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Social Reconstructions Through The Role of Islamic Boarding Schools in Building Cross-Cultural Solidarity in Border Areas

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ABSTRACT. This research aims to uncover the role of the Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in building cross-cultural solidarity in border areas. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach, through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that pesantren not only functions as an institution of religious teaching, but also as a strategic center for social reconstruction that encourages the creation of intercultural harmony. Islamic boarding schools create learning spaces that are responsive to social dynamics, develop a curriculum based on the values of fairness and openness, and involve students in various social, cultural, and religious activities with the community. The leadership of kiai and teachers plays an important role in internalizing the values of tolerance, peace, and inclusivity that make students agents of peace and social stability. These findings also identify the challenges and opportunities faced by Islamic boarding schools, especially in establishing cooperation across religions, customs, and social institutions. This research confirms that Islamic values can be a solid foundation for the formation of cross-cultural solidarity while strengthening social cohesion in border areas.

Keywords: *Boarding, Cross-Cultural Solidarity, Social Reconstruction, Tolerance, Islamic Education*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as a country that has cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity spread across various regions (Masyrullahushomad, 2019). One of the strategic areas that is Indonesia's land gateway with neighboring Malaysia is Entikong District, Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan (Mahrus et al., 2024). This region is not only an economic route and cross-border mobility, but also a region full of diverse cultural and ethnic interactions, such as Dayak, Malay, Chinese, and immigrant communities from outside Kalimantan. This diversity creates complex social dynamics, both opportunities for social integration and potential conflicts if not managed wisely. Therefore, every citizen needs to be educated to respect differences and work together in a spirit of peace in diversity (Putra et al., 2023).

It is in this context that Islamic education has a strategic position to take part in the process of social reconstruction, namely rebuilding an inclusive, harmonious, and just social order based on moderate religious values and rahmatan lil 'alamin (Iffah et al., 2023). Islamic education is

expected to be able to become a medium of social reconstruction that instills the values of togetherness, tolerance, and solidarity (Pangeran et al., 2025). One of the institutions that is a representation of Islamic education that is firmly rooted in the community is the Islamic boarding school. Pesantren is not only a place for the transfer of religious knowledge, but also serves as a center for social, moral, and cultural transformation of the surrounding community.

Islamic boarding schools have long been Islamic educational institutions that play an important role in producing a generation that not only has deep religious knowledge but also has noble morals (Aziz, 2024). In border areas, Islamic boarding schools have unique challenges and potentials as educational centers that contribute to the formation of the character of a culturally diverse, ethnic and religious society. By integrating Islamic education and social reconstruction efforts, pesantren are able to create a space for cross-cultural dialogue that encourages the creation of solidarity between communities (Viera Valencia & Garcia Giraldo, 2019).

According to Piere Bourdieu (1992). The diverse types of capital possessed by individuals can determine their position in the social stratification structure, ultimately influencing their patterns of social behavior. More specifically, there are three main forms of capital, namely economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital (Mustikasari et al., 2023).

The Miftahul Hidayah Balai Karangan Islamic Boarding School, located in the Entikong border area, is one of the institutions that has a significant social and cultural role. This pesantren not only educates students in religious aspects, but is also active in establishing social relations with the surrounding community with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. For example, in the momentum of the commemoration of National Santri Day, this pesantren becomes a collaborative forum between people, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and local governments to strengthen the spirit of nationality and strengthen cross-cultural solidarity (Ferandi, 2024).

Facts on the ground show that border areas still hold various problems. Development inequality, lack of educational facilities, weak cross-cultural literacy, and the existence of social barriers due to ethnic and religious differences are real challenges. In conditions like this, pesantren are required to be more adaptive and responsive to multicultural realities. It is not enough for Islamic boarding schools to educate in the context of fiqh or monotheism, but it is necessary to equip students and the community with insight into diversity, social skills, and the ability to dialogue across cultures.

The role of pesantren in the context of building cross-cultural solidarity in border areas has not been touched much in academic studies. Many studies have highlighted the role of pesantren in building formal education or tackling radicalism, but few have explored how pesantren carry out social reconstruction in the context of border multiculturalism. In fact, social reconstruction is very important to ensure that border communities remain solid, harmonious, and empowered in the midst of globalization and identity differences.

