

# The Nahdlatul Ulama's Contribution to Peacemaking in A Digital Era

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**Abstract:** This research discusses the role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in promoting peace in the digital era. In its background, digitization has fundamentally altered the paradigm of human communication and interaction. This study aims to analyze NU's practices in promoting peace and tolerance in the digital world and to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by NU in this regard. The research method used is a qualitative approach with online observation and content analysis of materials produced and disseminated by NU on social media and other digital platforms. The results show that NU actively advocates messages of peace and tolerance through direct activities and inclusive digital content production. NU also engages in interfaith dialogue and cross-religious cooperation in the digital world. Despite receiving positive responses from the public, NU also faces challenges and controversies, such as the emergence of misleading content on social media, the presence of controversial figures affiliated with NU, and the disagreement over the term "Islam Nusantara." This research argues that NU plays a crucial role in introducing peace through the virtual world, with significant contributions to understanding the role of religion in the digital era and developing more effective strategies in leveraging digital technology for peace purposes.

**Keywords:** Nahdlatul Ulama; peace; digital age; social media; tolerance.

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## 1. Introduction

The digital era has fundamentally transformed the landscape of human communication and interaction (Floridi, 2014; Setia et al., 2021). Alongside this, the role of religion in promoting peace and tolerance has also undergone significant evolution in the digital era. Religious movements, particularly those active in the digital space, have become intriguing subjects for study, as they have the potential to influence individual and societal perspectives and behaviors on a broad scale. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia with a significant presence in the digital realm, presents an interesting case study to explore how religion can play a role in promoting peace in the digital world.

Previously, there have been several studies examining the role of religion in promoting peace in the digital era. Some studies have explored the influence of social media on individuals' perceptions and behaviors related to religion and conflict (Ferguson et al., 2021; Green, 2017; Marsden & Savigny, 2016; Zeitsoff, 2017). There have also been studies focusing on the analysis of specific religious movements in the digital space and their impact on society (Setia & Iqbal, 2021; M. I. Wahid, 2020). However, research on the role of religion in peace in the digital world, with a specific focus on religious movements like NU, is still relatively limited; hence, this study aims to fill that gap in the literature.

In the context of globalization and the increasing use of digital technology, studies on the role of religion in promoting peace in the digital world are becoming increasingly relevant. The digital era provides a wide platform for religious movements to communicate, share messages, and

influence public opinion (Yoe, 2018). With the exponential growth of social media users and other digital platforms, it is important to understand how religion, through movements like Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), can act as an agents of peace in the digital space. NU, as a case study, holds a significant role in Indonesian society and has considerable influence at both national and international levels (Saenong, 2021). Therefore, this research aims to explore NU's practices and strategies in promoting peace and tolerance in the digital world, as well as to understand how their religious messages are received and responded to by the online community.

The main objective of this research is to demonstrate the role of religion, particularly through religious movements like NU, in promoting peace in the digital era. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the practices used by NU in the digital space, including communication strategies, disseminated messages, and societal responses. Additionally, this research also aims to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by NU in promoting peace and tolerance in the digital world. It is hoped that this research contributes to understanding the role of religion in the digital era and provides insights for the development of more effective strategies in leveraging digital technology for peace purposes.

## 2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach (Lune & Berg, 2017), utilizing research methods that include online observation and content analysis of materials produced and disseminated by NU on social media and other digital platforms. This approach enables researchers to gain a deep understanding of NU's use of digital media to promote peace and tolerance and how their religious messages are received and responded to by the online community. Furthermore, in an effort to obtain a holistic understanding of NU's role in promoting peace in the digital world, a triangulation approach is also employed (Harrison et al., 2020). This approach involves combining multiple research methods to strengthen the validity and reliability of findings. In addition, online observation and content analysis involving detailed studies of messages disseminated by NU on social media and other digital platforms are conducted systematically. Data obtained from both of these methods are then integrated and analyzed together to identify patterns, themes, and trends emerging in NU's practices in the digital space. The triangulation approach can result in a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of NU's contribution to promoting peace and tolerance in the digital era, as well as lend strength to the research findings obtained.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### a. Nahdlatul Ulama

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is the largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, exerting significant influence in religious, social, and political spheres. NU's history began in the early 20th century, specifically in 1926 in Jombang, East Java, when KH Hasyim Asy'ari founded the organization in response to the modernization movement of Islam that began to influence Muslim society in Indonesia. The spirit inspired the establishment of NU to uphold traditional Islamic teachings (*Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah*) from the influence of modernization and the orientalizing of Islam introduced by the Dutch colonial rule. NU staunchly adheres to Islam teachings that are inclusive, tolerant, and respectful of local traditions while rejecting radicalism and extremism (Ismail, 2011).

