

THE PRACTICE OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AT MAJELIS TAKLIM IN SITIUNG DHARMASRAYA, WEST SUMATRA

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Abstract

This article aims to describe the existence of the *majelis taklim* (Islamic forum) and how this *majelis taklim* strengthen its role in providing multicultural education for multicultural communities in Sitiung Dharmasraya, West Sumatra. In contrast to several studies which show that the *majelis taklim* is an agent of spreading intolerant narratives in society, this article tries to present the face of the *majelis taklim* that is friendly to diversity by strengthening multicultural education. This study uses a participatory action research method. Data were obtained through interviews, focus group discussion, observations, documentation, and actions or improvements through workshops in the July-November 2018 period at *majelis taklim* in Sitiung Dharmasraya, West Sumatra. The findings of this study indicate that the *majelis taklim* in Sitiung are attended by people who come from various elements and backgrounds and different mindsets, but the attitude of togetherness is maintained and synergized. In addition, the existing *majelis taklim* are used as a forum for increasing awareness of community members who are starting to feel the impact of modernization and globalization, and are starting to plunder solidarity and tolerance. The strengthening of multicultural education carried out through participatory action research in this study shows that the taklim assembly can function as a center for peace values, a center for change agents to become better Muslims, a community development center, communication and information center, a cadre center and a social control agent.

Keywords: Multicultural Education; Majelis Taklim; Sitiung Dharmasraya.

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan eksistensi majelis taklim dan memperkuat perannya dalam menghadirkan pendidikan multikultural bagi masyarakat multikultural di Sitiung Dharmasraya, Sumatera Barat. Berbeda dengan beberapa studi yang menunjukkan bahwa majelis taklim menjadi agen penyebar narasi intoleran di masyarakat, artikel ini berusaha menghadirkan wajah majelis taklim yang ramah keragaman dengan usaha memperkuat pendidikan multikultural. Studi ini menggunakan metode participatory action research. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, focus group discussion, observasi, dokumentasi, serta aksi atau penguatan melalui workshop pada periode Juli-November tahun 2018 di majelis taklim yang ada di Sitiung Dharmasraya, Sumatera Barat. Temuan studi ini menunjukkan bahwa majelis taklim-majelis taklim yang ada di Kecamatan Sitiung diikuti oleh masyarakat yang datang dari berbagai unsur dan latar belakang serta pola pikir yang berbeda, namun sikap kebersamaan tetap terjaga dan bersinergi. Selain itu, kelompok majelis taklim yang ada dijadikan sebagai wadah untuk peningkatan kesadaran anggota masyarakat yang mulai merasakan dampak modernisasi dan globalisasi, serta mulai menjarah solidaritas dan toleransi. Penguatan pendidikan multikultural yang dilakukan melalui participatory action research dalam studi ini, menunjukkan bahwa majelis taklim dapat berfungsi sebagai pusat nilai perdamaian, pusat agen perubahan untuk menjadi umat Islam yang lebih baik, pusat pengembangan masyarakat, pusat komunikasi dan informasi, pusat kader dan agen kontrol sosial.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Multikultural; Majelis Taklim; Sitiung Dharmasraya.

Background

Since the 1990s, the discourse on radicalism, religious fundamentalism, and multiculturalism is still a critical discussion and continues to grow in Indonesia.¹ It is indeed inseparable from the Indonesian context as a country known to be very multicultural on the one hand and a country with the largest Muslim population in the world on the other. Such potential has an impact, both positive and negative, on socio-religious life in Indonesia.²

In this multicultural context in Indonesia, the majelis taklim as a non-formal Islamic education institution can be an effective da'wah media for providing a space for religious understanding that is diverse, varied, and not singular. However, it can also work the other way around. As a forum for local wisdom of the Indonesian Muslim community, recitation in the form of a majelis taklim is a part of bonding love for the homeland, love for diversity, and love for harmony.³ The majelis taklim is also seen as a solution for planting the sole basis of democracy, tolerance, and multiculturalism through its teaching materials.⁴

In addition to the positive potential, several negative potentials still lurk in the majelis taklim. For example, Huda's findings⁵ in his research stated that the content of the material, the delivery model, and the relevance of the material to actual problems and environmental needs are various problems faced by the majelis taklim. In addition, the high spirit of da'wah without being supported by a good

understanding of other religions or other sects that are different from the preachers also impacts attitudes of intolerance and anti-multiculturalism in the majelis taklim and mosque pulpit.⁶

