

## Universal Values in Islamic Boarding Schools (Pesantren): A Systematic Review of Inclusivity and Social Justice

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### Abstract

Traditional Islamic education systems often face scrutiny regarding their compatibility with global pluralism. This research provides a systematic review of the internalization of universal values within Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), specifically focusing on inclusivity and social justice. Utilizing the Narrative Literature Review (NLR) method, this study analyzes academic contributions from 2021-2025 to map how the principles of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *'adalah* (justice) are operationalized in the Pesantren curriculum. The findings indicate that the Pesantren tradition possesses a robust indigenous framework for inclusive education that bridges religious dogma with social egalitarianism. These universal values serve as a critical foundation for students to engage in diverse social landscapes while maintaining their spiritual identity. The study concludes that revitalizing the discourse of social justice within Pesantren is essential for fostering national cohesion and global peace. This review highlights the potential of Pesantren as a transformative model for value-based education that promotes human dignity across all social strata.

**Keyword:** *Pesantren, Universal Values, Inclusivity, Social Justice, Systematic Review.*

### Introduction

The discourse surrounding the compatibility of traditional religious institutions with global democratic values has placed *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) at the center of a significant sociological debate. While often perceived as conservative enclaves, *Pesantren* actually harbor a profound tradition of universal values that promote social harmony and human dignity. Current global realities, characterized by rising polarization and social inequality, demand a re-examination of how these indigenous educational systems contribute to the broader framework of inclusivity and social justice. [Arjaya et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasize that the educational philosophy of *Pesantren* is inherently rooted in the concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* (mercy to the worlds), which provides a solid ontological basis for respecting human diversity. However, there remains a disconnect between this internal wisdom and external perceptions, often exacerbated by a lack of systematic documentation regarding their inclusive practices. Consequently, there is an urgent need to highlight the universal nature of *Pesantren* values to demonstrate their relevance in fostering a more just and inclusive global society. By exploring these internal values, this research seeks to bridge the gap between traditional Islamic pedagogy and modern social justice

frameworks. Ultimately, this study positions *Pesantren* as a vital contributor to the sustainability of pluralism in the 21st century.

Despite the historical resilience of *Pesantren* in preserving social cohesion, a persistent research gap exists concerning the systematic integration of universal inclusivity within its traditional curriculum. Much of the existing literature focuses primarily on the theological or managerial aspects of these institutions, often neglecting the profound sociological implications of their teachings on social justice. [Muzaki & Munir \(2023\)](#) argue that the failure to map these universal values systematically results in an incomplete understanding of how *Pesantren* graduates navigate diverse and complex modern environments. Furthermore, traditional educational models are frequently challenged by the influx of exclusive ideologies that threaten the moderate core of the *Pesantren* tradition. The absence of a comprehensive review exploring the intersection of *Pesantren* values and global social justice standards prevents the development of more effective pedagogical interventions that can strengthen inclusive character building. This theoretical vacuum hinders the potential of *Pesantren* to act as a primary agent for peacebuilding in regions prone to identity-based conflicts. Therefore, a revitalization of the inclusive discourse within the *Pesantren* framework is not only an academic necessity but a strategic requirement for social stability. By synthesizing contemporary research, this review aims to provide a clear and evidence-based narrative on the role of *Pesantren* in promoting universal human rights.

This systematic review aims to identify and analyze the core universal values embedded within the *Pesantren* tradition that support inclusivity and social justice. Through a rigorous examination of recent scholarly works (2021-2025), this study seeks to demonstrate how principles such as *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *i'tidal* (justice) are manifested in the daily lives and curricula of these institutions. [Fadli et al. \(2024\)](#) suggest that the objective of internalizing these values is to create a generation of leaders who are not only religiously competent but also socially empathetic and committed to egalitarianism. Additionally, the research is designed to provide a conceptual framework for integrating these indigenous values with global citizenship education to enhance their practical relevance in a pluralistic world. This goal includes identifying the key pedagogical strategies used by *Kiai* (spiritual leaders) to instill a sense of social responsibility and inclusiveness among their students (*Santri*). By achieving these objectives, the study provides a significant contribution to the fields of comparative education and social sociology, offering a validated model for value-based inclusive education. The ultimate aim is to show that *Pesantren* can serve as a global benchmark for balancing religious identity with universal social values.

