


Inclusive Peacebuilding through Nahdlatul Ulama in Local Conflict Resolution


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Abstract

This study examines the dynamics of socio-political conflict at the local level in Makassar and highlights the strategic role of Nahdlatul Ulama in constructing sustainable peace. Using a qualitative descriptive approach based on literature review and document analysis of scholarly publications, organizational documents, and research reports published mainly between 2021–2026. The findings indicate that socio-political conflicts tend to manifest in latent forms such as polarization, fragmentation, and identity-based tensions. Nahdlatul Ulama plays a significant role through deliberation-based dialogic mediation, inclusive dialogue, participatory decision-making, and trust-building among conflicting groups. In addition, the implementation of religious moderation through religious activities, education, and preaching strengthens social harmony and prevents conflict escalation. The study also highlights digital transformation as both an opportunity and a challenge in disseminating peace values. Overall, the integration of dialogic approaches, moderation values, and digital adaptation is essential for achieving sustainable peace at the local level.

Studi ini meneliti dinamika konflik sosial-politik di tingkat lokal di Makassar dan menyoroti peran strategis Nahdlatul Ulama dalam membangun perdamaian berkelanjutan. Menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif berdasarkan tinjauan pustaka dan analisis dokumen publikasi ilmiah, dokumen organisasi, dan laporan penelitian yang diterbitkan terutama antara tahun 2021–2026. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa konflik sosial-politik cenderung bermanifestasi dalam bentuk laten seperti polarisasi, fragmentasi, dan ketegangan berbasis identitas. Nahdlatul Ulama memainkan peran penting melalui mediasi dialogis berbasis musyawarah, dialog inklusif, pengambilan keputusan partisipatif, dan pembangunan kepercayaan di antara kelompok-kelompok yang berkonflik. Selain itu, implementasi moderasi agama melalui kegiatan keagamaan, pendidikan, dan dakwah memperkuat harmoni sosial dan mencegah eskalasi konflik. Studi ini juga menyoroti transformasi digital sebagai peluang sekaligus tantangan dalam menyebarkan nilai-nilai perdamaian. Secara keseluruhan, integrasi pendekatan dialogis, nilai-nilai moderasi, dan adaptasi digital sangat penting untuk mencapai perdamaian berkelanjutan di tingkat lokal.

INTRODUCTION

Socio-political conflict at the regional level remains a persistent phenomenon shaping the dynamics of community life across various regions in Indonesia, including Makassar as one of the major centers of economic and political growth in Eastern Indonesia. Although the democratic system has undergone significant development since the Reformasi era, various forms of conflict based on identity, political interests, and the distribution of resources continue to occur, particularly within the contemporary context marked by increasing social polarization and the influence of digital media. In Makassar, the dynamics of socio-political conflict do not always manifest in the form of open violence, but more often appear as social tensions, group fragmentation, and intense local political contestation, especially during regional head elections. Therefore, conflict should be understood as a complex social process involving power relations, legitimacy, and interactions among local actors within an ever-evolving social space¹.

In governance and political science studies, the peacebuilding approach has become an important framework for understanding how conflicts can be managed constructively toward the creation of sustainable peace². One example of contemporary socio-political conflict dynamics in Makassar can be observed in the increasing polarization of society following local political contestations, which often give rise to social segregation based on political preferences as well as religious identities³. Although it has not escalated into large-scale conflict, this condition indicates the presence of latent conflict potential that may disrupt social stability if not properly managed. In such situations, the role of local actors becomes highly significant, particularly those who possess social legitimacy and close ties to the community. These actors function not only as mediators but also as drivers of social reconciliation, capable of reducing tensions and rebuilding trust among different groups.

In this context, the presence of religious organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama becomes highly strategic in the peacebuilding process at the local level⁴. With its extensive grassroots network, Nahdlatul Ulama has the capacity to reach various segments of society and serve as a bridge for communication

¹ Bastiaensen et al., "Fostering Bottom-up Actor Coalitions for Transforming Complex Rural Territorial Pathways"; Routh, "Examining the Legal Legitimacy of Informal Economic Activities."

² Vasist, Chatterjee, and Krishnan, "The Polarizing Impact of Political Disinformation and Hate Speech: A Cross-Country Configural Narrative."

³ Suhardi, "The Impact of Identity Politics in Elections on Social Polarization in Urban Indonesian Communities."

⁴ Mahfudin and Sundrijo, "Faith-Based Transnational Actors and Peacebuilding: An Analysis of the Role Of Nahdlatul Ulama in Afghanistan's Peace Process."

among groups with the potential for conflict⁵. In Makassar, this role is reflected through various religious activities, inter-community dialogues, and efforts to strengthen the values of religious moderation aimed at maintaining social harmony amid diversity. Furthermore, the presence of Nahdlatul Ulama figures who possess strong moral authority constitutes an important factor in building social legitimacy in the process of conflict resolution.

