



Multicultural Values and Equitable Participation in Islamic Religious Education: A Grade 11 Textbook Content Analysis for Vocational Secondary Education in Indonesia

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Abstract

Indonesia's religiously diverse society requires Islamic Religious Education (IRE) to cultivate both religious commitment and respect for difference. This study examines multicultural values in the 2021 Grade 11 IRE and Character Education textbook used as the core learning resource in an Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational upper secondary school in Mojokerto, Indonesia. A directed qualitative content analysis of all 331 instructional pages across ten chapters used four core codes: tolerance, deliberative participation, equality, and justice. Tolerance is the most explicit value, especially through religious harmony and protection of human life. The text also promotes peaceful preaching, respectful disagreement, social-media ethics, gender equality and educational rights, and justice in civic governance. However, values are unevenly distributed and are more consistently assessed as individual moral commitments than as observable practices of equitable participation. The analysis identifies a textbook-task-assessment alignment gap: discussion and collaborative activities are present, but explicit assessment criteria for non-discrimination, inclusive voice, and the handling of prejudice are limited. The study contributes a value-to-pedagogy framework for curriculum refinement and teacher development that connects IRE with student dignity, social cohesion, and educational welfare.

Keywords: Character Education; Equitable Participation; Islamic Religious Education; Multicultural Education; Religious Moderation; Textbook Analysis; Vocational Secondary Education.

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is not limited to learners' physical access to school; it requires curriculum and pedagogy that secure recognition, dignity, participation, and fairness across social, cultural, religious, and economic differences. Multicultural education provides a useful framework because it connects knowledge selection, classroom interaction, institutional climate, and unequal relations of power rather than positioning diversity as an occasional celebration [1], [2], [3].

This concern is particularly salient in Indonesia, where cultural plurality, religious identification, regional identities, and unequal access to social resources shape students' educational experiences. A meta-analysis of Indonesian multicultural-education scholarship confirms that diversity-oriented learning remains a sustained educational priority, while research on *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) shows that multicultural commitments must be translated into daily educational practice to influence social relations [4], [5]. In Islamic Religious Education (IRE), the formal subject historically labelled *Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Budi Pekerti*, textbooks are especially influential because they establish the moral language, illustrations, cases, and assessment prompts through which learners interpret difference. Studies of IRE textbooks have shown that messages of religious moderation and multiculturalism can be present at the level of content while remaining insufficiently contextualised or pedagogically operationalised [6], [7].

Islamic education offers substantive ethical resources for multicultural learning. In Indonesian scholarship, tolerance (*tasamuh*), equality (*al-musawah*), justice (*al-adalah*), deliberation (*shura*), peace, and human dignity are frequently advanced as interdependent foundations for inclusive religious education [8], [9], [10], [11]. Recent research also indicates that the purposeful integration of multicultural values can strengthen tolerance and inclusivity when students are invited to interpret real social differences, cooperate across perspectives, and deliberate about ethical dilemmas rather than only memorise normative propositions [12], [13], [14], [15].

The Indonesian literature further emphasizes that tolerance is not formed by text alone. It is shaped by intellectual humility, local wisdom, religious literacy, authority relations, and the institutional climate in which students encounter one another [16], [17], [18], [19]. The implication for IRE is clear: a textbook must not merely state values; it must also provide pedagogical pathways and assessment opportunities through which learners practice respectful disagreement, fair participation, and responsibility for others. This requirement is particularly relevant for vocational upper secondary education, where students are preparing for participation in diverse workplaces and communities. It also applies to Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational secondary schools, where formal learning and character formation coexist within a shared institutional environment.

Although the original thesis proposal was framed as an implementation study in an Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational secondary school in Mojokerto, it does not include verified classroom observations, interviews, or school documents. A field-implementation claim would therefore be methodologically indefensible. This article resolves that evidentiary boundary by examining the complete textbook that forms the proposed instructional basis. The study asks: (1) How are tolerance, deliberative participation, equality,

and justice represented in the Grade 11 IRE and Character Education textbook? (2) What learning and assessment pathways does the textbook provide for translating those values into equitable participation? This focus preserves the substantive purpose of the original proposal while producing a complete, verifiable research article grounded in an accessible primary corpus.