As a social institution, pesantren accepts children from various walks of life in Muslim society, regardless of the socioeconomic status of their parents. The cost of living and studying in Islamic boarding schools tends to be more affordable compared to education outside Islamic boarding schools (Rif'atul Mahfudhoh, 2015).

In line with the development of Islamic boarding schools as multicultural education centers, it is a must to answer the challenges of globalization and dynamic social change in border areas (Syamhuri, 2021). On the other hand, there is a real gap between ideal expectations for the role of pesantren and the reality on the ground. Normatively, pesantren are expected to be able to become agents of peace and driving forces of cross-cultural solidarity, especially in border areas that are vulnerable to social fragmentation due to ethnic, cultural, and religious differences. Pesantren is positioned as an institution that not only teaches Islamic values, but also fosters a moderate attitude, tolerance, and openness to diversity. However, the reality shows that not all

pesantren have the institutional capacity, strategies to strengthen multiculturalism, or adequate support from the surrounding environment or from the government to optimally play this strategic role.

In this context, it is important to conduct an in-depth study that focuses on how strategies and approaches are used by Islamic boarding schools in strengthening intercultural solidarity, especially in border areas such as Entikong. This study needs to explore the extent of the effectiveness of the role of pesantren in facilitating cross-cultural interactions, building national awareness, and creating a space for dialogue between diverse community groups. In addition, it is also important to identify the various challenges faced by Islamic boarding schools in carrying out their social functions, both from the internal side of the institution and from the external social reality that surrounds it.

On this basis, this research is considered important and relevant to be conducted. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the socio-cultural dynamics in border areas and how Islamic education, especially those organized by Islamic boarding schools, responds to these challenges through its strategic roles. In addition, the results of this research are also expected to be a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of a contextual, adaptive, and responsive Islamic education model to multicultural realities, as well as fill the gap in academic literature that discusses the role of pesantren in social reconstruction based on inclusive Islamic values in border areas.

This study focuses on the Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in Balai Karangan, Entikong District, Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan, which is geographically located on the border area of Indonesia and Malaysia.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to examine the implementation of multicultural education at Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School. The case study approach was selected to explore the phenomenon within its social and cultural context, particularly the experiences, practices, and interactions of individuals involved in multicultural education. The study focused on how diversity, tolerance, and cross-cultural solidarity were understood and practiced by students, *ustadz* and *ustadzah* (Islamic teachers), school administrators, and members of the surrounding community (Satrio et al., 2024).

Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Participatory observation was conducted during selected pesantren activities, including learning sessions, congregational worship, social interactions, and community-related activities. The observations aimed to identify how multicultural values were expressed in everyday practices and interactions. In-depth interviews were conducted with school leaders, *ustadz* and *ustadzah*, students, and community representatives to explore their perceptions, experiences, and strategies for promoting diversity and tolerance. The selection of participants considered their involvement in pesantren activities, knowledge of the local social environment, and relevance to the research objectives.

To obtain an external perspective on the pesantren's claims regarding cross-cultural solidarity, the study included non-Muslim community leaders, particularly representatives from Dayak and Chinese communities in the surrounding area. Their perspectives were sought to assess whether the reported practices of tolerance, mutual respect, and intergroup cooperation were also recognized and experienced by community members outside the pesantren. These interviews provided an external point of comparison for the accounts obtained from school administrators, teachers, and students. The inclusion of these community leaders was intended to

reduce reliance on internal institutional narratives and strengthen the credibility of the findings concerning relations between the pesantren and the wider community.

Document analysis was conducted to complement the observational and interview data. The documents examined included the pesantren's curriculum, institutional vision and mission, activity reports, and available photographs or videos documenting relevant activities. These materials were reviewed to identify evidence of institutional commitments to multicultural education and to compare documented policies with observed practices and participants' accounts (Sugiyono, 2021; Hani Subakti, 2023).

Data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis. The process involved organizing and reducing the data, coding relevant statements and observed behaviors, grouping the codes into themes, presenting the findings in a systematic narrative, and interpreting patterns related to multicultural education, tolerance, and cross-cultural solidarity. The analysis compared the perspectives of internal pesantren participants with those of non-Muslim community leaders and examined whether the interview accounts were consistent with observational evidence and institutional documents.