The strategic role of Nahdlatul Ulama in the construction of peace is closely linked to the values it upholds, such as *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawassuth* (moderation), and *tawazun* (balance), which serve as foundational principles in fostering harmonious social relations. This approach enables the organization to be widely accepted across diverse segments of society, including in situations of conflict involving differences in interests and identities. However, in the context of contemporary socio-political conflict in Makassar, the challenges faced are far from simple. The complexity of conflicts shaped by factors such as electoral politics, socio-economic disparities, and the flow of digital information demands more adaptive and innovative peacebuilding strategies⁶.

The current state of this research shows that in the past five years, studies on peacebuilding have increasingly emphasized the importance of the role of non-state actors in conflict resolution, both at the global and local levels. The study by⁷ is entitled "The Role of Non-State Actors in Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Analysis of Peacebuilding Efforts in Colombia and Nepal." found that non-state actors play an important role in facilitating dialogue and reconciliation, although it is still comparative and has not examined religious value-based practices at the local level. Furthermore in "From Confrontation to Cooperation: Describing Non-State Armed Group-UN Interactions in Peace Operations" highlights the transformation of relations between non-state actors and global institutions in peacebuilding, but focuses more on armed actors and the international level⁸. Meanwhile, through "Peacebuilding in Somalia: Local Realities, Federal Aspirations, and the Shifting Role of External Support" the importance of local context and community involvement in building peace, but has not yet integrated a specific approach to religious moderation and

⁵ Gunawan, "The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Fostering Interfaith Harmony Through Social Capital in Palembang City."

⁶ Besinga and Mukete, "Technological Innovations for Climate Adaptation and Peacebuilding: A Holistic Approach to Resource Conflict and Environmental Challenges."

⁷ Ramirez, "The Role of Non-State Actors in Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Analysis of Peacebuilding Efforts in Colombia and Nepal."

⁸ Kotajoki, "From Confrontation to Cooperation: Describing Non-State Armed Group-UN Interactions in Peace Operations."

deliberative dialogue⁹. In contrast to these studies, this study offers novelty by examining in depth the role of local religious organizations, namely Nahdlatul Ulama, in the context of urban socio-political conflict through a deliberation-based dialogic mediation approach, the implementation of religious moderation, and adaptation to digital dynamics, thus providing a more contextual and applicable empirical contribution in building inclusive and sustainable peace. Previous studies on Nahdlatul Ulama have mainly focused on religious moderation and civil society at the national level, while peacebuilding studies emphasize state and international actors. Therefore, limited attention has been given to Nahdlatul Ulama as a local dialogic mediator in managing urban socio-political conflict shaped by digital polarization and identity contestation in Makassar.

Although previous studies have discussed peacebuilding and the role of Nahdlatul Ulama in religious moderation, most remain focused on national, normative, or interfaith dimensions. Limited attention has been given to how Nahdlatul Ulama operates as a local dialogic mediator in managing latent socio-political conflicts within contemporary urban contexts shaped by digital polarization and identity contestation. This study addresses that gap by examining peacebuilding through deliberation-based mediation, religious moderation, and digital adaptation in the socio-political dynamics of Makassar.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach because socio-political conflict and peacebuilding are complex social phenomena shaped by social relations, political contestation, and digital polarization in Makassar. This approach enables an in-depth analysis of how Nahdlatul Ulama constructs peace through religious moderation and dialogic mediation¹⁰. The qualitative approach is chosen because it allows the researcher to comprehensively explore meanings, perspectives, and social practices that develop within the context of conflict¹¹. Data collection techniques are carried out through a literature review of various scholarly sources, including academic journals, books, and relevant research reports, as well as the analysis of official documents such as organizational statements, policies, and archives related to Nahdlatul Ulama's involvement in socio-political issues. The data obtained are then analyzed descriptively by identifying emerging patterns, themes, and trends, thereby providing a