This study tries to describe and strengthen the majelis taklim in spreading the values of tolerance through multicultural education by making the majelis taklim in Sitiung Dharmasraya District the case. The location of Sitiung Sub-district was chosen because the characteristics of the community are following the topic of this study, namely a multicultural society that has lived side by side for a long time. In general, the people of Sitiung District are multicultural communities, where the Minang ethnic group is the majority with a composition of 75% of the total population of 26,367 people. Besides Minang ethnic, Sitiung sub-district is also inhabited by Javanese (22%), Batak (2%), and Sundanese (1%)

The various ethnic communities in Sitiung District can live side by side and each ethnic group preserves its customs and traditions, including religious activities such as *nirid yasinan*, which takes turns and brings in local and outside speakers from the Dharmasraya area. The community in Sitiung District carries out religious activities with various patterns to increase religious understanding. This effort is an intelligent solution in equipping oneself with a comprehensive religious practice to form a religious character in responding to various problems that occur in life. Because motivation

¹ Zakiyuddin Baidhaw, "Muatan Nilai-Nilai Multikultural Dan Anti-Multikultural Dari Mimbar Masjid Di Kota Solo," *Jurnal Analisa* 21, No. 2 (2014): 173–187.

² MT Hartono Ikhsan and Sandi Fauzi Giwangsa, "The Importance of Multicultural Education in Indonesia," *Journal of Teaching and Learning in Elementary Education (Jtle)* 2, No. 1 (2019): 60.

³ Tantry Widiyanarti, "Pengajian Al Quran Sebagai Perekat Kebhinnekaan (Kajian Pola Komunikasi Dalam Pengembangan Nilai-Nilai Pancasila Pada Masyarakat Multikultural Melalui Pengajian Al Quran Di Medan, Sumatera Utara)," *Nyimak (Journal of Communication)* 1, no. 1 (2017): 1–21.

⁴ Zaenal Abidin, "Majelis Ta'lim (Islamic Forum) and Harmonizing Inter Faith Communication," *INJECT (Interdisciplinary Journal of Communication)* 4, No. 1 (2019): 115.

⁵ Imamul Huda, "Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Multikultural Di Majelis Taklim An Najach Magelang," *INFERENSI: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 13, no. 2 (2020): 253–278.

⁶ Zakiyuddin Baidhaw, "The Problem of Multiculturalism: Radicalism Mainstreaming through Religious Preaching in Surakarta," *JOURNAL OF INDONESIA ISLAM* 4, no. 2 (December 1, 2010): 268, <http://jiis.uinsby.ac.id/index.php/JIIs/article/view/71>.

and enthusiasm alone are certainly not enough to be the capital of life without being supported by religious, social attitudes.

On the other hand, due to this diversity, the Sitiung community still has the potential for conflict. If only there were a slight gust and provocation, the people there could be provoked to take acts of intolerance, division and attack each other.⁷ Therefore, the efforts of community leaders, religious scholars, intellectuals, *bundo kanduang* and traditional leaders are needed so that harmonious, unified, peaceful and security communication is always maintained. This effort is maximally empowered through recitation groups at the *majelis taklim* to minimize conflicts and quarrels in a multi-ethnic society to maintain peace and harmony in everyday life.

Several previous studies related to the existence of recitations in mosques and *taklim* assemblies conducted by Baidhawi (2010), Al-Makassary and Gaus (2010),⁸ and Taufik (2018)⁹ showed that recitations in *taklim* and mosques became a means of spreading narratives of intolerance and anti-multiculturalism in Indonesia. Public. In contrast to these studies, this article attempts to present the face of assemblies of *taklim* that are friendly to diversity by strengthening multicultural education.

This study uses a participatory action research method. The data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation in the July-November period 2018. The informants were purposively determined: *ninik mamak*, *alim ulama cerdik pandai* and the study group leader. In addition

to extracting qualitative data, this research is also carried out with action or improvement through workshops on strengthening the narrative of tolerance at the *majelis taklim* in Sitiung Dharmasraya through multicultural education. Recitation groups in the Sitiung sub-district attended this activity but it was not possible to participate as a whole because of the enormous number so that the committees of the *taklim* group, totaling 30 people, were gathered in the hope that these administrators could transmit the material to a broader congregation to the broader congregation has been conveyed by the resource persons regarding the strengthening of socio-cultural values and socio-religious values.

