

# Recent Trends on Study of History of Islam in Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

This article explores recent developments in the study of the history of Islam in Indonesia, highlighting methodological shifts and thematic expansions among scholars. Contemporary historiography has moved beyond traditional emphases on political and institutional narratives to embrace more nuanced explorations of Islam's social, cultural, and local manifestations. Recent research reflects a paradigm shift from grand narratives toward micro-histories that capture the diverse expressions of Islam across regions. The increased utilization of local sources—such as manuscripts, colonial archives, and oral traditions—has enriched the understanding of Islamic dynamics in Indonesia. Employing interdisciplinary approaches that draw on anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies, the study of Islamic history has become more complex and inclusive. These trends not only advance academic discourse but also contribute to shaping a dynamic and context-sensitive Islamic identity within the Indonesian archipelago. This study adopts a qualitative literature review method by analyzing peer-reviewed scholarly articles published between 2015 and 2023, primarily sourced from the Scopus database. The analysis employs thematic coding to synthesize key findings across four main domains: historical foundations, Islamic organizations, education, and legal frameworks. This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of contemporary historiographical trends in the study of Islam in Indonesia.

## ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi perkembangan terkini dalam studi sejarah Islam di Indonesia, serta menyoroti pergeseran metodologis dan perluasan tematik di antara para sarjana. Historiografi kontemporer telah bergerak melampaui penekanan tradisional pada narasi politik dan kelembagaan untuk merangkul eksplorasi yang lebih bernuansa pada manifestasi sosial, budaya, dan Islam lokal. Penelitian terbaru mencerminkan pergeseran paradigma dari narasi besar ke arah sejarah mikro yang menangkap beragam ekspresi Islam di berbagai wilayah. Meningkatnya pemanfaatan sumber-sumber lokal seperti manuskrip, arsip kolonial, dan tradisi lisan, telah memperkaya pemahaman tentang dinamika Islam di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan interdisipliner yang mengacu pada antropologi, sosiologi, dan kajian budaya, studi sejarah Islam menjadi lebih kompleks dan inklusif. Tren ini tidak hanya memajukan wacana akademis tetapi juga berkontribusi dalam membentuk identitas Islam yang dinamis dan peka terhadap konteks di Indonesia. Studi ini mengadopsi metode tinjauan literatur kualitatif dengan menganalisis artikel ilmiah yang ditelaah oleh rekan sejawat yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2015 dan 2023, yang terutama bersumber dari basis data Scopus. Analisis ini menggunakan pengkodean tematik untuk mensintesis temuan-temuan utama di empat domain utama: fondasi sejarah, organisasi Islam, pendidikan, dan kerangka hukum. Pendekatan ini memungkinkan pemahaman yang komprehensif mengenai tren historiografi kontemporer dalam studi Islam di Indonesia.

## Keywords

History of Islam, Indonesia, Islamic Organizations, Islamic Movements

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## Introduction

Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, presents a unique and intricate tapestry of Islam's historical development, characterized by a rich array of local interpretations, syncretic practices, and socio-political dynamics. The presence of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago has significantly shaped not only religious identities but also cultural and political landscapes, making an in-depth study of its historical trajectory essential for understanding contemporary Indonesian society. This paper aims to explore recent trends in the history of Islam in Indonesia, contextualizing its evolution from the early centuries of contact with traders to the present day, where Islam continues to play a pivotal role in shaping national identity, politics, and cultural practices.

Islam's historical journey in Indonesia dates back to the 13th century when it began to penetrate the archipelago through trade routes primarily established by Muslim merchants from the Middle East and South Asia (Rudnycky, 2010). These traders not only facilitated commerce but also acted as cultural intermediaries, introducing aspects of Islamic belief, practice, and governance to indigenous communities. One of the earliest known Islamic kingdoms in Indonesia, the Sultanate of Samudera Pasai in Aceh, serves as an exemplary case of this early phase of Islamization, where political power became intertwined with the propagation of Islamic principles (Hamzani & Idayanti, 2024). Throughout this period, Islam's penetration into the cultural fabric of Indonesia resulted in a nuanced fusion of beliefs, as the religion adapted to the socio-political context of the region.

In examining the historical evolution of Islam in Indonesia, one can identify periods of significant change frequently influenced by both internal and external factors. The arrival of colonial powers, particularly the Dutch in the late 16th century, disrupted existing Islamic administrations, leading to resistance movements that fortified Islamic identity against colonial imposition (Kyrchanoff, 2021). Subsequently, these dynamics paved the way for the emergence of nationalist movements intertwined with Islamic reform sentiments during the early 20th century, exemplified by organizations like Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. These groups sought to modernize Islamic thought and education while addressing pressing socio-political issues of their time (Salim, 2013; Seeth, 2023). Despite their distinct approaches—where Muhammadiyah embodies modernist reformism and Nahdlatul Ulama reflects a more traditionalist stance—the two organizations have played significant roles in shaping modern Islamic identity in Indonesia and continue to exert influence on contemporary socio-political matters.