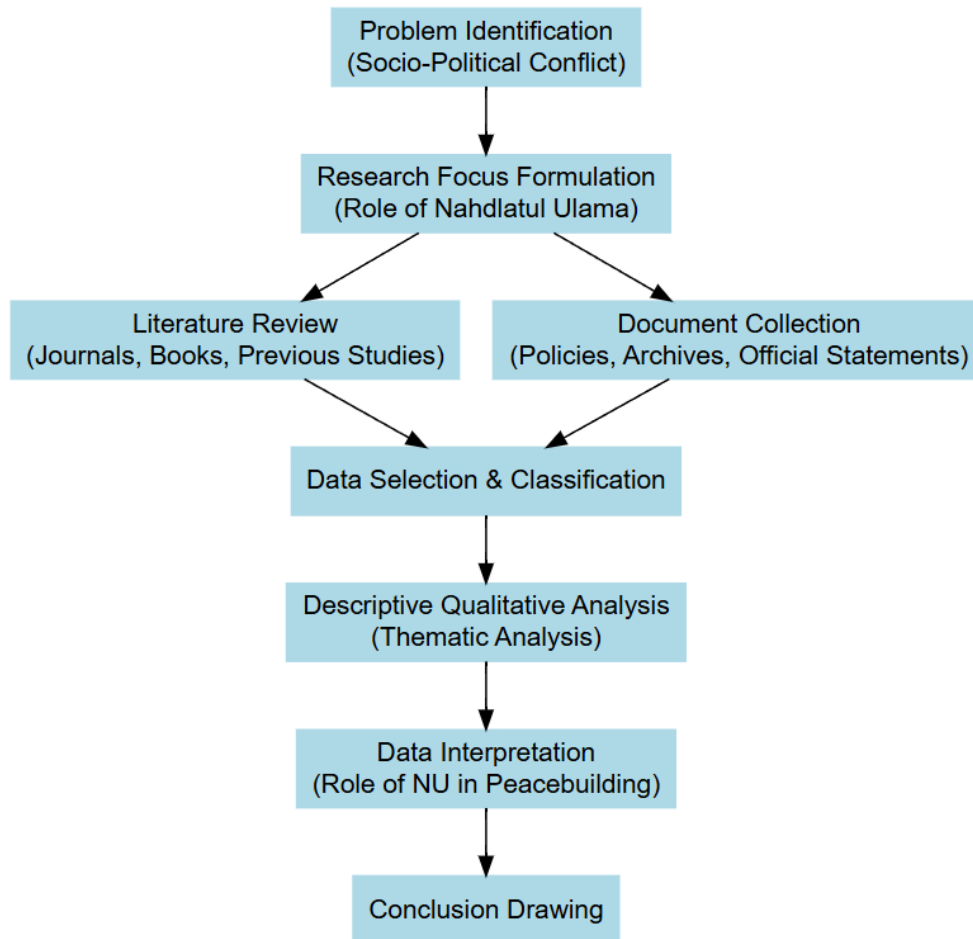
⁹ Ndutu N, "Peacebuilding in Somalia: Local Realities, Federal Aspirations, and the Shifting Role of External Support."

¹⁰ Villamin et al., "A Worked Example of Qualitative Descriptive Design: A Step-by-Step Guide for Novice and Early Career Researchers."

¹¹ Emon, "Research Approach: A Comparative Analysis of Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies in Social Science Research."

systematic account of how Nahdlatul Ulama positions itself as a strategic actor in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts amid complex socio-political dynamics.

Figure 1. Diagram Alur Penelitian



Source: Data Processes by the Author 2026

Figure 1 is The research flowchart begins with the stage of problem identification, which focuses on the dynamics of socio-political conflict. At this stage, the researcher seeks to understand the broader context of conflict, including its underlying causes, patterns, and implications within society. This initial step is crucial as it provides the foundation for formulating a clear and focused research direction. Following this, the research proceeds to the formulation of the research focus, specifically emphasizing the role of Nahdlatul Ulama as a religious organization in addressing and managing socio-political conflicts. This stage narrows the scope of the study, ensuring that the analysis

remains relevant and aligned with the objectives of examining peacebuilding practices at the local level¹².

The next stage involves data collection through two primary sources: literature review and document collection. The literature review includes academic journals, books, and previous studies that provide theoretical and empirical insights into socio-political conflict and peacebuilding. In parallel, document collection focuses on gathering official materials such as policies, organizational statements, and archival records related to Nahdlatul Ulama's involvement in socio-political issues. These two sources of data are then integrated in the process of data selection and classification, where relevant information is systematically organized based on themes, categories, and research needs¹³. This step ensures that the data used in the analysis is both credible and aligned with the research objectives.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis supported by NVivo software to facilitate systematic coding, theme classification, and the identification of relationships between themes and subthemes. NVivo was utilized to organize qualitative data obtained from literature reviews and document analysis, enabling a more structured and transparent analytical process. In addition, the software supported the visualization of research findings through thematic models such as treemaps, heatmaps, and Sankey diagrams, which helped illustrate patterns, thematic dominance, and the interconnected dynamics of socio-political conflict and peacebuilding. Therefore, the use of NVivo strengthened both the rigor of qualitative analysis and the interpretation of the strategic role of Nahdlatul Ulama in local peacebuilding processes.¹⁴

To ensure data validity and trustworthiness, this study employed source triangulation by comparing findings from academic journals, books, research reports, and official organizational documents. In addition, credibility was strengthened through systematic thematic analysis and repeated interpretation of data to maintain consistency between themes and research findings. The use of NVivo software also supported data dependability and confirmability by providing a structured coding process and transparent theme categorization.

¹² Ogunsola and Babatope, "Bridging Global and Local: Enhancing the Effectiveness of International Organizations in Local Peacebuilding Initiatives."

¹³ Taherdoost, "What Are Different Research Approaches? Comprehensive Review of Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Research, Their Applications, Types, and Limitations."

