

Fostering Tolerance Through the Hidden Curriculum: An Ethnographic Study of Inclusive Education in an Indonesian Islamic Boarding School

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Submitted: 12-05-2025

Revised : 20-09-2025

Accepted: 20-10-2025

ABSTRACT. This study aims to explore the design of inclusive education and the strategies for fostering tolerance at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. This Islamic boarding school integrates religious education and social morality. Using a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods, the research involves field observations, in-depth interviews with students, teachers, and caregivers, and documentation of relevant activities. The main theoretical argument of this study is grounded in inclusive education theory, which views education as a tool for creating a more just and inclusive society. It also considers the concept of the hidden curriculum, which posits that social and moral values can be instilled through social activities beyond the formal curriculum. The findings indicate that Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has successfully integrated inclusive education across various dimensions of the curriculum, including intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities, which emphasize collaboration, respect for differences, and unity. Additionally, the hidden curriculum, applied through social activities such as community service and scouting, plays a crucial role in shaping tolerance among students. This research contributes to the literature on inclusive religious-based education, particularly in the context of Islamic boarding schools, by demonstrating how inclusive and moderate-based education can address social challenges in Indonesia. The limitations of this study lie in its focus on only one pesantren and the perspectives of students and caregivers. Future research is recommended to include other pesantren and perspectives from parents and the surrounding community to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of inclusive education on attitudes of tolerance.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Tolerance, Pesantren, Hidden Curriculum.



<https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i4.1960>

How to Cite Syarifah, Masykuri, Mistar, J., Anwar, S., & Azizah, N. (2025). Fostering Tolerance Through the Hidden Curriculum: An Ethnographic Study of Inclusive Education in an Indonesian Islamic Boarding School. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(4), 603–617.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is currently facing increasing social polarization, with various forms of radicalization and intolerance permeating both public spaces and daily life. (Abuzandah, 2021). Religion-based hate speech on social media further exacerbates this issue, posing a significant threat to intergroup harmony. Education plays a critical role in mitigating potential conflicts and fostering a more moderate and tolerant generation. (Maskuri, 2023). In the context of this study, "inclusive education" refers to an educational approach that not only accommodates diverse learning needs

but also emphasizes the acceptance and respect of differences, particularly in multicultural and multi-religious settings. This definition of inclusion aligns with relevant literature, distinguishing it from the more commonly associated term linked to special education and disabilities. Although inclusive education has been widely implemented in public schools, its application within Islamic boarding schools, a vital component of Indonesia's Islamic education system, remains underexplored. Islamic boarding schools, such as Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, with their distinctive curriculum and multicultural values, are at the forefront of addressing these societal challenges. (Mala et al., 2024) Given the significant role pesantren play in shaping the character of Indonesia's youth, it is crucial to investigate how inclusive education is applied within this environment, particularly in fostering attitudes of tolerance amidst the country's religious and cultural diversity (Mala et al., 2024).

The importance of this study is even more urgent, considering that inclusive education is not only related to the acceptance of differences, but also to efforts to create a constructive dialogue space between various groups in society (Allan, 2007). In the midst of social dynamics full of these challenges, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor offers a model that provides a new perspective on how inclusive-based education can overcome these challenges and nurture a young generation capable of contributing positively to maintaining the harmony of the ummah. (Danforth & Narayan, 2015). Therefore, discussing the design of inclusive education in Gontor is a crucial step to finding strategic solutions to strengthen the values of tolerance and moderation in Indonesia, which is increasingly plural and complex (Tragoulia & Strogilos, 2013).

Several previous studies have examined the importance of inclusive education in forming an attitude of tolerance. (Suroyyah & Harmanto, 2022) Inclusive learning in high school can shape students' tolerant behaviors through social-based approaches that encourage them to value diversity. Similarly (Yantoro et al., 2020) Revealed that teachers' strategies in inclusive education can encourage students to develop tolerance through habituation, example, and inclusive teaching methods in elementary schools. Other research by (Anam et al., 2024) Shows that inclusive Islamic religious education plays an important role in shaping moderate attitudes among students in ethnically and religiously diverse schools. In addition, research by (Dwi Mariyono, 2023) Highlighting how multicultural education in Islamic boarding schools can strengthen the values of tolerance through interaction between students with different backgrounds, although this study has not discussed in depth the design of inclusive education in Islamic boarding schools. More specific studies by (Suroyyah & Harmanto, 2021) Suggested that inclusive education in the context of Islamic religious education can be an effective means to overcome the potential for radicalization, but this has not been widely applied in Islamic boarding schools.