Data credibility was strengthened through triangulation of sources and methods. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from school administrators, *ustadz* and *ustadzah*, students, Muslim community members, and non-Muslim community leaders from Dayak and Chinese communities. Methodological triangulation involved comparing evidence from participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. When discrepancies emerged between participants' accounts and other evidence, the differences were examined rather than automatically resolved in favor of the institutional narrative. This procedure enabled the researcher to evaluate the consistency of the evidence and develop a more balanced interpretation of multicultural practices and cross-cultural solidarity in and around the pesantren (Moleong, 2013).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings indicate that Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School in the Entikong border area connects religious education with community participation, cultural activities, and the management of everyday social relationships. The interview accounts describe an institution that seeks to maintain interaction with its surrounding community rather than limiting its educational activities to students within the pesantren. This orientation is reflected in invitations to public activities, the use of social media to communicate events, the inclusion of local cultural performances, and opportunities for students to participate in community life. At the same time, the informants acknowledge that institutional expectations are not always reflected consistently in individual student behavior.

The findings presented in this section draw on interviews conducted on June 21, 2025, with Miftahul Munir, the pesantren secretary; Ustadz Husein Kailani, a religious educator; and Mr. Aldi, a representative of the pesantren committee. Their accounts provide institutional and community-linked perspectives on the pesantren's activities and relationships. However, they do not represent the full range of experiences among students, residents, or different ethnic and religious groups in the surrounding area.

Table 1 Interview-Based Findings on Community Engagement and Cross-Cultural Solidarity at Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School

Empirical	Practices reported in the	Informant support	Descriptive finding

theme	interviews		
Community participation	**Direct invitations, social media announcements, monthly gatherings, anniversary celebrations, and community cleaning activities.**	**Miftahul Munir described invitations and recurring gatherings; Mr. Aldi reported residents' participation in institutional and social activities.**	**The pesantren maintains contact with residents through recurring events and practical cooperation that extend beyond religious instruction.**
Local cultural expression	**Regional dances, traditional arts, and Gasmi martial arts are included in institutional activities.**	**The interview accounts describe anniversary performances, while Ustadz Husein Kailani referred to traditional dance and Gasmi martial arts.**	**Selected cultural practices are given a visible place in the pesantren's activities, although their incorporation into the formal written curriculum is not established.**
Islamic ethical education	**Instruction using *Taisirul Kholaq*, *Ta'limul Muta'allim*, and *Riyadhus Shalihin*, accompanied by teacher examples and everyday habituation.**	**Ustadz Husein Kailani identified the moral texts; Miftahul Munir emphasized the relationship between religious instruction and social experience.**	**Ethical formation is described as combining textual learning, exemplary conduct, and participation in everyday relationships.**
Respect for difference	**Teaching students to avoid hatred, use peaceful language, and respect people from different backgrounds.**	**Mr. Aldi described expectations concerning respect for difference; Miftahul Munir and Ustadz Husein Kailani emphasized inclusive religious narratives.**	**Respect for diversity is presented as an institutional expectation, although its consistent implementation among all students is not established.**
Student participation in public life	**Opportunities to participate in Friday sermons, public religious gatherings, and cultural activities.**	**The interview accounts describe students' involvement in religious and community settings.**	**Students are provided with opportunities to practice communication and social responsibility outside classroom instruction.**
Management of misunderstandings	**Negotiation and tabayyun are used when tensions or misunderstandings arise.**	**Ustadz Husein Kailani reported the use of negotiation and tabayyun in addressing conflict.**	**Clarification and dialogue are identified as institutional responses to disagreement, although a complete mediation sequence is not documented.**
Institutional –community cooperation	**Social service, cooperation with social, customary, and religious institutions, and opportunities involving local enterprises during events.**	**Miftahul Munir described institutional cooperation; Ustadz Husein Kailani referred to social service and support for local enterprises.**	**The pesantren's relationships include religious, social, cultural, and potentially economic forms of participation. Their distribution and outcomes remain unmeasured.**
Implementation challenges and perceived outcomes	**Some student behavior is misunderstood by residents; informants also report greater harmony and more polite behavior among children.**	**Ustadz Husein Kailani described misunderstandings; Mr. Aldi provided a positive assessment of community relationships and children's conduct.**	**The account reveal both positive perception and a gap between institutional exception and everyday behavior. They do not establish causal effects.**

