

The Relevance of Multicultural Islamic Religious Education with the Culture of Siangga, Sikamali and Siangkaran: Ethnographic Study in Tana Toraja

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relevance of multicultural Islamic Religious Education values within the local cultures of Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran in Tana Toraja. It focuses on three key questions: the conceptualization of Islamic education values in these local traditions, the process of integrating multicultural Islamic values through them, and the outcomes of this integration in social life. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method with an ethnographic approach to obtain in-depth and credible data. Data were collected through observation, structured and semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing as proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The findings indicate that Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran serve as essential cultural foundations for building social harmony, solidarity, and moral character. Siangga promotes mutual cooperation and togetherness, Sikamali emphasizes empathy, politeness, and collective moral awareness, while Siangkaran highlights sincerity and selfless social concern. These values strongly align with Islamic principles such as *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), *rahmah* (compassion), *haya'* (moral modesty), and *ikhlas* (sincerity). Their integration into contextual and collaborative Islamic education reinforces tolerance, respect for diversity, and multicultural awareness.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tana Toraja is one of the regions in Indonesia that is famous for its unique culture. Located in South Sulawesi Province, the Toraja people have a rich and diverse value system and traditions, including in religious and educational aspects. The culture of Tana Toraja is strongly influenced by the traditional beliefs and traditions of the ancestors. Traditional ceremonies, kinship systems, and traditional religious rituals play an important role in people's daily lives. The Tana Toraja community is one of the most iconic areas with its culture and very diverse regional crafts that have been inherited to this day. (Evitasari et al., 2024) Toraja very much uphold their beliefs and customs. This makes Tana Toraja one of the world cultural heritage sites registered with the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO). However, along with the development of Islam in this region, there are several cultures that are still preserved by the community, including the *Siangga* culture (mutual respect), *Sikamali* (mutual longing), and *Siangkaran* (helping each other). This shows that the culture of *Siangga*, *Sikamali* and *Siangkaran* can be a strength of the community in terms of strengthening the bond of togetherness. It can be understood that the culture of *Siangga*, *Sikamali* and *Siangkaran* itself consists of three syllables, namely, *Siangga* (mutual respect), *Sikamali* (mutual longing), and *Siangkaran* (helping each other).

The Tana Toraja community is a multicultural society from religious, ethnic and other aspects. The diversity of the people of Tana Toraja is capital in building and developing its society to live tolerantly and harmoniously. Harmony in diversity of the Tana Toraja community is very interesting to be studied as a formula to foster a sense of togetherness and national unity formulated as the foundation of multicultural Islamic Education. (Tang & Rahim, 2019) The *culture of Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran* is an important foundation in the social and spiritual structure of the Tana Toraja community. These three not only become cultural identities, but also serve as life guidelines that teach universal goodness such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and respect for ancestors and nature.

Culture is known as the rule of law or custom which in fiqh terms is called with 'urf. 'Urf (عرف) is a term in Arabic that means custom, custom or tradition. In the context of Islamic law, 'urf refers to certain practices, traditions, or customs of a particular society that are considered good and do not contradict the basic principles of sharia. In general, 'urf is recognized in Islamic law as a secondary source of law, after the Qur'an, Hadith, Ijma', and Qiyas. Broadly speaking, 'urf is divided into two categories, including: 'Urf Saheeh (Sahih Custom) custom that does not contradict Islamic law, this custom can be used as one of the bases in the determination of Islamic law. 'Urf Fasid (Corrupted Customs) is a custom that is contrary to the teachings of Islamic law, so it cannot be used as a legal basis. (Janah, 2023) It is the same with the *Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran cultures* applied by the people of Tana Toraja, especially in Mengkendek District which is one of the cultures or customs that has been passed down from generation to generation and is still practiced by the community today.

The culture of *Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran* is a culture that does not contradict Islamic law and actually contains a useful inner meaning. This discussion talks about the values that are the basis of human life, including moral, aesthetic, and social values. Axiology explains how humans determine what is important and how those values are applied in different aspects of life. This research is important to be carried out as an effort to Relevance of Multicultural Islamic Religious Education with *Siangga, Sikamali and Siangkaran Culture* (Ethnographic Studies in Tana Toraja). The findings of this study are expected to identify the concept of multicultural Islamic education values that are relevant to the *Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran cultures*, Analyze how the process of relevance of multicultural Islamic education values in culture

2. METHODS

The type of research used in this study is in the form of qualitative research because the researcher will analyze and describe the relevance of multicultural Islamic education in the *culture of "Siangga, Sikamali and Siangkaran"* Ethnographic studies in Tana Toraja. Qualitative research requires a deep and thorough understanding of the object to be studied. The purpose is to find answers to research problems, to get data that are then analyzed and conclusions in certain situations and conditions. Qualitative research can be interpreted as research that produces descriptive data about spoken and written words, and observable behavior from the people being studied. (Sutinah, 2007) Based on the explanation from Sugiono, which states that qualitative research is a method used to examine the condition of natural objects (Natural Setting) and then described in language that is easy to understand through observations in the field and based on the data collected, while the researcher is a key instrument (*Key Instrument*). (Abdussamad & Sik, 2021) This research will focus on describing the relevance of multicultural Islamic education in the *culture of "Siangga, Sikamali and Siangkaran"* Tana Toraja case study.

