

## Building Religious Harmony with A Humanistic Education: The Potential and Strategies to Overcome the Conflict Threat in *Pesantren*

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### ABSTRACT

Religious harmony is increasingly challenged by rising fanaticism, exclusivity, and intolerance, particularly in religious educational settings. This study analyzes the strategy of fostering religious harmony through a humanistic education approach at Pesantren Khaffiah Village in Batang Regency, Central Java. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research explores the pesantren's educational practices and their role in promoting interreligious understanding. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation to examine how humanistic values are integrated into religious instruction. The study identifies four main threats to religious harmony: excessive fanaticism, social exclusivity, the spread of intolerant ideologies, and internal conflict. These issues are rooted in a limited understanding of peaceful religious teachings among new students, social isolation, and socio-economic disparities. In response, Pesantren Khaffiah implements a four-pronged strategy grounded in Islamic humanism. This includes (1) teaching classical Islamic texts emphasizing peace and ethics, such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and *Riyadhus Shalihin*, (2) organizing a "Humanistic Learning Day" that addresses humanitarian issues, (3) launching the "Santri Peduli" social service program to foster inter-organizational cooperation, and (4) offering the "Art of Harmony" extracurricular initiative to build tolerance through artistic collaboration. These findings contribute to the development of a humanistic education model aimed at promoting religious harmony in Islamic boarding schools. The model offers practical insights for Islamic educational institutions seeking to nurture peaceful coexistence in diverse religious contexts.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Religious conflict continues to emerge in various parts of the world, often leading to violence and long-term societal divisions. These conflicts, rooted in ideological, political, and cultural differences, are not confined to any one region. For instance, the 2002 Bali bombing in Indonesia, carried out by Islamist extremists, resulted in the deaths of over 200 people and became a symbol of how religious ideology can be manipulated to justify acts of terror (Hitchcock, Michael, & Nyoman, 2005). Gould (2005) underscores that similar incidents have occurred globally, reflecting how religious motives, whether direct or indirect, can fuel violence. Schulze (2019) interprets the Bali bombing as a retaliatory act linked to earlier sectarian violence in Poso and Ambon, which resulted in extensive casualties and destruction. Lewis et al. (2013) further note that the perpetrators framed their actions as a continuation of a broader religious struggle, drawing on narratives from conflicts such as the Afghanistan war. In Australia, comparable tensions arose after anti-terrorism operations in Sydney and Melbourne, leading to a spike in anti-Muslim attacks and highlighting the broader societal impact of religiously framed conflicts (Cherney & Kristina, 2016). These examples underscore the complexity and global scope of religious conflict and its devastating consequences.

In response, scholars have advocated for educational interventions that promote religious tolerance and peace. Tan (2008) argues for the early integration of religious harmony into educational curricula, while Widodo (2020) emphasizes the critical role of humanistic education in fostering interfaith understanding. Kruja (2022) highlights the importance of community institutions and international student networks in cultivating religious harmony, and Karliani, Saefulloh, and Triyani (2021) advocate for empowering these structures to promote tolerance and humanistic values. Despite these insights, research specifically examining religious conflict through the lens of humanistic education remains limited. Fox (2004) notes the importance of learning from past religious violence to build a culture of peace, warning against allowing historical grievances to justify future conflict.

This study aims to address this gap by examining the role of humanistic education in fostering religious harmony at the Khaffiah Village Islamic Boarding School (pesantren) in Batang Regency, Central Java. The research focuses on three objectives: (1) identifying potential threats to religious harmony within the pesantren environment; (2) analyzing the underlying factors contributing to these threats; and (3) exploring the strategies implemented by the pesantren to address them. According to Zimmermann (2012), humanistic education offers a vital foundation for nurturing interreligious dialogue and understanding, particularly among youth. The Khaffiah Village pesantren serves as a strategic site for this inquiry, given its influence as a local educational institution within a culturally and religiously diverse community. Understanding how this pesantren navigates challenges to religious harmony will provide valuable insights for the development of a humanistic, tolerance-based educational model applicable to similar institutions across Indonesia and beyond.

The conceptual foundation of this study is grounded in the humanistic theories of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, both of whom emphasize the inherent potential of individuals and the importance of nurturing environments in realizing that potential. In the context of pesantren education, Maslow's theory of self-actualization offers a relevant framework, particularly his proposition that basic psychological and safety needs—such as the need for acceptance, security, and belonging—must be fulfilled before individuals can attain personal growth and actualization (Maslow, 1998). Applied to religious education, this suggests that a harmonious learning environment where students feel respected and valued is essential for fostering open, interfaith engagement and preventing conflict. In such an environment, students are more likely to internalize values of tolerance and mutual respect, laying the groundwork for sustained religious harmony.