The table summarizes interview material collected on June 21, 2025. The themes are analytical groupings of the supplied accounts and do not indicate frequency, prevalence, or measured effectiveness. As shown in Table 1, the pesantren's engagement with its surrounding community involves several related practices rather than a single program. Religious gatherings provide recurring occasions for contact, cultural events create opportunities for participation, and social activities connect institutional members with residents through practical cooperation. The interviews also identify limitations in the implementation of inclusive expectations, particularly when student behavior becomes a source of misunderstanding.

Community involvement was described as a recurring feature of the pesantren's activities. Miftahul Munir explained that residents are invited through direct communication and announcements on social media (Interview, June 21, 2025). These practices indicate that the institution uses interpersonal and digital channels to maintain contact with its surrounding community. Direct invitations provide a personal form of engagement, while social media announcements extend the circulation of information beyond immediate face-to-face relationships.

The activities described by the informants create opportunities for interaction among students, teachers, administrators, and residents. Community members are not presented exclusively as recipients of religious instruction. They also attend celebrations, contribute to activities, and participate in forms of cooperation associated with the institution. Mr. Aldi's account similarly emphasized residents' involvement in major events and social activities (Interview, June 21, 2025).

Monthly gatherings were identified as a particularly important setting for maintaining this relationship. Miftahul Munir described the monthly activity as "a bridge between the pesantren and the surrounding community" (Interview, June 21, 2025). His statement indicates that recurring events are understood within the institution as opportunities to sustain communication and familiarity, rather than merely as isolated ceremonial occasions.

The interviews also referred to community participation in festivals and cleaning activities. These examples show that interaction is not restricted to religious teaching. Some activities involve cooperation around shared spaces and practical needs. Nevertheless, the available material does not specify the frequency of each activity, the number of participants, or the distribution of participation across different social groups. The inclusion of local cultural expression was another prominent feature of the accounts. Regional dances and traditional arts were described as part of anniversary celebrations and other institutional events. Students and community members participate in these activities, bringing cultural expression into occasions associated with the pesantren's public life.

These practices indicate that selected cultural forms are given institutional visibility. Local culture is not treated solely as an external influence separate from religious education. Instead, it is incorporated into activities in which religious identity, institutional celebration, and community participation overlap. However, the evidence is stronger for cultural integration in activities than for formal integration into a documented curriculum.

Ustadz Husein Kailani also referred to traditional dance and Gasmi martial arts as activities through which students engage with cultural practices beyond classroom learning (Interview, June 21, 2025). These activities provide settings for collective practice and participation that differ from text-based instruction. The cultural activities also create occasions for interaction between students and residents. However, the interviews do not identify the ethnic composition of participants, explain how particular performances are selected, or establish whether all cultural

groups have equal opportunities to contribute. The findings therefore demonstrate the presence of cultural expression without establishing comprehensive cultural representation.

The pesantren's approach to social relationships was described as grounded in religious instruction, exemplary conduct, and direct experience. Miftahul Munir emphasized the combination of religious teaching and social experience in developing tolerant attitudes (Interview, June 21, 2025). His account suggests that ethical education is understood as a continuing process that extends beyond formal lessons.

Ustadz Husein Kailani identified *Taisirul Kholaq*, *Ta'limul Muta'allim*, and *Riyadhus Shalihin* as references used in teaching moral conduct (Interview, June 21, 2025). Within his account, these texts provide material for communicating expectations concerning appropriate behavior and harmonious relationships. The available material does not include lesson observations or detailed examples of how particular passages are applied to cross-cultural situations. Kiai and teachers were described as central to this process because their role extends beyond the transmission of knowledge. They also provide examples of conduct that students observe in everyday institutional life. The informants' emphasis on exemplary behavior indicates that ethical expectations are communicated through both verbal instruction and interpersonal practice.

