

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Religion has many meaningful values for human being life. All of them need it although they are from communists. The communists, in fact however, need beliefs by using another name outside religion. This study aims to find differences and similarities regarding the implementation of religious education curriculum in schools around the world. The approach of study is a qualitative-descriptive method by studying related library sources and the results of previous researches from various countries, and then concluding the research data. The study concluded that religious values are eternal and universal ones for all people. The people in one country and other countries are different in believing what they believe and behave. However, they have sameness in getting meaning of religious values urgency for their lives. So, they desire to bring these down to their generation through education or teaching process. Many countries all over the world pay attention to this urgency. They include religious education into schools' curriculum in which it must be studied by all students.

Keywords: Curriculum, Religious Education, School Education, World Countries

INTRODUCTION

The values contained in religion, whatever the religion is, have an important meaning for human life in this world (Park, 2005). Religious values become spiritual energy that can bring them to a calm and serene soul. Humans, with their spiritual potential, tend to make religion with all the values contained therein to be an encouragement of life, a seed of peace and tranquility, as well as a stimulant of optimism for their soul in the hope of happiness in their eternal life (Kahle & Robbins, 2014).

Awareness of the importance about religious values for life encourages them to preserve these religious values not only for themselves but also for their generation and families general. The process of instilling them is pursued through education and teaching in the family (informal), community (non-formal) and/or in schools (formal) (Basir & Rahman, 2020).

In a complex world of education, the distinction between the three areas of education is becoming increasingly difficult to draw a clear red line because in reality these three areas support and complement each other. Even non-formal education becomes a place or way of implementing formal education. This happens, for example, in the area of religious education and teaching. For example, the church is a place of Catholic learning for Catholic students studying in public schools (Defiore, 2006).

This study will try to present a comparison of religious education in schools around the world. The discussion include: What are the experiences of world countries in organizing religious education? What are the similarities and differences between the Countries? and What is the urgency of religious education that is carried out in the world countries?

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach (Lambert & Lambert, 2012), with the library research method (Bowen, 2009). Research data was collected through content analysis techniques from books, magazines, newspapers, online media, and documents related to religious education in various countries. Then, data analysis was carried out by arranging the order of the data, organizing it into a pattern, category, and basic sequence units. To check the validity or validation of the data, the referential adequacy technique was used (Cypress, 2017). It was carried out by trying to describe and interpret what exists, opinions that are growing, ongoing processes, effects that occur or trends that develop (Westbrook, 1994). In addition, this study also used the comparative method, in which the researcher tried to find the cause or reason for differences or compares one opinion with another (Smelser, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, it is important to reveal the experiences of countries in the world in carrying out religious education in the schools.

Research Results

Indonesian and Malaysian Experiences

Religious education in these two countries provides equal proportions to formal educational institutions to carry out religious education for 2 (two) hours per week (Munastiwi & Marfuah, 2019). The religious education in research question is Islamic, Christian, Catholic, Buddhist, and Hindu education. It is known that Indonesia and Malaysia are countries in Southeast Asia where the majority of the population is Muslim (Muslim) even though formally these countries are not Islamic countries. These two countries accommodate multiculturalism, considering that their population consists of various ethnicities, cultures, and religions. There are Muslims, Christians, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists, and others (Mappiasse, 2017).

Islamic education in these two countries is not intended to dominate the national education curriculum, but rather to accommodate the wishes of their citizens. Islamic education is juxtaposed with education of other religions (Rahman et al., 2020). Therefore, even in formal schools, religious education is taught. Christianity is taught in Christian schools, Catholic is taught in Catholic schools, Hinduism is taught in Hindu schools, and so on. In formal educational institutions organized by the government (or called public schools), students are taught religion according to the religion they embrace. The state or schools do not provide their students with only one religion (Margono, 2012).

European Experiences

The dominant religious education in Europe is Catholic education (Hendek, 2022) because the majority of the population embraces Catholic, followed by Christian education. Catholic education in Europe is recognized as education that has great benefits for the state and its citizens. It makes a major contribution to European civilization. Then, it is primarily concentrated on promoting the formation of the

common tasks of children and youth in the best possible way. It is very aware of the demand from its citizens for their interest in studying the Catholic religion as well because the majority of the population is Catholic (Schweitzer, 2004). The main goal of Catholic or Christian religious education is to form citizens to have a good spiritual dimension, become human beings, and become humans who maintain their social existence (Hendek, 2022). This religious education is intended for both men and women. Catholic education in Europe is rapidly expanding throughout Europe as a whole. What is developed from this religious education is human awareness as a creature of God and is not constructed to be a human being who has a sentimental attitude in behavior.

