

**MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC
BOARDING SCHOOL
(A Descriptive Study of Pesantren DDI Mangkoso, South
Sulawesi)**

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Abstract;

The main objective of this research was to elaborate how *pesantren* contend with multicultural education. Qualitative methods including: interviews, focus group discussion (FGD) and detailed observations of the life of *pesantren* were used. The researcher also examined the wide range of literatures related to the topic. The research focused on *pesantren* Mangkoso Barru, Indonesia, representing traditional *pesantren* in the region of South Sulawesi. The data was collected from the teachers, students, *kyai* (religious leaders) in this particular *pesantren*. The findings suggest that *pesantren* have their own understanding regarding multicultural education. Their understandings were mainly based on the holy Koran without learning from western perspectives. They believe that human beings were created on the basis of difference, so people must appreciate one another. The differences related to language, race, religion, are a must. These concepts have been implemented in the *pesantren* curricula. The curricula are very inclusive and more opened to any difference. The *pesantren* provides different materials which come from different sects, and students. There is no enforcement from *pesantren* management to just learn from specific sect. In addition, expanding networks of *pesantren* is also inclusive. They have already collaborated with different organizations in relation to development of *pesantren* management. Another issue considered was its vision of leadership which is perceived as very open. The leader (*kyai*) are frequently involved in multicultural campaigns, such as seminars, workshops, and bench markings. They perceive that the progress of *pesantren*

depends strongly on the way the kyai deals with contemporary issues, including multiculturalism.

Keywords; *multicultural, education, pesantren, kyai, santri*

Introduction

The concept of multiculturalism is becoming a trending topic for the last decades. A huge number of researches focusing on multiculturalism might be easily found both through articles and books. Some argue that this issue need to be seriously taken into account considering many movements coming from the minority groups of religion, culture, and race, emerged to demand their existence being recognized by public society and state (Parekh, 2008). They insist on asking government to appreciate their existing on behalf of civil rights. Another point that might be considered is several conflicts based on races, ethnicity, religion, and culture that are happening across the globe, indicated the importance of implementing multiculturalism in the practical way. I believe that people who tend to commit violence or conflicts in the name of religion and culture demonstrated their inability to recognize the differences. In other words, they lacked understanding regarding multiculturalism. Unfortunately, in the context of Indonesia, the majority of people who got involved in a religious violence come from traditional Islamic school (*pesantren*) background.

Consequently, *pesantren*, as an interesting feature of Islamic education in Indonesia, is frequently perceived as a source of radicalism by Western media and Western policy makers (Lukens-Bull, 2008, p.1). That is to say that *pesantren* is anti-multiculturalism and ignoring the nature of difference. Contrary to this perception, Lukens-Bull (2008) contends that *pesantren* is not a center of radicalism but a source of anti-radicalism in the efforts to establish peace and harmony in the world. A number of values on multiculturalism, such as respect, anti-discrimination, have been taught in *pesantren*. Although multicultural education is originated from the United States and has slowly become one of the most important feature in its

education system (Geng, 2013), it does not mean that *pesantren* disassociate with this issue. This paper will then investigate how *pesantren* DDI Mangkoso deal with the multiculturalism through education. This takes on four related tasks. The first will review the literature on multicultural education and *pesantren*. The second will describe the research methodology which has been undertaken by the researcher. The third will be finding and discussions. The last will be conclusion or reflection.

Literature Review

1. Multicultural Education

Multicultural education can be defined as educational policies and practices that recognize, accept and affirm human differences and similarities related to gender, race handicap and class (Sleeter & Grant, 1988). Similarly, Banks (1989) also define multicultural education “as philosophical position and movement that deems that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions, including the staff, the norms, the values, the curriculum, and the student body”. Historically, the notion of multicultural education emerged during the civil rights movement of the 1960’s struggling for political power, freedom and economic integration in the United States. During that time, a number of oppressed groups demanded that public schools cover cultural and ethnic content. Although most of them are minority groups, they asked for recognition and equal treatment like the others. (Alismail, 2016; Mary Rogers, 1996; Kedourie, 1967; Monique, 1967). In the late 1960 and early 1970’s, there was an example of civil rights movement, namely, women’s right groups who advocated for this educational reform and called for learning institutions to provide equal opportunities for all the people that coming from different social background (Alismail, 2016). Their demand not only concern on economics level that is politics of redistribution, but mainly about politics of recognition (Lubis, 2015). In addition, the use of this terminology was strongly related to public policy in terms of finding solution of diversities and moral claims (Kymlica, 2001).

