
Integrating Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education (CRIMED) for Curriculum Reform: An SDGs-Based Inclusive Learning Framework in Indonesia

Arif Rahman¹, Maya Novita Sari², Hafidz³, Imran⁴, Marsekal Rahman Hakiem⁵

^{1,4}Department of Islamic Studies, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia

²Department of Educational Management, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

³Department of Islamic Studies, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia

⁵Department of Arabic Language and Literature, College of Languages and Humanities, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

¹Arif.rahman@uad.ac.id, ²mayanovitasari@uny.ac.id, ³hafidz@ums.ac.id,

⁴imranibnurus@gmail.com, ⁵471116756@qu.edu.sa

Received April 28, 2025; Revised September 28, 2025; Accepted October 25, 2025

Abstract

Objectives: This study aims to examine the implementation of Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) as an SDGs-based framework for curriculum reform that promotes inclusive and contextual learning in Indonesia. **Theoretical framework:** Grounded in the theoretical framework of culturally responsive pedagogy and Islamic educational philosophy, the study integrates principles of rahmatan lil ‘alamin, ta’awun, and social justice with the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). **Literature review:** The literature review highlights gaps in existing Islamic education models that often emphasize normative content while underutilizing local cultural capital and inclusivity as drivers of sustainable development. **Method:** Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through document analysis, curriculum review, and in-depth interviews with madrasah teachers and institutional leaders. **Result:** The findings reveal that CRIMED operates through three interrelated domains. First, curriculum design integrates Islamic teachings with local cultural wisdom, enabling learning content to resonate with students’ lived experiences and diverse social contexts. Second, pedagogical practices emphasize participatory approaches, including project-based learning and contextual learning, which empower students to express cultural, religious, and social identities while developing critical thinking and collaboration skills aligned with SDG competencies. Third, institutional–community engagement strengthens the role of madrasahs as centers of social harmony, intercultural dialogue, and interfaith cooperation, contributing to peaceful and inclusive societies. The study demonstrates that CRIMED not only aligns Islamic education with national initiatives such as Religious Moderation but also situates madrasahs within the broader sustainable development discourse. **Implications:** The practical implications suggest that policymakers, curriculum developers, and educators can adopt CRIMED to enhance inclusivity, equity, and relevance in Islamic education. **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in positioning culturally responsive Islamic madrasah education as an

explicit SDGs-based curriculum reform framework, offering a contextual yet globally relevant model for transforming Islamic education in multicultural societies.

Keywords: culturally responsive education, madrasah, curriculum reform, sdgs, inclusive learning.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, Islamic education has increasingly been positioned at the intersection of religious instruction, cultural diversity, and global development agendas. In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, madrasahs play a strategic role not only in transmitting Islamic knowledge but also in shaping social cohesion, cultural identity, and civic responsibility within a pluralistic society. However, amid rapid socio-cultural transformation, globalization, and educational reform, Islamic madrasah education continues to face structural and pedagogical challenges related to inclusivity, contextual relevance, and sustainability. These challenges have become more pressing in light of the global commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes inclusive, equitable, and lifelong learning opportunities for all [1].

Existing Islamic education practices in many madrasahs remain predominantly normative and text-centered, often prioritizing doctrinal mastery over contextual understanding and learner diversity. While such approaches preserve religious authenticity, they may insufficiently address the lived experiences, cultural backgrounds, and social realities of students in multicultural settings. As a result, Islamic education risks being perceived as disconnected from contemporary societal challenges, including inequality, social fragmentation, and intercultural tensions. This gap highlights the urgent need for an educational framework that harmonizes Islamic values with culturally responsive and development-oriented pedagogies [2].

Scholarly literature on culturally responsive pedagogy has extensively demonstrated its potential to improve learner engagement, equity, and academic outcomes by recognizing students' cultural identities as assets rather than obstacles. Nevertheless, much of this literature is rooted in secular or Western educational contexts, with limited adaptation to Islamic educational institutions. Studies on Islamic education, on the other hand, tend to focus on curriculum content, theological orientation, or institutional governance, often overlooking pedagogical responsiveness and cultural inclusivity as systematic frameworks. Consequently, there remains a significant research gap at the intersection of culturally responsive education, Islamic madrasah reform, and the SDGs. Few studies explicitly conceptualize Islamic madrasah education as a vehicle for advancing inclusive learning while contributing to sustainable development goals [3].

This study addresses this gap by introducing and examining Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) as an SDGs-based framework for curriculum reform in Indonesia. CRIMED is grounded in the integration of culturally responsive pedagogy and Islamic educational philosophy, particularly the principles of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy to all creation) and ta'awun (mutual cooperation). By aligning these principles with the SDGs, especially SDG 4, SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), CRIMED positions madrasah education as a transformative force for inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable societies [4].

The importance of this theme lies in its dual relevance to national and global agendas. At the national level, Indonesia has prioritized curriculum reform and the promotion of Religious Moderation (Moderasi Beragama) to strengthen social harmony and prevent exclusivism within religious education. Madrasahs are expected to function not only as sites of religious learning but also as institutions that cultivate tolerance, civic ethics, and intercultural dialogue. At the global level, education is increasingly recognized as a catalyst

for achieving the SDGs, with faith-based institutions acknowledged as key stakeholders in promoting equity, social justice, and community resilience. Integrating Islamic madrasah education into the SDGs framework, therefore, enhances its global relevance and policy significance [5].