Over time, NU has grown into a significant force in Indonesian Muslim society. The organization has developed an educational network, including traditional pesantrens that serve as the main religious education base in Indonesia. At the same time, NU is also active in providing social services to the community through various humanitarian and social welfare programs (Bruinessen et al., 1996).

During Indonesia's independence era, NU played a crucial role in the formation of the state and Indonesian society. During the independence revolution, NU actively participated in the struggle against colonialism and fought for Indonesia's independence. After independence, NU

was involved in the national development process, both in religious and social aspects (Fealy & Bush, 2014).

In the political realm, NU also holds significant influence. The organization formed political parties, such as the Masyumi Party in the early independence era and later the Nahdlatul Ulama Party during the New Order era. However, NU also maintains independence and autonomy from political power and prioritizes democratic principles and tolerance in its political decisions (Bush, 2009).

Until today, NU remains a major force in the religious, social, and political life of Indonesia. The organization continues to strive to promote the values of moderate Islam, inter-religious tolerance, and peace and actively participates in building a united, advanced, and just Indonesian nation (Muhammad, 2015).

Figures like Abdurrahman Wahid, better known as Gus Dur, a prominent figure in the history of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), had profound insights into the organization's journey. He emphasized the importance of NU in upholding moderate and inclusive Islam amidst various pressures and challenges. In his works, Gus Dur often stressed that NU must remain a pillar of tolerance and pluralism in Indonesian society and avoid radicalism that could divide the nation. Gus Dur's arguments provide a perspective on NU's role in maintaining Indonesia's diversity and unity (A. Wahid, 2006).

Remy Madinier (2015), an academic who has delved into the history of NU, also made significant contributions to understanding the organization. Through his works, Madinier presents in-depth analyses of NU's development from historical and sociological perspectives. His arguments highlight how NU evolved from a religious movement into a significant political and social force in Indonesia. Madinier emphasizes that NU has a complex role in Indonesia's political and social dynamics while maintaining a strong Islamic identity. Madinier's contributions provide a broader understanding of NU's transformation in the context of modern Indonesian history (Madinier & Feillard, 1999).

Greg Fealy (Fealy, 2012), an Indonesian political expert, also offers valuable insights into NU's history. In his work, Fealy describes NU's role in Indonesian politics, especially during the New Order era and after the reform. His arguments highlight how NU has adapted to political and social changes in Indonesia and how the relationship between NU and political power has evolved. Fealy emphasizes the importance of NU in realizing democracy and pluralism in Indonesia, as well as maintaining the organization's independence from political dominance. Fealy's contribution enriches the understanding of NU's political and social dynamics in the development of modern Indonesian history.

Before the reform era, NU was often characterized as a conservative organization that tended to reject the presence of modern technology. Hence, the organization was always synonymous with 'traditionalist organizations. However, recent developments indicate significant changes in NU's views and practices regarding technology, especially in social media. Several researchers, such as Wahid (M. I. Wahid, 2020) and Setia & Iqbal (Setia & Iqbal, 2021), have observed this transformation in-depth.

Wahid's research (M. I. Wahid, 2020) highlights NU's attitude change towards technology, particularly in adopting social media as a tool for communication and preaching. Wahid notes that NU has been actively utilizing social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to disseminate religious messages, promote moderate Islamic values and participate in public dialogue. Wahid presents an understanding that NU has transformed into an organization that is responsive to information technology developments.

Meanwhile, Setia & Iqbal's research (Setia & Iqbal, 2021) focuses more on the role of social media in changing NU's overall image. They observe that NU not only becomes an active user of social media but also proactively responds to contemporary issues and provides moderate Islamic perspectives in various public debates. Setia & Iqbal note that NU uses social media as a means to strengthen Islamic identity, expand preaching networks, and advocate for humanitarian values

and social justice. Their arguments indicate that NU has surpassed its traditionalist image and become a progressive force actively engaged in the digital space.

In conclusion, arguments from researchers such as Wahid (M. I. Wahid, 2020) and Setia & Iqbal (Setia & Iqbal, 2021) provide a deep understanding of NU's transformation in adopting and leveraging technology, especially social media. This change reflects NU's adaptability to the changing times and its willingness to participate more actively and progressively in the public domain.

