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Local Wisdom Islamic Education as a Cultural Bridge Mechanism For Intercultural Sensitivity In Vocational Tourism Schools

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Abstract

Although intercultural sensitivity has become a crucial competency in the global tourism industry, the empirical mechanisms of managing Islamic Religious Education (IRE) based on local wisdom and intercultural sensitivity remain underdeveloped. Existing literature predominantly employs Western-centered psychometric frameworks, thereby neglecting the epistemological potential of indigenous knowledge systems as pedagogical foundations. This study utilized a multi-site qualitative design with maximum variation sampling. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews (27 informants), participant observation (9 sessions), and document analysis (18 curriculum and policy documents). Data analysis followed the interactive model with comprehensive triangulation credibility mechanisms, yielding 127 open codes, 27 categories, and 6 main themes with 18 sub-themes. The findings identified six management mechanisms: (1) integrative mapping of Islamic-Sasak values into curriculum documents, (2) collaborative multi-stakeholder governance, (3) contextual tourism learning design, (4) contextual-reflective pedagogy, (5) holistic-affective evaluation, and (6) differentiated intercultural sensitivity formation. Cross-case analysis revealed three distinct formation pathways: experiential engagement (high multicultural exposure in Batulayar), reflective empathy (limited pluralistic community in Lingsar), and analytical ethics (structured cognitive preparation in Gerung). These findings were strengthened by 18 evidence-based propositions verified through source, technique, and investigator triangulation. The findings demonstrate that IRE management based on local wisdom functions as a cultural bridge mechanism whose effectiveness varies according to ecological context intensity and pedagogical depth. This study extends curriculum management theory to non-Western indigenous epistemology and advances analytical propositions for culturally responsive religious education.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, increasing global mobility, expansion of the tourism industry, and intensification of cross-cultural interactions have prompted higher and vocational education to position intercultural competence as one of the main learning outcomes [28]. Intercultural education is no longer understood merely as an effort to comprehend cultural differences, but as a systematic process to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes enabling individuals to interact effectively in multicultural situations (Qin, 2024; Wang et al., 2023). In this context, intercultural sensitivity becomes a crucial foundation because it relates to individuals' capacity to recognize, respond to, and interpret cultural differences accurately.

In line with this, various studies indicate that education has a strategic role in forming such competencies, both through formal curriculum and contextual learning experiences (Hafizin et al., 2026; Vu, 2022). However, the effectiveness of intercultural education is not solely determined by learning content, but also by how pedagogical processes are designed and implemented. Qin (2024), for instance, demonstrated that collaborative approaches such as lesson study can foster pedagogical innovation and more meaningful experience-based learning. On the other hand, Hapsari's (2024) research revealed that although intercultural education interventions can increase awareness and attitudes, value internalization processes often remain limited, thus requiring more contextual and sustainable approaches.

In the context of religious education, particularly Islamic Religious Education (IRE), the potential for developing intercultural sensitivity is actually substantial (Nattheeraphong et al., 2025). Sijamhodžić-Nadarević's (2023) study showed that Islamic religious education curriculum can contribute to developing dialogic and intercultural competencies through value integration, practical experience, and cross-religious collaboration. However, in practice, religious learning often remains oriented toward doctrinal transmission, thus not fully connected with the multicultural social realities faced by learners.

Although the importance of intercultural sensitivity has been widely acknowledged, a fundamental problem remains regarding how such competencies actually form within educational contexts, particularly in vocation-based religious education. Most research still focuses on competency measurement or intervention effectiveness, without adequately explaining the internal mechanisms connecting curriculum with learning outcomes (Kim, 2005). Furthermore, existing studies tend to employ Western theoretical frameworks that do not fully consider the complexity of local and non-Western contexts.

As a general solution, literature points to the importance of more integrative approaches combining curriculum, pedagogical, and social context dimensions. Sociocultural approaches emphasize that learning occurs through interaction and experience (Vygotsky, 1978), while experiential learning approaches assert the importance of direct engagement in real situations (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). Nevertheless, how these two approaches are operationalized in religious education curriculum management, particularly in vocational contexts, has not been extensively explored.

A number of studies have begun to point toward the importance of integrating intercultural education, learning experience, and local context. Jose and Torres (2024) emphasized the need for pedagogical approaches based on community and indigenous knowledge in indigenous education contexts. Meanwhile, Valencia and Michelson (2023) showed that intercultural policy implementation requires structural support, including resources, teacher training, and community involvement.

In the context of religious education, Yogeeswaran et al. (2021) found that although innovative approaches have been used, intercultural learning practices remain limited to presentation methods and do not consistently involve direct experience. This is reinforced by Weda et al. (2022) who indicated that lack of intercultural experience becomes one of the main obstacles in developing intercultural sensitivity, despite theoretical knowledge being possessed. These findings lead to one important conclusion: approaches are needed that not only integrate values and content, but also manage learning processes systematically and contextually, thereby enabling deeper value internalization.