Mr. Aldi explained that students are taught not to respond to difference with hatred and to respect diversity as part of living together (Interview, June 21, 2025). This account presents tolerance as an expectation concerning behavior toward others, rather than merely as an acknowledgment that differences exist. Opportunities to participate in Friday sermons, public religious gatherings, and cultural activities were also described in the material. These settings allow students to practice communication and assume responsibilities outside routine classroom instruction. Their contribution to ethical development is reported as part of the institutional approach, rather than demonstrated through systematic assessment of student outcomes.

The informants described an effort to communicate religious teachings through inclusive narratives. Miftahul Munir referred to *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, the use of peaceful language, rejection of extremism, and participation in interreligious social life (Interview, June 21, 2025). Ustadz Husein Kailani similarly emphasized peaceful language and participation in social relationships involving people from different religious backgrounds. These statements show that the informants present religious commitment and social openness as compatible. Within their accounts, maintaining an Islamic educational identity does not require withdrawal from people outside the institution. Instead, the practice of religious values is connected to the quality of communication and cooperation with others.

Miftahul Munir also acknowledged that the degree of openness can vary according to institutional culture, the outlook of the caregiver, and the surrounding social context (Interview, June 21, 2025). This qualification indicates that the reported orientation is connected to particular leadership and institutional conditions. It should not be treated as a characteristic shared uniformly by all pesantren. Although the interviews referred to interreligious participation, they did not identify all partner institutions, participating groups, or the continuity of these relationships. The findings therefore establish an inclusive orientation and reported participation while leaving the scope of that participation insufficiently documented.

Negotiation and tabayyun were identified as approaches used when social tensions arise. Ustadz Husein Kailani stated, "Usually we reduce conflicts through negotiation and tabayyun" (Interview, June 21, 2025). His statement indicates that communication and clarification are understood as responses to disagreement. The material does not provide a complete account of a specific conflict, the stages of mediation, the participants involved, or a final agreement.

Consequently, the findings establish negotiation and tabayyun as reported practices without demonstrating a standardized procedure or its effectiveness across different situations. The same informant described occasions when the conduct of some students was misunderstood by residents. These misunderstandings were reported to affect the optimal implementation of activities, although he did not identify direct rejection of the activities themselves (Interview, June 21, 2025). The distinction suggests that difficulties arose within ongoing relationships rather than necessarily taking the form of organized opposition to the institution.

This account also identifies a gap between institutional expectations and individual behavior. Although the pesantren promotes inclusive values, student conduct is not always interpreted as consistent with those expectations. The interviews do not establish whether particular misunderstandings resulted primarily from student behavior, incomplete information, differing expectations, or a combination of these factors. The interviews described cooperation with social, customary, and religious institutions as part of the pesantren's wider relationships. Miftahul Munir referred to participation involving caregivers, administrators, students, and community members (Interview, June 21, 2025). Ustadz Husein Kailani identified social service and support for local micro, small, and medium enterprises through religious events and cultural festivals (Interview, June 21, 2025).

These accounts suggest that public activities include social and potentially economic dimensions alongside religious instruction. Events may provide opportunities for residents to contribute services or participate through local enterprises. However, the material does not quantify economic benefits or establish how consistently these opportunities are available. Mr. Aldi offered a positive assessment of the pesantren's influence, describing more harmonious relationships among residents and more polite behavior among children (Interview, June 21, 2025). His account provides evidence of a favorable community-linked perception. It does not establish a measured change attributable exclusively to the institution because the available material contains no baseline assessment or systematic comparison.

Overall, the findings describe an institution that seeks to connect religious education with community cooperation, cultural participation, and dialogue. Its reported contribution lies in creating recurring opportunities for interaction and communicating expectations of respectful conduct. The main challenge concerns the consistency with which these expectations are practiced and understood in everyday relationships. If the research is qualitative, the results section must be able to contain detailed study sections in the form of sub-topics that are directly related to the research focus or categories of the research. Subtopics discussed or reviewed, are written in paragraphs rather than pointers, bulleting, or numbering.

