




An Ethnographic Study of the Bugis Community: Deconstructing Multicultural Islamic Educational Values in Bugis Society

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to analyze, interpret, identify, and describe the values of Islamic education from a multicultural perspective as embedded in the cultural practices of the Bugis community. Employing a qualitative method with a combined autoethnographic and realist ethnographic approach, the research utilized in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis as the primary data collection techniques. Data were examined through domain, taxonomic, and componential analyses, culminating in the formulation of key cultural values. The findings reveal seven core values within Bugis culture that can be adapted into a multicultural Islamic educational framework: (1) mutual respect and reverence, (2) compassion, (3) constructive admonition, (4) cooperation, (5) mutual protection, (6) recognition of human rights, and (7) cleanliness. The implications of this study suggest that these culturally rooted values can contribute significantly to the development of multicultural Islamic education in Indonesia. This research contributes to the preservation and academic recognition of Bugis cultural heritage by positioning it as a dynamic source of ethical and educational values, thereby bridging local culture with national and global discourses on multicultural and Islamic education.

Keywords: Bugis Community, Multicultural Islamic Education, Ethnography

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INTRODUCTION

The Bugis are widely known as one of the ethnic groups in Indonesia that demonstrate strong adherence to Islamic teachings. Their steadfast commitment to Islam has become an inseparable component of both their cultural identity and social life. For instance, the Bugis community in Barang Village, Soppeng Regency, exemplifies harmonious coexistence amid religious diversity, including Muslim, Protestant, and Catholic populations, as well as ethnic plurality consisting of Bugis, Makassarese, and Javanese residents (Obs./08/22). The religious practices and social interactions of the Bugis in Barang reflect not only their deep religious conviction but also a culturally embedded understanding of pluralism. These dynamics reveal the capacity of the Bugis in Barang to integrate Islamic values with inclusive and respectful community relations.

Christian Pelras (1996), in his seminal work *The Bugis*, classifies the Bugis alongside the Acehese, Malays, Banjarese, Sundanese, Madurese, and Makassarese as among the most devout Muslim ethnicities in Indonesia. According to Pelras' observation, nearly all Bugis people adhere to Islam, with few exceptions such as the *To-Lotang* community in Sidrap Regency; who continue to practice local belief systems and a small number of Christians in Soppeng Regency. This religious uniformity illustrates that Islam functions not only as a spiritual identity but also as a foundational element in shaping the social structure and cultural norms of the Bugis community.

Religiosity among the Bugis is deeply embedded within their social relationships through the principle of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood). This concept transcends normative religious doctrine and operates as a lived reality in building cohesive communities. It is embodied in the Bugis life philosophy known as the “3S” *sipakatau* (to humanize one another), *sipakalebbi* (to mutually respect), and *sipakainge’* (to advise one another). These principles encapsulate Islamic multicultural values, fostering a harmonious social environment that embraces diversity in socioeconomic status, religious interpretation, and communal roles (Rahim, 2014).

The social values embedded in Bugis society are not only spiritual in nature but also express a profound sense of social solidarity. One such tradition is *manno’*, a form of collective labor in rice cultivation where farmers assist each other in planting and harvesting, taking turns based on mutual agreement. This communal ethos extends beyond agriculture to include the construction of village infrastructure such as roads, irrigation systems, and mosques. These practices underscore the cultural integration of cooperation, social concern, and collective responsibility as reflections of Islamic values localized within Bugis society (Syamsuddin, 2020).

This socio-cultural context provides a fertile ground for developing a multicultural Islamic educational framework one that respects differences, upholds social justice, and promotes inclusivity. Cultural values such as *siri’* (dignity), *lemphu* (honesty), and *pacce* (compassion) resonate closely with core Islamic educational principles including *akhlaq* (moral character), *amar ma’ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil), and *ta’awun* (mutual cooperation). Thus, the Bugis cultural heritage holds great potential as a source of educational values capable of addressing the challenges of diversity in the era of globalization (Daeng, 2021).

