

## A comparison of Islamic religious practices in Pakistan and Indonesia: A sociocultural perspective

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### ABSTRACT

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Islam is the majority religion in both Pakistan and Indonesia, the two countries with the largest Muslim populations in the world. This article compares Islamic religious practices from a sociocultural perspective such as diversity of Islamic practices until religious issues in Indonesia and Pakistan. The research method used is qualitative including lectures delivered from Assist. Prof. Muhammad Ajmal Shah, an academic and practitioner from Pakistan is a key informant and held in in Dusun Watutebok, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali. Followed by collecting data based on search engines and categorizing it as relevant to the research topic. The data will be compared from both Pakistan and Indonesia to identify similarities and differences in the implementation of Islam on their social and cultural aspects linking them to relevant theories and concepts. Pakistan, founded as an Islamic state, applies a more conservative interpretation of Islam, incorporating Sharia law into its legal and social systems. On the other hand, Indonesia, as the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, integrates Islamic practices within a pluralistic governance framework that includes both secular and customary laws, fostering a diverse cultural environment and promoting religious tolerance. The findings suggest that while both countries face common challenges related to globalization and maintaining religious identity, their differing socio-cultural approaches to Islam have led to distinct outcomes in terms of social harmony, cultural integration, and the negotiation of religious diversity.

**Keywords:** culture, Indonesia, Islamic religious practices, Pakistan, social

### INTRODUCTION

Islam was first revealed in Mecca nearly 15 centuries ago, and while it shares some similarities with other religions, it also exhibits distinct differences. The similarities primarily relate to its core, unchanging doctrines, while the differences are more evident in the interpretation and application of the religion across the world. These variations arise because Islam engages deeply with human reality, including culture. The diversity becomes especially apparent when we examine how Islam is practiced in different regions of the world (Hermansyah, 2014; Sadaaf, 2022). Islam is the dominant religion in Pakistan and Indonesia, the two countries with the largest Muslim populations globally. Despite sharing Islam as their principal faith, religious practices in

these nations are deeply influenced by their distinct historical, social, and cultural trajectories. Pakistan, founded as an Islamic state following its separation from India in 1947, has a legal and social system heavily informed by Sharia principles. Pakistan has been struggling to become a Muslim state since its foundation. The political issue of how to become a modern as well as Muslim state eventually changed into ideological (Hermansyah, 2014). In Pakistan, the foundation of the constitution is explicitly rooted in Islamic principles, derived from the Quran and Sunnah. The nation's commitment to Islamic values is historically linked to its time as part of India, where Islamic laws gained a significant institutional foothold. Following independence, Pakistan further institutionalized these principles, making Sharia a critical influence on its policymaking and legal systems. However, much like other Islamic nations, Pakistan's legal framework primarily emphasizes civil law, with criminal law receiving comparatively less Sharia-based focus (Amir, 2024; Amir & Rahman, 2024). This prioritization reflects an effort to harmonize traditional Islamic teachings with modern governance requirements.

Indonesia offers a contrasting paradigm, wherein Islamic practices are intricately interwoven with the archipelago's rich cultural diversity. Unlike Pakistan, Indonesia's legal framework does not establish Sharia as the sole guiding principle but integrates it alongside customary (*adat*) and secular laws. This pluralistic approach fosters inclusivity, accommodating the nation's multi-religious and multi-ethnic composition. Consequently, Indonesian Islam is often celebrated for its moderate and culturally adaptive characteristics, where religious rituals and customs coexist with indigenous traditions. The approach of legal pluralism is the most suitable for the pluralistic nature of Indonesian society. In terms of lawmaking, lawmakers must be capable of creating laws and regulations that align with the values present in society (living law) as well as morals, ethics, and religion. The same applies to law enforcement. Pancasila has proven to be a well-qualified ideology and foundation for the governance of the state (particularly in the realm of law) in a pluralistic society. Substantive justice is embedded in each principle of Pancasila (Lufaefi, 2019; Marjani, 2023; Sila, 2018; Simanjuntak, 2022).

