting religious values, aiming to cultivate students who are tolerant of differences. The findings of this research could serve as a valuable reference for other private educational institutions seeking to promote diversity and tolerance among their student bodies.

This study delineates two primary themes: Al-Islam Kemuhammadiyah and Diversity. PAIK serves a twofold purpose in shaping the students' mindsets, improving their academic achievements, and instilling essential moral values for their future pursuits. To gain a deeper insight into the research framework, please refer to the accompanying visual aid:

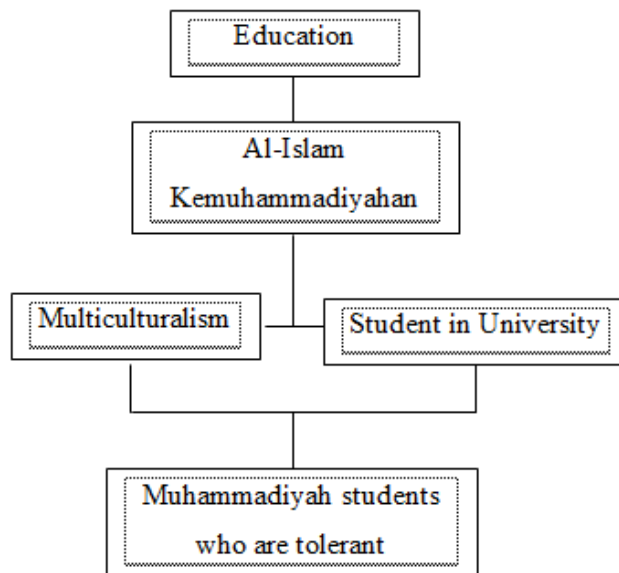


Figure 2. Conceptual Work

B. Method

The research methodology utilized in this study is qualitative. Qualitative research methods usually entail analysis and have a descriptive approach. In this paper, a library-based method, specifically Library Search, was employed for the review process. This involved a thorough examination and analysis of relevant library materials such as books and journals obtained from websites and online media. (Waruwu, 2022) describe research utilizing a library approach as a method for gathering information and data through various materials available in libraries, including documents, books, magazines, and historical records.

Data collection in this study was conducted using a library research method with the following steps: identifying relevant sources using specific keywords, evaluating sources based on their relevance and credibility, and recording important information from books, journals, articles, and other documents that support the research focus. The collected data were then analyzed descriptively and qualitatively by classifying the data based on themes, critically reviewing arguments and findings, and synthesizing the information to produce a comprehensive understanding. The results of the analysis were used to draw conclusions that address the research questions.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Result

a. The role of PAIK in shaping students' character

Al-Islam Kemuhammadiyah Education (PAIK) had played a crucial role in influencing the character and behavior of students. Rooted in Islamic teachings and Muhammadiyah principles, PAIK sought not only to provide religious instruction but also to cultivate individuals characterized by integrity, accountability, and dedication to improving society. Within this framework, PAIK significantly influences students behavior by incorporating several key aspects into its teachings: (1) Cultivating innovative thinking (*tajdîd*), (2) Fostering anticipatory skills, (3) Promoting a pluralistic mindset, (4) Instilling independence of character, (5) Encouraging moderation in actions. Through these elements, PAIK equipped students with the mindset, skills, and values necessary to navigate the complexities of contemporary society while upholding the principles of Islam and Muhammadiyah (Muryadi et al, 2023).

b. Application of Islamic and Muhammadiyah principles to instill integrity and responsibility

Within the educational setting, a genuine grasp of Islamic religious principles arose through a journey of instruction, practice, and moral growth. This was facilitated by the presence of role models, consistent reinforcement of ethical values, effective disciplinary actions, and the unwavering commitment of Islamic Education educators. Effective moral development wasn't solely reliant on issuing commands or prohibitions; rather, it necessitated the provision of positive examples by teachers within the school community. Through their actions and demeanor, teachers played a crucial role in shaping the moral compass of students,

fostering an environment where Islamic values are not just taught but lived out in practice.

c. An emphasis on a deeper understanding of religious teachings and moral values

By thoroughly understanding religious teachings, learners develop a deeper appreciation and receptivity to the moral and ethical values inherent in Islam. Through this comprehensive understanding, individuals gained insight into the principles and teachings of Islam, which in turn fostered a greater openness to embracing and internalizing its moral and ethical precepts. This deeper comprehension served as a foundation for individuals to reflect upon, internalize, and apply Islamic values in their daily lives, ultimately guiding them toward a more righteous and ethical path.

d. The development of independence, moderation, and innovation among students

Al-Islam Kemuhammadiyah Education (PAIK) played a vital role in guiding the students to understand that Islam extended beyond mere worship rituals; it also encompassed ethical standards for daily conduct that advocated for kindness, compassion, and empathy toward others. Through PAIK, the students were directed to foster an attitude of acceptance and appreciation for diversity. Within the diverse campus environment, where the students came from various cultural and religious backgrounds, Islamic Religious Education served as a strong foundation for understanding these differences and nurturing an inclusive mindset among students (Setia & Rahim, 2024).