Given these realities, it is essential to conduct an in-depth ethnographic study of Bugis society in order to explore the lived values practiced across generations. This study seeks to deconstruct and reinterpret these cultural values within the framework of multicultural Islamic education. In doing so, it aims not only to preserve local wisdom but also to contribute to a broader discourse on Islamic education that is responsive to Indonesia’s complex socio-cultural landscape (Abdullah, 2018). Ethnographic inquiry offers a unique opportunity to examine how the Bugis perceive education, diversity, and the intergenerational transmission of values in culturally meaningful ways.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using a critical ethnographic approach to narratively explore the values of multicultural Islamic education that flourish within Bugis society. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate for understanding the deep cultural and social phenomena that cannot be captured through quantitative measures. Ethnography was selected to investigate the symbolic, religious, and pedagogical dimensions of Bugis culture and how these relate to educational values. Beyond mere cultural description, critical ethnography engages with the power dynamics, symbolism, and social structures that shape the formation and transmission of values in the context of diversity and religious education (Creswell, 2013; Spradley, 2006).

The research was conducted in Barang Village, Soppeng Regency, South Sulawesi an area recognized for its strong adherence to Bugis customs and Islamic tradition. The fieldwork was carried out over two years (2022–2024), enabling the researcher to conduct longitudinal observations of educational patterns and social transformations.

Informants were selected purposively based on their relevance to the study. They included: (1) cultural leaders (To adat) and religious figures (imams, ustaz), (2) informal Islamic educators (Qur’an teachers), (3) parents and female community leaders, and (4) youth and students from the local area. A total of 15 key informants were interviewed in-depth, with observational data collected from five main educational and intercultural events in the community.

Data collection employed three main techniques: (1) Participant Observation: The researcher was immersed in the daily life of the community, observing religious education practices, social values, and intergenerational religious events, including prayer gatherings, local deliberations, and religious festivals (Spradley, 2006). (2) In-depth Interviews: Conducted using open and semi-structured interview guides to explore the meaning and internalization of key cultural values such as *siri’*, *pacce*, and *lemphu* in Islamic educational contexts. (3) Document Analysis: Local manuscripts, mosque activity records, religious study notes, and village archives were analyzed to trace the convergence of Islamic and cultural education in informal learning systems.

Data were analyzed thematically and interactively based on the Miles and Huberman (2014) model, involving: (1) Data condensation: selecting, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming field

data; (2) Data display: creating descriptive narratives and categorical tables; (3) Conclusion drawing: interpreting meanings through a cultural lens and relating findings to multicultural Islamic education theories. Analysis was conducted iteratively and dialogically, comparing empirical data with theoretical reflections to construct the value framework of multicultural Islamic education within the Bugis context.

To ensure data credibility and trustworthiness, several validation strategies were applied: (1) Triangulation of sources and techniques (observations, interviews, documents); (2) Member checking, where key findings were clarified and verified with informants; (3) Peer debriefing, involving academic and cultural experts to review analytical interpretations; (4) Audit trail, maintaining systematic records of data collection and analysis procedures.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

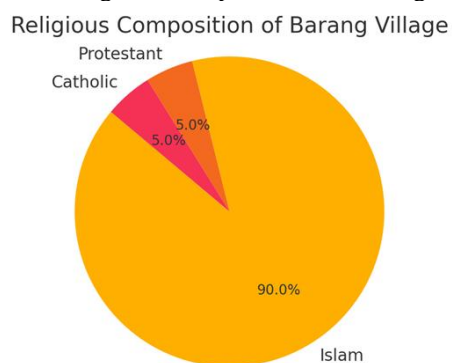
This section presents the key findings of the ethnographic study conducted in the Bugis community of Barang Village, Soppeng Regency. It focuses on the identification and interpretation of seven core cultural values that are deeply embedded in the community's daily life and have strong relevance for multicultural Islamic education. These values include: mutual respect and reverence, compassion, constructive admonition, cooperation, mutual protection, recognition of human rights, and cleanliness. The findings are analyzed thematically and situated within the framework of Islamic educational theory, multicultural pedagogy, and local socio-religious practices. This discussion also explores how these values are internalized through social interactions, religious rituals, and informal education, thereby shaping a participatory, contextually grounded, and culturally rooted model of Islamic education.