Although intercultural education literature continues to develop, several research gaps remain inadequately addressed. First, there exists a theoretical gap, where local wisdom is often positioned as a decorative element rather than an epistemological foundation in learning (Hadziomerovic & Isanović, 2025). Second, there is an analytical gap, as most research focuses more on curriculum content than on management processes encompassing planning, implementation, and evaluation (Sumardi et al., 2022). Third, there is a methodological gap, particularly the scarcity of multi-site qualitative studies capable of capturing contextual variations comparatively.

Furthermore, previous research also shows limitations in explaining how intercultural sensitivity develops as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects (Chen & Starosta, 2000). Many studies still view it as a direct intervention outcome, without considering the mediating role of pedagogical processes and ecological context influence. At this point, there remains a need to develop a conceptual framework capable of explaining the relationship between curriculum management, pedagogical process, local wisdom, and intercultural sensitivity in an integrative and contextual manner.

Departing from these gaps, this study offers a different approach by positioning Islamic Religious Education management based on local wisdom as the main mechanism in forming intercultural sensitivity, mediated by contextual pedagogical processes and influenced by ecological context. Specifically, this research provides three main contributions. First, it develops a conceptual model connecting curriculum management with intercultural sensitivity through pedagogical mediation mechanisms, thereby expanding understanding of how such competencies form. Second, it reconstructs the position of local wisdom from mere cultural content to an epistemological foundation in learning, integrated with Islamic values. Third, through a multi-site approach, it demonstrates how ecological context variations produce different learning dynamics, thereby contributing to more contextual theory development. Thus, this study not only attempts to answer what happens in intercultural education, but also how and why these processes occur in vocation-based religious education contexts in multicultural societies.

2. METHOD

2.1 Approach and Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a multi-site design to explain in depth the mechanisms of intercultural sensitivity formation through Islamic Religious Education (IRE) management based on local wisdom. This approach was chosen because the research problem relates not only to what learning outcomes are achieved, but more importantly to how and why these processes occur in different contexts. Therefore, the multi-site design enables comparative exploration of ecological context variations that cannot be explained through single-site designs.

Referring to Yin (2018), this design uses analytical replication logic, where each site is treated as a "natural experiment" to test the consistency of management mechanisms in different contexts. This approach also responds to limitations of previous research that tended to use single case studies or quantitative approaches based on psychometric instruments, thus failing to capture the complexity of pedagogical and managerial processes contextually.

2.2 Design and Research Setting

The multi-site design in this study aimed to produce what Miles and Huberman (1994) termed "heterogeneity within bounded systems," namely sufficient context variation to reveal mechanism differences, yet remaining within the same national curriculum framework, enabling structured and analytical comparison. Three public vocational senior high schools (SMKN) in West Lombok were purposively selected based on criteria considering different levels of multicultural exposure. SMKN 1

Batulayar represented a high multicultural intensity context in an international tourism area, fostering experience-based learning and industry partnership. SMKN 1 Lingsar reflected historical cultural-religious pluralism, enabling reflective learning through interfaith dialogue and social collaboration. Meanwhile, SMKN 1 Gerung demonstrated a moderate exposure context but with strong institutional support, thus emphasizing value systematization through curriculum structure and professional coordination. This selected variation enabled sharp comparative analysis of how ecological contexts shape management practices and pedagogical processes, and how both contribute to learning outcome differentiation.

2.3 Participants

Twenty-seven informants were selected through purposive maximum variation sampling to capture diverse institutional perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Detailed informant characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Research Informant Characteristics

Informant Category	Total	SMKN 1 Batulayar	SMKN 1 Lingsar	SMKN 1 Gerung	Role in Research
School leaders	3	1 (Principal)	1 (Principal)	1 (Principal)	Institutional vision and policy perspective
Vice Principal for Curriculum	3	1	1	1	Curriculum coordination and supervision
IRE Teachers	6	2 (core + support)	2 (core + support)	2 (core + support)	Pedagogical and classroom management insights
Cultural stakeholders	6	2 (customary leader + FKUB)	2 (customary leader + FKUB)	2 (customary leader + FKUB)	Community and interfaith perspective
Students	9	3 (high/medium/low involvement)	3 (high/medium/low involvement)	3 (high/medium/low involvement)	Learning experience and cross-cultural encounters
Industry partners	3	1 (hotel manager)	1 (hotel manager)	1 (hotel manager)	Graduate competency validation at workplace
Total	**27**	**9**	**9**	**9**	

Saturation was determined through repeated data analysis following Bogdan and Biklen (2006) guidelines: no new themes emerged after 23 interviews, with the last 4 interviews confirming existing patterns. Informants provided written consent; pseudonyms protected confidentiality. This saturation approach addresses common criticism of qualitative sampling with undetermined sample sizes by providing transparent, empirically-based justification.

2.4 Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through three complementary qualitative techniques to minimize single-source bias and capture institutional dynamics holistically. In-depth semi-structured interviews (27 interviews; 54 hours) were designed with role-specific protocols to explore policy mechanisms, pedagogical adaptations, learning experiences, community collaboration, and graduate performance relevance; all were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and retained local terminology. Participant observation (9 sessions; 27 hours) captured actual practices in classrooms, cultural projects, and governance forums through systematic recording encompassing descriptive, reflective, and analytical dimensions. Document analysis (18 documents) traced formal planning, implementation, and evaluation curriculum traces from teaching tools to school policies and internship reports. Integration of these three sources produced a comprehensive, mutually-verifying data base, ensuring findings represent not only actor perceptions but also actual practices and underlying institutional structures.