These religious educations are carried out in churches, not in schools. However, religious education is a compulsory subject that must be followed by all school children, whose implementation is carried out by churches (Schweitzer, 2004). In Flanders, 12 and 18-year-old children still have to attend religious education in Catholic schools. Church and community services through Catholic schools are directed at understanding plural religious awareness, not only directed at catholic primordialism but also at recognizing Christianity (Beckford, 2012). Religious education is oriented towards awareness of the reality of a plural and multicultural society (Boys & Lee, 2006).

Religious practice in schools in England and France is a conflict between the two groups (Llorent-Bedmar et al., 2023) The first group is entrusting religious education to the church, and the second one is entrusting education to the educational institutions they manage. The first group argues that the government must separate religious matters from other matters. Therefore, matters of religious education should be left to the church. The second group understands that there is no need for dichotomy, educational institutions can also be given the task of managing religious education. In France, religious education is more left to the church, not to formal educational institutions (for Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and others) (Nurwanto & Cusack, 2017).

Central Asian Countries Experiences

Religious practice in schools in England and France is a conflict between the two camps (Llorent-Bedmar et al., 2023) The first camp is entrusting religious education to the church, and the second is entrusting education to the educational institutions they manage. The first group argues that the government must separate religious matters from other matters. Therefore, matters of religious education should be left to the church. The second camp understands that there is no need for dichotomy, educational institutions can also be given the task of managing religious education. In France, religious education is more left to the church, not to formal educational institutions (for Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and others) (Nurwanto & Cusack, 2017).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Muslim countries revived, *dakwah* groups and reopened madrasas. In Uzbekistan, Tashkent restricts religious school graduates from competing for positions as imams in government-controlled mosques. In Afghanistan, on the other hand, madrasas are not controlled by the government and are financed by local non-governmental organizations. Graduates can become imams, judges in the national justice system which is based on Sharia law, or become teachers in religious schools (Schmitz, 2023).

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American Experiences

Religious education in America is Orthodox Christian education. This religious education is held in churches. The priority of religious education is a matter of faith. Faith education in Orthodox Christian beliefs is a priority for the church. Throughout the centuries, the ways that have been done is by developing a source of educational principles and methodologies. However, religious education is currently experiencing a crisis due to the lack of involvement of families and children in church life. In the past 40 years much progress has been made in the development of teaching materials for religious education, largely through the efforts of the Pan-Orthodox, Orthodox Education Commission (Grant, 2004). The visions of religious education that are developed include: (a) teaching the younger generation through personal example and conviction, (b) opening minds and hearts to the reality of God's kingdom, (c) helping to improve human relations with God, (d) helping the generation develop Orthodox obedience, (e) helping them discover God's grace in life, and (f) stimulating their desire to learn about their faith (Barb, 2019).

Religious education avoids teaching the facts that deal with the Orthodox faith without practicing its relation to the lives or struggles of the younger generation. To build the basic structure of learning, students emphasize religious learning which is constructed by the Orthodox Christian Education Commission. The basis and unification of their curriculum principles include devotion to God and faith education is directed at: belief in only the One God (trinity), being aware of the existence of Adam and Eve who disobeyed God so that they were expelled from God's heaven, believing in a new life, preparation to return to God, incarnation: God returned to man, the Son of God gave life to man and he died on the cross for the benefit of man, belief in a new moment with God, and the existence of God's kingdom (Mouza & Stamkopoulos, 2018).

The curriculum covered in the religious education program includes: church history, past church missionary activities, causes, differences between Orthodox and Catholics, Protestant reform, church history from the 17th to 21st centuries, discussion of Orthodoxy in America, discussion Worldwide Orthodoxy, comparative religions, great traditions (architects of churches, church buildings, iconography, church calendars, church holidays, and fast days), life of saints: saints Nicholas, Cyril and Methodius, and so on; dogma, great trinity, Christology, Mariology, theosis, eschatology, ecclesiology, private prayer, remembering God, praying Jesus, thanksgiving to God the giver of birth, and so on. Church education provides Catholic education with subject matter that is tailored to the grade level of children at school (from Kindergarten to College) (Mouza & Stamkopoulos, 2018).