Socio-Cultural Landscape of Barang Village as a Foundation for Multicultural Islamic Education

Barang Village, located in the Liliraja District of Soppeng Regency, South Sulawesi, embodies a complex multicultural landscape that has evolved through historical, geographical, social, and religious transformations. The village's name, derived from the Bugis term 'Barang' meaning 'principle' or 'commitment' reflects a foundational ethic rooted in communal responsibility and cultural identity. Historical narratives, such as the legendary conflict between the Kingdoms of Citta and Galung, illustrate how these values have shaped local governance and solidarity, eventually giving rise to Barang Village as an administrative and cultural entity.

The village's demographic diversity is reflected in its religious composition. Although predominantly Muslim, Barang is home to Protestant and Catholic minorities, each with established places of worship. This religious coexistence is a testament to the community's cultural inclusivity. The historical acceptance of Christianity in the 1960s for socio-economic reasons, particularly among marginalized groups, also highlights the dynamic interplay between faith, economic vulnerability, and social adaptation supporting Ibn Khaldun's (2000) theory that economic conditions significantly influence cultural shifts.

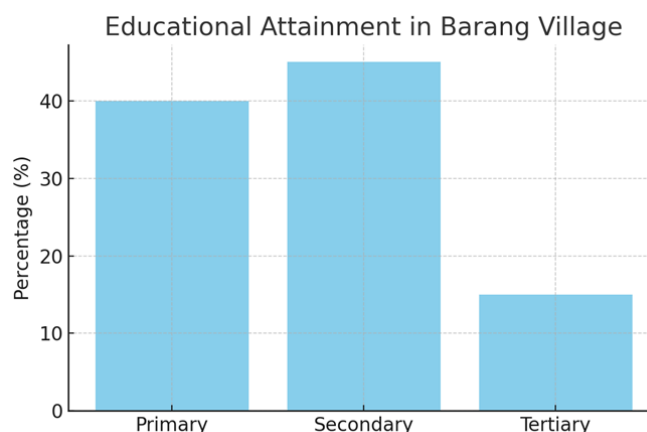
Figure 1. Religious Composition of Barang Village



From an educational perspective, Barang displays relatively high literacy and school participation rates, particularly among women, with a small but noteworthy number of residents attaining tertiary education. The community's informal pedagogical values are deeply interwoven with Bugis customs, such as *sipakatau* (mutual humanization), *sipakalebbi* (mutual respect), and *sipakainge'* (constructive admonition), which function as unwritten codes in socializing civic and

religious virtues. These values complement formal education and reflect a local epistemology grounded in Islamic ethics and Bugis adat.

Figure 2. Educational Attainment in Barang Village



Barang’s socio-cultural stratification, including hierarchical roles in governance and religion, further reflects the integration of traditional Bugis leadership structures with Islamic moral governance. Roles such as village imam, bilal, and doja remain essential, albeit with evolving functions. Economic diversity also illustrates a multidimensional stratification, where wealth and formal authority increasingly shape social status alongside noble lineage (*arung*). This evolution aligns with Farabi’s vision of society as a naturally ordered hierarchy of interdependent roles (Al-Farabi, 1993).

The gender dynamic in Barang illustrates a progressive accommodation of non-binary identities *calabai* and *calalai*; who, despite being a minority, are integrated into community life as respected artisans and service providers. Such acceptance underscores the inclusive nature of Bugis social fabric and represents an indigenous form of gender pluralism that resonates with multicultural Islamic perspectives. Together, these facets of Barang’s social landscape demonstrate how indigenous values and Islamic ethics can be harmonized to construct a robust, participatory, and inclusive model of Islamic education.