The discussion of this article begins by outlining the urgency of multicultural education through the *majelis taklim* to create an open and tolerant society, the context of the multicultural society in Sitiung Dharmasraya, and efforts to strengthen the *majelis taklim* through multicultural education conducted at Sitiung Dharmasraya.

The Urgency of Multicultural Education Through the Taklim Council

Historically, the field now called multicultural education has existed in the United States for less than half a century. Multicultural education is preceded and based on ethnic studies, intergroup relations movements, and multiethnic education.¹⁰ James E. Banks also says that multicultural education has evolved from ethnic studies to multiethnic

⁷ Among the conflicts that have occurred are related to the sale and purchase of land. Land that has been sold by the owner to certain residents, then the descendants behind it reclaim the land, triggering conflicts between sellers and buyers, between immigrants and natives. Zulfajri (Community Leader of Pisang Rebus), *Interview*, 10 July 2018.

⁸ Ridwan Al-Makassary and Ahmad Gaus, eds., *Benih-Benih Islam Radikal Di Masjid: Studi Kasus Jakarta Dan Solo* (Jakarta: CSRC, 2010).

⁹ Zulfan Taufik, "Berebut Kuasa Rumah Tuhan: Ekspansi Ideologi Radikal Melalui Masjid Di Kota Bekasi," *Islam Realitas: Journal of Islamic & Social Studies* 4, no. 1 (December 25, 2018): 21, https://ejournal.iainbukittinggi.ac.id/index.php/Islam_realitas/article/view/506.

¹⁰ Sonia Nieto, "Re-Imagining Multicultural Education: New Visions, New Possibilities," *Multicultural Education Review* 9, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 1-10, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2005615X.2016.1276671>.

education, multicultural education, and multicultural education globally.¹¹

Multicultural education is a process of developing all human potentials that respect plurality and heterogeneity due to cultural, ethnic, ethnic, and religious diversity. Multicultural education emphasizes a philosophy of cultural pluralism into the education system based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and acceptance and understanding and a moral commitment to social justice.¹² Multicultural education, as a concept, is a contextual idea with today's contemporary challenges. Recognition of differences, equality, justice, and openness, are the principles that humans need in the midst of the crush of globalization and religious extremism.¹³

In Indonesia, which is known for its diversity, multiculturalism is one of the main themes that is urgent to be discussed. Diversity can be disastrous if it is not maintained and nurtured correctly. Therefore, multicultural education is a must as an effort to prevent conflict because the current conflict is no longer just a phenomenon or symptom but has become a reality in people's daily lives. Tolerance for religious differences needs to be built to live in harmony and trust each other in a state of cultural diversity. Acceptance of pluralism and developing a positive attitude of tolerance towards other religions does not come naturally. People have to learn it.¹⁴

Obtaining religious education can be carried out both formally (school) and non-formally (outside school). In its non-formal form, religious education is usually carried out by socio-religious groups/communities. In the context of Islam, the model of religious education carried out by the community is known as majlis taklim. Although not generally known in Arab countries, the phrase "majlis taklim" comes from Arabic, which consists of two words, namely "majlis" which means "place" and taklim which means "teaching". So etymologically, majlis taklim means "a place for teaching and learning". In terminology, the majlis taklim is a non-formal educational institution taught by ustadz/ustadzah, whose members learn Islamic values and other valuable activities in certain places. The Ministry of Religion defines the majlis taklim as an Islamic educational institution that has a regular or regular learning schedule, but not in a daily schedule like in schools, its members are voluntary, not mandatory because it is considered as their spiritual need.

The majlis taklim has many functions, for example as a center for peace values, a center for change agents to become better Muslims, a community development center, a communication and information center, a regeneration center and an agent of social control.¹⁵ These functions must be carried out in the majlis taklim in building an advanced, independent, and civilized society. To share the truth of Islam and educate people to act wisely.

¹¹ James A. Banks, "The Construction and Historical Development of Multicultural Education, 1962–2012," *Theory Into Practice* 52, no. sup1 (October 20, 2013): 73–82, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00405841.2013.795444>.

¹² Rustam Ibrahim, "Pendidikan Multikultural: Pengertian, Prinsip, Dan Relevansinya Dengan Tujuan Pendidikan Islam," *Addin: Media Dialektika Ilmu Islam* 7, no. 1 (2013): 1–18.

¹³ Hasan Baharun and Robiatul Awwaliyah, "Pendidikan Multikultural Dalam Menanggulangi Narasi Islamisme Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 5, no. 2 (2017): 224.

