

Efforts to Eliminate Social Classes as an Implementation of Multicultural Islamic Education: A Study of the Educational Empowerment Program at the Ar Ridho Foundation

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Abstract:

The Ar Ridho Foundation is an institution that actively empowers orphans and the poor through educational programs that emphasize equality, inclusivity, and the elimination of social classes. In the context of multicultural Islamic education, efforts to eliminate social classes are an important aspect that is rarely studied in depth, especially at the level of religious institutional practice. This phenomenon is important to study because it shows how Islamic values of human equality, respect for dignity, and empowerment can be realized through structured educational programs. This study aims to analyze the implementation of multicultural Islamic education at the Ar Ridho Foundation and identify educational empowerment strategies used to eliminate social classes between orphans and the poor and children in general. The research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study, involving in-depth interviews, moderate participant observation, and documentation as data collection techniques. Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions interactively. The results show that the Ar Ridho Foundation implements multicultural Islamic education through a commensurate institutional culture, non-discriminatory social interaction, and educational programs such as tutoring, educational counseling, career guidance counseling, and the provision of

technological facilities. These programs have been shown to improve academic ability, self-confidence, and educational opportunities, significantly reducing class barriers. This study recommends expanding educational collaboration, improving learning facilities, and strengthening mentors' capacity as strategic steps to enhance the sustainability of class-based education efforts.

Keywords: educational equality; empowerment of orphans; multicultural Islamic education; social class; social inclusivity.

INTRODUCTION

The social class gap between the rich and the poor is a fundamental problem in Indonesian education. Education should be the primary means of improving quality of life, creating job opportunities, and serving as a crucial instrument for social mobility. However, in reality, education in Indonesia still faces significant challenges related to inequality of access and learning opportunities for economically disadvantaged groups. This inequality extends beyond funding to broader opportunities, including learning facilities, academic guidance, career support, and parental involvement in children's learning (Sipa Lestari et al., 2025).

Orphans and underprivileged children often face very real structural barriers to achieving an education on par with children from more socially and economically well-off families. They frequently struggle with limited resources, low family support for education, and lack of access to quality educational facilities. These barriers leave them vulnerable and unable to compete fairly with children from higher socioeconomic groups. The long-term consequences are reproduction of social inequality, where the gap between the upper and lower social classes continues to widen from one generation to the next. This phenomenon is in line with the concept of social reproduction as put forward by Pierre Bourdieu, where education, without strong structural intervention, tends to reinforce existing structures of inequality (Allolayuk, 2021).

One of the most obvious manifestations of educational problems related to social structure is the inequality in access to education. This inequality is not only evident in the number of schools available or the quality of their facilities, but also relates to how education is positioned as a social instrument. From a multicultural education perspective, education should be more than simply the transfer of knowledge; it should be a means to address discrimination and create equal opportunities for every individual. This requires attention to who has access to education, how the curriculum and learning methods are implemented, and the extent to which the educational environment fosters inclusivity. This inequality of access often places children from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups at a disadvantage, making it difficult for them to compete fairly with students from more prosperous backgrounds. Therefore, multicultural education recognizes the importance of designing educational strategies that transcend social boundaries, ensure every child has an equal right to learn, and internalize the values of equality, respect for diversity, and social justice. Thus, education is not just an academic tool, but also a tool for social transformation that minimizes the reproduction of intergenerational inequality (Anwar, 2022).

The problems of education in Indonesia are becoming increasingly complex due to the phenomenon of the commodification of education. Education is often treated as a commodity with high economic value, so that opportunities to obtain quality education tend to be more open to those with substantial financial capital and extensive social networks. This condition creates structural inequality, where social elites increasingly solidify their positions, while access for children from less fortunate families remains limited. As a result, the dominance of the upper class in the education system is strengthened, making efforts to uphold the principles of equality and inclusivity in education more difficult to achieve. This phenomenon demonstrates that education, which ideally should be an instrument for social mobility and equal opportunity, often reinforces existing social hierarchies. Therefore, an approach is needed that emphasizes not only academic quality but also ensures that all students, regardless of economic background, have equal access to educational opportunities. From a multicultural and social justice perspective, education must be able to penetrate socio-economic boundaries and create an inclusive learning space, where every individual can develop optimally and equally, so that education is no longer a tool for reproducing social inequality, but rather a means of just social transformation (Sari et al., 2025).

In the context of Islamic education, this inequality is contrary to the basic values of Islamic teachings such as justice ('adl), equality (musawah), and respect for human dignity (karamah al-insaniyyah) Islamic education aims not only to transfer knowledge, but also to develop an inclusive character, social awareness, and respect for the diversity and dignity of each individual. These values align with the principles of multicultural Islamic education which emphasizes the importance of recognizing socio-cultural diversity in education and eliminating all forms of discrimination that impact learning opportunities. However, in practice, the implementation of these noble values often does not align with the realities of education on the ground, particularly in the face of deeply rooted social inequality. This situation indicates that the multicultural values idealized in Islamic education still face many challenges in actual educational practice (Anwar, 2022).