The novelty of this study lies in three key contributions. First, it conceptualizes CRIMED as a coherent and operational framework that bridges culturally responsive pedagogy with Islamic educational values, rather than treating them as separate or competing paradigms. Second, it explicitly situates Islamic madrasah curriculum reform within the SDGs discourse, moving beyond normative religious goals toward measurable contributions to inclusive and sustainable development. Third, by identifying three interrelated domains: curriculum design, pedagogical practices, and institutional–community engagement, this study offers an integrative model that captures both classroom-level and systemic dimensions of educational transformation [6].

Methodologically, this research employs a descriptive qualitative approach through document analysis, curriculum review, and interviews with madrasah educators and leaders. This approach enables an in-depth exploration of how CRIMED is interpreted, implemented, and experienced within real educational contexts [7]. The findings contribute empirical insights into how culturally responsive Islamic education can be operationalized in diverse madrasah settings, rather than remaining at the level of abstract theory.

The implications of this study are multifaceted. For policymakers, the CRIMED framework provides a reference for aligning Islamic education policies with national curriculum reform and the SDGs. For educators and curriculum developers, it offers practical guidance on designing inclusive and contextual learning experiences that respect cultural diversity while maintaining Islamic authenticity [8]. For scholars, this research opens new avenues for interdisciplinary inquiry connecting Islamic education, multicultural pedagogy, and sustainable development. Ultimately, by positioning madrasah education as both culturally grounded and globally oriented, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on how Islamic education can remain relevant, inclusive, and transformative in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world [9].

In which, in the last decade, Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone a significant transformation towards a more inclusive and contextual direction. The increasing pluralism of Indonesian society challenges madrassas to move beyond conventional religious teaching models towards a more culturally conscious and socially oriented educational paradigm. However, many madrassas still face difficulties in integrating local culture, community diversity, and Islamic values into intact and sustainable pedagogical practices [10].

The concept of Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) is present as an innovative response to these challenges. CRIMED adapts the global framework of *culturally responsive pedagogy* and embeds it in the philosophy of Islamic education based on the values of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, *ukhuwah*, and *ta'awun*. This approach views culture not as an external factor, but as an essential element in the Islamic learning process that shapes students' identity, ethics, and social interactions [11].

Previous research on culturally responsive education has generally focused on Western multicultural contexts, while studies of how Islamic institutions in Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, operationalize these principles have been limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how madrassas design, implement, and institutionalize culturally responsive educational practices through the CRIMED framework [12].

The urgency of this research lies in its contribution to the national agenda of SDGs-based Religious Moderation, which equally emphasizes the importance of tolerance, social justice, and civic responsibility. The novelty of this research lies in the integration between

Islamic pedagogy and cultural inclusivity, which results in a holistic model to empower madrasahs as agents of dynamic social transformation rooted in Islamic values.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic education has long been recognized as a foundational institution for moral formation, religious understanding, and social development within Muslim societies. In the Indonesian context, madrasahs function not only as sites of religious instruction but also as formal educational institutions that respond to national curriculum standards and societal expectations. However, contemporary debates in Islamic education highlight persistent tensions between normative religious transmission and the need for contextual, inclusive, and learner-centered approaches. These tensions have intensified in multicultural societies where diversity of ethnicity, language, culture, and religious interpretation is an everyday reality [13].

Culturally Responsive Education (CRE) has emerged as a significant pedagogical framework that addresses learner diversity by recognizing cultural identity as a central component of the learning process. CRE emphasizes the integration of students' cultural backgrounds into curriculum content, teaching strategies, and classroom interactions. Through this approach, learning becomes more meaningful, equitable, and empowering. In broader educational discourse, CRE is increasingly associated with the achievement of inclusive and equitable quality education, aligning closely with the principles of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which stresses relevance, inclusivity, and lifelong learning [14].

Despite its growing prominence, CRE has predominantly developed within secular and Western educational paradigms. Its application in faith-based educational institutions, particularly Islamic madrasahs, remains limited and often fragmented. Islamic education literature, on the other hand, frequently focuses on curriculum content, theological orientation, or institutional history, with less emphasis on pedagogical responsiveness to cultural diversity. As a result, the integration of CRE into Islamic education has not been systematically theorized, creating a conceptual gap between contemporary pedagogical innovations and traditional religious education models [15].

Classical Islamic educational concepts such as *ta'dib*, *tarbiyah*, and *ta'lim* provide a strong normative foundation for culturally responsive and inclusive education. These concepts emphasize holistic human development, moral cultivation, and the transmission of knowledge within a social and ethical framework. When interpreted contextually, they resonate with CRE principles that value learner agency, dignity, and cultural relevance. This convergence suggests that Islamic education inherently possesses the ethical and pedagogical resources needed to support inclusive learning environments and contribute to reduced educational inequalities, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) [16].

Recent discussions on curriculum reform in madrasah education emphasize the importance of aligning religious education with contemporary social challenges and national development agendas. In Indonesia, curriculum reform has increasingly incorporated themes of social harmony, civic responsibility, and religious moderation. These themes reflect a growing awareness of the role of education in fostering peaceful coexistence and social cohesion, which directly relates to Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). However, without a clear pedagogical framework, these objectives risk remaining rhetorical rather than transformative in classroom practice [17].