Deconstructing Multicultural Islamic Educational Values in Bugis Culture

This study seeks to deconstruct the deeply rooted cultural values of the Bugis community that align with the principles of multicultural Islamic education. Fieldwork conducted in Desa Barang, South Sulawesi, identified seven core cultural values practiced in daily life that reflect and support Islamic educational ideals: (1) mutual respect and reverence, (2) compassion, (3) constructive admonition, (4) cooperation, (5) mutual protection, (6) recognition of human rights, and (7) cleanliness. These values are not isolated ethical principles but are lived expressions of community interaction and local wisdom that are highly compatible with inclusive Islamic pedagogy.

The first value, mutual respect and reverence (*sipakalebbi*), serves as an ethical foundation in Bugis society, where respecting others is considered a reflection of one’s own dignity. This principle resonates with the Islamic concept of *tasamuh* (tolerance), encouraging harmonious relationships across differences. Banks (2015) argues that culturally responsive pedagogy begins with recognizing students’ cultural backgrounds as assets rather than obstacles. In Bugis community learning spaces such as mosques and village deliberation forums—respect is not just taught but embodied, creating equitable environments for dialogue and participation.

The value of compassion (*paccé*) is another salient characteristic of Bugis culture. It manifests through collective solidarity during life-cycle events, communal labor, and mutual support in times of hardship. Compassion in this context is not only an emotional state but a practiced ethic embedded in social rituals. In line with Islamic teachings of *rahmah* (mercy), the Qur’an states, “We have not sent you [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds” (Q.S. Al-Anbiya: 107). Abdullah (2018) emphasizes that contextualizing Islamic education through locally understood values such as *paccé* enhances learners’ emotional engagement and moral development.

Constructive admonition (*sipakainge*) refers to the cultural practice of advising others through gentle, respectful communication. This contrasts sharply with authoritarian religious

instruction often seen in conventional settings. Drawing from Freire's (2006) concept of *dialogical pedagogy*, advice in Bugis culture is relational rather than hierarchical, fostering a reciprocal learning environment. Observations revealed that moral guidance in Bugis society is often delivered through storytelling, shared experiences, and lived examples, making it more meaningful and transformative.

The value of cooperation (*sipatokkong*) is expressed through collective action in agricultural, religious, and civic life. This cooperative spirit parallels the Islamic principle of *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), which is central to both community development and faith-based education. Nieto (2010) argues that multicultural education must cultivate learners' social competence and their ability to engage in collaborative problem-solving. In the Bugis context, cooperation is not an add-on but a way of life, reinforcing participatory learning models that are inherently inclusive and egalitarian.

Mutual protection reflects the community's shared responsibility in safeguarding physical safety, emotional well-being, and social integrity. This is closely tied to the Islamic ideal of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), where the protection of one another's dignity is a communal obligation. Field data indicate that community members, especially elders and religious leaders, play a critical role in conflict resolution and in creating safe learning environments a key component of multicultural pedagogical frameworks (Banks, 2015).

The sixth value, recognition of human rights, is observed in the way Bugis society grants individuals the right to voice opinions, participate in collective decisions, and access communal resources. While the term "human rights" is not explicitly used, its practice is embedded in local customs. This aligns with the Islamic commitment to *'adl* (justice) and reflects Mezirow's (2000) transformative learning theory, which calls for education that builds critical consciousness and fosters active citizenship.

Finally, cleanliness (*mapaselle*) holds both physical and spiritual dimensions. In Bugis culture, cleanliness is a sign of respect for oneself, others, and God. It aligns with the prophetic tradition that "cleanliness is part of faith" (*al-nazhafah min al-iman*). This ecological ethic, rooted in both Islamic teachings and cultural practice, provides a strong basis for environmentally conscious education and character formation. As environmental degradation becomes a global concern, integrating cleanliness and sustainability into Islamic education becomes increasingly urgent and relevant.

These seven values reveal that Bugis culture contains profound and practical principles that can inform and enrich multicultural Islamic education. Deconstructing these values not only uncovers their pedagogical potential but also challenges the rigid, monolithic interpretations of Islamic instruction. By embracing localized cultural wisdom, Islamic education can become more inclusive, transformative, and contextually relevant for diverse societies.