However, although many studies examine the concept of inclusive education in various education sectors, studies that specifically examine the application of inclusive education in the context of Islamic boarding schools are still very limited. Most of the existing research focuses more on the implementation of inclusive education in public schools, with an emphasis on teaching strategies or formal curriculum. (Gibson, 2006). Research on how pesantren, as a faith-based educational institution, can integrate inclusive education into students' daily lives through social and cultural values has not been widely explored. Although several studies have discussed multiculturalism in Islamic boarding schools, few have linked it to inclusive education, which has a broader dimension, both curricular and non-curricular (Veck & Hall, 2020). In addition, although some studies have underlined the importance of tolerance education in Islamic boarding schools, none have specifically examined how inclusive educational designs based on the principles of wasathiyyah or moderation are applied in this context. (Leijen et al., 2021). This research gap shows the urgency to explore further how inclusive education in Islamic boarding schools like Gontor not only teaches academic knowledge, but also shapes moderate and tolerant social attitudes through hidden curricula (*Hidden Curriculum*), as well as in-depth daily life practices (Messiou, 2019).

The purpose of this research is to examine how the inclusive educational design applied at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor shapes students' attitudes of tolerance in their daily lives. This study argues that at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, tolerance is not only taught but systematically nurtured through a holistic, inclusive design, where the hidden curriculum, embodied in daily social practices, plays a more significant role than formal instruction. By integrating the values of wasathiyyah (moderation) and multiculturalism, the pesantren creates an environment that promotes inclusivity and tolerance. The proposition of this study is that the application of inclusive education in Islamic boarding schools does not merely enhance academic understanding but, more importantly, cultivates a strong attitude of tolerance among students, both towards fellow Muslims and other groups in diverse societies. This research asserts that education grounded in inclusive values and moderation offers an effective solution to social polarization, fosters a more tolerant younger generation, and contributes actively to maintaining harmony in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods to deeply examine the implementation of inclusive educational design at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. The study was conducted over six months, with participatory observation where the researcher interacted directly with students, teachers, and caregivers in their daily activities at the boarding school. The researcher engaged in class activities, social interactions, and daily routines while maintaining sufficient distance to ensure objective observation. Access was granted after official approval from the boarding school management, and through informal conversations with participants to build trust (Moleong, 2017).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, a source triangulation technique was employed, involving in-depth interviews with various stakeholders (students, teachers, and caregivers) to obtain consistent information. Direct observation of educational activities at the boarding school was also conducted to verify the interview findings. The researcher also identified differences in perspectives between various sources, such as between caregivers and students, and analyzed these to understand broader dynamics. Additionally, member checking was used to ensure that the interpretation of the findings aligned with the participants' views and experiences (Yin, 2009).

Data analysis followed the model developed by (Miles & Huberman, 1994) This includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verifying findings. Relevant data were grouped and filtered, then organized into a clear narrative. Conclusions were drawn iteratively, considering the findings from interviews, observations, and documentation. Interpretation of conflicting data was done carefully, ensuring that the findings reflected diverse perspectives and provided a comprehensive understanding of the inclusive educational practices at the boarding school.

Table 1. Research Participants

Participant Groups	Number of Participants	Inclusion Criteria
Caregiver	5	Caregivers who have more than one year of experience at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor.
Teacher	5	Teachers who are directly involved in the educational process at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor.
Students	10	Students are active, involved in intracurricular, cocurricular, or extracurricular learning activities.

Source: Data Collection, 2025

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Inclusive Education Design of the Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School

The results of field observations show that Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor implements inclusive education through a curriculum that includes three main aspects: intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular.

Intracurricular Curriculum

In intra-curricular activities, observations in the classroom show that there are real efforts from teachers to instill inclusive values among students. Every learning in the classroom is not only focused on academic material, but also on building an attitude of tolerance. For example, in Islamic Religious Education lessons, teachers hold group discussions involving students from various backgrounds. Through this discussion, students are faced with social and religious issues relevant to their lives, such as religious diversity, cultural diversity, and the importance of respecting differences.