The literature also highlights the expanding role of educational institutions as agents of sustainable development. Education is no longer viewed solely as a means of knowledge transmission but as a catalyst for social transformation, community empowerment, and cultural sustainability. Faith-based institutions, including madrasahs, are increasingly

recognized as strategic actors in advancing sustainable development values at the grassroots level. Nevertheless, there is limited scholarly work that explicitly positions Islamic madrasah education within the SDGs framework, particularly through culturally responsive pedagogical models [18].

Taken together, the existing literature reveals a critical need for an integrative framework that bridges Islamic educational philosophy, culturally responsive pedagogy, and sustainable development objectives. The CRIMED framework responds to this need by conceptualizing Islamic madrasah education as culturally grounded, socially inclusive, and development-oriented. By embedding SDGs principles within curriculum design, pedagogical practice, and institutional–community engagement, CRIMED offers a holistic approach to transforming madrasah education in multicultural contexts while maintaining religious authenticity and global relevance.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative–descriptive approach with a conceptual and analytical research design [19]. This methodological choice is appropriate for examining the theoretical alignment and conceptual integration between Islamic educational principles and Culturally Responsive Education (CRE) within the context of madrasah curriculum reform in Indonesia. Rather than measuring variables quantitatively, the study seeks to develop a comprehensive and context-sensitive framework Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) that responds to contemporary educational challenges and aligns Islamic education with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

Data collection was conducted through systematic library research, drawing upon a wide range of authoritative and relevant sources [20]. These sources include national policy documents on Islamic education, such as the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs Decrees (KMA) No. 183 and 184 of 2019 concerning the madrasah curriculum, official documents on Religious Moderation (Moderasi Beragama) issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and foundational theories of classical Islamic education, including *ta'dib*, *tarbiyah*, and *ta'lim*. In addition, the study incorporates contemporary scholarly literature on culturally responsive education, multicultural pedagogy, inclusive learning, and education for sustainable development. This diverse body of literature enables a multidimensional analysis that bridges normative Islamic values, pedagogical theory, and global development discourse.

The research process was organized into three main stages: conceptual mapping, integrative analysis, and model formulation. The first stage, conceptual mapping, focused on identifying points of convergence between Islamic educational principles and the core values of culturally responsive education [21]. At this stage, key Islamic concepts such as justice (*'adl*), compassion (*rahmah*), cooperation (*ta'awun*), and human dignity were mapped against CRE principles, including cultural affirmation, learner-centered pedagogy, inclusivity, and contextual relevance. This mapping process also considered how these shared values contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in promoting equitable access to quality education and fostering social cohesion in diverse societies.

The second stage involved integrative analysis, which examined the compatibility of the identified values with the current direction of madrasah curriculum policy in Indonesia. Through critical analysis of curriculum frameworks, competency standards, and policy objectives outlined in KMA No. 183 and 184 of 2019, the study assessed the extent to which culturally responsive and SDGs-oriented principles are implicitly or explicitly accommodated within existing madrasah education policies. This stage also analyzed how the Religious Moderation agenda reinforces the need for inclusive, dialogical, and contextually grounded Islamic education capable of addressing social diversity and

preventing exclusivism. The integrative analysis thus served to situate CRIMED within both national educational priorities and global sustainable development commitments.

The third stage focused on the formulation of the CRIMED model as an SDGs-based framework for curriculum reform. Based on the findings of the previous stages, the model was articulated into three interrelated domains. The first domain is curriculum design, which emphasizes the contextual integration of Islamic teachings and local cultural values to ensure relevance to students' lived experiences. The second domain is pedagogical practice, characterized by adaptive, inclusive, and dialogical teaching methods that encourage participation, critical reflection, and intercultural understanding. The third domain is institutional and community engagement, which highlights the role of madrasahs in building equitable educational ecosystems through collaboration with families, local communities, and broader social institutions, thereby contributing to peaceful and inclusive societies in line with SDG 16.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. This process involved data reduction, categorization, and interpretation of key concepts derived from the literature, structured according to the three CRIMED domains. Themes were identified inductively while remaining guided by the research objectives and SDGs framework. To enhance the validity and credibility of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing insights across policy documents, classical and contemporary Islamic education literature, and scholarly works on culturally responsive education and public policy. Expert perspectives from Islamic education scholars and public policy analysts, as reflected in the literature, were also considered to ensure conceptual consistency and contextual relevance. Through this rigorous analytical process, the study establishes CRIMED as a theoretically grounded and policy-relevant framework for advancing inclusive and sustainable Islamic madrasah education in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) functions as an integrative framework that strengthens curriculum reform by aligning Islamic educational values, cultural diversity, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [22]. The analysis reveals three interrelated domains through which CRIMED is operationalized: curriculum design, pedagogical practices, and institutional–community engagement. These domains collectively contribute to inclusive, contextual, and sustainable learning in Indonesian madrasahs.

Curriculum Design: Integrating Islamic Values, Culture, and SDGs

The results indicate that CRIMED-based curriculum design emphasizes the contextual integration of Islamic teachings with local cultural knowledge and social realities. Islamic concepts such as justice, compassion, and cooperation are embedded alongside cultural narratives, traditions, and community practices familiar to students. This integration enhances curriculum relevance and learner engagement, supporting the principles of SDG 4 by promoting inclusive and meaningful learning experiences [23]. By recognizing cultural diversity as an educational asset, CRIMED also addresses structural inequalities that often marginalize students from minority or peripheral cultural backgrounds, thereby contributing to SDG 10. The findings suggest that curriculum contextualization enables madrasahs to move beyond uniform content delivery toward adaptive learning pathways that respond to diverse learner needs.

