

# The Role of Cross-Cultural Counseling to Increase Tolerance in Islamic Boarding Schools (Pesantren)

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## ABSTRACT

This article is a literature study. The purpose of this article is to find out about cross-cultural counseling to increase tolerance in Islamic boarding schools. Indonesia is a country full of cultural diversity. Each region's language, food, and customs have their characteristics. This also happens in the pesantren. Each pesantren environment also has its characteristics. Each student from a different region brings the culture of each region. This causes social conflict between one another. Tolerance is an important value that presents itself as an individual attitude and contributes to peace and order. Tolerance can prevent conflicts within the group. Schools based on pesantren have a role in developing the character of tolerance to students. A counselor needs to have the ability to be sensitive to cultural differences. There needs to be an understanding of the cultural diversity that exists in a school based on pesantren. With an understanding of cultural differences, counselors can understand cultural biases that occur between one student and another. The cultural bias that causes conflict in the school based on the pesantren environment will also be minimized and can be an alternative to conflict prevention. Cross-cultural counseling has the function of trying to understand humans thoroughly in their cultural context through an interpretative approach. The psychological function possessed by culture allows a study to understand a person's behavior through the expected social roles, norms, and regulations that apply in their environment. The existence of two-way communication in cross-cultural counseling provides students with an understanding of the values and norms contained in each culture. With cross-cultural counseling, it is hoped that it will be able to minimize cultural bias and create tolerance in a school based on pesantren.

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## **Introduction**

Schools based on pesantren are schools that provide not only general education but also religious (Zamroni, 2005). Pesantren is an educational institution that has no distance from the community and is a vehicle for spiritual struggle, as well as a medium for cultural recognition that provides space for freedom to associate between the cultural dimension and the normative dimension of religion. The purpose of the school based on pesantren is to teach and implement the religious values contained in the Qur'an and Al-Hadish. Peraturan Menteri Agama Number 13, 2014 concerning Islamic Religious Education mentions that the implementation of Islamic boarding school education as part of Islamic religious education aims to: (a) instill the student's faith and devotion to Allah SWT, (b) develop abilities, knowledge, and skills. attitudes and skills of students to become experts in Islamic religious studies and (c) develop personal morals of *al-karimah* for students who have individual and social piety by upholding the spirit of sincerity, simplicity, independence, and brotherhood among Muslims (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*), humble (*tawadhu'*), tolerant (*tasamuh*), balance (*tawazun*), moderate (*tawasuth*), exemplary (*uswah*), healthy lifestyle, and love for the nationality (Agama, 2014). Character education taught in Islamic boarding schools is more focused on instilling a religious spirit, morality, discipline, simplicity, respect for older people, and providing an understanding of the meaning of life.

In the pesantren environment, many students come from different regional backgrounds. They bring the culture from their home region is still strong in each student. Students who have different cultural backgrounds and live in the same place and for a long time of course still experience cultural differences in terms of interacting and when communicating with each other. Prayitno & Amti (Bashori, 2003) explain that in the life of a group of people with a fairly large number who live in a fairly large area, it is almost certain that there are differences in the socio-cultural elements that characterize their lives. In Islamic boarding schools students live in a unique community with kyai, ustadz, santri, and boarding school administrators who are based on Islamic religious values complete with their norms and habits that are not infrequently different from the general public who surround them. With their own culture, like it or not, every new or old student must make adjustments to the existing culture (Bashori, 2003). Adjustment to existing regulations, points of view, behavior, habits, and some things that belong to the culture there. Spending time with various activities, both religious and academic learning processes for 24 hours in the same place and with the same people. This is a challenge for the students. Even though roommates, religious

learning classes (Diniyah), and academic learning classes have different compositions of students, they still involve the same people. Interactions carried out by students in pesantren-based schools even though it has been going on for a long time, also cause friction due to existing cultural differences. These frictions can lead to social conflict.

Differences in cultural understanding between one student and another will lead to stereotypes in groups (Fadeli, 2018). The differences that arise will also give rise to social prejudice. If prejudice arises, it will lead to discrimination in groups. This of course will also impact the distribution of social groups and bring out the majority and minority groups of their cultures. The group that has stereotypes leads to intolerance from one group to another. Intolerance is formed as a result of a misunderstanding of information and news circulating in the community (Izzamillati, 2021). The higher a person's social prejudice, the lower their tolerance (Fadeli, 2018). Any information circulating in the community is sometimes not reality and causes stereotypes in a group. This stereotype creates cultural biases and a lack of tolerance between one group and another.