¹⁴ zafinatu Mainimo And Christopher Ndikum, "Non-State Actors And Conflict Resolution In Anglophone Cameroon."

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Deliberation Based Dialogic Mediation

The deliberation-based dialogic mediation approach has emerged as an important strategy in peacebuilding, particularly in the context of complex and multilayered socio-political conflicts. This approach emphasizes a dialogic process that is not merely communicative but also deliberative, in which all parties involved are given equal space to express their views, interests, and aspirations openly. In this framework, dialogue functions not only as a means of exchanging information but also as a collective mechanism for building mutual understanding and formulating solutions that are acceptable to all parties. Therefore, deliberation-based mediation holds significant potential in reducing tensions and preventing the escalation of broader conflicts.

In practice, this approach is highly relevant when implemented by local actors who possess strong social legitimacy and close ties to the community, such as Nahdlatul Ulama. Through its extensive grassroots network, Nahdlatul Ulama is able to facilitate inclusive and participatory spaces for dialogue by involving various groups with the potential for conflict. The dialogic process developed is not solely focused on short-term problem-solving, but also on building trust and strengthening social relations among groups. By promoting values of moderation, tolerance, and balance, this approach enables the creation of a conducive and productive dialogic environment¹⁵.

Deliberation-based dialogic mediation contributes to building a foundation for sustainable peace through the transformation of perspectives and patterns of interaction among social actors¹⁶. In the context of contemporary socio-political conflicts, which are often shaped by polarization and disinformation, this approach becomes increasingly important as it provides space for clarification and collective reflection. Thus, deliberation-based dialogic mediation serves not only as a tool for conflict resolution but also as a process of social learning that fosters a more inclusive, democratic, and resilient society in the face of potential future conflicts.

¹⁵ Uda, "Teaching Tolerance through Literature : A Study in English Language Classrooms in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education."

¹⁶ Istiyani, Karnadi, and Nasikhin, "Building a Moderate Generation through Inclusive Education: A Case Study in Semi-Modern Islamic Boarding Schools."

Figure 2. Treemap of Deliberation Based Dialogic Mediation



Source: Data Processes by the Nvivo 2026

Figure is The treemap visualization presented represents the results of a thematic analysis of deliberation-based dialogic mediation in the context of socio-political conflict resolution. In this visualization, the main concept is positioned as an overarching framework that encompasses various more specific themes and subthemes, forming a systematic hierarchical structure. The size of each box in the treemap reflects the level of dominance or intensity of each theme within the research data, which in practice can be interpreted as the frequency of occurrence in the coding process or the level of significance in qualitative analysis. Thus, the treemap functions not only as a visual aid but also as a conceptual representation that illustrates how meaning is constructed in a layered manner within the research. This visualization enables both researchers and readers to quickly grasp the relationships among themes while identifying the most prominent aspects of the overall findings¹⁷.

The main theme, deliberation-based dialogic mediation, serves as the core of the analysis and is further divided into three major categories: inclusive dialogue, deliberation process, and trust building. These categories reflect the fundamental dimensions of deliberative dialogue-based mediation practices aimed at constructive conflict resolution. Inclusive dialogue occupies a relatively large portion of the treemap, indicating that the equal involvement of diverse actors is a crucial element in the conflict resolution process. Subthemes such as

¹⁷ Ahmed et al., “Using Thematic Analysis in Qualitative Research.”

community participation and equal voice reinforce the finding that the success of mediation largely depends on the extent to which all involved groups are given fair opportunities to express their views, interests, and aspirations. This highlights that mediation is not merely a communicative process but also a democratic practice that places equality at the center of social interaction. In the context of socio-political conflict, particularly those driven by differences in identity and interests, this approach is essential to prevent the domination of one group over others.

Furthermore, the deliberation process category illustrates how collective and reflective decision-making lies at the heart of deliberation-based mediation. The subtheme collective decision-making shows that solutions generated through joint deliberation tend to have higher levels of acceptance, as they involve the active participation of all stakeholders¹⁸. This contrasts with top-down approaches, which often result in decisions that lack legitimacy among certain groups. Meanwhile, the subtheme mutual understanding emphasizes the importance of exchanging perspectives and clarifying misunderstandings, which are often key drivers of conflict. In this regard, deliberative dialogue serves as a space for collective reflection, allowing each party to better understand the positions and experiences of others. Therefore, the deliberation process is not only oriented toward reaching agreements but also toward transforming perspectives and improving the quality of relationships among social actors.

The final category, trust building, highlights an equally important dimension in conflict resolution, namely the development and maintenance of social trust. The subtheme social cohesion illustrates how sustained and inclusive interactions can strengthen relationships among groups that were previously fragmented due to conflict. Meanwhile, reconciliation emphasizes the deeper process of restoring social relations, addressing not only formal aspects but also the emotional and psychological dimensions of the parties involved¹⁹. In this context, trust is not understood as a static outcome but as a dynamic process continuously built through open communication, consistency in actions, and commitment to shared values. The success of trust-building efforts becomes a crucial foundation for sustainable peace, as agreements reached through mediation may remain fragile without a strong basis of trust.