Complementing this, Carl Rogers' person-centred educational theory contributes valuable insights for addressing social tensions within pesantren settings. Rogers posits that education should prioritize the development of empathy, authenticity, and interpersonal understanding (Kahn & Rachman, 2000). When educators act as facilitators rather than authoritarian figures, they create a space in which students can explore their identities, express themselves freely, and learn to appreciate diverse perspectives. This approach not only promotes emotional growth but also equips students with the interpersonal skills

necessary to navigate religious diversity peacefully. As Froom (1994) affirms, supportive educational environments significantly enhance students' capacity to resolve conflicts constructively, thereby strengthening unity and promoting long-term social cohesion. Together, the humanistic principles of Maslow and Rogers provide a robust theoretical lens through which to examine the role of pesantren in cultivating religious harmony.

## 2. METHODS

This study investigates the strategic implementation of a humanistic education approach to foster religious harmony at the Khafifah Village Islamic Boarding School in Batang Regency. A qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' lived experiences and to explore the complexities of social threats and conflict resolution within the pesantren environment (Bashkarada, 2014). This method is particularly suited to examining how educational practices are perceived and internalized by individuals in specific socio-cultural settings.

Data collection involved three main techniques: semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and participatory observation. Interviews were conducted with four pesantren administrators and three senior students who had been enrolled for more than five years. The administrators were selected based on their active roles in curriculum development and policy implementation, providing insights into institutional strategies. Meanwhile, the students offered valuable perspectives on the reception and impact of the pesantren's humanistic educational practices (Bachiochi & Weiner, 2004).

Supporting documents, such as curriculum materials and educational guidelines, were examined to identify content that promotes values of tolerance, empathy, and interreligious understanding. In addition, participatory observation was conducted within classroom settings and during students' daily activities. This allowed the researcher to observe the integration and practical application of humanistic principles in both formal and informal learning contexts. Observational data provided nuanced insights into student interactions and behavioral patterns, complementing the information gathered from interviews and documents. This triangulated approach ensured a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of how the pesantren addresses social threats and fosters religious harmony through humanistic education (Polkinghorne, 2005).

**Table 1.** Informant Profile

No.	Initials	Age	Position	Gender
1	KV1	27	Management	Man
2	KV2	31	Management	Woman
3	KV3	21	Management	Man
4	KV4	17	Management	Man
5	KV5	18	Students	Woman
6	KV6	19	Students	Man
7	KV7	19	Students	Man

In this study, data validation was carried out through triangulation of sources and methods to ensure the accuracy of information (Flick, 2004). The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, which consists of three main steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M., 1984). In the data reduction stage, information from interviews and documentation is filtered and selected based on relevance to the research theme. Data that did not fit the focus of the study were eliminated, while relevant information was organized to identify key patterns and themes. The next step is data presentation, where the reduced data is presented in the form of narratives, tables, or graphs to make it easier to understand and analyze. The presentation of this data allows researchers to see the relationships between various elements of information, making it easier to identify emerging themes. In the final stage, conclusions are drawn by analyzing data thoroughly to understand the strategies applied in the

development of religious harmony (Houghton, C., Murphy, K., Shaw, D., & Casey, D, 2015). This process involves reflecting and interpreting data to relate the findings to humanistic educational theories, ensuring that the strategies identified support the values of harmony and tolerance in accordance with the educational approach applied in the pesantren.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Identification of potential threats to religious harmony in Pesantren Khafifah Village

The findings of the study show that there are four potential threats that can erode awareness of religious harmony in Khafifah Islamic Boarding Schools, especially among new students who are not familiar with Islamic boarding school values. These threats include excessive fanaticism, exclusivity and social isolation, the spread of intolerance, and the potential for internal conflicts. Excessive fanaticism arises when students feel that only their teachings are true. This has the potential to trigger rejection of other beliefs and create tension. Exclusivity and social isolation occur when students limit interaction with outsiders, reinforcing barriers of difference that hinder interfaith dialogue, even between religions. The spread of intolerance also contributes to negative stereotypes that trigger hostility. This intolerant attitude is reinforced by misinformation and bias, exacerbating tensions between students. Meanwhile, the potential for internal conflicts arises from differences of views related to teachings or leadership in the pesantren itself. This disagreement not only damages internal harmony, but can also spread to the wider community.

The phenomenon of excessive fanaticism among students is only evident when they show extreme tendencies in understanding religious teachings. KV1 revealed, *"There are students who think that following the Shafi'i school is the only right way, and they refuse to discuss other schools."* This is exacerbated by KV2 which stated, *"In the discussion of differences of opinion in the law of ablution, some students flatly reject the interpretation of other madhhab."* This attitude shows that there is resistance to the plurality of views that are more inclusive in religious discussions. KV5 also added, *"When we discuss fiqh issues, there are students who feel that only their views are legitimate, and they accuse those who are different from them of being heretical."* This phenomenon can be explained through Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (2009), which emphasizes that individual behavior is studied through observation of their social environment. In this context, students who have just joined tend to adopt a rigid view because they are exposed to an environment that emphasizes one interpretation more. In the view of Henri Tajfel (1996), suggesting that individuals often identify with certain groups to reinforce their identity has the potential to fuel exclusivity and fanaticism towards different views.