2.5 Data Trustworthiness

Data trustworthiness was built referring to Lincoln and Guba's criteria through expanded and mutually reinforcing procedures. Credibility was ensured through cross-source triangulation across five informant categories, technique triangulation (interviews, observation, and documents), and investigator triangulation with independent coding of partial data. Finding validation was strengthened through member checks showing consensus on core themes, peer debriefing by external researchers, and adequate field involvement at each site. Dependability was supported by comprehensive audit trails covering the entire analysis cycle, from raw data to thematic reconstruction, including process documentation and analysis software use to ensure traceability. Transferability was achieved through rich contextual description enabling readers to assess finding relevance to similar contexts. Meanwhile, confirmability was maintained through systematic reflexivity practices and critical team discussions to minimize bias, ensuring findings do not merely reflect researcher subjective positions but are rooted in traceable and verifiable data.

2.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, adapted for multi-site qualitative research to address identified coding-categorization gaps in qualitative educational research:

Phase 1: Data Reduction. All interview transcripts (54 hours), observation field notes (27 hours), and documents (18 items). Initial coding yielded 127 open codes through inductive analysis. Codes were grouped into 27 categories through constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). Two researchers independently coded 20% of data; inter-coder reliability reached Cohen's kappa = 0.84, with differences resolved through consensus discussion. This exceeds the kappa ≥ 0.80 threshold recommended by Neuendorf (2017) for qualitative research.

Phase 2: Data Display. A cross-case matrix was built comparing Batulayar, Lingsar, and Gerung across three management dimensions (planning, implementation, evaluation) and six emerging themes. The matrix enabled pattern identification and negative case detection—three deviant cases (students with unexpected sensitivity patterns given their school contexts) were analyzed to refine rather than ignore emerging themes, following Yin's (2018) "pattern matching with rival explanations."

Phase 3: Conclusion Drawing and Verification. Pattern matching identified recurring relationships between management mechanisms and intercultural formation indicators. Explanation building developed 18 theoretical propositions. Negative case analysis examined different patterns. Triangulation verified conclusions through cross-source and cross-technique convergence. This three-phase approach addresses what Beteno, S., Hastomo, A., & Hadi, N. (2025) criticized as under-theorization of analysis procedures in qualitative educational research.

3. RESULTS

Cross-site analysis identified six management mechanisms consistently emerging from interview, observation, and document triangulation. These mechanisms explain how Islamic Religious Education (IRE) based on Sasak local wisdom is operationalized in vocational tourism school contexts and how such mechanisms differently shape students' intercultural sensitivity according to context. Unlike single-site descriptive qualitative studies, these findings were produced through pattern matching and cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2018), enabling analytical proposition development rather than mere contextual finding reporting. Table 2 summarizes the cross-case distribution of the six mechanisms based on 54 analyzed data units.

Table 2
Cross-Case Distribution of Management Mechanisms (N = 54 Data Units)

Management Mechanism	SMKN 1 Batulayar (n = 18)	SMKN 1 Lingsar (n = 18)	SMKN 1 Gerung (n = 18)
1. Integrative Value Mapping	Contextual-adaptive: Integration of *soloh* value with tourism service practice (B-D1, B-D2, B-W3)	Epistemological-theological: Connection of Sasak values with *al-Kulliyat al-Khamsah* and *maqāṣid asy-syariah* (L-D1, L-W1)	Systemic-philosophical: Comprehensive mapping of values *leq, pacu, isin, ajinang, solah, reme, paut, lomboq* to CP, ATP, modules (G-D1, G-D2, G-W1)
2. Multi-Stakeholder Governance	*Industry-driven governance*: Tourism partner involvement in planning and evaluation through TPKS (B-D3, B-W2)	*Interfaith-community governance*: FKUB and interfaith leader collaboration for social harmony (L-W2, L-O1)	*Institutionally-structured governance*: Internal MGMP coordination and cross-subject coordination (G-O1, G-W2)
3. Contextual Learning Design	*Experiential-authentic learning*: P5 tourism project with Islamic ethics and direct tourist interaction (B-O1, B-W4)	*Community-embedded learning*: *Perang topat* practice and Sabtu Budaya as learning spaces (L-D2, L-O1, L-W3)	*Case-based analytical learning*: Ethical dilemma case studies of interfaith-tourist interaction (G-O2, G-W4)
4. Reflective Pedagogy	*Experiential-reflective pedagogy*: Structured experience-reflection cycle through internship (B-W7, B-O1)	*Dialogic-reflective pedagogy*: Collective dialogue and intercultural interaction reflective journal (L-O3, L-W5, L-O4)	*Analytical-dialogic pedagogy*: Ethical reasoning through case studies and field observation (G-W5, G-W6, G-O3)
5. Holistic-Affective Evaluation	*Workplace-validated assessment*: Reflective-holistic assessment with industry partner validation (B-D4, B-O4, B-W8)	*Reflective-community assessment*: Portfolio, attitude observation, and visionary principal supervision (L-D3, L-O5, L-W7)	*Structured formative assessment*: Explicit cultural indicators (*gotong royong, solah perateq, bedadayan*) and feedback loop forum (G-D4, G-O5, G-D5)
6. Sensitivity Formation	*Behavioral adaptability*: Active involvement and adaptation ability with international tourists (B-O1, B-W4, B-W6)	*Affective empathy*: Empathy, tolerance, and difference appreciation in Islam-Hindu context (L-O2, L-W4, L-W5)	*Cognitive-ethical reasoning*: Critical understanding and ethical response to diversity (G-W4, G-O4, G-W6)