In contemporary Indonesia, the socio-political landscape is considerably more complex, marked by a potent interaction between Islamic movements and state politics. The dynamics of Islamic identity have become particularly pronounced since the end of the Suharto regime, which has witnessed a resurgence of Islamic activism and the rise of Muslim political parties (Salim, 2013). The post-Reformation period saw a more assertive public presence of Islam, manifesting in the emergence of political parties such as the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) and the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), which advocate varying interpretations of Islam and engage actively within the

governance and social debates of the country (Kyrchanoff, 2021). This engagement raises questions regarding how these movements influence public policy and the overall political landscape in Indonesia, impacting the broader discourse around national identity.

Despite extensive research on the evolution of Islam in Indonesia, there remains a critical gap in understanding how the interactions between various Islamic movements and contemporary political structures contribute to identity formation in modern society. While various studies have approached the historical development and radicalization of Islam, there remains a pressing need to unify these narratives within a coherent framework that encompasses both historical context and contemporary realities. Discussions on the growing influence of radical interpretations of Islam are often disjointed from those focusing on moderate organizations and their efforts toward fostering tolerance and pluralism (Alatas, 2019; Musahadi, 2018). This lack of integrative scholarship can lead to an oversimplified view of Islam in Indonesia as either uniformly moderate or radical, obscuring the diverse and dynamic nature of religious practice in the country.

Therefore, this paper's central aim is to analyze the landscape of Islam in Indonesia through the lens of these recent developments, focusing on how historical legacies, contemporary movements, and political dynamics intersect to shape the ongoing evolution of Islamic practice in the region. Furthermore, it seeks to illuminate the multifaceted nature of Indonesian Islam, exploring how traditional practices coexist with modern interpretations while also addressing the challenges posed by radicalism and increasing conservatism within the faith.

The paper will be structured to first provide a comprehensive overview of the historical context of Islam's arrival and establishment in Indonesia. Following this historical account, it will investigate the modern transformation of Islamic movements, examining organizations' roles in reinforcing or contesting political authority and public policy. The study will also focus on education's role, particularly the function of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) as pivotal sites for the transmission of both traditional and modern Islamic ideas (Lukens-Bull, 2008; Petru, 2020). Lastly, it will address how the political arena in Indonesia continues to shape religious discourse and identity politics, providing insight into the implications of current trends in the broader sociocultural landscape.

By dissecting these intersecting trajectories, this paper aims to contribute to the existing literature on Indonesian Islam by filling the gaps in understanding contemporary Islamic movements' impacts on Indonesian society. It will provide essential insights for policymakers, educators, and scholars interested in the complex interplay of religion and politics within one of the world's most diverse and populous Muslim countries.

## **Method**

This study adopts a qualitative literature approach to investigate the recent trends in the history of Islam in Indonesia, focusing on the themes of historical

foundations, Islamic organizations, education, and legal frameworks. The research utilizes scholarly articles published in the Scopus database from 2015 to 2023, ensuring a contemporary perspective on Islamic developments in Indonesia. The following sections outline the methodological procedures utilized in this study.

### **1. Selection of Literature**

The literature review starts by defining inclusion and exclusion criteria for effectively gathering relevant studies. Inclusion Criteria is Peer-reviewed articles focusing on the themes of historical context, contemporary Islamic organizations like Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Islamic education systems such as pesantren, and legal frameworks related to Islamic law in Indonesia will be included. Articles that provide empirical evidence, theoretical discussions, historical narratives, or case studies will also be prioritized.

The literature search will focus on using following Boolean “History of Islam AND Indonesia”, “Islam AND Dutch East Indies”, “History of Islam AND Nusantara”, “History of Islam AND Java”, “History of Islam AND Sumatra”, “History of Islam AND Sulawesi”, “History of Islam AND Maluku”, “History of Islam AND Malay Archipelago” with a specific emphasis on publications issued between 2015 and 2023.

### **2. Data Collection**

The collection of literature will be conducted through the Scopus database, which provides access to a comprehensive range of scholarly articles across multiple disciplines. The steps will involve: Conducting searches with relevant keywords and filters to retrieve studies that align with the research themes outlined; Utilizing citation tracking to identify additional relevant articles cited by or citing the retrieved literature; Collecting qualitative data through reading and analyzing the selected articles to synthesize findings pertinent to the research themes.

### **3. Data Analysis**

Analysis of the collected literature will follow qualitative content analysis methods emphasizing thematic categorization and narrative synthesis:

- a. **Thematic Analysis:** Qualitative analysis will employ a coding framework to group findings according to the identified themes: historical foundations, the influence of Islamic organizations, Islamic education, and legal frameworks. Each study will be coded for its contributions to these themes, allowing for a structured synthesis of knowledge.
- b. **Descriptive and Analytical Techniques:** After coding, a descriptive narrative will summarize key findings, highlight significant patterns across studies, and establish connections between historical narratives and contemporary applications. This approach aims to draw comprehensive insights into how each theme contributes to the broader understanding of Islam's evolution in Indonesia.

