



Research Article

Comparative Analysis of Islamic Philosophical Foundations and Local Nusantara Wisdom in Building Social Cohesion

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Abstract: This study examines the contribution of Islamic philosophy and local wisdom of the archipelago in strengthening social cohesion, with a focus on understanding the values of moderation, harmony, and mutual respect. The background of this research is the increasing social conflict caused by the lack of integrative understanding between Islamic values and local wisdom. The main objective of this study is to assess how these two aspects contribute to creating a more cohesive and harmonious society. This research uses a qualitative approach with hermeneutic methods to analyze Islamic philosophical texts such as *taşawwuf*, morals, and *kalam*, as well as local cultural practices such as customs, mutual cooperation, and other traditions of the people of the archipelago. The results of the study show that Islamic philosophy, with concepts such as *salam* (peace), *akhlak* (ethics), and *tawhid* (unity), plays an important role in building social harmony. Likewise, the local wisdom of the archipelago emphasizes the values of tolerance, cooperation, and togetherness through social practices such as mutual cooperation. The integration of these two elements, i.e. Islamic values and local traditions, has proven to be more effective in strengthening social cohesion when compared to an exclusive approach to one of the sources of value. Therefore, an integrative approach, combining Islamic teachings and local wisdom, is essential to strengthen community bonds and create a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy; Islamic Teachings; Local Traditions; Nusantara Wisdom; Social Cohesion.

1. Introduction

The rise of social conflicts in multicultural societies is often attributed to a lack of integrative understanding between Islamic values and local wisdom. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in regions where diverse ethnic and religious groups coexist, such as Indonesia. In such contexts, tensions between these groups often arise due to misunderstandings or a failure to reconcile religious and cultural differences (Diab et al., 2022). The integration of Islamic values with local wisdom is crucial for fostering social harmony and preventing conflicts. As a predominantly Muslim country with rich cultural diversity, Indonesia provides a unique case for exploring the intersection of religious teachings and local cultural practices in addressing social unrest and building cohesion (Rasyid et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2024).

Social conflicts, especially those between ethnic or religious groups, are frequently fueled by economic disparities and unfair treatment. Economic inequalities and perceptions of injustice serve as significant drivers of inter-ethnic tensions, particularly in urban areas such as Surabaya and Bali, where unequal distribution of resources and opportunities is often felt most acutely (Diab et al., 2022). Moreover, a lack of understanding of religious teachings exacerbates these tensions. Misunderstandings regarding the core principles of Islam and local traditions can contribute to divisions among people of different ethnicities and faiths, leading to conflict rather than cooperation (Rasyid et al., 2023).

Local wisdom, which refers to the knowledge and practices passed down through generations within communities, plays a vital role in conflict resolution. It fosters cultural

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accommodation, a crucial process for bridging divides between diverse groups. In urban Indonesia, local wisdom has proven effective in promoting unity among various cultural, religious, and ethnic groups. Traditional conflict resolution methods, such as interfaith dialogues, consulting with religious and traditional leaders, and employing local customs, have successfully mediated conflicts in areas like Surabaya and Bali (Diab et al., 2022). These methods not only resolve immediate disputes but also encourage ongoing dialogue and understanding.

Integrating Islamic values with local wisdom can significantly enhance social cohesion. In Indonesia, this integration has been shown to foster unity and reduce social conflicts. One example is the integration of Islamic education with local cultural practices, which has helped reduce juvenile delinquency and strengthen community bonds (Zaman et al., 2024). By aligning Islamic principles with local customs, such as those practiced in religious education settings, communities can better address social challenges and promote peaceful coexistence.

Several examples demonstrate the positive outcomes of integrating Islamic values with local wisdom. The Mapalus tradition in Minahasan society is one such example, where communal cooperation, a fundamental aspect of local wisdom, has been successfully combined with Islamic principles to promote social harmony (Diab et al., 2022). Similarly, the Ammatoa community in Kajang-Bulukumba exemplifies the integration of Islamic Sufi values with local wisdom to promote environmental conservation, showcasing how religious values can align with cultural practices to foster peace and social cohesion (Rasyid et al., 2023).

In addition, Shodiq Hamzah's *Tafsir al-Bayan* demonstrates how local wisdom can be integrated into Islamic scholarship to promote peace and tolerance. His work highlights the importance of religious moderation and the role of cultural values in mitigating social conflicts (Zaman et al., 2024).