Tolerance means self-control, patience, respect for others with different opinions, wide heart, and tolerance for others with different perspectives or religions (Nuh, 1993). Tolerance leads to open behaviors and willingness to admit differences in society like skin color, traditions, cultures, language, and religions (Salman, 2017). Tolerance is an attitude of respecting, allowing, and allowing views, opinions, beliefs, and behavior (Sulistia, 2020). In essence, tolerance is an attitude of respect, and control within humans to be able to respect opinions, beliefs, and behavior in society. Tolerance in the Islamic boarding school environment can be realized in the form of openness to multiculturalism. Where the model of tolerance applied in education is aware of differences, inclusive, not rigid, friendly and moderate, and full of multicultural values

In developing eras, counseling services are required to adapt to the needs, and desires of the counselee, and adjust the lives of the surrounding community. Clients come with a variety of cultural experiences through race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, language, and spirituality. Cross-cultural counseling or what can also be called multicultural counseling is a form of counseling to be able to understand clients with different characteristic backgrounds (Elizar, 2018). One of the aims of cross-cultural counseling is to help clients live together in a multicultural society and provide clients with an understanding of the importance of cultural values as considerations in making better life choices (Nuzliah, 2016).

Counseling in the current era is expected to be able to pay attention to the influence of culture on counseling itself. Cross-cultural counseling itself views all counselees as unique and have their own characteristics. Counselors who do cross-cultural counseling can accept counselees with different backgrounds and distance themselves from the cultural biases that arise. Therefore, this study aims to determine the extent of the role of cross-cultural counseling to increase tolerance in a pesantren-based environment.

## **Methods**

The research method uses the literature study method. The author looks for a lot of reading books literature, journals, and sources related to the research to be carried out. Literature studies also study various reference books from previous similar research results to get a theoretical basis for the problem to be studied. Literature study is an important step where after a researcher determines the research topic, the next step is to conduct a study related to theories related to the research topic (Nazir, 2005). In the search for theory, the researcher will collect as much information as possible from the relevant literature. Library sources can be obtained from: books, journals, magazines, research results (theses and dissertations), and other appropriate sources.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **1. Cross-cultural Counseling**

Counseling is an activity of advising with or in the form of suggestions and suggestions in the form of conversation or communication between the counselor and the counselee/client, where counseling comes from the client due to ignorance or lack of knowledge so that he asks for help from the counselor to guide with psychological methods in the following efforts to develop strong personality qualities, develop mental health qualities, develop more effective behaviors in individuals and their environment, cope with life problems and live independently (Bakran; 2001: 128). Counseling is a two-way communication process between the counselee and the counselor, where the role of the counselor is to help the counselee be able to develop himself, discover his potential, and find problem-solving effectively so that the counselee can become a better person.

Cross-cultural or multicultural counseling is a counseling process that involves counselors and clients of different cultures, so counselors are required to have cultural sensitivity, understand and be able to appreciate cultural diversity, and facilitate attention to individual differences (Masturin, 2017). Cross-cultural counseling is a counseling

process between the counselor and the counselee, where the counselor accepts the counselee as a complete and unique person. The counselor leaves what is called the background stereotype brought by the counselee. For the counselor to truly understand the client, he must recognize that the client is a very complex and diverse individual. Therefore, combining cultural factors and diversity as part of understanding is very essential.

Counseling services become more optimal if multicultural competence and understanding of one's own psychophysical attributes and the counselee's psychophysical attributes brought in counseling services are owned by the counselor, so that in-depth understanding and appreciation of cultural identity can be used as a bridge that connects the gap between the counselor's psychophysical attributes and the counselee's psychophysical attributes and can realize effective counseling services (Sulistiana, 2017). Supridi (Nugraha, 2012) argues that to have multicultural sensitivity, counselors are required to have a rich understanding of various cultures outside their own culture, especially with regard to the counselee's cultural background.

In the implementation of cross-cultural counseling, there is no culture and race that is superior, all cultures and races are look the same. The individual character is affected by the environmental conditions of the community in which the individual interacts. The cultural and religious aspects of the counselor and counselee in this case also influence understanding and meaning in the communication process in counseling. Counselors should capture information carefully by taking into account cultural and religious backgrounds proportionally, process information clearly, and provide clear and appropriate feedback.

## **2. Tolerance in School Based On Pesantren**

Tolerance is an attitude / character of tolerance in the form of respecting and allowing an opinion, view, belief or others that are different from one's own stance (Poerwadarminto, 2016). Tolerance comes from the latin, namely tolerant, which means leniency, meekness, lightness, and patience. From this, it can be understood that tolerance is an attitude to give full rights to others to express their opinions, even if their opinions are wrong and different. UNESCO (Hanifah, 2010) defines tolerance as an attitude of mutual respect, mutual acceptance, mutual respect in the middle of cultural diversity, freedom of expression, and human character for assimilation. Toleration (Sari, 2016) is a form of accommodation without formal approval. It can be concluded that tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect, appreciation, and acceptance of a person to express himself in a

society with various cultures. Tolerance contains several elements, namely respecting the rights of others, respecting the beliefs of others, understanding each other, respecting the freedom of others, and not imposing their will.