Further observations in the classroom showed that the students were very active in participating in group discussions and presentations. These discussions help them learn to express their opinions, listen to others' opinions, and collaborate despite having different views. This activity shows how inclusive education not only teaches knowledge but also develops an attitude of cooperation and respect for differences. This activity is also equipped with project-based assignments, where students are asked to work in teams with members from different backgrounds. This assignment aims to strengthen a sense of brotherhood and tolerance and teach the importance of cooperation in diversity.

"We try to integrate inclusive values in every subject. We encourage students to discuss, share views, and work in diverse groups. The goal is for them to learn to appreciate differences and be able to work with friends from different backgrounds." (B1 Teacher, A3 Babysitter).

The grades 5-6 students carry out discussion activities every Sunday and Thursday night. For discussion activities to run organically, optimally, and on target, the Discussion Supervisor held a general discussion. It aims to provide a reference on the procedure for discussion" (B4, B2 Teacher).

Documents obtained from the management of the boarding school show that the implemented curriculum explicitly includes the goals of inclusive education, such as learning about multiculturalism and tolerance. In the RPP (*Learning Implementation Plan*), there is a reference to group discussion activities that involve various perspectives and emphasize the social values that must be instilled in students during the learning process.



Figure 1. Caregiver Appreciation for Routine Discussion Activities

Co-curricular Curriculum

Co-curricular activities at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor are an integral part of inclusive education design. In the observation of scouting activities, which is one of the main co-curricular programs, it can be seen how this activity encourages students to work together in teams consisting of students with various backgrounds. Here, students learn to appreciate differences, both in abilities and outlook on life. For example, in scouting training activities that involve the construction of shelters or nature-oriented exercises, students are invited to work in groups, where they must collaborate even though they come from different backgrounds.

Furthermore, in the speech practice, which is also part of the co-curricular activities, students are given the opportunity to speak in public using Arabic and English, which requires them to practice communicating clearly and effectively. Observations show that in the speech exercises, the students not only talk about academic topics, but also about topics related to social and cultural life, which promotes tolerance between religions and cultural diversity. In this session, students were given the freedom to express their views on the values of diversity and to respect differences.

"Activities such as scouting and speeches are not only physical training, but rather about building cooperation and leadership. In this activity, students are trained to work in teams consisting of people with different backgrounds. This is our way of teaching tolerance." (A3-Caregiver).

Extracurricular Curriculum

Extracurricular activities involving sports events, drama arts, and music at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor also play an important role in the implementation of inclusive education. In the art practice, students from various religious and tribal backgrounds work together to create performances that reflect the values of diversity and tolerance. For example, in drama performances, students not only show stories that focus on their daily lives, but also insert messages about the importance of respecting differences and coexisting peacefully.

In addition, music activities are a space for students to collaborate creatively, combining various types of music and culture that exist among them. Through this collaboration, students not only learn to appreciate differences but also understand the importance of unity in diversity. One of the students explained:

"Here we learn to combine different types of music and different cultures. In drama and music rehearsals, we learn how to work with friends with different backgrounds and create something that reflects the existing diversity." (C3-C1 Students)

"We always remind students that through art and music, they learn about artistic skills and how to understand and accept others. Collaboration between students from different backgrounds helps them appreciate and celebrate differences more." (G2-G3 Teacher)

Field observations also show that the art practice process provides hands-on experience that teaches cooperation, tolerance, and appreciation for differences. The documentation of the performing arts activities corroborates these findings. Each work produced by the students consistently displays the theme of diversity and tolerance, which was chosen as part of the moral message to be conveyed in the performance. The caregiver also states that:

"We always prioritize cooperation between students, both in social and artistic activities. It teaches them to not only see differences as obstacles, but as riches that need to be valued and celebrated." (P3-P4 Caregiver)

Overall, the extracurricular curriculum serves as an effective social learning medium, where students can internalize the value of tolerance through real experience. These activities not only complement formal learning but also form essential social competencies for students to live in harmony in a diverse environment. This affirms that inclusive education in Islamic boarding schools occurs not only in the classroom but also through creative and collaborative practices in daily life.