¹⁴ Zulfan Taufik, "From Negative to Positive Peace: Strengthening the Role of Youth in Religious Peacebuilding in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 25, no. 2 (2020) (October 4, 2020), <https://ejournal.metrouniv.ac.id/index.php/akademika/article/view/2132>.

¹⁵ Rizal DJ. Kasim, "Majelis Taklim Dan Masyarakat Multikultural: Tinjauan Fungsi Dan Bentuk Kegiatan Majelis Taklim Pada Masyarakat Multikultural Di Kota Manado," *Jurnal Syntax Transformation* 2, no. 3 (2021): 398–408; Puji Astari, "Mengembalikan Fungsi Masjid Sebagai Pusat Peradaban Masyarakat," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah dan Pengembangan Komunitas* 9, no. 1 (2014).

This can be called Islamization, a way to improve and develop the benefit of society. Although the implementation of Islamic education based on the majelis taklim is not binding, in general its members have a high commitment to maintaining the existence of the movement as a da'wah space.

In this case, the majelis taklim can be seen as a solution to be used as a land for planting the seeds of democracy, tolerance and multiculturalism for blooming harmony between religious communities in the Republic of Indonesia.¹⁶ Knitting diversity through recitation is one way to prevent the disintegration of the nation. For this reason, the recitation needs to be appropriately communicated and correctly so that the community can accept it and the national values that want to be conveyed through the recitation can be implemented.¹⁷

There are three components in the majelis taklim, namely the lecturer, congregation and lecture material. Lecturers are the most crucial component as teachers are the most essential instrument in implementing the curriculum in schools. Lecture material is not much different from the curriculum, in various forms it is just a text and therefore the teacher is the one who really determines how to read and interpret it.¹⁸ From the description above, it can be understood that religious teachers are the vanguard of tolerance in the context of Indonesia and Islamism, which is then manifested in their social context. The resource persons for the recitation/majelis taklim who are usually called lecturers, ustadz, kiai or even

master teachers often determine the color and character of a majelis taklim.

The Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) concluded that the knowledge transfer model about Islam through face-to-face with religious teachers is the primary medium for citizens. The existence of the lecturer becomes the backbone of material giving, and becomes the most trusted person. The majority of residents consider the religious teachers (imam, kiai, ustaz, others) found at the recitation or class the most trusted source of knowledge about Islam. Likewise, lecture material can determine the color and character of a majelis taklim. If the lecture material of a majelis taklim has been determined and structured into a kind of recitation curriculum, then the committee/manager of the majelis taklim will definitely look for competent lecturers on condition that they adjust the character of the majelis taklim because the manager does not want to lose the character of the majelis taklim.¹⁹

There is a majelis taklim that delivers studies and discusses intolerance and anti-multicultural attitudes in the majelis taklim. It is because the high preaching spirit of the preachers is often tarnished by vilifying other religions, sects and groups of people.²⁰ The results of other studies also show that the socialization of religious teachings at the grassroots level is mostly controlled by da'wah interpreters who are less sensitive to plurality and multiculturalism. Problems like these make strengthening multicultural education in the majelis taklim very urgent to do.

¹⁶ Abidin, "Majelis Ta'lim (Islamic Forum) and Harmonizing Inter Faith Communication."

¹⁷ Widiyanarti, "Pengajian Al Quran Sebagai Perekat Kebhinnekaan (Kajian Pola Komunikasi Dalam Pengembangan Nilai-Nilai Pancasila Pada Masyarakat Multikultural Melalui Pengajian Al Quran Di Medan, Sumatera Utara)"; Ahmad Marzuki, Mohamad Zaidin Mohamad, and Rohaizan Baru, "Role of Majelis Taklim and Adaptation Muslim Minority with Tengger Local Culture," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 10 (2018).

¹⁸ Husniyatus Salamah Zainiyati, "Curriculum, Islamic Understanding and Radical Islamic Movements in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 2 (2016): p. 285-307.

¹⁹ Nur Setiawati, "Majelis Taklim Dan Tantangan Pengembangan Dakwah," *Tabligh* 13, no. 1 (2012): 81-95.

²⁰ Baidhawiy, "The Problem of Multiculturalism: Radicalism Mainstreaming through Religious Preaching in Surakarta."