Discussion

The findings suggest that Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School operates through relationships extending beyond its formal educational boundaries. Direct invitations, social media announcements, recurring gatherings, and practical community activities connect the institution to its surrounding social environment. This pattern supports an interpretation of the pesantren as a community-embedded educational institution rather than a socially isolated setting. The significance of this relationship lies in the form of participation described by the informants. Residents are not positioned exclusively as audiences who receive messages from religious authorities. They also participate in events, cooperate in activities, and contribute to the practical life surrounding the institution. Education, in this interpretation, takes place partly through the relationships between the pesantren and its community.

This reading is consistent with the understanding of education as rooted in social and cultural contexts presented in the original theoretical framework (Tilaar, 2004). It also

corresponds with accounts of pesantren that combine religious continuity with responsiveness to surrounding communities (Abdullah & Muawaroh, 2024). Nevertheless, the present findings support this interpretation within a particular institutional case and should not be generalized to all pesantren. The border setting provides the geographical and social context for these relationships. However, the evidence should not be extended into claims about cross-border cooperation with Malaysian institutions or communities because such relationships are not documented in the supplied interviews. The contribution demonstrated here concerns community relationships within the Entikong setting.

The inclusion of regional dances, traditional arts, and cultural festivals can be interpreted through Bourdieu's perspective on the relationship between social connections, cultural resources, and institutional recognition. In the present case, recurring activities bring participants into relationships that may provide access to information, cooperation, and institutional familiarity. Cultural practices also acquire visibility when they are recognized within pesantren events rather than remaining outside the institution's public life. Within this interpretation, the value of a cultural activity is not confined to the performance itself. Participation may connect students, teachers, residents, and organizers through preparation, attendance, and shared responsibilities. These connections provide the relational basis through which social resources may become available. The empirical evidence establishes opportunities for such relationships, although it does not directly measure the resources that participants obtain from them.

The activities can also be discussed as having a bridging function because they create potential points of contact between the pesantren and people outside its immediate membership. In the diverse social setting described in the study, regional dances and art festivals may offer a shared occasion for interaction without requiring participants to hold identical cultural or religious identities. Cultural participation becomes a possible meeting point between institutional identity and local diversity. However, the analysis should distinguish this bridging interpretation from a claim that Bourdieu's theory alone establishes the bonding–bridging distinction. In this study, Bourdieu provides the central lens for examining networks, cultural resources, recognition, and access, while "bridging" describes the outward-facing relationships suggested by the activities. A final manuscript should include an appropriate source for Bourdieu's social capital framework and a separate conceptual reference if bridging social capital is retained as a formal analytical category.

The findings also leave open the question of who benefits most from these relationships. The presence of a cultural festival does not establish equal representation or equal access to institutional resources. An analysis informed by Bourdieu should therefore examine not only whether networks exist but also who can enter them, whose cultural practices are recognized, and who holds authority over participation. The supplied interviews do not resolve these questions, making them important limitations rather than grounds for assuming universal inclusion. The connection with multicultural education is nevertheless relevant. Giving cultural expression a place within institutional activities may challenge a rigid separation between religious learning and local cultural life. This interpretation is compatible with the emphasis on recognizing diversity within education found in the original framework (Banks, 2006; Dharma et al., 2023). Yet recognition through performance should be distinguished from deeper curricular change. The present evidence is stronger for cultural participation in institutional activities than for a fully documented multicultural curriculum.

The use of moral texts, teacher examples, and community participation suggests that ethical formation is understood as a process distributed across different settings. Religious instruction introduces normative expectations, while exemplary conduct gives those expectations a visible form. Participation in community activities then provides situations in which students are expected to practice what they have learned.

This relationship helps explain why the role of the kiai is central in the informants' accounts. Educational authority is exercised not only through the explanation of religious material but also through the conduct that students observe. When leaders communicate respectfully and cooperate with residents, their behavior can provide an institutional reference for how social relationships should be maintained.

However, the reported misunderstandings surrounding some students show that institutional values are not reproduced automatically. Students may understand an ethical expectation in the classroom without applying it consistently in unfamiliar interactions. Conversely, residents may interpret student behavior through information or expectations that differ from those within the pesantren. The difficulty therefore concerns both ethical practice and communication across institutional boundaries.