To date, many studies have mapped the phenomenon of educational inequality in Indonesia and its impact on social mobility. For example, research in *Journal of the Journal* revealed that educational inequality is caused by various factors such as economic disparities, the quality of teaching staff, and unequal access to educational facilities across various regions in Indonesia (Pugu et al., 2025). Furthermore, other studies show that social inequality also affects the quality of education received by students, particularly in rural areas and underprivileged communities (Mujiburrohman & Putri, 2024). However, despite the growing theoretical and empirical research on educational inequality, research on how social and religious-based educational institutions concretely implement a multicultural approach to eliminate social class remains limited. This presents an important academic space that needs to be explored, particularly given the enormous potential of Islamic education as a driver of social change based on universal and inclusive values.

The Ar Ridho Foundation is a socio-religious institution actively implementing various educational empowerment programs for orphans and the underprivileged. Based on religious and educational principles, the foundation implements programs designed to create equal and inclusive learning spaces for students regardless of their social background. However, there are few scientific studies documenting in detail how these educational empowerment practices

work and the extent to which these programs are effective in reducing class inequality in the educational context.

According to numerous studies, education plays a strategic role in increasing social mobility. Education is viewed as an instrument that not only transfers knowledge but also opens up opportunities for better jobs and higher social status. However, obstacles such as unequal access, limited facilities, and unequal socioeconomic structures often prevent education from being fully effective in opening up these opportunities equally (Zaidah & Parozak, 2025).

Given this situation, the implementation of multicultural Islamic education at institutions like the Ar Ridho Foundation has the potential to become a model for inclusive and transformative practice. Multicultural Islamic education not only teaches the values of tolerance and respect for differences but also has a socially liberating dimension that can challenge unfair social class structures. This thinking is based on the view that Islamic education is a process of developing holistic individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also morally, socially, and spiritually strong, to build a more just and civilized society (Anwar, 2022). Thus, the focus of this research is to explore the Efforts to Eliminate Social Classes as an Implementation of Multicultural Islamic Education at the Ar Ridho Foundation, through an empirical study of the foundation's educational empowerment practices. This research is expected to not only provide academic contributions to the study of multicultural Islamic education but also provide policy recommendations and practices that can be adopted by similar institutions in their efforts to empower socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Multicultural Islamic education is an educational approach that aims to ensure that human diversity, whether in terms of culture, social background, economics, or life experiences, is recognized and valued in the educational process. This type of education not only emphasizes acceptance of differences but also places respect for human dignity as a fundamental value. In the Islamic context, this concept is deeply rooted in the principles of equality (*al musawah*), distributive justice (*al 'adl*), respect for individual dignity (*karamah al insaniyyah*), and freedom of choice (*ikhtiyar*) within an inclusive and just educational framework. This theory is closely aligned with Islamic teachings, which place all humans equal before God, where education must be a medium for realizing prosperity and justice for all students, without exception.

Several studies emphasize that Islamic multicultural education must be understood as more than just rhetoric about the value of tolerance; it needs to be realized in concrete practices such as eliminating discrimination and providing equal access to educational facilities for all students. For example, multicultural education emphasizes efforts to break down discriminatory boundaries within educational institutions so that every student feels valued and has equal opportunities to learn and develop. One study that highlights this importance discusses how Islamic multicultural education is designed to respect differences and promote equality in formal educational settings (Susanti, 2025).

In practice, multicultural Islamic education is realized through learning strategies that respect diversity and integrate social values such as tolerance, respect, and cooperation among students from different backgrounds. Other studies have shown that multicultural-

based Islamic religious education can foster a tolerant attitude and respect for differences in students' daily lives, including in social interactions and intergroup relations (Ichsan, 2024). Furthermore, other articles reinforce that multicultural Islamic education is not merely about teaching values, but also about developing curricula and learning practices that internalize the values of pluralism and diversity. This includes integrating values of togetherness, respect for differences, and rejecting various forms of discrimination within the educational structure.

From the perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith, multicultural education is also supported by Islamic teachings, which emphasize the importance of tolerance and respect for diversity as part of human nature. This type of education not only offers an understanding of plurality but also expresses the principles of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for all the universe) as an ethical guide in education. Thus, the literature on multicultural Islamic education emphasizes that this education contains two important dimensions: normative (values and principles) and practical (implementation in learning strategies and educational policies). Ideally, multicultural Islamic education aims to help students develop optimally regardless of their socioeconomic background and contribute to the formation of a more just and peaceful society ('Ula & Prasetya, 2020).