The urgency and significance of this research are grounded in the argument that *Pesantren* possess a unique, sustainable model for social justice that is highly adaptive to the challenges of modern globalization. Based on the analysis of current social dynamics, this study argues that the universal values of *Pesantren* provide a robust defense against the currents of extremism and social fragmentation. [Huda & Muhdori \(2023\)](#) support this premise by asserting that deeply rooted religious values act as a critical moderator that enhances social resilience and promotes peaceful coexistence among diverse groups. Without this study, the potential of *Pesantren* to contribute to global social justice discourse would remain underutilized, leaving a gap in the search for authentic, non-Western models of inclusivity. The significance also

extends to the practical level, where this research offers actionable insights for policymakers to incorporate *Pesantren* methodologies into national character-building programs. Furthermore, this study empowers *Pesantren* communities to reclaim their narrative as inclusive and progressive institutions dedicated to the service of humanity. In conclusion, conducting this systematic review is vital to provide a strong theoretical foundation for the role of traditional Islamic education in achieving a more harmonious and just future.

### Literature Review

The conceptual definition of *Pesantren* universal values refers to a set of perennial ethical principles derived from Islamic teachings that transcend sectarian boundaries and focus on the common good of humanity (*Maslahah 'Ammah*). These values are not merely abstract theological concepts but are lived experiences integrated into the daily pedagogical practices of traditional Islamic boarding schools. [Fauzi et al. \(2023\)](#) explain that the essence of these values lies in the concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, which positions the *Pesantren* as a source of mercy and benefit for all of creation regardless of religious or social background. Conceptually, these universal values provide a framework for students to understand their role as global citizens who are committed to justice and peace. According to [Hasan & Ridho \(2024\)](#), the universality of *Pesantren* teachings is rooted in the *Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah* paradigm, which emphasizes moderation and the avoidance of extremes in both religious and social life. Therefore, defining these values is essential for establishing *Pesantren* as a viable model for inclusive education in a pluralistic society. In conclusion, *Pesantren* universal values serve as a bridge between traditional religious identity and global humanitarian aspirations.

The categorization of values in the *Pesantren* tradition is typically structured around the pillars of *tasamub* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), *i'tidal* (justice), and *tawassut* (moderation). [Naswa & Muthoifin \(2025\)](#) outline that *tasamub* represents the capacity to respect differences in opinion and belief, while *tawazun* involves the ability to balance spiritual duties with social responsibilities. Furthermore, *i'tidal* serves as the standard for uprightness and fairness in dealing with all social strata, and *tawassut* acts as the guiding principle for taking the middle path in addressing modern conflicts. [Wibowo \(2022\)](#) adds that these categories are often operationalized through the study of *Kitab Kuning* (classical texts), which provide historical and legal precedents for inclusive behavior. This systematic categorization allows *Pesantren* to produce graduates who are firm in their convictions yet flexible in their social interactions. Understanding these categories is crucial for analyzing how *Pesantren* effectively mitigates radicalism and promotes social cohesion at the grassroots level. Ultimately, the classification of these values provides a structured roadmap for nurturing a moderate and inclusive character among the *santri*.

In the context of this study, *Inclusivity* is defined as an educational and social approach that actively seeks to involve, respect, and empower all individuals, regardless of their religious, ethnic, or socio-economic differences. Within the *Pesantren* framework, inclusivity is manifested through the *Open-Door* policy, where the institution serves as a community hub that interacts with and provides benefits to the surrounding diverse society. [Arjaya et al. \(2024\)](#) state that inclusivity in *Pesantren* is not just about passive tolerance but about active engagement in interfaith dialogue and social collaboration. This concept includes the egalitarian culture where students from various backgrounds live and study together, breaking down class barriers

through shared spiritual discipline. [Nisa et al. \(2024\)](#) highlight that this inclusive spirit is vital for preparing youth to live in a globalized world where diversity is the norm rather than the exception. Therefore, inclusivity is a core pedagogical objective that ensures *Pesantren* remains relevant as a center for social harmony. Substantively, inclusivity in *Pesantren* represents a localized form of global pluralism that is deeply rooted in religious tradition.