3.1 Mechanism 1: Integrative Islamic-Sasak Value Mapping

Analysis shows that all three schools do not merely "insert" local values, but systematically map values into curriculum structure with varying depth. This finding emerges from document (ATP, RPP, modules), teacher interview, and classroom observation convergence.

In Batulayar, value mapping is contextual-adaptive, connecting values such as *soloh* (politeness, harmony) with tourism service practice. Classroom observation and curriculum document evidence show alignment

between learning objectives and pedagogical practice, producing applicative orientation toward the working world. As the Principal expressed: "Our IRE planning is not merely administrative, but a bridge between religion and social reality" (B-W1).

Conversely, Lingsar shows epistemological-theological mapping, where local values are explicitly connected with *maqāṣid asy-syariah* through the *al-Kulliyat al-Khamsah* framework. Interview and document data reveal that this integration is not symbolic, but forms a normative learning framework. The IRE teacher explained: "We position local culture as a theologically valid pedagogical medium, not merely a symbol" (L-W1).

Gerung represents the most systematic form through philosophical-structural approach, with high coherence between objectives, materials, activities, and evaluation. Document analysis shows vertical and horizontal integration across curriculum components. The IRE teacher stated: "Our planning is a cultural blueprint, not merely an administrative document" (G-W1). Cross-site comparison reveals a gradation from contextual adaptation to theological legitimization, culminating in philosophical systematization. This pattern indicates that value integration quality is not determined by formal policy, but by schools' epistemic and managerial capacity.

3.2 Mechanism 2: Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Governance

Data show that all schools develop collaborative governance, but with different configurations according to their ecological contexts. SMKN 1 Batulayar operates an *industry-driven governance* model, where industry actors are directly involved in planning and evaluation. Evidence from KOSP documents and TPKS meeting observation shows genuine, not symbolic, involvement. The Vice Principal for Curriculum explained: "We involve tourism stakeholders in planning so that IRE is relevant to the working world" (B-W2).

SMKN 1 Lingsar develops an *interfaith-community governance* model, utilizing the community's historical pluralism. Observation of *perang topat* activities and FKUB involvement shows integration between social practice and formal curriculum. The customary leader stated: "Collaboration between school and community ensures local values live in IRE planning" (L-W2).

Gerung displays *institutionally-structured governance*, with internal cross-subject coordination through MGMP. Document data show formal mechanisms maintaining value implementation consistency. The Vice Principal for Curriculum explained: "We direct IRE to form students who are religious yet professional in tourism" (G-W2). Cross-case synthesis shows that: governance effectiveness does not depend on actor type, but on collaboration institutionalization level.

3.3 Mechanism 3: Contextual Learning Design

Cross-site analysis in this study reveals three different contextualization models, each correlating with schools' ecological resources. SMKN 1 Batulayar adopts *experiential-authentic learning*, based on real projects with industry involvement. P5 observation and student interviews show direct connection between experience and value internalization. The student expressed: "I came to understand that professionalism and work ethics are part of worship" (B-W6).

SMKN 1 Lingsar uses *community-embedded learning*, where the community becomes a learning space. Observation and student reflection data show dialogic and real social experience-based learning processes. The student explained: "Through cross-cultural role play, I learned to understand others' perspectives" (L-W4).

SMKN 1 Gerung develops *case-based analytical learning*, with ethical dilemma simulation. Classroom data show systematic thinking processes connecting Islamic and cultural values. The student stated: "From case studies, I learned to identify ethical dilemmas and formulate attitudes based on Islamic and Sasak values" (G-W4). Cross-site patterns show that: effective contextualization occurs when learning strategies align with students' social ecology.

3.4 Mechanism 4: Contextual-Reflective Pedagogy

Applied pedagogy shows different *signature pedagogy* in each school. SMKN 1 Batulayar emphasizes *experiential-reflective pedagogy*, with structured experience and reflection cycles, particularly through internship. The IRE teacher explained: "Students learn not only from books, but from real experience serving tourists from different cultures" (B-W4).

SMKN 1 Lingsar develops *dialogic-reflective pedagogy*, where meaning is built through dialogue and collective reflection. The IRE teacher stated: "We are not monologic, but dialogic. Students must listen, respond, and reflect" (L-W5). Students write reflective journals about intercultural interaction experiences (L-O4).