Southeast Asian Experiences

Islamic education dominates religious education in Southeast Asian countries (Schweitzer, 2004). Islamic education in Southeast Asia reflects the diversity of Islam in the region and plays a central role in shaping and transforming the region of religious traditions. One of the interesting characteristics of Islam as a whole in Southeast Asian is its lack of relativity, even to the Wahhabi movement (Sawari et al., 2022), even Islam in Southeast Asian maintains a special diversity - which reflects that the majority of Muslims in that region respect local culture, ethnicity, and language traditions in their

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Islamic practices (Rumainur et al., 2022). This tendency is referred to as traditionalism in Indonesia.

Most traditionalist Muslims in Southeast Asia follow the Imam Shafi school of thought (Crotty, 2003). They are represented by NU, the largest socio-religious organization in the Muslim world with more than 40 million members. The NU constitution is based on the struggle for social and religious welfare which is based on the ideology of *Ahlu al-Sunnah Wa al-Jama'ah*. The other groups are the modernists, namely the movement that started in the 20th century influenced by the ideas of Jamaluddin al-Afgani and Muhammad Abduh, which aims to purify Islam.

One of the organizations that is claimed to be modernist movements is Muhammadiyah, which was founded in 1912. Indonesian modernists believe in the need to adapt Islamic law to the contemporary world. The structure of religious education in Southeast Asia is reflected in religious education in Indonesia (Barnes, 2002). Here religious education is held at all levels of education, starting from kindergarten to university with religious education in accordance with students' beliefs. In contrast, in Malaysia, Islam is the official state religion. Therefore, Islamic religious education is only given to Islamic educational institutions or schools. In the Philippines, religious education is not held in schools but is left to the church.

Bangladesh Experiences

In Bangladesh, religious education is dominated by Islamic education (Barnes, 2002). What is interesting from Bangladesh experience is the issue of women's position in education. Women are placed in a prioritized position in education, because previously women did not get a place in educational activities. Bangladeshi Muslim women are enrolled in madrasah education. This education is emphasized to equip them as prospective housewives who are ready to become the first educators in the family for their children (Roy et al., 2020).

The characteristics of madrasah education in Bangladesh are as follows: (a) the teaching method is Urdu. (b) there are no references used as curriculum content, (c) heavily dependent on classical texts, (d) the fields of study are *fiqh*, *ushul fiqh*, hadith and *kalam* for Sunni and Shia students (Langgulung, 2004). Islamic tertiary institutions outline the Islamic curriculum on the syllabus of Arabic, *Fiqh*, *Usul Fiqh*, hadith, history, and Islamic philosophy. These lecture topics are for male and female students. It can be concluded that Islamic education for women increases and varies in the of formal and non-formal education (Roy et al., 2020)

Japanese Experiences

When viewed from the points of similarities and differences, it can be said that the education systems of Indonesia and Japan have a number of similarities apart from, of course, differences. The similarities lie in the system and levels of education-six years of primary and senior secondary education, and universities. While the difference includes many factors such as educational institutions, curriculum, quality of graduates, and so on (Looney, 2006). Besides that, there is an important difference, namely the matter of religious education in public schools. In Indonesia, religious education is given in schools as a compulsory subject. Not only that, Indonesia even recognizes religious-based educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools as part of the national

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education system. Meanwhile, Japan, like other modern countries, does not provide religious education in schools. Religious education is the responsibility of parents or society in general (Nuryatno, 2014).

Japanese educational institutions or schools ranging from Kindergarten to Higher Education do not have a special religious education curriculum. Religion in Japan is considered as a private area that does not need government intervention, even though the majority of the Japanese population adhere to Shinto. For Japan, it is enough for individuals and society to take care of it without having to be regulated by the government. (Looney, 2006)