This finding qualifies a purely celebratory interpretation of habituation. Repetition and example may support ethical development, but the available evidence does not demonstrate that all students internalize the same values to the same extent. The educational significance of participation lies in the opportunities it creates for practice, feedback, and correction, rather than in an assumed guarantee of tolerant behavior. The emphasis on opportunities for public communication and leadership is consistent with the original discussion of the role of kiai and teachers in developing socially responsible students (Rahman, 2022). Nevertheless, the present study does not provide direct student accounts or longitudinal evidence. Its conclusions concern the reported educational strategy and the expectations attached to it.

The findings can be connected to Counts' social reconstruction perspective because the institution's activities are directed toward social relationships beyond the classroom. Religious instruction is accompanied by community participation, cultural expression, and efforts to address misunderstanding. Education is therefore presented as relevant to the organization of shared life rather than solely to individual academic or religious achievement (Counts, 1932). From this perspective, the pesantren's contribution lies in creating settings where students encounter social responsibilities and where institutional resources are connected to community needs. Activities involving social service, local enterprises, and public participation indicate that the institution's role extends into practical cooperation. These practices are compatible with a reconstructive orientation, but they do not by themselves demonstrate structural social transformation.

The distinction is important because the original findings rely primarily on institutional and committee accounts. They do not show whether participants critically examine unequal access to resources, challenge exclusionary decision-making, or influence wider social structures. The evidence therefore supports the identification of reconstructive possibilities and practices, rather than a conclusion that social reconstruction has been completed. Freire's critical pedagogy also provides a useful interpretive connection when community engagement is understood as an opportunity for dialogue and reflection (Freire, 1970, 2018). However, dialogue requires more than attendance at an event. A stronger claim about critical consciousness would require evidence that students and residents examine social problems, question assumptions, and participate in decisions concerning their shared circumstances.

Accordingly, the present findings suggest an experiential basis for transformative education but do not establish a fully developed critical pedagogical process. The contribution is most defensibly described as connecting religious learning with opportunities for socially engaged practice. One of the most significant analytical findings is the reported use of negotiation and tabayyun when misunderstandings arise. In this case, tabayyun is not described only as an individual religious obligation concerning the verification of information. It is also presented by the informant as part of how the institution addresses tensions in its relationship with residents.

This allows tabayyun to be interpreted as a practical link between religious ethics and community conflict management. The religious principle provides a reason to avoid premature judgment, while negotiation provides a social setting in which different accounts can be discussed. Together, they suggest an approach that seeks clarification before a disagreement develops into a more entrenched conflict. The local dimension emerges from the setting in which clarification is practiced: ongoing relationships between a pesantren, its students, and surrounding residents. The parties are not strangers participating in an isolated exchange. Their relationships continue beyond the immediate disagreement, making the maintenance of communication part of the problem being addressed.

Nevertheless, the designation "local wisdom-based conflict resolution" requires careful qualification. The supplied interviews establish the use of negotiation and tabayyun, but they do not document specific customary procedures, the involvement of adat authorities, or a complete mediation process. It would therefore be more precise to describe the finding as a locally embedded, religiously grounded conflict-resolution practice. The stronger claim that it constitutes a distinct local wisdom-based model would require additional evidence about the local norms and actors shaping its operation.

Within these limits, the study's potential contribution lies in explaining how a religious verification principle is translated into the management of everyday institutional–community relationships in a border setting. This is an analytical contribution of the case, not a verified claim that such an approach has never been examined elsewhere. The reported reliance on clarification also directs attention to how conflict is defined. The issue described by Ustadz Husein Kailani concerns misunderstandings surrounding student conduct rather than an explicitly documented interethnic or interreligious confrontation. The analysis should preserve this distinction. Tabayyun is relevant to the management of everyday tensions, but the present evidence does not demonstrate its effectiveness in resolving large-scale communal conflict.

The inclusive narratives described by the informants connect religious identity with peaceful relationships across difference. References to *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, peaceful language, and rejection of extremism indicate that openness is framed as compatible with Islamic commitment. This interpretation supports the possibility of maintaining a distinct religious identity while participating in shared social activities. At the same time, Miftahul Munir's acknowledgment that openness varies according to leadership and institutional culture points to a question of sustainability. If inclusive practice depends heavily on the outlook of particular caregivers, its continuity may be vulnerable to changes in leadership or priorities. The interviews do not establish whether openness is secured through written policies, structured partnerships, or procedures for responding to exclusion.