This study is conducted in two stages, starting with information gathered from key informants, followed by a literature review on relevant topics, and supports qualitative research about comparing the Islamic religious practices in Pakistan and Indonesia from socio-cultural perspectives. By examining the differences and similarities in how Islam is practiced in these two nations, it aims to provide deeper insights into the interaction between religion and culture in shaping societal dynamics. Understanding these variations not only underscores the diversity within the Muslim world but also offers valuable lessons on fostering coexistence and harmony in pluralistic societies (Marenza & Karimuddin, 2024; Sulaeman, 2017). Through this comparative lens, the study highlights the broader implications of Islam's role in influencing social and cultural life in Pakistan and Indonesia, revealing the richness and complexity of Islamic practice in varying contexts.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The method employed in this religious guidance activity is a qualitative research approach, utilizing a lecture (Figure 1) and involves oral explanations presented to participants, who listen to the material being delivered. The keynote speaker for the event was Assist. Prof. Muhammad Ajmal Shah, PharmD, MPhil, Ph.D, is a renowned academic and practitioner from Pakistan, recognized for his expertise in pharmacy and Islamic studies. This religious activity was held on August 27, 2024, in Dusun Watutebok, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali (Figure 2). This

location was chosen due to its distinct characteristics that are relevant to the research objectives. The community in this area exhibits unique practices in both Islam and culture, providing a rich context for this study. For instance, the interpretation and application of Islamic teachings in this region may differ from other areas, making it an ideal site for examining the diversity of Islamic practices and their impact on community life. The religious and cultural nuances of this location offer a deeper understanding of how Islam is interpreted and applied in daily life, aligning with the focus of this research on religious diversity and its interaction with cultural realities. Data collection in this study used a combination of qualitative instruments. Primary data was gathered through in-depth lectures with key informants, who provided insights based on their personal experiences and knowledge of Islamic practices and local culture. Additionally, the study also includes a literature review on topics relevant to the research objectives based on search engines.



Figure 1. Presentation of the material by the speaker using the lecture method by Assist. Prof. Muhammad Ajmal Shah, PharmD, MPhil, Ph.D.



Figure 2. The condition of the material delivery by the speaker to the residents of Watutebok Hamlet, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali.

To ensure data validity, this study employs triangulation methods, which involve using various data sources and data collection techniques. This triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from interviews with key informants and existing literature in order to ensure the consistency and credibility of the findings. This process aims to identify emerging themes from

the existing data. Such an analysis allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of Islamic practices and interpretations within the community, as well as how these interact with local culture.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Diversity of Islamic Sects and Practices: A Social and Cultural Perspective in Indonesia and Pakistan**

Indonesia, although not an Islamic state, has a majority population that adheres to Islam, especially the Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah (Sunni) school of thought. Among Sunni Muslims, there are affiliations with organizations such as Al Jam'iyyatul Washliyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Persis, and Muhammadiyah, which play an important role in shaping the socio-religious landscape through their representation in the Indonesian Ulema Council. Although Sunni are the majority, the emergence of new sects such as Shia and Ahmadiyah demonstrate the dynamics of religious pluralism in Indonesia, although the MUI has classified these sects as deviant (Waseem et al., 2009). This diversity is enriched by the integration of local traditions, such as *slametan* and *tahlilan*, into religious practices, reflecting the acculturation of Islam with Javanese culture.

On the other hand, Pakistan is also a country with a Sunni Muslim majority but is more dominant following the Hanafi school of thought. The Hanafi tradition greatly influences daily religious practices, especially in the application of Islamic law related to family and inheritance (Waseem et al., 2009). This influence creates uniformity in religious and legal practices, making Pakistan more homogeneous than Indonesia. Although both countries are predominantly Sunni, Indonesia offers greater diversity due to the blend of Islam and local culture, while Pakistan shows stronger consistency in the Hanafi tradition integrated into its legal system and social life.

In the socio-cultural context, findings from the lecture in Watutebok Hamlet, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali, highlighted the diversity of religious practices of the community, which are strongly influenced by local culture and hereditary traditions. The local community integrates Islamic values into daily activities, such as *hajatan*, *slametan*, and *gotong royong*, thus creating a unique model of religiosity. This is in line with Clifford Geertz's theory of *Abangan-Santri-Priyayi*, which shows that religion in Javanese society not only functions as a system of faith but also as an integral part of cultural identity. Mark Woodward's research on Islam in Java supports this view, stating that Islam in Java is syncretic, adopting local elements to strengthen acceptance in society. Local traditions not only survive but also transform through dynamic reinterpretations of religious teachings.

