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**Postgraduate Students' Challenges in Developing Social Solidarity in The Multicultural Community of an Islamic University**

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**ABSTRAK**

Universitas Islam Internasional Malaysia (UIAM) adalah sebuah institusi pendidikan tinggi yang didasari prinsip-prinsip Islam, lantas membedakannya daripada institusi pendidikan tinggi yang lain di Malaysia dalam aspek kurikulum, pengembangan mahasiswa, dan profesionalisme akademiknya. Sebagai salah satu universitas Islam awam yang internasional di Malaysia, UIAM berhasrat untuk menjadi pusat pendidikan yang unggul dengan penekanannya yang kuat terhadap pembangunan nilai-nilai Islam serta penglibatan globalnya. Visi dan misi UIAM mencerminkan komitmennya yang tinggi terhadap integrasi ilmu pengetahuan, amalan-amalan dan antara keberagaman staf dan mahasiswanya. Hingga kini, UIAM memiliki mahasiswa daripada 56 buah negara. Justru itu, kepelbagaian mahasiswanya itu telah memberi cabaran kepada usaha UIAM dalam menyatukan serta membangun solidaritas sosial bagi mencapai visi dan misi pembangunan *Ummatik*-nya. Sebagai tanggapan terhadap hal ini, penelitian ini dilaksanakan supaya pengalaman mahasiswa di UIAM dapat diselidiki, dengan fokus pada tantangan yang dihadapi mahasiswa pascasarjana dalam membangun solidaritas sosial di dalam komunitas Muslim yang beragam selama perjalanan akademik mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian fenomenologis, dimana sepuluh peserta dipilih melalui teknik pengambilan sampel yang terancang. Data yang dikumpulkan kemudian dianalisis menggunakan kaedah analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian kajian ini menunjukkan peserta mengalami tantangan dalam membangun solidaritas sosial yang mengungkapkan dua tema utama, yaitu komitmen kolektif dan kebijakan universitas. Penelitian ini menekankan perlunya peningkatan kurikulum, kokurikulum, dan lingkungan pembelajaran yang mempertimbangkan latar belakang multikultural dan badan dan program mahasiswa. Studi ini juga menyoroti pentingnya kolaborasi antara pendidik dan administrator universitas dalam meningkatkan kurikulum, pedagogi, dan prosedur administratif yang mendukung solidaritas sosial di antara populasi mahasiswa multikultural dan keberagaman di institusi pendidikan tinggi.

**KATA KUNCI:** *mahasiswa multikultural; Universitas Islam; tantangan; solidaritas sosial; keberagaman*

**ABSTRACT**

*International Islamic University (IIUM) is an institution of higher education that is grounded in Islamic principles, distinguishing its unique characteristics in its curriculum, student development and academic professionalism. As one of the public Islamic universities in Malaysia, the International Islamic University (IIUM) aims to establish itself as a hub of academic distinction with a strong focus on promoting Islamic values and global engagement. The vision and mission of the university reflect a commitment to the integration of knowledge,*

*practices and the diversity of its staff and student population. Currently, the university consists of undergraduate and postgraduate students from 56 countries. As a result, fostering social unity and solidarity to realise its mission of Ummatic development presents a significant challenge. In view of this, the study aims to investigate the experiences of students in IIUM, focusing on the challenges of postgraduate students in developing social solidarity within the diverse Muslim community during their academic journey. The study employed the phenomenological research design, where ten participants were selected using purposive sampling. The data were then analyzed using thematic analysis. Research findings of the study showed that participants experienced challenges in developing social solidarity which revealed two major themes, collective commitment and student body and program. It emphasizes the need to improve the curriculum, co-curriculum, and learning environment that considers the multicultural background of the students. The study highlights the necessity for collaboration between educators and university administrators in enhancing curriculum, pedagogy, and administrative procedures that foster social solidarity among multicultural student populations in higher educational institutions.*