Due to the same condition and similar treatment for minority groups around the world, this theory has also been adopted and applied in other countries, including Indonesia, in the same manner at the end of the 20th. Geng (2013) clearly explain that the fact of multi ethnics among the human being is unquestionable and it is the basic tenet of multiculturalism. He goes on to state that the main feature of multicultural education was that it was generated based on the diversified culture different ethnic groups. There are at least three ideologies relating to this issue, that is assimilation, integration and multivariate. These ideologies are expected to match up the differences between different cultures of ethnic groups during different historical stages (Geng, 2013). Moreover, as contended by Banks (1988), multicultural education is a sort of education for people of color and it is intended to explore the diversities as a must. He treated multicultural education as a sort of reflection on ideas for the purpose of enabling all students from different cultures and different ethnics background to have equal access for educational opportunities and the same learning treatment from schools and teachers. Similarly, Anderson and Cushner (1994) stated that multicultural education is a type of education which mainly concerned on culture diversities.

The discourse of multicultural education is also strongly required to implement in practical way due to pessimistic attitude shown by certain people to this topic. Some argue that multicultural education merely work in theoretical framework, but it is still far away from the reality. In other words, both theory and practice were frequently not able to work together. Apart from these, multicultural education is believed as a progressive approach for transforming people into social justice. Through multicultural education, people are expected to eliminate the oppression and injustice, especially in education system. Aqsa Lubis (2009) pointed out that the ultimate goal of multicultural education is generating social change and further transforming three different strands, they are transformation of self, transformation of schools and schooling, and the

transformation of society. These three aspects are the kind of positive change in terms of education process. Moreover, multicultural education as a knowledge production is expected to play a significant role to move people from the tradition of intolerance to tolerance attitude in the context of diversities or differences (Derderian-Aghajanian, 2010). However, as stated by Alismail (2016), to create school atmosphere that support equal opportunities, social justice, or fair education is a big challenging for teachers. Teachers must have adequate skills and strong commitment that enabling them to integrate the students' different cultures into classroom experiences. In this case, Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992), as cited by Alismail (2016), argue that multicultural education strongly need the development of three stages of understanding; awareness, knowledge and skills. These steps should be integrated by the teachers in order to have general perspective about the students and how to treat them in a fair process of education, especially, in the classroom activities. Alismail (2016) offers a strategy to cope with this challenging issue through providing preservice training which enabling teachers to identify the effect of cultural and racial diversity on students. Another goal of preservice training that might be considered is teachers can use this diversity as a classroom resource in teaching process.

2. Pesantren

Effendi (2008) defines *Pesantren* as a place where *santri* (student) live and study Islamic knowledge. It is a traditional institution of Islamic boarding school owned and led by *kyai*. Historically, the birth of *Pesantren* as an Islamic institution in the Indonesian archipelago is still debatable among the scholars, for example, as contended by Federspiel (2016), *pesantren* derives from the sixteenth century, when learning centers were established, known as a place of learning for the Islamic faithful (*santri*). While, Lukens-Bull (2008) stated that *pesantren* emerged earlier, around in the thirteenth century. Its emergence is nearly as old as Islam in Java itself. Both in print, and oral tradition, as Lukens-Bull (2008) continue to state that *pesantrens* are closely related to the *Wali Songo* (the nine saints who brought Islam to

Java). The first of the Wali Songo, Sunan Maulana Malik Ibrahim is said to have established the first pesantren in Java in 1399 (Common Era) in order to train *muballigh* (preachers) to further spread Islam in Java. So that, all kyais in Java were seen as the inheritors of the Wali Songo and all the pesantrens are the intellectual heritages left by the Wali Songo. Federspiel (2016) pointed out that by the seventeenth century, the pesantren on Java had become alternate centers of authority to the princely courts. The court stressed elaborate lifestyle based on old Javanese values of refinement, while the pesantren highlight on pious conduct and the hereafter. Since the nativity of pesantren around 14th century, pesantren is widely believed to contact with the colonialization (traders and travelers) in the archipelago. As noted in the history of Indonesia, the traders firstly touch the ground of Indonesia archipelago on the sixteenth century (1571) with a great mission to build economics relationship (Steenbrink, 2006). This mission has been changed into political affairs along with the long history between Indonesia and the colonial. The colonialist gradually exploited the natural resources of Indonesian archipelago and sending out the resources to their country. They usually cooperate with the local king to explore the natural resources.