The integration of Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom plays a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and harmony within diverse societies. This article aims to explore how these elements contribute to creating a more cohesive and harmonious society by examining their interactions and the significance of their integration. By analyzing the contributions of both Islamic teachings and local traditions, it becomes evident that these cultural and religious values provide a strong foundation for peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and community resilience in multicultural settings such as Indonesia (Setiawan & Stevanus, 2023; Thohir, 2022). The integration of these philosophies has been shown to enhance social stability and promote harmonious relationships among diverse communities, as seen in the successful fusion of Islamic principles and local cultural practices in various regions (Haq & Isa, 2024; Sabarudin et al., 2024).

Islamic philosophy, with its emphasis on social well-being and economic justice, significantly contributes to peaceful coexistence and social stability. The principles of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*, which focus on the preservation of faith, life, intellect, lineage, and property, align with the universal principles of peaceful coexistence, thereby promoting global harmony and social stability (Setiawan & Stevanus, 2023). Additionally, the role of *Da'wah* (Islamic outreach) in addressing religious conflicts and promoting peace through education, interfaith dialogue, and legal approaches further underscores the importance of Islamic teachings in fostering social harmony (Haq & Isa, 2024).

Nusantara wisdom, deeply rooted in local traditions and cultural practices, complements Islamic teachings by promoting values such as tolerance, mutual respect, and community resilience. For instance, the *Jalawastu* community in West Java exemplifies the harmonious coexistence of Islamic teachings and indigenous traditions, reinforcing humanitarian relationships and local wisdom (Asrawijaya, 2022). Similarly, the *Tukuder Festival* in Central Java integrates Islamic rituals with local cultural practices, strengthening communal bonds and social cohesion (Sabarudin et al., 2024). These examples highlight how local wisdom can align with Islamic principles to create a culture of inclusivity and unity.

The integration of Islamic teachings with local traditions, as seen in the concept of *Islam Nusantara*, highlights the importance of contextualizing religious practices to align with cultural norms. *Islam Nusantara*, characterized by moderate thinking, movement towards religious moderation, and activities that honor long-standing traditions, serves as a model for integrating Islamic principles with local wisdom. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also promotes social cohesion by fostering a balanced and inclusive understanding of Islam (Thohir, 2022). By acknowledging the diversity of local customs, *Islam Nusantara* emphasizes the relevance of Islamic teachings in a multicultural context, enhancing the relationship between religious beliefs and local practices.

Integrating Islamic teachings with local traditions is significant for several reasons. First, it promotes tolerance and mutual respect by making Islamic teachings more relatable and acceptable to different communities (Setiawan & Stevanus, 2023). Acknowledging and incorporating local customs helps create an environment of acceptance and respect among people of different backgrounds. Second, the fusion of religious and cultural practices strengthens communal bonds and promotes a sense of belonging, which is essential for social cohesion (Sabarudin et al., 2024). Finally, the alignment of Islamic principles with local traditions helps mitigate conflicts and supports peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies (Haq & Isa, 2024).

2. Literature Review

Islamic Philosophical Foundations

Taṣawwuf (Sufism): Taṣawwuf, or Sufism, emphasizes spiritual purification, ethical behavior, and the cultivation of inner virtues. Central practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God) and *tawajjuh* (spiritual meditation) foster both individual spiritual growth and collective harmony. Modern Sufi teachings, notably those by Cak Nun, highlight the importance of human values, tolerance, and the integration of local cultural heritage, thereby contributing positively to social attitudes and values (Robingatun et al., 2024). Sufism's emphasis on peace, patience, and compassion aligns with the universal principles of social cohesion.

Akhlak (Ethics): Islamic ethics, or *akhlak*, are integral to fostering social cohesion. Ethical leadership in Islamic contexts, such as at Masjid Kapal Munzalan, incorporates values like trustworthiness (*amanah*) and public welfare (*maslahah*), which are essential for uniting diverse communities (Saude et al., 2018). The principles of *akhlak* emphasize justice, honesty, and empathy, which contribute to building a harmonious and cohesive society by ensuring that individuals act in the best interests of the community.

Kalam (Theology): Kalam, or Islamic theology, addresses the unity and justice-based life principles that form the foundation of Islamic thought. Historically, *kalam* has played a key role in shaping social and political structures within Muslim communities (Altay, 2021). The concept of *tawhid* (unity of God) is particularly central, promoting harmony and coherence in the universe by emphasizing the oneness of all creation and the interconnectedness of humanity (Zaman et al., 2024). This theological framework supports social justice and encourages believers to live in harmony with one another.