**KEYWORDS:** *multicultural students; Islamic University; challenges; social solidarity; diversity*

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## INTRODUCTION

Islam perceives multiculturalism as being rooted in the principles of diversity, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence. The Quran (49:13) explains how Allah SWT created humanity into nations and tribes so that they can learn and understand each other. Islam views variety in ethnicity as an opportunity to come to know one another and support one another in deeds of kindness (Rabiu & Modibbo, 2018). Throughout the life of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, he demonstrated respect for adherents of different religions; in Islam, this is a core principle. However, in today's globalised world, multicultural communities face many challenges, including violence stemming from racism, prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping (Kunesh & Noltemeyer, 2019; Hur, 2021). These issues are prevalent in various sectors, particularly in education,

where they continue to inhibit unity and solidarity within multicultural communities (Bruckner et al., 2022). Among these concerns, religious affiliation plays a critical role in social inclusion and exclusion, often affecting Muslim communities leading to division and social disunity (Chua et al., 2022). In response to these challenges, holistic and integrated education has become more valuable, emphasizing the development of good *akhlaq* to help foster social solidarity and unity. Therefore, Islamic educational institutions play a significant role in developing individuals who can navigate the challenges of living in a multicultural environment.

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) is one of the Islamic public universities that is grounded in *Tawhidic* epistemology and promotes the integration

of knowledge between revealed and acquired knowledge, theoretical and practical knowledge, and the integration between its local and international staff and students. Internationalisation is another one of IIUM missions that is directed towards *Ummatic* development, by cultivating *Ummatic* consciousness and working towards the common good for the global Muslim community and humanity at large. This aspiration is possible through the promotion of social solidarity and unity in IIUM community, beginning with the development of good *akhlaq*, and balanced and integrated knowledge and practices (between '*ilm*' and '*amal*'). For this reason, the study focusses on the fostering of social solidarity among its postgraduate students.

This study focusses on the concept of social solidarity drawn from Durkheim's (1984) mechanic and organic solidarity. The former refers to traditional societies with shared common beliefs, values and practices creating unity in homogeneity. The latter refers to modern societies where specialisation and interdependence create cohesion amidst diversity. Recent studies on social solidarity in the West primarily focus on inclusivity, equality, and educational human rights (Mayorga & Picower, 2018; Gelepithis & Giani, 2020) in various vital sectors, such as economics and politics (Gelepithis & Giani, 2020). On the contrary, nations like South Korea, China, and Malaysia's discussions on national integration and social solidarity have been progressively aligned with their national policy visions, recognizing the diverse ethnic and cultural composition of their populations (Liu et al., 2017; Patras et al., 2022).

Numerous studies on social cohesion and intergroup relations in multicultural communities employ Durkheim's (1984) social solidarity and Allport's (1958) intergroup contact theory as their framework (Ab. Majid et al. 2018; Özkan et al., 2024). According to Allport (1958), equal status, intergroup cooperation, shared goals, and the support of law and institutional authorities are positive effects of intergroup contact. This is supported by the findings in few studies finding that show intergroup contact is most successful at reducing prejudice, even under unstructured contact and across different groups (Lim et al., 2024; Nasie, 2023). It has also been demonstrated that good contact experiences decrease self-reported prejudice toward both a minority group and the outgroup (Grigoryan, 2023). Meanwhile, studies on discrimination and prejudices specifically affecting Muslim in western countries occur in different contexts such as economic sector, healthcare institutions, and education (Chaouali et al., 2024; Sloan & Haner, 2024; Uddin et al., 2022; Zainiddinov, 2024). Yet, the perception of Muslims themselves on social solidarity remains largely under-researched (Effendi et al., 2023), indicating a gap in the literature with regards to Muslim communities' view of social solidarity and their experiences of its development. Hence, this study examined Muslim students' challenges in developing social solidarity in a multicultural context of an Islamic university. The study is significant because it provides an in-depth look into the lived experience of multicultural university students and the challenges that they encounter while studying in IIUM. Many previous studies

have examined the challenges of multi-cultural and multiracial university students (Chen et al., 2020; Owusu-Agyeman, 2021), but very few focus on matured students such as postgraduate students' experiences. Furthermore, while examining the challenges of the Muslim community of students of multiple nationalities and cultural differences in an Islamic university, it is timely to investigate the institutional support towards the endeavour of developing social solidarity as highlighted by Allport (1958).

**RESEARCH METHODS**

**Research Design, Participants and Instrument of the Study.**

The qualitative research approach was employed to explore students' challenges

through their personal experiences living in a multicultural community, whilst navigating their academic journey in an Islamic university. The study used specifically, the phenomenological research design to gain deeper insights through the analyses of participants' lived experiences.