SMKN 1 Gerung applies *analytical-dialogic pedagogy*, focusing on ethical reasoning through case studies. The IRE teacher explained: "We make Islamic and cultural values living values directly experienced by students" (G-W5). Findings show that: reflection becomes the key mechanism connecting experience with value internalization, as expressed by the Lingsar student: "Reflection makes me aware which attitudes need improvement in facing differences" (L-W6).

3.5 Mechanism 5: Holistic-Affective Evaluation

Cross-site analysis results show that all schools go beyond cognitive evaluation, but with different approaches. SMKN 1 Batulayar through *Workplace-validated assessment* (assessment validated through work practice experience). Evaluation documents include tolerance, openness, and difference appreciation indicators (B-D4). Industry partners confirmed: "Internship students at our hotel showed good ethics and cross-cultural communication" (B-W9).

SMKN 1 Lingsar conducts evaluation through *Reflective-community assessment* (reflective community assessment). Evaluation instruments include attitude observation, portfolio, and continuous reflective notes (L-D3). The Principal stated: "Our evaluation is inclusive and coordinated, not merely the IRE teacher's sole responsibility" (L-W8).

SMKN 1 Gerung through *Structured formative assessment* (structured formative assessment). Values *gotong royong, solah perateq, bedadayan, saduq* are made attitude evaluation indicators (G-D4). Teacher forums are used for continuous improvement feedback loops (G-D5).

Data triangulation shows that evaluation functions as: a value reinforcement mechanism, not merely a learning outcome measurement. The Batulayar Principal explained: "Our IRE evaluation functions as a character reinforcement mechanism, not merely a graduation determinant" (B-W8).

3.6 Mechanism 6: Intercultural Sensitivity Formation

Cross-case analysis shows that management mechanisms produce three different intercultural sensitivity patterns: SMKN 1 Batulayar through *Behavioral adaptability* (behavioral adaptation ability): Students show active involvement and adaptation ability with international tourists. P5 observation and student interview data strengthen this finding (B-O1, B-W4). SMKN 1 Lingsar with *Affective empathy* (affective empathy): Students show empathy, tolerance, and difference appreciation in the Islam-Hindu coexistence context. Classroom dialogue observation and student interviews support this finding (L-O3, L-W5). SMKN 1 Gerung *Cognitive-ethical reasoning* (cognitive-ethical reasoning): Students show critical understanding and ethical response to diversity. Case study and student interview data confirm this pattern (G-O2, G-W6). This finding does not support linear development models, but points toward the Context-Activated Differentiation Model, where intercultural sensitivity forms are determined by context configuration and management mechanisms.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Cultural Bridge Mechanism as Epistemic Reconstruction

This study's findings advance a theoretical framework termed the cultural bridge mechanism, namely a model explaining how Islamic Religious Education (IRE) management based on local wisdom bridges doctrinal teachings with interaction demands in multicultural contexts. Different from approaches positioning local culture as an additional curriculum element, this study shows that local values can function as an epistemological foundation equivalent to religious principles.

This mechanism operates through three interrelated processes. First, epistemological foundation, where local values (for instance Sasak values such as *soloh* and *pacu*) are not merely contextualized, but theologized through the *al-Kulliyat al-Khamsah* framework (five universal sharia objectives: preserving life, religion, intellect, lineage, and property). Second, experience translation, namely the process of connecting abstract ethical principles with real practice in social and professional life. Third, evaluative reinforcement, emphasizing behavior and disposition-based assessment, not merely cognitive mastery.

These findings expand existing literature. Studies such as Qin (2024) emphasize the importance of pedagogical innovation through lesson study, yet have not touched the epistemological dimensions underlying such processes. Likewise, IRE curriculum in the Bosnia context (Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2023) has systematically integrated interfaith dialogue, but still tends to position cultural values as supplementary content. This study goes beyond such approaches by showing that ontological not merely integrative—integration can produce deeper transformation, as strengthened by Lingsar data showing explicit Sasak value connection with *maqāṣid asy-syariah* (L-D1, L-W1).

Thus, the cultural bridge mechanism not only bridges educational practice, but also reconstructs epistemic relations between religious knowledge and local knowledge. This directly answers Kim's (2005) criticism highlighting the need for more relational, contextual, and non-Western epistemology-rooted intercultural models.

4.2 Ecological Differentiation Theory: Competence as Contextual Activation

Cross-case findings show that intercultural competence formation does not follow linear development patterns as assumed in classical models (Bennett, 2004; Deardorff, 2006). Conversely, this study proposes ecological differentiation theory, stating that intercultural competence is activated contextually, depending on multicultural exposure intensity and structure.

In high intensity contexts (SMKN 1 Batulayar), direct interaction with international tourists activates behavioral competence through authentic participation. This aligns with the *legitimate peripheral participation* concept, but is expanded by showing local values' role as mediator between religious ethics and professional practice. Data show Batulayar students demonstrate high behavioral adaptability (B-O1, B-W4, B-W6).

In medium intensity contexts (Lingsar), structured interfaith interaction develops affective-relational competence. The pluralistic social environment provides space for tolerance value internalization which is then formalized through *maqāṣid syariah*-based learning. This reflects *zone of proximal development* principles (Vygotsky, 1978), but with added local epistemology dimensions. Data show Lingsar students excel in affective empathy (L-O2, L-W4, L-W5).