In addition, local religious and cultural figures play an important role in maintaining harmony in a pluralistic society. They function as mediators in social conflicts as well as drivers of the integration of Islamic values with local norms. As stated by Taufik Abdullah, ulama in Java has a strategic role in bridging Islam with local traditions, creating sustainable social stability. Thus, the dynamics of the relationship between religion and culture show that Islam is not only present as a theological belief but also as a force that shapes the social and cultural identity of society in Indonesia.

### **The Role of Religion in Daily Life: A Social and Cultural Perspective in Indonesia and Pakistan**

In Indonesia, Islamic traditions are intricately intertwined with local customs, creating a unique social and cultural fabric. This blend of religion and culture is particularly evident in

regions like Watutebok Hamlet, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali, where the local community observes Islamic practices such as daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, and the celebration of Eid al-Fitr while also engaging in traditional activities like *gotong-royong* (mutual cooperation) and ceremonies that blend both Islamic and Javanese elements. These practices show how Islam is not just a religion but a key component of social cohesion, fostering unity while honoring local traditions (Ningsih, 2021).

In Pakistan, religion is deeply embedded in both public and private life, with Islam serving as the foundation of the nation's legal and political systems. Unlike Indonesia's more pluralistic approach, Pakistan integrates Islamic principles into its constitution and legal frameworks, influencing personal conduct, public behavior, and societal norms. Daily practices such as prayer, fasting, and adherence to Islamic dress codes are reinforced by both state and society, making Islam central to the national identity. While Pakistan's diverse ethnic groups bring their unique cultural practices, Islamic identity often takes precedence in public and legal matters (Rohmadi, 2014).

In Indonesia, Islam coexists with a variety of local customs, resulting in a more flexible integration of religion and culture. In Watutebok Hamlet, for instance, religious observances such as communal prayers and fasting are woven into daily life alongside Javanese traditions, allowing local practices to blend seamlessly with Islamic rituals. This integration fosters a sense of unity while respecting the region's cultural diversity. Local Islamic organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah further contribute to this synergy, promoting social welfare, education, and interfaith dialogue within the community (Ningsih, 2021).

In contrast, Pakistan's formal integration of Islamic law into governance means that religion not only shapes personal behavior but also directly influences legal and political structures. The country's legal system, with its foundation in Sharia, governs matters of family law, inheritance, and public behavior, making religion a more formal and public force. While religious practices like prayer and fasting are crucial to daily life in Pakistan, the state's emphasis on Islamic principles in the legal system sets it apart from Indonesia's more inclusive and pluralistic approach. This formalization of religion in Pakistan creates a unified religious identity that shapes national policies, societal norms, and individual behavior (Rohmadi, 2014).

While both countries are shaped by Islam, the relationship between religion, culture, and governance differs greatly. Indonesia's pluralistic approach allows for a blend of Islamic practices with local traditions, creating a rich cultural tapestry that emphasizes inclusivity. In contrast, Pakistan's more rigid integration of Islamic law into the national framework reinforces the centrality of religion in both public and private life, shaping governance, legal structures, and social expectations. In both cases, however, religion plays a vital role in shaping national identity, cultural expression, and social behavior, illustrating the powerful influence of Islam on daily life (Ningsih, 2021; Rohmadi, 2014).

## Religious Education: A Social and Cultural Perspective in Indonesia and Pakistan

Religious education plays a pivotal role in shaping the cultural and social dynamics of societies, particularly in countries where Islam holds significant influence. In both Indonesia and Pakistan, Islamic education has evolved in ways that are closely tied to the historical, social, and political contexts of each nation. While sharing a common religious foundation, the implementation and impact of Islamic education diverge significantly, reflecting the unique cultural landscapes of each country.

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In Indonesia, the spread of Islam was significantly influenced by the work of ulama (Islamic scholars) who introduced religious teachings through the establishment of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). These institutions initially focused on religious studies, such as Quranic interpretation, Hadith (Prophetic traditions), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and the Arabic language. Over time, however, pesantren expanded to integrate general education, becoming a cornerstone of the nation's Islamic education system (Ismah, 2022; Ninggih, 2021; Siddiq, 2023). This transformation underscores the role of religious institutions in bridging the gap between tradition and modernity, reflecting a cultural adaptation that allows Islamic values to coexist with the demands of contemporary education.