Values in Tradition: A Reflection of Local Islamic Education

Cultural values in the Bugis community function not only as social norms but also as foundational elements of a localized and contextual Islamic education system. Field observations reveal that values such as *siri'* (self-respect), *paccé* (empathy), and *lempu* (honesty) are not taught through formal institutions but are internalized through role models, social interaction, and symbolic practices. For instance, *siri'*, the cultural imperative to uphold personal and communal dignity, operates as a moral compass that aligns with Islamic virtues such as *akhlaq karimah* (noble character). This character-centered, culturally grounded education exemplifies how tradition can naturally support Islamic ethical formation. These values harmonize with core Islamic teachings rather than contradict them. Abdullah (2018) describes this phenomenon as a form of contextual Islamic epistemology where normative Islamic teachings are interpreted and lived within the framework of local wisdom. Elders, religious leaders, and parents often transmit these values through storytelling, lived experience, and symbolic guidance. For example, when a child is perceived to have acted improperly, the correction is not punitive but delivered through the culturally resonant phrase *malilu sipakainge'* (if one errs, others should gently remind). Further, values such as *sipatokkong* (collaboration) and *sipakainge'* (constructive advice) are embedded in community activities like cooperative farming, mosque construction, and religious gatherings such as Maulid. These communal spaces serve as informal educational arenas where social and spiritual values are transmitted in real-time. Nieto (2010) asserts that community-based learning, especially when rooted in local wisdom, is among the most effective approaches for implementing multicultural education. This study also affirms that Islamic education grounded in tradition has advantages in sustainability and emotional resonance. Compared to formal, didactic instruction, traditional

education allows for more meaningful and experiential learning. Mezirow (2000) posits that transformative learning occurs when learners critically reflect on lived experience; a process that naturally unfolds in cultural traditions embedded in everyday life. Therefore, the traditional values practiced in the Bugis community are not merely cultural artifacts but constitute the pedagogical foundation of a reflective, contextual, and multicultural Islamic education. These practices offer an alternative to monolithic approaches and invite the development of a dynamic, participatory, and community-rooted pedagogy.

Multiculturalism in Socio-Religious Practice

Field observations in Desa Barang, South Sulawesi, demonstrate that the Bugis community practices a vibrant and grounded form of multiculturalism embedded within its socio-religious life. Although the majority of residents are Muslim, interreligious relations with minority groups such as the To-Lotang adherents and Christian families are marked by harmony and cooperation. These relationships are reflected in communal activities such as village infrastructure development, attendance at family celebrations, and joint participation in community deliberations. Such interactions illustrate the Islamic values of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *ta'awun* (cooperation), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), not as abstract ideals but as concrete, everyday practices.

Multiculturalism is also evident in religious events that function as inclusive platforms for social cohesion. Celebrations such as the Prophet's birthday (Maulid) and weekly Qur'anic gatherings serve not only religious purposes but also social bonding. All community members—children, women, youth, and traditional leaders—participate without hierarchical barriers. In this setting, the mosque becomes more than a place of worship; it transforms into a center for intergenerational learning and inclusive community engagement. This affirms Wahid's (2016) argument that traditional Indonesian mosques serve as social hubs and grassroots-based centers for multicultural education.

These findings support Banks' (2015) theory of transformative multicultural education, which goes beyond teaching tolerance and fosters active engagement in building equitable and just societies. In the Bugis context, Islamic teachings are embedded within local traditions to create safe, inclusive spaces free from majority domination. The involvement of women and youth in religious events signals a paradigm shift toward more democratic and multicultural expressions of Islamic education.

Moreover, the traditional *musyawarah* (deliberation) system, where all voices are heard and decisions are made by consensus, demonstrates that Islamic democracy has long been practiced organically at the community level. These forums provide experiential learning in dialogue, empathy, and collective decision-making. Nieto (2010) emphasizes that authentic multicultural education should cultivate these very competencies. Hence, the Bugis model of socio-religious life offers a contextual and participatory blueprint for community-based Islamic multicultural education. In conclusion, multiculturalism in the Bugis community is not a mere theoretical construct but a lived reality expressed through inclusive religious and social practices. Islamic values are not imposed externally but manifested organically through local traditions rooted in empathy, cooperation, and collective ethics. This affirms that Islamic multicultural education can and should emerge from within the cultural fabric of Muslim communities themselves.