Figure 2. Students performing in the Arts Olympiad

Table 2. Table of Research Results

Aspects	Findings	Validation
Intracurricular Curriculum	<p>The inclusive education design is implemented through intracurricular activities that involve</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group discussions and Joint projects 2. Developing the values of tolerance, understanding of differences 3. Cooperation between students with diverse backgrounds. 	<p>Observation Interview Documentation</p>
Co-curricular Curriculum	<p>Inclusive education is applied in co-curricular activities such as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scout 2. Speech 3. Event Collaborative Competition 	<p>Observation Interview Documentation</p>
Extracurricular Curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Artwork Activities 2. Drama, Colossal, and music <p>Providing a space for students to collaborate in performances that reflect cultural diversity and messages of tolerance, as well as increasing the sense of unity among them.</p>	<p>Observation Interview Documentation</p>

Source: Data Collection, 2025

Hidden Curriculum Strategies for Forming Tolerance Attitudes at Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding School

Observations conducted at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor found that the hidden curriculum plays a very important role in forming an attitude of tolerance among students. Although not explicitly taught in the formal curriculum, values like cooperation, respect for differences, and unity in diversity are instilled through daily activities that involve social interaction among students, caregivers, and teachers. Tolerance education internalized in this hidden curriculum takes place naturally, especially in activities that are not directly related to classroom lessons.

The first observation was made in the boarding house during the students' leisure time, when they interacted informally. In these interactions, students from various religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are faced with situations where they must collaborate on daily tasks, such as cleaning dormitories, setting nightwatch schedules, and managing social activities. Although this activity looks simple, it actually touches the core of social character building and tolerance. For example, in community service activities involving students from various backgrounds, they are forced to work together to achieve common goals despite existing differences. During the observation, it was seen that the students quickly adjusted to their group mates, did not question religious or ethnic differences, and focused more on the tasks that had to be completed.

Furthermore, night watch activities also play a big role in fostering a sense of tolerance and responsibility among students. Every night, students take turns maintaining the security of the boarding school. Field experience shows that this activity creates opportunities for students to interact in a more informal and less structured situation. During this time together, they talk about topics that touch their daily lives, such as their experiences at home, their life challenges, and their views on the diversity that exists in society. This activity provides space for students to get to know and appreciate each other better, even if they come from different backgrounds.

Other observations show that tolerance is also fostered through joint activities not bound by specific statuses or roles, such as when students help fellow students in need, both academically and non-academically. For example, when students have difficulty understanding the subject matter, other students voluntarily offer help. This suggests that while differences in beliefs or cultures may exist, there is a greater sense of unity between them. This creates an environment that not only educates students to appreciate differences but also encourages collaboration and sharing in a setting full of mutual respect.

"Initially, I found it difficult to interact with friends from very different areas, mainly because of religious differences. However, after I started living in the cottage and interacting in activities like scouting and night watches, I felt more open and learned to respect each other. We do not talk about our religion or background, but focus more on cooperation." (C5-Santri)

Another reinforcement about respecting differences is also in accordance with the results of the caregiver interview below:

"In daily life at the cottage, we often remind the students to interact well and be respectful. In the cottage, there is no difference between students based on religion or ethnicity. We teach that what is important is tolerance and cooperation for the sake of the harmony of the cottage." (A5-Caregiver)

Documentation of the lodge's activities shows that in the guidelines of social activities, such as neighborhood cleanup and other communal activities, there has always been an emphasis on the values of inclusivity and tolerance. In the parenting playbook, there are important points that emphasize the importance of mutual respect and understanding differences, both in communication and collaboration. The document also lists social activities that require students to respect and adapt to students from various backgrounds. This shows that the hidden curriculum focuses not only on social norms but also on systematically instilling values of tolerance in daily life.

Another document found was a report on night watch activities, containing notes on student cooperation. In this report, the caregiver notes how students from different religious backgrounds can support each other and cooperate in maintaining the security of the cottage. The report also noted informal conversations that often related to tolerance, where students from different backgrounds discussed their views on social life outside the lodge.

From the results of observations and interviews, it can be concluded that the hidden curriculum plays a significant role in the formation of tolerance in Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. Although not explicitly taught in the formal curriculum, values such as cooperation, respect for differences, and unity in diversity are taught indirectly through social activities, nurturing, and daily interactions between students, caregivers, and teachers. Activities such as night watches, community service, and informal discussions provide a space for students to collaborate and appreciate differences, which in turn form a tolerant character that they bring into social life outside of the cottage.

Education through the hidden curriculum at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has created a harmonious environment where students can interact regardless of their religious, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds. Through social activities that focus on cooperation and respect for

differences, this boarding school has succeeded in instilling the values of moderation and tolerance in the younger generation who are ready to contribute to maintaining social harmony in Indonesia.