In Watutebok Hamlet, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali, a study conducted on local community practices revealed that religious education within pesantren continues to serve as an essential framework for cultural transmission. The research found that, in this rural setting, families view pesantren not only as a place of religious learning but also as a key social institution where children acquire both moral values and practical skills. Despite challenges such as limited access to modern infrastructure, the pesantren's role in shaping community identity remains vital. Here, Islamic teachings are integrated with local customs, illustrating how religious education serves as a social and cultural glue that reinforces shared values and social cohesion. This finding aligns with previous research that highlights the transformative role of religious schools in fostering a sense of belonging and continuity within communities, especially in rural and marginalized areas.

In contrast, Pakistan's approach to religious education is deeply embedded within the national education system. Islamiyat, the mandatory Islamic Studies curriculum in public schools, serves to instill Islamic teachings across all levels of education. The subject covers a wide range of topics, including the Quran, Hadith, Islamic history, and moral teachings, all designed to ensure that students are rooted in their religious heritage. The integration of religious education into the national curriculum serves not only to reinforce moral and ethical values but also to cultivate a national identity grounded in Islamic principles. The inclusion of Islamiyat in public education reflects Pakistan's commitment to intertwining religious and national identity, to foster a cohesive and ethically responsible citizenry. The social and cultural implications of religious education in both countries are profound. In Indonesia, religious education is seen as part of a broader curriculum that includes subjects like mathematics, science, and social studies, all aimed at promoting both intellectual and spiritual growth. This holistic approach to education allows students to navigate the complexities of modern life while maintaining a strong foundation in Islamic values. The integration of religious studies into public schooling helps create a balanced approach to education, promoting cultural diversity and tolerance within the national fabric (Panjwani & Hadi Chaudhary, 2022; Rohman et al., 2024; Saparudin & Salim, 2023).

In Pakistan, however, the focus of religious education is more intensely placed on deepening the understanding of Islamic principles. The study of Islamiyat fosters not only religious awareness but also the development of a national identity based on Islamic values. The consistent updates to the curriculum reflect a responsiveness to contemporary challenges, ensuring that Islamic teachings remain relevant and applicable to modern life. This culturally specific approach to religious education is a response to the need to foster ethical behavior, social cohesion, and a collective sense of belonging among Pakistan's diverse population (Faiz et al., 2012; Ulum & Asy'arie, 2024).

In both Indonesia and Pakistan, the role of religious education in shaping social and cultural values is undeniable. The integration of religious teachings into educational frameworks reflects the importance of Islam not only as a spiritual guide but also as a cultural anchor that influences social behaviors, community structures, and national identities. As demonstrated by the findings in Watutebok Hamlet, the role of pesantren in maintaining cultural continuity while adapting to modern demands serves as a microcosm of the broader societal trends seen across Indonesia and Pakistan. In these contexts, religious education serves not only as a tool for spiritual development but also as a medium through which cultural values are preserved, adapted, and transmitted across generations.

### **Impact of Globalization and Modernization: A Social and Cultural Perspective in Indonesia and Pakistan**

Globalization and modernization have profoundly impacted Indonesia and Pakistan, shaping their economies, societies, cultures, and educational systems through complex, interconnected processes. These phenomena bring significant opportunities for growth and transformation while simultaneously presenting challenges that require strategic management to balance economic advancement with social and cultural preservation (Mulyono, 2017; Ningsih et al., 2018; Sardiyo & Dhasman, 2019; Waseem et al., 2009). Despite differing historical, political, and socio-economic contexts, the effects of globalization and modernization in these two nations reveal striking parallels and contrasts that reflect the nuanced interplay of local and global forces.

In Indonesia, globalization has been a catalyst for rapid economic growth since the 1990s, with foreign investment and trade agreements such as the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) driving the expansion of key sectors like textiles, electronics, and mining (Ningsih et al., 2018). The country's integration into global markets has not only enhanced its economic standing but also facilitated the adoption of advanced production technologies, boosting industrial efficiency and competitiveness. However, this economic transformation has come at a cost, as rapid urbanization in cities like Jakarta has created significant challenges, including congestion, environmental degradation, and widening social inequality (Waseem et al., 2009). The influx of global capital has primarily benefited urban areas, leaving rural regions struggling to access similar opportunities, thus exacerbating regional disparities.