Pedagogical Practices: Inclusive and Participatory Learning

In the pedagogical domain, CRIMED encourages adaptive, dialogical, and participatory teaching approaches. Methods such as project-based learning, collaborative inquiry, and contextual learning were identified as key strategies that allow students to connect religious

knowledge with real-life social issues. These practices create learning environments where students are encouraged to express their cultural, religious, and social identities respectfully. From an SDGs perspective, such pedagogical practices foster critical thinking, empathy, and collaboration competencies essential for sustainable development. The findings align with SDG 4.7, which emphasizes education for global citizenship, cultural diversity, and peace. Furthermore, inclusive pedagogy within CRIMED supports social cohesion by reducing exclusionary tendencies and promoting mutual understanding among learners from diverse backgrounds [24].

Institutional–Community Engagement: Madrasahs as Social Anchors

The third domain highlights the expanding role of madrasahs as community-centered institutions. The findings show that CRIMED strengthens institutional–community engagement by encouraging partnerships between madrasahs, families, local cultural leaders, and community organizations. This engagement positions madrasahs as hubs of social harmony, intercultural dialogue, and interfaith cooperation. In relation to SDG 16, such engagement contributes to building peaceful, inclusive, and resilient communities. Madrasahs operating under the CRIMED framework are not confined to classroom instruction but actively participate in addressing local social issues, conflict prevention, and community empowerment [25].

Discussion: Toward Sustainable and Inclusive Islamic Education

The discussion of these findings underscores the transformative potential of CRIMED in addressing long-standing challenges in Islamic madrasah education. By integrating culturally responsive pedagogy with Islamic educational philosophy, CRIMED bridges the gap between normative religious instruction and contemporary societal demands. Unlike conventional models that prioritize content transmission, CRIMED emphasizes learner agency, cultural relevance, and social responsibility [26]. This shift aligns Islamic education with both national priorities, such as Religious Moderation, and global commitments under the SDGs.

Moreover, the findings suggest that CRIMED provides a practical pathway for embedding sustainable development principles within religious education without compromising theological integrity. The integration of SDGs into curriculum design and pedagogy reframes Islamic education as a contributor to social equity, peacebuilding, and sustainable development. This approach enhances the global relevance of madrasah education while preserving its local and religious authenticity [27]. Overall, the results confirm that CRIMED offers a comprehensive and scalable model for curriculum reform in Indonesian madrasahs. Its emphasis on inclusivity, contextual learning, and community engagement positions Islamic education as a key actor in advancing quality education, reducing inequalities, and fostering peaceful societies in diverse and multicultural contexts.

The findings of this study show that the implementation of the concept of Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) in the reform of madrasah curriculum in Indonesia provides a new direction for the development of inclusive, contextual, and human values-based Islamic education. CRIMED operates through three key domains: Curriculum Design, Pedagogical Practice, and Institutional–Community Engagement that are interconnected in shaping a learning ecosystem that is responsive to learners' cultural and social diversity [28].

Conceptually, CRIMED strengthens the position of madrasah as an educational institution that not only functions as a center for the transmission of religious knowledge but also as a social space that instills the values of justice, togetherness (*ukhuwah*), and tolerance (*tasamuh*). The three domains show the integration between aspects of curriculum, learning strategies, and institutional management, all of which are rooted in the principles of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* and religious moderation [29].

Culturally Embedded Curriculum Design

The first finding confirms that the design of a culturally responsive madrasah curriculum must depart from the integration of Islamic values with the local context of students. Teachers and curriculum developers in some madrassas have adapted religious teaching materials to be more relevant to the local culture, such as *local customary fiqh*, *local sirah*, or religious practices that develop in the surrounding community [30].

The curriculum was developed based on CRIMED features three main aspects:

1. Integration of local culture and Islamic values – for example, by featuring local Islamic figures, traditional religious practices that are in harmony with Islamic principles, and forms of local wisdom as a source of learning.
2. The theme of religious diversity and moderation – placing religious, ethnic, and cultural differences as part of national identity that must be understood positively.
3. Multicultural content enrichment – expanding teaching references to include cross-cultural narratives, comparisons of Islamic traditions in different regions, and case studies of tolerance in the history of Islam in the archipelago [31].

Table 1. Key Aspects of the CRIMED-Based Curriculum

| Key Aspects | Description and Implementation in the Madrasah Curriculum |
|---|--|
| Integration of Local Culture and Islamic Values | The curriculum is developed by incorporating elements of local culture that are in harmony with Islamic principles. For example, introducing regional Islamic figures, traditional religious practices based on Islamic values, and local wisdom as a contextual and meaningful learning resource. |
| Theme of Religious Diversity and Moderation | The curriculum places religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity as an integral part of national identity. Students are invited to understand differences as a social potential that needs to be appreciated and maintained through strengthening the value of religious moderation and intercultural dialogue. |
| Multicultural Content Enrichment | Learning is enriched with cross-cultural references and narratives, such as comparisons of Islamic traditions in various regions, stories of tolerance in the history of Islam in the archipelago, and contemporary studies of social harmony in a pluralistic society. |

These findings are in line with *the theory of culturally relevant pedagogy*, which emphasizes the importance of relating students' life experiences to the content of the curriculum. On the other hand, this approach is also consistent with the principle of *'urf* in Islamic jurisprudence, which is recognition of local customs and culture as long as it does not contradict the sharia. Thus, CRIMED offers an epistemological basis for madrassas to build a curriculum that is not only orthodox but also contextual and inclusive [32].