The data sources in this study consist of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from the research subjects through interview techniques with informants. The subjects of this study are, among others, the people of Tana Toraja, community leaders, religious

leaders, cultural leaders, and the local government. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained from documents or other references that support and strengthen the findings in the field. Data collection techniques include observation, open interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out by directly observing activities in Mengkendek District, Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi, interviews were conducted flexibly using an open-ended question list, and documentation was carried out by collecting data in the form of written notes, drawings, or other works related to the object of research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The concept of multicultural Islamic education values in *Siangga, Sikamali, and Holiday* in Tana Toraja

The *culture of Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran* is part of the local wisdom of the Tana Toraja people which contains noble values in social life. *Siangga* refers to the spirit of helping and social solidarity between residents in dealing with events such as death, disasters, or traditional events. This value instills the importance of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and non-individualistic attitudes, which are very relevant to the Islamic teachings on *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *ta'awun* (helping in kindness). Meanwhile, *Sikamali* is a cultural value that teaches empathy, manners, and politeness in responding to situations full of sorrow or sadness. *Sikamali* forms the character of a society that has noble morals, takes care of the feelings of others, and is present with sincerity in difficult moments. This value is in line with the morals of *karimah* in Islamic teachings which emphasizes subtlety of mind and concern for others. *Siangkaran* teaches the importance of sincerity in giving, both in the form of materials, energy, and time, for the continuity and smoothness of community social events or activities.

This value encourages the growth of a spirit of generosity, social responsibility, and concern for collective needs, which is in line with the concepts of alms and infak in Islam. These three concepts are the basis for the formation of a strong society morally, socially, and spiritually, and contribute greatly to strengthening social harmony in the midst of cultural and religious diversity. (Umar et al., 2025) Philosophically, these three concepts reflect the principle of "living together in harmony" which is the core of the local wisdom of the Tana Toraja community. *Siangga* fosters the spirit of mutual cooperation and solidarity, *Sikamali* teaches empathy and manners in social relationships, while *Siangkaran* emphasizes the value of sincerity in giving and participating. These values are rooted in the Toraja people's philosophy of life that respects the relationship between humans (horizontal) and with the Creator (vertical), which in the Toraja language is known as the *philosophy of Sangtorayan maelo, sangtorayan massangna* (uniting and supporting each other). The sentence *Sangtorayan maelo, sangtorayan massangna* comes from the oral wisdom of the Toraja indigenous people which has been inherited from generation to generation since pre-colonial times. This sentence arises from the life values of agrarian and communal societies, where survival is highly dependent on social solidarity, cooperation, and close family ties. In the structure In the Toraja society, life cannot be lived individually; every person, family, and community is interconnected and needs each other in various aspects of life, from farming, building houses, to holding traditional ceremonies. This expression is widely traced in traditional texts and oral stories conveyed by the *to minaa* (traditional leaders) and Toraja traditional elders. Yunus & Mukoyyaroh, 2022)

From the perspective of Islamic Religious Education, local concepts such as *Siangga, Sikamali, and Siangkaran* contain values that are very relevant to the basic principles of Islamic teachings, especially in the formation of social character and morals. *Siangga* which means helping each other reflects the concept of *ta'awun* (helping in kindness). Meanwhile, *Sikamali*, which means empathy and politeness towards people who are in distress, is closely related to the teachings of

rahmah (love) and ihsan (doing good to others), the two main pillars of Islamic morality. As for *Siangkaran*, which reflects a sincere attitude in selfless participation, it is in line with the concept of sincerity in Islam, which is to do charity not because you want to be praised, but solely because of Allah.

These three values not only revive the spirit of mutual cooperation, but also internalize character education in social life. (Mustaghfirah & Listyaningsih, 2023) In the context of PAI learning, the integration of local wisdom like this is in line with the *contextual teaching and learning* approach that emphasizes the importance of education based on culture and social reality of students. (Nasution & Aryanti, 2023) Therefore, this local Toraja wisdom does not contradict Islam, and can even be an effective means of instilling noble moral values. In terms of legal foundation, local cultural values such as *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* have received legitimacy in the national legal system. This is affirmed in Article 18B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution which states: "*The State recognizes and respects the unity of customary law communities and their traditional rights as long as they are alive and in accordance with the development of society and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia*". Indonesia, 2002) This law emphasizes the importance of strengthening cultural values to form the character of the nation rooted in local wisdom.