During these contacts, Islam as a religion was the biggest population and pesantren had become a center of teaching Islam. A number of public protests were frequently acted by the Muslims due to colonial oppression. The religious leaders (kyais) were the central figure to mobilize people fighting against colonialist. That is why some people argue that the emergence of pesantren is strongly related to imperialism or colonialism. Kyais or religious leaders built pesantren not only as the center of developing Islamic education but also as the basis of fighting against colonialist. In some cases, as contended by Effendi (2008), kyais led people to fight against not only to the colonial regime, but also against local king who collaborate with the colonial government. It indicated that most kyais and santri (students) in the colonialization era were fighters, in the name of *jihad fii sabilillah*, standing at the front line against

colonialists. Some of them lost lives in defending their countries from colonialists. As contended by Azyumardi Azra (2006,p.2), since nineteenth century, during Netherland colonialization, some pesantren fight against colonialist through *uzlah* (stay away from colonialist power) because of lacking resources and power. This is popularly termed “silent opposition”. Pesantren took positioning in the rural area, away from the city. In other words, as explained by Federspiel (2016), in earlier times, the pesantren were a rural phenomenon, interacting with local communities. At the same time, schools under missionary flag grew up and developed in urban area. They further got financial support and sufficient facilities from the colonial government. Consequently, the quality of both schools is extremely different. Those who graduated from tertiary education under the church system have a remarkable achievement rather than those who finished in the pesantren. In addition, as stated by Jamhari (2006, p.2), both its system of education as well as its organization are much better than *pesantren*. However, this is not to say that all pesantren in the earlier times could not generate success persons in the Indonesia context. Beside limited facilities and lack of resources, a number of pesantren across Indonesia archipelago, including Pesantren DDI Mangkoso Barru, South Sulawesi, were able to create great person who further play a significant role in maintenance of Islamic education in the global context. an example of this might be noted in this sense, is K.H. Hasyim Asy’ari (1875-1947) who became the key person defending Islamic values in line with colonialism order. Kyai Hasyim was even being the founding father of NU (awakening of Ulama), it is nowadays as the great Muslim organization in the world. Similarly, in the South Sulawesi context, it is widely believed that K.H. Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle played a significant role in the development of Islamic education. Although he was a product of pesantren during the colonialism, he can build pesantren which in turn can largely contribute to educational development, especially in the area of Islamic teaching. Interestingly, he also organized Muslim scholars meeting and finally declared DDI as a Muslim

organization concerning in missionary and education situated in South Sulawesi.

Pesantren as a unique education institution has several important elements which further differentiate it from common education institutions. Dhofier (1985) identifies five important elements associated with any sorts of *pesantren*: *pondok* (dormitory), *mosque*, *kitab kuning* (classical Arabic text), *santri* (students), and *kiais* (religious leaders). According to Dhofier (1985), there are at least three reasons why the *pesantrens* provide a *pondok* for their *santri*. Firstly, it is based on the principal of equality. *Santri* who live in *pondok* are regarded as having the same social background without allowing privilege to any particular *santri*. All *santri* are under one rule which they must obey. Secondly, it enables *pesantren* to integrate all *santri*' activities, both academic and social (Saifullah, 1995), in order to prepare *santri* with the knowledge and skills which will be beneficial once they return to their own society. Lastly, as Dhofier (1985) suggests, it will build a strong relationship between *kiais* and *santri* that can be framed as a father-child relationship, and more importantly, it can ease the *kiais* watch on the *santri* over twenty four hours. Additionally, as contended by Suparto (2000), there is a reciprocal relationship between the *kiai* and *santri*. *Santri* regard the *kiai* as the representative of their parents. In turn, the *kiai* consider *santri* as the trusteeship of God that has to be cared for. Thus, as Suparto (2000) goes on, this reciprocal relationship leads *santri* to be loyal. The *santri* devote their service to the *kiais* in the sense of contributing their skills and power to the interest of *pesantrens*' development. Nevertheless, as noted by Geertz (1960, cited in Suparto, 2000) the *pesantren* is different from monasteries. *Santri* are not monks.

