

Peace Education and Islamic Perspectives in the Malay Archipelago: A Literature Review

MT Hartono Ikhsan¹

¹ Universitas Islam Nusantara Bandung, Indonesia. E-mail: mthartono@unsap.ac.id

Received: November 11, 2025 **Accepted:** December 7, 2025 **Published:** December 22, 2025

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the interrelation between peace education and the Islamic archipelagic perspective (Islam Nusantara) as an educational paradigm rooted in moderation, tolerance, and universal human values. Employing a library research approach, this study reviews ten academic journal articles, books, and relevant online sources. Using content analysis, the research critically examines the theoretical foundations of peace education and the core values of Islam Nusantara to identify their intersections within the context of Islamic education in Indonesia. The findings reveal that peace education grounded in the principles of Islam Nusantara serves as a foundation for developing a civilized, inclusive, and socially just national character. Islam Nusantara, with its values of tawassuth (moderation), tasamuh (tolerance), tawazun (balance), and i'tidal (justice), provides a moral and cultural framework for a contextual and relevant peace education model within Indonesia's diverse society. The integration of these two paradigms not only reinforces religious moderation but also cultivates a peace-oriented awareness deeply rooted in local wisdom and the Islamic tradition of rahmatan lil 'alamin.

Keywords: Peace Education, Islam Nusantara, religious moderation, human values, library research.



© 2025 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Attribution – Non Commercial Share Alike 4.0 International (CC BY NC SA) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>).

Introduction

In the contemporary global context, the world faces various forms of humanitarian crises such as social conflict, identity-based violence, and growing intolerance in various regions. Education is a strategic instrument in building a sustainable culture of peace, because through the educational process, humans can learn to appreciate differences, resolve conflicts constructively, and foster empathy for others (Reardon, 2018; Salomon & Cairns, 2010). Peace education, therefore, is not merely teaching about the importance of peaceful living, but also a process of transforming values, attitudes, and behaviors towards a more just and harmonious social order (Harris & Morrison, 2013).

Indonesia, as a country with ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity, faces great challenges in maintaining social harmony. The phenomena of intolerance, radicalism, and political polarization show that education emphasizing the values of peace is urgently needed to strengthen national integration (Siregar, 2023). On the other hand, in the context of Indonesian Islam, the idea of Islam Nusantara has emerged, emphasizing the importance of understanding Islam in a contextual, moderate, and accommodating manner towards local culture (Azra, 2020). Islam Nusantara stems from the view that Islam in Indonesia cannot be separated from the dynamic interaction between Islamic teachings and local traditions that are rich in wisdom and peace (Hasyim, 2016).

Islam Nusantara is not a new form of Islam, but rather a way of practicing religion that places Islam as a universal teaching that is actualized in the context of local culture. This concept emphasizes the values of tolerance (*tasamuh*), balance (*tawazun*), moderation (*wasathiyyah*), and social justice (*al-'adl*), all of which are in line with the principles of peace education (Sahal & Aziz, 2015; Murtadho, 2021). Through Islam Nusantara, the universal values of Islam can be translated into social practices that foster a culture of peace and mutual cooperation. Therefore, peace education based on the insights of Islam Nusantara is a relevant model for the pluralistic and multicultural context of Indonesia (Fauzan, 2020).

The history of the spread of Islam in the archipelago also provides a historical basis for the birth of peaceful Islam. The scholars and saints who spread Islam in the archipelago used cultural and persuasive approaches in their preaching, rather than violence or coercion. This approach fostered a friendly, polite, and tolerant Islam towards local traditions (Azra, 2020). This shaped the face of Indonesian Islam, which is different from the face of Islam in other regions, which is more rigid and confrontational. These cultural values are in line with the spirit of peace education, which rejects violence and promotes dialogue as a means of resolving differences (Reardon, 2018).

Peace education itself emphasizes the importance of critical awareness and reflective abilities in students to understand the root causes of conflict and social injustice. According to Bar-Tal (2013), peace education needs to be directed towards building a peace culture oriented towards empathy, solidarity, and respect for human dignity. These values are in line with Islamic teachings that emphasize the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, namely Islam as a blessing for the entire universe. In this context, Islam Nusantara can be understood as a concrete manifestation of the value of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* in the context of Indonesian culture (Murtadho, 2021).