Social class in the sociology of education is defined as a social stratum that differs in access to economic resources, social networks, and educational opportunities. This concept was comprehensively explained by Pierre Bourdieu, who stated that social class structures are reproduced through the mechanisms of cultural capital and social capital, which ultimately reinforce social inequality between generations. Bourdieu pointed out that disadvantaged social groups tend to experience limited access to important educational resources, such as quality learning facilities, academic support, and a social environment conducive to learning. As a result, disparities in educational attainment are passed down from generation to generation, reinforcing unfair social stratification.

In the context of educating orphans and the underprivileged, this inequality becomes more complex because they face structural barriers that are not only economic, but also social and psychological. These barriers include limited learning facilities, unstable family support, and limited academic support available to them. This situation demonstrates that social class inequality in education is not merely a theoretical issue, but a structural reality that requires affirmative and sustained intervention. Traditional approaches to education that emphasize only the transfer of academic knowledge without addressing the social context of students tend to fail to address this inequality. Therefore, many education experts emphasize the need for empowerment as an educational strategy that can break the cycle of reproduction of social inequality. In the Islamic context, eliminating social class is not merely a social goal, but a moral obligation because fair and inclusive education embodies the principles of social justice and human dignity as taught in Islamic teachings.

Educational empowerment is understood as the process of strengthening individuals' abilities to control their own lives, expand their academic capabilities, and open up opportunities for social mobility. According to Zimmerman, empowerment includes mentoring, increased motivation, skills transfer, and expanded access to resources previously unavailable to students (Zimmerman, 2000). In the context of orphans and the underprivileged, educational empowerment means providing facilities that can alleviate their initial limitations, such as intensive tutoring, access to educational technology, career guidance, and character development programs. This type of empowerment is often

considered effective because it directly addresses the inequality in educational capital that is at the root of social classism. From an Islamic perspective, empowerment interventions are seen not only as social programs but as social worship required to protect and advance those who are economically and socially disadvantaged.

The literature demonstrates a strong link between multicultural education and efforts to eliminate social class inequality in education. Multicultural Islamic education serves as a framework that not only conveys tolerance but also encourages a truly equitable educational structure. This means providing equal access to educational facilities, academic guidance, career support, and personal development opportunities for all students without discrimination based on their socioeconomic status (Freire, 1970). Several empirical studies have shown that the implementation of multicultural Islamic education in formal educational institutions has successfully created a more inclusive environment and more equitable opportunities for all students. For example, the implementation of a curriculum that integrates the values of pluralism and equality helps foster an appreciation for diversity and improves the academic achievement of students from various social backgrounds. This demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education not only has a moral impact but also structurally reduces inequalities in formal educational practices. However, some critical studies note that although many educational institutions have adopted multicultural jargon in their curricula, its implementation is often symbolic without substantial changes in the educational structure itself. This indicates a gap between the theory of multicultural education and actual practice in the field, including in the context of Islamic educational institutions (Geertz, 1973).

The available literature shows that multicultural Islamic education offers a normative and practical framework for addressing social class inequality in education. This approach is not simply about respecting plurality but must also be realized in concrete strategies that provide real access for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, including orphans and the poor. The integration of Islam as a source of multicultural values provides a strong moral foundation for inclusive and equitable education, but practical implementation challenges remain significant and require further empirical study.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand in-depth how the Ar Ridho Foundation implements multicultural Islamic education in an effort to eliminate social class through educational empowerment programs. The case study method allows researchers to explore phenomena in detail in a specific, natural, and real context, thus explaining the processes, strategies, and experiences of the relevant parties.

Data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from research subjects, including the Ar Ridho Foundation administrators (chairperson, educational advisor, program coordinator), fostered children (orphans and the poor) participating in educational empowerment programs, and volunteers or educational tutors involved in providing tutoring or educational counseling. This primary data consists of narratives of experiences, perceptions, and explanations related to the implementation of multicultural education and efforts to eliminate social class within the foundation. Secondary data were obtained from foundation documents (institutional profile, vision and mission,

program reports, educational facility data, activity photos); academic literature related to multicultural Islamic education, social class, orphan and poor empowerment, and studies on socio-religious institutions; as well as relevant scientific articles, books, research reports, and online media (Creswell, 2016).

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the foundation's class-elimination practices, the educational strategies and programs implemented, the children's experiences with learning opportunities, and the administrators' perceptions of the values of multicultural Islamic education. Interviews were conducted directly at the foundation for one month in November 2025. Observations included learning activities, educational guidance, children's interactions, facility use, and the dynamics of the foundation's activities. The researcher acted as an observer within the foundation but was not actively involved in managing the activities. These observations aimed to obtain contextual data regarding multicultural education and empowerment practices. Documentation was obtained from the foundation's archives, including activity reports, program lists, training materials, participant data, and documentation of facilities such as study rooms, laptops, printers, and other supporting equipment. This technique was used to complement and confirm the interview and observation findings.