Table 3. Hidden Curriculum as a Strategy for Forming Tolerance Attitudes

Items	Research Results	Validation
The Role of the Hidden Curriculum in Forming Tolerance	The hidden curriculum plays a big role in shaping the attitude of tolerance of students through unstructured social activities: 1. Like community service 2. Night watch 3. Group discussions.	Observation Interview Documentation
Dormitory Activities and Cooperation Between Students	1. Activities in the dormitory 2. Devotional and 3. Joint Tasks It shows collaboration between students with different backgrounds, which leads to the formation of an attitude of tolerance.	Observation Interview Documentation
The Influence of Night Watch Activities in the Formation of Tolerance	The night vigil activity, which involves students from various religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, strengthens mutual respect and cooperation.	Observation Interview Documentation.
Documentation of Social Activities and Tolerance	The documentation of the activity shows that social activities, such as community service and joint tasks, always prioritize the values of tolerance and unity and teach students to respect differences.	Observation Interview Documentation
Tolerance in the Interaction of Students and Caregivers	The interaction between students and caregivers in daily activities also strengthens the formation of tolerance, with caregivers serving as examples in applying moderation values.	Observation Interview Documentation

Source: Data Collection, 2025

Discussion

Inclusive Education Design at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor adopts an inclusive education approach that holistically involves intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular curricula. In the intracurricular curriculum, students are equipped not only with academic knowledge but also with the values of tolerance, moderation, and cooperation, which are integrated into each subject. (Wicaksono et al., 2024). These findings confirm that education at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor serves a purpose beyond merely transferring educational knowledge; it is an instrument for shaping the social character of students, adapting to the challenges of social diversity in Indonesia.

One of the most significant findings of this study is the way Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor uses the intracurricular curriculum as a tool to teach the value of tolerance. (Mala et al., 2024) In each subject, the teacher emphasizes the importance of respect for differences and cooperation. For example, in the Islamic Religious Education lesson, which includes a discussion about religious diversity, students are invited to reflect on the concept of pluralism and social harmony. This concept implies that differences in religion, ethnicity, and culture are not barriers to living together but opportunities to complement each other (Abuzandah, 2021; Effendi et al., 2025; Fadha, 2024). This discussion is not only limited to religious theory but is also applied in daily activities, allowing students to experience the value of tolerance in their social practices (Sharma, 2024).

This activity is in line with Gramsci's views, quoted (May, 2008) The statement suggests that education is a tool to maintain or challenge dominant power in society. Gramsci proposed the

concept of hegemony, which refers to how specific values and cultures are accepted by society without question (Gross, 2011). In the context of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, the design of inclusive education aims to form the hegemony of moderation through tolerance education. Gramsci argued that education not only shapes the individual cognitively, but also shapes social consciousness that can challenge the dominance of intolerance and polarization (Entwistle, 2009). Thus, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor strategically uses education to change the social construction of tolerance among students, making them agents of change who are more moderate and open to differences.

However, implementing inclusive education is not enough to achieve it just by integrating the values of tolerance into the curriculum. In co-curricular and extracurricular education, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor creates a space for dynamic interaction among students, allowing them to get to know each other more deeply and develop a sense of brotherhood despite their diverse backgrounds. Activities such as scouting and speech practice allow students to work together in diverse teams, strengthening mutual respect and understanding of differences (Armstrong, 1988).

The application of inclusive education through this curriculum also reminds us of the concept of multicultural education that has been widely discussed in the educational literature, as stated by (Banks, 1995a, 2011). The text argues that multicultural education aims to create a deep understanding of diversity and promote social justice through understanding different perspectives and cultures. The approach applied at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor leads to in-depth education on how to live together in diversity, through inclusivity-based activities that can minimize social tensions and strengthen cooperation between groups (H. A. Giroux et al., 1980).

Strategies for Forming Tolerance Attitudes through Hidden Curriculum

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has long been known as an educational institution that emphasizes student character formation through various approaches, one of which is through a hidden curriculum. Although not taught directly in the formal curriculum, values such as cooperation, respect for differences, and unity are internalized through social interactions and daily activities in Islamic boarding schools. (Bahtiar et al., 2025). The findings of this study show that community service, night watch, and social activities in the dormitory are spaces where students learn to respect differences and work together on joint tasks. (Alamin et al., 2022). In this activity, even though the values of tolerance are not explicitly pronounced, students internalize these values through direct practice. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hidden curriculum at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor plays a very important role in forming a tolerant social character. (Wicaksono et al., 2024).