Recent studies show that peace education based on local Islamic values has proven effective in reducing the potential for religious and ethnic violence in schools (Nasir & Wibowo, 2021; Aini, 2022). Through a curriculum that integrates values of peace and local wisdom, students not only understand the meaning of peace theoretically, but are also able to practice it in their daily lives. In Indonesia, educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools have great potential in developing Islamic-based peace education. Islamic boarding schools have long been known as centers for character and moral development that emphasize the values of sincerity, tolerance, and compassion (Abadi, 2017).

Furthermore, Rahman (2023) states that peace education in Indonesia needs to be developed with an interdisciplinary approach that involves religious, social, and cultural aspects. In this case, Islam Nusantara serves as a theological and cultural paradigm that provides a moral basis for the creation of a peaceful society. Islam Nusantara rejects all forms of violence in the name of religion and emphasizes the importance of intergroup dialogue as a means of building social cohesion. Therefore, the integration of peace education and Islam Nusantara insights is expected to produce an educational model that not only educates but also humanizes humans.

Methodologically, studies on peace education and Islam Nusantara are important to be conducted using a literature review approach. This approach allows researchers to examine and synthesize various theoretical views that have been developed previously (Zed, 2014). Literature research can enrich conceptual understanding and provide a strong theoretical framework for the development of peace education practices in the future. By examining various recent literature on peace education and Islam Nusantara, this study is expected to contribute scientifically to a more humanistic, contextual, and locally-rooted discourse on Islamic education.

Thus, this study aims to describe and analyze the relationship between peace education and the insights of Islam Nusantara in the context of national character building. Through a literature review of various journals, books, and previous research results, this study seeks to explain how the principles of peace education can be integrated with the values of Islam Nusantara to strengthen a culture of peace and religious moderation in Indonesia. This integration is expected to be an important contribution to the development of an Islamic education paradigm oriented towards peace, social justice, and universal humanity.

Research Method

The research approach used in this study is library research. This approach is carried out by searching for, collecting, and reviewing various information and data sourced from written literature, such as books, official documents, scientific journals, and historical records relevant to the research topic (Mardalis, 1999). Library research not only serves as a means of gathering information, but also includes analytical activities on various scientific works and previous research results that are thematically related to the object of study, so as to provide a strong theoretical basis for this research (Sarwo).

Furthermore, Nazir (1988) defines literature study as a method of data collection carried out through in-depth examination of various written sources, including books, articles, research notes, and reports relevant to the issue being studied. In Sugiyono's (2012) view, a literature study is a conceptual study that focuses on the analysis of scientific references and literature that discuss the values, norms, and culture that develop in the social context that is the focus of the research. In this context, the literature research method is used to formulate basic concepts regarding peace education and Islam Nusantara, which can then be used as a basis for developing practical strategies to strengthen the values of peace and religious moderation in society.

Moleong (2006) explains that conducting library research involves several systematic stages. The first stage is determining the topic, which is to formulate the research problem clearly and specifically so that it is relevant to the field of study. The second stage is collecting data sources by searching for relevant literature, whether in the form of books, scientific articles, research reports, or other supporting documents. The third stage involves the process of critically reading and recording the contents of the sources, with a focus on theories, concepts, and findings that are directly related to the issues being studied. The fourth stage is analyzing and processing library data by interpreting the contents of the literature in depth to find new relationships, patterns, and perspectives on the issues discussed. The final stage involves compiling the research results in the form of a scientific paper that is logically and systematically structured as a contribution to the development of knowledge in the field of peace education and Islam in the Indonesian archipelago.

The data sources in this study came from various literature relevant to the topic of study, including scientific books, accredited journals, and credible online sources. Specifically, this study uses ten scientific journals that directly discuss issues surrounding peace education and Islam Nusantara. Through this literature study, the researcher attempts to examine, identify, and interpret various concepts and findings presented in the literature, thereby producing a comprehensive understanding of the integration between peace education and the values of Islam Nusantara.

The data collection technique used was documentation, which is the collection of data through searching various written documents, such as books, papers, scientific articles, research reports, and journals relevant to the research topic. The research instruments used in this process were a checklist for classifying reference materials, a conceptual writing scheme, and a format for recording the results

of the literature review, which served to maintain the systematics and consistency in the data analysis process.