### **4. Triangulation of Data**

To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, the research will incorporate triangulation by drawing on multiple sources of literature. By comparing and contrasting findings across different articles and methodologies, the study will aim to construct a multidimensional perspective on the evolution of Islam in Indonesia. This approach will facilitate a nuanced analysis of diverse viewpoints within the literature, allowing for a more comprehensive representation of themes.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Historical Foundations of Islam in Indonesia**

The historical foundations of Islam in Indonesia are deeply intertwined with the region's rich tapestry of trade, cultural exchanges, and local politics. The penetration of Islam into the Indonesian archipelago began as early as the 13th century, facilitated by Muslim traders and Sufi missionaries. This initial contact marked the beginning of a transformative journey that would significantly shape the cultural and social landscape of Indonesia over centuries.

One of the earliest known Islamic kingdoms in Indonesia was the Sultanate of Samudera Pasai, located in present-day Aceh. Historical records indicate that Islam was introduced to this region through trading networks that connected the archipelago to the Arabian Peninsula and South Asia. Notably, Chinese historical accounts dating to the 10th century reference the existence of the Kingdom of Lamuri, which later emerged as a significant political power in Aceh, hinting at the early influence of Islam (Suprayitno, 2023). The sultanate, established by the early 13th century, became a critical center for the spreading of Islamic teachings, serving as a model for subsequent Islamic governance and culture across the archipelago (Thohir, 2021).

The mechanisms through which Islam spread included both political conquests and socio-cultural assimilation. As Burhanudin points out, the pre-colonial period of Indonesian history witnessed rapid Islamization, with sultans and local rulers adopting Islam as a means to strengthen their political legitimacy and unify diverse ethnolinguistic groups under a shared religious identity. The sultanates acted as hubs facilitating interactions between Islamic scholars (*ulamā*) and local communities, profoundly affecting social dynamics at the time. This Islamic connection was often mediated by the Sufi orders, which played an essential role in adapting Islamic teachings to local customs and practices. The social structures established during this period laid the groundwork for the intertwining of Islamic authority and regional governance that can still be observed today (Burhanudin, 2018).

In Java, the arrival of Islam was catalyzed by the involvement of Walisongo, the nine saints credited with spreading Islamic teachings in the region. Their narratives and practices reflect a distinct Javanese interpretation of Islam, one that integrated local customs and spiritual beliefs. The Walisongo utilized existing cultural frameworks to convey Islamic values, which lessened resistance among indigenous populations and allowed for smoother assimilation of the new faith (Burhanudin, 2018). Historical analyses emphasize that this syncretic approach not only facilitated

the acceptance of Islam but also led to the formation of a unique Javanese Islamic identity that blended elements of both Hindu-Buddhist traditions and Islamic practices.

Islam's influence spread further during the post-Sultanate era, particularly with the establishment of new Islamic kingdoms in Java, such as the Sultanate of Demak, which became a precursor to the expansive Muslim kingdoms in the area. According to Usman et al., these states consolidated their power in the 16th century by promoting Islam as a central element of their governance (Usman et al., 2024). The inscriptions found on tombstones and monuments from this era reinforce the cultural synthesis that occurred, showcasing the integration of Islamic architecture with pre-existing styles and local artisan practices (Suprayitno, 2023).

The transition toward a more organized Islamic community during the Dutch colonial period is marked by the emergence of various Islamic reform movements in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The rapid spread of modernist interpretations of Islam during this period highlighted dissatisfaction with traditional practices and a call for a return to what were seen as the purest forms of the faith (Кирчанов, 2022). The rise of organizations like Muhammadiyah and the Islamic Union Party (PSII) during this time exemplified the synthesis of nationalist sentiments with Islamic identities (Alatas, 2019). These movements sought to reform society according to Islamic principles, pressing for educational and social reforms that aligned with modernity while simultaneously maintaining a deep respect for the historical foundations of Islam in the archipelago.

The colonial government's policies and practices proved crucial in shaping the trajectory of Islam in Indonesia. The implementation of indirect rule in many areas resulted in a complex relationship between Islamic authorities and colonial powers. While the Dutch authorities often restricted the political influence of Islamic leaders, they simultaneously recognized the importance of Islam in maintaining social order and control over the populations. This duality created an environment where Islamic identity was both constrained and provided a space for reassertion and resistance against colonial authority (Кирчанов, 2022).

Moreover, the socio-political landscapes in which Islam developed during both colonial and post-colonial times were marked by resistance movements deeply rooted in Islamic ideology. The Darul Islam movement, which sought to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia, emerged prominently in the 1940s and 1950s, highlighting the desire among segments of Muslim populations to integrate religious principles into state governance. This historical interplay of Islam with the national narrative underscores the complicated threads of identity woven through Indonesia's past.