In addition, observations on August 21, 2024, showed that there was an exclusive phenomenon and social isolation in Islamic boarding schools. This was seen when new students from certain regions formed their own groups and were reluctant to interact with students from other regions. KV2 explained, *"There was once a new student from Kendal Regency, he usually only gathers with his fellow villagers, and this causes them to rarely participate in discussions with students from Batang, even though we are still cognates."* This isolation is most evident when there are weekly discussion activities, such as when discussing the topic of different views of the sect. *"When talking about the pilgrimage to the grave, the group I am referring to (from Kendal) is very dominant, and they refuse to listen to the arguments of the students from Batang who are more moderate,"* explained KV6. Students from this group often only listen to the opinions of their group members and ignore the views of others. *"I have seen a senior student who has been here for a long time, he tried to convey his views on pilgrimage, but was immediately cut off by a new student with a strong religious background,"* said KV7. This has the potential to cause division among Islamic boarding schools.

Observations on August 19, 2024 also show that the spread of intolerance appears in discussion forums, especially for new students who freely discuss sensitive religious issues. KV3 mentioned, *"In a discussion about the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday, there was a new student who refused to listen to the argument that celebrating Maulid can be considered heresy and only wanted to hear the views that supported the celebration."* This is exacerbated by the judgmental attitude shown by KV6 who said, *"My friend said otherwise, students who celebrate Maulid are infidels, because it is not taught by the prophet."* This kind of attitude reinforces polarization and creates distance between groups with different views. KV7 added, *"When there*

are students who follow a different view, such as in the issue of tahlilan, they are immediately considered deviant by new students who are not familiar with the world of Islamic boarding schools." The theory of Identity vs. Role Confusion from Erik Erikson (1959) states that individuals in adolescence and young adulthood seek to find their identity through social interaction and religious values. In the context of pesantren, the inability of students to accept differences reflects the confusion of roles and the identity crisis, where group identity becomes more dominant than a comprehensive understanding of religious teachings.

Another threat that can erode the awareness of religious harmony is the potential for internal conflicts that can increase when students do not find agreement in their daily activities. KV4 said, "There has been a dispute between two groups of students about who should lead the congregational prayer, because they come from different mass organization backgrounds." This conflict is also seen in the difference in learning methods, as stated by KV5, "In learning activities, some of us prefer to follow traditional learning methods, while others want a more modern method, by using Power Point, even though the pesantren has not provided support for it." Furthermore, KV6 added, "When we plan extracurricular activities, there are often conflicts about who should be responsible, because of group competition." These conflicts reflect tensions arising from differences in backgrounds and individual preferences in a community that is supposed to be harmonious. Lewis Coser (1957) explained that conflict is the result of differences in interests and values that must be managed to prevent negative impacts on social cohesion. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this conflict requires effective management to prevent its impact on the relationship between students and their daily activities. Without a good conflict resolution strategy, this tension can worsen social relations and disrupt daily life in pesantren (Oberschall, 1978).

Openness to new views without losing religious identity is a big challenge for pesantren when facing changing times. KV1 revealed, "Some students are starting to be interested in more liberal views, such as supporting gender equality in religious roles, which are contrary to the traditional teachings of Islamic boarding schools." This reflects the conflict between traditional values and the demands of modernization. As revealed by KV6, "There was a discussion where some students argued that women should be given more roles in the pesantren, but conservative groups strongly rejected this,". This tension shows a sharp difference of opinion regarding the role of gender in the pesantren community. KV7's opinion that stated, "When we discuss the issue of gender roles, some students even feel that the tradition of the pesantren is being attacked," confirms that this change is considered a threat to the cultural and religious identity of the pesantren. In Karl Marx's theory of Social Conflict (1973), the ideological battle between those who support change and conservatives who maintain tradition can disrupt the main focus of religious education. This conflict illustrates how social change can create tensions in existing social structures, highlighting the difficulty of balancing innovation with the preservation of tradition.

Social media is often a means for students to get inaccurate information and reinforce intolerance. KV2 revealed, "There are some students who are affected by online lectures that are often provocative and spread hatred against other groups." This content is often accessed without filters, causing distortions in religious understanding. "I have seen students who have turned more radical after following accounts on social media that spread extreme ideologies," said KV6. This certainly has an impact on the atmosphere in the pesantren, because the affected students often try to impose their views on others. "Some of them are starting to teach us that tolerance is a weakness, and we have to be tougher on those who are different," KV7 said. This analysis can be understood through the theory of mass communication by Marshall McLuhan (2019), specifically the concept of "medium is the message," which emphasizes that the way information is conveyed affects the way it is received and processed. Social media, as a new medium, expands the reach of information in a way that is often unfiltered and unverified, accelerating the spread of radical ideologies. McLuhan argues that the medium itself serves as a message that shapes social understanding and interaction. In addition, the social theory of radicalization by Roger Griffin (2018) emphasizes how individuals can be influenced by extreme ideologies through consistent and persuasive content exposure, which seems to correspond to changes in student attitudes as described by KV6 and KV7. This explanation shows that social media can be a tool for the spread of intolerant ideologies that threaten social harmony, especially in the context of religious communities such as Islamic boarding schools.