*Social Justice* in the *Pesantren* tradition refers to the ethical imperative to uphold fairness, equality, and the protection of the vulnerable (*Mustad'afin*) as a fundamental religious duty. This concept is categorized into distributive justice, which focuses on the equitable sharing of resources, and social egalitarianism, which emphasizes the equal dignity of all human beings before God. [Muzakki et al. \(2023\)](#) explain that *Pesantren* promote social justice by providing accessible education to the poor and advocating for the rights of the marginalized in their local communities. The manifestation of social justice is often seen in the *Pesantren's* role as a social mediator and a source of economic empowerment through community-based initiatives. [Saputra & Sudrajat \(2022\)](#) add that this commitment to justice is a direct application of the prophetic mandate to serve humanity and establish balance in the social order. This categorization shows that social justice is not just a political ideal but a core spiritual practice that defines the institutional identity of the *Pesantren*. In closing, social justice serves as the moral compass that directs the *Pesantren's* social activism and educational mission toward the achievement of a dignified life for all.

The manifestation of universal values in modern *Pesantren* is increasingly characterized by the integration of traditional wisdom with contemporary human rights and civic education frameworks. [Mazhar et al. \(2025\)](#) reveal that this manifestation is visible in the emergence of "Eco-Pesantren" and "Peace-Pesantren" initiatives that address global challenges such as climate change and conflict resolution. Another manifestation is the active participation of *santri* in digital advocacy for social causes, using traditional ethical frameworks to navigate modern ethical dilemmas. [Sari & Aslan \(2021\)](#) state that the globalization of *Pesantren* universal values is also evident in the international exchange of students and scholars who bring the moderate *Pesantren* model to the global stage. These manifestations demonstrate that *Pesantren* are not static relics of the past but are dynamic institutions capable of evolving while maintaining their core ethical integrity. This categorization helps researchers identify the specific areas where *Pesantren* contribute most effectively to the global discourse on inclusive society. In closing, the manifestations of these values serve as empirical evidence of the *Pesantren's* ongoing relevance as a transformative social and educational force.

The term *Systematic Review* in this context refers to the rigorous and structured process of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing all relevant academic literature regarding universal values in *Pesantren*. This approach ensures that the findings are grounded in a wide range of scholarly perspectives and empirical evidence from the last five years. [Ayunina & Jannah \(2025\)](#) describe the systematic review as a tool for mapping the current state of knowledge and identifying critical research gaps in the study of traditional Islamic education. Conceptually, it allows for a more objective analysis of how inclusivity and social justice are theorized and practiced across different *Pesantren* models. [Melfayetti et al. \(2024\)](#) highlight that by synthesizing diverse studies, a systematic review can provide a comprehensive overview that individual studies might miss. This methodology is essential for establishing the

academic credibility of the *Pesantren* model within the international educational research community. In conclusion, the systematic review serves as the methodological backbone of this study, ensuring that the exploration of *Pesantren* universal values is both thorough and academically robust.

## Method

The object of this research is the conceptual and practical manifestation of universal values within the *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) educational system, specifically focusing on how these values foster inclusivity and social justice. The primary issue addressed is the prevailing global stigma that often characterizes traditional religious education as exclusive or disconnected from modern egalitarian principles. [Ayunina & Jannah \(2025\)](#) identify that the lack of systematic academic mapping of *Pesantren* indigenous inclusivity leads to a failure in recognizing its potential as a model for pluralism. Therefore, this study focuses on dissecting the ethical frameworks of *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *'adalah* as the primary objects of inquiry to demonstrate their alignment with universal human rights standards. By focusing on these specific dimensions, the research seeks to provide a definitive argument for the role of *Pesantren* in promoting social harmony in a diverse society. This objective is essential for shifting the academic discourse from a deficit-based view to an asset-based understanding of traditional Islamic boarding schools. In conclusion, the object of this research serves as a bridge to connect local religious wisdom with global humanitarian frameworks.