A Portrait of Multiculturalism in Sitiung

Administratively, Sitiung is the name of a nagari and sub-district in Dharmasraya Regency, West Sumatra Province. This area has four villages: the Siguntur Village, the Sitiung Village, the Duo River Village, and the Gunung Medan Village. Based on the latest data, the population of Sitiung District is 26,367 people, 11.82% of the population of Dharmasraya district. The total area of 12457 Ha is 4.12% of the total area of Dharmasraya Regency.²¹ The areas in Sitiung District have different characters and demographics. This is influenced by historical factors of transmigration implementation and regional economic development, especially the plantation sector. The mainstay sectors in the economy of the Dharmasraya community are rubber plantations and oil palm plantations. Oil palm and rubber plantations encourage the level of community welfare to reduce the poverty rate from 10.56% in 2010 to 6.98% in 2014.²²

As one of the transmigration destinations, Sitiung, which was initially a relatively homogeneous population, has become heterogeneous. Because besides Javanese ethnicity, Sitiung is also inhabited by various other ethnic groups such as Malay, Batak, Acehese, and others due to economic development in the Sitiung transmigration settlement area. However, the Minangkabau ethnicity and followed by the Javanese are the two most dominant ethnic groups. So Minangkabau and Javanese culture are also dominant in the area. In addition, the Minangkabau ethnic community itself has a culture with different characteristics so that they can live side by side with one another through the operation of social institutions in a multi-ethnic society. These social institutions include

marriage, family, political, educational, religious and educational institutions.²³

In addition to the integration aspect, various conflicts have also occurred in the multicultural Sitiung community, such as conflicts over buying and selling land. Land that the owner has sold to certain residents, then the descendants behind it reclaim the land, triggering conflicts between sellers and buyers, between immigrants and natives. It happened in the Nagari Sitiung where the mamak as the tribal chief issued a pedestal as proof that the land had been sold to the community. The generation behind him sold the exact location again to other entrepreneurs, finally, the first buyer suffered a loss of land being taken away, the small community could not do what to do because they are faced with entrepreneurs who have capital.²⁴ The process of solving this problem is not possible only between the disputing residents. However, there needs to be mediation from traditional leaders, religious leaders, *Cadiak Pandai* and *Bundo Kanduang* to provide enlightenment so that each party understands and understands each other.

The step forward and the great enthusiasm of the community was not directly proportional to the existing infrastructure supply. Religious activities have been carried out by the community in the form of recitation groups initiated by several religious leaders but have not touched all aspects of community life. The allocation of funds from the district government is still unable to provide adequate material support for the smooth running of this religious activity, but morally the commitment and great enthusiasm of the District Government have been felt by the community. It is felt by incentive assistance for both *ninik*

²¹ Perda No 10 Tahun 2012 tentang RTRW Kabupaten Dharmasraya Tahun 2011-2013 dan BPS Kabupaten Dharmasraya Tahun 2016

²²BPS Kabupaten Dharmasraya Tahun 2016

²³ Retno Anggraini, "Integrasi Sosial Masyarakat Multietnik Di Nagari Sitiung Kabupaten Dharmasraya,"

Jurnal Sosiologi Andalas 5, no. 2 (October 1, 2019): 115–132, <http://jsa.fisip.unand.ac.id/index.php/jsa/article/view/21>.

²⁴Zulfajri (Tokoh Masyarakat Dusun Pisang Rebus), *Interview*, 10 Juli 2018.

mamak and religious movers such as imams and *garin* of mosques.²⁵

Hamzan Dt. Mangkuto Rajo explained that the traditional and cultural values that have been held firmly by the community are fading away, the current generation no longer knows what is called *kato nan ampek*, *kato mandaki*, *kato manurun*, *kato malereng* and *kato mendatar*. *Kato mandaki* is manners and rules when talking to older people. *Kato manurun* is the rule of how to talk to a smaller person. *Kato malereng* is the rule of talking to *sumando*, and *kato mendatar* is talking to peers. These rules have begun to blur, so that it often causes friction in the community.²⁶

Based on the opinion above, it can be understood that there is concern among *ninik mamak* and religious leaders regarding socio-cultural values and the preservation of socio-cultural values for the younger generation, especially related to speech and communication patterns that are increasingly leaving traditional values. Whereas the traditional philosophy of the community as illustrated by "*adat basandi syara', syarak basandi Kitabullah*" is harmony between *adat* and *syara'*. Hamzan Dt. Mangkuto Rajo also explained the worries that occur in today's generation, including the promiscuity of urban lifestyles and the influence of drugs on us, villagers, including studying at the *surau* where our children used to flock to the *surau* to recite the Koran, so no generation at that time could not read the Qur'an²⁷