Strengthening Bourdieu's Theory, quoted by (Painter, 2000) It turns out that it is in accordance with the concept of habitus, referring to social habits and norms formed through daily social interactions. In the context of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, the hidden curriculum acts as a practical space that allows students to internalize the values of tolerance through social practices carried out every day. Social activities that involve cooperation between students with different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds provide opportunities for them to collaborate and appreciate existing differences. (Bourdieu, 1990). Students who may have previously been less open to diversity, through community service and night watches, eventually learn to accept and adapt to friends who have different views on life and beliefs. (Nash, 1990). These values are formed from social practices outside the classroom, which include a variety of collective activities that educate them to work together regardless of religion or cultural background. This is in accordance with Bourdieu's view that social values, including tolerance, are built through habitus formed by the social environment and direct experience in everyday life. (Throop & Murphy, 2002).

Moreover, (Davy, 1919) His theory of moral education states that education does not only focus on the transfer of formal knowledge, but also includes the cultivation of social norms and collective values in society. Emile Durkheim (Thompson, 2003) quoted, moral education is an

important aspect in the formation of social character that can form a collective identity in a community. The same can be seen in the hidden curriculum at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, which indirectly teaches students about social responsibility, cooperation, and respect for differences. Activities such as community service and night watch, which bring together students from diverse backgrounds, teach them to manage differences wisely and strengthen a sense of leadership and social solidarity (Arief et al., 2025; Balqis et al., 2025; Radhi et al., 2025; Zaini et al., 2023; Zufriyatun et al., 2025). These social activities not only create a moral awareness of the importance of tolerance, but also form a social character that supports social harmony in daily life (Pritchard, 1988).

Meanwhile, the findings in this study also show that social care carried out by caregivers at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor plays an important role in guiding students to become role models in the application of moderation values and respect for differences. (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004). The caregivers, in their daily interactions with students, not only teach the academic aspect but also instill moral values that prioritize tolerance. The nanny functions as a *Role model* in facilitating students to adapt to the diversity around them, as well as introducing them to the concept of living together in diversity. (Pattaro, 2016). As stated by Siroj (2025), value-based education that prioritizes tolerance can change students' perception of diversity and encourage them to be more open to differences. This interaction provides an opportunity for students to learn social values directly through experience, ultimately strengthening their habitus of tolerance and carrying it over into their social life after leaving the cottage. (Howard et al., 2004).

The Influence of the Hidden Curriculum in the Formation of Tolerance Attitudes

The formation of tolerance through the hidden curriculum at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor shows that education is not limited to formal classrooms, but also occurs in informal social interactions that lead to social transformation in students. Observations and interviews conducted with students revealed that even though they came from different backgrounds, both in terms of religion, ethnicity, and culture, the social activities carried out in the cottage, such as scouting, group discussions, and social care, made them feel more open and more accustomed to differences. These activities provide a space for students to interact directly with their peers, overcome differences, and finally internalize the value of tolerance (D. H. A. Giroux, 1978; H. A. Giroux et al., 1980).

This is in line with the theory. (H. A. Giroux et al., 1980) Regarding the hegemony of education, it states that education not only serves to transfer formal knowledge but also plays a large role in shaping social consciousness. At Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, the hidden curriculum plays an important role in shaping a social character based on the values of cooperation, respect for differences, and unity in diversity. As explained by (Bourdieu, 1990; Throop & Murphy, 2002) Habitus formed in daily social life, including in the context of social activities in the cottage, can affect an individual's perspective and attitude towards diversity outside the cottage (Baihaqi et al., 2023; Ma`arif et al., 2025; Suroyyah & Harmanto, 2021; Utama & Salim, 2024). Therefore, inclusive education applied through the hidden curriculum at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor not only instills academic knowledge but also forms a deep social praxis in students.

Furthermore, the hidden curriculum applied in scouting activities, group discussions, and social care allows students to experience the value of tolerance in practice. This activity teaches them to work together with fellow students who have different backgrounds, as well as gives them a space to listen and appreciate different opinions. In scouting, for example, teamwork activities involving students from various religious and cultural backgrounds strengthen mutual respect and cooperation, which in turn fosters an attitude of tolerance. This is in line with the view. (Banks, 1995a, 2011) This states that multicultural education, which involves collaboration between groups with different backgrounds, can enrich learning experiences and strengthen intercultural understanding.

