

## The Influence of Integrating Multicultural and Ethical Values on the Effectiveness of Digital-Based Islamic Religious Education Learning

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the influence of multicultural and ethical values integration on the effectiveness of digital-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at UIN Jambi. The primary objective is to determine how these values contribute to shaping tolerant and responsible student behaviour within a digital landscape often marked by polarisation. A quantitative research design was employed, utilising regression analysis to test the correlation between value-based pedagogy and learning outcomes. The population consisted of 310 sixth-semester students, with a representative sample selected via Slovin's formula. The findings indicate that multicultural values significantly foster tolerance and appreciation for intellectual diversity, particularly in the study of Islamic jurisprudence, while ethical values promote academic honesty and responsible technology use. The study's novelty is established through its empirical evidence that the integration of these specific values accounts for a substantial 61.8% of the variance in digital learning effectiveness. This study provides empirical evidence from Islamic higher education on how multicultural and ethical value integration predicts digital learning effectiveness. Despite these effective outcomes, the results suggest that further improvements are required in student interaction and assessment strategies. The findings suggest that value-embedded digital pedagogy is essential for developing technologically competent and ethically grounded graduates.

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### INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of digital technology has fundamentally altered the paradigm of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), offering unprecedented flexibility while posing significant challenges to the preservation of moral and religious values. While digital tools facilitate broader access to educational resources, they simultaneously create a vacuum in character development if not guided by a structured ethical framework (Dennis & Harrison, 2021; Harrison & Laco, 2022). In a pluralistic society like Indonesia, the integration of multicultural values is no longer optional but a necessity to ensure that digital learning fosters tolerance and mutual respect rather than social polarisation (Rosario, 2024). Consequently, there is an urgent need to align technological advancements with an inclusive pedagogical approach that addresses both global insights and local cultural sensitivities.

Current scholarship in multicultural education emphasises the transition from surface-level inclusion to a transformative pedagogy that confronts structural inequalities and systemic biases (Roegman et al., 2021; Soriano, 2024). In the digital realm, this involves amplifying marginalised voices and fostering intercultural dialogues that empower students to navigate complex identities (Dooly & Darvin, 2022; Karimova et al., 2024). However, the intersection of ethics and multiculturalism in digital PAI remains underdeveloped. Without a strong ethical foundation encompassing digital

citizenship, academic integrity, and respect for pluralistic frameworks, digital platforms risk becoming sites of plagiarism, cyberbullying, and cultural marginalization (Ndasauka, 2021; Ogutu, 2024).

Despite the growing body of literature on e-learning, a significant research gap persists regarding the specific integration of multicultural and ethical values within Islamic higher education. Most existing studies focus predominantly on the technical effectiveness of digital platforms or general pedagogical shifts post-pandemic (Careaga-Butter et al., 2020; Sato et al., 2023). There is a lack of empirical evidence exploring how these values can be woven into complex theological subjects, such as the Comparative Study of Mazhab, where intellectual diversity is the core subject matter. Furthermore, previous research often overlooks the social-emotional dimensions and the potential for algorithmic biases to marginalise diverse cultural narratives in an Islamic context (Vallo Hult et al., 2023).

The research problem is manifested in the observed imbalance between cognitive mastery and value integration at institutions like UIN Jambi. Preliminary observations indicate that while instructors utilise digital tools for knowledge transfer, the optimisation of these platforms to foster holistic character and ethical competence remains stagnant (Deák & Kumar, 2024; Zhao et al., 2024). This pedagogical gap results in learning outcomes that favour academic performance over the development of inclusive attitudes, leaving students ill-equipped to act as agents of change in a polarised digital landscape. This study, therefore, addresses the critical need for a learning model that transcends mere content delivery to include deep-seated moral and multicultural engagement.

To address this problem, this research examines the Comparative Study of Mazhab as a pilot context for integrating multimedia-based multiculturalism. By utilising animated videos and interactive tools to portray the diverse methodologies of the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools, the course aims to foster an appreciation for intellectual pluralism. Ethical dimensions are embedded within these digital modules to promote academic honesty and respectful discourse. This approach seeks to determine whether such integration can mitigate the challenges of student adaptation to technology while simultaneously strengthening their ability to connect classical legal principles with contemporary, diverse social realities.