Data analysis used an interactive model of (Miles et al., 2014) This research includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were selected, summarized, and grouped into categories such as multicultural education practices, social class elimination, empowerment programs, educational facilities, and the experiences of foster children. The reduced data were presented in the form of thematic narratives, matrices, or interview quotations to facilitate understanding of the relationships between findings. At this stage, the patterns, strategies, and dynamics of multicultural education implementation at the Ar Ridho Foundation began to become clear. Conclusions were drawn based on the patterns emerging from the data, then verified by triangulating data across techniques (interviews, observations, documentation) and reconfirming with informants. This stage ensured that the research findings were valid, reliable, and accurately represented the reality on the ground (Sugiyono, 2023).

DISCUSSION

Implementation of Multicultural Islamic Education in an Effort to Eliminate Social Classes

The implementation of multicultural Islamic education reflects a strategic effort to address social class inequality, particularly in educational institutions focused on empowering orphans and the underprivileged, such as the Ar Ridho Foundation. This approach is not merely normative, but is realized through a series of institutional practices aimed at creating fair and equal learning conditions for all students regardless of their socioeconomic background. In its implementation, multicultural Islamic education serves as a tool for social transformation that affirms the values of equality, inclusivity, and respect for human dignity in all educational activities. Although research examining the context of foundations like Ar Ridho has not been conducted explicitly, various studies of multicultural Islamic education in various educational contexts demonstrate that multicultural values can be integrated into pedagogical practices to create a more inclusive and equal learning environment (Sriliza, 2025). It has been demonstrated that an inclusive approach to religious education can foster values of tolerance

and respect for student diversity, which are essential foundations of multicultural Islamic education.

One concrete way to implement multicultural Islamic education in empowerment institutions is through the instilling of values of equality within the institutional culture. An inclusive institutional culture emphasizes that every individual, including orphans and the underprivileged, has equal rights and opportunities to learn, participate, and develop academically and socially. This aligns with multicultural principles that integrate humanitarian values such as tolerance, mutual respect, and togetherness into every educational program policy. Research shows that internalizing multicultural values within the education system can strengthen social cohesion and reduce discriminatory attitudes in daily interactions between students. The integration of multicultural values into the curriculum and learning can strengthen the social capital of a heterogeneous society by fostering inclusive and tolerant attitudes.

Character building is a crucial element in the implementation of multicultural Islamic education, which aims to eliminate social classes. Character building encompasses not only moral and ethical aspects, but also the instilling of attitudes of justice, empathy, and cooperation, grounded in the principles of *al-musawah* (equality) and *al-'adl* (justice). Within the context of social institutions, character building activities are implemented through learning modules that address the affective and social aspects of students, such as activities that encourage mutual cooperation, respect for differences, and practices of concern for the social environment. This aligns with studies showing that multicultural education can shape students' moral direction through inclusive social interactions. Learning Islam from a multicultural perspective is effective in developing inclusive social attitudes and respect for diversity (Anam, 2023).

In the realm of educational programs, institutions such as the Ar Ridho Foundation operationalize multicultural Islamic education through a number of concrete programs. First, tutoring and academic strengthening are aimed at improving student competency without class discrimination, ensuring that orphans and the underprivileged receive the same support as other students. Second, technological facilitation plays a crucial role in ensuring students have equal access to digital learning resources, ensuring that economic limitations do not become a barrier to learning. Third, the provision of educational and career counseling helps students plan their futures with comprehensive support, including personal skills development and early career preparation. These programs are not simply supplementary services, but crucial instruments in operationalizing the inclusive values that characterize multicultural Islamic education (Ali & Bagir, 2021).

Motivational strengthening programs are a strategic tool for increasing the self-confidence of students from vulnerable groups. Studies on multicultural Islamic education highlight the importance of approaches that encourage student engagement in learning and foster self-efficacy so they can compete equally in a broader social context. Islamic-based multicultural education aims to create an inclusive environment that upholds openness, tolerance, and respect for differences as part of a humane education (Anam, 2023). The implementation of multicultural Islamic education in non-formal educational institutions such as educational empowerment foundations is not merely about teaching the value of tolerance, but also encompasses the design of institutional policies, the development of inclusive learning programs, and the formation of a culture that values social equality. Thus, multicultural Islamic education serves a dual role: as a value framework for developing just

social attitudes and as a programmatic strategy for eliminating social class inequalities that have limited the access and opportunities of orphans and the underprivileged in the educational process.