2. Discussion

a. Implementation of PAIK in fostering tolerance and diversity within the campus environment

This not only fostered a cohesive campus atmosphere but also provided students with essential interpersonal abilities crucial for both social engagements and career pursuits. Moreover, Muhammadiyah's Islamic Religious Education placed particular emphasis on fostering students' character growth and leadership capabilities. The Islamic principles underscored the significance of upholding ethical standards and exhibiting just leadership. Through Muhammadiyah's Islamic Religious Education, the students were encouraged to become leaders who were

conscientious, equitable, and influential, capable of making meaningful contributions to society.

As a result, the students not only acquired academic knowledge but also evolved into individuals characterized by their honesty and commitment to promoting the welfare of humanity. Furthermore, PAIK fostered the growth of social skills and personal fulfillment. The Students were urged to cultivate autonomy, innovation, and resilience in surmounting obstacles. Through this method, PAIK not only empowered students to excel in their chosen fields but also provided them with the autonomy and flexibility required to adeptly navigate through periods of change.

b. Challenges in implementing PAIK in higher education, including cultural diversity and rapid technological advancements

PAIK emphasized the development of virtuous actions to improve student conduct. The Students were motivated to actively participate in social and humanitarian initiatives aimed at benefiting the wider community. Consequently, this educational approach not only emphasized the refinement of individual character but also nurtured students as catalysts for positive societal transformation. Essentially, Al-Islamic Kemuhammadiyah Education played a crucial role in shaping learners' behavior. By incorporating Islamic teachings and Muhammadiyah values into higher education, students were not only prepared to excel in their respective professions but also emerged as exemplary individuals ready to make significant contributions to societal advancement and progress.

The study of Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah was an obligatory component in Muhammadiyah/Aisyiyah universities, as stipulated by the directives from Research and Development (PP Litbang) Dikti Muhammadiyah. Essentially, these institutions of higher education were dedicated to promoting the principles of inclusivity and safeguarding the rights of all societal groups. The aspiration was for graduates to consistently embody Islamic and Muhammadiyah values across diverse activities throughout their lives. AIK, serving as a comprehensive model, molded students into leaders distinguished by their integrity, responsibility, and sincere commitment to the well-being of others. Muhammadiyah University (PTM) exemplified this through its steadfast dedication to the principles of AIK.

However, within the realm of higher education, PTM encountered various challenges in implementing AIK, necessitating specific strategies and concerted efforts. Among these challenges, the diversity of students stood out as a major

obstacle. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) often enrolled students from diverse cultural backgrounds, religions, and interpretations of Islam. Each student brought their own unique understanding and perspective of AIK, leading to a plurality of viewpoints that had to be navigated and reconciled.

c. Strategies to overcome challenges, such as inclusive approaches and institutional support

Harmonizing comprehension and implementation of AIK presented a complex challenge with various dimensions. An inclusive strategy was crucial to guarantee that AIK messages were comprehensible and accepted by all students, promoting a feeling of belonging and inclusiveness. Furthermore, the rapid pace of scientific and technological advancements presented additional hurdles in the application of AIK. Universities were tasked with staying abreast of these developments, which could potentially strain the integration of AIK principles with modern contexts. As a result, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) had to ensure that the AIK curriculum stayed pertinent and flexible to integrate Islamic values with modern societal standards. Additionally, management and leadership aspects posed challenges in implementing AIK effectively. Robust backing from university administrators, faculty, and staff was essential; nevertheless, the essential adjustments to incorporate AIK might demand a substantial shift in organizational culture, highlighting the importance of strategic leadership and efficient management methodologies.

Universities should give precedence to efficient communication, proactive involvement, and thorough support from all parties involved to accomplish the desired changes. Furthermore, the aspect of comprehension and interpretation of AIK among educators posed a notable challenge. As the main guides in the educational journey, educators hold a crucial position in delivering AIK effectively. Challenges arose when discrepancies in understanding existed among lecturers, complicating the attainment of consistency and clarity in conveying AIK messages. Therefore, ensuring alignment and coherence in the interpretation and delivery of AIK by lecturers was crucial for successful implementation within the academic setting.

The effectiveness of AIK implementation could be hindered by social and economic barriers faced by students. Students frequently grappled with time limitations, financial constraints, and personal challenges that might impede their active involvement in AIK-related endeavors. It was imperative for universities to cultivate an environment that fostered students' holistic development, addressing

not only academic needs but also broadened aspects of their lives. Despite these challenges, Muhammadiyah Universities possess significant potential to surmount obstacles and enhance AIK implementation. By engaging all members of the university community, PTM could foster an optimal learning atmosphere, enhance the transmission of AIK values, and nurture graduates who excel academically while embodying the esteemed virtues advocated by the Islamic principles of Muhammadiyah.

d. Development of leadership skills, empathy, and social responsibility among students

The advancement of student character through AIK embodied a holistic and enduring initiative aimed at nurturing individuals who excelled not only in academics but also demonstrated robust character and ethical values. As the foundation, AIK offered an approach that seamlessly integrated Islamic principles and *Kemuhammadiyah* ideals into the process of shaping students' character. Character development through AIK involved immersing deeply into Islamic teachings, encouraging students to delve into the meanings and wisdom encapsulated in Quranic verses and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad SAW. This profound comprehension served as the cornerstone for students to internalize essential values such as honesty, integrity, and compassion in their everyday lives.