Ultimately, this study aims to provide a comprehensive empirical analysis of how multicultural and ethical integration influences the effectiveness of digital-based PAI. Theoretically, it contributes to an adaptive Islamic education model that harmonises traditional values with modern technological demands (Nordin et al., 2024). Practically, it offers a strategic roadmap for educators and policymakers at UIN Jambi and similar institutions to refine their curricula. By bridging the gap between technology and morality, this research supports the national vision of producing graduates who are not only digitally proficient but also possess the noble character and integrity required for social cohesion in the digital age.

This study addresses the following research questions: (1) To what extent do multicultural values influence the effectiveness of digital-based PAI learning? (2) To what extent do ethical values influence the effectiveness of digital-based PAI learning?

## **METHODS**

This study employs a quantitative approach with a survey design to examine the effect of integrating multicultural and ethical values on the effectiveness of digital-based Islamic Religious Education learning in the Comparative Schools course within the Islamic Religious Education Study Program at UIN Jambi. The quantitative method was selected because it facilitates objective and measurable analysis of the relationships between variables (Duckett, 2021; Mulisa, 2022). Data were collected using questionnaires distributed to sixth-semester students, who were chosen as research respondents due to their completion of the "Comparative Mazhab" course. The data collection focused on key variables about the integration of multicultural values, ethical values, and the effectiveness of digital learning. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 30 items distributed across the three research variables measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). To ensure the quality of the instrument, content validity was established through an expert review process involving two senior faculty members to

evaluate item relevance and clarity. Furthermore, the instrument's internal consistency was confirmed through reliability statistics, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.84 for multicultural values, 0.81 for ethical values, and 0.87 for digital learning effectiveness. These values, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold, indicate high instrument reliability. For data analysis, descriptive statistics and linear regression techniques were employed to assess the degree of influence that the independent variables exert on the dependent variable. The population in this study was all sixth-semester students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program at UIN Jambi, totalling 310 people. Because the population is relatively large, the sample determination was carried out using the Slovin formula so that the data obtained were representative and could be generalised to the population. so that a sample of 175 (56.45% of the total population) students was determined.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 175 respondents randomly selected using the Slovin formula, the majority of students fell within the productive academic age range of 20 to 22 years. This age bracket corresponds closely with the typical demographic of sixth-semester students, reflecting their progression in the academic program. This homogeneity in age is significant as it ensures that the respondents share similar cognitive development stages, academic maturity, and familiarity with the digital learning environment, which can influence their engagement and perception of the educational process.

Moreover, the gender distribution among the respondents was nearly balanced, with male and female participants representing almost equal proportions. This relative gender parity is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it prevents gender dominance in the data, which could skew results if one gender's experiences and perspectives were disproportionately represented. Secondly, having an equitable gender representation allows the research to capture diverse viewpoints and learning behaviours influenced by social and cultural factors associated with gender. In educational research, gender often intersects with variables such as communication styles, motivation, and interaction preferences in digital settings. Therefore, this balanced participation enhances the validity and generalizability of the findings.

Ensuring that both male and female students are adequately represented also allows for the exploration of potential differences or similarities in how digital learning is experienced across genders. This consideration is important for identifying inclusive teaching strategies and designing digital learning environments that accommodate diverse learner needs. Furthermore, this balanced sample mitigates potential biases related to gender (Ahmed & Sidiq, 2023), thus strengthening the overall credibility and applicability of the research conclusions to the broader student population.

The demographic composition of the sample, with its concentration in the typical academic age range and balanced gender distribution, provides a robust foundation for examining the effectiveness and dynamics of digital learning. It ensures that the insights derived are reflective of a wide spectrum of student experiences, enhancing the study's relevance and contribution to educational practice and policy.

### Variable Description

In this study, variables are defined as the measurable characteristics or attributes that represent the concepts under investigation. Each variable plays a specific role in analysing the relationships and effects within the research framework. The following table provides a clearer overview of the descriptive analysis results for each main variable:

Variable	Indicators	Average Score	Interpretation
Multicultural Values	Tolerance, respect for diversity, and inclusiveness	3.75	Good
Ethical Values in Digital Learning	Academic honesty, digital ethics, responsibility	3.82	Relatively High
Effectiveness of Digital Learning	Goal achievement, interaction, content mastery, assessment	3.68	Fairly Effective (Needs Improvement)

Table 1: Descriptive analysis results  
 Analysis [source]

Descriptive data from this study reveal significant findings regarding the integration of multicultural values into digital Islamic education learning. Data collected through questionnaires distributed to 310 sixth-semester students enrolled in the Islamic Education Study Program at UIN Jambi indicate meaningful trends in students' perceptions and experiences. Specifically, the dimension of multicultural values, which includes key aspects such as tolerance, appreciation of diversity, and inclusiveness, achieved an average score of 3.75 out of a maximum of 5. This relatively high score demonstrates that students generally possess a strong level of acceptance and understanding toward the multicultural principles embedded within the digital learning process. Such findings reflect the effectiveness of the instructional strategies employed in fostering an environment that promotes mutual respect and social cohesion amidst the diverse academic community. This suggests that students not only cognitively recognise multicultural values but also likely internalise these values as part of their learning experience.