The treemap provides a comprehensive illustration of how the various dimensions of deliberation-based dialogic mediation interact and contribute to

¹⁸ Grcheva and Oktay Vehbi, "From Public Participation to Co-Creation in the Cultural Heritage Management Decision-Making Process."

¹⁹ Genbezo, Gatiso, and Adafre, "Cultural Pathways to Reconciliation and Harmony: Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanisms and Peace Formation Practices Among the Dawuro Ethnic Group of Southwest Ethiopia."

creating more inclusive, participatory, and sustainable conflict resolution. The relationships among themes depicted in this visualization demonstrate that successful peacebuilding does not rely on a single factor but rather emerges from the synergy between inclusive dialogue, high-quality deliberative processes, and continuous trust-building efforts. Therefore, this visualization not only strengthens the empirical findings of the study but also offers a conceptual framework that can be used to understand and develop more effective conflict resolution strategies, particularly within complex and dynamic socio-political contexts.

Implementation of religious Moderation Through Religious Activities, Education, and Preaching

The implementation of religious moderation through religious activities, education, and preaching represents a strategic approach in fostering social harmony within diverse societies. In pluralistic contexts, where differences in beliefs and identities are inherent, religious moderation serves as a guiding principle to prevent the escalation of conflict and promote mutual respect. This approach emphasizes the importance of balanced religious understanding, encouraging individuals and communities to practice their faith without negating the rights and existence of others. As such, religious moderation is not merely a normative concept, but a practical framework that can be operationalized through various social and religious instruments.

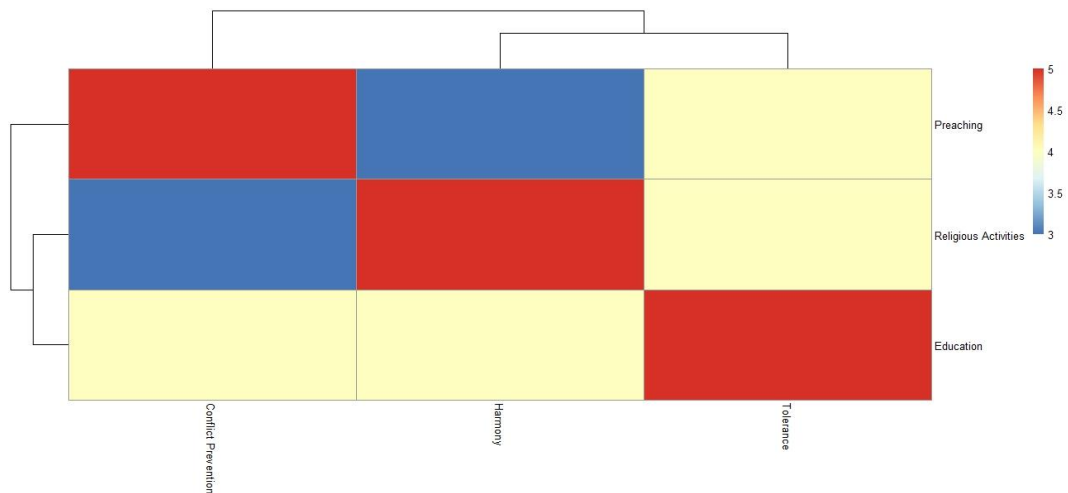
Religious activities play a significant role as a primary medium for embedding the values of moderation within society. Through routine gatherings such as sermons, study circles, and community-based religious events, messages of tolerance, inclusivity, and peaceful coexistence can be consistently disseminated. These activities provide direct engagement with the community, allowing religious leaders to shape perspectives and influence attitudes at the grassroots level²⁰. In this context, religious preaching becomes a crucial channel for promoting moderate interpretations of religious teachings, ensuring that doctrinal messages are conveyed in ways that support social cohesion rather than division.

In addition to religious activities, education serves as a long-term mechanism for institutionalizing the values of religious moderation. Through formal and informal educational settings, such as schools, pesantren, and community learning forums, individuals are equipped with critical thinking skills and a comprehensive understanding of religious teachings that emphasize

²⁰ Koehrsen, "Muslims and Climate Change: How Islam, Muslim Organizations, and Religious Leaders Influence Climate Change Perceptions and Mitigation Activities."

balance and tolerance. The integration of moderation values into educational curricula and learning processes helps to build resilience against radical and exclusive ideologies. Consequently, the synergy between religious activities, education, and preaching creates a holistic approach that not only addresses immediate social tensions but also contributes to the formation of a more inclusive, peaceful, and resilient society.