Agusri Yusuf, one of the religious leaders, explained that the religious level of the people in the village has shifted and is starting to fade, this is an indication that mosques and *surau* are not equipped with congregational prayers, tribal *surau* do not have congregational prayers. . People prefer to talk about their material forms such as having a beautiful house showing off

their wealth, the spirit of making sacrifices every year does not exist, as well as respect for each other, mutual respect has faded now, the young no longer greet the older, he is busy with their business is to look at their cell phones even though they are sitting close together.²⁸ Likewise, the opinion of *Bundo Kanduang*, especially the elements of bureaucracy, is thus illustrated by the various inputs from the elements involved in the discussion, various problems in society are illustrated.

Strengthening Multicultural Education in the Majelis Taklim

Based on the focus group discussion conducted on August 30, 2018, with the management of the *majelis taklim* in Sitiung Dharmasraya, several essential things were obtained from the recitation group or *majelis taklim* in Sitiung: First, the worshipers came from various elements and different backgrounds and mindsets are different, but the attitude of togetherness is maintained and synergized. Second, the arrangement of the recitation group is not structured and does not have good management but runs peacefully without spending time arguing, not busy with their respective social statuses. They followed what was said by the group leader. This needs to be empowered regularly and structured..

Third, they have the same level of anxiety about the condition of the community and the younger generation who are trapped in a hedonistic lifestyle and are less concerned about the environment, cultural values, let alone socio-religious. Fourth, the birth of this study group is an awareness of minor members of the community who are starting to feel the impact of modernization and globalization which has begun to plunder solidarity and uproot a sense of togetherness. Through *gotong royong*, their

²⁵Aswat (Walinagari Siguntur), *Interview*, 15 Nopember 2018.

²⁶Hamzan Dt. Mangkuto Rajo (Kepala suku Piliang), *Interview*, 30 Agustus 2018.

²⁷Hamzan Dt. Mangkuto Rajo (Kepala suku Piliang), *Interview*, 30 Agustus 2018.

²⁸Agusri Yusuf (Religious Leader), *Interview*, 30 Agustus 2018.

impact is starting to be felt by them, so it is crucial to have a place as a space to express these good intentions and appreciate the forms of kindness that have existed in the traditions of society.

Fifth, public concern arises because the value of togetherness has begun to disappear in the context of helping, even though the Islamic principle, *ta'awun alal birri wattaqwa*, helps each other for goodness and piety. Please help in the context of society, of course cooperation and togetherness in good deeds. Helping each other in the form of mutual assistance in cleaning up the environment has begun to fade. It can be seen as less clean in the environment, togetherness, if someone has passed away, is still maintained. It is evidenced by the process of the religious ritual, regardless of which group experienced the death accident, and community groups are quick to lend a hand to help the person who passed away, such as digging graves for men's groups and preparing water for bathing for women, including the procurement of shrouds. Another example of socio-religious changes that have changed is related to the tradition of death. In the past, if someone passed away in a household, food was provided after the funeral. However, to not burden the mourning families, the neighbors whose houses are close to them will provide the food.²⁹

In the context and challenges faced by the multicultural community in Sitiung, this study then carried out an action or intervention to strengthen multicultural education for the majelis taklim in Sitiung. This activity was carried out by presenting two main speakers: Safrudin, S.Sos, M.Si (Head of Welfare Section of the Dharmasraya Regent's Office), and Dolizal Putra S.Ag, MA (Religious Leader of Dharmasraya Regency). The core material

presented in this activity is a guide on how the majelis taklim can function as a center for peace values, a center for change agents to become better Muslims, community development centers, communication and information centers, cadres centers and social control agents. In addition, the strengthening materials delivered were also related to democracy, justice and law, cultural values and ethos, equality in differences, ethnicity, religious beliefs, cultural expressions, private and public spheres, human rights, community cultural rights, and other related concepts.³⁰

The process of teaching and inculcating the values of tolerance for religious adherents, especially Indonesian Muslims, can be carried out through the majelis taklim. Instead of deepening religious differences, the majelis taklim should offer the opportunity to introduce the values of justice and tolerance to its congregations. The lecture material delivered was related to issues of democracy, justice and law, cultural values and ethos, togetherness in equal differences, ethnicity, ethnicity, ethnic culture, religious beliefs, cultural expressions, private and public domains, human rights, human rights, community cultural rights, and other relevant concepts.³¹

The materials mentioned above are in line with the meaning of multicultural education as education regarding cultural diversity presented by Anderson and Cusher. It is also in line with James Banks who calls multicultural education as education for people of color, which means that multicultural education wants to explore differences as a necessity. Thus, in simple terms, multicultural education actually wants to respond to demographic and cultural changes in a particular community environment or even the global world as a whole.³²

²⁹Observation and focus group discussion with the board of *majelis taklim* in Sitiung, 30 Agustus 2018.