Instilling the Value of Equality Through Institutional Culture

Instilling the value of equality through institutional culture is a crucial strategy in implementing multicultural Islamic education at the Ar Ridho Foundation. Research shows that the foundation has built an institutional culture that places every foster child on an equal footing, regardless of social, economic, ethnic, academic, or family background. This approach is realized not only through formal policies but also through daily interactions between administrators and children. In practice, administrators deliberately avoid using terms that can instill feelings of inferiority, such as "orphan," "dhuafa," or "aid child," opting instead for more equitable terms such as "sister" or "friend." This symbolic strategy has a significant impact on eliminating the social labels typically attached to children from disadvantaged groups, while simultaneously creating an inclusive and welcoming institutional atmosphere for all students (Amarullah et al., 2024).

The culture of equality implemented at this foundation is a concrete manifestation of the principles of multicultural Islamic education, particularly *al-musawah* (equality) and *al-karamah al-insaniyyah* (human dignity). The management emphasizes that the children under its care are not treated as objects of pity, but rather as individuals possessing potential, talents, and the right to develop optimally. This practice emphasizes not only academic aspects but also the social and psychological aspects of students, encouraging them to see themselves as part of an equal and valued community. This approach expands the literature on multicultural Islamic education, which has tended to be normative or discursive. The implementation of an inclusive institutional culture demonstrates that multicultural education goes beyond simply teaching tolerance, but also requires practical changes in language, attitudes, and social relations within the educational environment. Several previous studies have emphasized the importance of implementing multicultural values within institutional contexts to prevent the reproduction of social stigma and class inequality. For example, multicultural Islamic education can be realized through daily interactions that respect the dignity of all students, as well as strengthening awareness that every child deserves fair treatment and equal opportunities in learning (Barth, 1969).

This practice serves as a means of social transformation that minimizes the reproduction of inequality and stigma often attached to orphans and the poor. By creating an institutional culture that emphasizes equality, the foundation prepares children to develop holistically academically, socially, and emotionally without obstacles caused by socioeconomic factors or social stereotypes. This aligns with the perspective of multicultural education, which emphasizes that the educational environment must be an inclusive space where all learners feel valued, accepted, and have equal opportunities to develop their potential. Thus, instilling the value of equality through institutional culture not only has a positive impact on character development and children's motivation but also serves as a concrete instrument in eliminating social class. This implementation demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education can function as a mechanism for empowering children from vulnerable backgrounds, while simultaneously creating a more just, inclusive, and stigma-free educational society. An inclusive institutional culture, in addition to fostering a sense of belonging and self-confidence, also strengthens the values of social justice that are the foundation of Islamic teachings.

Positive Identity Formation Approach

Observations and interviews at the Ar Ridho Foundation show that the institution systematically implements strategies to build positive identities in the children it supports. Many orphans and underprivileged children come with psychological burdens such as low self-esteem, feelings of inferiority at school, or beliefs that they will not be able to achieve the same success as their peers from wealthy families. These psychological conditions often lower children's motivation to learn and self-confidence, necessitating interventions that are not only academic but also psychosocial. To address these challenges, the foundation emphasizes motivation-based character education. This practice is realized through regular weekly meetings focused on self-development counseling and reflection sessions. During these meetings, children are encouraged to understand that success is not determined by socioeconomic background, but rather by effort, discipline, perseverance, and commitment to learning. This approach provides a space for children to develop self-confidence, recognize their potential, and build confidence that they have equal rights and abilities to achieve educational opportunities (Bourdieu, 1986). In this way, the Ar Ridho Foundation acts as a facilitator, meeting the psychological needs of the children in its care, enabling them to develop without feeling significantly different from their more fortunate peers.

This approach to strengthening positive identity aligns with the principles of empowerment-based multicultural Islamic education, which emphasizes the importance of building self-confidence in marginalized groups. Education is not simply the transfer of knowledge, but also the process of developing children's psychological capacities so they can see themselves as valuable, capable individuals with equal rights to access learning opportunities. By consistently implementing this approach, children can reduce feelings of social inferiority, strengthen their motivation to learn, and develop a proactive attitude in the educational process (Durkheim, 1912). These findings expand the literature on multicultural Islamic education, which emphasizes that positive identity formation is not merely an individual issue but also a social strategy for eliminating stigma and class inequality. A positive identity serves as a foundation for children from low-income backgrounds to actively participate in the learning process, interact equally with their peers, and optimally develop their potential. This approach demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education is effective when implemented not only as a normative value but also through programs and practices that facilitate children's psychological and social growth in a concrete way. Therefore, strengthening positive identity through character education and motivation is a crucial strategy for empowering orphans and the underprivileged. This strategy not only supports academic development but also fosters self-confidence, motivation, and awareness of their rights as equal individuals. This approach confirms that multicultural Islamic education can be implemented effectively in social institutions, creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment and freeing children from the feelings of inferiority that often arise from socioeconomic inequality.