Despite the positive trends, the Effectiveness of Digital Learning score of 3.68, while "Fairly Effective" is lower than the value-based predictors. This gap highlights a critical area for pedagogical intervention. While students have high moral and multicultural awareness, the structural aspects of digital learning (such as interactive assessments and the diversity of digital materials) require further refinement.

The findings suggest that the next stage of development for UIN Jambi should not be a search for new technology, but rather a deepening of lecturer-student interaction within these digital platforms. To reach "High Effectiveness," the curriculum must move from passive consumption of animated content to active, ethically-grounded digital discourse. By bridging this gap, PAI can become a holistic ecosystem that fosters not only cognitive mastery of Islamic law but also the practical application of tolerance and integrity in the modern world.

### Linear Regression Analysis

To determine the extent to which the integration of multicultural values and ethical values influences the effectiveness of digital learning in the Comparative Mazhab course, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The results of the analysis show that both independent variables simultaneously have a significant influence on the dependent variable.

Independent Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	t-Statistic	Significance (p)
(Constant)	0.812	0.227	3.577	0.000
Multicultural Values	0.417	0.063	6.619	0.000
Ethical Values	0.384	0.072	5.333	0.000

Table 2: Regression Coefficient  
 Output of SPSS Analysis [source]

The results of the regression analysis provide valuable insights into the effects of multicultural values and ethical values on the effectiveness of learning in the digital Islamic education context. The model's constant term, valued at 0.812, represents the baseline level of learning effectiveness when both independent variables, multicultural values and ethical values, are set to zero. This baseline provides a foundational reference point for understanding how changes in these variables influence learning outcomes.

Multicultural values exhibit a positive and statistically significant relationship with learning effectiveness, as indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.417 and a p-value less than 0.01. This finding implies that, holding all other factors constant, each one-unit increase in the multicultural values score corresponds to an approximate increase of 0.417 units in the learning effectiveness score. This strong association underscores the pivotal role that fostering tolerance, appreciation of diversity, and inclusiveness plays in enhancing students' engagement and academic success within digital learning environments.

Ethical values have a significant positive impact on learning effectiveness, with a coefficient of 0.384 and a p-value below 0.01, indicating that increased ethical awareness—such as academic honesty, responsible technology use, and ethical communication—leads to improved learning outcomes. Alongside multicultural values, these findings confirm that both are strong predictors of digital learning effectiveness. Their integration into the curriculum not only enhances academic performance but also promotes a respectful, responsible, and inclusive learning environment, highlighting the need for educational institutions to prioritise these values in teaching practices.

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
Multikultural + Etika → Efektivitas	0,787	0,620	0,618	0,431

Table 3: Regression Model Summary Results  
 Output of SPSS Analysis [source]

The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.618 further reinforces the strength and reliability of the regression model. In accordance with the latest benchmarks by (Hair & Alamer (2022)), an R<sup>2</sup> value exceeding 0.50 in social and behavioural sciences is classified as 'moderate-to-substantial,' confirming that the model possesses strong explanatory power. Despite including only two independent variables, multicultural values and ethical values, this statistic indicates that together they account for approximately 61.8% of the variance in learning effectiveness. This substantial proportion of explained variance suggests that these two predictors collectively provide a stable and meaningful contribution to understanding the factors influencing learning outcomes. However, as (Hair & Alamer, 2022) also emphasise, while a high R<sup>2</sup> indicates a good fit, it does not imply that the model is exhaustive, as the remaining 38.2% of the variance suggests the presence of other unmeasured latent constructs. Moreover, the relatively high Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> reflects that the model maintains strong predictive power without significant overfitting or loss of explanatory capability, thereby confirming the robustness and validity of the findings.