Meanwhile, in low intensity contexts (Gerung), limited multicultural exposure results in emphasis on cognitive-ethical competence through case study approaches. Although effective in building analytical frameworks, these findings show that such competence does not automatically convert to practice without real experience support. Data show Gerung students excel in cognitive-ethical reasoning (G-O2, G-W4, G-W6).

These findings provide explanations for limitations reported in previous studies. Bajec (2024) showed that educational interventions often fail to produce sustainable behavioral change, while Filipović and Jurišić (2024) found gaps between open attitudes and behavioral adaptation ability. This study shows that such gaps are not merely individual problems, but consequences of ecological configurations not supporting certain dimension activation. Thus, ecological differentiation theory shifts understanding from universal development models toward context-activated competence models.

4.3 Collaborative Governance as Decolonial Curriculum Co-Construction

This study's findings show that curriculum management can no longer be understood as merely an internal educational institution process, but as a result of interaction between various social actors. The collaborative governance concept in this study develops into what can be termed shared culture

management, where formal actors (school) and non-formal actors (customary leaders, community, industry) together shape curriculum structure.

This aligns with *network governance* notions (Ball, 2012), but this study adds an important dimension: in non-Western contexts, traditional authority is not merely a partner, but an epistemic legitimacy source. This strengthens Torres and Quilaqueo's (2024) arguments about indigenous community involvement importance, while going beyond them by showing how such involvement concretely shapes learning objectives, pedagogical methods, and evaluation systems as strengthened by Batulayar (B-D3, B-W2), Lingsar (L-W2, L-O1), and Gerung (G-O1, G-W2) data. On the other hand, these findings also complement Hadjisoteriou and Angelides' (2016) perspectives emphasizing policy support and resources importance. This study shows that without cultural legitimacy, structural interventions tend not to be sustainable.

Thus, collaborative governance in this study represents a decolonial model, where knowledge production is not monopolized by formal institutions, but constructed together.

4.4 Signature Pedagogy and Contextual Autonomy

Pedagogical approach variations in the three schools show that there is no single universal method in intercultural education. Each school develops *signature pedagogy* reflecting its ecological conditions: Batulayar with experiential-reflective pedagogy, Lingsar with dialogic-reflective pedagogy, and Gerung with analytical-dialogic pedagogy.

These findings expand Ruiz Viruel et al.'s (2025) *pedagogical content knowledge* concept to the institutional level. If Qin (2024) emphasizes the importance of reflective cycles in pedagogical development, this study shows that pedagogical innovation effectiveness highly depends on its suitability with social and cultural context as strengthened by observation and teacher interview data at all three schools.

The implication is the need for context-sensitive pedagogical autonomy. Learning method standardization potentially ignores local ecology uniqueness, while context-based approaches enable existing potential optimization.

4.5 Authentic Evaluation and Cultural Validity

Evaluation-related findings show a shift from cognitive testing paradigms toward authentic assessment evaluating dispositions and real practice. This aligns with criticism of the *testing trap* (Wiggins, 1998), but this study adds an important dimension: cultural validity. Local value-based indicator use (for instance *gotong royong, solah perateq* (good intention), *bedadayan* (cooperation), *saduq* (mutual trust)) increases evaluation system relevance and acceptability. This answers gaps identified by Ruiz-Bernardo et al. (2024) regarding universal instrument limitations in measuring intercultural sensitivity. Furthermore, multi-source evaluation approaches (teachers, peers, parents, industry partners) strengthen reliability, although also opening space for power dynamics requiring further study.

4.6 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations that need transparent acknowledgment. First, the multi-site design provides breadth but limits contextual analysis depth at each site. Second, the relatively short research

duration (6 weeks per school) has not been able to capture long-term development dynamics. Third, the limited geographical context in West Lombok restricts generalization to other multicultural contexts.

Further research is recommended to use longitudinal designs to track sensitivity trajectories over time, develop context-based assessment instruments, and test this model in different multicultural settings (for instance urban metropolitan contexts such as Jakarta or international border contexts).

5. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that IRE management based on local wisdom functions as an institutional mechanism that systematically forms intercultural sensitivity through value integration, collaborative governance, and contextual pedagogy. Its main contribution lies in the shift from individual and universalistic approaches toward a contextual-differential model, where local wisdom is positioned as an epistemological foundation connecting theological principles with practical needs, including the working world.

For practitioners and policymakers, these findings are important because they show that religious education effectiveness is not determined by uniform standards, but by the ability to calibrate curriculum, learning, and evaluation according to schools' ecological contexts. Practically, this can be realized through local asset mapping, theological capacity strengthening for teachers, local case study use, context-based behavioral assessment development, and formal partnership with industry and community.

However, this study has limitations in cross-sectional design restricting causal inference, instrument use still depending on contextual interpretation, and specific location coverage thus limiting generalization. Further research needs to adopt longitudinal designs to track intercultural sensitivity development over time, develop measurable and cross-context validated scenario-based assessment instruments, and test interventions through controlled experiments to more strictly assess model effectiveness. Thus, future development not only strengthens the ecological differentiation theory's theoretical validity, but also ensures its implementation remains operational, adaptive, and relevant for educational practice and policy.