Ten postgraduate students participated in this study through the snowball technique. Selected participants had spent a minimum of three years as a post-graduate student. Out of the ten participants, two students who were involved in the dyadic interview held position as a committee member of an academic/co-curricular society. Table 1 shows the demographics of the participants with their pseudonyms. The main instrument for this study was interview questions, which

**Table 1. Participants' Demographics**

Participants	Level of study	Years studying	Country	Field of study	Ethnicity	Sex
Ivo	PhD	3	Indonesia	Leadership	Bugis	Female
Kas	PhD	4	Iran	Sociology	Persian	Female
Kak	PhD	6	Singapore	TESL	Malay	Female
Nai	PhD	3	Indonesia	Islamic Education	Javanese	Male
Kam	PhD	10	Nigeria	Curriculum	African	Male
Man	PhD	6	Algeria	Philosophy	Arab	Male
Kai	PhD	10	Malaysia	Law	Malay	Male
Fat	PhD	4	Thailand	Counseling	Thai	Female
Wis	PhD	3	Albania	Psychology	European	Male
Ina	PhD	10	Malaysia	Islamic Education	Malay	Female

were constructed based on the research question of the study. The researchers used semi-structured interviews to obtain the required data. The interview began with the investigation of the participants' background before delving into their experiences living in the multicultural community of the university and participating in the university's curricular/co-curricular activities. Finally, participants' challenges in fostering social

solidarity based on their lived experiences were explored.

**Data Collection**

*Individual Interviews*

To gather primary data for this study, the researchers interviewed eight participants individually. The eight participants were postgraduate students who were not affiliated with any academic or extra-

curricular organizations at the university. They were interviewed to answer the challenges that they faced in fostering social solidarity in a multicultural Muslim community. This technique was selected to help the researchers better grasp what was being said and to decipher participants' non-verbal cues by observing their body language, facial expression, and eye contact. Due to the participants' preference, availability and convenient, the interviews took place at different times and locations.

#### *Dyadic Interview*

In contrast to individual and focus group interviews, dyadic interviews only involved two people (Szulc & King, 2022). This method has been investigated in-depth, especially with partners and couples (Gu et al., 2024). The study set the criteria for the dyadic interview that the participants need to be representatives of the university's academic society and co-curricular club committees. They should have extensive experience participating in various university-sponsored events and programs, both those run by the university and those run by the students themselves.

#### *Ethical Issues: Informed Consent, Privacy and Anonymity*

Certain ethical principles must be considered when dealing with human subjects in a qualitative study. In addressing this concern, participants were thoroughly briefed on the purpose of the study and assured of their confidentiality prior to the interview. Written consent forms were provided to participants, which included their agreement to the audio recording of the

interviews and were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point during the interview process. The researchers safeguarded the participants' privacy and anonymity using pseudonyms, enabling the researchers to cite the transcripts without disclosing the participants' identity in the research report and publications.

### **Data Analysis**

#### *Thematic Analysis*

The researchers employed thematic analysis guided by Moustakas' transcendental phenomenological model as the method for data analysis in the study. The researchers managed a sizable amount of raw data using the phenomenological reduction method. The first cycle method referred to as provisional coding by Atkinson (2013) and Saldana (2014), allows the researchers to identify relevant data and establish the framework for interpretation and conclusion-making. The second step involves identifying and organizing participants' ideas and concepts pertinent to the research question. The researchers developed the category based on the interview questions, with the primary questions designed to minimize potential bias and establish common themes. In the third step, the researchers employed the process of 'horizontalization' as described by Moustakas (1994). The researchers looked for every significant statement about participants' challenges in developing social solidarity and observed over-arching themes in the data. The fourth stage involves the development of clusters of meanings from the themes. For this process, Moustakas (1994) affirms the removal of unsupported

statements from the main responses. Hence, the researchers created textual descriptions developed from a cluster of themes. Finally, the researchers pieced together the themes, sub-themes and main ideas to create the whole picture of the challenges faced by the participants based on their lived experiences in the university.