The article contributes three advances. First, it adopts internationally intelligible terminology while retaining the Indonesian educational context: IRE for the subject, vocational upper secondary school for *SMK*, and Islamic boarding school-integrated school for *SMK Pesantren Terpadu*. Second, it distinguishes the representation of a value from the pedagogical task and assessment mechanism that might enact it. Third, it links textbook design to student dignity, safe voice, and social cohesion, thereby situating the analysis within education and social-welfare concerns. These priorities are consistent with culturally responsive and equity-oriented approaches that expect curriculum to make learners' identities and participation consequential to learning [20], [21], [22], [23], [24].

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a directed qualitative content analysis of the official Grade 11 IRE and Character Education textbook published by Indonesia's Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2021. Directed content analysis was selected because the study began with theoretically defined values from the original proposal but retained the capacity to identify contextual mechanisms through which those values were represented and pedagogically activated [25], [26], [27]. The design is documentary rather than field-based: it does not make claims about teacher behaviour, student attitudes, or school culture.

Terminological Standardisation

Table 1. Internationally Readable Terms Used in This Article

Original Indonesian Term	Term Used in This Article	Scope of Meaning
Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Budi Pekerti	Islamic Religious Education and Character Education (IRECE); shortened to Islamic Religious Education (IRE)	The school subject combines Islamic knowledge, ethics, and character formation.
SMK	Vocational upper secondary school	Upper-secondary institution preparing students for vocational and further-education pathways.
SMK Pesantren Terpadu	Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational upper secondary school	A vocational school whose formal education is integrated with Islamic boarding-school character formation.
Kurikulum Merdeka	Merdeka Curriculum	Indonesia's competency-oriented national curriculum framework.

Original Indonesian Term	Term Used in This Article	Scope of Meaning
Profil Pelajar Pancasila	Pancasila Student Profile	Indonesia's national learner-character framework, including global diversity and mutual cooperation.
Budi Pekerti	Character education / ethical formation	The subject's moral and relational dimension.

Corpus and Unit of Analysis

The corpus was the complete 2021 textbook *Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Budi Pekerti untuk SMA/SMK Kelas XI*, authored by Abd. Rahman and Hery Nugroho. The book contains 340 numbered pages. The analytic corpus comprised the ten instructional chapters (pp. 1-331); publisher front matter and the bibliography were excluded. A meaning unit was defined as a substantive narrative passage, visual prompt, activity instruction, reflection item, assessment item, or character-application statement that represented at least one core value. Repeated running headers, chapter titles, bibliography entries, and duplicated answer-format instructions were not coded.

Table 2. Structure of the Analytic Corpus

Chapter	Printed Pages	Primary Topic	Multicultural Relevance
1	1-32	Critical thinking and science/technology	Reasoned inquiry and respectful intellectual engagement.
2	33-64	Faith through promises, gratitude, speech, and privacy	Ethical speech and protection of others' dignity.
3	65-98	Preventing student violence, alcohol misuse, and drugs	Non-violence, care, and social responsibility.
4	99-136	Peaceful preaching, sermons, and religious communication	Peaceful persuasion, consultation, and gender-inclusive preaching roles.
5	137-174	Indonesian scholars with global influence	Plural national identity, global engagement, and coexistence.
6	175-210	Religious harmony, tolerance, and protection of human life	The textbook's most explicit treatment of tolerance, justice, and dignity.
7	211-232	Honour, sincerity, modesty, and asceticism	Personal dignity and self-regulation.
8	233-256	Ethics of social-media use	Respectful disagreement, anti-hate-speech, and digital responsibility.
9	257-292	Marriage in Islam	Rights, responsibilities, legal protections, and gender representation.
10	293-331	Islamic civilisation in the modern period	Educational rights, gender equality, civic justice, and reform.

Coding Framework and Analytic Procedure

The codebook was derived from the four values explicitly prioritised in the original proposal: tolerance, democracy, equality, and justice. To avoid a culturally narrow use of democracy, the term *deliberative participation* is used in the analysis to capture consultation, discussion, reasoned disagreement, shared decision-making, and learners' opportunities to contribute. Each meaning unit was coded as explicit when the value was directly named or prescribed, and contextual when the value was communicated through an example, case, historical narrative, image, or task. Units could receive more than one code. The full corpus was coded in a first pass, reviewed in a second pass against page-level evidence, and recorded in an audit matrix. This procedure follows established guidance on qualitative content analysis, transparent thematic coding, and documentary trustworthiness [25], [26], [27], [28], [29].