## **b. Introducing Peace Through the Digital Age**

### *Advocating Messages of Peace, Tolerance, and Interfaith Harmony*

NU has utilized digital media as a platform to advocate messages of peace, tolerance, and interreligious harmony. Through various official social media accounts, websites, Instagram, and YouTube channels, NU consistently disseminates content promoting these values to the wider community. They raise awareness about the importance of building harmonious relationships among religious communities, emphasizing the significance of mutual respect and understanding religious differences. With an inclusive and compassionate approach, NU constructs a narrative of peace that inspires and instills hope in communities amidst tension and conflict. NU has a variety of efforts to convey messages of peace, both through social media and documented direct activities on various platforms. One example is the active commitment to peace efforts in Afghanistan through the Consultation Forum for Peace in Afghanistan organized by PBNU, in which 20 Afghan delegates participated (Suryanto, 2011). Additionally, NU also delivers messages of peace regarding conflict situations in Gaza, Ukraine and the threat of conflict in several Asian countries at the Asia-Africa and Latin America Religious Moderation Conference (Erica, 2023). Among the young NU generation, the IPPNU cultural festival serves as a platform to convey messages of peace worldwide, bringing the voice of peace through cultural celebrations that embrace the young NU generation (Amaliyah, 2023). Not only on a national scale, but NU is also active in advocating for peace internationally by visiting countries in Africa, such as Kenya. These visits provide an opportunity to encourage African countries to explore the path of peace as the main foundation for nation-building and governance. With various initiatives, NU continues to rally joint efforts in realizing peace both locally and globally.

NU is not only active in advocating messages of peace through direct activities and cultural festivals but also through modern media platforms such as YouTube, represented by TVNU Nahdlatul Ulama Television. In this YouTube channel, the chairman of PBNU, KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf becomes a figure who delivers meaningful speeches. Through content published on this platform, NU consistently advocates for peace, including defending and striving for peace in Palestine, which remains a global issue requiring ongoing attention. Through a combination of direct activities, cultural festivals, and modern media platforms, NU has emerged as a consistent force in spreading messages of peace, not only at the local level but also on a global scale, reflecting a deep commitment to achieving world peace. NU expands the reach of messages of peace and tolerance through its active presence on other social media platforms, such as Instagram. In content postings, NU often presents quotes from prominent figures within the NU scope, conveying profound messages about peace and tolerance (Erica, 2023). By using powerful imagery and words, this content is able to reach a wider audience, including the younger generation active on social media. Thus, NU is not only present in the physical realm but also digitally, utilizing social media platforms as an effective means of disseminating the fundamental values of peace and tolerance inherent in NU teachings. This reflects NU's adaptation to technological advancements and the need for broader communication while maintaining the essence of messages of peace and tolerance that constitute their identity.

Figure 1. Tolerance quotes from Gus Dur on NU's Instagram



Source: <https://l1nk.dev/mbzHj>, 2024.

In addition to actively advocating for peace through various platforms, NU also plays an active role in providing humanitarian assistance, particularly to the Palestinian people. NU's commitment to creating a peaceful life for the Palestinian people is reflected through tangible efforts in providing aid and support. Content postings on NU's Instagram serve as one way to demonstrate their solidarity and support for Palestine to the wider community. Through these activities, NU not only expresses its role as a peace agent but also as a humanitarian agent committed to assisting those in need, underscoring the importance of humanitarian values in achieving sustainable and lasting peace.

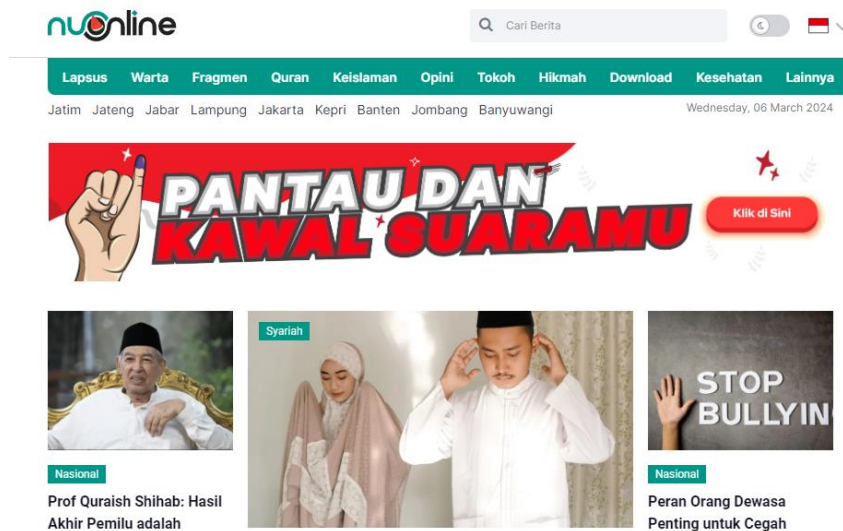
Figure 2. Humanitarian campaign for Palestine on NU Instagram