*Credibility of the Data: Triangulation & Member Checking*

The study carried out the triangulation method to ensure the credibility of the data. According to Ramakrishnan et al. (2023), the triangulation method verifies the coherence of results produced by several data collection techniques. For instance, this study used in-depth dyadic and one-on-one interviews to gather participants' data. It also involved participants from different nationalities, levels of study and programmes as another method of triangulation to gather experiences from diverse and multiple participants. In addition, member checking is considered one of the most critical provisions that can help strengthen a study's credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Once transcribed, the researchers handed over a copy of the interview transcript to the participant for review,

confirmation, and correction. This step was intended to eliminate the inaccurate transcription and minimize any misrepresentation of the collected data, thus increasing its reliability. This also ensures the findings were accurate and reflected their intended meanings during the interviews.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Two main themes were generated from the data i.e., firstly, collective commitment with two sub-themes, which are, collective attitudes and cultural adaptations and secondly, student body and program with its sub-theme, university program. The themes and the corresponding sub-themes are outlined in **Table 2**.

Participants revealed that they had to adapt to the different culture of their friends from different ethnicity and nationality. Cultural adaptation, or also known as acculturation, is the process by which people or groups fit in and adapt to a new cultural setting (Berry, 2017). People may experience this when they relocate to a new environment, or neighbourhoods with different cultural norms, beliefs, and customs. They have to develop the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and behaviours required to

**Table 2. Themes, Sub-Themes and Main Ideas**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Main Ideas</b>
<b>Collective Commitment</b>	<i>Cultural</i>	Language barrier -miscommunication; misunderstanding & conflict
	<i>Adaptation</i>	Cultural barrier - misunderstanding & conflict
<b>Student Body and Program</b>	<i>Collective Attitudes</i>	Negative attitudes: trust vs stereotyping & prejudices; in-group vs out-group; discrimination
	<i>University</i>	Unclear objective
	<i>Program</i>	Funding Program/Activities Evaluation

successfully and comfortably navigate in a new cultural environment for a smooth adjustment. This process poses the main challenge for participants of the study.

Participants revealed the barriers they faced in their efforts to adapt to the new environment and culture of the community, were language and culture. These barriers when not resolved may lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding, consequently resulting in conflict in many forms such as mistrust, stereotyping, prejudices and in certain instances discrimination.

Although miscommunication is viewed as a common phenomenon in the learning process of cultural adaptation, the gap of different culture tends to cause misunderstanding and miscommunication when one party cannot clearly and accurately understand the message from the other party. As Kak and Wis said,

*Sometimes there may be miscommunication or misunderstanding of the message, which requires clarification. (Kak)*

*I think the barriers to foster close relationship with my multicultural friends is misunderstanding. (Wis)*

Nai also revealed that he faced a communication problem with his friends from different culture because neither of them were English native speakers. The language barrier has contributed to many instances of miscommunication that inhibits the development of a close relationship, challenging the fostering of social solidarity. Furthermore, the anxiety of using English to communicate among the students who were largely non-native speakers may aggravate the matter since they may feel inferior when

using English. However, this situation can be overcome if students realise that the key to communication is understanding the message, instead of worrying about the technicality of the language such as grammar. As shared by Fat,

*Previously, I always worry about making grammatical mistakes, but now I always tell myself that the key in communication is the understanding of the message. Grammar is not important compared to the content of the communication itself.*

Although miscommunication or misunderstanding highlighted by Kak, Wis, Nai and Fat was due to the language barrier, it can also happen because of the gap between different cultures. This was explained by Ivo,

*The obstacles I experienced when building relationships with my multicultural friends are adapting to their habits, and adapting to good communication with them, both verbally and gesture...*

Unfortunately, such misunderstandings may lead to conflict, as illustrated by Kai's experience with friends from a different nationality. What began as a minor misunderstanding eventually fostered a negative perception of the other person, hindering the development of essential values when building a good relationship such as trust, tolerance and respect.

However, Kam emphasised the need for 'understanding' to avoid any conflict. He explained how certain behaviour holds different meaning in different culture for instance, *if someone points his pointer finger like this (showing his pointer finger) you are considered as rude. But in my culture, doing this action is normal when you want to tell something to someone...*

Kam's insight highlights the importance of openness, patience, and effort in understanding those from different cultural backgrounds. In a multicultural community, members must consistently strive to embrace these qualities, recognizing that individuals from other cultures may behave differently. Conflicts, such as misunderstandings and disagreements, can be addressed through dialogue, allowing for compromises and solutions that contribute to the harmony and solidarity among the community members (Iwabuchi, 2021). Meanwhile, inclusive communication practices ensure that all community members are heard and valued, realising social equality and justice in the community (Logan, 2021).