Inclusivity in Social Relations and Program Policies

The Ar Ridho Foundation not only emphasizes inclusivity as a normative concept but also implements it concretely in its institutional policies and practices. All children in its care, whether orphans or the underprivileged, receive equal educational services and facilities. There is no discrimination in treatment or access to educational programs

based on socioeconomic background, academic ability, or family status. This approach affirms the principles of multicultural Islamic education, which emphasize equal rights, respect for human dignity (*al-karamah al-insaniyyah*), and justice (*al-'adl*), so that every child feels accepted and has an equal opportunity to develop (Harweli & Sesmiarni, 2024).

One concrete implementation of this inclusivity is seen in group discussions and collaborative learning activities. Tutors deliberately assemble mixed-groups consisting of children with different socioeconomic backgrounds, academic abilities, and life experiences. This strategy not only enhances social interaction but also encourages children to understand the diversity of their peers' life experiences. Through inclusive interactions, children learn to appreciate differences, develop empathy, and build social skills essential for everyday life. This practice aligns with literature findings that emphasize that interactions across social backgrounds in educational settings can reduce stereotypes, increase tolerance, and strengthen social cohesion among students. Beyond the learning aspect, the foundation also implements inclusivity in its donation and publication ethics. The foundation consistently rejects conditional aid or donation programs that feature photos of children in poverty or distress. Such practices are considered contrary to human dignity, as they can lead to feelings of inferiority, social stigma, and the reproduction of inequality (Mujiburrohman & Putri, 2024). This approach demonstrates that multicultural ethics apply not only to the learning process but also to the institution's resource management and public communications. By rejecting donor practices that promote symbolic discrimination, the foundation asserts that all children should be treated with respect and equal opportunity, regardless of their family's economic circumstances.

This inclusive policy demonstrates the integration of empowerment principles into children's daily lives. Every child, without exception, is given the opportunity to access educational facilities, technology, academic guidance, counseling, and personal development programs. With a policy structure that consistently implements inclusivity, children can reduce feelings of inferiority, develop self-confidence, and increase their motivation to learn. This approach aligns with empowerment theory, which emphasizes strengthening individual capacity through access to resources, social support, and the formation of a positive identity (Zimmerman, 2000).

The implementation of inclusivity also serves as a mechanism for eliminating social classism. By ensuring equal services, inclusive social interactions, and donation ethics that respect children's dignity, the foundation builds an institutional culture that emphasizes equality and mutual respect. This demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education not only teaches the values of tolerance and egalitarianism but also operationalizes them in the institution's daily programs, policies, and practices. Children learn that diversity is a social asset that must be valued, and that every individual has an equal right to develop, without limitations imposed by economic or social factors (Nieto, 2010). Thus, the inclusive approach at the Ar Ridho Foundation demonstrates how the principles of multicultural Islamic education can be applied holistically: in the learning process, social relations, institutional policies, and publication ethics. This strategy not only improves the quality of education but also fosters social awareness, empathy, and self-confidence in children, significantly contributing to the elimination of social classes and the reduction of stigma against vulnerable groups.

Educational Programs That Play a Role in Eliminating Social Classes

1. Tutoring and Academic Strengthening

One of the Ar Ridho Foundation's flagship programs is free tutoring, specifically for mathematics. This program is designed not only to help children complete their schoolwork but also to improve their overall academic competency, enabling them to compete in a formal school environment. This strategy aligns with the principles of multicultural Islamic education, which emphasizes empowering children from vulnerable groups to have equal opportunities to develop academically and socially (Raihani et al., 2023).

Interviews with administrators and tutors revealed that many students experienced significant improvements in their academic performance after participating in the tutoring program. Some students who previously ranked lower in their class were now able to compete with their peers from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. This improvement not only impacted academic grades but also self-confidence, motivation to learn, and active participation in school activities. These findings confirm that tutoring serves as a concrete instrument for reducing social inequality in education, in line with the concept of academic capital (Bourdieu, 1986), access to academic capital determines an individual's ability to compete in the education system.

This tutoring program is implemented with a personalized and inclusive approach. Tutors not only teach the subject matter but also monitor each child's progress, provide constructive feedback, and adapt learning methods to individual needs. This approach aligns with the principle of student empowerment in multicultural Islamic education, where every child is given the opportunity to develop according to their potential, without being limited by social or economic background. Thus, the foundation focuses not only on knowledge transfer but also on developing children's holistic capacities, including problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and self-confidence. This tutoring also serves as a strategy to practically eliminate social class barriers. Children from underprivileged families who previously had limited access to additional education now gain academic capital on par with children from more affluent families (Febriyanni et al., 2024). This helps equalize their opportunities for school achievement, reduces the reproduction of social inequality, and builds the self-confidence fundamental to social mobility. In other words, tutoring becomes a concrete empowerment tool, connecting multicultural education theory with real-world practice.