Transformative Pedagogical Practices

The second finding highlights the importance of transformation in learning strategies to be more participatory and oriented to learners' cultural experiences. Madrasah teachers who apply the CRIMED principle utilize participatory learning methods such as *project-based learning*, *contextual inquiry*, and *cultural storytelling* that allow students to express their identity in the learning process [33].

One of the innovations that emerged was the application of local case studies, where teachers use social problems in the student environment as material for moral and religious reflection. For example, issues of cooperation, waste management, or social solidarity are

discussed within the framework of Islamic values such as *ta'awun* (help) and *amanah* (responsibility).

In addition, it was found that there is intercultural teacher training that focuses on strengthening empathy, cross-cultural communication, and reflection on cultural biases in the teaching process. This is in line with Gay's (2018) idea that culturally responsive educators must understand students' social contexts as well as appreciate the diversity of their identities in the learning process [34].

By applying this approach, teachers not only play the role of transmitters of knowledge, but also as *cultural mediators* who bridge Islamic values with the reality of social life. The pedagogical implication is the creation of a more meaningful learning process, where religious values are not taught dogmatically, but are contextualized through students' experiences and social interactions.

Collaborative Institutional and Community Engagement

The third finding emphasizes that the successful implementation of CRIMED depends not only on teachers and curriculum, but also on institutional support and community collaboration. Culturally responsive madrasahs need to establish partnerships with community leaders, traditional institutions, and religious organizations to strengthen the social function of Islamic education [35].

Collaborative activities found in the field include madrasah cooperation with local institutions to develop *service learning* programs, socio-religious training, and community-based service activities. Through this involvement, students learn to internalize the values of *ukhuwah*, *tasamuh*, and *ta'awun* in a real context.

At the institutional level, several madrasahs have begun to formulate indicators of cultural responsiveness in accreditation and quality evaluation. This includes aspects such as local community participation in school planning, cultural representation in teaching materials, as well as madrasah policies that are friendly to social diversity. This approach is aligned with *transformative leadership* theory, Shields, which emphasizes the importance of leadership oriented towards social justice and community empowerment [36].

Thus, this domain reinforces that culturally responsive Islamic education cannot run without the active involvement of the community. Madrasahs that are open to community collaboration will be able to function as centers for social reconciliation and strengthening intercultural harmony.

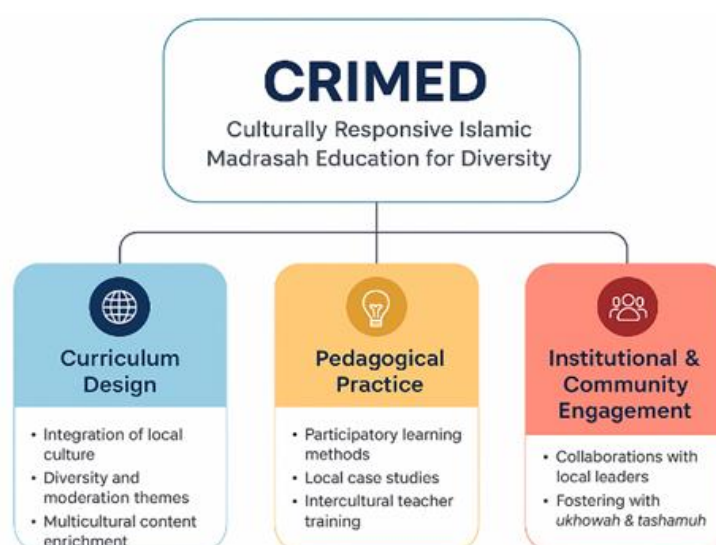


Figure 1. CRIMED Conceptual Model

Table 2. CRIMED's Domains and Operational Practices

| Domain | Key Focus | Operational Practices |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Curriculum Design</i> | Integration of local culture & Islamic values | Islamic subjects based on local wisdom (local customary fiqh, local sirah) - Themes of religious diversity and moderation - Multicultural content enrichment |
| <i>Pedagogical Practice (Learning Strategies)</i> | Culturally responsive learning methods | Participatory methods & culture-based projects - Local case studies - Intercultural and reflective teacher training |
| <i>Institutional & Community Engagement</i> | Institutional support & community collaboration | Cooperation with traditional leaders and local institutions - Instilling the value of ukhuwah & tasamuh - Indicators of cultural responsiveness in accreditation and evaluation of madrasas |

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, CRIMED expands the discourse of *culturally responsive education* into the context of Islamic education. This model combines the Western scientific paradigm based on cultural justice with Islamic epistemology that emphasizes the balance between *monotheism*, *morality*, and *mu'amalah* [37]. Practically, CRIMED provides an implementable guide for madrasahs to balance between religious orthodoxy and pluralistic social realities.

This model also supports the direction of national policies such as *Religious Moderation* and *the Independent Curriculum* by emphasizing adaptive, equitable, and humanitarian-oriented learning [38]. In other words, the implementation of CRIMED not only enriches madrasah pedagogy but also strengthens the role of madrasahs as a pillar of Islamic education that is relevant to the demands of the times.