Table 3. Directed Codebook for the Textbook Analysis

Core Value	Operational Definition	Textual and Pedagogical Indicators
Tolerance	Respect for people who hold different beliefs, opinions, identities, or practices without compromising one's own convictions.	Recognition of religious difference; respectful disagreement; anti-hate-speech; non-violence; peaceful coexistence.
Deliberative participation	The use of consultation, dialogue, group discussion, reasoned argument, and shared task allocation to reach ethical decisions.	Musyawah; discussion; listening to views; collaborative inquiry; group roles; feedback.
Equality	Recognition of equal human dignity, educational opportunity, or participatory worth across gender and social difference.	Male-female learning roles; rights to education; human dignity; equal standing; protection from exclusion.
Justice	Fairness in social relations, rights, governance, and the protection of life.	Fair treatment; legal protection; rights and duties; civic justice; rejection of inequity and harm.

Trustworthiness and Ethics

Trustworthiness was supported through a complete-corpus approach, an explicit codebook, page-level audit records, re-reading of coded units, and deliberate attention to disconfirming evidence, including passages that present gendered roles without an explicit equality frame. The study involved no human participants, private school records, or identifiable personal data; therefore, formal participant consent was not required. The analysis is reported as a documentary interpretation and does not infer students' or teachers' beliefs. These practices are consistent with established principles for qualitative reporting and trustworthiness [30], [31], [32].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Corpus Profile and Overall Pattern of Value Representation

The analysis covered 331 instructional pages organised into ten chapters. Across the corpus, 58 unique meaning units were identified as carrying one or more multicultural values, producing 70 coded instances because several units represented multiple values simultaneously. The overall pattern was uneven rather than uniform. Tolerance was the dominant and most explicit value, with its clearest concentration in Chapter 6, followed by peaceful communication in Chapter 4 and digital interaction in Chapter 8. Deliberative participation was spread across chapters but was usually embedded in discussion instructions rather than framed as a right to student voice. Equality was visible in selected gender and educational-rights narratives, especially in Chapters 4 and 10, while justice was most often articulated through the protection of life, fair governance, and the ethical treatment of others. The distribution is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of Multicultural Value Codes across the Textbook

Core Value	Coded Instances	Most Prominent Chapters	Interpretive Pattern
Tolerance	23	4, 6, and 8	Most explicit. Connects peaceful religious communication, interreligious respect, protection of life, and digital ethics.
Deliberative participation	15	4, 6, 8, and 9	Present mainly through consultation, discussion, group work, and respectful disagreement.
Equality	18	4, 9, and 10	Visible through gender participation, educational rights, legal rights, and shared human dignity; not consistently framed as anti-discrimination.
Justice	14	4, 6, and 10	Articulated through justice in governance, fair treatment, protection of life, and the rights of others.
Total coded instances	70	All 10 chapters	58 unique meaning units; multiple coding was permitted.

Tolerance and the Protection of Human Dignity

Tolerance is the most fully developed multicultural value in the textbook. Chapter 6 is explicitly dedicated to religious harmony, tolerance, and the protection of human life. Its learning objectives require students to understand tolerance, care for others, peace, nationalism, and responsibility; its subsequent narrative links these values to the Medina Charter, freedom of religion, justice for religious and ethnic communities, and social peace (pp. 176-179). The chapter differentiates internal tolerance among Muslims from external tolerance across religious communities, while stressing respectful conduct, fairness toward people of different faiths in social life, and the preservation of each person's right to life (pp. 187-203).

The representation of tolerance is not confined to a single chapter. Chapter 4 frames religious communication as persuasive, peaceful, courteous, and attentive to others' opinions,

rather than coercive or hostile (pp. 105-126). Chapter 8 extends this ethic into digital spaces by instructing learners to avoid hoaxes, hate speech, SARA-based insults (ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup hostility), intolerance, and radicalising messages; it explicitly asks users to respect others when disagreements arise in online groups (pp. 247-251). These cross-chapter links position tolerance as an ethical practice of communication, not merely an abstract interfaith ideal.