### 3.2 Analysis of factors supporting the emergence of threats that erode religious harmony

This study found that the threat to the erosion of religious harmony attitudes in Khafifah Islamic boarding schools is caused by several key factors. First, the lack of peaceful religious understanding among new students is the main cause, because they often do not have adequate knowledge about the values of tolerance and harmony in religious teachings. This makes them more susceptible to extreme or exclusive views. Second, group influence and social isolation have exacerbated this problem; Students who are isolated or belong to homogeneous groups often experience radicalization of thoughts that reinforce intolerant attitudes. Third, social and economic disparities among students also contribute to internal conflicts and tensions, exacerbating misunderstandings and deepening differences in attitudes towards harmony. These three factors simultaneously create an environment in which an attitude of harmony is difficult to maintain, and there is a need for more effective educational and social strategies to address these issues in pesantren. By overcoming this problem, it is hoped that a more harmonious and inclusive atmosphere can be created in the pesantren environment.

KV1 informant stated, "New students often do not understand the values of peace in religious teachings, which causes minor conflicts between them." This is supported by KV2 who added, "There is a discrepancy between the understanding of old and new students regarding the teachings of tolerance." KV3 also noted, "The lack of introduction to harmonious values from the beginning makes it difficult for new students to adjust." Meanwhile, KV4 revealed, "Teaching about tolerance has not been an important part of the curriculum for new students, so they are not ready to face diversity." These factors reflect the importance of understanding and applying the value of tolerance from the beginning for new students. In this context, Lev Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural theory is relevant, as it emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural context in learning. Vygotsky (2022) argues that individual learning and development are greatly influenced by social interaction, and without effective teaching of tolerance, new students may not gain the understanding necessary to adapt to diversity. In addition, Henri Tajfel's (1974) theory of Social Identity is also relevant, because differences in understanding between old and new students can cause conflicts due to differences in group norms and social identities.

The influence of groups and social isolation are also factors that play a significant role in raising awareness of religious diversity in the pesantren environment. According to KV5, "Students who belong to homogeneous groups tend to have a harder time accepting different views, which is a serious problem related to the awareness of religious tolerance." This suggests that the existence of socially isolated groups can create an environment in which heterogeneity is perceived as a threat, thus exacerbating the inability to accept differences. KV6 added, "Social isolation makes students feel less integrated with the wider pesantren community, which exacerbates intolerance." The attitude of isolation makes students less interactive with diverse perspectives. In addition, KV7 highlighted, "new students with this character are often trapped in echo chambers, where their views are not challenged constructively," leading to the strengthening of one-sided views without constructive discussion. This was clarified by KV1 who stated that "children with this kind of character will have very limited communication, their perspective is not wide." This limited communication exacerbates divisions, adding to the inability to resolve conflicts constructively and sustainably. The Echo Chamber Theory (2016) by Cass Sunstein explains how individuals in homogeneous groups reinforce their beliefs in the absence of interaction with diverse views, while Social Constructivism Theory by Vygotsky (2018) helps explain how social isolation affects the process of social integration and tolerance in communities.

In addition to the above, this study also found that social and economic disparities are also factors that have the potential to erode awareness of diversity and a sense of togetherness. KV2 explained, "Students from lower economic backgrounds have the potential to feel marginalized compared to students from more established backgrounds." This inequality worsens the relationship between students, as stated by KV3, "This inequality causes tensions that often explode in the form of conflicts." This gap leads to the separation into more homogeneous groups, as KV5 mentioned, "This gap worsens the relationship between students, causing them to tend to separate into more homogeneous groups, not blending in with others." These data show that economic and social inequality not only exacerbates internal conflicts but also affects social cohesion in Islamic boarding schools, which needs to be addressed to create a more harmonious environment. The Social Classification Theory by Max Weber (1976) can explain the impact of social and economic disparities in creating

inequalities in access and opportunity, which triggers tensions in society. In addition, the theory of Conflict by Karl Marx (1975) is also relevant, because Marx proposed that social class inequality can cause tension and conflict in society, including in the pesantren environment.

In the context of group influence, Observations on July 12, 2024 show that there are groups that dominate, as noted by KV6: "Senior students usually open up opportunities to jointly form a dominating group, especially when they feel threatened by the presence of students from different backgrounds." This is reinforced by KV7 who added, "Seniority and junior age are indeed a problem, but we always try to minimize this as best as possible." In addition, KV2 points out that "Lack of integration between groups leads to increased misunderstandings and conflicts." This phenomenon reflects the concept of social identity theory introduced by Henri Tajfel (2010), which explains how individuals in a group tend to show bias towards other groups in order to maintain and reinforce their own group identity. This theory suggests that the strengthening of attitudes of intolerance and division between groups can occur as a result of a strong group identification mechanism. In addition, the theory of intergroup conflict put forward by Muzafer Sherif is also relevant here, as it explains how competition and inequality between groups can trigger conflicts and tensions, worsening relationships between members of different groups. KV4 said, "sometimes senior students have good intentions, to educate new students so that they can have a more inclusive view of Islam, but some of the ways that are done sometimes need to be criticized, they need to be more subtle."