Table 1. The Use of Religious Education Curriculum

Countries	Religious Edu.	Subject Matters	Took Place/Form
Indonesia, Malaysia	Islamic	Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Ushul Fiqh, Tafseer, Ulum al-Qor'an, Prophetic histories, Ethics, etc.	Schools/formal Mosques/non-formal Other places/non-formal
	Cristian Catholics	The Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost and Hinduism	Schools/formal Churches/non-formal Churches/non-formal
	Hindus Buddhists	Teachings Buddha's love	Temple/non-formal Vehar/non-formal
Europe	Catholics	The Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost	Churches/non-formal
	Cristian		Churches/non-formal
Central Asia	Islamic	Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Ushul Fiqh, Tafseer, Ulum al-Qor'an, Prophetic histories, Ethics, etc.	Madrasas/formal Mosques/non-formal
America	Orthodox	The Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost	Churches/non-formal
	Catholics		Churches/non-formal
	Protestant		Churches/non-formal
Southeast Asia	Islamic	Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Ushul Fiqh, Tafseer, Ulum al-Qor'an, Prophetic histories, Ethics, etc.	Schools/Madrasas/formal Mosques/non-formal
Philippines	Cristian	The Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost	Churches/non-formal
	Catholics		Churches/non-formal
Bangladesh	Islamics	Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Ushul Fiqh, Tafseer, Ulum al-Qor'an, Prophetic histories, Ethics, etc.	
Japanese	Shinto	Ethics	Family /informal Society/informal

Discussion

Aspects of Similarities and Differences

From the description above, there are several similarities and differences that can be identified regarding the implementation of religious education. These include: firstly

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the countries of the world (Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, Europe, America, etc.) have the same interest in providing religious education for their citizens (Abramson, 2010). This equality of interest is based more on considerations of human instincts and a philosophy of life, namely that humans, whoever they are, need something that is believed in and which the soul relies on in their lives. For them, Religion is a channel that is able to accommodate these spiritual needs (Starr, 2005). Then, religious education needs to be implemented. Their beliefs are part of the cultural heritage that must be passed on to the next generation. Therefore, it is carried out within the framework of passing on their culture in the form of belief in God.

Secondly, they both incorporate religious education into the school curriculum although the implementation is different. Some religious educations are carried out in schools with a clear curriculum and some of them carried out outside school, for example churches for Catholic students (Defiore, 2006). The majority of Southeast Asian, Central Asian, and Middle Eastern countries provide their religious education services in schools (Rumainur et al., 2022). Religious education is included in the compulsory curricular. Unlike European and American countries, religious education is carried out in churches (Hendek, 2022); and thirdly, religious education in world countries is included in general subjects that must be followed by students. The purpose is directed to the formation of human beings who are faithful and pious, understand religious teachings, and live the divinity in their lives (Nurwanto & Cusack, 2017).

The main issue today is the problem of religious education that is held in schools. The law is deemed as unnecessary to regulate it so that the state does not intervene in private areas. Another group argues that public schools (in the Indonesian context: public schools) are deemed as unnecessary to teach religion because faith and piety are aspects that should be taught in the family and society. In contrast to the opinions above, the more parties who care about and strive for the formation of humans to become religious faithful, pious, and virtuous the better it will be. The state, in this case, does not enter into private affairs but into social affairs, which is limited to maintain the upholding of social fairness in the implementation of religious teaching in schools, for the sake of harmony in life together among religious communities. If students are taught based on their own religion and taught by teachers of the same religion (this is what the state regulates through this law), people's sense of justice does not need to be disturbed. After all, on this way, schools with religious missions (usually private schools) will be more motivated to carry out religious "promotion" not in bad ways but through beautiful and elegant ways, namely through the brilliance of religious manners displayed by its adherents or by the school's culture.

Given the importance of building student character (read: national character), even though religious education has been carried out by families and communities, it would be better if it was also carried out by schools. The problem is what kind of religious education praxis has been implemented in the schools so far. The moral behaviour of students is still very disappointing, as well as the frequent occurrence of social tensions and rifts with religious nuances, as well as the rampant phenomenon of social moral decline, indicating that there is a serious problem in the practice of religious education in schools. Therefore, it is still far from the significance of its role in building the national character.

Religious education that emphasizes the absolute truth of one's own religion while viewing other religions as wrong and heretical, surely leads students to attitudes and behaviour that insult other religions, are intolerant, and have the potential to be hostile to adherents of other religions. Conflicts and wars in the name of religion, the religious basis is this attitude. Likewise, religious teaching that is too busy emphasizing ritualism and an all-round orientation to the afterlife not associating diversity with worldly concrete behaviour has the potential to lead students to split attitudes and behaviour. People with this attitude will place great importance on personal piety (and are usually cynical towards other people who less ritualistic), while his social life in work, business, politics, power, and others - is splattered with acts of deceit, malice, falsehood, abuse of authority, corruption, and so on. Finally, religious education that places too much emphasis on cognitive or intellectual aspects (especially memorization) and does not emphasize the formation of a religious spirit in students, will encourage students to treat religious lessons only for the purpose of facing tests or exams, not for building their personality.