Another interesting feature of *pesantren* is the existence of mosque. Dhofier (1980) argues that a mosque is an inseparable element of a *pesantren* and is regarded as the most appropriate place for training *santri*. This notion shows how the standing of the mosque is strongly related to the *pesantren*, particularly in the practice of daily prayers, Friday sermons and prayers, as well as in the teaching of the classical Islamic text (*kitab kuning*).

Similarly, Woodward (1989, cited in Suparto, 2000) noted the mosque within the *pesantren* is a place where the children are introduced to the ritual component of the *santri* tradition. They are taught how to perform *shalat* (praying), to read Arabic script, and to recite the Koran. Another important activity held in the mosques is conducting a *pengajian* (religious teaching led by a *Kiai*) that is frequently held after *maghrib* (sunset) prayer and *subuh* (dawn prayer). Geertz (1960) stated that the mosque is where the *kiai* chants passages from books of religious commentary and the *santri* echo him, line by line. Moreover, in every part of the Muslim world, the mosque has continued to be the common place of meeting and the center of educational, administrative, and other cultural activities in the Muslim community (Dhofier, 1980). Furthermore, according to Suparto (2000), the mosque reflects the togetherness of the community. It can be clearly seen in the performance of daily prayer. People perform prayers together, uniting the community in a ritual of submission to Allah almighty. From this point of view, it can be assumed that the mosque is not only beneficial for *pesantren* but also for Moslems in general.

Another important key of *pesantren* is *kiai*. He is the central figure of the *pesantren*. Basically, the popularity of *pesantren* lies in how popular a *kiai* they have. In other words, the *kiai* plays a leading role to sustainability of the *pesantren*. Briefly put, Dhofier (1985) identifies three significant meanings of *kiai*. First of all, *kiai* may be defined as the person who has an association with superstition or magic. Secondly, it refers to elderly people who are respected by the community. Thirdly, *kiai* can be identified as a person who has a wide range of Islamic knowledge. According to Muthohar (2007), the term *kiai* derives from the Javanese word “*kijaji*” meaning a person who has a qualification in religious teaching. While in Sumatera, people prefer terms such as *tuan guru* or *tuan syaikh* to *kiai*. In West Java, *kiai* may be called *ajengan* and *elang*. Differently, the term *kiai* in Makassar where *Pesantren DDI Mangkoso* situated, are also called *anre gurutta*. Nevertheless, all these terms have similar meanings with the *kiai*, and as far as I am concerned, the term *kiai* is the most

used across all of Indonesia. Zuhri (1987) stated that *kiai* always refers to a male Islamic scholar while a female Islamic scholar is called *nyai*. According to Dhofier (1980), the *kiais* of major *pesantrens* have been able to extend their influence throughout the nation and beyond, and as a result, some of them have been appointed as government ministers, members of parliament, ambassadors, and as other high government officials. To become *kiai* as Dhofier (1980) continues, there are a number of stages. To begin with, he is usually a close relative of a *kiai*. Having completed his studies at various *pesantren*, the older *kiai* trains him to establish his own *pesantren*. Sometimes the older *kiai* leads and finances the new project because the young *kiai* is a good potential '*ulama*'. Afterwards, the old *kiai* will find him a spouse, and encourage him to use the latter part of his stay in the *pesantren* to become a *kiai*.

Santri is another important element of *pesantren*. The term *pesantren* itself, as contended by Dhofier (1980), derived from the word *santri* with the prefix *pe* and suffix *an*, thus literally meaning "the place of santri". According to John (cited in Dhofier, 1985), the term *santri* comes from the Tamil language in which *santiri* means Islamic teacher or the religion teacher. Similarly, Berg (1932, cited in Sedyawati, 1991) stated that the term *santri* is derived from the word *sastrī* which in the Sanskrit language indicates a person who has a deep knowledge of the holy book of Hindu. The word *sastrī* itself is adopted from the word *sastra*, which means the holy books or books of knowledge. Apart from the controversy as shown above, this study will focus on the core meaning of *santri* as student in an Islamic school (Woodward, 1989). This notion is based on the exploration of Geertz (1960) in Javanese *pesantren*. According to Geertz, the term *santri* has a narrow and a broad meaning. The first indicates a student in a religious school called a *pondok* or *pesantren*. In the broad view, a *santri* is a member of the part of the Javanese population who takes their Islam seriously, go to the mosque on Friday, perform prayers, and so forth. From my point of view, these definitions tend to narrow the term *santri* due to the scholars' focus merely on the Javanese population.