Cultural shifts in Indonesia have been equally transformative, with globalization introducing Western influences that reshape societal values, particularly among younger generations. Modernization has fostered the adoption of global trends in fashion, entertainment, and consumer behavior, while also promoting individualism and consumerism (Mulyono, 2017). Despite these changes, Indonesia's cultural resilience is evident in the way local traditions adapt and coexist with foreign elements, reflecting a dynamic interplay between modernity and heritage. For instance, the preservation of traditional ceremonies, arts, and local languages continues to thrive alongside the integration of modern practices, highlighting the country's ability to balance cultural evolution with historical continuity (Haniah et al., 2024; Wijaya, 2023).

Pakistan has similarly experienced significant economic impacts from globalization, particularly in sectors like textiles, which remain a cornerstone of its export economy (Sardiyo & Dhasman, 2019). Initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have exemplified the role of modernization in bolstering infrastructure development and improving connectivity. These projects have attracted substantial foreign investment, creating opportunities for economic growth and technological advancement. However, Pakistan's economic landscape is

hindered by persistent challenges, including political instability, energy shortages, and reliance on external aid, which limit its ability to fully capitalize on globalization's benefits (Das, 2018). Furthermore, trade imbalances and heightened competition in global markets pose additional hurdles, requiring strategic economic reforms to ensure sustainable development.

Cultural transformations in Pakistan under globalization have sparked significant debates about preserving Islamic and local traditions in the face of Western influences disseminated through media, education, and trade (Ningsih et al., 2018). These changes have been particularly evident in the shifting roles of women in society, as modernization has promoted greater gender equality and increased female participation in education and the workforce. While these developments signify progress in addressing patriarchal norms, they have also elicited resistance in conservative segments of society, reflecting ongoing tensions between tradition and modernity (Mulyono, 2017). The introduction of modern consumer culture and global entertainment trends further illustrates the dual impact of globalization, simultaneously enriching cultural diversity and challenging established norms.

Both Indonesia and Pakistan face shared challenges arising from globalization, including rising social inequality, environmental degradation, and the deepening divide between urban and rural areas. Technological advancements, such as the widespread adoption of smartphones and internet access, have connected these nations to the global digital economy but have also amplified disparities. Urban centers in both countries disproportionately benefit from the influx of global capital and technological innovation, while rural regions often lag, struggling to access the same resources and opportunities (Sardiyo & Dhasman, 2019). These disparities underscore the need for inclusive development strategies that address the needs of marginalized populations, particularly in rural areas.

Environmental challenges in both nations are another critical issue tied to globalization and modernization. In Indonesia, deforestation driven by industrial expansion and palm oil production has resulted in significant biodiversity loss and environmental degradation (Das, 2018). Similarly, Pakistan faces acute environmental issues, including water shortages, pollution, and the impacts of climate change, which threaten both human livelihoods and natural ecosystems (Ningsih et al., 2018). While global environmental awareness has spurred initiatives to mitigate these impacts, such efforts often require substantial coordination and investment, highlighting the complex interplay between economic development and environmental sustainability.

The educational systems in Indonesia and Pakistan have also been significantly influenced by globalization, reshaping how knowledge is transmitted and accessed. In Indonesia, the integration of global curricula and emphasis on English proficiency has equipped students with skills to compete in the international job market, aligning with the demands of a globalized economy (Mulyono, 2017). However, the increasing adoption of Western educational models has raised concerns about the potential erosion of local knowledge systems and cultural identity. In Pakistan, educational reforms driven by modernization aim to improve literacy rates and enhance the quality of education by aligning curricula with global standards (Das, 2018). Religious education, a key component of Pakistan's educational landscape, has also been influenced by modernization, leading to curriculum changes and the emergence of alternative interpretations of Islamic teachings. While these reforms seek to bridge traditional and modern knowledge systems, they occasionally contribute to sectarian tensions, underscoring the complex relationship between education and social cohesion.

A localized perspective, such as data from *ceramah* (lectures) in Watutebok Hamlet, Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali, provides valuable insights into how globalization and modernization manifest at the grassroots level. In this rural community, the introduction of technologies like mobile phones and internet access has transformed communication, especially among younger generations. This technological integration facilitates greater exposure to global trends but also raises concerns about the erosion of local cultural practices, such as traditional agriculture and communal values (Sardiyo & Dhasman, 2019). Urban migration has further reshaped the village's social and economic structures, with many residents seeking better opportunities in cities, leading to a decline in traditional occupations and changes in community dynamics. The challenges faced by Watutebok Hamlet reflect broader patterns in rural Indonesia, where communities must navigate the dual forces of modernization and cultural preservation.