Dignity Deliberative Participation: Strong Activity Prompts, Limited Voice Criteria

The textbook repeatedly uses deliberation and discussion as learning mechanisms. Chapter 4 instructs learners to pursue consultation and discussion in religious communication, including when opinions differ (pp. 109, 114, 125, and 130). Chapters 6, 8, and 9 employ group discussion, task allocation, reflection, and collaborative outputs such as presentations or mind maps (pp. 209, 248-252, and 292). The book therefore recognises that ethical learning requires more than solitary recall; students are invited to articulate reasons, exchange perspectives, and complete shared products.

Nevertheless, deliberative participation is more visible as a teaching technique than as a protected participation norm. The activities request group work and consultation, but the book does not provide a dedicated assessment descriptor for equitable turn-taking, listening to marginalised views, responding to prejudicial statements, or repairing interpersonal harm. This indicates that the text offers an entry point for dialogic pedagogy while leaving teachers to make the principles of inclusive voice explicit in classroom facilitation and evaluation.

Equality, Gender Representation, and Educational Rights

Equality appears through several, partly divergent, representations. Chapter 4 visualises both male and female religious communicators and names both *dai* and *daiyah* (male and female preachers), establishing a basic recognition of women's participation in religious communication (pp. 102, 107, and 123). Chapter 10 offers the most explicit equality language: it presents education as a right for all groups, states that women and men have equal standing, and connects gender equality with women's emancipation and social reform (pp. 304-307). The same chapter also links equality to civic governance and to intellectual renewal, widening the discussion beyond interpersonal politeness.

However, the equality pattern is not fully consistent. Chapter 9 discusses marriage in terms of mutual rights and obligations and notes the equal statutory minimum marriage age for women and men (pp. 263, 275, 284, and 290). At the same time, several legal-role descriptions are presented through gender-differentiated responsibilities, such as male guardianship and differentiated duties in marriage. The finding is therefore not that the textbook is uniformly egalitarian or uniformly exclusionary. Rather, it contains significant equality resources, especially in education and public participation, while requiring teachers to facilitate careful discussion of gender, consent, dignity, rights, and responsibility so that legal content is not simplified into fixed hierarchy.

Justice, Peaceful Governance, and Social Responsibility

Justice is represented as a social rather than merely procedural value. Chapter 4 links peaceful religious communication with fairness, wise leadership, and the resolution of disputes in ways

that are just and peace-building (pp. 126 and 134). Chapter 6 integrates justice with the Medina Charter, rights recognition, fair treatment of people of different religions, and the preservation of human life (pp. 178-179, 189, and 198). Here, justice is directly connected to human dignity: protecting one life is presented as safeguarding humanity more broadly.

Chapter 10 reinforces justice through civic thought. It describes education as a right, governance as an arena that must be administered fairly under law, and reformist thought as a source of equality and justice (pp. 304, 316, and 324). Chapter 8 adds an important digital dimension by urging fairness toward people or groups discussed online before judgment is made (p. 237). Taken together, these units create a strong ethical rationale for social responsibility. Yet they are generally assessed through reflection, knowledge questions, and personal commitments rather than through documented actions such as responding to exclusion, contributing to safe dialogue, or designing an anti-discrimination intervention.

Textbook-to-Task-to-Assessment Alignment

Figure 1. Textbook-to-Participation Alignment Model Derived from the Content Analysis

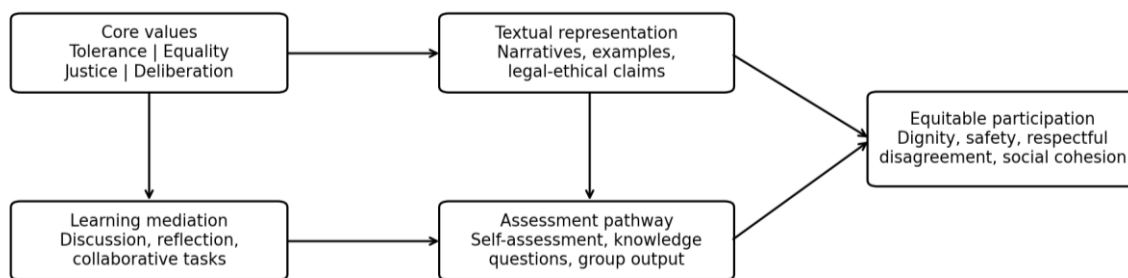


Figure 1 synthesises the central result. The textbook contains substantive textual resources for multicultural IRE, and it provides several active-learning prompts. However, the assessment pathway does not consistently translate the four values into observable indicators of equitable participation. This alignment gap is the key document-level finding: values are strongly represented in moral exposition, partially enacted through tasks, and weakly specified in assessment criteria.