As the Indonesian nation transitioned toward independence in 1945, the historical foundations of Islam continued to shape national consciousness. The framing of national identity in Indonesia is significantly interlinked with the breadth of its Islamic heritage. This complex relationship, where religion serves as both a unifying and contentious element, has shaped subsequent political dialogues about the role of Islam in Indonesian governance and society at large (Rosyidin & Arifin, 2021).

The resilience of Islamic traditions continues to manifest in modern Indonesia, where a diverse spectrum of beliefs coexists within the socio-political framework. The legal recognition of Islamic law in various aspects of civil life, especially in regions like Aceh, demonstrates the enduring legacy of the historical foundations laid centuries ago. Current discussions on the application of Islamic law reflect not just a continuation of centuries-old practices but also the adaptation of these practices to address contemporary issues within Indonesian society (Qodir et al., 2020; Ropi, 2016).

The historical foundations of Islam in Indonesia are multifaceted and deeply entrenched within the nation's sociopolitical fabric. From the early interactions of traders and scholars to the modern resurgence of Islamic identity, Indonesia's history is marked by a dynamic interplay of religion, governance, and cultural exchange. The historical evolution of Islamic practice forms a critical backdrop for understanding its present-day manifestations and the ongoing negotiations of Islamic identity within a rapidly changing societal context.

### **Islamic Organizations and Movements**

The landscape of Islam in Indonesia is shaped by a multitude of Islamic organizations and movements that have emerged over the past century, reflecting a complex interplay of tradition, modernity, and socio-political dynamics. These organizations have not only influenced the religious lives of Indonesian Muslims but have also played a pivotal role in shaping the country's political discourse, cultural narratives, and social policies. This section explores the development and impact of key Islamic organizations, their ideological frameworks, and the movements that have arisen in response to both national and global challenges.

One of the most influential Islamic organizations in Indonesia is Muhammadiyah, founded in 1912 by Ahmad Dahlan. Muhammadiyah embodies a modernist approach to Islam, emphasizing reform and modernization in religious practice. The organization has been instrumental in promoting social welfare, education, and health. It operates thousands of schools and hospitals across the archipelago, contributing significantly to the Indonesian educational landscape (Suprayitno, 2023). Muhammadiyah's philosophy encourages a rational engagement with Islamic teachings, advocating for the application of Islamic values in addressing contemporary issues. This dedication to public service and educational reform has established Muhammadiyah as a major force in Indonesian civil society, fostering a broad interpretation of Islam that emphasizes social justice and community empowerment (Meirison, 2020)

In contrast, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), established in 1926, represents a more traditionalist approach while advocating for moderate interpretations of Islam. NU's extensive network of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) has cultivated a distinct form of Javanese Islam that emphasizes the importance of local culture and traditions (Handoko & Farida, 2021). The organization has played a critical role in promoting inter-religious dialogue and tolerance, countering extremist narratives within society. Its leaders have been actively involved in national discourse, advocating for policies

that reflect the values of pluralism and social cohesion. This dual commitment to preserving traditional practices while engaging with modernity has positioned NU as a stabilizing force in Indonesia's religious landscape (Mohomed, 2024).

The diverse spectrum of Islamic organizations is further complemented by the presence of activist movements advocating for various interpretations of Islam in the public sphere. One such movement is Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), which espouses a more radical approach, advocating for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate and the implementation of strict Islamic law. Scholars like Yasir have noted that the rise of movements such as HTI indicates a polarizing trend within Indonesian Islam, where factions mobilize around differing visions of governance and social order (Thohir et al., 2021). These tensions highlight the ongoing debates about the role of Islam in state affairs and the balance between secular governance and religious principles.

Recent variations of Islamic activism have also emerged, with groups addressing contemporary issues such as environmental sustainability, gender equality, and social justice. This intersection of Islam and activism reflects a growing awareness among Muslim communities of their role in addressing global challenges. Organizations focused on environmental issues have begun to integrate Islamic teachings on stewardship of the earth with advocacy for sustainable practices, indicating a shift towards a broader interpretation of religious obligation (Qodir et al., 2020). Movements such as these demonstrate how Indonesian Muslims are re-contextualizing Islamic principles within the framework of pressing global issues.

The rise of Islamic feminism represents another important dimension within the discourse of Islamic organizations in Indonesia. Scholars like Sara have highlighted the efforts of various Islamic women's organizations that strive to reinterpret Islamic texts from a feminist perspective. These movements emphasize gender equality and social justice, advocating for women's rights within the framework of Islamic law. They aim to challenge traditional interpretations that have marginalized women's roles in both religious and social contexts (Wibowo et al., 2023). This shift towards inclusive narratives within Islamic organizations marks a critical evolution in how gender relations are being reconstructed within Indonesian society.