In Pakistan, similar patterns are observed in rural areas, where globalization and modernization have introduced new opportunities while also posing significant challenges. The penetration of global media and the internet has exposed rural populations to diverse cultural influences, fostering aspirations for better education and employment. However, these changes often clash with entrenched traditional values, creating tensions within communities (Ningsih et al., 2018). The migration of rural youth to urban centers in search of economic opportunities further exacerbates these tensions, as families grapple with the loss of traditional livelihoods and the erosion of social cohesion.

Through these localized examples, the broader impact of globalization and modernization on Indonesia and Pakistan becomes clearer, highlighting the intricate balance required to harness these forces for positive change. Both nations must address the socio-cultural and economic disparities that globalization often exacerbates while promoting strategies that preserve their unique identities and foster inclusive development. The interplay of local traditions and global influences continues to shape the trajectories of Indonesia and Pakistan, offering valuable lessons on navigating the complexities of an increasingly interconnected world (Das, 2018; Mulyono, 2017; Ningsih et al., 2018; Sardiyo & Dhasman, 2019).

### **Social and Religious Issues: A Social and Cultural Perspective in Indonesia and Pakistan**

Indonesia and Pakistan share various complex social and religious issues, shaped by their distinct cultural, historical, and socio-political contexts, yet they also face notable similarities, particularly in the prevalence of social and religious conflicts. In Indonesia, critical social challenges include poverty and unemployment, social inequality, rising crime rates, juvenile delinquency, the spread of infectious diseases, and unequal access to education. These issues are often compounded by religious tensions, such as those experienced during the conflicts in Ambon and Poso. Such incidents highlight the importance of fostering deeper understanding and tolerance among religious communities, despite Indonesia's national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) (Ahmed, 2023).

Likewise, Pakistan contends with a spectrum of social and cultural dilemmas. Persistent poverty, economic instability, and an ongoing education crisis, especially the high dropout rates among girls, pose significant barriers to societal progress. These challenges are exacerbated by political instability, which often fuels social polarization. Religious tensions in Pakistan are further inflamed by the misuse of blasphemy laws, leading to violence and discrimination against religious minorities, thus intensifying social fragmentation (Danisworo, 2023; Mehfooz, 2021).

A deeper analysis of the social and cultural fabric of both nations reveals that these issues are rooted in historical processes and shaped by the interplay of local traditions and external influences. For example, Indonesia's emphasis on *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and Pakistan's strong emphasis on Islamic jurisprudence reflect their respective cultural values in addressing social problems. However, both nations struggle to balance these traditional values with modern governance challenges. The data derived from a recent study of the Watutebok Hamlet in Potronayan Village, Nogosari, Boyolali, underscores the role of local cultural practices in shaping social dynamics. Ceremonial activities, communal prayers, and *arisan* (rotating savings groups) are prominent aspects of social life that foster a sense of community. However, these same cultural practices can sometimes exclude certain groups, particularly when they intersect with religious or socioeconomic divides. This phenomenon is consistent with findings from prior research indicating that localized cultural norms significantly influence broader social cohesion and conflict resolution efforts (Raza Shah, 2021).

To address these multifaceted issues, Indonesia and Pakistan must prioritize enhancing interfaith dialogue and fostering inclusive social policies. Leveraging cultural strengths, such as Indonesia's Pancasila ideology and Pakistan's emphasis on *ummah* (community), could help bridge divides and promote unity. These efforts are not only critical for addressing the challenges but also for laying the foundation for sustainable peace and harmony within these culturally rich societies.

## **CONCLUSION**

Indonesia's pluralistic approach integrates Islamic practices with local traditions, fostering cultural diversity and adaptability, whereas Pakistan emphasizes uniformity through the Hanafi school, deeply rooted in its legal and governance frameworks. These findings address the research questions on the role of religion in shaping societal structures and cultural identity. Implications highlight the need for inclusive policies to address globalization's challenges, such as inequality and cultural shifts while leveraging religious and cultural values to foster unity. However, the study is limited to these two nations and localized data, which may not fully capture broader global trends. Future research should explore how religious pluralism and modernization influence socio-cultural resilience in other contexts.

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