Table 5. Pedagogical Affordances and Gaps in the Multicultural Sections of the Textbook

Textbook Component	Observed Evidence	Contribution to Multicultural IRE	Unresolved Gap
Narratives and ethical exposition	Medina Charter, peaceful preaching, protection of life, gender equality, and civic justice.	Supplies a clear moral vocabulary and historical-religious justification for social cohesion.	Some complex issues are described normatively without situated contemporary cases.
Discussion and collaborative tasks	Consultation, group discussion, presentations, social-media	Creates opportunities for dialogue, reasoning, and shared work.	No explicit safeguards for equal voice, respectful dissent, or the

Textbook Component	Observed Evidence	Contribution to Multicultural IRE	Unresolved Gap
	discussion rules, and mind maps.		inclusion of quieter students.
Self-reflection and character application	Statements about respecting difference, avoiding hate speech, and contributing to group discussion.	Encourages personal ethical commitment.	Primarily self-reported; limited criteria for observable relational practice.
Knowledge and performance assessment	Recall questions, written responses, and group products.	Can assess comprehension and basic application.	No specific rubric was identified for non-discrimination, equitable participation, prejudice response, or conflict repair.

Discussion

Interpreting the Textbook's Multicultural Architecture

The findings show that the Grade 11 IRE textbook contains a meaningful multicultural architecture rather than a superficial reference to diversity. This is most evident in its sustained treatment of tolerance, peaceful communication, human life, and online ethics. The pattern is consistent with studies that identify religious moderation and multicultural values as important components of IRE materials, but it also refines that literature by showing where values are concentrated and how they travel across thematic units [6], [7], [8], [12]. The dominance of Chapter 6 confirms the centrality of tolerance in Indonesian IRE, while the connections to Chapter 4 and Chapter 8 demonstrate that the text also frames tolerance as a communicative and digital ethic.

The result is aligned with scholarship arguing that multicultural Islamic education should combine religious commitment with respect for plurality, social responsibility, and non-violent public engagement [9], [10], [33], [34]. It also converges with research on religious moderation in Indonesian educational institutions, which shows that moderation becomes educationally meaningful when it is connected to concrete practices of dialogue, fairness, and everyday interaction [13], [14], [15], [16], [17]. In this textbook, the use of the Medina Charter, the injunction to protect human life, and the rejection of online hate speech offer particularly useful bridges between Islamic ethical sources and contemporary civic life.

From Value Presence to Pedagogical Enactment

The main limitation identified in the content analysis is not the absence of values but the incomplete alignment among value representation, learning activity, and assessment. The textbook asks students to discuss, collaborate, reflect, and create outputs, yet it does not consistently state how teachers should recognise equitable participation, address discriminatory comments, or assess students' ability to manage disagreement constructively. This result supports the wider inclusive-education literature, which cautions that formal commitments to inclusion are insufficient when participation structures and assessment practices remain

unspecified [2], [3], [24]. It also supports culturally responsive scholarship that expects teachers to make student identity, voice, and knowledge consequential to classroom participation rather than treating them as background attributes [20], [21], [22], [23].

The textbook therefore should be read as a resource with pedagogical affordances, not as a self-executing multicultural curriculum. Teachers in Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational secondary schools can convert its affordances into practice by using case-based dialogue, rotating group roles, structured listening protocols, evidence-based disagreement, and feedback criteria that recognise respect, fairness, and responsibility. These strategies are compatible with studies of multicultural IRE learning design and cooperative learning, which highlight the importance of integrating values into curriculum, teaching methods, and evaluation rather than treating them as discrete moral messages [35], [36], [37].

Novelty and Theoretical Contribution

The novelty of this study lies in its textbook-task-assessment alignment model. Previous studies have commonly asked whether multicultural or moderation values are present in IRE materials, or they have focused on classroom implementation without tracing the curricular mechanism that supports it. This study integrates the two concerns at the document level by examining: (a) the explicit and contextual representation of values, (b) the learning tasks that can mediate them, and (c) the assessment descriptors that can make them observable. The analysis thereby distinguishes symbolic inclusion from pedagogically actionable inclusion.