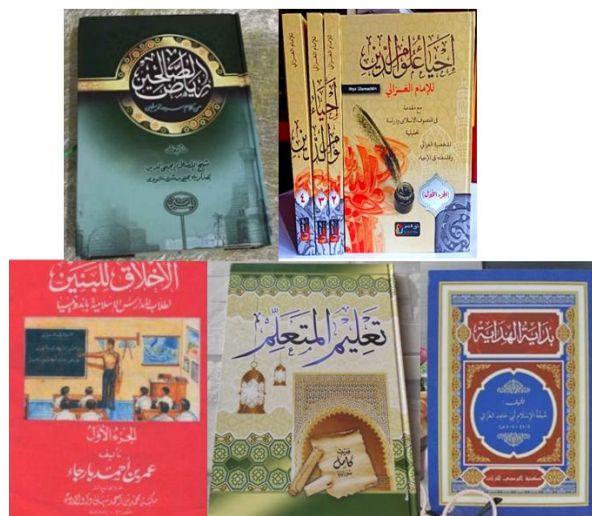
The lack of understanding of the teachings of the religion of peace among new students is an important highlight. KV3 stated, "Education about tolerance and harmony has not been given comprehensively to new students, brands need time to learn." KV4 added, "Old students usually help us guide new students about the values of peace." KV5 revealed, "We are responding to this seriously, either through the study of the interdisciplinary curriculum or the public relations values in Islamic teachings." In addition, KV6 also noted, "Many new students feel confused and not ready to face diversity in Islamic boarding schools." These data show that there is a gap in the pesantren education system that needs to be overcome so that new students can be better prepared to face the existing social dynamics. Without adequate teaching about tolerance and harmony, new students may have difficulty adapting to the diverse pesantren environment (Johansson, T. R, 2024). It also reflects the importance of a more integrative and holistic approach to education, as proposed by the theory of Multicultural Education by James Banks (2023), which emphasizes the need for education that includes a variety of cultural perspectives to promote tolerance and harmony. In addition, Albert Bandura's theory of Social Learning is also relevant here, because it shows that learning often occurs through observation and imitation of other people's behavior (Rumjaun, A., & Narod, F., 2020), so the role of old students as a model of good behavior is crucial in guiding new students.

### ***3.3 Development Strategy of Religious Harmony Based on Humanistic Values in Pesantren Khafifah Village***

After successfully analyzing threats and factors that have the potential to degrade the awareness of religious harmony among students, this study succeeded in finding several strategic steps that Islamic boarding schools have taken to overcome these problems. The Khafifah Islamic Boarding School implements four main steps by integrating a humanistic education pattern based on Islamic values to strengthen religious harmony. The first step is the study of classic books that contain the value of peace, such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, *Al-Akhlaq Lil Banin*, and *Riyadhus Shalihin*, which are designed to instill a deep understanding of Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of tolerance and harmony. Second, the pesantren implements the "Humanistic Learning Day" Program which focuses on humanitarian issues, which provides a space for students to discuss and understand global and local humanitarian challenges from an Islamic perspective. Third, the "Santri Peduli" social activity is carried out by involving service across Islamic organizations, thereby encouraging collaboration and interaction between different Islamic groups to build a strong solidarity network. Fourth, the extracurricular program "Art of Harmony" is designed to encourage collaboration in the arts that strengthens tolerance and mutual respect between students.

The first strategy to build religious harmony through humanistic education has been implemented by the Khafifah pesantren by studying classic books that emphasize the values of peace and morals. One

effective approach is to integrate teachings from classical books such as Ihya' Ulumuddin and Bidayatul Hidayah in the religious education curriculum. KV1 explained, "Ihya' Ulumuddin in our program is very important. It teaches ethics and morals that support inner peace." These books, which are rich in teachings on ethics and morality, offer guidance on how individuals can achieve inner peace as well as build harmonious relationships with others. KV2 added, "The Bidayatul Hidayah study is important to teach students about maintaining harmonious relationships and facing conflicts." The study of these books contributes to instilling the values of tolerance and understanding of diversity. By applying these principles, pesantren education can help individuals understand and appreciate diversity through classical teachings that promote peace and harmony, as KV3 says, "The study of these books is very important to increase awareness of diversity based on humanistic values." It promotes the integration of peace values in daily life and social interaction.



**Figure 1:** The cover of the book studied by the pesantren to instill awareness of religious harmony based on humanistic values

In an effort to build the foundation of ethics and manners in social interaction in Islamic boarding schools, the study of classical books plays an important role. According to KV3, "In our curriculum, Al-Akhlāq Lil Banīn serves as a guide to building mutual respect." This book, along with other books, contributes to shaping the character of students through the teaching of moral and ethical values. In addition to Al-Akhlāq Lil Banīn, KV4 added, "The combination of Riyadhus Shalihin and Ta'lim Muta'allim in our teaching emphasizes the importance of ethics and manners in social interaction." The study of these books is carried out every week after the asr prayer, with each student reciting one book and given the opportunity to ask questions, which shows the integration between formal learning and open discussion. In Kohlberg's view, this process supports the moral development of students by increasing their understanding of ethical principles and social responsibility. He argues that continuous and reflective moral education, as applied in the study of these books, contributes to the improvement of individuals' ability to make better moral decisions (Kim, D., 2022). Thus, the teaching of these classic books not only strengthens the ethical foundation in the pesantren community but also facilitates the development of the character of the students as a whole.