Analysis

The analysis of this study positions Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) as a strategic response to the evolving challenges of Islamic education in multicultural and pluralistic societies such as Indonesia. The CRIMED framework demonstrates how Islamic education can be reoriented from a predominantly normative and text-centered paradigm toward a contextual, inclusive, and socially transformative model aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This analytical perspective underscores that curriculum reform in madrasahs is not merely a technical adjustment but a paradigm shift in how knowledge, culture, and values are integrated [39].

At the analytical level, CRIMED reveals a strong convergence between culturally responsive education and Islamic educational philosophy. Core Islamic principles such as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, *ukhuwah*, *justice*, and *ta'awun* provide an ethical foundation that naturally supports inclusivity, equity, and social responsibility. When analyzed through an SDGs lens, these values resonate closely with SDG 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes relevance, inclusiveness, and lifelong learning. CRIMED operationalizes these ideals by embedding local cultural knowledge and social realities into curriculum design, thereby addressing the persistent disconnect between religious content and students' lived experiences [40].

The pedagogical dimension of CRIMED represents a significant analytical shift in Islamic education practice. Rather than positioning students as passive recipients of religious knowledge, CRIMED frames learners as active agents who negotiate meaning through cultural dialogue and social interaction. This analytical finding highlights how participatory and contextual pedagogies foster critical thinking, empathy, and collaboration competencies essential for sustainable development. From the perspective of SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), such pedagogical practices mitigate exclusion by validating diverse identities and learning styles within madrasah classrooms [41].

Institutional and community engagement emerges as a critical analytical component that extends the impact of CRIMED beyond the classroom. The analysis shows that madrasahs adopting CRIMED are better positioned to function as social anchors within their communities. Through collaboration with local leaders, cultural institutions, and community organizations, madrasahs contribute to social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and conflict prevention. This aligns strongly with SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), as education becomes a vehicle for nurturing peaceful and inclusive societies rather than merely transmitting doctrinal knowledge [42].

Analytically, CRIMED also addresses a structural gap in existing Islamic education reforms. Many reform initiatives emphasize curriculum standards or assessment outcomes without sufficiently engaging cultural context and community participation. CRIMED fills this gap by offering a holistic framework that integrates curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional culture into a single coherent model. This integrative nature strengthens the sustainability of reform efforts and reduces the risk of superficial or symbolic change [43]. Overall, the analysis affirms that CRIMED represents more than an instructional innovation; it is a transformative educational paradigm. By aligning Islamic madrasah education with the SDGs, CRIMED reframes religious education as a contributor to global development objectives while remaining deeply rooted in local culture and Islamic values. This analytical insight positions CRIMED as a scalable and adaptable model for strengthening the relevance, inclusivity, and sustainability of Islamic education in diverse contexts [44].

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Culturally Responsive Islamic Madrasah Education for Diversity (CRIMED) model represents a relevant, coherent, and applicable framework for strengthening inclusive and contextual Islamic education in Indonesia. By structuring curriculum reform around three interconnected domains: curriculum design, pedagogical practices, and institutional–community engagement, CRIMED successfully integrates universal Islamic values such as *rahmatan lil ‘alamin*, *ukhuwah*, and *ta‘awun* with local socio-cultural realities. This integration enhances curriculum relevance while fostering learning environments that are participatory, dialogical, and responsive to the diverse backgrounds of madrasah students. The findings affirm that CRIMED contributes meaningfully to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by promoting inclusive, equitable, and contextually grounded learning. Curriculum design that incorporates cultural knowledge alongside Islamic teachings allows students to connect religious understanding with their lived experiences, thereby improving engagement and comprehension. At the same time, CRIMED addresses educational inequality by recognizing diversity as an asset rather than a barrier, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Through adaptive pedagogical practices, the model supports learner agency, critical reflection, and social inclusion within the classroom. Beyond instructional settings, CRIMED positions madrasahs as key social institutions capable of contributing to peaceful and cohesive communities. Institutional–community engagement under the CRIMED framework encourages collaboration with local leaders, cultural actors, and community organizations. This engagement strengthens intercultural dialogue and reinforces substantive religious moderation, supporting the objectives of

Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Madrasahs thus function not only as centers of religious learning but also as agents of social harmony and cultural sustainability within pluralistic societies. From a theoretical standpoint, this study demonstrates that culturally responsive pedagogy and Islamic educational philosophy are not conceptually contradictory. On the contrary, when interpreted contextually, classical Islamic educational concepts resonate strongly with contemporary pedagogical approaches that emphasize dignity, justice, and inclusivity. CRIMED bridges these paradigms, offering a transformative perspective that situates Islamic education within both national reform agendas and global sustainable development discourse. Practically, the CRIMED model provides clear direction for educators, school leaders, and policymakers. For teachers and madrasah principals, it offers guidance in designing culturally responsive and inclusive learning experiences. For policymakers, CRIMED serves as a reference framework for aligning Islamic education reform with Religious Moderation initiatives and the SDGs. While further empirical research is needed to assess large-scale implementation and impact, this study concludes that CRIMED offers a sustainable foundation for reimagining Islamic madrasah education as culturally rooted, socially inclusive, and globally relevant.

Acknowledgments

The authors gratefully acknowledge institutional support, discussions, and constructive feedback that enriched this study. Appreciation is extended to participating schools and experts whose insights strengthened the CRIMED framework and its alignment with inclusive, SDGs-oriented education in Indonesia.