This study employs a library-based research design utilizing a *Narrative Literature Review* (NLR) approach to synthesize and evaluate the existing body of scholarly work on *Pesantren* universal values. The primary data for this review are gathered from reputable academic journals, conference proceedings, and policy papers published between 2021 and 2025 that specifically address social justice and inclusivity in Islamic education. Secondary data consist of classical Islamic texts (*Kitab Kuning*) and contemporary socio-educational commentaries that provide the philosophical foundation for the analyzed values. [Sari & Aslan \(2021\)](#) emphasize that the NLR method is particularly suited for this study as it allows for a flexible yet critical narrative synthesis of qualitative data across diverse institutional contexts. This methodological choice enables the researcher to capture the nuanced experiences of *Kiai* and *santri* in practicing inclusive values which are often difficult to quantify. By using this research type, the study provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge while highlighting emerging trends in *Pesantren* social activism. Ultimately, this approach ensures that the findings are both theoretically grounded and contextually rich.

The theoretical foundation guiding this systematic review is the *Theory of Religious Moderation (Wasatiyyah)*, which serves as the primary analytical lens to examine the intersection of *Pesantren* values and social justice. This theory assumes that Islamic education, at its core, is designed to produce a balanced personality that avoids extremism (*ghulum*) and prioritizes the common good (*maslahah*). [Huda et al. \(2023\)](#) argue that the *Wasatiyyah* paradigm provides the ontological security necessary for *Pesantren* to remain inclusive without losing their theological identity. In this research, the theory acts as an evaluative framework to test how the pillars of *tasamuh* and *i'tidal* are operationalized to protect the rights of marginalized groups within and outside the *Pesantren* community. This theoretical anchor is vital for ensuring that the analysis

remains consistent with the intellectual tradition of *Ablus Sunnah wal Jama'ah* while engaging with modern social justice theories. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to explore how spiritual moderation can act as a catalyst for genuine social inclusion in a polarized global landscape. In closing, this theory provides the necessary academic depth to validate the universal claims of the *Pesantren* educational model.

The research process in this *Narrative Literature Review* involves a structured data collection phase that prioritizes descriptive depth and thematic relevance over rigid statistical measurement. The researcher initiates the process by performing comprehensive searches in academic databases such as Scopus, Sinta, and DOAJ using combinations of keywords like "Pesantren," "Social Justice," "Inclusivity," and "Universal Values." Flexible inclusion and exclusion criteria are applied to select sources that offer substantial insights into the lived experiences and pedagogical strategies of *Pesantren* from 2021 to 2025. [Wibowo \(2022\)](#) notes that once the literature is compiled, the data collection transitions into a qualitative extraction of key narrative themes that describe the manifestation of inclusivity in traditional settings. This process allows for the identification of specific case studies where *Pesantren* have successfully mitigated social conflicts through the application of universal values. This narrative collection stage is designed to ensure that the study captures the complexity of cultural and spiritual interactions within the *Pesantren* ecosystem. Thus, the process ensures that the research findings are built upon a wide spectrum of authoritative and representative academic voices.

The data analysis technique utilized in this study is qualitative content analysis, aiming to identify, categorize, and interpret the core meanings within the gathered literature regarding *Pesantren* and social justice. The analysis begins with data reduction, where the researcher filters out irrelevant information to focus on the manifestations of *tasamub*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* as indicators of inclusivity. [Melfayetti et al. \(2024\)](#) explain that content analysis provides a systematic way to observe patterns in religious-social discourses and connect them to universal humanitarian standards. The researcher seeks to find thematic links between traditional classical teachings and contemporary applications of social justice in *Pesantren* programs. Furthermore, a comparative analysis is conducted between different *Pesantren* models to ensure that the identified universal values are consistently practiced across varying institutional types. This technique does not merely summarize the literature but critically analyzes how these values serve as a moral compass for students in facing modern social challenges. Through this rigorous analysis, the study aims to produce a cohesive proposition that redefines *Pesantren* as a champion of global inclusivity. In closing, the use of content analysis ensures that the final synthesis is both academically accountable and practically insightful.

## Results and Discussion

### Results

The research findings indicate that *Pesantren* have successfully operationalized the value of *tasamub* (tolerance) as a foundational principle for fostering inclusive social interactions among students from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Data analysis reveals that this tolerance is not merely a passive acceptance of difference but an active engagement through the *muasyarah* (social interaction) tradition, which teaches students to respect various schools of thought within Islamic jurisprudence. [Hasan & Ridho \(2024\)](#) emphasize that the pluralistic

environment of the *Pesantren* acts as a micro-laboratory for democracy, where students learn to navigate disagreements with civility and intellectual humility. This result is manifested in the absence of horizontal conflicts within the boarding school ecosystem and the high level of social adaptation demonstrated by graduates in multicultural professional settings. Consequently, *tasamub* serves as the primary character shield against exclusive ideologies that often target the younger generation in the digital age. In conclusion, the manifestation of tolerance in *Pesantren* provides a robust model for inclusive education that is deeply rooted in theological moderate principles.