**Table 2.** Schedule for Special Book Study at Khafifah Village Islamic Boarding School

No	Day	Book	Time	Location
1	Saturday	Ihya' Ulumuddin	16:00 - 17:20	Aula Pesantren
2	Sunday	Bidayatul Hidayah	16:00 - 17:20	Aula Pesantren
3	Monday	Al-Akhlāq Lil Banīn	16:00 - 17:20	Aula Pesantren
4	Tuesday	Ta'lim Muta'allim	16:00 - 17:20	Aula Pesantren
5	Wednesday	Riyadhus Shalihin	16:00 - 17:20	Aula Pesantren

Building religious harmony is closely related to the application of humanistic values contained in Islamic classics that have long been a spiritual and moral foundation. The KV3 informant affirmed that books such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and *Bidayatul Hidayah* by Imam Al-Ghazali underlined the importance of "self-awareness, concern for others, and character development as the foundation for interacting harmoniously." Meanwhile, KV1 mentioned that *Al-Akhlaq Lil Banin* and *Ta'lim Mutaalim* emphasized on "the formation of children's character and ethics in the teaching and learning process," which serves to build mutual respect and good communication ethics. On the other hand, KV2 revealed that *Riyadhus Shalihin* by Imam Nawawi reinforces "noble moral values and concern for the rights of others." In the context of building religious harmony, the application of these principles is very relevant because they not only teach about individual moral and ethical values, but also about how to foster harmonious social relationships. The implementation of these values is urgent, considering the challenges of modern times that require a more holistic approach in building tolerance and harmony in society.

**Table 3:** Humanistic values in book studies at Khafifah Pesantren

Book	Humanistic Values
<i>Ihya' Lyduddin</i>	Self-awareness and reflection (muhasabah) Concern for others (solemn) Character and moral development (akhlaq) Spiritual and temporal balance
<i>Bidayatul Hidayah</i>	Children's character education (tarbiyah) The importance of guidance and teaching from an early age Emphasis on good morals and manners (ethics) Parents' role models in educating children
<i>Al-Akhlaq Lil Banin</i>	Formation of children's character (akhlaq) The importance of moral and spiritual education Social and ethical skills in everyday interactions Development of the values of honesty and responsibility
<i>T'lam student</i>	Ethics of learning and teaching (adab al-ilm) Respect for knowledge and seekers Teachers' responsibilities towards students Communication and interaction ethics in the learning process
<i>Riyadhus Shalihin</i>	Development of noble morals and positive behavior (akhlaq) Concern for the rights of others and fair treatment Emphasis on worship and daily behavior in accordance with sharia Building character through worship and sunnah practices

The "Humanistic Learning Day" program which is carried out every week with a focus on human values such as peace and social justice shows an educational approach that is in line with humanistic learning theory. According to Carl Rogers (2021), humanistic learning emphasizes holistic individual development and a deep understanding of human values that support personal and social growth. As stated by KV1, this activity is centered on human values, while KV2 highlights the importance of reading the stories of humanitarian figures from Islamic history to provide an example to students. This is in line with learning principles that prioritize personal experience and reflection in building character and empathy. KV3 mentions the use of *walisongo* stories to teach tolerance and cooperation, which also reflects Lev Vygotsky's theory of social learning and interaction as a means of understanding social values (Taber, K. S., 2020). In addition, the discussion on human rights explained by KV4 serves to deepen students' understanding of their rights and obligations as part of a global society. Through these activities, the 'Humanistic Learning Day' program aims to integrate human values practically in the learning process, thus helping students to develop not only as intelligent individuals, but also as caring and ethical members of society.

In addition, the 'Santri Peduli' program shows how social activities can strengthen social involvement and responsibility among students. According to Abdullah Hasan et al. (2020), social learning occurs through observation and imitation of other people's behavior in a social context. KV1 said that the giving

of sacrificial meat to families from various religious backgrounds shows an effort to promote social inclusion and reduce the gap between groups. KV2 added that social service activities in poor villages and the distribution of basic necessities help improve access and quality of life for disadvantaged communities, which is a form of application of social justice principles. Meanwhile, KV3 noted the involvement of students in teaching and improving public facilities such as places of worship, which shows an active role in improving the quality of life of the community. KV4 underlined that the purpose of this activity is to teach students about social care and responsibility, in accordance with the theory of social responsibility which suggests that engaging in social activities helps to form positive identities and values.