Declarations

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Author contributions

Hafizin: Conceptualisation, investigation, methodology, formal analysis, data collection, data analysis, writing-original draft, writing-review & editing.

Maisyaroh: Conceptualisation, methodology, supervision, project administration, writing-review & editing.

Agus Timan: Conceptualisation, methodology, theoretical framework, writing-review & editing.

Teguh Triwiyanto: Conceptualisation, methodology, validation, writing-review & editing.

Muhammad Ahyar: Conceptualisation, methodology, local wisdom expertise, writing-review & editing.

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Data availability

The datasets generated during this study are available upon request from the corresponding author. Due to the qualitative nature of the data containing detailed interview transcripts with identifiable contextual information, raw data are not publicly available to protect participant confidentiality in accordance with the ethical approval granted by the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Negeri Malang.

Declaration

Ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Negeri Malang (Komite Etik Penelitian Universitas Negeri Malang) in accordance with Peraturan Rektor Universitas Negeri Malang Nomor 46 Tahun 2024 concerning Ethical Feasibility of Research and Community Service (Protocol No. 24.2.4/UN32.1.1/KM/2024). The study protocol was evaluated following the committee's assessment of risks to participants, privacy protection, and research integrity standards. All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Furthermore, research permits were acquired from the appropriate District Education Office, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Official authorisation to carry out the investigation in public vocational secondary schools was secured.

Informed consents

Informed consents, comprising both Consent to Participate and Consent to Publish, were secured from all participants prior to the commencement of data collection. Participants' anonymity was ensured through the use of pseudonyms, and confidentiality was maintained by storing digital and physical data securely. Participants were informed of their rights, including the option to participate voluntarily, the right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and access to information about the study. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. No participants under 16 years of age were involved in this study.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. Hence, the authors declare no conflict of interest.

Consent to participate

Not Applicable. This manuscript does not contain any identifiable personal data, images, videos, or other materials that could identify individual participants. All data presented are anonymized and aggregated through the use of pseudonyms and coded identifiers. No individual participant can be identified from the information provided in this manuscript.

Statement regarding research involving Human Subjects and/or Animals

This study involved human participants, specifically school leaders, teachers, students, customary leaders, FKUB representatives, and industry partners in three public vocational senior high schools in West Lombok. No animals participated in this research. All research activities complied with established ethical standards as approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Negeri Malang.