In fact, there are many *santri* spread across the country, including Makassar. Another definition that might be considered is that *santri* has a commitment to Islam, regardless of what and who they are (Mulkhan, 1994). As contended by Dhofier (1985), there are at least two kinds of *santri*; *santri mukim* and *santri kalong*. The first indicates those who come far from the *pesantren*, as a result, they have to stay in *pondok* during their schooling. Despite studying, as Dhofier stated, *santri mukim* are in charge of the *pondok's* daily affairs as well as teaching younger *santri* such as elementary version of the yellow book (*kitab kuning*). *Santri kalong* are those coming from the surrounding areas. They do not stay in the *pondok*, but just come daily to and from the *pesantren* in accordance with their learning timetable.

Based on the explanation above, I am of the opinion that *pesantren* play a leading role in educating people in Indonesia archipelago from ignorance to intelligence. Even before the formation of Indonesia as a state, *pesantren* had already contributed to empower people through education. That is why *pesantren* is believed as the oldest form of education in Indonesia archipelago. So, it can be stated that the history of Indonesia will be different without the existence of *pesantren*. In other words, the history of Indonesia could not be separated from the history of *pesantren*. As an educational institution, *pesantren* as a unique one compared to other sort of institution. Its role to maintain the tradition of Indonesia archipelago enable them to exist and survive along with the long history of Indonesia.

C. Research Methodology

The researcher employs qualitative methodology through case study. In relation to the method applied, I conducted participant observation and interview in my research. I also undertake participant observation by attending some religious lessons, involving in the dorm life of *pesantren* and performing some mystical practices. I visited *pesantren* DDI Mangkoso many times during January to August 2016 which ranged from several

hours and to several days. I also conducted in-depth interview with three groups of informants. These include students, teachers, and kyai (including his assistants). Semi-structure and unstructured interviews are used in interviewing those informants. Semi-structured interview is used to obtain some data on how the students perceive modernity. Similarly, I also used semi-structured interview to get some data on how the teacher respond to the modernity. Differently, with kyai (and his assistants) I employed unstructured interview. This method generates great benefits, for example, researcher can get involve in a spontaneous discussion, conversation and even argument. So, the data collected will be natural and more objective (Berg, 1994)

D. Findings and Discussions

It is important to note that all students (santri) of pesantren DDI Mangkoso live in the pesantren campus. There are at least three campuses in this pesantren. The first campus is located in the centre of sub-district Soppeng Riaja, Barru, South Sulawesi. This is the place where the university students study in the Institute of DDI Mangkoso. Here also the office of administration center and the house of pesantren leader. The second is situated in the hill of Soppeng Riaja which further called "the hill of Tonronge), it is about 4 km from the first one. It is the place where male santri from the level of junior high school (*tsananiviyah*) and senior high school (*Aliyah*) live and study. The third is located in the mount *Bulu Lampang*, about one km from the first one, it is specialized for female santri starting from junior high school (*tsananiviyah*) until senior high school (*Aliyah*). In this case, it should be noted that system of segregation also become the tradition of pesantren management. Since the establishment of pesantren DDI Mangkoso in 1938, there is a significant change in terms of santri numbers as well as the popularity. If the number of santri in the early period is only a few, nowadays, the total of Santri in Pesantren DDI Mangkoso is about 3.000 santri that are coming from different regions and provinces. It indicated that the popularity of the pesantren reach a peak during anre gurutta

Farid Wajd period, the current successor in the history of Pesantren. The founding father of pesantren is andre gurutta Abdurrahman Ambo Dalle who is also the former leader of pesantren. He had already laid the foundation of pesantren, especially the way pesantren negotiate with the contemporary issues.