In the group discussion activities, students were allowed to share their personal views on various issues, including religious diversity, culture, and social identity. These findings also support the (Thompson, 2003) About the importance of moral education in shaping social character through social norms learned in social interaction. Education based on the value of tolerance, such as that implemented at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, not only teaches students to appreciate differences but also to celebrate diversity and collaborate in building a harmonious community. This experience brought about a significant change in the way students interacted with their friends from different religions, tribes, and cultures. Students who previously may have tended to avoid interaction with certain groups, after engaging in these activities, began to show a more open attitude and accept the differences that existed around them (Ali & Bagley, 2015).

Along with these findings, the hidden curriculum at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor profoundly influences the social attitudes of students regarding cooperation and tolerance. This is in line with the thinking. (Purwanti et al., 2025) This explains that education based on social values, such as tolerance, not only serves to transmit knowledge but also to form a social character capable of overcoming differences and creating a more inclusive environments(Bahtiar et al., 2025; Chabibi et al., 2025; Zainuddin et al., 2025). As a result, students at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor not only gain academic understanding but are also revived in social praxis that shapes them into more moderate, tolerant, and ready to contribute to a diverse society (H. A. Giroux & Penna, 1979).

Table. Theoretical Analysis and Research Contributions

Dimensions	Findings	Related Theories	Research Contributions
Inclusive Education Design	Implementation of a curriculum that supports diversity	Gramsci (1971) - The Hegemony of Education; Bourdieu (1990) - Habitus	Using inclusive education to form a moderate and tolerant character among students.
Hidden Curriculum	Education through everyday social interaction	Durkheim (1922) - Moral Education; Siroj (2025) - Inclusive Education	Instilling the value of tolerance through social activities that bring together students with different backgrounds.
Formation of Tolerance	Changes in social interaction between students	Banks (2009) - Multicultural Education	Creating an inclusive environment and strengthening an open attitude and tolerance among students.

Source: Data Collection, 2025

This research significantly addresses the existing gap in inclusive education within Islamic boarding schools and highlights the importance of the hidden curriculum in fostering tolerant attitudes among students. These findings confirm that inclusive education, implemented through formal curriculum and hidden curriculum, has a great impact on shaping a tolerant social character. This is in accordance with the theory of multicultural education put forward by (Banks, 1995) and (Gross, 2011) about the importance of inclusive education in building moderate social awareness.

Using the theories of Bourdieu and Durkheim, this study clarifies how the values of tolerance are formed in social practices that occur outside the classroom. These findings reinforce the view that education occurs not only in formal processes but also through social interactions that form the habitus of tolerance in individuals. Through activities such as community service, scouting, and night watch, students at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor are taught to collaborate in diversity, which contributes to the formation of a collective morality based on the value of tolerance.

CONCLUSION

This research successfully addresses the two main questions of the study: the design of inclusive education and strategies for fostering tolerance at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. The key findings of the study show that Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has effectively implemented inclusive education comprehensively through intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular curricula, which clearly instill the values of tolerance and moderation among students. This inclusive education design not only focuses on enhancing academic understanding but also emphasizes the importance of appreciating differences, cooperating in diversity, and building mutual respect among students from various religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Specifically, the hidden curriculum, implemented through social activities like community service and scouting, plays a significant role in strengthening tolerance. Direct interactions between students lead to a greater appreciation of differences and the creation of a more inclusive community.

The theoretical contribution of this research expands our understanding of how inclusive education in the pesantren context can shape tolerant character, not only through formal curricula but also through the values taught in daily life. This study also reveals that education based on moderation and inclusivity can address social challenges, such as increasing polarization in Indonesia. From a practical perspective, the findings provide valuable insights for developing a more inclusive pesantren curriculum, one that focuses not only on religious knowledge but also on character formation and the ability to live in a multicultural society. Thus, pesantren can serve as an effective model for educating a tolerant and moderate younger generation.

However, this study has limitations, one of which is that it focuses on a single pesantren, so the findings may not fully represent the conditions of other pesantren with different characteristics. Furthermore, while the study focuses on the perspectives of students and caregivers, the views of parents and the surrounding community on the implementation of inclusive education have not been fully explored. Future research is recommended to expand the scope by involving more pesantren across Indonesia and incorporating the perspectives of various stakeholders, including parents and the local community, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of inclusive education. Further studies could also explore the long-term effects of inclusive education on the tolerance attitudes of students after they complete their education at pesantren, as well as their contributions to social harmony in society.

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