Beyond Exclusivism: Toward Contextual Islamic Education

In the Bugis community of Desa Barang, the practice of Islamic education reflects a shift away from exclusive, text-centered, and normative approaches. Although some religious leaders still employ lecture-based instruction emphasizing prohibitions and legalistic interpretations, the broader community demonstrates a more participatory and culturally embedded educational model. Values such as *sipakainge'* (constructive admonition) and *lempu* (honesty) are conveyed through humane and dialogical interactions rather than authoritarian methods. Islamic education in this context functions not merely as knowledge transmission but as a relational and empathetic practice. This reality aligns with Freire's (2006) argument that education should be dialogical, liberatory, and rooted in learners' lived experiences. In the Bugis setting, religious values are not imposed through rigid curricula but emerge organically through cultural practices such as storytelling, communal deliberation, and symbolic correction. When someone violates social norms, the community responds not with punishment but with collective reflection using local expressions like *malilu sipakainge'*, which means "those who err should be gently reminded by others."

The deconstruction of exclusivism is further evident in the active involvement of women and youth in religious and educational activities. Women play significant roles in mosque programs, religious study groups, and family discussions, while youth participate in thematic halaqah, social dialogues, and creative da'wah initiatives. This embodies an *inclusive spirit* of Islamic education, which, according to Banks (2015), is a cornerstone of transformative multicultural pedagogy. These findings also critique the uniform and context-insensitive nature of formal Islamic education, which often emphasizes rote memorization and compliance over personal reflection. Such approaches risk alienating students from diverse cultural backgrounds. In contrast, the Bugis community offers a contextual Islamic education that integrates religious principles with local wisdom and multicultural engagement a more holistic and humanizing approach.

In summary, transcending exclusivism in Islamic education does not mean abandoning religious values; rather, it requires reimagining pedagogy in ways that are culturally responsive, empowering, and socially relevant. The Bugis community exemplifies how contextual Islamic education can be rooted in tradition while remaining open, inclusive, and dialogical in multicultural realities.

Social Transformation and Participatory Islamic Education

Social transformation in the Bugis community, particularly in Desa Barang, is marked by shifts in social relations, family structure, access to information, and the increasing role of youth and women in religious and community life. With the rise of digital media, educational mobility, and women's participation in public discourse, Islamic education is undergoing a significant reorientation. No longer monopolized by religious authorities, Islamic learning is becoming more participatory, community-based, and inclusive in nature.

Field data reveal the emergence of new educational spaces such as youth-led religious forums, thematic halaqah focused on social issues, family-based religious discussions, and intergenerational collaboration in religious rituals. Initiatives such as "creative youth halaqah," "young mothers' study groups," and "communal ethical deliberations with adat leaders" reflect a participatory shift in the practice of Islamic education. This affirms Mezirow's (2000) theory that meaningful learning occurs when individuals engage in critical reflection through social interaction and experiential dialogue.

This participatory approach aligns with recent findings by Ma'arif and Nurdin (2023), who argue that community-driven Islamic education models are more effective in rural contexts than top-down pedagogical frameworks. In the Bugis setting, communal involvement in shaping the content, structure, and facilitation of religious learning activities ensures broader inclusion welcoming women, youth, and marginalized groups as co-creators of knowledge and religious meaning.

Furthermore, traditional values such as *sipatokkong* (cooperation) and *paccé* (social empathy) continue to serve as ethical foundations for participatory education. Community activities such as mosque construction, religious festivals, and collective prayer events are not only spiritually enriching but also provide experiential education in ethics, teamwork, and social accountability. As Wahid (2021) notes, participatory religious education rooted in communal traditions is more resilient to ideological extremism and social fragmentation because it is based on shared values rather than hierarchical authority. Thus, participatory Islamic education in Bugis society exemplifies how social transformation can enhance religious life by making education more adaptive, inclusive, and grounded in community engagement. When Islamic education emerges from below—through involvement, reflection, and collective consciousness—it becomes a living, responsive, and resilient expression of faith within a multicultural society.