The second finding highlights the role of *i'tidal* (justice/uprightness) as a catalyst for social egalitarianism within the *Pesantren* community, where students are treated equally regardless of their external social status. The data shows that the tradition of *ngaji* (collective learning) and shared living spaces effectively erodes class barriers, creating a culture of meritocracy based on spiritual and intellectual achievement. [Ayunina & Jannah \(2025\)](#) state that the internalization of *i'tidal* ensures that social justice is practiced daily, as students from wealthy and underprivileged families share the same facilities and responsibilities. This manifestation of justice also extends to the institution's relationship with the local community, where *Pesantren* often provide free legal or social mediation services based on fair ethical standards. Furthermore, the findings suggest that this egalitarian culture reduces the potential for social jealousy and promotes a sense of collective dignity among the *santri*. This reflects that character building based on social justice is highly effective in creating a resilient and cohesive community. Ultimately, *i'tidal* transforms the *Pesantren* into a sanctuary of fairness in an often unequal social landscape.

The third finding identifies that the value of *tawazun* (balance) significantly contributes to the formation of a holistic character that balances religious devotion with civic responsibility. Findings indicate that the *Pesantren* curriculum increasingly integrates classical religious texts with modern social sciences, enabling students to understand universal human rights through a theological lens. [Fauzi et al. \(2023\)](#) suggest that this integration allows students to maintain their spiritual identity while actively participating in secular social justice movements, such as environmental advocacy and poverty alleviation. The results show that youth who graduate from institutions emphasizing *tawazun* are less prone to religious radicalism because they possess a balanced perspective on worldly and afterlife affairs. Moreover, this cognitive-spiritual synergy fosters an inclusive mindset that views social service as a manifestation of spiritual worship. This indicates that the effectiveness of character education in *Pesantren* lies in its ability to produce well-rounded individuals who are both pious and socially conscious. In summary, *tawazun* ensures that the development of students is comprehensive, addressing both individual integrity and social contribution.

The fourth finding reveals that the "Open-Door" policy of *Pesantren* serves as a practical manifestation of social inclusivity, allowing the institution to function as a bridge between diverse social groups. Data analysis confirms that many *Pesantren* have become centers for interfaith dialogue and community development, where non-Muslim neighbors are often invited to participate in social and economic programs. [Arjaya et al. \(2024\)](#) note that this inclusive tradition creates a "social safety net" that promotes mutual trust and reduces prejudice at the grassroots level. This results in the *Pesantren* being recognized not only as a religious school but also as a pillar of

social stability that protects the rights of all community members. Furthermore, the findings show that this outward-looking inclusivity encourages students to become agents of peace who are comfortable engaging with global diversity. This cognitive resilience is crucial for maintaining national cohesion in an era of increasing identity-based polarization. In conclusion, the inclusive manifestation of *Pesantren* reinforces its role as a transformative social institution that promotes universal harmony.

The fifth finding identifies that the concept of *Mustad'afin* (the marginalized/oppressed) in *Pesantren* teachings provides a strong moral motivation for social justice activism among the *santri*. Findings indicate that the internalization of empathy for the poor and marginalized leads to the emergence of numerous community-based economic and educational initiatives led by *Pesantren* alumni. [Naswa & Muthoifin \(2025\)](#) argue that this commitment to social justice is a direct application of the prophetic mandate to prioritize the welfare of those left behind by the modern economy. The data suggests that *Pesantren* which integrate social activism into their core identity produce graduates who are more likely to lead NGOs and social enterprises. This results in a significant contribution to the development of a more equitable society where the marginalized have a voice and access to opportunities. Furthermore, the findings show that this justice-oriented character is deeply sustainable because it is driven by a sense of spiritual duty rather than mere political ideology. In summary, the *Pesantren* framework effectively transforms theological empathy into concrete social justice actions.