Source: <https://l1nk.dev/k5IG7>, 2024.

NU is also highly active on their website, nu.or.id. They actively promote peace through the website with articles written by NU scholars, figures, and NU cadres from around the world. On the site, when we type the keyword “peace,” there are over 31,800 results containing that keyword. This indicates that NU is truly active and serious about advocating for peace on its website.

Figure 3. NU media's official site



Source: <https://www.nu.or.id/>, 2024.

One of the articles that garnered a lot of attention on the NU website is titled “Realizing Peace between Palestine and Israel, Gus Yahya: Comprehensive Engagement Needed” (Zaman, 2023). The article recounts Gus Yahya, Chairman of PBNU, 's visit to Israel several years ago. In the article, it is concluded that NU is very ready to assist the peace process between Israel and Palestine. The visit marks NU's commitment to creating comprehensive dialogue and inclusive engagement to promote sustainable peace in the region. Thus, NU is not only voicing messages of peace through words but also through tangible actions and concrete diplomatic efforts. This reflects NU's important role in paving the way for sustainable and just peace in the Middle East.

### *Interfaith Dialogue and Interfaith Cooperation in A Digital Era*

NU is actively engaging in interfaith dialogues and cross-religious cooperation in the digital world as a means to strengthen interreligious relations. They organize seminars, webinars, and online discussion forums involving religious figures from various backgrounds to discuss crucial issues affecting peace and social justice. Through these platforms, NU creates space for open and honest dialogue, facilitating a deeper understanding among religious communities and promoting solidarity in addressing common challenges.

In addition to concrete efforts to create peace through various activities and platforms, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has also conducted various religious dialogue activities. One notable activity is the International Conference of Islamic Scholars (ICIS), organized by NU as a bridge for dialogue among international scholars (NF, 2019). In this conference, Islamic scholars and intellectuals from various parts of the world gather to exchange views, discuss, and seek mutual understanding on relevant religious and humanitarian issues. Through ICIS, NU seeks to expand cooperation networks among scholars and build a deeper understanding of Islam and peace on a global scale. Thus, NU is not only active in creating peace practically but also in facilitating interfaith dialogue to strengthen harmony and tolerance among religious communities worldwide.

NU is also involved in intercultural and interreligious dialogue in Southeast Asia through the ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference (IIDC), held in September

2023 as part of the ASEAN High-Level Conference (Attar, 2023). This conference serves as an important platform for NU to expand interfaith and intercultural dialogue networks in the Southeast Asian region. Through active participation in this event, NU can contribute to better understanding among various religious and cultural groups in the region and strengthen joint commitments to creating peace and harmony at the regional level. Thus, NU not only plays a role in reconciling internal conflicts in Indonesia but also strives to expand its positive influence in creating stability and harmony throughout the ASEAN region.

NU is also involved in the Indonesia – Austria Strengthening Interreligious Dialogue through Youth and Religious Tolerance in the Digital World activity, which was held online via webinar (Kemlu RI, 2022). This activity is a collaborative effort between Indonesia and Austria aimed at maintaining and strengthening tolerance in the digital world. By organizing this webinar in Bandung and Vienna, Austria, NU plays an active role in engaging young people to understand the importance of tolerance in the rapidly evolving digital era. Through this forum, NU contributes to formulating solutions and strategies to address challenges emerging in the digital space, thus creating a more inclusive and harmonious online environment for all religious communities. Thus, NU is not only involved in local interfaith dialogues but also expands its action to the international level, reaffirming its role as an influential agent of peace and tolerance globally.