As far as I observed, students (santri), who are studying in Pesantren DDI Mangkoso Barru, come from different ethnics and variant social backgrounds. They are multi ethnics and multi cultures. Some of them are Buginese, *Makassaries*, *Mandaries*, *Konjois*, and Javanese (especially Madura tribe). Although the majority of santri are Buginese, pesantren does not give them privilege above the others in term of process of learning. They get equal treatment from pesantren management. Anyone breaks the pesantren regulation, he or she will be equally treated before the internal regulation of pesantren. This is absolutely relevant to the idea of Alismail (2016) regarding the objective of multicultural education, that is social justice for all stakeholders in educational organization. In this case, Muhammad Agus (school principal) stated that, *Anre Gurutta* Farid Wajedi (pesantren leader) always advice all teachers to respect the difference and put professionalism as the main priority to measure santri's academic performance. This positive attitude is demonstrated not only in the classroom activities, but also in the life of pesantren during twenty four hours. As far as I observed in the life of dormitory, all santri (students) are making friends, eating, sharing foods, washing dress, and studying together. They do exercise every afternoon, such as soccer, badminton, and karate, even they frequently hold sport competition among the regions. These daily activities can strengthen their relationship, more than just a friendship, as acknowledged by one santri whom I interviewed, he feel like a big family living in with different ethnics and cultures. Although all of them live in different dormitories where they are mixed based on different ethnics and cultures, they build strong relationship through respecting each other. This is exactly the same ideologies in term of multicultural

education as explained by Geng (2013), that is assimilation, integration and multivariate. In this case, santri are being integrated, assimilated under one “small nation” that is pesantren regardless of different races, ethnics and languages.

When I interviewed a number of santri (students), I found information regarding the way santri to interact among them which is strongly influenced by the ustad (junior kyai) who live in the same dormitory with the santri. It is imperative to know that every dormitory has a mentor (ustad: junior kyai) who is appointed by pesantren management and representing the voice of pesantren leader (*anre gurutta*). He is in charge to look after santri performance and its progress who live in the dormitory. In other words, the process of being mentor takes a long procedure in which the final decision lies on the hand of anre gurutta (pesantren leader). According to the santri, the mentor always encourages them to act as The God’s instruction to the human being. One example of these is maintaining the good relationship not only to The God but also generally to the human being. The relationship to The God is proven through the rituals, such as doing five times praying, fasting in the holy month, reading Koran, doing pilgrimage, and etc. while the relationship to the human being is shown by respecting each other in every single opportunity. Santri are expected to help each other and more importantly, they are obliged to appreciate the values of humanity. In the life of pesantren, santri are not allowed to call other santri with bad nickname or racist call that will humiliate the others, they should call their friends with good names. From my point of view, this is an example of real multicultural education lesson that has been demonstrated in the pesantren daily life. Even though *santri* (students) and *ustad* (teachers) do not learn theories of multicultural education from the Western perspectives, they do implement the values of multicultural education. According to santri, they learn these things from the junior kyai (ustad) that both relationship need to be taken into account in the practical way. Both of them supplement each other. In other words, it is not a perfect santri if he or she only concern on one relationship, and neglect

another side, both have to be integrated in the self of santri. The point here is santri are required to always refresh their relationship either to The God or to the human being in order to have ability in transforming their attitude in a better way. It is probably pertinent with the concept of transformation of self, society as the ultimate goal of multicultural education. (Aqsa Lubis, 2009)

During my visits in this pesantren for several times, the teachers gave me a lot of information the way pesantren deals with the multiculturalism. They stated that pesantren does not officially introduce multiculturalism to the santri as an alternative approach in the classroom activities. It is true, when I asked some santri, most of them have less understanding regarding multiculturalism theories from the Western perspectives, even the teachers do not have much knowledge about this issue. The only thing that they notice that the term “multiculturalism” implies variant or many cultures and each of them should appreciate each other. They just believe that human being was created to know each other, regardless of the gender differences, social class, race and language. Thereby, there is no space for discrimination in Islamic education, education for all without exception. This notion is relevant to the theory of Banks (1989) which stated that children should have equal opportunity for education. This belief is taught in the pesantren life which is originally from the Koran and prophet Muhammad tradition. That’s why the management of pesantren is so inclusive and more opened to the diversities. According to ustads (teachers), pesantren believes an education is such an important thing, thus, it is compulsory for all starting from the birth until the end of time. The prophet Muhammad said, as narrated by ustad, “whoever wants to gain happiness in the world, they must search for knowledge, and whoever wants to obtain a pleasure in the hereafter, they have to seek knowledge”. This principal was adopted from the message of Prophet Muhammad who had ordered all the Muslim to gain knowledge wherever and whenever. As far as I observed, I discovered a number of santri descended from low income