Author Contribution

All authors collaboratively designed the study, developed the CRIMED framework, analyzed data, and drafted the manuscript. Contributors from Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, and Qassim University reviewed content and approved the final version

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- [1] N. Kurnia Putra, A. Amrin, M. M. Abu Zinah, M. Masuwd, and S. Subhan, "Consumption from an Islamic Economic Perspective: Study of Quranic Verses on Consumption," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 37–45, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v1i01.21>.
- [2] N. S. Handayani, S. Sya'roni, S. Ab Rahman, and M. A. Maisu, "General Property Rights from Sharia Perspective: Strategy for the Implementation of Ummah's Economic Welfare and Justice," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 46–56, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v1i01.18>.
- [3] M. R. Kurniawan, Abdurrahman, S. T. Anggraeni, U. Hasanah, and Marwiyah, "The Problem of Akad Murabahah in Sharia Banks: Between Profit-Oriented and Sharia Compliance," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 2, no. 01, pp. 55–66, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v2i01.97>.
- [4] S. A. Musa and B. Ali, "Muslim Women, Counselling and Rights: An Islamic Overview," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 2, no. 01, pp. 37–46, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v2i01.96>.
- [5] M. B. Alauddin *et al.*, "The Concept of Ta' awun and Sharia Mutual Cooperation in Prosperity and the Establishment of Darus Salam Mosque," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 241–254, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v1i03.75>.
- [6] M. Hanafi and Y. H. Jibril, "Economic Rights of Women Under Sokoto Caliphate: A Lesson for Contemporary Women in Nigeria," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 2, no. 01, pp. 01–14, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v2i01.81>.
- [7] S. Ridha, I. Rosyadi, M. A. Maisu, A. E. Conti Morales, and Muthoifin, "Management of Zakat Funds for Education Sharia Economic Law Perspective," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 2, no. 01, pp. 27–36, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v2i01.85>.

-
- [8] D. Sartono, M. Mahmudhassan, I. Najmi, S. Amin, and M. Bensar, "Silver as Nishab Zakat to Improve Community Welfare in the Modern Era," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 1, no. 02, pp. 83–91, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v1i02.24>.
- [9] R. Susanto, Qoree Butlam, Mohamed Akhiruddin Ibrahim, and Muthoifin, "Implementation of Concepts and Thoughts on Sharia in DSKS (Dewan Syariah Kota Surakarta)," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 1, no. 03, pp. 179–187, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v1i03.49>.
- [10] S. Z., "The Practice of Buying and Selling Fish with a Tariff System in Fishing Islamic Law Perspective," *Demak Univers. J. Islam Sharia*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 143–153, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/deujis.v1i02.62>.
- [11] M. Rusli and I. Khullatil Mardiyah, "The Urgency and Revitalization of the Development of the Economic System in Indonesia Through the Management of the Scientific Approach of Fiqh Pesantren," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 02, pp. 244–258, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i02.2160>.
- [12] T. Rahayu, J. Subando, M. Fatimah, A. F. Haq Rumaf, and A. K. Hussain Solihu, "Optimization of Teaching Strategies of Tahfidz Teachers To Improve the Quality and Quantity of Students' Memorization of the Qur'an," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 02, pp. 259–268, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i02.1976>.
- [13] M. Fatimah, A. Husaen Sastra Negara, W. Waston, S. Hidayat, A. Abdul Adzim, and M. Zakir Husain, "Teacher Communication Patterns To Improve Students' Religious Character Values At Vocational Schools," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 02, pp. 217–225, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i02.2063>.
- [14] Choiriyah, Saprida, D. Noviani, I. Arifin, and M. S. Mubarak Bin Humaid, "Implementation of Ushul Fiqh As a Legal Basis for Solving Sharia-Based Economic Problems," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 25, no. 01, pp. 67–82, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v25i01.4127>.
- [15] M. Meriyati, M. N. Agus Saputra, I. Arifin, M. Panorama, and M. S. Mubarak Bin Humaid, "Maqasid Sharia'S View on the Scarcity of Subsidized Fertilizers on the Welfare of Farmers in East Oku Indonesia," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 02, pp. 187–195, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i02.1954>.
- [16] M. Dwi Fajri, D. Saepudin, Bahrudin, and Ibdalsyah, "The Concept of Tauhid Education in the Family Environment: Study of Hamka'S Perspective," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 01, pp. 33–45, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i01.1672>.
- [17] A. Diana and M. Z. Azani, "The Concept and Context of Islamic Education Learning in the Digital Era : Relevance and Integrative Studies," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 33–44, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v25i01.4239>.
- [18] B. Nugraha, M. Sa'diyah, and A. R. Rosyadi, "Module Development of Gender Harmony in Islamic Education Perspective," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 25, no. 01, pp. 45–54, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v25i01.3846>.
- [19] D. Susanto, Risnita, and M. S. Jailani, "Teknik Pemeriksaan Keabsahan Data Dalam Penelitian Ilmiah," *J. QOSIM J. Pendidikan, Sos. Hum.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 53–61, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61104/jq.v1i1.60>.
- [20] H. Zukriadi, Sulaiman, U., "Aneka Macam Penelitian," *SAMBARA J. Pengabd. Kpd. Masy.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 36–46, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.58540/sambarapkm.v1i1.157>.
- [21] M. Mulyadi, "Penelitian Kuantitatif Dan Kualitatif Serta Pemikiran Dasar Menggabungkannya," *J. Stud. Komun. dan Media*, vol. 15, no. 1, p. 128, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.31445/jskm.2011.150106>.
- [22] S. Effendi and M. Arifi, "Islamic Study: Cultural Aspects (Historic Mosques)," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 01, pp. 131–136, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i01.1688>.
- [23] M. Khadafie, "Construction of Islamic Religious Education in the Era of the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Profetika J. Stud. Islam*, vol. 24, no. 01, pp. 94–102, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v24i01.1690>.
- [24] M. R. Sofa Izurrohman, M. Zakki Azani, and H. Salim, "The Concept of Prophetic Education According to Imam Tirmidzi in the Book of Syamail Muhammadiyah," *Solo Int. Collab. Publ. Soc. Sci. Humanit.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 52–61, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sicopus.v1i01.33>.
- [25] I. Ismail, H. Hasanuddin, and A. Chandra, "The Influence of Thinking Styles and Learning Styles on Student Learning Achievement," *AL-ISHLAH J. Pendidik.*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 193–202, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i1.2896>.
- [26] Dede Rizal Munir and A. Aquil, "The Influence of the Qiyas Method on the Students' Ability to Understand the Book of Alfiyah Ibnu Malik at Islamic Boarding School," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 02, pp. 96–103, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i02.45>.
-