The tutoring and academic strengthening program at the Ar Ridho Foundation demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education can be implemented not only through the instillation of egalitarian values, but also through concrete programs that enhance children's academic abilities and social capital. This program creates equal opportunities for orphans and the underprivileged to compete fairly, builds self-confidence, and prepares them to become productive and competitive individuals in the future. Thus, tutoring serves as a practical instrument for eliminating social classism while simultaneously implementing the principles of justice and empowerment in Islamic education.

2. Educational Technology Facilitation (Laptops and Printers)

One of the Ar Ridho Foundation's efforts to support the empowerment of its foster children is by providing access to educational technology, including laptops and printers, for daily use by the children. This service is crucial for orphans and underprivileged children who lack technological devices at home, as it enables them to complete schoolwork, create presentations, and develop digital literacy skills. With this facility, the foundation directly

addresses the digital divide, which is one of the factors causing social class inequality in the modern era. This technology facilitation program demonstrates how Islamic educational institutions can concretely apply the principles of empowerment-based multicultural education. Children who previously had limited access to technology are given equal opportunities to access essential resources for the learning process. In this way, the foundation not only improves students' academic abilities but also instills self-confidence because the children feel they have the same access as their peers from wealthy families. This reinforces the concepts of equality (*al-musawah*) and respect for individual dignity (*al-karamah al-insaniyyah*), which are the foundations of multicultural Islamic education (Rohmadi, 2017).

Interview data with administrators and children in the foundation shows that access to laptops and printers not only helps complete schoolwork but also fosters digital competencies that are crucial for children's future academic and professional development. Children learn to create documents, prepare presentations, and operate basic software frequently used in formal school activities. Thus, this technological facilitation serves as an instrument for reducing social inequality, as digital capital is now part of the academic and social capital that supports the educational mobility of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Furthermore, the use of technological facilities at the foundation creates an inclusive and equitable learning environment. Children do not feel left behind or different from their peers who have access to technology at home. This sense of "equality" is crucial for building a positive identity and consistent learning motivation, enabling children to actively participate in learning without psychological barriers due to differences in access. These findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of access to technology as part of inclusive and multicultural education, especially for vulnerable groups (Banks, 2009; Rahman & Hazis, 2019). Thus, the provision of laptops and printers at the Ar Ridho Foundation demonstrates how multicultural Islamic education can be realized in practice. The institution not only emphasizes the discourse of equality but also provides concrete access that eliminates digital inequality and expands learning opportunities. These technological facilities serve as a means of empowerment, improving academic competence, fostering self-confidence, and building positive identities in orphans and the underprivileged. Overall, this program is an integral part of the foundation's efforts to eliminate social classism through inclusive, equitable, and empowerment-based education.

3. Educational and Career Counseling Guidance

One of the important services provided by the Ar Ridho Foundation is educational and career counseling. This program is designed to help the children in their care determine their academic direction, choose appropriate high school or vocational school majors, plan for the future, and understand various scholarship opportunities. Many children admitted that before participating in this counseling program, they were unaware of the pathways to achievement, opportunities for further education, or the mechanisms for obtaining scholarships. This demonstrates that access to educational and career information is often the distinguishing factor between children from wealthy families and those from less fortunate families. Through this counseling, the foundation provides informational capital, crucial for social mobility and educational success. This capital encompasses not only academic knowledge but also an understanding of self-development opportunities, learning strategies, and access to a broader educational network (Safitri & Juliana, 2025). In other words, this counseling program directly

reduces the information gap that typically reinforces social class and reproduces inequality in the education system. Children from poor families, who previously had limited access to information about educational pathways and scholarships, now have equal opportunities to plan their futures.

In addition to providing academic information, guidance and counseling also emphasizes the development of self-competence and motivation to learn. Children are taught to identify their interests and talents, set goals, and design realistic strategies for achieving them. This approach aligns with the principles of empowerment-based multicultural Islamic education, which emphasize that every child, regardless of socioeconomic background, has equal access to education and development opportunities. Educational and career counseling helps children build a positive identity, fosters self-confidence, and instills the belief that success can be achieved through effort, planning, and hard work. Thus, the educational and career counseling program at the Ar Ridho Foundation serves a dual role. First, it provides informational capital that supports children's educational and social mobility. Second, it serves as a means of psychological empowerment that fosters motivation, self-confidence, and decision-making skills. This program is an integral part of the foundation's strategy to erase social class boundaries through inclusive, equitable education, based on the principles of justice (*al-'adl*) and equality (*al-musawah*) in multicultural Islamic education.