### *Inclusive Content*

NU produces and disseminates inclusive digital content covering various aspects of life and societal needs. They generate content related to preaching, education, social issues, and humanitarianism aimed at all segments of society, regardless of religious or cultural differences. With the diversity of content presented, NU successfully reaches a wide audience and fosters deeper connections with the community, strengthening the foundation of harmony and brotherhood.

NU advises its members, especially the younger generation, to disseminate inclusive content on digital media as part of efforts to support peace and harmony. The Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Ta'lif Wan Nasyr Institution (LTN NU) in Sumedang Regency, Ayi Abdul Kohar, emphasizes the importance of intelligence in using social media. He encourages NU members to use social media as a means of preaching Islam, according to the Nahdlatul Ulama's Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah, with the aim of spreading messages of goodness and tolerance to all layers of society (Thobiin, 2017).

In response to initiatives to disseminate inclusive content, NU is appreciated by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Republic of Indonesia as an organization consistent in spreading messages of peace in diversity (Kominfo RI, 2023). NU's focus on the Inclusive Service Vision of NU in the Second Century is a manifestation of its commitment to bring about positive impacts amidst changing times. NU figure Rahmat Hidayat Pulungan emphasizes that NU's potential is not limited to the spiritual dimension of the community but should also encompass the formation of excellent cadres in future technology fields (Pulungan, 2023). Thus, NU not only acts as a peace agent but also as a driving force in creating quality cadres to address contemporary challenges.

Regarding inclusive content, NU produces a lot of it in various aspects of life, such as religion, politics, and socio-cultural issues. For example, NU produces content to avoid division, such as messages from NU founders. This is important as a warning to the Indonesian people to avoid division during the 2024 elections.



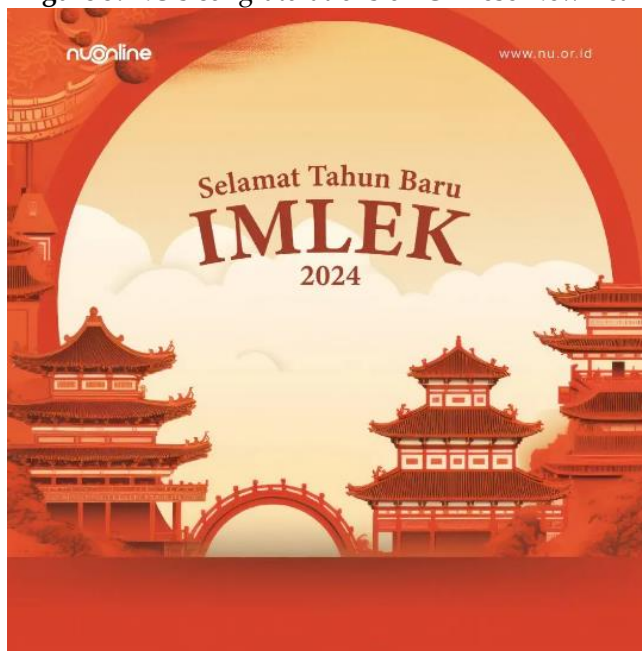
**Figure 4.** NU's inclusive content to avoid national division



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C3VGxbNLn9D/>, 2024.

Another inclusive content disseminated by NU is acknowledgments and greetings related to other religious holidays, such as the Chinese New Year. This is a tangible manifestation of NU's commitment to promoting tolerance and harmony among religious communities. By recognizing and respecting the celebrations of other religions, NU strengthens interfaith relations and builds an atmosphere of harmony amidst diverse communities. This action also reflects NU's spirit of inclusivity that underlies its efforts in creating an environment that values cultural and religious diversity. By spreading such positive messages, NU plays a crucial role in building a more united and peaceful society where diversity is cherished as a commonwealth.

**Figure 5.** NU's congratulations on Chinese New Year



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C3KOJe9rF0L/>, 2024.



NU also utilizes social media platforms, particularly through the Instagram account of the Central Leadership of Fatayat NU (@pp\_fatayatnu), to advocate messages of peace and inclusive content. In their Instagram account, the tagline “Women of Tolerance” is used as a manifestation of NU's attention to inclusivity, especially in the context of women. By using this tagline, NU emphasizes the importance of women's roles in promoting tolerance and harmony among religious communities. This demonstrates NU's commitment to empowering women as active agents of peace in building an inclusive and harmonious society. Thus, NU not only focuses on developing religious understanding but also on empowering women as the primary drivers in advocating for peace and tolerance in society.