Furthermore, character development within the framework of AIK involved implementing these principles in various aspects of campus life. The Students were encouraged to participate actively in spiritual endeavors, including communal prayers, Quranic studies, and discussions centered around Islamic teachings. Through such participation, students fostered a sense of camaraderie while nurturing their spirituality and embedding Islamic values within the campus community. Moreover, the character development initiative incorporated aspects of empathy and societal accountability, integral values within the Muhammadiyah tradition. The Students were encouraged to engage in communal efforts, both within the university grounds and in the wider society. Initiatives such as community service projects, humanitarian missions, and other related activities provided students with opportunities to manifest the ideals of empathy and fairness advocated by AIK.

Throughout the character training journey, AIK placed particular emphasis on nurturing personality and leadership growth. The Students were encouraged to

become catalysts for positive change by embodying leadership grounded in the principles of Kemuhammadiyah. They were mentored to embody leadership qualities characterized by fairness, empathy, and the ability to motivate others. Core virtues like integrity, accountability, and allegiance were highlighted throughout the character development program. The Students were motivated to internalize these principles across diverse spheres of their lives, encompassing academic endeavors, interpersonal connections, and communal duties. Character training through AIK entailed active involvement from lecturers and educational staff, who serve as exemplary role models. Lecturers not only fulfilled the role of educators but also acted as spiritual guides, offering inspiration and fostering enthusiasm among students.

Encouraging interactions between the students and lecturers created a setting that supports the nurturing of positive character traits. As a result, character education through AIK went beyond formal activities, becoming an integral part of students' educational experience. This cultivated a milieu that nurtured holistic growth, wherein students evolved into not only proficient professionals but also individuals imbued with strong moral principles and social consciousness. The process of nurturing character through AIK represented a continuous commitment to developing a group of students who excelled not only in their careers but also actively contributed to improving societal well-being (Hidayat & Purwanto, 2022); (Handoko et al., 2024).

Character formation through AIK not only fostered academic prowess but also molded individuals characterized by integrity and a profound sense of social accountability. This fostered an educational environment conducive to holistic growth, where the educational process extended beyond mere knowledge transfer to instill robust personality traits and moral values in each learner. The educational voyage of Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah encompassed both the human-centered and divined aspects, mirroring the overarching goals of Islamic education. Tangible outcomes included the harmonization of human and divine, social and religious, as well as inner and outer dimensions within students. The ultimate aspiration was to nurture individuals who embodied the ideal of being the most beneficial to humanity (Setiawan, 2022).

In an educational environment that incorporates AIK, the students were empowered to cultivate their abilities across academic, spiritual, emotional, and social realms. They were encouraged to contemplate and integrate Islamic values into their daily lives, thereby fostering a deeper comprehension of life's meaning

and purpose in the world. The significance of moral integrity was underscored, with the students being urged to embody traits of honesty, fairness, and responsibility. Fundamental principles such as integrity in actions and communication, accountability to oneself and the community, and ethical conduct in all spheres of life served as the cornerstone for students' character development.

D. Conclusions

Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah Education play a vital role in molding students' character and conduct. By merging Islamic teachings with Muhammadiyah values, Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education not only imparts religious knowledge but also guides students toward becoming individuals characterized by integrity, accountability, and the ability to make positive contributions to society. Serving as a cornerstone in character development, AIK instills in students a profound comprehension of Islamic principles, empowering them to internalize moral, ethical, and virtuous values in their daily lives. Moreover, AIK goes beyond mere theoretical instruction, guiding students in the cultivation of their personalities and leadership acumen.

Students are encouraged to exemplify leadership traits marked by equity, empathy, and the capacity to motivate others. Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education nurtures a setting that advocates for tolerance and empathy, urging students to value diversity and participate in social and humanitarian initiatives. By grounding themselves in Islamic values, students cultivate a deep understanding of societal dynamics and contribute meaningfully to collective welfare. Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education also nurtures students' social competencies and self-empowerment, fostering traits of independence, creativity, and resilience necessary for navigating challenges and embracing change with confidence. Furthermore, Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education instill in students a sense of duty toward society through active participation in benevolent deeds. Through such selfless deeds, students not only actively benefit their communities but also internalize a profound sense of duty towards others.

This study makes a significant contribution to enriching the literature on the role of Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah Education in shaping students' character to be inclusive, tolerant, and integrity-driven within Muhammadiyah Higher Education institutions. Through the integration of Islamic values and

Kemuhammadiyah principles, this research proposes a character education model that emphasizes leadership, social responsibility, and adaptation to diversity. Furthermore, the findings of this study could serve as a practical guide for developing AIK curricula that are relevant to contemporary social and cultural challenges, while also opening opportunities for further research on the effectiveness of AIK implementation in various educational contexts. Thus, this study not only strengthens the theoretical foundation of AIK education but also offers practical strategies for shaping a younger generation with strong spiritual and social intelligence.

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