Referring to Stark & Glock (1970), religious commitment has five dimensions. Firstly, the intellectual dimension (religious knowledge) concerns a person's level of knowledge and understanding of the teachings of his religion. Secondly, the ritualistic dimension (religious practice) concerns the level of a person's obedience in carrying out his religious rites. Thirdly, the ideological dimension (religious belief) concerns the level of one's belief in the truth of one's religion, especially towards fundamental or dogmatic teachings. Fourthly, the experiential dimension (religious feeling) concerns the intensity level of one's feelings and religious experiences. Fifthly, the consequential dimension (religious effect) concerns how strong a person's religious teachings and values motivate and become a source of inspiration for his worldly behaviour. The order as written above is also a sequence of emphasis in the teaching or educational praxis of religious dimensions in schools so far. It shows that the influence of each dimension of religion in bringing positive behaviour towards fellow human beings or pro-social (pro-social behaviour) sharing, working together, donating, helping, being honest, being generous, nurturing, caring for, and paying attention to the rights, and welfare of others.

Therefore, if people want religious education in schools to be truly functional and contextual with the current problems of social, national and state life, aspects of religious education in schools must be in the order of priority scales and work on educational materials as follows. Firstly, religious education should prioritize the consequential dimension of religion. The teachers should invite and train students to practice orders or religious values in worldly real life, such as maintaining cleanliness, acting honestly in exams, helping for good, respecting other people (including those of other religions), and so on as part of their expression of faith. They should train students to set aside pocket money to donate to the needy people. Also, they should invite students to visit members of other religions and organize co-activities to build attitudes of respect, tolerance, and cooperation among people of different faiths. They should teach that religion is a blessing for life together. Then, religion must be an adhesive factor, not a disintegrative factor; solution factors, not problem factors. This is because all religions long for a peaceful, prosperous and quality human life. It is important for students to realize that diversity must result in good living behaviour. Without it, no matter how "lush" one's religious appearance, it will be just like a mere patch of weeds.

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Secondly, the experiential dimension works on by efforts to present God in students' consciousness at all times: in amazement at the beauty, awesomeness, and sophistication of the universe created by God, as well as in students' daily activities. Through that way, God is not only presented at exclusive ritual moments, but continuously in every step of life. Thirdly, the processing of the ideological dimension is carried out while still prioritizing the need for humility and broadmindedness. Confidence in the truth of the religion that students adhere to must not produce narrow fanaticism, religious arrogance, paralysis of reason, and anti-dialogue attitudes. Students need to be realized that God is the God of the universe. God "speaks" not only to certain religious groups, but to all mankind and Divine Truth is scattered everywhere. Without this awareness, people are easily tempted to recruit members of other religions under the pretext of saving, which results in social rifts.

Fourthly, teaching and training on the procedures for religious rites must be carried out while emphasizing students' awareness that rituality is more an effort to strengthen one's commitment to God, spiritual purification, and God's presence in the soul, so that its effectiveness must be in the form of good living behaviour. Ritualism without good living behaviour is a lie in religion. Fifthly, teaching the intellectual dimension aside from dealing with matters relating to religious history, the contents of the Holy Scriptures, and the like. Next, it is also important to present a discourse on how noble religious values can be embodied in real-life praxis in today's Indonesian social world and also anticipating the future. Thus, religious intellectualism becomes contextual with the current situation.

In today's era of school autonomy, it is not the government, but school stakeholders (school committees, principals, teachers, and parents) who have the right to determine the practical concept of religious education. However, it should be noted, no matter how good a concept is, in practice all of it will be blunt if religious teachers (ustadz, clerics, priests, pastors, etc.) as the spearheads in the field do not have sufficient spiritual, emotional, or intellectual qualities. Given the extraordinarily strategic role of education, the preparation and appreciation of religious teachers should be carried out with special resources, not "perfunctory". Likewise, without being accompanied by habituation or cultivating noble religious values honesty, humility, sincerity, compassion, responsibility, and so on in the individual behaviour of all academic and institutional members of the school, even a "superman" religious teacher will struggle to carry the heavy burden alone.