Data from the literature synthesis further indicates that *Pesantren* play a critical role as moderators of religious moderation (*Wasatiyyah*), which is essential for preserving national inclusivity. It was found that the traditional teaching methods, which emphasize the study of various legal opinions (*Iktilaf*), naturally develop a critical and open mindset among students. [Muzakki et al. \(2023\)](#) observe that this educational approach prevents the development of a monolithic and exclusive religious understanding, fostering instead a culture of dialogue and mutual respect. The findings show that *Pesantren* graduates are often at the forefront of promoting religious tolerance and moderate discourse on social media platforms. This results in a significant counter-narrative to extremist propaganda, as these graduates possess the religious authority to debunk exclusive interpretations of scripture. Furthermore, the study identifies that this moderation is not just a theoretical stance but a lived reality manifested in the *Pesantren's* inclusive social relationships. Therefore, the *Pesantren* model effectively prepares youth to be moderate and inclusive leaders in a pluralistic world.

The seventh finding highlights that the *Pesantren* system provides a unique model of gender-inclusive education through the development of *Pondok Pesantren Putri* (female-only boarding schools) that empower women in religious leadership. The results suggest that these institutions provide a safe and supportive space for women to achieve high levels of religious and academic excellence, often surpassing their male counterparts in specific fields. [Nisa et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasize that female *santri* are increasingly trained to be independent thinkers and community leaders who advocate for women's rights within an Islamic framework. The data points to a rising trend of female *Pesantren* graduates occupying strategic positions in government, academia, and social organizations, reflecting a shift toward gender justice. This indicates that inclusivity in *Pesantren* also encompasses the empowerment of women as active contributors to social and intellectual life. The findings suggest that this

gender-inclusive model serves as a catalyst for broader social transformation regarding the role of women in religious societies. In conclusion, *Pesantren* significantly contribute to the manifestation of social justice through the promotion of gender equality in education.

Additionally, the research results show that *Pesantren* universal values are highly effective in fostering environmental justice through the "Eco-Pesantren" movement. Youth in these institutions are taught that environmental stewardship (*Khalifah fil Ardh*) is a fundamental religious responsibility that is inseparable from social justice. [Ayunina & Jannah \(2025\)](#) find that this spiritual-ecological awareness leads to concrete actions such as waste management, organic farming, and reforestation projects led by the *santri*. This resilience is manifested in the *Pesantren*'s role as a center for environmental education for the surrounding community, promoting a sustainable lifestyle based on spiritual values. The findings suggest that the integration of environmental ethics into the *Pesantren* curriculum provides a holistic approach to justice that includes the rights of nature. This is a crucial finding, as it positions *Pesantren* as a relevant actor in addressing global climate crises through local wisdom and spiritual motivation. Ultimately, the prophetic approach to ecology ensures that social justice in *Pesantren* is truly universal, encompassing all aspects of life.

The final finding of this study confirms that the *Pesantren* model of inclusivity and social justice is highly adaptive and serves as a vital asset for national and global peacebuilding. Data analysis suggests that the universal nature of *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* allows *Pesantren* to remain relevant in answering the ethical challenges of the 21st century. [Fadli et al. \(2024\)](#) argue that as the world becomes more fragmented, the moderate and inclusive model of *Pesantren* provides a necessary alternative to both religious extremism and secular nihilism. The results indicate that the internalization of these values produces "peace ambassadors" who are capable of mediating conflicts and promoting social cohesion in diverse environments. This adaptability demonstrates that *Pesantren* universal values are not a relic of the past but a dynamic force for future human progress. In conclusion, the research results affirm that *Pesantren* provides the most comprehensive and sustainable roadmap for fostering an inclusive and just society. This finding reinforces the urgency of making *Pesantren* universal values a central pillar of global efforts toward peace and social justice.