Indeed, the sense of belonging and solidarity can be developed when diverse voices are acknowledged and included in the community. The experiences shared by the participants indicate the grave consequence of the language and cultural barriers on the community's unity and solidarity if no effective measures or initiatives are taken. For example, Kam explained his interest in learning more about other cultures,

*The environment here reminds me of the ayah of the Quran where Allah says, "...We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another...." I experienced myself with this ayah here where I see so many nationalities and different cultures and I do not hate these differences. Besides I feel interested to know and learn more.*

Meanwhile, Ivo expressed her view of the matter as her personal effort to learn and understand other cultures so that she can

*understand students from different culture and accept them.* Man, another participant concurred with Ivo, adding that *understanding others also requires him to study the different culture and its people patiently.* If members of the community share this view of being open in learning about others and accepting them as they are, then this would facilitate the fostering of social solidarity in the multicultural community. However, this can be a challenge if individuals encounter attitudes that are collectively negative like most participants have discovered through their interaction with the administrative staff of the university.

This brings us to the second sub-theme i.e., collective attitudes, which consist of personal attitudes that are negative, such as mistrust, stereotyping, prejudices which originate from miscommunication and misunderstanding due to language and cultural barriers.

According to Kai, he struggled with trusting his multicultural friends, yet he believed that mutual trust is essential for building social solidarity in a diverse community. He expressed this concern, stating,

*"The biggest challenge to building solidarity in our Muslim multicultural community is perhaps how to trust each other."*

One of the key factors contributing to this challenge is prejudice, which often stems from stereotyping. When individuals form premature assumptions, it negatively impacts how they perceive, interact with, and treat others. Kas shared an example of this issue,

*"People avoid interacting with foreigners who are not from their community because they are afraid of certain behaviours*



*they assumed the international community has."*

In other words, there is a tendency to generalize and conclude that all members of the 'other' group such as the international students in this case, exhibit certain unpleasant or negative behaviours. For instance, Kai recounted a misunderstanding with an international student that led to a minor quarrel. As a result, he became hesitant to communicate with other international students,

*"Well, I was involved in a misunderstanding with my international friends, which led to a small quarrel. Since then, I have felt afraid to communicate with other international friends."*

Similarly, Kak acknowledged her own feelings of prejudice toward certain ethnic groups, based on her expectations of negative reactions. She shared,

*"I am always cautious when interacting with friends of different races, especially from certain ethnicities, because I can predict their responses if they are dissatisfied with my statements."*

These experiences highlight how past personal negative encounters lead to stereotyping, and contribute to trust issues and prejudices in multicultural communities, ultimately hindering the development of social solidarity (Selvanathan et al., 2020). If these negative attitudes are not replaced with positive ones, it may be difficult for individuals to display positive values such as openness, tolerance, equal treatment, and kindness to the 'other', who are different from them whether in terms of ethnicity, nationality and culture. As a result, the individuals may display behaviours that

would seem to be discriminating.

Discrimination is rooted in the overt behaviour of 'in-group' favouritism (Grigoryan, 2023). In-group refers to the group that a person belongs to due to a similar ethnicity or nationality. It is quite common that a person would prefer to communicate only with their in-group members since they may share similar language, culture and traditions, making them feel more at ease with each other than with the 'out-group' members whom they may need to adjust to. However, this may also result in different treatments to people of different ethnicity or nationality as they are regarded as an out-group member. Such behaviours and treatments may be viewed as a discrimination to a certain extent when it becomes a collective behaviour displayed by a group of people to the out-group members (Abbinck & Harris, 2019; Dickinson et al., 2018; Grigoryan, 2023; Ji & Bates, 2021). This is the challenge to solidarity that almost all of the participants in the study personally encountered, particularly in their dealings with the administrative staff. A good case in point was shared by Kam during the COVID-19 lockdown period,

*"I heard so many complaints during this period of lockdown. Even I experienced how the staff acted unfairly toward us (foreigners) compared to how they treated the local students. They should be more empathetic to us because most of us are coming from far away here alone, leaving our families and children to seek knowledge here. I was disappointed. They should not make us feel uncomfortable without our family members, instead they should make us happy here."*