Moreover, the educational landscape reflects the evolving role of Islamic organizations in shaping the next generation of Indonesian Muslims. Pesantren systems have increasingly integrated modern educational curricula alongside traditional religious teachings. As Nurhasanah points out, this blending of secular subjects with religious instruction fosters a more holistic educational environment that prepares students to engage effectively with the wider world, promoting both their spiritual and intellectual development (Amin & Ritonga, 2023). The incorporation of technology and digital resources into pesantren education has further enhanced learning experiences, allowing students to access a wider array of Islamic scholarship and contemporary knowledge.

On a political level, Islamic organizations have been at the forefront of advocating for the recognition of Islamic law within Indonesia's legal framework. The debate surrounding the codification of Islamic law, particularly the Compilation of Islamic Law, reflects the ongoing struggle between different ideological factions within

Indonesian Islam. Activists and scholars have argued for a clear and accessible legal structure that respects religious obligations while aligning with democratic principles (Kustiawan et al., 2023). However, there remains contention about how Islamic law should be implemented and what its implications are for Indonesia's multi-religious society.

The issue of legal pluralism is particularly pertinent in this discourse, as Indonesia's complex legal system includes both civil law and traditional Islamic law. The coexistence of these systems poses challenges and opportunities for Islamic organizations to influence legal discourse effectively. As noted by Handoko and Farida, the intersection of Islamic law and state law has sparked debates over the balance between religious authority and democratic governance, which is essential for maintaining Indonesia's social fabric (Yilmaz et al., 2022).

Islamic organizations also play a crucial role in humanitarian efforts, particularly in times of natural disasters. The responses from groups such as Muhammadiyah during earthquakes and floods illustrate their commitment to community welfare and solidarity. These organizations mobilize resources and volunteers to provide assistance, reflecting the principles of compassion and solidarity embedded in Islamic teachings and their commitment to service (Kyrchanoff, 2021). This aspect further enhances their relevance and legitimacy in Indonesian society.

Another important aspect is the growing recognition of the role of Islamic organizations in fostering a civic identity among Muslims. Initiatives directed toward community development, women's empowerment, and advocacy for human rights illustrate a nuanced understanding of how Islam can positively contribute to civic life in Indonesia. Muhammad depicts how Muhammadiyah's activism during the Japanese occupation of Indonesia was reflective of its broader commitment to humanitarian principles intertwined with Islamic values (Hamzani & Idayanti, 2024).

As these organizations continue to engage with national and global issues, their impact on society becomes increasingly significant. Notably, the establishment of organizations focused on rights-based advocacy illustrates an emerging trend where Islamic tenets are applied to modern contexts, challenging traditional boundaries while promoting inclusive interpretations of faith (Fauzan & Fata, 2022).

In summary, Islamic organizations and movements in Indonesia are marked by their diversity, adaptability, and relevance in a rapidly changing world. The progressive and traditional movements represent a spectrum of thought that engages with both contemporary challenges and historical legacies. Through education, activism, and legal advocacy, these organizations play an essential role in shaping the narrative of Indonesian Islam, fostering a dynamic interplay between faith, culture, and identity. As Indonesia moves forward, the ongoing dialogue within these groups will continue to play a pivotal role in defining what it means to be a Muslim in a modern, interconnected society.

## Islamic Education and Pedagogical Innovations

Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone significant transformations influenced by historical, cultural, and socio-political factors. As the nation navigates its identity as a Muslim-majority country, the evolution of Islamic education becomes crucial in shaping the beliefs and practices of Indonesian Muslims. This section discusses the historical context of Islamic education, its development through various institutional frameworks, and contemporary innovations in pedagogy, focusing especially on the role of pesantren and modern educational reforms.

The roots of Islamic education in Indonesia can be traced back to the arrival of Islam in the archipelago during the 13th century. The earliest forms of Islamic education were informal and took place in mosques and through personal instruction by religious leaders (kiai and ulama). These informal settings laid the groundwork for the establishment of pesantren, which emerged as more structured religious schools in the 17th century. The pesantren system is unique to Indonesia and reflects the local adaptation of Islamic teachings, blending them with indigenous educational traditions (Suprayitno, 2023)

Historically, pesantren served as centers for both religious and general education, offering a curriculum that included Islamic theology, Arabic language, literature, and traditional sciences. The methods employed were often rooted in oral traditions and memorization, emphasizing the importance of learning through direct transmission from teacher to student. As noted by Mulya et al., pesantren have functioned as crucial institutions in disseminating Islamic teachings across generations, helping to cultivate religious leaders and scholars who shaped Indonesia's Islamic landscape (Mulya et al., 2021).

Over time, the integration of modern education alongside traditional methods became increasingly prominent. The 20th century witnessed the introduction of Western educational models into the pesantren system, leading to a hybrid format that combined Islamic knowledge with secular subjects such as mathematics, science, and social studies. This adaptation aimed to equip students with skills necessary to engage with a rapidly modernizing world, thereby making Islamic education relevant to contemporary societal needs (Rosyidin & Arifin, 2021).