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Figures

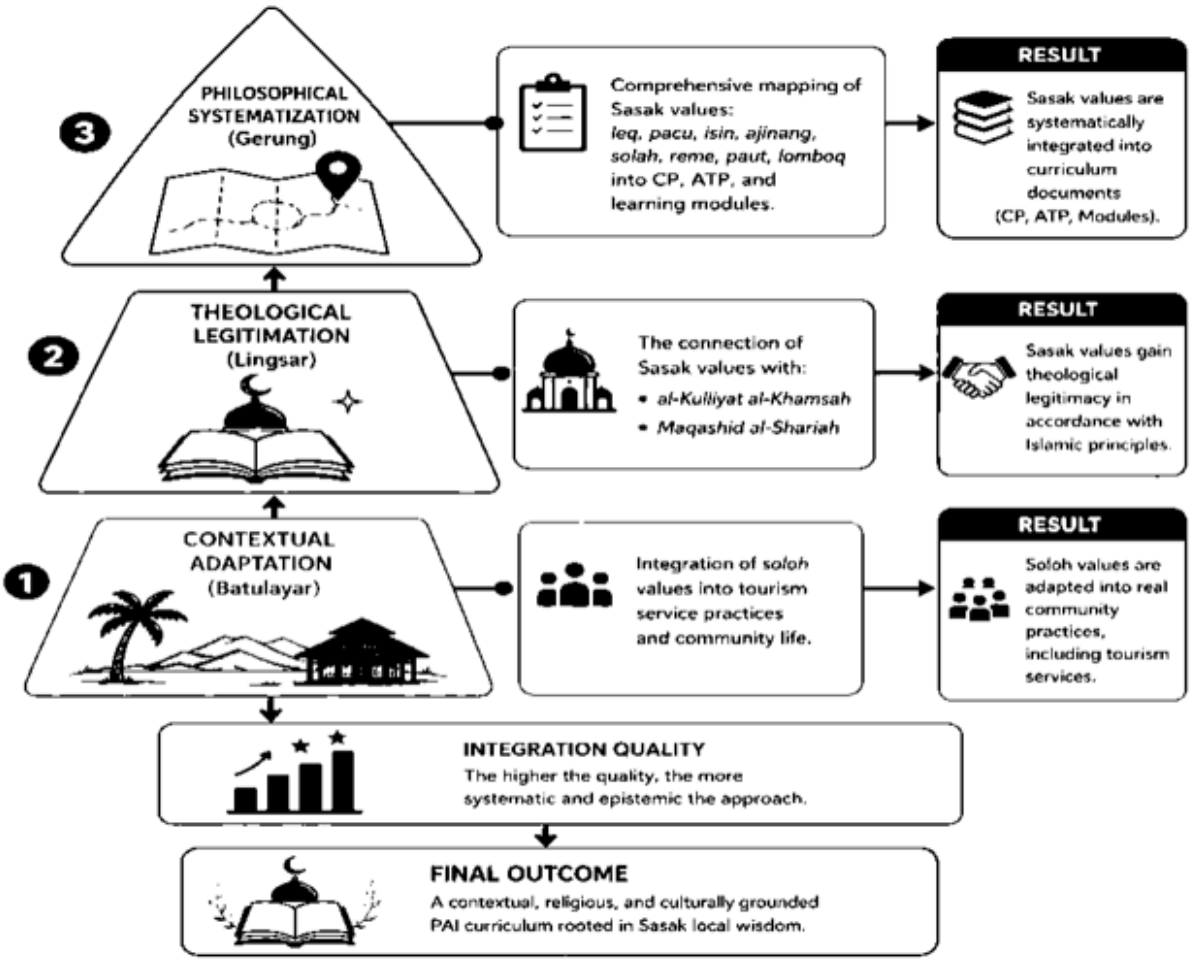


Figure 1

Hierarchy of Islamic-Sasak Value Integration Quality in IRE Curriculum From Contextual Adaptation (Batulayar), Theological Legitimation (Lingsar), To Philosophical Systematization (Gerung)

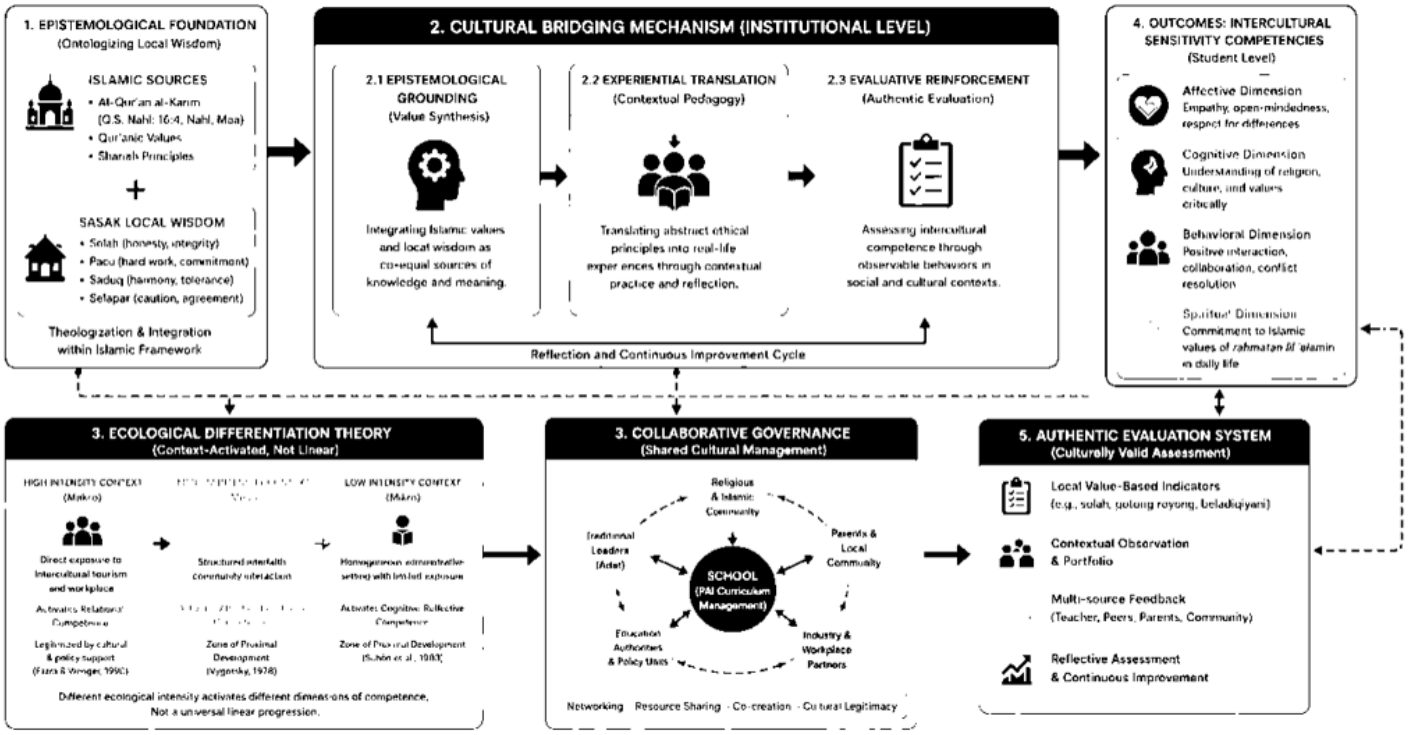


Figure 2

Context-Activated Differentiation Model where intercultural Sensitivity Forms Are Determined By Context Configuration and Management Mechanisms

Supplementary Files

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- AnalisisDataKualitatifMilesHubermanLengkap.xlsx