3.2. The process of relevance of the value of multicultural Islamic education in the culture of *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* in Tana Toraja

The process of the relevance of the values of multicultural Islamic education in *the culture of Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* in Tana Toraja takes place through the integration of local values with the principles of inclusive and tolerant religious education. The culture of *Siangga* (mutual respect), *Sikamali* (mutual longing), and *Siangkaran* (mutual help) culture is a strong social foundation in building mutual respect and cooperation between religious communities in Toraja society. In the practice of multicultural Islamic education, these values are implemented through learning that provides space for every student to practice his or her religious teachings without discrimination, such as inclusive joint prayer, providing opportunities to learn religion according to their respective beliefs, as well as extracurricular activities and commemoration of religious holidays that involve all students and the community. The process of applying these values does not only occur in the classroom, but also in social activities that strengthen solidarity and harmony between religious communities. As a result, this process creates a comfortable and conducive learning environment and fosters a culture of mutual respect, appreciation, and acceptance of differences. (Nasir et al., 2023) Thus, multicultural Islamic education that is relevant to the culture of *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* is able to avoid conflict and strengthen harmony in the social life of the pluralistic Tana Toraja community. In short, this relevance process is a form of adaptation and synchronization of Islamic educational values with local cultural values that have been attached for a long time, so that religious education not only teaches ritual and doctrinal aspects, but also strengthens socio-cultural values that support tolerance and peace in Tana Toraja. (Anwar, 2021)

The value of multicultural Islamic education aims to instill an attitude of mutual respect, tolerance, and solidarity between human beings in cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. (Haryati & Dewi, 2025) These values are very relevant when studied in the context of local cultures such as *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* that live and develop in the Tana Toraja community. All three are expressions of deep social values, which can be juxtaposed with Islamic principles in building a civilized and harmonious society. Toraja's local culture is full of social values such as *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* is a cultural heritage that reflects the spirit of collectivity, social ethics and community civility. These three concepts have great potential to be integrated into multicultural

Islamic education, as their basic values are universal and in harmony with the principles of Islamic teachings.

3.3. The Relevance of Multicultural Islamic Education in Siangga, *Sikamali*, and Culture *Siangkaran* to the Community in Tana Toraja

Multicultural Islamic education emphasizes the formation of tolerance, respect for differences, and awareness of cultural and religious diversity. In Tana Toraja, these values found a common ground with local cultural practices such as Siangga (mutual cooperation), Sikamali (collective shame), and Siangkaran (social concern). (Arikarani et al., 2025) The application of Multicultural Islamic Education in Toraja culture not only affirms the importance of equality and inclusivity, but also proves that Islam as *a religion of rahmatan lil alamin* is able to coexist and strengthen constructive local values. By integrating modern educational theories and local cultural perspectives, the learning process becomes more contextual, reflective, and transformational. (Sari et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, from a juridical point of view, the implementation of Multicultural Islamic Education that is contextual and respects local cultures such as *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* has a strong legal basis, both in national regulations and international principles. Article 31 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution states that "*The government seeks and implements a national education system that increases faith, piety, and noble morals...*" In this context, Islamic education that respects local culture is part of a national education system that is inclusive and responsive to diversity. (Ansya et al., n.d.) UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), states that: "*Cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.*" Education that integrates local cultural values such as Siangga and Siangkaran is not only part of cultural preservation, but also meets international standards on inclusive education and respect for cultural diversity. (Heriyadi, 2015) In conclusion, juridically, the implementation of Multicultural Islamic Education that is in harmony with the local culture of the Toraja people is not only morally and socially valid, but also legally protected. National and international law encourages a good education. Recognizing cultural plurality as the nation's wealth, so that it becomes a strong foundation in designing inclusive and transformative Islamic values-based educational curricula and practices

4. CONCLUSION

The concept of multicultural Islamic education values in the *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* cultures in Tana Toraja is that these three local values are an important foundation in building social harmony, solidarity, and the character of a civilized society. *Siangga* instills the spirit of mutual cooperation and togetherness, *Sikamali* teaches empathy and politeness in social interaction, while *Siangkaran* emphasizes sincerity in giving selflessly. These values are very much in line with the Islamic teachings of *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, *rahmah*, *ihsan*, and sincerity, thus strengthening the education of Islamic character in community life. In addition, these values also receive legitimacy from the constitution and national laws as part of local wisdom that is recognized and preserved by the state. Thus, the implementation of *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* not only strengthens the Toraja cultural identity, but also becomes an effective means of instilling universal Islamic values and building an inclusive, tolerant, and noble society. The results of the relevance of multicultural Islamic education in the *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* cultures to the people in Tana Toraja can be concluded that the application of multicultural Islamic education in the *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* cultures in the Tana Toraja community is very relevant and important in building an attitude of tolerance and respect for the people of Tana Toraja differences, as well as awareness of cultural and religious diversity. Local values such as mutual cooperation (*Siangga*), collective shame

(*Sikamali*), and social concern (*Siangkaran*) have a common point with Islamic teachings, such as the principles of *ukhuwah*, *haya'*, and *ta'awun*, thereby strengthening the social and spiritual ethics of the community. Multicultural Islamic education does not aim to erase local culture, but rather to adapt and strengthen local values that are in line with Islamic teachings, so that the cultural and spiritual identity of the community is maintained. From a juridical perspective, the implementation of multicultural Islamic education that respects local culture is supported by national constitutions and regulations, and is in line with international standards on inclusive education and respect for cultural diversity. Thus, the integration of *Siangga*, *Sikamali*, and *Siangkaran* values in multicultural Islamic education is able to create a contextual, inclusive, and transformative learning environment, as well as strengthen the character and identity of the Toraja community in a sustainable manner.

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