Bugis Cultural Values as Pillars of Multicultural Islamic Education

Four key Bugis cultural values—*Sipakatau* (mutual humanization), *Sipakalebbi* (mutual respect), *Sipakainge'* (mutual admonition), and cleanliness as a spiritual and cultural value form the foundation of a contextual and participatory model of multicultural Islamic education. These values are not only embedded in ethical conduct but also function as core components of informal educational systems that shape character within the community.

Sipakatau, which translates as "to humanize one another," emphasizes the recognition of every person's dignity regardless of ethnicity, religion, age, or social status. Field observations reveal its application in village deliberations, intergenerational religious learning, and inclusive communal events. This resonates with the Islamic notion of *ukhuwah insaniyah*, or universal brotherhood.

Freire (2006) argued that liberating education must begin with a mutual recognition of humanity, a principle reflected strongly in *sipakatau*.

Sipakalebbi, or mutual respect, reinforces *sipakatau* by promoting humility and civility in social interactions. This value manifests through polite speech, respectful disagreement, and deference to others in community spaces. In Islamic pedagogy, it corresponds with *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character), a cornerstone of the Prophet Muhammad's educational approach. According to Banks (2015), successful multicultural education fosters mutual respect across diverse identities, laying the groundwork for social harmony.

Sipakainge', meaning mutual admonition, represents the Bugis model of ethical and dialogical social correction. Rather than enforcing discipline through punishment, advice is offered in a spirit of brotherhood and care. The local maxim *malilu sipakainge', mappakasiri' sipakalebbi'* (correct mistakes to preserve dignity through mutual respect) exemplifies a culturally grounded approach to moral education. This aligns with the Islamic ethic of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, which emphasizes wisdom and compassion when guiding others (Q.S. An-Nahl: 125).

Cleanliness as a spiritual and cultural value (mapaselle) signifies the integration of Islamic principles with local practice. Cleanliness is regarded not only as physical hygiene but also as a reflection of personal faith and social responsibility. Community-based cleaning of mosques, homes, and public areas becomes a learning opportunity in both spiritual and civic responsibility. As the Prophet stated, "*Cleanliness is part of faith*" (*al-nazhafah minal iman*). Wahid (2021) notes that Islamic education rooted in communal tradition fosters ecological character and sustainable ethics.

These four interrelated values offer a holistic framework for Islamic education that is participatory, contextual, and multicultural. When education is grounded in deeply held local traditions, the learning process becomes more meaningful, relevant, and sustainable in nurturing inclusive and adaptive Muslim identities.

The main findings of this ethnographic research reveal that Islamic education in the Bugis community of Barang Village is deeply shaped by seven cultural values: mutual respect, compassion, constructive admonition, cooperation, mutual protection, human rights recognition, and cleanliness. These values operate not merely as social norms but as embedded pedagogical principles that structure social interaction, moral development, and interreligious coexistence. The study finds that these values organically create a multicultural, dialogical, and participatory Islamic educational ecosystem, one that is context-sensitive and grounded in local wisdom (Banks, 2015; Abdullah, 2018; Freire, 2006). Ethnographic observations indicate that these values are transmitted through informal mechanisms; family teachings, storytelling, community rituals, *musyawarah*, and religious gatherings; rather than formal curricular structures. This supports Mezirow's (2000) theory that transformative learning is most effective when rooted in lived experience. Furthermore, the findings show that cultural values such as *sipakatau*, *sipakalebbi*, and *sipakainge'* function as ethical anchors that nurture inclusive identities aligned with Islamic universalism. These findings together highlight that local culture is not a peripheral element but a fundamental pillar of multicultural Islamic education (Wahid, 2021; Ma'arif & Nurdin, 2023).