Figure 3. Relationship between Theme and Impact



Source: Data Processes by the Authro 2026

Figure 3 presents the results of the analysis in the form of a heatmap depicting the relationship between three main dimensions in the implementation of religious moderation: preaching, religious activities, and education, with three indicators of social impact: conflict prevention, harmony, and tolerance. The color intensity in each cell indicates the strength of the relationship between these variables, with redder colors indicating a stronger relationship and bluer colors indicating a weaker relationship. Furthermore, the dendrograms on the sides and top of the visualization show patterns of proximity or similarity between variables, providing additional insight into how each dimension relates to each other within the research context.

Based on the visualization, the preaching dimension has the strongest relationship with the conflict prevention indicator, as indicated by the dominant red color in the cell. This indicates that preaching practices that prioritize religious moderation play a significant role in preventing social conflict in society. Persuasive, inclusive preaching, and emphasizing messages of peace can shape collective awareness in society, encouraging people to avoid actions that

could potentially trigger conflict²¹. However, the relationship between preaching and harmony appears weaker than that of the other indicators, suggesting that while preaching is effective in preventing conflict, its contribution to fostering social harmony may require support from other dimensions such as education and more interactive socio-religious activities.

The religious activities dimension shows the strongest relationship with the harmony indicator, as indicated by the dominant red color in the cell. This suggests that collective religious activities, such as religious study groups, socio-religious activities, and community gatherings, play a crucial role in building and strengthening social harmony. These activities not only serve as a means to deepen religious understanding but also serve as a space for social interaction that enables communication and integration between individuals and groups. Through intense and sustained interaction in religious activities, communities can build a sense of togetherness and solidarity, ultimately strengthening social cohesion. On the other hand, the relationship between religious activities and conflict prevention appears to be lower, indicating that religious activities play a greater role in maintaining social relations than in directly preventing conflict.

The education dimension shows the strongest relationship with the tolerance indicator, indicated by the red color in the cell. This indicates that education plays a very strategic role in shaping attitudes of tolerance in society. Through educational processes, both formal and informal, individuals are equipped with a deeper understanding of the values of diversity, inclusivity, and respect for differences. Education also plays a role in developing critical thinking skills, enabling individuals to resist the influence of extreme or provocative narratives that can trigger conflict²². However, the relationship between education and the conflict prevention and harmony indicators appears to be moderate, indicating that the impact of education is more long-term and requires a continuous process of internalization of values.

The dendrogram in this visualization also provides important information regarding the proximity between dimensions. It appears that religious activities and preaching have a relatively closer level of similarity than education, indicating that the two dimensions share more similar characteristics in practice, particularly in the context of directly conveying religious values to the community. Meanwhile, education tends to stand as a more separate dimension, reflecting its more systematic, structured, and long-term orientation.

²¹ Nwokoro, "Embracing a Common and Inclusive Approach: Building Sustainable Peace in a Violent Society from a Theological Ethics Perspective."

²² Naseer and Shaheen, "Significance of Critical Thinking through Education in Countering Violent Extremism in Pakistan."

This visualization shows that the implementation of religious moderation through these three main dimensions has distinct yet complementary contributions to creating peaceful and harmonious social conditions. No single dimension alone can optimally achieve all social impact indicators; synergy between preaching, religious activities, and education is necessary. Preaching plays a crucial role in conflict prevention, religious activities strengthen social harmony, and education fosters sustainable tolerance. Therefore, a holistic and integrated approach is key to optimizing the implementation of religious moderation in the face of complex social dynamics.

Digital Acceleration in Educational Transformation

Digital acceleration in educational transformation has become a defining feature of contemporary learning systems, driven by rapid technological advancements and the increasing integration of digital tools into everyday life²³. This transformation is not merely about adopting new technologies, but about fundamentally reshaping how knowledge is accessed, delivered, and experienced. Educational institutions are increasingly leveraging digital platforms, online learning environments, and interactive technologies to enhance accessibility and flexibility in learning. As a result, traditional boundaries of time and space in education are being redefined, enabling learners to engage with educational content in more dynamic and personalized ways.

The acceleration of digital transformation in education also brings significant changes to pedagogical approaches and the roles of educators and learners. Teachers are no longer positioned solely as knowledge transmitters, but as facilitators who guide students in navigating digital resources, developing critical thinking skills, and engaging in collaborative learning processes²⁴. At the same time, students are encouraged to take a more active role in their learning journey, utilizing digital tools to explore, create, and share knowledge. This shift fosters a more learner-centered environment, where adaptability, creativity, and digital literacy become essential competencies in responding to the demands of the modern world.