The distinction between personal commitment and institutional arrangement is therefore important. Leadership can establish an inclusive direction, but sustaining it may require practices that remain understandable and accessible beyond individual relationships. This observation follows from the informant's qualification and should be treated as an implication rather than an existing feature of the institution. The original literature associates pesantren with multicultural learning, reconciliation, and cultural preservation (Rosmilawati et al., 2021; Zuhri, 2021; Sutomo et al., 2024). The present findings are consistent with aspects of that discussion, particularly community participation and dialogical responses to misunderstanding. However, they also reveal the need to assess the conditions under which openness is maintained, rather than treating inclusion as a permanent institutional attribute.

The involvement of residents in festivals, cleaning activities, and social service suggests a relationship involving practical cooperation. Such activities can be interpreted as opportunities for strengthening familiarity and shared responsibility. Support for local enterprises adds a possible material dimension to these relationships because participation may involve more than

symbolic recognition. However, the existence of an opportunity should not be confused with a demonstrated benefit. The interviews do not quantify enterprise income, document changes in residents' access to resources, or compare social relationships before and after participation. Economic and social contributions are therefore reported possibilities and perceptions rather than measured outcomes.

Mr. Aldi's assessment of more harmonious relationships and more polite behavior remains important as evidence of how a committee representative perceives the institution. Yet it cannot establish that these changes were caused exclusively by the pesantren. Other family, community, educational, and social influences are not examined in the supplied material. This distinction strengthens rather than weakens the analysis. It allows the study to recognize a positive community-linked assessment while maintaining an appropriate boundary between reported experience and causal explanation. The findings support a conclusion that the pesantren is perceived as contributing to social relationships, not that its overall impact has been conclusively measured.

The principal contribution of this case is the identification of a relationship among religious ethical education, cultural participation, community networks, and the management of misunderstanding. These dimensions are connected in practice rather than functioning as separate institutional activities. Teaching establishes expectations, cultural and social events provide meeting spaces, and negotiation offers a reported response when everyday relationships become strained. The study also highlights the importance of examining inclusion as an ongoing process. The presence of inclusive narratives and public activities does not eliminate misunderstandings or guarantee equal participation. Cross-cultural solidarity is better understood here as a relationship that requires maintenance through repeated interaction, responsible conduct, and opportunities for clarification.

Several limitations shape this interpretation. The supplied material draws on three informants with institutional or committee connections. It does not include direct accounts from students, independent residents, minority-group representatives, customary leaders, or external religious partners. Consequently, the perspectives of those who may experience participation differently remain insufficiently represented. The evidence also does not provide detailed observation of teaching, a documented curriculum analysis, a complete conflict-resolution case, or systematic participation data. These omissions limit conclusions about critical consciousness, cultural equality, bridging relationships across particular ethnic groups, and the effectiveness of tabayyun. English translations of interview statements should also be checked against the original transcripts to preserve their intended meaning. Within these boundaries, the findings support a contextual interpretation of Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School as an institution that seeks to connect Islamic education with cooperative community life. Its distinctive analytical value lies in the interaction between cultural activities, religiously informed ethical practice, and locally situated dialogue, while the broader extent and durability of these contributions remain matters for further investigation.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School not only functions as a religious teaching institution, but also as a strategic center for the formation of cross-cultural solidarity in border areas. Through inclusive Islamic values-based education, cooperation with various parties, and active involvement in society, pesantren play a role as agents of social transformation that create harmony between religious and cultural communities. This role can be seen in the creation of responsive learning spaces, a curriculum that emphasizes fairness and openness, and community activities that directly involve students. The internalization of the values of tolerance, peace, and justice is strengthened through the example of kiai and teachers,

who encourage the change of the mindset of students from an exclusive attitude to an inclusive attitude, so that they grow as agents of peace.

The Miftahul Hidayah Islamic Boarding School also faces challenges as well as opportunities in strengthening cross-cultural social networks. Cultural activities, cooperation with social, customary, and religious institutions make pesantren a meeting point for diversity, as well as strengthening social cohesion. These findings confirm that Islamic values can be a strong foundation for the formation of cross-cultural solidarity and social harmony in border areas.

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