-
- [27] Agus Maryanto, "Principal Performance and Leadership in Facing the Covid-19 Pandemic at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 02, pp. 118–126, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i02.65>.
- [28] A. Nurzannah, D. R. Munir, A. Fajar, and T. Luthfi, "The Influence of the Internet to Improve Students' Understanding of Arabic Vocabulary: A Semi-Experimental Study at Al-Mutahar Falyurid Islamic High School," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 58–83, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i01.40>.
- [29] Muthoifin, A. E. Conti Morales, M. A. Maisu, I. S. Windiarti, and E. I. Osman Musa, "Competent Teacher Ideal Professional Certified Character and Progressive Perspective of Kitab Al-Rasul Al-Muallim," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 02, pp. 84–95, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i02.41>.
- [30] R. F. Irmi, M. Al Farabi, and A. Darlis, "Technology Education in the Quran," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 01–09, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i01.4>.
- [31] A. Mahmud, "Multicultural Democratic and Tolerant: Qur'anic Perspectives and Islamic Education at the Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 03, pp. 205–220, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i03.82>.
- [32] Sigit Raharja, "Boarding Model Education Concept to Improve the Quality of Pesantren Education," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 03, pp. 161–171, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i03.70>.
- [33] S. Shobron, T. Trisno, M. Muthoifin, M. Mahmudhassan, and M. N. Rochim Maksum, "Humanist Education the Dayak of Kalimantan Indonesia Islamic Perspective," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 20–29, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i01.27>.
- [34] J. Wang and R. S. Austria, "Construction of an effectiveness evaluation model for furniture design curriculum reform under the new engineering education paradigm," *Environ. Soc. Psychol.*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.59429/esp.v10i2.3427>.
- [35] S. A. F. Lingga, A. Mustaqim, M. Al Farabi, and A. Darlis, "Tauhid Education in the Qur'an," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 10–19, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i01.3>.
- [36] T. Sanyoto, N. Fadli, R. Irfan Rosyadi, and M. Muthoifin, "Implementation of Tawhid-Based Integral Education to Improve and Strengthen Hidayatullah Basic Education," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 30–41, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i01.31>.
- [37] H. Haerul, I. Iqra, B. M. A. Muhammad Hamad Al-Nil, and R. Mahmoud ELSakhawy, "The Role of the Teacher in Instilling Tauhid-Based Education in Students in the Perspective of the Qur'an," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 01, pp. 50–57, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i01.35>.
- [38] Salahudin, Syamsul Hidayat, Muthoifin, and Ismail Abdul Ghani al-Jalal, "Values of Progressive Islamic Education and Multicultural Education in Alaq: 1-5," *Solo Univers. J. Islam. Educ. Multicult.*, vol. 1, no. 02, pp. 147–160, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v1i02.69>.
- [39] S. Quirke, L. Espinoza, and G. Sensevy, "Teacher Professional Identity and Curriculum Reform," in *New ICMI Study Series*, vol. Part F776, Institute of Education, Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland: Springer Science and Business Media B.V., 2023, pp. 455–468. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13548-4_29.
- [40] L. Wilkerson, "Curriculum Reform for Christian Education (Part 2): Designing and Implementing an Inquiry Design Method (IDMCE)," *Christ. Educ. J.*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 12–32, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/07398913231152506>.
- [41] F. Tusa, I. Aguaded, and S. Tejedor, "Values and Ethics as Education Policy: Media Framing of Ecuador's 2024 Curriculum Reform," *Educ. Sci.*, vol. 15, no. 10, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15101328>.
- [42] C. S. M. Ho, W. K. S. Chiu, and L. C. K. Liu, "Middle leaders as catalysts for faux comprehension and pseudo-understanding: Teacher sensemaking challenges in curriculum reform," *Int. J. Educ. Res.*, vol. 131, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2025.102580>.
- [43] K. E. Wolff, T. S. Hattingh, and L. Smith, "Global challenges, local responses: Exploring curriculum reform in South African engineering education," *J. Eng. Educ.*, vol. 114, no. 3, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jee.70006>.
- [44] Z. Hu *et al.*, "Competence-based curriculum reform of Principles of Genetic Engineering in biomedical education for promoting the construction of first-class majors and disciplines: a qualitative study," *Cogent Educ.*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2466306>.
-