In the data analysis stage, this study applied content analysis, as described by Krippendorff (1993), which is an analysis technique that aims to obtain valid and testable inferences based on the context of the data being analyzed. The analysis process was carried out through a series of steps that included selecting, comparing, grouping, and integrating various concepts and findings to obtain the most relevant meaning for the research objectives (Serbaguna, 2005). To ensure the consistency and reliability of the analysis results, cross-checking between literature sources and conceptual validation through discussions with academic supervisors were carried out. This step aims to minimize the potential for misinterpretation and subjective bias, as well as to ensure the accuracy of the research results (Sutanto, 2005).

Results and Discussion

Peace education is an educational paradigm oriented towards shaping the character, values, and critical awareness of students so that they are able to live harmoniously in a pluralistic society. In the Indonesian context, peace education is an urgent need amid increasing symptoms of intolerance, religious-based violence, and social disintegration that have the potential to threaten national unity. In such a situation, Islam Nusantara presents itself as a model of Islam that emphasizes the values of moderation, tolerance, and local wisdom in understanding and practicing Islamic teachings. Thus, the integration of peace education and the perspective of Islam Nusantara is a strategic step to internalize the values of peace into the Islamic education system in Indonesia (Azra, 2020; Rahman, 2023).

Conceptually, peace education has strong roots in humanistic educational philosophy. It emphasizes the development of human potential to think critically, empathize, and be able to resolve conflicts constructively without violence (Reardon, 2018). Reardon argues that peace education is not merely teaching about peace, but rather a process of transforming values and behaviors towards a culture of peace. This process requires an inclusive and dialogical educational environment, where students can learn to respect differences, understand diversity, and build solidarity across identities. In this context, the Islam Nusantara approach is relevant because it is rooted in a long history of interaction between Islamic teachings and local cultures that emphasize social harmony and respect for differences (Sahal & Aziz, 2015).

Islam Nusantara is not a new sect or school of thought in Islam, but rather a perspective that places Islam as a teaching that is contextual to the culture and traditions of Indonesian society. According to Hasyim (2016), Islam Nusantara grew out of a spirit of gentle preaching, accommodating local culture and avoiding a confrontational approach. Islamic scholars who spread Islam in the archipelago, such as the Walisongo, taught Islam through cultural approaches, education, and moral examples, rather than through violence or coercion. This approach fostered the values of peace and harmony that became the foundation of Islamic civilization in Indonesia. Thus, the perspective of Islam Nusantara has strong relevance to peace education, as both teach respect for differences, social justice, and peaceful conflict resolution (Murtadho, 2021).

In Islamic education, the application of the principles of peace education and Islam Nusantara can be done through the integration of the values of religious moderation (*wasathiyah*), tolerance (*tasamuh*), and balance between faith and reason (*tawazun*). Islamic education not only functions as a means of transmitting knowledge, but also as a vehicle for shaping a peaceful character () rooted in Islamic values. This is in line with the views of Nasir and Wibowo (2021) that contextual Islamic education must be able to internalize peaceful cultural values in its curriculum and learning practices. In this case, Islam Nusantara can be an epistemological paradigm for developing an Islamic education model that emphasizes justice, compassion, and respect for diversity.

The results of a review of ten related journal articles show a consistent view that peace education cannot be separated from the cultural and religious context of a society. For example, a study by Abadi (2017) highlights how Islamic boarding schools, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, play a strategic role in instilling values of peace through learning based on local wisdom. Pesantren are not only places to study religious knowledge, but also social spaces where students learn to respect differences, develop empathy, and build social solidarity. The values taught in pesantren, such as

tawadhu' (humility), tasamuh (tolerance), and ta'awun (cooperation), are in fact manifestations of the principles of peace education that are contextual to the Islamic culture of the Indonesian archipelago.

In addition, research by Aini (2022) shows that peace education in the context of Islam can be strengthened through a culture-based curriculum approach. According to her, a curriculum that combines local values and Islamic teachings can create a more grounded awareness of peace. This approach not only instills the concept of peace theoretically but also fosters a peaceful attitude that is reflected in the social behavior of students. In the Indonesian context, this can be realized through the strengthening of character education based on the values of Islam Nusantara, such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and respect for parents and teachers. These values contribute to the formation of a culture of peace in schools and communities (Fauzan, 2020).

Another study by Murtadho (2021) emphasizes that Islam Nusantara teaches the principle of balance between religiosity and humanity. In this framework, Islamic teachings are understood not only in terms of rituals but also in social and moral dimensions. Values such as rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy for all creation), ukhuwah insaniyah (human brotherhood), and social justice are important foundations in peace education. If these values are integrated into education, then the learning process is no longer merely a transfer of knowledge, but also a moral transformation towards a peaceful and civilized society. This approach is also in line with Smith's (2020) idea that peace education is effective when contextualized according to the local values that exist in society.