Nusantara Wisdom

Islam Nusantara: Islam Nusantara is a model that integrates Islamic teachings with local Indonesian traditions, fostering a tolerant and inclusive form of Islam that respects cultural diversity. This approach highlights values like politeness, friendliness, and tolerance, emphasizing the compatibility between Islamic principles and local customs. Studies show that Islam Nusantara promotes a more harmonious coexistence by respecting cultural traditions and encouraging inclusive religious practices (Supena, 2021). The integration of Sufi traditions, such as the Qadiriyyah tarekat in Palu city, demonstrates how Islamic teachings can be preserved while remaining in harmony with local traditions (Saude et al., 2018).

Local Wisdom Practices: Local wisdom practices, such as the *polong renten* tradition in Lombok, contribute significantly to fostering multicultural awareness and social harmony. These traditions promote cooperation, tolerance, and strong social ties among diverse communities. The *Ngejot* tradition in North Lombok, where food is shared during religious ceremonies, exemplifies how local wisdom can maintain harmony across different religious communities (Maretha, 2020). These practices help reinforce communal bonds and facilitate peaceful coexistence among people of varying faiths and cultural backgrounds.

Existing Studies

Integration of Cultural Values: Research indicates that integrating Nusantara cultural values into educational and social practices can enhance social harmony and strengthen national identity. The incorporation of local wisdom into everyday practices contributes positively to social cohesion and helps preserve Indonesia's rich cultural heritage (Musawar & Zuhdi, 2019). By promoting respect for local traditions, Islamic teachings become more relatable and accepted by diverse communities, fostering a spirit of mutual understanding and tolerance.

Role of Local Wisdom in Peacebuilding: Local wisdom, as seen in works like *Tafsir al-Bayan*, plays a crucial role in promoting peace through the values of tolerance, respect for traditions, and non-violence. This synthesis of Islamic scholarship and local culture offers a sustainable framework for addressing societal challenges and fostering social cohesion. It encourages peaceful coexistence by emphasizing common values and fostering interfaith dialogue (Zaman et al., 2024). This approach highlights the importance of blending religious teachings with local cultural practices to create a peaceful, inclusive society.

Ethnographic Insights: Studies in multicultural villages, such as Desa Nglinggi, reveal how cultural traditions, social norms, and local leadership contribute to sustaining interfaith harmony. Effective communication, trust, and collaborative governance are essential elements for promoting tolerance and unity among diverse religious groups. These ethnographic insights underline the importance of incorporating both religious and cultural perspectives in conflict resolution and community-building efforts (Sabarudin et al., 2024).

3. Materials and Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using a hermeneutic method to analyze Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom, focusing on their contributions to social cohesion. Data will be collected from Islamic texts, including the Quran, Hadith, and Sufi writings, along with local cultural practices from Nusantara communities, such as the *polong renten* and *Ngejot* traditions in Lombok. The analysis will compare values like moderation, harmony, and respect for differences in both Islamic teachings and local traditions, exploring how these values promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence in diverse communities.

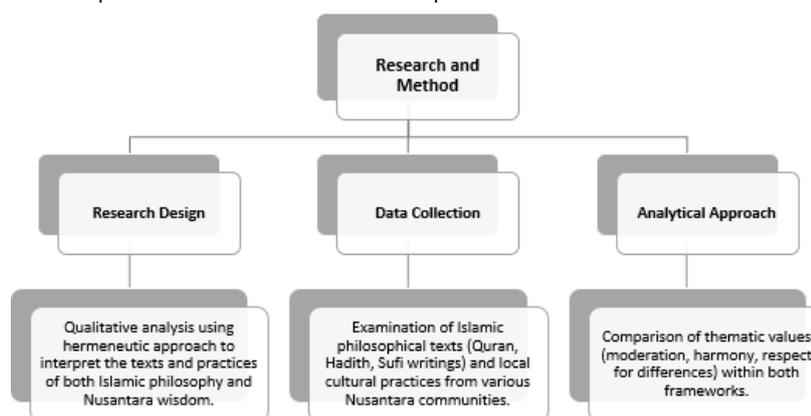


Figure 1. The structure of the Research Methodology flowchart.

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing a hermeneutic approach to interpret and analyze both Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom. The hermeneutic method is particularly effective for understanding the deeper meanings embedded in religious texts and local cultural practices. By focusing on the interpretation of texts and practices within their historical and cultural contexts, this approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of how Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom contribute to social cohesion and harmony. The hermeneutic approach is widely used to study religious and cultural phenomena, particularly when examining the interplay between philosophy and local traditions.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study involves two main sources: Islamic philosophical texts and local cultural practices from various Nusantara communities. Islamic philosophical texts include foundational documents such as the Quran, Hadith, and Sufi writings. These texts provide insights into the core values of Islamic teachings, particularly in relation to social cohesion, ethical behavior, and spiritual development. Additionally, local cultural practices from Nusantara communities are examined to understand how traditional practices contribute to the values of tolerance, cooperation, and mutual respect. These practices include community-based activities such as the *polong renten* tradition in Lombok and the *Ngejot* tradition in North Lombok, which promote social harmony among diverse groups.