Motivation and Resilience Strengthening Program

The Ar Ridho Foundation regularly holds monthly evaluation programs that include motivational sessions, moral development, and discussion sessions with inspirational figures from similar socio-economic backgrounds. This program aims to build resilience in the children it supports and instill the value that success is not the exclusive right of the wealthy or those with greater access to resources. This approach demonstrates the foundation's efforts to foster a positive mentality capable of facing challenges, including socio-economic obstacles, so that children can see opportunities as attainable through effort and hard work. In implementing this program, the management emphasizes the importance of avoiding a dependency mindset. Children are taught to be self-confident, independent, and proactive in learning and seizing opportunities. This guidance focuses not only on academic aspects, but also on character development, internal motivation, and self-awareness of their potential. Children are guided to understand that the facilities and assistance they receive are not meant to make them dependent, but rather as a means to maximize their abilities. This approach represents a more in-depth implementation of multicultural Islamic education, as it emphasizes the mental and psychological transformation of children, rather than simply providing physical or material facilities. Multicultural education aims not only to eliminate discrimination and inequality of access, but also to instill self-confidence, resilience, and adaptability that enable children to compete on equal terms with their peers from more affluent backgrounds (Yunus et al., 2021). By internalizing these values, children learn that success can be achieved through effort, discipline, and commitment, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Furthermore, the monthly motivational sessions also serve as role modeling. By learning the stories of inspiring figures from similar backgrounds, children can see real-life examples that success is not determined solely by financial capital, but also by effort, perseverance, and mental resilience. This strategy helps build a positive identity and reduces feelings of social

inferiority that often arise among orphans and underprivileged children. Children begin to believe that they have equal rights and capacity to achieve educational opportunities and achieve success. The motivational and resilience strengthening program at the Ar Ridho Foundation demonstrates that multicultural Islamic education can be implemented holistically. This approach not only provides physical and academic access but also fosters a mentality of empowerment, resilience, and social equality. Children are taught to view themselves as individuals with value, potential, and the ability to face challenges without relying on external assistance. Thus, this program is an integral part of the foundation's strategy to eliminate social classes, internalize the values of justice (*al-'adl*) and equality (*al-musawah*), and prepare children to become independent, confident, and productive individuals in the future.

Program Integration with the Implementation of Multicultural Islamic Education

The Ar Ridho Foundation applies the principles of multicultural Islamic education through an empowerment-based approach, which systematically seeks to eliminate social class boundaries by providing essential resources for children's development. These resources include academic, technological, informational, motivational, and character development. This approach emphasizes that multicultural education is not limited to teaching religious values but also forms institutional strategies that transform children's perceptions of themselves, how institutions treat students, and how society views orphans and the underprivileged. Research shows that eliminating social class cannot be achieved solely through economic or material assistance. Rather, the successful implementation of multicultural Islamic education depends on the integration of three main aspects. First, an inclusive institutional culture, where every child is treated equally regardless of socioeconomic background, academic ability, or family status. Second, educational empowerment, which includes tutoring, academic reinforcement, educational and career counseling, and character and motivational development. Third, providing equal access to technology and information, including laptops, printers, and information regarding scholarships and further education opportunities. The integration of these three aspects enables children from disadvantaged groups to acquire social, academic, and psychological capital equivalent to that of children from more affluent families (Mujiburrohman & Putri, 2024).

This integrated approach results in a comprehensive, contextual, and effective multicultural education model. Children not only acquire academic skills but also develop a positive identity, self-confidence, resilience, and motivation to achieve. In other words, this model emphasizes holistic empowerment, linking the development of intellectual, technological, and character skills with the internalization of egalitarian, inclusive, and just values in accordance with Islamic principles. Thus, the integration of the Ar Ridho Foundation's programs demonstrates that the implementation of empowerment-based multicultural Islamic education not only creates equal access but also builds an inclusive mentality, positive identity, and social resilience in the children under its care, while simultaneously reducing the reproduction of social class inequality in society.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that the Ar Ridho Foundation plays a significant role as a religious institution that not only carries out philanthropic functions but also as an agent of multicultural Islamic education oriented towards the elimination of social classes. Through

egalitarian social relations, the foundation has succeeded in building an educational environment that places all children under its care, regardless of economic background, as equal subjects in the learning and self-development process. These findings demonstrate that multicultural Islamic education does not stop at normative discourse, but is realized concretely through the design of systematic empowerment programs. Programs providing educational facilities, tutoring, career guidance, and access to educational technology have been proven to increase the social and cultural capital of orphans and underprivileged children. Thus, the foundation does not simply provide short-term assistance, but creates a space for sustainable social mobility. This approach aligns with the perspective of liberation education, which emphasizes structural transformation through education. The Ar Ridho Foundation can be understood as a model of inclusive and equitable Islamic educational practices, where success is not positioned as a privilege for a particular class, but rather as the right of every child given adequate opportunity and support. These findings underscore the important role of religious institutions in building social justice through empowering education.

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