Furthermore, research by Siregar (2023) reveals that tolerance education in Indonesian schools still faces various challenges, especially in terms of consistent curriculum implementation and social environment support. One of the solutions offered is to adopt the values of Islam Nusantara in learning activities and extracurricular activities, so that students can directly practice the principles of peace and moderation in their daily lives. In Siregar's view, Islam Nusantara has great potential to become a model for peaceful character education because its values are born from the pluralistic and religious social reality of Indonesia.

From the various results of these studies, it can be seen that peace education is not only related to the delivery of teaching materials, but also to the creation of an inclusive and humanistic learning environment. Teachers and educators have an important role as peace educators who not only transfer knowledge, but also exemplify peaceful attitudes and behaviors (Salomon & Cairns, 2010). In the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, the role of madrasah teachers, Islamic boarding school teachers, and Islamic university lecturers is very strategic in building peace awareness based on the values of Islam Nusantara. Their exemplary moderate, fair, and respectful attitudes towards differences are a tangible form of peace education implementation.

In practice, the application of peace education based on Islam Nusantara can be realized through various strategies. First, the integration of peace values into the Islamic education curriculum, for example in the teaching of morals, fiqh, and Islamic cultural history. Second, the implementation of co-curricular activities such as interfaith dialogue, social service, and cultural discussions involving various religious groups. Third, developing a school culture that respects diversity, through the "Peaceful School" program that promotes empathetic communication and non-violent conflict resolution (Rahman, 2023). This strategy is in line with Harris' (2014) finding that effective peace education must be participatory and community-based.

However, the implementation of Islam Nusantara-based peace education is not without challenges. One of them is the narrow view of the concept of Islam Nusantara, which is considered to deviate from universal Islamic teachings. In fact, as explained by Azra (2020), Islam Nusantara is actually a local expression of universal Islam that adapts to the culture of the community without changing the substance of its teachings. Another challenge is the lack of understanding among teachers regarding peace education methodology. Many educators still view peace education as an additional subject, rather than an integral approach in the entire learning process (Abadi, 2017). This shows the need for training and capacity building for teachers so that they are able to implement peace education effectively.

In addition, social environmental factors also influence the effectiveness of peace education. In societies that are still vulnerable to issues of intolerance and religious-based violence, peace education needs the support of all elements of society. Families, religious institutions, and the mass media must

play an active role in instilling the values of peace and tolerance. As stated by Krippendorff (2019), the process of values education will not be successful without consistency between the messages taught in school and the social realities experienced by students in their daily lives. Therefore, synergy between formal and non-formal education is key to building a culture of peace in Indonesia.

Islamic-based peace education in the archipelago also has a deep philosophical dimension. It is not merely a pedagogical strategy, but also the actualization of universal Islamic ethics. Values such as *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawassuth* (moderation), *adl* (justice), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) are basic principles taught by Islam and passed down by the traditions of the Nusantara scholars. Within the framework of Islam Nusantara, these values are translated into social and cultural practices that are unique to Indonesia, such as deliberation, mutual cooperation, and mutual respect among religious communities. Therefore, peace education based on Islam Nusantara is not merely an adaptation of Western concepts, but a development of the local wisdom of Indonesian Islam itself (Fauzan, 2020; Hasyim, 2016).

Furthermore, peace education and Islam Nusantara play an important role in shaping a peaceful national consciousness. In the pluralistic context of Indonesia, both can be a means to strengthen the values of Pancasila and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Islam Nusantara teaches that Islam and Indonesianness are not two conflicting things, but two complementary sides. Thus, Islam Nusantara-based peace education can strengthen social integration and prevent horizontal conflicts caused by differences in ethnicity, religion, race, and class (Moleong, 2019). This integration is particularly relevant amid globalization and digitalization, which bring new challenges to national social cohesion.

Finally, from all the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that peace education and Islam Nusantara have a symbiotic relationship that strengthens each other. Islam Nusantara provides a theological and cultural basis for peace education in Indonesia, while peace education is a means to actualize the values of Islam Nusantara in real life. The integration of the two is not only important for Islamic education but also for the development of a peaceful and just nation. With a contextual, humanistic, and inclusive approach, Islam Nusantara-based peace education has great potential to become an alternative education model in the Islamic world that can respond to the challenges of the times while strengthening the identity of the Indonesian nation (Rahman, 2023; Smith, 2020).