The model also contributes an international vocabulary for interpreting a locally grounded curriculum. The text's core concern is not a generic notion of tolerance; it is a four-value configuration of tolerance, deliberative participation, equality, and justice. In this configuration, tolerance protects difference; deliberative participation protects voice; equality protects standing; and justice protects fair treatment and human dignity. These values become educationally consequential only when they are connected to learning activities and assessment. This framework is especially relevant to faith-based vocational education because students are simultaneously developing religious identity, interpersonal competence, civic responsibility, and preparedness for diverse social and occupational environments.

Implications for Curriculum, Teaching, and Student Welfare

At the curriculum level, the textbook would be strengthened by contemporary cases involving online hostility, gendered exclusion, workplace diversity, disability, economic inequality, and intergroup conflict. These cases should require students to use Islamic ethical sources to reason through competing claims, not merely reproduce approved statements. Such refinement is consistent with studies advocating a multicultural IRE curriculum, educational equity, and values-based learning that are responsive to students' lived social realities [38], [39], [40].

At the teaching level, teacher-development programmes should help IRE teachers facilitate discussions in which disagreement is permissible but personal humiliation is not. A practical rubric can assess four indicators: respectful listening, evidence-based reasoning, equitable contribution, and repair after harmful speech. In vocational upper secondary schools, these indicators can be integrated with workplace communication, teamwork, civic readiness, and digital professionalism. For an Islamic boarding school-integrated context, they can also

inform dormitory mentoring and peer support, provided that no individual student's religious commitment is judged through superficial conformity.

At the institutional level, the findings matter for student welfare. A curriculum that explicitly promotes dignity, safe voice, and fair treatment can support social belonging and reduce the normalisation of exclusionary interaction. This implication resonates with research that links multicultural Islamic education, social cohesion, and the prevention of radicalising or hostile orientations in Islamic educational settings [14], [18], [19], [41]. The most immediate recommendation is therefore to embed the four-value rubric in lesson planning and assessment, beginning with Chapters 4, 6, 8, and 10, where the textbook already provides the strongest textual foundation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Grade 11 IRE and Character Education textbook contains a substantial, though uneven, multicultural resource base. Tolerance is the most explicit value, reinforced through religious harmony, protection of life, peaceful preaching, and social-media ethics. Deliberative participation, equality, and justice are also present through consultation, gender participation, educational rights, civic fairness, and human dignity. The textbook's central limitation is an alignment gap: it provides values and several learning activities but few explicit assessment criteria for equitable voice, non-discrimination, prejudice response, and conflict repair. The study's contribution is a textbook-task-assessment alignment model that translates multicultural values into actionable curriculum and teaching priorities. For Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational secondary education, this model can guide IRE toward stronger social cohesion, student dignity, and equitable participation without reducing Islamic ethical commitments to abstract slogans.

LIMITATIONS

The study is limited to a single public textbook and does not claim that its values are enacted consistently in classrooms, boarding-school life, or student interactions. Content analysis can establish the availability and organisation of curricular resources, but it cannot establish teachers' pedagogical choices, learners' interpretations, or welfare outcomes. The coding was conducted by one analyst, although page-level auditing, full-corpus coverage, and attention to contradictory gender representations were used to strengthen transparency. Future research should examine how the alignment model operates across multiple Islamic boarding school-integrated vocational schools through classroom observation, teacher interviews, student focus groups, assessment artefacts, and longitudinal evidence of participation and belonging.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

A.N.T. led the conceptualization of the study, developed the methodology, conducted the investigation and document analysis, curated the data, prepared the visualizations, and wrote the original manuscript draft. M. and A.K. contributed to the conceptualization and methodological design, provided academic supervision, and critically reviewed the manuscript to strengthen its theoretical coherence and scholarly quality. M.F.S. supported the formal analysis, data curation, validation of the findings, preparation of visual materials, and manuscript editing. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to be accountable for its content.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

"The authors declare no conflict of interest."

DECLARATION OF USE OF AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

The authors used generative AI-assisted language support during manuscript preparation to improve grammar, readability, structure, and citation formatting. The authors reviewed and edited all generated material, verified the reported findings against the study records, and remain fully responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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