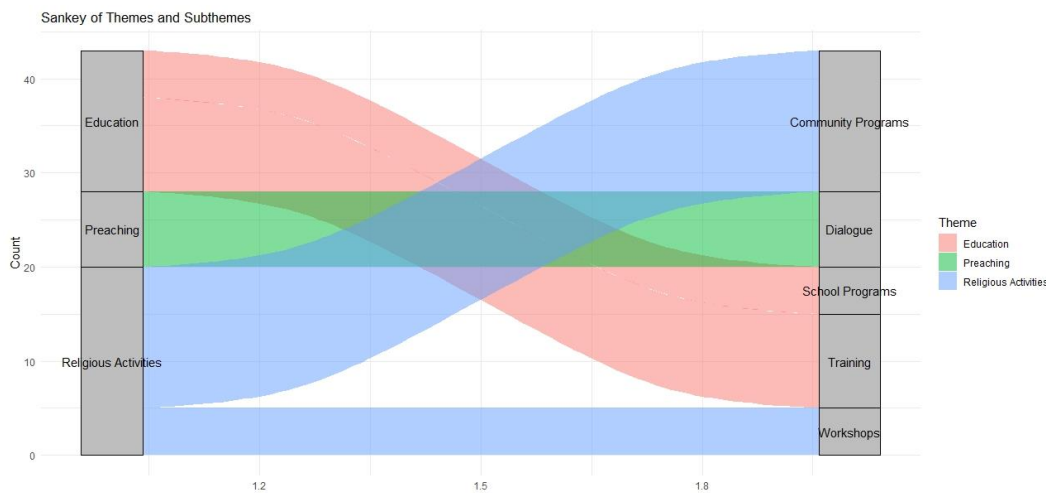
The process of digital acceleration in education is not without challenges. Issues such as unequal access to technology, varying levels of digital literacy, and the need for adequate infrastructure can create disparities in learning opportunities. Moreover, the rapid influx of digital information requires careful management to ensure the quality and credibility of educational content. Despite these challenges, digital transformation presents a significant opportunity to

²³ Alenezi, "Digital Learning and Digital Institution in Higher Education."

²⁴ Aspandi and Muttaqin, "Transforming Teacher Roles in Indonesia's Digital Era: Enhancing Learning Effectiveness and Student Engagement."

build more inclusive, innovative, and resilient educational systems. By integrating technology with sound pedagogical strategies, education can evolve to better meet the needs of diverse learners and contribute to sustainable development in an increasingly digital society.

Figure 4. Sankey of Themes and Subthemes



Source: Processes by the Author 2026

Figure 4 is a visualization of a Sankey diagram, often called an alluvial plot, which maps the relationship between the main research theme and the subthemes that appear within it. In the context of qualitative research, this diagram serves as a very effective tool for visually presenting thematic structure and flow, so that readers can understand how the research focus is divided into several more specific aspects and how each subtheme contributes to the main theme. In this diagram, the horizontal axis displays two levels of categories: Theme as the main category and Subtheme as a more specific derivative category, while the vertical axis shows the number or frequency of occurrence of each subtheme, which in this code is represented by the variable Count. This visualization not only emphasizes the hierarchical relationship between themes and subthemes but also emphasizes the relative proportion of each subtheme, so readers can see which subtheme is more dominant in the research.

The resulting diagram shows that the theme "Religious Activities" has two subthemes: "Community Programs" and "Workshops," with frequencies of 15 and 5, respectively. This indicates that the research focuses more on community programs than workshops, providing a quantitative overview of the research's focus on religious activities. Meanwhile, the theme "Education" is divided into the subthemes "Training" and "School Programs," with frequencies

of 10 and 5, respectively. This diagram shows how education, as a research theme, is divided into two distinct aspects: general training and formal education programs in schools, with training being the more prominent subtheme. Furthermore, the theme "Preaching" has one subtheme, "Dialogue," with a frequency of 8, indicating that the lecture or teaching aspect of the research focuses more on dialogue, which can refer to direct interactions between religious leaders and the community or between groups of participants within the research context. A crucial visual element in this diagram is the alluvium, the lines or streams connecting the main theme to the subthemes.

These streams are colored according to the main theme, making it easier for readers to follow the path of each subtheme from its parent theme. For example, the same color will be used for both subthemes of "Religious Activities," making the relationship between the parent theme and its subthemes immediately visible. The width of the stream on each line represents the number or frequency of subthemes' occurrences, allowing readers to easily assess the relative importance of each subtheme compared to the others. Subthemes with broader streams, such as "Community Programs," demonstrate greater dominance or significance within the research context than narrower subthemes, such as "Workshops" or "School Programs." In this way, the diagram intuitively conveys quantitative information through a narrative visual element.

In the context of Makassar, deliberation-based mediation was implemented through community religious forums, intergroup discussions, and moderation-oriented preaching conducted by local Nahdlatul Ulama figures, particularly during periods of political contestation. The findings indicate that socio-political tensions were frequently intensified by digital polarization and identity-based narratives circulating through social media. In response, Nahdlatul Ulama utilized religious gatherings and community dialogue as informal mediation spaces to reduce tensions, rebuild communication between groups, and strengthen social cohesion within urban communities.