The next findings show that the 'Art of Harmony' initiative involving students in art and cultural activities with students from other schools, as described by KV1, KV2, KV3, and KV4, shows significant efforts in promoting tolerance and diversity through artistic expression. McVeigh (2020) explained that social interactions that occur in the context of art can expand individuals' understanding of various cultural identities and values. Activities such as drama performances and music performances carried out in this program not only provide opportunities for students to collaborate with students from different backgrounds but also strengthen mutual understanding and tolerance (KV2, KV4). Collaboration with students from Muhammadiyah and Persis, as mentioned by KV3, creates opportunities for students to face and celebrate diversity. Durkheim (2023) states that interactions between different groups help build social cohesion and reduce prejudice. This initiative not only serves as a platform to express humanistic messages, but also as a tool to create an inclusive atmosphere among students. Through the arts, the program seeks to create awareness of the importance of tolerance and cooperation between different groups, reflecting the broader principles of education and social integration.

In the context of education that prioritizes the values of empathy and social justice, the application of humanistic principles plays an important role. KV1 emphasizes that *"humanistic principles in learning are essential because they focus on developing individual potential and fulfilling psychological needs."* This is in line with the humanistic theory put forward by Carl Rogers (2000) who emphasizes that the development of self-potential is the key to effective learning. KV2 added, *"The teaching method we use involves group discussions, so that students can understand each other's experiences more deeply."* This approach reflects Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism, where social interactions such as group discussions help deepen understanding. Furthermore, KV3 explained, *"Students are also often involved in debates and role-playing on social issues, which hone critical thinking and problem-solving skills."* This activity supports the theory of critical education of Paulo Freire (2002) which encourages critical reflection on social reality. KV4 added that *"the activity allows students to apply humanistic values in daily life,"* emphasizing that education should support the development of character and social-emotional skills.

Regular evaluation of humanistic programs in pesantren has an important role in increasing the effectiveness and relevance of the values taught. According to KV1, "the evaluation is conducted through surveys and feedback from students and the community," which reflects a participatory approach in data collection for program assessment. KV2 asserts, *"evaluation results are critical to improving programs and adapting them to evolving needs,"* aligned with the principles of Stufflebeam's CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) Model, which emphasizes the importance of feedback for program adjustments (Gunung, I. N., & Darma, I. K., 2019). In addition, KV3 said that meetings with administrators and students were conducted "to discuss the results of the evaluation," reflecting collaborative efforts in the process of continuous improvement. KV4 added, *"The evaluation process helps identify the strengths and weaknesses of humanistic programs,"* By integrating this feedback, pesantren can be more effective in developing humanistic values in a sustainable manner.

Collaborative programs such as cultural festivals have a significant impact in strengthening the relationship between pesantren and interfaith communities. KV1 emphasized that *"this kind of activity strengthens the bond between the pesantren and the community,"* in line with KV2's expression, *"this activity involves the community in social projects to strengthen social bonds,"* in line with KV3's view that "the active participation of students in the planning and implementation of activities shows the importance of direct involvement." This data supports the theory of John Dewey (2003) which emphasizes direct involvement as a way to strengthen a sense of responsibility and connection with the community. In addition, KV4

highlights that "this program allows interaction between the community and students to build mutual understanding," in accordance with Edward Said's (2013) theory of intercultural communication, which emphasizes the importance of intercultural dialogue in reducing prejudice and increasing understanding. This collaboration not only builds a harmonious relationship between the pesantren and the surrounding community, but also contributes to the formation of a more inclusive and coherent society.

The use of technology in education in Islamic boarding schools plays an important role in expanding access and deepening humanistic values such as peace and social justice. KV1 explained that "technology allows students to access materials related to peace and social justice online," thereby expanding the scope of learning beyond traditional resources. KV2 added that "webinars with humanitarian experts serve to broaden students' horizons," providing a first-hand perspective from experienced practitioners. KV3 notes that "educational apps support learning about human rights," enriching the learning experience with relevant and up-to-date material. Meanwhile, KV4 observed that these technological innovations "not only expand access, but also increase student engagement in learning," with a positive impact on their motivation and participation.

### **3.4 Analysis and policy contribution**

In the context of Carl Rogers' humanistic education, an approach that emphasizes the potential of individuals to develop freely and authentically is very relevant in responding to threats to religious harmony among students. Rogers argues that education should focus on learner-centered personal development, taking into account their emotional and psychological needs. The implementation of the "Humanistic Learning Day" program and the "Santri Peduli" social activities in pesantren is a reflection of this approach, because it prioritizes empathy, openness, and understanding between people. A more balanced education, such as the study of the classics that teach peace, is also in line with Rogers' view that a supportive learning environment will reduce resistance to change and increase social awareness. Compared to other humanistic figures such as Abraham Maslow, who emphasized self-actualization, this pesantren approach aims to achieve social harmony through collaboration and active involvement. Meanwhile, Erich Fromm, who focuses on the human need for freedom and healthy social relationships, is also relevant here. Extracurricular activities such as "Art of Harmony" involving art collaboration can be understood as an effort to create stronger social connectedness, reduce isolation, and overcome social exclusivity. Overall, this pesantren strategy reflects a humanistic educational approach that emphasizes experiential learning, self-development, and harmonious social interaction.