Figure 6. Content of Tolerant Women, Fatayat NU Central Leadership



Source: [https://www.instagram.com/pp\\_fatayatnu/](https://www.instagram.com/pp_fatayatnu/), 2024.

Theoretically, Nahdlatul Ulama's (NU) endeavors to generate inclusive content on social media can be comprehended through various perspectives grounded in communication theory, sociology, and religious studies. In line with communication theory, NU, being a significant organization with extensive societal influence, assumes a pivotal role in molding the public agenda and exerting influence on public opinion (Hjarvard, 2011). In this context, NU creates inclusive content on social media as part of its communication strategy to expand its influence and garner support for values of tolerance, harmony, and peace. The impact of this inclusive content can be felt in increasing societal awareness of the importance of respecting differences and promoting harmony among religious communities (Rosyad et al., 2021).

From a sociological perspective, NU's efforts to create inclusive content on social media are an expression of the social dynamics occurring in society, where cultural and religious diversity is increasingly recognized. NU, as an inclusive Islamic organization, understands the importance of adapting to these social changes by expanding the scope of its messages to be relevant to the needs and demands of the times (Parsons, 2013, p. 121). The result is the creation of a more open and inclusive dialogue space on social media, where people from various backgrounds can interact and understand each other.

From the perspective of religious studies, NU's efforts to create inclusive content on social media can be understood as an implementation of Islamic teachings emphasizing values of tolerance, peace, and harmony among religious communities (Newman, 2019). NU uses social media as a means to disseminate inclusive religious messages and invites Muslims and the broader society to respect religious and cultural differences. The impact is a deeper understanding of an inclusive Islam and

the peace brought by religious teachings, leading to a more open society towards religious and cultural diversity.

### c. Community Response

The presence of NU in the digital realm has received positive responses from the community. Many individuals, groups, and even international institutions appreciate NU's efforts in promoting peace and tolerance, feeling inspired by the messages conveyed. They engage in dialogue, share NU's content, and contribute to building a more inclusive and harmonious community.

Positive responses to the presence of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) also come from intellectuals and Islamic scholars like Eko Supriatno, who appreciates NU's steps in the digital revolution (Supriatno, 2022). In his view, NU emerges as a refresher amid the often confusing and unsettling flow of information in society. NU's presence on social and digital media is expected to have a positive impact and provide enriching alternatives to the information presented to the public. Thus, NU is not just part of the cultural wealth of society but also expands its role as a relevant and adaptive organization in the digital era.

Moreover, the Media Center Coordinator of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Pasuruan Regency, Subadar, emphasizes the extraordinary role of NU in facing the challenges of the digital era today (Salsabila, 2022). According to him, NU's presence is not only accepted as a cultural organization but also as a community or structural one. Subadar asserts that NU is not only part of history and tradition but also has a strong influence in shaping the social and cultural dynamics of society. NU's presence is acknowledged as a source of inspiration and leadership in conveying inclusive religious and humanitarian values relevant to the demands of the times. Thus, appreciation for NU does not only come from ordinary people but also from those who understand the significant impact and contribution NU has in addressing the constantly changing challenges of the times.

NU's active struggle in advocating for peace, especially through social media platforms, has yielded remarkable results by winning the Zayed Award for Human Fraternity 2024 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in February 2024. This award is considered equivalent to the Nobel Peace Prize for the Asian region. It was also achieved jointly with Muhammadiyah. This recognition serves as concrete evidence of NU's significant contribution to promoting peace and tolerance, establishing them as leaders in efforts to create a more harmonious and coexistent world. This success also serves as inspiration for many organizations and individuals to continue striving to maintain peace and build harmony amidst differences.

**Figure 7.** NU received the 2024 Zayed Award for Human Fraternity



Source: <https://acesse.one/IQmkD>, 2024.

The presence of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in the digital realm is not only well-received by the public but also widely appreciated by various parties, including individuals, groups, and international institutions. This positive response encompasses recognition of NU's efforts in promoting peace and tolerance, as well as acknowledgment of their role as leaders in creating a more harmonious world. This appreciation is reflected in the Zayed Award for Human Fraternity 2024, which NU received jointly with Muhammadiyah, solidifying NU's significant contribution to regional and global peacekeeping efforts.

NU's success in receiving this award also catalyzes other organizations and individuals to continue advocating for peace and fostering harmony amidst differences. Thus, NU's success is not only their achievement but also a source of inspiration for the entire community to contribute to creating a more peaceful, inclusive, and coexistent world. By continually spreading messages of peace and expanding cooperation networks, NU plays a crucial role in bringing about positive change in an increasingly complex and dynamic world.