Differences Between This Study and Previous Findings

This study differs from previous research in several significant ways. First, unlike prior works that analyze Bugis values merely as *adat-based moral principles* (Mattulada, 1998; Pelras, 2006), this study situates them within the framework of multicultural Islamic pedagogy, demonstrating their pedagogical functions in sustaining inclusive and dialogical education. Earlier studies often focused on Bugis honor ethics (*siri'*) without linking them to transformative educational practices (Robinson, 1995; Acciaoli, 2009). In contrast, this study shows how local ethics actively shape participatory Islamic learning. Second, studies on multicultural Islamic education in Indonesia generally highlight *pesantren* or urban Muslim communities (Mahfud, 2017; Azra, 2019; Hasan, 2019). This research departs from that pattern by providing an ethnographic account of a rural village where cultural values play a stronger role than formal institutions. Third, prior works such as Nurdin (2016) and Syamsuddin (2020) argue that multiculturalism in Islamic contexts is primarily doctrinal, whereas this study demonstrates its *embodied and experiential* form. Fourth, while many researchers emphasize state-driven models of religious moderation (PPIM, 2021; Wahid Foundation, 2020), this study uncovers a bottom-up community model where harmony emerges organically through cultural practices, validating Alatas's (2010) idea of indigenous moral knowledge. Fifth, earlier studies of Bugis gender identity (Davies, 2010; Graham, 2017) focus on *calabai-calalai* roles, but seldom relate them to Islamic educational inclusion; this study identifies their role in shaping a

plural social learning environment. Sixth, contrary to normative Islamic educational models that rely on formal instruction (Hefner, 2016; Halstead, 2004), this study reveals a predominantly relational and dialogical pedagogy similar to Freire's (2006) humanist model. Seventh, while environmental ethics in Bugis culture have been studied (Satria, 2015; Arifin, 2021), the link between cleanliness (*mapaselle*) and multicultural Islamic teaching remains insufficiently explored and is expanded here. Finally, this study diverges from universalistic approaches to multicultural education (Nieto, 2010; Grant & Sleeter, 2011) by proposing a localized multicultural model rooted in Bugis epistemology, thus bridging anthropology, Islamic studies, and educational theory.

The findings carry several theoretical, pedagogical, and practical implications. Theoretically, the study strengthens the argument that Islamic education must be culturally rooted to remain meaningful and sustainable (Abdullah, 2018; Ma'arif, 2020). The discovery that Bugis cultural values naturally reinforce inclusive Islamic pedagogy suggests that local wisdom can serve as a *counterbalance* to exclusivist interpretations of Islam (Hefner, 2016; Madjid, 1992). Pedagogically, the study offers a contextual model of multicultural Islamic education that can be adopted in rural settings across Indonesia. Teachers, religious leaders, and policymakers can integrate principles such as *sipakainge'* and *sipakalebbi'* into curriculum development, character education, and community learning. The research also contributes to the growing belief that informal education is equally vital in shaping ethical and multicultural dispositions (Banks, 2019; Mezirow, 2000).

Practically, the findings highlight that strengthening community-based educational institutions mosques, family circles, and adat councils may be more effective than purely formal interventions in cultivating tolerance, collaboration, and social justice. The results also offer guidance for interreligious engagement programs, rural educational initiatives, and Islamic education reforms that must consider indigenous cultural frames (Wahid, 2021; Ma'arif & Nurdin, 2023).

Despite its contributions, the study faces several limitations. First, as an ethnographic study focused solely on Barang Village, the findings may not fully represent the diversity of Bugis communities across South Sulawesi. Local variations in adat, leadership structures, and religious orientations could yield different educational dynamics (Pelras, 2006; Mattulada, 1998). Second, data collection relied heavily on participant observation and in-depth interviews, which, although rich, may introduce interpretive bias or subjectivity an inherent limitation in qualitative research (Creswell, 2018). Third, the study did not include a longitudinal component; therefore, it cannot measure long-term changes in cultural influence on Islamic education, especially in contexts of digital transformation (Campbell, 2019). Fourth, the research did not deeply compare the educational outcomes of those exposed to traditional teachings versus those educated through formal institutions. Fifth, because the study emphasizes cultural values, it may underrepresent socio-economic factors that also shape educational practices. These limitations highlight the need for broader regional studies, mixed-method designs, and long-term community engagement for more comprehensive insights.

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