³⁰Safrudin, S.Sos, M.Si (Kabag Kesra Kantor Bupati Dharmasraya), *Workshop Pendidikan Multikultural Majelis Taklim di Sitiung*, 24 Oktober 2018.

³¹Dolizal Putra, S.Ag, MA (Tokoh Agama Kabupaten Dharmasraya), *Workshop Pendidikan Multikultural Majelis Taklim di Sitiung*, 24 Oktober 2018.

³²James A. Banks, "Multicultural Education: Historical Development, Dimensions, and Practice," *Review of Research in Education* 19 (1993): 3,

Strengthening multicultural education for the multicultural Sitiung community recitation group is considered essential because the majelis taklim has become a forum for realizing multicultural education and tolerance in society. The majelis taklim is also a means and a forum for participating in building tolerance and mutual respect between tribes, religions and cultures, in the cultural aspect, cultural assimilation can be carried out to minimize differences and find points of similarity. This multicultural education is essential for the community to become a religious culture, where the community can embrace religious values. Even though there are differences between ethnic religions, every ethnic and group has carried out their respective beliefs, it will reduce the selfish attitude of justifying each group by itself creating an attitude of living tolerance and mutual respect, this is what a multicultural society is. Operationally, community empowerment activities based on the majelis taklim are interpreted as the majelis taklim movement as a central force centered on the congregation's participation, the community and the majelis taklim management. These activities are expected to be able to increase independence, welfare and improve the quality of life for the better.

This multicultural education strengthening activity at the majelis taklim received a good response from the community and the taklim board management in Sitiung Dharmasraya, especially the majelis taklim groups that were initially not well structured and did not have a directed system. Through discussions, questions and answers, and expository information regarding the values of multiculturalism, they feel the importance of third parties to provide input, enlightenment in

opening insights that are considered new and innovative. So that they open their horizons and awareness always to gather together, even though they do not have systematic material, but many things can be discussed together regarding the condition of society and the condition of the generation that is faced with various challenges and global influences that have been felt.³³

Firdaus, one of the leaders of the study group when interviewed on October 24, 2018 explained:

“After we participated in strengthening multicultural education, we felt that there were still many shortcomings of the recitation group that needed attention to be improved in the future. We gather just to carry out social gatherings occasionally to do recitations and even then it is not well structured and does not have innovative and integrative learning methods”.³⁴

Regarding the strengthening of multicultural education in the majelis taklim, Agusri Yusuf, one of the religious leaders who is also the leader of the majelis taklim in Sitiung Dharmasraya, said that through the activities so far, multicultural values have been found in the teaching materials at the majelis taklim that he leads. For example, related to educational equality, democratic principles, competing in doing good, forgiving others, the importance of living together, positive thinking, open-mindedness, and peace. However, Agusri Yusuf also acknowledged that there were still some lecturers who delivered lecture materials that still stigmatized and judged other different groups and materials that contained hate messages.³⁵

Based on interviews with several representatives of religious leaders and leaders of the majelis taklim above, it can be seen that the taklim groups in Sitiung Dharmasraya really

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0091-732X%281993%2919%3C3%3AMEHDDA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-N&origin=crossref>

³³Observasi pada *Workshop Pendidikan Multikultural Majelis Taklim di Sitiung*, 24 Oktober 2018.

³⁴Firdaus, (*Majelis Taklim* Leader), Interview, 24 Oktober 2018.

³⁵Agusri Yusuf (Religious Leaders), Interview, 30 Agustus 2018.

need strengthening, especially regarding the existence of recitation groups, preparation of structured materials, varied sources, and different delivery methods. wise. Moreover, integrative and interconnective learning becomes a transformative force capable of changing the pattern of relations between tribes and ethnicities in various aspects and dimensions. Multicultural education can also preserve the noble values of inter-ethnic culture and lead to a strong culture in the community.