Tabel 2. The Key Similarities and Differences of the Implementation of Religious Education

Aspect of Religious Education Implementation	Indonesia & Malaysia	European Countries	Central Asian Countries	America	Southeast Asian Countries	Bangladesh	Japan
Religious Education in Schools	Yes	Varies	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Diversity of Religious Education	Yes (Multiple religions)	Yes (Catholic, Christian)	Yes (Islamic)	Yes (Orthodox Christian)	Yes (Islamic)	Yes (Islamic)	No

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Aspect of Religious Education Implementation	Indonesia & Malaysia	European Countries	Central Asian Countries	America	Southeast Asian Countries	Bangladesh	Japan
Religious Dominance	Multicultural	Catholic	Islamic	Orthodox Christian	Islamic	Islamic	None
State's Role in Religious Education	Accommodating	Supportive	Central (Madrasas)	Limited	Varies (Southeast Asian Islam)	Prioritizes Women	None
Purpose of Religious Education	Accommodate wishes	Promote Catholicism	Historical role	Forming good citizens	Respect local culture	Empower women	Not in schools
Integration of Religion in Curriculum	Juxtaposed with other religions	Yes, in Catholic schools	Primarily in Madrasas	In churches	In schools according to beliefs	Urdu-based madrasah	No religious curriculum
Religious Education in Churches	Not common	Common	Primarily in Madrasas	Yes, Orthodox Christian education	Not common	Not common	Not common
Government's Role in Religious Education	Minimal interference	Differing approaches	Centralized (Madrasas)	Varies	Varies	Prioritizes women's education	Non-intervention

The table shows the implementation of religious education carried out in almost countries all over the world.

The Urgency of Implementation of Religious Education

Religion has a very deep and important meaning for human life in this world. It's hard to imagine what would happen if life is without religion. Mitchell (1997) has conducted research on the effects of religious education on society. According to him, religious education has an effect on structured adults on attitudes and behaviour. This research questioned two main issues, namely: is religious education related to behaviour change for adults? and Whether or not adults differently benefit based on their age level as predicted by Warner Schaller research which suggested that adults learn for the benefit of their families and work while older adults learn for their own interests (Warner & Williams, 2016). It is proven that religious education has a positive effect on attitudes and behaviour. The learning approach is an intensive curriculum, given in two hours every week and thirty weeks in one year. Formal and intensive religious education have an effective influence on religious attitudes and behaviour for adult students. These effects depend on the age of the students (Warner, 2005).

Education as a vehicle for passing on human culture is important for developing the maturity of students, not only physical maturity but also intellectual, emotional, spiritual maturity, and so on (Sukardi, 2016). In the context of religious education, it is important to help students in order to construct their imagination through religious diversity in public school classes. This is where the importance of the curriculum pays attention to the potential challenges and strengths that exist in the minds of students through imagination management. According to him, the imagination of students is

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developed based on their religious beliefs. By providing these religious emotional foundations, students are expected to be smart and remain guided by religious values.

Another aspect of the urgency of religious education is that religion is an aspect of life that does not even conflict with modern science and technology (Evans, 2011). There is a harmonious relationship between science, religion, and education. These three things can work based on their function and can be combined. Science does not have any conclusions about how the world has been created. Science is a method of discovering what is true, not conclusions about what is true. Therefore, the scientific arena is where all (even religious) views are given the same opportunity to express them so that beliefs can be found (Evans, 2011). Religion talks about beliefs (Logan, 1993) about whether this world has been created by the Creator, or it is only natural phenomenon without a primary cause. Science cannot explain this, but religion can answer the question. Religion with its doctrine of faith is able to reassure humans for their understanding of natural phenomena (Bowie, 2021). Humans who have faith can accept that nature has been created by God who is the Creator without having to confirm it with science first (Polkinghorne, 1998). However, at some point, religion and science can be brought together. Science provides an explanation of how this world has been created while religion gives people the belief that this world has been created by God, who is all-powerful (Plantinga, 2007). The balance of scientific and religious understanding will be formed through education (Johnson, 1998). Education will try to provide a synthetic understanding between the two poles, namely the science and the religion pole.