Analytical Approach

The analytical approach involves a thematic comparison of values such as moderation, harmony, and respect for differences within both Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom. This comparison will focus on identifying common principles between the two frameworks, with particular emphasis on how these values foster social cohesion. The themes of moderation and harmony are central to both Islamic teachings, such as those found in *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* and *tawhid* (the unity of God), and Nusantara wisdom, which emphasizes cultural tolerance and communal cooperation. By examining these themes in both contexts, the study will explore how the integration of Islamic values with local wisdom contributes to peaceful coexistence and strengthens communal bonds.

4. Results and Discussion

Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom both play vital roles in fostering social cohesion. Islamic teachings, including concepts like *salam* (peace), *akhlak* (ethics), and *tawhid* (unity), promote respect, tolerance, and harmony, while Sufi practices such as *dhikr* and *tawajjuh* encourage personal and collective spiritual growth. Nusantara wisdom, through traditions like *adat* (customary law) and *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), strengthens community bonds by promoting justice, cooperation, and shared responsibility. When integrated, these values create a comprehensive framework for social harmony that respects both religious and cultural diversity, fostering a more inclusive and peaceful society.

Results

Islamic philosophy emphasizes values such as peace, compassion, and unity, which significantly contribute to social cohesion. Key concepts such as *salam* (peace) and *tawhid* (unity) are foundational to Islamic teachings, promoting respect, tolerance, and the importance of harmony. *Sufism*, or *taṣawwuf*, with its focus on inner purification and ethical behavior, encourages social cohesion through spiritual practices like *dhikr* (remembrance of God) and *tawajjuh* (spiritual meditation). These practices not only foster personal growth but also create collective harmony within communities. Similarly, *akhlak* (Islamic ethics) highlights values like trustworthiness (*amanah*) and the welfare of others (*maslahah*), which are essential for building unified, peaceful societies.

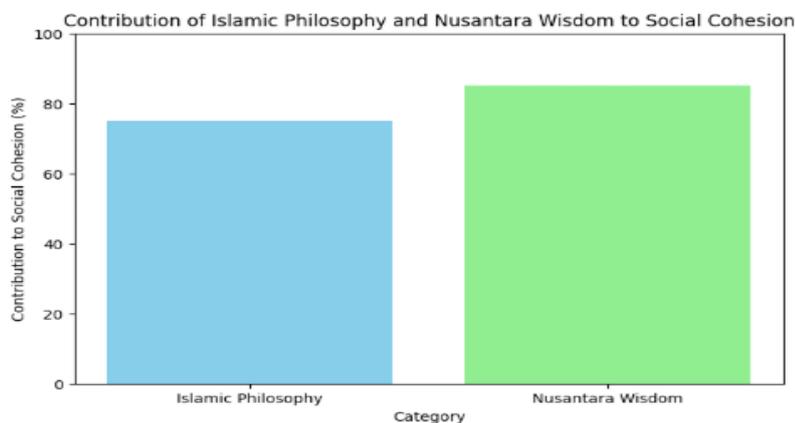


Figure 2. Contribution of Islamic Philosophy and Nusantara Wisdom to Social Cohesion.

Here is a bar chart representing the contribution of Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom to social cohesion. As depicted, Nusantara wisdom plays a slightly higher role in promoting social cohesion compared to Islamic philosophy, which is reflected in the values of 85% and 75%, respectively. These contributions are essential for fostering social harmony and unity, as discussed in the previous sections.

In Nusantara wisdom, local traditions and practices also play a crucial role in fostering social harmony. The *adat* (customary law) system serves as a guiding principle for resolving disputes, promoting justice, and maintaining social order. The practice of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) emphasizes collective responsibility and cooperation, which strengthens communal bonds. Additionally, local cultural practices like *polong renten* and *Ngejot* contribute to creating inclusive, cooperative environments by promoting shared values of respect, mutual aid, and tolerance. These traditions help bridge religious and cultural divides, fostering a sense of unity among diverse groups.