#### **d. Challenges and Controversy**

Despite enjoying widespread support, NU also faces challenges and controversies in its efforts to promote peace through the digital sphere. These challenges include the emergence of misleading or provocative content on social media, which hampers NU's effective dissemination of peace messages (Niam, 2019). Nevertheless, NU continues to strive to overcome these challenges through wise approaches, coordination with various parties, and increasing public awareness of the importance of maintaining peace and harmony.

NU is also confronted with controversies arising from individuals affiliated with them and their behavior on social media. For instance, Permadi Arya or Abu Janda (Yuana, 2021). Abu Janda, in the past, was deemed to have gone too far when referring to "evolution" in a debate with Natalius Pigai, which later evolved into a racist issue and then "arrogant Islam." Consequently, Abu Janda was reported to the Indonesian National Police's Criminal Investigation Department for hate speech by the Central Leadership of the Indonesian National Committee of Youth (KNPI). Abu Janda's frequent self-representation as part of NU has led to widespread public opposition (Maulana, 2021), potentially tarnishing NU's reputation in the digital realm.

NU is also embroiled in controversy over the term "Islam Nusantara," which has sparked much debate on social media. NU actively advocates for the term Islam Nusantara. According to the then chairman of PBNU, Said Aqil Siradj, the term Islam Nusantara refers to the historical fact of Islam's spread in the Nusantara region, which he described as "through cultural approaches, not rigid and harsh doctrines." He added, "Islam Nusantara preaches embracing culture, preserving culture, respecting culture, not suppressing culture." From this historical standpoint, NU will continue to uphold the character of Islam Nusantara, which is "friendly, anti-radical, inclusive, and tolerant." Said Aqil emphasizes that this model is different from what he refers to as "Arab Islam, which is always in conflict with fellow Muslims and engaged in civil wars" (Affan, 2015).

Controversy arises, for example, from Hizbut Tahrir questioning the juxtaposition of the concept of Islam Nusantara with Islam in the Middle East, which they deem inappropriate. According to HT, it is unfair to compare the Middle East with Indonesia, especially regarding conflicts in the Middle East. For HT, the conflicts in the Middle East are a form of protest against oppressive rule. HTI regards ISIS as a creation of the West. Ismail Yusnato, a spokesman for HTI, explains that there is no difference between Islam in Indonesia and the Middle East in the framework of resisting dictatorial rulers (Affan, 2015).

Nevertheless, the term Islam Nusantara is supported by scholars, such as Azyumardi Azra, who states that the Islam Nusantara model is needed by the global community today because its hallmark emphasizes the "middle path." This could be a solution in diverse realities like Indonesia to avoid conflict (Affan, 2015).

#### 4. Conclusion

This study explores the role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in promoting peace and tolerance in the digital world. Through analyzing the practices undertaken by NU, this research highlights various efforts made by the organization to foster peace, both locally and globally, through social media and digital platforms. NU consistently advocates for messages of peace, tolerance, and interfaith harmony, both through direct activities and the production of inclusive digital content. Through interreligious dialogue and cross-faith cooperation, NU also plays a role in strengthening interfaith relations, facilitating deeper understanding, and promoting solidarity in addressing common challenges. However, NU's role in introducing peace through the digital realm also faces challenges and controversies, such as the emergence of misleading or provocative content on social media, controversies related to individuals perceived to be affiliated with NU, and the pros and cons of the term "Islam Nusantara." Nonetheless, NU continues to strive to address these challenges through wise approaches and increasing public awareness of the importance of maintaining peace and harmony.

This research provides a novel contribution to understanding the role of religion in peace in the digital era, particularly through a case study of the religious movement of NU. By understanding the practices and strategies employed by NU in the digital space, these findings can serve as a basis for developing more effective strategies in utilizing digital technology for peace and reconciliation in broader society. Thus, this research offers a significant contribution to understanding the role of religion, particularly through religious movements like NU, in promoting peace in the digital era. Through a deeper understanding of NU's practices in the digital space, this research provides insights for the development of more effective strategies in leveraging digital technology for peace purposes. Additionally, this study highlights the importance of public awareness of the impact and significant contributions made by NU in facing the challenges of an ever-changing era, as well as the support needed to strengthen the role of religion in promoting peace and harmony in an increasingly complex digital world.

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