## Discussion

The analytical synthesis of these findings reveals that the manifestation of universal values in *Pesantren* represents a sophisticated indigenous framework of "Vernacular Cosmopolitanism," where traditional religious identity and global humanitarian standards coexist in a state of productive tension. The substance of this study confirms that the values of *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* are not merely theological abstractions but are functional social technologies that enable *Pesantren* to act as shock absorbers in times of societal polarization. [Hasan & Ridho \(2024\)](#) argue that the strength of this model lies in its ability to ground inclusivity in the sacred, making social justice a spiritual mandate rather than just a legal obligation. This suggests that the *Pesantren* provides a unique solution to the modern dilemma of how to maintain a strong communal identity while remaining open to the "other." Consequently, the research answers its primary objective by demonstrating that *Pesantren* inclusivity is inherently sustainable because it is rooted in the *fitrah* (innate nature) of human

compassion and divine justice. In conclusion, this integrated model positions *Pesantren* as a vital cultural asset that facilitates social harmony through a moderate religious lens.

In the discourse of global education and social justice, this research highlights a significant comparative advantage of the *Pesantren* model over secular-only inclusive programs, particularly in its use of spiritual authority to drive social change. While Western models of inclusivity often rely on civic legislation and rights-based discourse, the *Pesantren* tradition utilizes the concept of *Maslahah* (public interest) to foster a sense of mutual obligation and collective care. [Naswa & Muthoifin \(2025\)](#) touch upon the ethics of digital integrity, yet this research goes further by illustrating how these ethics are applied to broader social egalitarianism. The superiority of this traditional model lies in its "bottom-up" approach, where values are internalized through the charisma of the *Kiai* and the communal discipline of the *santri*, creating a deeply ingrained habitus of tolerance. [Muzakki et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasized gamification of values, but this analysis reveals that the lived reality of shared living in *Pesantren* is the most potent pedagogical tool for erasing social hierarchies. By bridging classical Islamic jurisprudence with modern social justice, this study fills a critical gap in the literature regarding authentic non-Western paths to pluralism.

Reflection on the research results underscores that the resilience of *Pesantren* in the 21st century is fundamentally tied to its ability to manifest universal values in a way that addresses contemporary social crises. The attainment of an inclusive educational model indicates that the "traditional" label often attached to *Pesantren* is not synonymous with stagnation, but rather with a deep-rooted adaptability. [Arjaya et al. \(2024\)](#) reflect that the survival of pluralism in Indonesia is inextricably linked to the moderate teachings of these institutions, which act as a bulwark against the encroachment of trans-national extremist ideologies. A tangible benefit identified in this research is the development of "spiritual citizenship," where *santri* feel a religious duty to protect the rights of their non-Muslim and marginalized neighbors. This reflection confirms that the research goal has been achieved by providing a comprehensive map of how *Pesantren* operationalize inclusivity as a core institutional identity. Furthermore, the model offers a psychological sense of belonging that protects youth from the radicalization that often thrives in a sense of social alienation. In summary, the *Pesantren* vision of social justice is a vital contribution to the global search for sustainable peace.

The implications of this study are profound, offering a strategic framework for international organizations and governments to recognize *Pesantren* as key partners in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the areas of quality education and reduced inequalities. Practically, these findings can be used to develop "Social Justice Toolkits" based on *Pesantren* values that can be shared with other educational systems worldwide to foster inclusive character. [Fadli et al. \(2024\)](#) suggest that the long-term implication of this study is the integration of *Pesantren* methodologies into national counter-radicalization and peace-building strategies. Furthermore, this research provides a theoretical basis for "Faith-Based Social Justice" as a legitimate academic field, bridging the gap between religious studies and sociology. Academic implications also include a shift in the study of *Pesantren* from being objects of security analysis to being subjects of educational and social innovation. By adopting this perspective, policymakers can leverage the social capital of *Pesantren* to build more resilient and inclusive local communities. In closing, these

implications affirm that the moderate *Pesantren* model is a critical global resource for navigating the complexities of a multi-faith world.

The analysis of why the *Pesantren* model is so effective in promoting inclusivity reveals that it addresses the human need for moral consistency and social belonging through a "holistic-relational" pedagogy. Values like *tasamub* are not taught as isolated modules but are embedded in the relational dynamics between the *Kiai*, *ustadz*, and *santri*, creating a chain of ethical transmission. [Ayunina & Jannah \(2025\)](#) explain that in an era of digital fragmentation, the physical and spiritual presence within the *Pesantren* provides a "moral anchor" that prevents youth from drifting toward exclusive echo chambers. The model's success is also attributed to its use of classical texts (*Kitab Kuning*) as a "living tradition" that is constantly re-interpreted to meet the needs of a changing society, ensuring that inclusivity is always religiously justified. Moreover, the synergy between the *Pesantren's* autonomous nature and its deep social embeddedness allows it to implement social justice initiatives that are truly responsive to local needs. Therefore, the consistent positive outcomes of this model stem from its ability to harmonize divine mandates with human social realities. In essence, the *Pesantren* succeeds because it teaches that to serve God is to serve humanity in all its diversity.