The findings of the first study highlight threats to the awareness of religious harmony among students such as excessive fanaticism, social exclusivity, and intolerant attitudes. This is in line with the findings of Mufid (2020), who examined fanaticism and social exclusivity among students, as well as Hakim and Nasir (2021), who discussed the influence of social groups in forming intolerant attitudes. In addition, this study also found that social and economic disparities play a role in triggering potential internal conflicts in Islamic boarding schools, which have also been analyzed by Rahmat and Fauzan (2022) and Sari and Maulana (2020). However, the strategic steps implemented by pesantren to reduce conflicts, such as the study of classical books and the art of harmony program, show a more practical approach in responding to this problem. The difference lies in the approach and solutions offered. Previous research, such as Syukur (2019) and Hidayat (2022) tended to focus on identifying the problem and the impact of these threats, while this latest study is more comprehensive in presenting concrete steps to overcome these challenges through humanistic educational strategies and Islamic values. For example, the integration of classical book studies, the "Humanistic Learning Day" program, and the art of harmony are new innovations that have not been discussed in depth in previous research. In addition, the focus on developing art-based extracurricular programs to encourage tolerance is also another difference, which is not fully explored in the study by Zuhri (2021).

This finding makes practical and theoretical contributions in the development of a strategy for the development of religious harmony based on humanistic education in Islamic boarding schools. In practical terms, the implementation of the "Humanistic Learning Day" program and social activities reflect an effective way to address the threat of religious harmony through an approach that emphasizes empathy,

openness, and collaboration between individuals. These programs show how humanistic values can be applied in the context of pesantren education to create an environment that supports experiential learning, self-development, and harmonious social interaction (Musthofa, M., & Zabidi, A. Z. M., 2023). This approach also shows that a more holistic education, which integrates classical values such as peace, is able to reduce resistance to social change among students. Theoretically, these findings reinforce Carl Rogers' view of the importance of learner-centered education, in which their emotional and psychological needs are taken care of (Kahn, E., & Rachman, A. W., 2000). In addition, the extracurricular programs offered are in line with the theory of Erich Fromm (1944) which emphasizes the importance of healthy social relationships and freedom in individual development. Thus, this research makes an important contribution to the literature of humanistic education, especially in the context of religious education that seeks to develop social harmony through an approach that emphasizes connectivity and active collaboration.

In criticizing the donations above, the policies that must be implemented need to consider strengthening the individual and social aspects of students in a more in-depth manner. Humanistic education, which focuses on the personal development and freedom of students, must be integrated more systematically in the formal and informal curriculum of Islamic boarding schools. The policy must encourage the training of teachers who are able to apply a holistic humanistic approach, including paying attention to the emotional and psychological aspects of students in various learning activities. On the other hand, programs such as "Humanistic Learning Day" and "Santri Peduli" should be evaluated periodically to ensure that they are not only symbolic, but also truly create space for dialogue, empathy, and cross-group cooperation. In addition, a more interdisciplinary approach, including the study of classical books with a humanistic approach, can be considered to increase the relevance of pesantren education in building religious harmony. In this case, extracurricular activities that emphasize art and collaboration, such as "The Art of Harmony," need to be expanded in scope to accommodate the diverse needs of students, including those with different interests and skills. This policy is expected to be able to strengthen harmony and reduce the potential for social exclusivity in the pesantren environment, thereby creating a more inclusive and collaborative learning atmosphere.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that four primary threats to religious harmony among students at the Khafifah Village Islamic Boarding School are excessive religious fanaticism, social exclusivity, the spread of intolerant attitudes, and the potential for internal conflict. These threats stem from a combination of factors, including limited understanding of peaceful religious teachings, the influence of socially isolating group dynamics, and underlying socio-economic inequalities. A key finding of this research is that the most significant driver of intolerance among students is the lack of balanced and inclusive religious education, particularly among new students.

In response to these challenges, the pesantren has implemented a four-pronged strategy grounded in Islamic humanistic education. This includes: (1) studying classical texts that emphasize peace and ethical conduct, (2) organizing a "Humanistic Learning Day" to explore humanitarian issues, (3) engaging students in "Santri Peduli" social outreach involving cross-organizational collaboration, and (4) offering the "Art of Harmony" extracurricular program to promote inter-student cooperation through the arts. These efforts have shown promise in fostering inclusive religious understanding and reducing the likelihood of conflict within the pesantren environment.

Despite these valuable insights, the study has several limitations. The focus on a single pesantren restricts the generalizability of findings to other contexts, particularly those with different cultural or religious dynamics. Additionally, the qualitative approach, while rich in detail, carries the risk of researcher bias and subjectivity. The limited sample size and time frame also constrain the depth and breadth of the analysis.

Future research should consider employing mixed-methods approaches and expanding the sample to include multiple pesantren across diverse regions. Incorporating the perspectives of broader stakeholders—such as local communities, religious leaders, and governmental bodies—would enrich the

analysis and contribute to the development of more comprehensive strategies for promoting religious harmony in Islamic educational institutions.

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