Fat also shared her experience when

renewing her visa where *the admin staff was not really understanding when Fat kept asking for documents and letters many times*. Ina too mentioned that she encountered *an admin staff who treated the local and international students differently although both were seeking similar assistance for registration and financial process*. Being a local student, she was surprised that she was treated well unlike the treatment provided by the admin staff to another student who was an international student. The discriminating behaviours were reported to only be displayed by the administrative staff and not the academic staff. This could be due to the language and cultural barriers since generally, the administrative staff who provided front desk services do not have a high level of education like the academic staff. In addition, the administrative staff may also have personal negative encounters with the out-group members which may strengthen their assumptions about the international students as had been shared by Kai and Kak earlier.

Based on the participants' experiences, the key to fostering social solidarity lies in understanding others effectively so that conflicts can be resolved and replaced with positive values such as tolerance, respect and open mindedness, which in due course will strengthen social bonds, fostering a more resilient and cohesive community (Hogan, 2020; Suleimany et al., 2022).

### **Student Body and Program**

The second theme of the study is student body and program. Studies have shown that universities leverage on student bodies and student programs to develop

balanced and holistic graduates. These initiatives equip students with essential skills to excel in their personal and professional lives by fostering interaction and engagement among students, and with the broader community and industry (Tondok et al., 2022; Ubani et al., 2020). According to Aini (2023), providing opportunities to students to engage and interact with each other and the community will assist in improving their cultural adaptation and competency. It is through student activities that solidarity among students can be encouraged and strengthened. To help fulfil this objective, the University has policies in place to facilitate and ensure successful organisation and effectiveness of student programs. Since one of IIUM's mission is internationalization, it organizes annual events to help the international students to adjust while fostering the solidarity between its multicultural students such as *Ummatic Week*, foster family for international students, *Kampung* life experience, and *Iftar* and *Eid* celebration gatherings. Despite of these university's efforts, participants faced some challenges when participating in some of the student body programs and activities. Ina, an exco member of a student body, described how *some programs often lack clear objectives*. She noted that, at times, *the student body felt compelled to organize and execute these programs simply because they were outlined in the almanac and approved by the university authorities*. As a result, both participants and committee members missed the opportunity to genuinely interact and socialize during these events.

Apart from this, Ina mentioned about the limited funds allocated to the student

body to organise good, meaningful and beneficial programs. She elaborated, “For me, we must have good funding...because to encourage and build a good relationship among multicultural students requires us to conduct a good program. And a good program always needs good funding such as the Ummatic week, we need lot of funds to make the program more effective and get a good response from students and staff.”

Wis, the other participant who was a student committee, concur with Ina when he emphasised that *conducting student involvement and activities alone cannot ensure the aim of fostering social solidarity among the students unless student programs are planned well with a clear objective to integrate the diverse students*. In addition, he stressed on the importance of *assessing the effectiveness of student programs so that any lacking can be improved in future programs*. These problems are regarded as challenges that participants encountered during their involvement in student activities, but if addressed well, may assist in the promotion of solidarity among the students through positive interaction and socialisation. If student programs and activities promote and facilitate interaction and socialisation among diverse students, as well between students and academic and administrative staff, then they can help break down language and cultural barriers. This, in turn, fosters a deeper understanding of each other's differences and cultural practices, resulting in greater tolerance and mutual respect.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of the study i.e., collective commitment and student body

and program are the main challenges for multicultural Muslim students to foster social solidarity in the university. There needs to be a collective commitment among the students, as well as between students, university staff and management to practise positive attitudes and values. Guided by their spiritual motivation, this commitment can promote and strengthen the spirit of social solidarity within the university. Islamic principles should be utilized to acquire the practical skills necessary for success in an increasingly technological society. Consequently, Islamic teachings on social relations and interactions are essential. Muslim students must first cultivate positive attitudes and become good human beings before striving to be good Muslims. Therefore, these findings highlight the necessity of enhancing the curriculum, co-curriculum, and learning environment to accommodate students' multicultural backgrounds. The study underscores the need for collaboration between educators and university management to develop curricula, teaching methodologies, and management practices that can cope with the challenges faced by students and foster social solidarity among multicultural students in Islamic universities.

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