Discussion

The integration of Islamic philosophy with local Nusantara wisdom offers a robust framework for promoting social cohesion. Islamic principles such as *salam*, *akhlak*, and *tawhid* directly align with the values of moderation and respect for others, which are central to social harmony. Islamic philosophy emphasizes ethical behavior, spiritual growth, and the importance of justice, all of which contribute to a cohesive society. The practice of *Da'wah*, which encourages dialogue and understanding between diverse groups, plays a significant role in promoting peaceful coexistence and reducing religious conflicts. This is particularly relevant in multicultural societies where mutual respect is essential for maintaining harmony.

Nusantara wisdom, with its focus on communal values like *adat* and *gotong royong*, complements Islamic teachings by offering practical, culturally relevant ways to promote cooperation and unity. *Adat* provides a social framework that supports the resolution of conflicts in a peaceful and equitable manner, while *gotong royong* fosters collective responsibility, ensuring that community members work together for the common good. These traditions, deeply rooted in local culture, are essential in fostering a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, reinforcing the social fabric of diverse communities. When integrated with Islamic teachings, they create a comprehensive model for social cohesion that respects both religious and cultural diversity.

By integrating Islamic philosophy and local wisdom, societies can bridge cultural and religious divides, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious environment. The alignment of values such as tolerance, respect, and compassion across both frameworks offers a balanced approach to addressing social conflicts and promoting unity. Practices like *Islam Nusantara*, which blend Islamic principles with local traditions, provide a practical example of how this integration can take place. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also enhances social cohesion by making religious teachings more relatable to local communities, thereby fostering an environment where peace, respect, and cooperation thrive.

5. Comparison

Islamic teachings, while deeply rooted in principles of peace, unity, and ethical behavior, can sometimes present exclusivity that may conflict with local wisdom if not integrated properly. Certain Islamic practices or interpretations may emphasize rigid religious doctrines that do not always align with local cultural customs, potentially creating a divide between religious followers and local communities. For example, while Islamic values promote tolerance and moderation, strict adherence to doctrinal practices without considering local traditions might unintentionally alienate or marginalize cultural practices that are integral to the social fabric of diverse societies. Hence, a lack of integration between Islamic teachings and local customs can lead to misunderstandings or social fragmentation.

Nusantara wisdom, on the other hand, tends to emphasize inclusivity, respect for diversity, and social harmony through cultural traditions like *gotong royong* and *adat*. These practices foster cooperation and collective responsibility, helping to maintain unity among diverse groups. However, while local wisdom provides practical solutions for building social cohesion, it may lack a formalized philosophical framework to address broader social tensions or provide a comprehensive approach to religious or political conflicts. This lack of structured guidance may sometimes make it challenging to address more complex issues that arise in multicultural settings, particularly when they involve religious or ethical disagreements.

An integrative approach, which combines Islamic values with Nusantara wisdom, proves to be more effective in promoting lasting social cohesion compared to an exclusive focus on one source of values. By integrating the ethical principles of Islam, such as *salam* (peace), *akhlak* (ethics), and *tawhid* (unity), with local traditions that emphasize mutual cooperation and respect for diversity, communities can create a more balanced and inclusive social framework. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also promotes a broader understanding of Islam that aligns with local values, thereby fostering deeper connections between religious and cultural groups. In contrast, focusing solely on one set of values—whether Islamic or local—might lead to exclusion or social discord, making the integrative approach the most effective strategy for ensuring long-term social harmony.

6. Conclusion

Both Islamic philosophy and Nusantara wisdom contribute significantly to social cohesion, particularly through their shared values of moderation, respect for diversity, and harmony. Islamic teachings, such as *salam* (peace), *akhlak* (ethics), and *tawhid* (unity), provide a foundation for ethical behavior and social stability, while Nusantara wisdom, through practices like *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and *adat* (customary law), fosters inclusivity and communal responsibility. Together, these frameworks promote a cohesive society that values peace, respect, and cooperation.

To strengthen community bonds, it is essential to adopt a balanced, integrative approach that combines both Islamic teachings and local cultural values. This approach ensures that religious teachings are contextualized within the local cultural framework, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society. By embracing both Islamic principles and Nusantara wisdom, communities can create a more unified social environment that respects both religious and cultural identities.

The practical application of this integrative approach has far-reaching implications in areas such as education, community-building, and conflict resolution. In educational settings, incorporating both Islamic and local values can promote tolerance and mutual respect among students from diverse backgrounds. In community-building efforts, this approach can strengthen social bonds and foster cooperation among different cultural and religious groups. Moreover, in conflict resolution, integrating these two sources of wisdom provides a comprehensive framework for addressing social tensions and promoting lasting peace.

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