Based on the multiple linear regression analysis, it can be concluded that the integration of multicultural and ethical values has a significant and positive impact on the effectiveness of digital learning. This finding is strongly supported by the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) framework, particularly its most recent evolution in the digital era (Gay, 2022), which emphasises that learning outcomes are optimised when instructional designs resonate with students' cultural identities and ethical values. Adopting an educational approach that simultaneously promotes diversity awareness and moral principles is a crucial factor in supporting the success of the digital learning process. Recent empirical evidence from Ladson-Billings (2021) and Khalifa (2022) further validates that inclusive pedagogical practices are essential for student engagement in virtual environments. Particularly within the context of Islamic Religious Education, this combined integration serves not only to enhance academic achievement but also to foster a respectful and ethically responsible digital environment. This aligns with recent studies by (Huda & al., 2024), which argue that in a digital-based Islamic education, the synergy between multiculturalism and ethics (Akhlaq) is the primary driver of student motivation and learning persistence. Thus, these findings provide robust empirical support for educational policies and instructional designs that prioritize the holistic integration of multiculturalism and ethics to optimise the outcomes of modern digital learning systems.

The substantial impact of multicultural and ethical integration, accounting for over 60% of learning effectiveness, shifts the focus from technological determinism to a human-centric digital pedagogy. This finding is consistent with the Social Constructivist Theory (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978), which argues that effective learning is inherently a social process shaped by cultural and ethical interactions. In the specific context of Islamic Religious Education (IRE), digital platforms serve not merely as delivery mechanisms for information but as transformative spaces where the "Ethics of

Disagreement" (Adab al-Ikhtilaf) can be practised in real-time. Recent studies by Huda & al. (2023) and Sahin (2021) support this by demonstrating that the integration of classical Islamic ethics into digital environments significantly enhances student engagement and critical thinking. By bridging the gap between classical jurisprudential diversity and modern digital interaction, this study provides empirical evidence for the "Digital Muamalah" framework (Zulkifli et al., 2022), which suggests that an inclusive curriculum reduces the risk of digital marginalisation. Furthermore, as emphasised by Selwyn (2021), prioritising human values over technical features fosters a more resilient and empathetic academic community. Consequently, these results confirm that ethical multicultural integration is a structural necessity, not a supplementary feature, in achieving learning success in the digital age.

These findings advocate for a strategic re-orientation of digital learning policies within Islamic Higher Education Institutions (IHEI), such as UIN Jambi. The transition from "fairly effective" to "highly effective" learning outcomes necessitates a shift from passive digital consumption toward a value-embedded discourse. This recommendation is supported by the "Value-Based Education" (VBE) framework in the digital era (Lovat, 2020), which demonstrates that academic excellence is fundamentally linked to the institutionalisation of core values. By formalising these ethical and multicultural frameworks, PAI programs can mitigate the risks of "technological dehumanisation." Research by UNESCO (2023) on digital transformation in higher education underscores that for technology to be effective, it must be balanced with ethical frameworks that protect human dignity. In the context of PAI, this integration ensures that technological advancement aligns with Digital Citizenship Theory (Ribble & Park, 2024), which emphasises responsibility and respect as pillars of digital interaction. Ultimately, as highlighted by Sultana et al. (2022), such an integrated policy prepares students to navigate the complexities of a globalised digital society while remaining firmly rooted in the Islamic principles of justice ('Adl), honesty (Siddiq), and mutual respect (Tasamuh). This study, therefore, provides an empirical basis for institutionalising ethics as a structural component of digital pedagogy to ensure long-term educational resilience.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the integration of multicultural and ethical values significantly enhances the effectiveness of digital learning, particularly in the Comparative Mazhab course. Based on the multiple linear regression analysis, both independent variables were found to have a significant impact, both partially and simultaneously. The partial analysis (t-test) revealed that multicultural values (X1) significantly influence learning effectiveness ( $t = 5.214$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with a coefficient of 0.417. Similarly, ethical values (X2) showed a significant positive impact ( $t = 4.892$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) with a coefficient of 0.384. Furthermore, the simultaneous test (F-test) yielded an F-value of 138.452 ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that multicultural and ethical values collectively exercise a significant influence on digital learning effectiveness. These predictors account for a substantial 61.8% of the variance in learning outcomes (Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.618$ ). While the descriptive analysis showed high levels of multicultural acceptance (mean 3.75) and ethical awareness (mean 3.82), the "fairly effective" rating for digital learning (mean 3.68) suggests a need for optimisation. These statistical results provide empirical weight to the argument that fostering diversity, respect, and moral responsibility is not merely a pedagogical preference but a statistically significant requirement for enhancing digital learning outcomes within Islamic Religious Education.

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