Table 3. The Urgencies of Implementing Religious Education

Aspects of Urgency in Implementing Religious Education	Importance
Cultural Preservation	High
Moral and Ethical Development	High
Social Cohesion and Harmony	High
Balancing Science and Religion	Medium
Promoting Religious Tolerance	High
Ethical Behavior in Society	High
Conflict Prevention and Resolution	High
Interfaith Dialogue	High
Women's Empowerment through Education	High
Preserving Local Culture and Language	High
Adapting Religious Law to the Modern World	Medium
Youth Engagement and Character Building	High

This table summarizes the urgency of implementing religious education across various aspects, emphasizing its importance in preserving culture, fostering moral development, promoting social cohesion, and addressing contemporary challenges such as ethical behavior and interfaith dialogue. The level of importance may vary depending on the country and the context. The research discusses the implementation of religious education in various countries around the world, highlighting the experiences and approaches taken by different countries. It covers a range of regions, including Southeast Asia, Europe, Central Asia, America, and more. It also emphasizes the importance of religious education in shaping individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and the overall cultural landscape.

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Indonesia and Malaysia offer equal proportions of religious education to formal educational institutions or schools, accommodating various religions, including Islam, Christianity, Catholic, Buddhism, and Hinduism. These countries emphasize multiculturalism due to their diverse populations, with religious education provided in schools without imposing a single religion. Catholic education dominates in Europe due to a significant Catholic population, contributing to European civilization and promoting common values. Catholic and Christian education aims to develop individuals spiritually who can contribute positively to society. Then, religious education in Europe often occurs in churches and may vary in terms of government involvement.

Besides that, Central Asian countries are predominantly Muslim and provide religious education in institutions called madrasas, which have historical significance. Madrasas have evolved over time and sometimes focus on theology over applied sciences. Graduates from these institutions may become imams, judges, or teachers in religious schools. In the United States, Orthodox Christian education is prominent, primarily held in churches. The focus is on faith education, but there is a concern about decreasing involvement of families and children in church life. Next, efforts have been made to develop teaching materials for religious education.

Islamic education dominates in Southeast Asian countries, reflecting the region's diverse interpretations of Islam. Traditionalist and modernist movements coexist, by having various organizations promoting different approaches to Islamic education. The structure of religious education varies in which Indonesia offers religious learning at all education levels. Bangladesh emphasizes Islamic education, by having an interesting focus on women's education to prepare them as future educators and housewives. Madrasah education is significant, with a curriculum heavily dependent on classical texts. Then, Japan does not provide religious education in public schools and considers religion as a private matter. Religious education in Japan is typically the responsibility of parents and society and it has a little government intervention.

This study identifies several similarities and differences in the implementation of religious education across countries: (1) the universal interest in providing religious education to meet spiritual needs and preserve cultural heritage; (2) incorporation of religious education into school curricula, with variations in its implementation; (3) the need to balance religious education with tolerance, respect for other religions, and societal harmony; (4) the importance of cultivating values and behaviors aligned with religious teachings; and (5) the potential impact of religious education on individuals' attitudes and behaviors in which the order of influence varies based on five dimension (intellectual, ritualistic, ideological, experiential, and consequential).

Moreover, the study argues for a comprehensive approach to religious education that prioritizes ethical behavior, experiential connection with religion, and humility in ideological teachings. The study underscores the importance of religious education in guiding individuals' lives, providing answers to fundamental questions, and promoting tolerance. It argues that religious education can coexist with science and technology, contributing to a harmonious understanding of the world. Then, education plays a crucial role in synthesizing scientific and religious perspectives, providing a balanced worldview. Besides that, it emphasizes the need for high-quality religious teachers and

suggests that the government should ensure their adequate training. This study provides a comprehensive overview of religious education practices worldwide as well, highlighting the unique approaches and challenges faced by different countries. Also, it underscores the significance of religious education in shaping individuals and societies and calls for a thoughtful and balanced approach that fosters tolerance and ethical behavior while integrating religious and scientific knowledge.

CONCLUSION

All countries in the world agree to organize religious education for their citizens. Is religious education held in schools as formal educational institutions? is it held outside schools while still referring to the curriculum outlined in schools? or is it held by each individual and society with the assumption that religion is considered a private area? The differences where this religious education is held depend on each of these countries. Southeast Asian, Central Asian, and Middle Eastern countries tend to organize religious education in schools as well as outside schools. This, for example, can be seen in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Egypt. The Japan, as part of Asia, does not organize religious education in schools, it is more left to personal and community rights. For countries in Europe and America, the implementation of religious education is carried out in churches. That is why schools do not teach students about religious education, but schools entrust it to the church. Thus, religious education is carried out in non-formal or informal institutions. Besides that, religious education in these countries aims to pass on beliefs to the next generation in which the beliefs come from their predecessors.

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