Tolerance has the intention to allow the formation of a system that guarantees the security of personal, property and minority elements in society by respecting their religion, morality and institutions and respecting the opinions of others and the differences that exist in their environment without having to disagree with them. Each other because only because of their differences. In Islamic boarding schools, tolerance can be realized by forgiving one another, no judgment on certain groups of different cultures, and mutual acceptance of criticism and suggestions given by others. With an attitude of tolerance, unity can be realized together.

There are several principles taught in Islamic boarding schools, namely the principle of worship, the principle of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, the principle of glorifying knowledge, the principle of practice, the principle of parent-child relations, the principle of relay, collectivity, the principle of independence, and the principle of simplicity (Hakim, 2015: 32). The principle of worship views that all human activities always directed on achieving the value of worship, and expecting the pleasure of Allah. The principle of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar is the principle to always do good and keep away from evil. The principle of glorifying knowledge is the principle that seeking knowledge is for the happiness of the world and the hereafter and not just for thinking. The principle of experience is the principle where the importance of self-actualization so that individuals are also useful for others. The principle of parents and children is the principle that teachers in Islamic boarding schools are also parents, not only teachers who teach knowledge and work in schools. The relay principle is the principle that every job is not only borne by the leader of the pesantren but there is also the regeneration of senior students. The principle of collectivity is the principle that every student prioritizes the interests of others over their interests. The principle of independence is the principle where students can choose and filter every positive and negative thing in the middle of diversity. The principle of simplicity is that students hope that they do not apply excessively and act appropriately, in the sense of not being greedy.

Some of these principles relate to the attitude of tolerance taught in school based on pesantren. Every santri or student who is in a boarding school in the middle of cultural diversity is not selfish in prioritizing his opinions or understandings and principles. From

the differences in principles and beliefs of the culture that students bring to the pesantren environment, they can be mutually accepted. If there are differences of opinion within the pesantren environment, the tolerance shown is being able to forgive each other and accept these differences as a characteristic or uniqueness of each other. Thus all students can accept themselves and others, besides that all students are able to actualize themselves comfortably in the pesantren environment even though there is cultural diversity in the pesantren.

### **3. The Role of Cross-Cultural Counseling to Increase Tolerance**

Multicultural education should be part of the educational program for counselors. Given today's forms of discrimination still occur. Therefore, counselors need to improve concepts, tests, methods, results to create a good culture without discrimination. In the counseling process, there are already multicultural elements, for example the beliefs or culture of the counselor with different beliefs or culture of the counselee. Of course, counselors need to bridge these differences.

Cross-cultural counseling has an important role for students in defending themselves from cultural and religious understandings that are intolerant of the plurality of (Diana, 2022). Where Islamic boarding schools which have diversity within them can also give rise to conflict, the role of guidance and counseling teachers is also influential in creating an environment that is tolerant of diversity. Cross-cultural counseling plays a very important role in schools because schools are an important embryo in giving birth to a generation that aspires to tolerance (Diana, 2022). Cross-cultural counseling provides an understanding of tolerance by discussing material related to tolerance issues, providing guidance to students to always maintain unity and unity between religious communities, and always implementing good relationships with other people who have differences. In cross-cultural counseling, counselors can also be an example for students to apply an attitude of mutual respect and respect with fellow teachers and with students who have cultural differences.

During the multi-cultural insight counseling process, the counselor and client will each use their own culture as an initial investment for solving problems (Rahmawati, 2020). Furthermore, the counselor and client will increase this investment through gaining experience in the group process and maturing with each other by exchanging cultural awareness, all of which aims to solve problems and develop the potential of group members. Multicultural assistance or intervention in counseling is assistance that is based

on individual values/beliefs, morals, attitudes, and behavior as a reflection of society and is not based solely on theory with the assumption that the same therapeutic approach can be effectively applied to all clients, from various cultures.

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The counseling process carried out between the counselor and the counselee is expected to be able to bring a new understanding, namely that diversity is not the main factor in problems that always occur. But how can a person adapt and be able to accept the diversity in the environment where he lives. Cross-cultural counseling where cultural biases in it must be removed makes a person learn to accept one another in diversity. The ability of a counselor to be able to translate diversity as a constructive attitude is needed. With an understanding of this difference, trust and mutual respect will be established between fellow students. Thus tolerance in a pesantren environment where there is diversity can work well.

## **Conclusion**

Multicultural education should be part of the educational program for counselors. Given today's forms of discrimination still occur. Therefore, counselors need to improve concepts, tests, methods, and results to create a good culture without discrimination. In the counseling process, there are already multicultural elements, for example, the beliefs or culture of the counselor with different beliefs or culture of the counselee. Of course, counselors need to bridge these differences.

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