The government has made a policy with the issuance of Law Number 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture. This law has provided guidance for the community to build a local culture, which will strengthen the national culture. The development of community cultural values can express freedom and creativity and actualize the cultural values it adheres to. With the issuance of Law no. 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture, the role of culture is to enrich cultural diversity, strengthen identity, national unity and integrity, improve people's welfare, and influence the direction of development of world civilization. The above law also provides protection for the cultural diversity of the community, strengthens community identity and maintains community unity, which means preserving socio-cultural values will further maintain the unity and tolerance of a community and can even lead to prosperity for the community, this condition is expected by a multicultural society. It is following the local Minangkabau wisdom, "*Bersilang kayu di bawah tungku, disitu api mako idnik*". This means that differences are not coming to divide but differences bring grace to humans.³⁶

Islam also gives a view through the letter Al Hujurat: 13 Allah says "O humankind; indeed we created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you

may know each other, indeed the noblest of you is the most noble of you. pious among you, verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing." Through the verse above, it can be understood that Allah does not distinguish humans by calling all humans, not only certain people, then Allah creates various ethnic groups, ethnicities and even genders, not division and divorce, but to understand each other, if they understand each other If this is developed in a socio-cultural value, it will create peace, harmony and harmony in society.³⁷

Strengthening multicultural education through the majelis taklim in Sitiung strengthens divinity, openness, freedom, tolerance, and cooperation. The religious value means that people practice the religion they follow according to the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet so that they become obedient servants. The value of openness is willing to receive and give, listen and want to learn and ultimately make changes for the better. The value of openness is something critical which is characterized by ability and intelligence in the Qur'an called the *Ulul Albab*. Not a priori with change, willing to be criticized in the end becomes someone who is critical. Developing an attitude of togetherness in a multicultural society is by prioritizing similarities over differences, seeking common ground rather than points of contention. Too much emphasis on differences will make people vulnerable. Excessive exposure of differences and unnecessary rivalry (*jidat*) in the public sphere can lead to negative perceptions, anti-pathy, and fights between organizations.

Develop tolerance, mutual respect, and tolerance. Tolerance means being aware of differences, understanding the causes of differences, allowing other parties to carry out worship according to their beliefs, and to some

³⁶Safrudin, S.Sos, M.Si (Kabag Kesra Kantor Bupati Dharmasraya), *Workshop Pendidikan Multikultural Majelis Taklim di Sitiung*, 24 Oktober 2018.

³⁷Dolizal Putra, S.Ag, MA (Tokoh Agama Kabupaten Dharmasraya), *Workshop Pendidikan Multikultural Majelis Taklim di Sitiung*, 24 Oktober 2018.

extent facilitating, protecting, and ensuring security. There are examples of how the scholars of madhhab respect each other in history, glorify, even in some cases, practice the opinions of "different madhhabs".

The value of cooperation as in Islam commands its adherents to live in harmony by establishing *ukhuwah* and mutual cooperation, helping (*taawun*) in goodness and piety and prohibiting cooperation in sinful acts and enmity.

The current context demands that the multicultural society has a moderate attitude to avoid skepticism and radicals and excessive fanaticism. History records excessive fanaticism, and excessive radicalism is a setback. So moderate attitude is a way out of hostility, developing a moderate attitude means practicing etiquette in differences and manners of accepting and acknowledging differences and acknowledging the existence of different groups, developing a positive attitude towards different groups which in the end is not looking for weaknesses against other groups but looking for common ground.

Conclusion

Majelis taklim as a non-formal Islamic educational institution can be an effective da'wah media for providing a space for religious understanding that is diverse, varied, and not singular, but can also function the other way around. In the context of the multicultural community of Sitiung Dharmasraya, the majelis taklim are attended by people who come from various elements and backgrounds and different mindsets, but the attitude of togetherness is maintained and synergized. In addition, the existing taklim groups are used as a forum for increasing awareness of community members who are starting to feel the impact of modernization and globalization and are starting to plunder solidarity and tolerance.

The strengthening of multicultural education carried out through participatory action research in this study shows that the

majelis taklim can function as a center for peace values, a center for change agents to become better Muslims, a community development center, communication and information center, a cadre center and a control agent. social. Among the crucial materials that were strengthened were democracy, justice and law, cultural values and ethos, equality in differences, ethnicity, religious beliefs, cultural expressions, private and public spheres, human rights, cultural rights of the people, and other related concept.

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