family. These santri sometimes could not meet their expenses for school fee. In this sense, as stated by ustad, pesantren does not force them to pay the school fee, if they have sufficient money, they have a choice either they pay or not, the most crucial thing for pesantren, is providing wider access to these santri an opportunity in gaining a good education. As an evidence of this principal, pesantren regularly conduct “stadium general” in the mosque and opened to the public for free. This philosophy automatically surge the good reputation of Pesantren in the eye of public community. Therefore, pesantren continuously get support from the community, at least, they guard pesantren from the criminal behavior.

In relation to the classroom activities, I observed the process of learning, for example, the way teacher in treating santri, the class circumstance, and more importantly, the curricula used in the classroom, I contend that these elements practically support multicultural education. In terms of the way teachers treat santri in the classroom, teachers usually take a very brief time to start listening santri problems, particularly, the problems related to ethnicity among them, afterwards, the teachers stress the importance to always presenting the sympathy in building relationship to the others. The teacher continues to state that “Indeed God never look at your physical performance, but He really see your heart”. This indicated that the languages, race, ethnicity are just “the dress”, the real thing, as ustad continues, is how you build the similarity among the differences. This is completely a multicultural education lesson through providing an introduction before starting the lesson. Moreover, the class circumstance in the pesantren also back up the multicultural education, such as, the seat of santri is regularly mixed based on the different ethnics. The teacher usually change it in a period of time, its goal is santri are expected to have more friends. This method, as asserted by teacher, will diminish the race tension among them. Furthermore, the curricula used in the pesantren is also extremely boost the multicultural education. Besides using national curricula, pesantren also utilize the specific books for strengthening Islamic teaching, especially the moderate

books which offer a wide ranges of schools (*mazhab*), sects, and disciplines, so, pesantren is extremely opened to sects differences without pressuring to single one. In addition, as far I concerned, although the tradition of pesantren is closely to NU (Nahdhatul Ulama), but they do not identify themselves as a part of this organization, they just simply stated that Pesantren DDI Mangkoso is DDI (Daru Dakwah wa al-Irsyad) which is opened to any organization, including NU or Muhammadiyah. Another thing that might be considered is the wide-ranging organization which have in collaborating with this pesantren in term of educational development, such as, interfaith dialog, center for Islam and community service. This designates the inclusive attitude shown by pesantren. All in all, the vision of pesantren leadership powerfully determine the orientation of pesantren either support multicultural education or against it.

E. Conclusion

Based on the studies above, I will highlight some key elements in terms of multicultural education in pesantren. Firstly, it is a dynamic terminology that is strongly depends on the context. People in the United States, Europe, and Asia will come to different perspectives in regarding multicultural education. Pesantren itself have own understanding regarding multiculturalism. Secondly, multicultural education covers universal values, such as, equality and equity in the process of learning, no discrimination, respect to diversities, and full of social justice in learning process. All these things have been implemented in the pesantren life although they do not gain Western theories about multicultural education. Thirdly, multicultural education believes that diversities on ethnics, races, religions, and cultures, are the must and natural. This diversity, according to the writer, is designed by The Creator to make colorful life. In addition, multicultural education is a kind of movement that transforming people into positive change. It is more than just an understanding or theoretical discussion, it will generate an action which can transform self, school, and community into collective awareness of the importance of

multiculturalism. In this sense, I believe that pesantren, as an example of Islamic educational institution, have already demonstrated the values of multicultural education. Finally, multicultural education is a complex approach which can be negotiated by the educators, to do this approach, there is no single methodology to implement it, in this regard, teachers (ustad) should be given authority to apply it, because, to my understanding, they know in detail about the students circumstances than the others, especially the ustad (mentor) who live and interact with students or santri.

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