DISCUSSION

Although Nahdlatul Ulama has played a significant role in promoting peacebuilding through dialogic mediation and religious moderation, the implementation of these approaches in Makassar also encounters various structural, social, and technological challenges. Peacebuilding at the local level cannot be understood as a simple or linear process because socio-political conflicts in urban society are shaped by complex interactions between political interests, identity contestation, religious narratives, and the rapid transformation of digital communication. In the context of Makassar, the dynamics of local political contestation frequently generate polarization among community groups,

particularly during regional elections where political preferences are often intertwined with religious and cultural identities. Under these conditions, efforts to promote inclusive dialogue and moderation-oriented discourse are not always easily accepted by all segments of society.

One of the primary obstacles faced in the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives is the persistence of conservative and identity-based narratives that tend to reject pluralistic and inclusive approaches. In several social contexts, moderation discourse is sometimes perceived as weakening ideological purity or reducing the dominance of particular identity groups within local political dynamics. As a result, dialogic mediation efforts carried out by Nahdlatul Ulama often face resistance from groups that prefer confrontational, exclusive, or highly ideological approaches in responding to socio-political issues. This resistance becomes more visible during moments of political contestation, where religious symbols and identity narratives are frequently mobilized to strengthen political support and social influence. Consequently, peacebuilding efforts are challenged not only by social fragmentation but also by the politicization of religious identity itself.

In addition, the expansion of digital media has significantly transformed the landscape of socio-political conflict in Makassar. Digital platforms and social media have accelerated the circulation of information, but at the same time they have intensified the spread of disinformation, hate speech, and provocative narratives capable of deepening polarization within society. The speed of information dissemination in digital spaces often exceeds the ability of local institutions and community actors to conduct verification and mediation processes. This condition creates a situation where emotional narratives, political propaganda, and identity-based provocation can rapidly shape public opinion and trigger social tensions. In many cases, conflict escalation no longer occurs primarily through direct physical confrontation, but rather through symbolic contestation and discursive battles within digital public spaces.

The challenges of digital transformation are further complicated by unequal levels of digital literacy among community members. While digital platforms provide opportunities for disseminating peace narratives and moderation values, not all segments of society possess the critical capacity to evaluate the credibility of online information. Low digital literacy increases vulnerability to manipulation, misinformation, and extremist narratives circulated through social media networks. Under such circumstances, the dissemination of peacebuilding messages by Nahdlatul Ulama often faces limitations in terms of reach, effectiveness, and public engagement. Moderation narratives that rely on rational dialogue and gradual social persuasion frequently

struggle to compete with sensational, emotional, and polarizing content that tends to spread more rapidly within digital ecosystems.

Another important challenge lies in the institutional and infrastructural limitations faced by local peacebuilding actors. Although Nahdlatul Ulama possesses strong social legitimacy and extensive grassroots networks, the organization still encounters constraints related to technological adaptation, digital communication strategies, and the optimization of online engagement. The transformation of peacebuilding practices from conventional face-to-face interaction toward digitally mediated communication requires not only technological resources but also new communication capacities capable of responding to contemporary patterns of information consumption. Without adaptive strategies, peacebuilding initiatives risk losing relevance among younger generations who increasingly interact within digital environments dominated by fast-moving and algorithm-driven information flows.

Furthermore, the complexity of socio-political conflict in Makassar demonstrates that peacebuilding is essentially a continuous negotiation process rather than a final or permanent achievement. Social harmony remains vulnerable to shifts in political dynamics, economic inequality, identity mobilization, and technological disruption. This means that peacebuilding efforts carried out by Nahdlatul Ulama must continuously adapt to changing social realities while maintaining the principles of inclusivity, deliberation, and religious moderation. In this regard, the role of Nahdlatul Ulama extends beyond functioning merely as a religious organization; it also operates as a social mediator that actively negotiates competing interests, reconstructs communication between fragmented groups, and strengthens social resilience amid the pressures of contemporary urban conflict dynamics.

Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that the success of local peacebuilding depends not only on the existence of moderation values and dialogic mediation mechanisms, but also on the capacity of local actors to respond critically and adaptively to evolving political, social, and digital challenges. The interaction between conservative resistance, identity politics, digital polarization, and unequal technological access illustrates that peacebuilding in contemporary urban society requires multidimensional strategies that integrate social legitimacy, digital literacy, community participation, and adaptive communication approaches. Under these circumstances, peacebuilding becomes an ongoing social process that requires continuous negotiation, collective commitment, and sustainable institutional adaptation.

CONCLUSION

Despite these findings, this study has several limitations, particularly due to its reliance on qualitative document analysis and literature-based data, which may not fully capture direct field experiences and community perceptions regarding peacebuilding practices in Makassar. In addition, the study mainly focuses on the role of Nahdlatul Ulama, without extensively comparing the involvement of other local actors in socio-political conflict management. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ field-based qualitative methods such as interviews and participant observation to explore community experiences more deeply. Comparative studies involving different regions, religious organizations, or digital peacebuilding practices would also contribute to strengthening the broader discourse on local peacebuilding and socio-political conflict resolution.

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