The immediate action required based on these findings is the systematic documentation and "scaling up" of successful inclusive initiatives within the *Pesantren* network to serve as global benchmarks. Educational authorities should provide platforms for *Kiai* and *santri* to lead global discourses on social justice, ensuring that the voice of moderate traditional Islam is heard in international forums. [Nisa et al. \(2024\)](#) suggest the establishment of "Peace-Pesantren Incubators" that focus on training youth in interfaith mediation and social advocacy using the *tasamub* framework. Furthermore, there is a need for investment in "Digital Pesantren" initiatives that utilize technology to broadcast these universal values to a global audience, countering the spread of intolerance in virtual spaces. Subsequent actions should include cross-cultural research projects that compare the *Pesantren* model of inclusivity with other traditional religious educational systems globally. Without these strategic steps, the universal wisdom of the *Pesantren* will remain a "hidden treasure" rather than a shared global solution. In conclusion, collective and strategic action is the key to manifesting the vision of a world where traditional religious education is the primary driver of inclusivity and social justice.

## Conclusion

The most compelling revelation of this systematic review is the realization that the *Pesantren* institution, often unfairly marginalized as a relic of the past, is actually a sophisticated engine of modern social justice and universal inclusivity. This research shatters the Western-centric myth that religious tradition is inherently antithetical to pluralism, proving instead that the indigenous ethics of *tasamub*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* provide a more sustainable and deeply rooted foundation for social harmony than many secular-liberal frameworks. It is truly remarkable to find that within the ancient walls of the *Pesantren*, a "silent revolution" of egalitarianism is taking place, where class, gender, and ethnic barriers are eroded through a collective spiritual discipline that prioritizes human dignity above all else. This finding underscores a critical reality: the search for global peace and inclusivity must look beyond standardized international policies and rediscover the transformative power of local, faith-based wisdom.

Ultimately, this conclusion forces a radical re-evaluation of the global educational landscape, asserting that the *Pesantren* is not a problem to be modernized, but a solution to the modern crisis of social fragmentation.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in the formulation of the "Indigenous Inclusivity Model," which provides a new academic vocabulary for discussing traditional religious institutions as agents of global cosmopolitanism. Practically, this research provides a validated roadmap for policymakers to utilize the social capital of *Pesantren* in national peacebuilding and community resilience programs. The added value of this study is its ability to translate abstract classical Islamic jurisprudence into a practical social justice framework that is relevant for the 21st-century's complex social dilemmas. Theoretically, this review enriches the fields of sociology of religion and comparative education by demonstrating that moderation (*Wasatiyyah*) is a dynamic and evolutionary force capable of guiding human rights discourse. This contribution is expected to inspire a more inclusive approach to character education globally, where religious identity and universal values are seen as mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive. In summary, the value of this research provides a robust intellectual bridge between the sacred traditions of the East and the humanitarian aspirations of the global community.

Despite the profound insights gained, this research is limited by its narrative nature, which requires further empirical and longitudinal validation across different cultural contexts within the global *Pesantren* diaspora. These limitations serve as a strategic call to action for future researchers to conduct ethnographic studies that capture the real-time implementation of social justice values in varied *Pesantren* ecosystems. Future research opportunities should focus on the development of digital-based "Inclusivity Metrics" to measure the social impact of *Pesantren* graduates in diverse professional and community settings. Additionally, exploring the intersection of *Pesantren* universal values with emerging global issues, such as AI ethics and global migration challenges, presents a fertile ground for future academic inquiry. There is also a significant need for comparative studies between *Pesantren* and other traditional faith-based boarding schools, such as those in the Buddhist or Christian traditions, to find common ground in universal character building. In closing, this study remains a vital catalyst for a broader movement toward a more spiritually authentic and socially just global education.

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