As Indonesia's political landscape transitioned after independence in 1945, Islamic education also evolved in response to broader national development goals. The New Order era under President Suharto emphasized national unity and modernity, prompting Islamic educational institutions to align their teachings with the state ideology of Pancasila, which promotes a harmonious coexistence among Indonesia's diverse ethnic and religious groups. The integration of Pancasila values into Islamic curriculums reflects the country's approach to fostering a pluralistic identity among Indonesian Muslims (Muqowim et al., 2022).

Currently, a notable trend in Islamic education is the focus on developing religious moderation as a core value. The concept of Islām Wasatiyyah, or the “middle path” of Islam, is being increasingly promoted in various educational settings, particularly pesantren. Muqowim et al. argue for the implementation of Islām

Wasatiyyah in the learning process, emphasizing values of tolerance, balance, and innovation in Islamic teachings (Fina, 2020). These pedagogical innovations are essential for nurturing students who can engage positively with contemporary challenges, both locally and globally.

The role of technology in Islamic education has also gained traction in recent years. Digital platforms are increasingly being adopted within Islamic educational institutions to enhance learning experiences. Online resources and e-learning platforms have allowed students to access a broader range of Islamic texts and contemporary scholarship, facilitating a more interactive learning environment (Muqowim et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated these technological adaptations, demonstrating the need for resilience and flexibility within the education system. Scholars have observed that while traditional methods retained their relevance, the introduction of technology in pesantren has opened new avenues for educational engagement and access, particularly for rural students who may face geographical barriers (Rohman et al., 2024)

Islamic organizations, such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, have played critical roles in modernizing Islamic education in Indonesia. Muhammadiyah has been at the forefront of educational reform and has established a vast network of schools, hospitals, and university institutions that emphasize the integration of modern knowledge with Islamic principles. The organization's commitment to educational advancement is further demonstrated through initiatives aimed at improving teacher training and curriculum development (Jamhari & Asrori, 2022). Through these efforts, Muhammadiyah has significantly contributed to elevating the quality of Islamic education across the nation.

Nahdlatul Ulama, with its emphasis on maintaining traditional Islamic teachings while simultaneously engaging with modern educational practices, has cultivated a unique approach to Islamic education. The integration of Islamic jurisprudence with contemporary issues of social justice and gender equality has become increasingly important in NU's educational discourse (Thohir, 2021; Thohir et al., 2021). This alignment creates spaces for dialogue among students, allowing them to critically engage with their religious teachings and societal issues.

The discourse surrounding gender within Islamic education has gained momentum in recent years, with scholars arguing for greater representation and inclusion of women's voices within curricular frameworks. Research by Mulya et al. (2021) highlights how female pre-service teachers are encouraged to navigate their identities as religiously tolerant Muslims, signifying a shift towards recognizing diverse perspectives within Islamic teachings. Such developments are critical in fostering environments that not only comply with traditional roles but also empower women in positions of authority and influence within Islamic institutions.

Despite the progress made, challenges remain within the Islamic educational sphere. The curriculum development often grapples with the tensions between maintaining traditional Islamic values and adapting to modern educational needs. Studies indicate that while there is a growing recognition of the importance of incorporating secular subjects, resistance from more conservative factions continues

to pose dilemmas for pedagogical innovation within pesantren (Jamhari & Asrori, 2022). The dichotomy between conservative and progressive interpretations of Islam reflects broader societal tensions that infiltrate the education sector.

Today, different models of Islamic schools exist alongside traditional pesantren, including Integrated Islamic Schools that combine secular and religious curricula with the aim of producing well-rounded and globally competitive graduates. These modern institutions often cater to the demands of parents seeking a more holistic approach to their children's education, blending rigorous academic standards with character-building rooted in Islamic principles.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the evolving nature of the Islamic educational landscape in Indonesia within a global context. As globalization continues to influence educational frameworks, Indonesian Islamic education can benefit from cross-cultural exchanges that foster greater understanding of different interpretations of Islam. Such exchanges can lead to richer educational content and diverse perspectives that engage creatively with existing structures and ideologies, reinforcing the relevance of Islamic teachings in contemporary society (Abdullah, 2017).

Islamic education in Indonesia reflects a dynamic interplay between traditional practices and modern innovations that respond to the needs of contemporary society. The evolution of pesantren, the impact of Islamic organizations, and the integration of technology and modern curricula underscore a commitment to nurturing a generation of Muslims who can thrive within an increasingly globalized world while remaining grounded in their faith. As these educational institutions adapt to changing environments, they continue to play a crucial role in shaping Indonesian Muslims' identities and futures.

## **Legal Frameworks and Islamic Jurisprudence**

The legal frameworks governing Islamic law (sharia) in Indonesia represent a complex landscape shaped by colonial history, social dynamics, and contemporary political contexts. With Indonesia being the largest Muslim-majority country globally, the interactions between Islamic jurisprudence and national law provide a unique study of how legal traditions evolve and adapt to meet the needs of a diverse population. This section delves into the historical developments, foundational principles, contemporary applications, and ongoing debates surrounding Islamic law in Indonesia.

Islamic law in Indonesia has its roots in early Islamic teachings, which were introduced through trade and the establishment of Islamic sultanates. The acceptance of Islamic principles was often facilitated by the integration of local customs and pre-Islamic legal practices. As noted by Meirison (2020), the historical context of legal frameworks is pivotal; it showcases how these early systems set a precedent for integrating Islamic rule within local governance structures (Pramoosook & Dalimunte, 2020). The Sultanate of Aceh, for example, became a prominent center for Islamic scholarship, where local sultans enacted laws based on Islamic jurisprudence while accommodating traditional customs to solidify their authority (Suprayitno, 2023)

The Dutch colonial period introduced significant changes to the legal landscape. Colonial powers were keen to establish control over diverse legal practices within their territories. The Dutch implemented a dual legal system, marginalizing indigenous Islamic law while privileging colonial civil law (Meirison, 2020). This practice often created friction between local customs and imposed legal norms, which complicated the application of Islamic law during the colonial period. Scholars like Wibowo et al. argue that the consequences of this legal dichotomy have had long-lasting effects, shaping the contemporary legal discourse surrounding Islamic practices in Indonesia (Mohomed, 2024)

After Indonesia gained independence in 1945, the relationship between Islam and the state underwent further transformation. The newly formed government faced the challenge of integrating varying interpretations of Islam into a cohesive legal framework that respected the nation's diversity. The struggle over the implementation of Islamic law became a prominent issue, particularly among political elites and Islamic organizations. Groups such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama emerged as key players in advocating for their interpretations of how Islamic values could inform the state's legal framework (Wibowo et al., 2023). Their competing ideologies reflect a broader discourse on the appropriate relationship between Islam and state governance in a pluralistic society.

The 1970s marked a crucial turning point in Islamic law's prominence, which experienced a revival within both religious and state circles. The promulgation of various laws, such as Law No. 1/1974 on Marriage, signifies the acknowledgment of Islamic law's role in personal matters, including marriage, divorce, and inheritance (Hamzani & Idayanti, 2024). This law allowed Islamic practices to be formally recognized within the legal system while reinforcing the authority of Religious Courts (Pengadilan Agama), which adjudicated personal and family law matters based on Islamic principles. Furthermore, as indicated by Ridhwan and Nuzul, this legal recognition has expanded the role of sharia into areas like inheritance and family law, ultimately shaping social practices among Muslim communities (Fajarina et al., 2024).

In recent years, the conceptualization of Islamic law has evolved to consider modern legal reforms, particularly in the context of democratization and globalization. This development has led to a more nuanced understanding of the concept of religious moderation, as articulated by Zuhri, who emphasizes Islamic Wasathiyah — the principle of moderation in Islam — as vital in debates surrounding the implementation of sharia (Omara, 2024). The ability to engage critically with Islamic teachings while adapting them to new social realities resonates with the ongoing pursuit of a balanced approach to governance and legal practices.

A notable feature of contemporary Islamic jurisprudence in Indonesia is the interaction between Islamic law and customary (adat) law. The hybridization of these systems reflects the negotiation of power and identity among Muslim and non-Muslim communities. As explored by Zayyadi (2020), the application of Islamic law is often informed by local customs, which can either complement or undermine orthodox interpretations of sharia. Furthermore, the legal pluralism inherent in Indonesia's legal framework underscores the significance of understanding how different legal systems

operate alongside one another, with tension and discourse often emerging from these interactions (Faiz et al., 2024)

The recent debates over the codification of Islamic law reflect a broader trend of seeking clarity and relevance in religious jurisprudence. Studies examining the complexities surrounding the *Kompilasi Hukum Islam* (Compilation of Islamic Law) assert that the codification has been both a success and a point of contention among Islamic jurists and lawmakers (Feener et al., 2021). Critics argue that institutionalizing Islamic law in Indonesia could lead to a form of legal monism that undermines local customs and diversity. Proponents, however, maintain that codification reinforces the accessibility and understanding of Islamic law for ordinary Muslims, aligning it with modern legal practices (Riyanto et al., 2022).

In addition, the increasing attention to issues related to gender within Islamic law illustrates the dynamic and adaptive nature of sharia in contemporary Indonesia. Islamic inheritance laws, traditionally rooted in patriarchal interpretations, are being scrutinized and re-evaluated through a gender-sensitive lens. As noted by Amrullah, this critical examination is essential in addressing disparities in rights and entitlements experienced by women within Muslim communities (Zuhriah, 2024). This movement reflects a growing awareness and acceptance of gender equity within the interpretations of sharia, further complicating the legal landscape.

The interplay between Islamic law and socio-political dynamics is evident in the rise of activist movements advocating for various interpretations of both Islamic teachings and legal reforms. Groups advocating for women's rights, environmental sustainability, and socio-economic justice find their footing within the Islamic legal framework, seeking to align their causes with the moral imperatives of Islam. This engagement emphasizes the potential for Islamic jurisprudence to reflect contemporary values while remaining grounded in tradition (Pelu & Dakhoir, 2021).

Throughout Indonesia's history, the practical applications of Islamic law have highlighted its fundamental role in governance and social cohesion. Participation in local governance, through bodies such as sharia advisory councils, reinforces the significance of maintaining a cohesive legal identity while navigating the complexities of modern governance (Ridhwan & Nuzul, 2021). Scholars have pointed to the necessity of adapting Islamic legal frameworks to contemporary contexts, arguing that ongoing dialogue is vital in the cultivation of a dynamic Islamic jurisprudence that responds to both challenges and opportunities present in a modern nation-state.

The legal frameworks and Islamic jurisprudence in Indonesia represent a multifaceted narrative of adaptation and resilience. As the nation grapples with its identity as the largest Muslim-majority country, the interplay between historical foundations, contemporary practices, and legal innovations illustrates the dynamic nature of Islamic law. The evolution of Islamic jurisprudence in Indonesia not only reflects deep-seated cultural and legal traditions but also indicates an openness to dialogue and adaptation in the face of modern challenges. This synthesis highlights the pivotal role that Islamic law will continue to play in shaping Indonesian society's legal and cultural fabric in the years to come.

## Conclusion

This paper has explored the historical and contemporary trajectories of Islam in Indonesia, emphasizing the complex interplay between religious beliefs, cultural practices, and socio-political dynamics. From the initial arrival of Islam in the archipelago through trade and the establishment of sultanates to the modern reforms and the formation of various Islamic organizations, the evolution of Islam in Indonesia is rich with history and varies significantly across the nation's diverse societies.

The early foundations of Islam in Indonesia were marked by the establishment of key Islamic sultanates, such as Samudera Pasai, which served not only as centers of trade but also as hubs for the dissemination of Islamic teachings. The dynamic interactions between local customs and Islamic principles laid the groundwork for a distinctively Indonesian form of Islam, characterized by syncretism and adaptation to indigenous cultures. Prominent figures such as Walisongo in Java played a crucial role in promoting Islam by blending Islamic teachings with local traditions, which greatly facilitated acceptance and integration among the indigenous populations.

As noted in the discussion, the colonial period introduced significant challenges to Islamic authority and practices through the imposition of Dutch legal frameworks that undermined traditional Islamic laws. This historical experience of dual governance led to a unique legal landscape where Islamic jurisprudence had to negotiate its place within a modern state apparatus. The establishment of the national legal identity post-independence involved a delicate balancing act between Islamic principles and Indonesia's secular framework and multicultural ethos. The emergence of organizations like Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama demonstrated the various responses to these challenges, where progressive and traditional narratives coalesced to shape Indonesia's contemporary Islamic identity.

The role of Islamic organizations in shaping modern Indonesian Islam cannot be overstated. Muhammadiyah's focus on modernization and social welfare initiatives has positioned it as a influential actor in the national discourse on Islamic values and societal progress. Conversely, NU champions traditional Islam, promoting a moderate interpretation that encourages pluralism and tolerance within the diverse social fabric of Indonesia. The divergence in approaches from these organizations reflects broader trends within Islamic thought, showcasing the vibrant debates over religious governance, societal roles, and the relationship between Islam and the state.

In addition, the structural evolution of educational institutions like pesantren demonstrates how religious education in Indonesia has adapted to contemporary realities. The integration of Islamic teachings with modern curricula has expanded opportunities for students to engage with both religious and secular knowledge, fostering a critical approach to Islamic education. Recent efforts to incorporate the principles of *Islām Wasaṭiyyah* into pedagogical practices reflect a commitment to promoting moderation and inclusivity, addressing contemporary societal challenges while remaining anchored in tradition.

The legal frameworks surrounding Islamic law have also evolved, illustrating the complexities of governance in a multicultural society. The adaptation of sharia within

Indonesia's legal system involves ongoing negotiations that balance traditional Islamic norms with the demands of a modern nation-state. Contemporary discussions around the codification of Islamic law signal the need for reform in how Islamic jurisprudence is applied, allowing for greater clarity and accessibility while accommodating the diverse practices of Indonesian Muslims.

The findings of this study indicate that Islam in Indonesia is characterized by an ongoing negotiation between tradition and modernity, shaped by historical contexts, organizational dynamics, educational innovations, and legal interpretations. Understanding these elements provides valuable insights into the broader narrative of Indonesian Islam as it navigates contemporary challenges while maintaining its rich historical heritage.

As Indonesia continues to grapple with its identity as a Muslim-majority nation within a globalized context, the historical foundations of Islam will remain vital in shaping the future trajectory of its religious and social landscape. The interplay among various Islamic organizations, educational institutions, and legal systems will fundamentally influence how Islam is practiced and understood in Indonesia moving forward. Ultimately, the resilience and adaptability of Indonesian Islam present both opportunities for growth and transformation, as well as challenges to navigate amidst the rapidly changing global and local environments.

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