Conclusion

This study confirms that peace education and the Islamic perspective of the Indonesian archipelago are substantially interrelated and complementary in shaping a moderate, inclusive, and universal humanistic paradigm of Islamic education. Peace education not only serves as an instrument to prevent conflict but also as a process of cultivating values of compassion, empathy, and social justice. These values are strongly relevant to the principles of Islam Nusantara, which emphasize *tawassuth* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *i'tidal* (justice).

The results of the study show that Islam Nusantara can serve as a moral, theological, and cultural foundation for strengthening peace education in Indonesia. Through the integration of Islam Nusantara values and the principles of peace education, an Islamic education model can be developed that is adaptive to the socio-cultural context of Indonesia while remaining grounded in the universal teachings of Islam, which is *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a blessing for all creation). This model not only strengthens the character of students to be more tolerant and open to differences, but also contributes to the formation of a culture of peace in a multicultural society.

In addition, this study also emphasizes the importance of repositioning the role of Islamic educational institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasas, as agents of peace that instill values of tolerance, dialogue, and respect for diversity. By integrating the Islam Nusantara approach into the peace education curriculum, these institutions can become the driving force in building a harmonious, just, and civilized society.

From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the field of Islamic education by strengthening the conceptual basis of peace education rooted in local wisdom and Islamic values. Meanwhile, from a practical perspective, the results of this study can be used as a reference for educators, policymakers, and educational institutions in designing learning programs that systematically instill the values of peace and religious moderation.

Finally, it can be concluded that the synergy between peace education and the Islamic Nusantara perspective is a strategic step in developing humanistic, contextual, and sustainable Islamic education. This effort also contributes significantly to strengthening the nation's cultural resilience and realizing peace rooted in the spiritual, moral, and social values of Indonesian society.

Based on the findings, this study recommends several concrete steps. First, the government and educational institutions need to strengthen policies that support the integration of Islam Nusantara-based peace education into the national education system. Second, training needs to be provided for teachers and educators to improve their understanding of the values of moderation and local wisdom in learning. Third, further research using an empirical approach is highly recommended to test the effectiveness of implementing Islam Nusantara-based peace education in enhancing tolerance and social harmony in educational settings.

References

- Abadi, M. (2017). Islam Nusantara and Peace Education in Islamic Boarding Schools. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(2), 112–125.
- Aini, R. (2022). Integrating Peace Education in Islamic Curriculum: A Cultural Approach. *Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, 9(1), 34–49.
- Azra, A. (2020). Islam Nusantara: A Cultural Expression of Universal Islam. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 14(2), 201–218.
- Bar-Tal, D. (2013). *Intractable Conflicts: Socio-Psychological Foundations and Dynamics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Fauzan, M. (2020). Religious Moderation in the Perspective of Islam Nusantara. *Al-Qalam*, 27(3), 305–320.
- Harris, I. (2014). *Peace Education Theory and Practice*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Hasyim, M. (2016). Islamic Values of the Archipelago in Multicultural Education. *Al-Tarbiyah Journal*, 5(1), 44–59.
- Krippendorff, K. (2019). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Moleong, L. J. (2019). *Qualitative Research Methodology*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Murtadho, A. (2021). Islam Nusantara as a Peaceful Paradigm in Indonesian Islam. *Journal of Social Religion*, 12(2), 88–104.
- Nasir, M., & Wibowo, S. (2021). Integrating Local Wisdom in Islamic Education for Peaceful Coexistence. *Journal of Peace Studies*, 10(3), 221–239.
- Rahman, F. (2023). Education for Peace in Islamic Context: The Case of Indonesia. *Journal of Moral and Civic Education*, 8(1), 1–18.
- Reardon, B. (2018). *Comprehensive Peace Education: Educating for Global Responsibility*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Salomon, G., & Cairns, E. (2010). *Handbook on Peace Education*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Sahal, M., & Aziz, A. (2015). *Islam Nusantara: From Cultural Islam to Islamic Civilization*. Jakarta: LP3ES.
- Smith, C. (2020). Teaching Peace in Plural Societies: Lessons from Southeast Asia. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 25(4), 142–157.
- Siregar, N. (2023). Religious Tolerance Education in Indonesian Schools. *Journal of Character Education*, 13(2), 78–94.
- Sugiyono. (2021). *Qualitative Research Methods*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Zed, M. (2014). *Library Research Methods*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia