



Muhammadiyah's Contribution to Shaping Progressive Islam in the Nusantara and Contemporary World

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Submitted: 12/01/2025 | Accepted: 20/01/2025 | Online: 20/01/2025 | doi: <https://doi.org/10.63088/numasv1i17>

Abstract:

Purpose: This article explores Muhammadiyah's efforts to advance progressive Islam, highlighting its role in shaping educational institutions, and advocating for human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.

Methods: The study used qualitative methods, including literature review and case studies.

Results: The research identifies gaps in global discussions on progressive Islam, especially regarding Muhammadiyah's international influence.

Conclusions: Despite its significant contributions, data availability and scope limitations remain, particularly regarding its impact outside Indonesia, presenting opportunities for further research on Muhammadiyah's role in the global Muslim community.

Keywords:

Progressive Islam, Modernity in Islam, Muhammadiyah, Nusantara, Traditional

1. Introduction

Islam has deeply influenced Indonesia's cultural and historical landscape, shaping its identity as a predominantly Muslim-majority nation. Among the diverse Islamic traditions that have emerged, the School of Nusantara Thought stands out as a unique synthesis of Islamic teachings and local cultural values. This intellectual tradition harmonizes Indonesian identity with religious principles, fostering a contextually relevant understanding of Islam. Central to this development is Muhammadiyah, an Islamic reform movement established in 1912, which has significantly contributed to the socio-religious transformation of Indonesian society.

Muhammadiyah's emphasis on modernity and social transformation positions it as a progressive force within Indonesia's Islamic landscape. With a commitment to peaceful propagation of Islam and addressing global social issues, Muhammadiyah integrates religious values with the principles of Pancasila. This approach not only contextualizes Islam within the framework of Indonesian nationalism but also adapts it to meet the challenges of an increasingly globalized world (Thahir, 2024). The movement's internationalization strategy underscores its efforts to foster inclusivity and adaptability,



enabling it to respond effectively to local contexts while contributing to global humanitarian efforts.

A cornerstone of Muhammadiyah's philosophy is its concept of progressive Islam, which aligns Islamic principles with contemporary challenges. This approach advocates for critical engagement with religious texts and calls for their reinterpretation to address issues in politics, economics, education, and social justice (Fyroza Mustika Akhlis, 2024). By rejecting rigid interpretations and emphasizing flexibility, Muhammadiyah encourages the dynamic integration of Islamic values with modern societal needs.

One of the most prominent expressions of Muhammadiyah's progressive vision is its focus on education. Since its inception, the organization has recognized the transformative power of education in shaping individuals and society. Muhammadiyah's extensive network of schools, universities, and educational institutions underscores its commitment to knowledge advancement rooted in Islamic values. With more than 1,700 higher education institutions and 20,000 schools, the organization nurtures future leaders while integrating modern knowledge with religious teachings.

Indonesia's Muslim population, comprising approximately 229.62 million people or 87.2% of the total population, represents a significant portion of the global Muslim community, projected to reach 2.2 billion by 2030 (Mastuki, 2020). Muhammadiyah's influence within this demographic is profound, with a membership exceeding 30 million and an established presence in education, healthcare, and social services. Its vast network includes over 170 hospitals and 600 clinics, providing essential services to underserved populations. Through its women's wing, Aisyiyah, Muhammadiyah also emphasizes gender empowerment, with more than 3 million active members contributing to its initiatives (Anardianto, 2023).

Despite its achievements, Muhammadiyah faces challenges in promoting its progressive Islamic vision. Internally, conservative interpretations of Islam resist reformist ideas, creating tensions within the broader Muslim community. Study by Jafar (2020) highlights ideological contestations between reformist and orthodox groups, particularly regarding methodologies for interpreting religious texts. Reformists advocate for a contextual approach to Islam, aligning it with contemporary realities, while orthodox groups emphasize preserving tradition through literal interpretations.

Globally, Muhammadiyah's progressive model encounters difficulties in gaining traction within diverse Islamic contexts, especially in regions dominated by traditionalist perspectives. Traditionalist groups, such as Neo-Traditional Salafis, prioritize historical interpretations and often reject modern influences, limiting the acceptance of reformist ideas (Adis Duderija, 2020). Conversely, modernist approaches, exemplified by figures like Mahmoud Muhammad Taha, emphasize justice and ethical values, advocating for gender equality and the reinterpretation of religious texts to align with contemporary societal needs (Vassilios Adrahtas, 2021).

Nonetheless, Muhammadiyah remains steadfast in addressing pressing social issues, including gender equality, human rights, and poverty alleviation. Through Aisyiyah, the organization has championed women's rights, emphasizing leadership roles and contextual interpretations of religious texts. Initiatives such as education programs,



healthcare services, and advocacy for women's empowerment demonstrate Muhammadiyah's commitment to fostering an inclusive society (Arman Maulana, 2023).

Furthermore, Muhammadiyah's social service programs address the needs of underprivileged communities. Its healthcare network provides affordable medical services, while educational initiatives aim to uplift marginalized populations. For instance, Muhammadiyah hospitals actively participate in Indonesia's National Health Insurance program, ensuring access to quality healthcare for low-income communities (Sahya Muspita & Ai Susi Susanti, 2024).

On the global stage, Muhammadiyah actively engages in international forums to promote peaceful Islamic advocacy and address global challenges. Its humanitarian missions and conflict resolution efforts position the organization as a key player in advocating for moderate Islam amid rising extremism. Interfaith dialogue is another crucial aspect of Muhammadiyah's international engagement. By fostering collaboration with diverse religious communities, Muhammadiyah promotes peaceful coexistence and mutual respect, both within Indonesia and abroad (Ma'arif et al., 2024).

Muhammadiyah's commitment to progressive Islam and its efforts in education, social services, and global advocacy exemplify its role as a model for Islamic reform. By addressing contemporary challenges while remaining rooted in faith, Muhammadiyah demonstrates that Islam can harmonize tradition with modernity. Its influence continues to grow, inspiring a vision of Islam that is inclusive, compassionate, and responsive to the complexities of the 21st century.

2. Literature Review

Nusantara thought is an intellectual tradition that blends Islamic teachings with local cultural practices in Southeast Asia. This tradition emphasizes the importance of harmony between religious values and local wisdom, encouraging a more progressive and inclusive approach to addressing the challenges of the modern era. Nusantara thought stresses the significance of moderation, tolerance, and the integration of religious values with traditional wisdom, promoting a progressive and open approach to contemporary issues. The concept of Islam Nusantara is deeply rooted in the culture and history of the region, advocating for an Islam that is inclusive, friendly, and dynamic, while responding to modern challenges such as extremism and changes in cultural identity. Islam Nusantara combines Islamic teachings with local cultural traditions, resulting in a unique form of Islam that reflects the identity and character of the people in the archipelago (Kusuma & Pepilina, 2024). This integration is evident in various practices, such as communal prayers, pilgrimages to graves, and community festivals, often held in educational institutions like pesantren.

Moderation (*tawassut*) and tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*) emphasize the importance of religious moderation and mutual respect, which are highly relevant in multicultural societies such as Indonesia. This tradition acts as a mediator in resolving conflicts arising from cultural and religious differences (D. E. Setiawan & Stevanus, 2023). Nusantara Islam promotes a concept of Islam that is moderate, peaceful, and tolerant, shaped by principles of democracy and human rights, positioning itself as a response to the global challenges faced by Muslim communities (Pratama et al., 2023). The Nusantara Islamic education



model is characterized by a focus on integrating Islamic values with local wisdom, shaping identity and social relationships among Muslim communities in the archipelago (Yahya, 2024). This tradition also influences public discourse and enriches the broader narrative of Islamic thought, shaping the identity of Indonesian Muslims and offering insights into future development directions.

Although Nusantara thought is praised for its inclusive nature and ability to integrate various cultures, it also faces a range of challenges and criticisms. Some view this thought as a form of syncretism that could dilute the purity of Islamic teachings, while others see it as an important adaptation to the local context and a strategy for addressing radicalization (Abdul Aziz & Debi Arlianto, 2023). This duality reflects the ongoing negotiation process between tradition and modernity in the region, depicting the complex dynamics of Islamic thought in Southeast Asia.

In this context, Muhammadiyah, as one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, plays a crucial role. As a moderate Islamic movement, Muhammadiyah seeks to connect religious traditions with the challenges of the modern era through various approaches. They strive to unite classical Islamic values with developments in education, social issues, and local culture. As written by Mutohharun Jinan (2021), Muhammadiyah wisely captures and accommodates local culture, Muhammadiyah provides decentralized policy space for regions, and Muhammadiyah opens the door wide for pluralistic religious thought. The era of the "sabdo pandito ratu" (*royal decree*) is no longer present in Muhammadiyah's religious thought.

This is reflected in their commitment to religious moderation, reforms in the education sector, and efforts to promote social progress. A study by Mahesa (2023) highlights how Muhammadiyah integrates Islamic education with secular knowledge, modernizing Islamic education while preserving tradition. This holistic approach aims to adapt to contemporary needs, ensuring that education contributes to individual development and national progress, reflecting a balance between tradition and modernity.

Fundamental principles such as *Tajdīd* (reform) and *Ijtihād* (independent reasoning) form the foundation of these efforts, which also address significant issues like gender equality and religious moderation. Research by Mohammad Bachrul Falah (2024) discusses gender equality within Muhammadiyah, producing progressive fatwas that reflect a balance between traditional Islamic thought and modern gender justice principles. Organizational decisions, such as those related to marital relationships, demonstrate a neo-traditionalist approach, blending classical Islamic knowledge with *Tajdīd* to accommodate contemporary gender discussions. Furthermore, research by Rahman (2024) indicates that Muhammadiyah promotes religious moderation, known as *Wasathiyah*, which emphasizes a balanced approach to religious practice and interfaith dialogue. This moderation is evident in its educational institutions, which serve as platforms for teaching tolerance and understanding among diverse religious communities.

In addition, Muhammadiyah demonstrates a profound commitment to environmental sustainability and sustainable development. In the 21st century, attention to environmental issues has become increasingly significant, and Muhammadiyah, with its progressive vision, has not remained idle. Through various social and educational



programs, Muhammadiyah recognizes that environmental problems must be addressed holistically. For instance, Muhammadiyah has established organizations aimed at raising environmental awareness and promoting eco-friendly solutions. Through this approach, Muhammadiyah encourages Muslims to not only focus on socio-economic matters but also to preserve nature as an integral part of worship. In this context, Muhammadiyah serves as a bridge between Islamic values that prioritize the welfare of the community and the ecological challenges the world faces today.

As studied by Setiawan (2022), Muhammadiyah's Environmental Council (Majlis Lingkungan Hidup Muhammadiyah) has initiated an eco-theological movement that underscores the importance of al-Ma'un theology in addressing environmental issues. This movement reflects the emergence of a new awareness within the Muslim community by integrating religious principles with ecological actions. Muhammadiyah addresses ecological challenges by promoting environmental consciousness and sustainable practices, harmonizing Islamic values with the well-being of society. Their initiatives, such as water and disaster jurisprudence, exemplify their commitment to nurturing a virtuous community while tackling pressing environmental problems (Harimurti & Alam, 2024).

Muhammadiyah has established itself as a progressive organization in various aspects, and the time has come to expand its influence on a global scale. While numerous studies on Muhammadiyah focus predominantly on its contributions within Indonesia, there is a significant opportunity to delve deeper into how this organization can impact Muslim communities abroad. Further research on Muhammadiyah in an international context is urgently needed. In this regard, Muhammadiyah's role in promoting progressive and inclusive Islamic values, as well as its advocacy for human rights, deserves greater exploration. Such efforts could pave the way for Muhammadiyah to contribute more substantially to the global discourse on Islam.

Hence, developing studies that highlight Muhammadiyah's role in building international networks, introducing progressive Islamic ideas, and exploring the reception of these values among Muslim communities in various countries becomes essential. Through more in-depth and comprehensive studies, we can view Muhammadiyah not merely as a religious organization in Indonesia but also as a catalyst for change with a significant influence on global Islamic discourse. Muhammadiyah's thoughts on education, social issues, gender, and the environment offer unique perspectives on how Islam can be applied in broader and more modern contexts.

Further research on Muhammadiyah's influence in the international arena will also provide new insights into how this organization bridges traditional values with contemporary developments and how it remains relevant amid evolving global challenges. In doing so, Muhammadiyah can serve as an example for other Islamic movements in formulating more open, inclusive, and progressive approaches within the Muslim world. Amid various social, political, and cultural challenges, Muhammadiyah has demonstrated that a faith-based organization can significantly foster more equitable and humane social change. By expanding the scope of this paper, a broader understanding of Muhammadiyah can emerge, not only as an intellectual and social force



driving change in Indonesia but also as a significant contributor to global Islamic discourse.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research is based on the concept of Progressive Islam, which emphasizes harmony between Islamic teachings and the dynamic needs of modern society. In this context, the Nusantara School is the primary foundation for understanding how Islamic values interact with local cultural traditions in Southeast Asia, creating a unique synthesis between Islamic identity and local wisdom. Muhammadiyah's rational and pragmatic approach reflects the spirit of modernization, where Islamic teachings are translated into universal principles such as rationality, social justice, and access to education for all.

This approach aligns with the framework of Modernization Theory, particularly the perspective of Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, which highlights the dual impact of modernization on religiosity and spirituality. This perspective suggests that modernity can both challenge and enrich religious expressions by encouraging thoughtful responses to change (Waode Zainab Zilullah Toresano & Endang Sri Rahayu, 2024).

Further, the integration of tradition and modernity can be analyzed through the Cultural Integration Theory, which highlights Muhammadiyah's ability to harmonize classical Islamic teachings with contemporary issues such as human rights, gender equality, and environmental preservation. This demonstrates that Islamic values can remain relevant without losing their spiritual and moral essence. Hakim (2024) observed that Western humanistic approaches, which emphasize individual freedom, human rights, and rationality, are often seen as conflicting with certain traditional Islamic interpretations. However, when analyzed through the framework of Cultural Integration Theory, the intersection of these two value systems presents an opportunity to construct a harmonious synthesis. Cultural integration, as understood in this theory, involves processes of adaptation, dialogue, and assimilation of differing values to create a new, more inclusive equilibrium. In this context, Islamic values such as respect for human dignity, social justice, and moral responsibility can serve as a bridge connecting these two worldviews. Cross-cultural dialogue facilitates mutual learning and enrichment, enabling both sides to reconcile their core principles without compromising their identities.

The Social Capital Theory offers another perspective on Muhammadiyah's contributions, particularly in building social networks and institutions that play a significant role in fostering community solidarity and advancement. Through an inclusive approach, Muhammadiyah focuses not only on spiritual dimensions but also on community development through education, healthcare, and economic empowerment. Muhammadiyah actively cultivates social capital by engaging in various community services, including education and healthcare, thereby fostering collaboration and trust among community members. This aligns with the emphasis of Social Capital Theory on social networks and community engagement (Sri Iswati et al., 2018). In a global context, Muhammadiyah's potential as a model of progressive Islam can be examined through Globalization Theory, which highlights Muhammadiyah's role in articulating



Islamic values on a global scale. While Muhammadiyah's contributions have been significant, this study also identifies certain challenges, particularly in terms of data limitations and the broad scope of Muhammadiyah's influence beyond Indonesia.

These challenges present opportunities for further research to explore how Muhammadiyah can expand its impact within the global Muslim community. Using this theoretical framework, the research not only develops a comprehensive analysis but also opens space for new discourses on the transformation of Islam in the modern era.

4. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach, as qualitative research is relevant for understanding the underlying meanings behind the behaviors of the subjects being studied (Lexy J. Moloeng, 2008). The research aims to examine Muhammadiyah's contributions to progressive Islam, particularly in integrating Islamic principles with the needs of contemporary society. A descriptive and interpretative framework is applied to analyze the interaction between Islamic teachings and local cultural practices in various Muhammadiyah initiatives. This article highlights the organization's role in advancing education, social justice, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. To ensure a comprehensive understanding, data collection relies on secondary sources, including an extensive literature review of academic works, organizational reports, and historical documents (Zuchri Abdussamad, 2021).

Although this research provides valuable insights, certain limitations are acknowledged. The availability of primary data on Muhammadiyah's activities outside Indonesia remains limited, restricting the scope of the analysis. Additionally, reliance on existing literature and documented case studies may not fully capture the most recent or undocumented initiatives. Nevertheless, this study offers a solid foundation for understanding Muhammadiyah's role in advancing progressive Islam and opens opportunities for further research to broaden its global perspective. This methodological framework is designed to ensure a systematic and in-depth exploration of Muhammadiyah's contributions, aligned with international standards of scholarly discussion. By addressing the identified gaps and limitations, this research aims to contribute to broader discussions on progressive Islam and its global implications.

5. Results and Discussion

Results

This study demonstrates that the concept of Islam Nusantara, which integrates Islamic values with local cultural practices, makes a significant contribution to the development of progressive Islam in Southeast Asia. Muhammadiyah, as one of Indonesia's largest Islamic organizations, plays a central role in this intellectual tradition. The organization emphasizes principles of modernity, education, social justice, and inclusive reform. Through its approach rooted in rationalism and social welfare, Muhammadiyah successfully aligns traditional Islamic values with the evolving needs of society.

The main findings of this research include the following:

1. *Development of Educational Institutions:* Muhammadiyah has established numerous educational institutions that emphasize the importance of balancing religious studies with general sciences. As has been researched by Zahroh (2023)



Muhammadiyah emphasizes an integrative-interconnective model in its educational institutions, balancing religious studies and general science. This approach aims to minimize educational dualism, ensuring that Islamic Religious Education curriculum materials are interconnected with general and social sciences for comprehensive learning. Sita (2022) Formation of intellectual scholars through egalitarian education and sustainable growth of Muhammadiyah schools in Indonesia and abroad. Muhammadiyah's educational institutions span from elementary to university levels, both within Indonesia and internationally, highlighting its significant impact on the educational landscape (Salito et al., 2023). The results of the research by Amallah (2024) highlighted the internationalisation of Muhammadiyah education through the establishment of an international-level university, namely Universiti Muhammadiyah Malaysia, in Malaysia. Muhammadiyah in Malaysia operates as a sister organization committed to Islamic da'wah, focusing on education and community development. It aims to promote progressive Islam and has established Universiti Muhammadiyah Malaysia (UMAM) to enhance educational standards and internationalization. These institutions promote critical thinking and the integration of knowledge into daily life.

2. *Social Justice and Community Services*: Muhammadiyah demonstrates a strong commitment to social welfare through various programs, including healthcare services, In the field of healthcare, Muhammadiyah's da'wah efforts have been realised through the establishment of 97 hospitals and 214 clinics across various regions: Sumatra (6 hospitals and 37 clinics), Java (81 hospitals and 141 clinics), Kalimantan (4 hospitals and 19 clinics), Sulawesi (4 hospitals and 15 clinics), Maluku (1 hospital), West Nusa Tenggara (1 hospital and 1 clinic), and Papua (1 clinic). This is further supported by the operation of various educational institutions for healthcare professionals, including 11 faculties of medicine, numerous faculties of health sciences, and health-focused colleges (midwifery, nursing, and pharmacy schools). Additionally, Muhammadiyah actively engages in community health initiatives, focusing on issues such as avian flu prevention, malaria elimination, maternal and child health, and tuberculosis (TB) management (Suara Muhammadiyah, 2018). according to Ridha (2022) Muhammadiyah has established numerous social institutions, including health services and educational programs, reflecting its commitment to social welfare. Its initiatives aim to alleviate poverty and provide disaster relief, contributing significantly to the advancement of Indonesian society. Disaster relief efforts, and poverty alleviation initiatives. The Muhammadiyah organization holds a pivotal role in disaster management and preparedness within Indonesian communities. Through various initiatives, it integrates religious values with scientific approaches to strengthen resilience against disasters. These efforts include volunteer training, the development of educational frameworks, and the utilization of local wisdom to enhance community awareness and preparedness. Volunteer Training and Knowledge

The Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC) emphasizes

volunteer training in disaster triage. A study revealed that 70% of volunteers have a moderate level of knowledge in this area. Continuous education and skill updates are crucial to enhancing the effectiveness of volunteers in disaster response (Ningsih et al., 2024). Research by Shalihin (2024) Muhammadiyah plays a pivotal role in developing a disaster mitigation framework, integrating religious and scientific knowledge. The framework includes risk assessment and emphasizes values like monotheism, gratitude, and justice, tailored for effective disaster preparedness in Muslim communities. Maulana (2023) Muhammadiyah Middle School Sewon Bantul's initiative to enhance disaster preparedness, focusing on mapping evacuation routes and educating students about natural disaster risks, particularly earthquakes, to minimize panic and reduce potential losses during such events.

3. *Advocacy for Progressive Values: Muhammadiyah actively advocates for human rights*
Muhammadiyah actively champions human rights, gender equality, and environmental issues, establishing itself as a highly relevant organisation globally. For instance, in July 2024, the Central Leadership of Muhammadiyah signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Commission on Human Rights to strengthen the protection and enforcement of human rights in Indonesia (Komnas HAM, 2024). Additionally, 'Aisyiyah, Muhammadiyah's women's wing, highlighted issues of violence and gender equality in educational settings, underscoring their commitment to gender-related concerns. Regarding environmental advocacy, Muhammadiyah engages in various initiatives to raise awareness and take action on environmental issues, including advocating for protecting women human rights defenders in environmental sectors. (Muhammadiyah.or.id, 2024). Moh. Faizin (2022) highlights that Muhammadiyah, particularly through Aisyiyah, has significantly contributed to women's rights through extensive education programs, healthcare initiatives, and advocacy efforts. These contributions emphasize the importance of protecting women and children from sexual violence, as reflected in Muhammadiyah's firm stance on relevant government policies.

Global Potential: On the global level, Muhammadiyah's international engagement has become a crucial part of its strategy to promote progressive Islam. Muhammadiyah's involvement with the global Islamic network demonstrates its commitment to sharing its vision of Islam with the broader Muslim world. A study by Thahir (2024) notes that Muhammadiyah actively participates in international forums, promoting peaceful Islamic advocacy and addressing global issues. Its commitment to humanitarian missions and conflict resolution positions it as a key player in advocating for moderate Islam amid rising extremism and fostering global understanding. While Muhammadiyah's current focus is primarily in Indonesia, its potential to expand influence at the international level remains significant, even though data on this aspect is still limited. Although Muhammadiyah's primary focus currently lies in Indonesia, its potential to expand its influence on the international stage remains substantial. Recent data reveals that Muhammadiyah has established 30 Special Branch Leaderships (PCIM) in various



countries, including Malaysia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Egypt (Aanardianto, 2024). Additionally, Muhammadiyah has founded educational institutions abroad, such as Universiti Muhammadiyah Malaysia (UMAM) and Muhammadiyah Australia College (Eliyadi et al., 2024). Muhammadiyah's involvement in international forums and collaborations with global organisations further demonstrates its concrete efforts to enhance its role globally.

Discussion

The findings of this study affirm that Muhammadiyah successfully integrates Islamic teachings with modern realities, offering an innovative approach in the context of progressive Islam. This approach enables Muhammadiyah to address local challenges while creating opportunities to expand its global impact. Harmony of Tradition and Modernity: Muhammadiyah can preserve its traditional roots while adapting to changing times. This makes the organization relevant to diverse societal layers, particularly in Southeast Asia.

Muhammadiyah: Balancing Tradition and Modernity in Nusantara

Muhammadiyah, one of the largest Islamic organizations in Nusantara, not only demonstrates its global relevance but also makes a significant contribution to the development of local communities. Its harmony between tradition and modernity aligns with the social and cultural context of Nusantara, a region renowned for its rich diversity and dynamic changes over time. Islamic traditions in Nusantara preserving heritage. Nusantara boasts a long history of spreading Islam through peaceful means such as trade, culture, and education. This peaceful approach to propagation is also a hallmark of Muhammadiyah. Since its founding in 1912 by Kyai Ahmad Dahlan, Muhammadiyah has emphasized an *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding wrong) approach grounded in Qur'anic values while being contextually relevant to the social realities of its community.

Muhammadiyah has successfully preserved the moderate and inclusive Islamic traditions of Nusantara. Study by Aziz (2024) Muhammadiyah has successfully integrated religious values with local cultural values, fostering a dialogue that preserves moderate and inclusive Islamic traditions in the archipelago. This approach promotes social and spiritual harmony, reflecting their renewed perspective on culture. The organization supports Islamic practices that adhere to the original teachings of Islam while rejecting elements deemed irrelevant or contradictory to its core values. Amid the diverse local cultures in Nusantara, Muhammadiyah emphasizes unity and pluralism, reflecting the values of Islam as a mercy to all creation (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*). Adapting Modernity in the Nusantara Context. Nusantara faces complex modern challenges, including urbanization, digitalization, and socio-economic transformation. Muhammadiyah responds to these challenges innovatively while maintaining its core identity.

For instance, Muhammadiyah has established thousands of schools, universities, hospitals, and social institutions that integrate modern curricula with Islamic values. According to Nasril, (2024) Muhammadiyah has established numerous educational



institutions across Indonesia, significantly impacting national education policies through advocacy and curriculum development. It emphasizes inclusivity, quality, and relevance in education, aligning with its vision of creating a tolerant and empowered society. In the context of digitalization, Muhammadiyah has developed online platforms to reach younger generations across the region. This technological adoption highlights Muhammadiyah's ability to stay relevant amidst rapid digital transformation. Muh Farhan Ali (2024) that Muhammadiyah aims to optimize digital media for da'wah, emphasizing the involvement of the younger generation. However, it does not specifically mention the development of an online preaching platform targeting youth across the archipelago.

Muhammadiyah's social relevance in nusantara, in nusantara's cultural diversity, Muhammadiyah functions not only as a religious organization but also as a driving force for social change. Its community empowerment programs, such as Sharia cooperatives, entrepreneurship training, and humanitarian aid, address the specific needs of both rural and urban communities. The integration of sharia economic principles and local wisdom further enhances the effectiveness of these empowerment strategies, promoting a shared consciousness and community development (Fuaidi, 2024).

Muhammadiyah's empowerment programs are impactful, challenges such as limited infrastructure and cultural resistance persist. Addressing these issues requires continuous adaptation and innovation, ensuring that the programs remain effective and inclusive across diverse Indonesian communities. Muhammadiyah also plays a pivotal role in fostering interfaith harmony. In areas with religious plurality, Muhammadiyah often leads interfaith dialogues, creating spaces for constructive collaboration to promote mutual welfare. (Ma'arif et al., 2024). One area where Muhammadiyah has made a significant impact is in promoting interfaith dialogue. In an increasingly polarized world, Muhammadiyah's message of moderation and peacebuilding has resonated across religious divides (Ma'arif et al., 2024). For example, Muhammadiyah has actively engaged in dialogue with Christian organizations in Indonesia, helping to foster a stronger sense of national unity. This interfaith collaboration has paved the way for peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among various religious communities in Indonesia. Muhammadiyah, in promoting interfaith dialogue, emphasizes the importance of religious dialogue in international diplomacy, highlighting its role in reducing religious tensions and encouraging cooperation among societies (Siahaya et al., 2023).

Faced with the rising tide of Islamophobia and religious intolerance globally, Muhammadiyah's emphasis on tolerance and mutual respect has provided a refreshing perspective on what it means to practice Islam in a diverse world. As highlighted by Oktriyani (2024), Muhammadiyah stresses the importance of tolerance and cooperation among religious communities for peace in Indonesia's diversity, advocating for moderate Islam as the foundation for a just and inclusive society. This offers a new perspective on practicing Islam in a diverse world. Additionally, Asmanidar (2023) reinforces that religious moderation in Islam, including values like tolerance and mutual respect, is crucial for practicing Islam in a diverse world. It fosters cooperation and understanding between different religious communities, promoting peace and harmony. In recent years,



Muhammadiyah has emerged as a leading voice in addressing misconceptions about Islam, especially in Western media. By offering an alternative narrative rooted in moderation, education, and peace, Muhammadiyah is gradually but steadily changing perceptions of Islam, both in the Muslim world and beyond.

Muhammadiyah and national values in nusantara. Muhammadiyah's role extends beyond religion to strengthening national values. Muhammadiyah has successfully navigated the challenges of modernity while adhering to traditional Islamic values, making it a model for other Islamic movements worldwide. By integrating modern educational reforms, (Ma'rif & Akbar, 2024) Muhammadiyah's educational philosophy integrates traditional Islamic values with modern knowledge, enabling it to address historical challenges effectively. This approach positions Muhammadiyah as a model for other Islamic movements globally, demonstrating how to harmonize faith with contemporary educational practices. Promoting gender equality, and engaging in international humanitarian efforts, Muhammadiyah has demonstrated a balanced approach that respects traditional values while embracing modern opportunities (Mohammad Bachrul Falah et al., 2024). This dual approach has allowed Muhammadiyah to maintain its relevance and influence both locally and globally.

Muhammadiyah's concept of Islam Berkemajuan (*Progressive Islam*) embodies the spirit of Nusantara – open to progress while staying rooted in cultural and religious heritage. Inspiration for Nusantara and Beyond. Muhammadiyah's balance of tradition and modernity reflects the unique approach of Islam in Nusantara. By adhering to relevant traditional values and leveraging modern opportunities, Muhammadiyah serves as a model for other Islamic movements worldwide facing similar challenges. Through the fusion of Nusantara's local values and global innovation, Muhammadiyah not only enriches the dynamics of Islam in Indonesia but also inspires how Islam can remain relevant, dynamic, and progressive amidst diversity and change.

Limitations in international engagement, despite its significant influence in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah's role on the international stage remains underexplored. This presents an opportunity for further research on how Muhammadiyah's principles can be applied in a global context. Academic Research Gaps: The global literature discussing Muhammadiyah's contributions to progressive Islam is still limited. Further studies involving comparative analyses with Islamic movements in other countries could provide broader insights.

Sustainability of programs, Muhammadiyah's efforts in education, social justice, and environmental issues need to be complemented with sustainability strategies, including resource management and international collaboration.

6. Conclusions

This research reveals that the thought of Islam Nusantara, with its approach that blends Islamic teachings with local traditions, makes a significant contribution to shaping the paradigm of progressive Islam, particularly in Southeast Asia. Within this framework, Muhammadiyah plays a key role by emphasizing principles of rationalism, modernity, education, and social justice as the foundation of its movement. Through these contributions, Muhammadiyah has not only provided Islam-based solutions to local



challenges but also offered a model of Islam capable of addressing the needs of global society.

Although Muhammadiyah's contributions have been profoundly felt in Indonesia, this study highlights that its influence abroad remains limited and not well understood. As one of the largest Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah holds vast potential to serve as a model for reinforcing progressive Islamic values at an international level, especially given its focus on strategic issues such as inclusive education, social empowerment, and environmental sustainability.

Further research is necessary to explore in greater depth how Muhammadiyah's principles and approaches can be applied in various global contexts. Such efforts are crucial to spotlighting Muhammadiyah's role in fostering cross-cultural and interfaith dialogue, as well as its contributions to presenting Islam as a force for an inclusive, just, and adaptable civilization in the face of modern challenges.

By addressing the limitations in existing data and literature, future research can expand understanding of Muhammadiyah as an innovative Islamic movement, not only in Indonesia but also on the global stage. This would enable Muhammadiyah to be more widely recognized as an inspiration for other Islamic organizations in bridging tradition and modernity to build a more just and sustainable society.

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