



## THE IMPACT OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT ON MODERN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: BRIDGING TRADITION AND REFORM

Amie Primarni<sup>1</sup>, Khalil Zaman<sup>2</sup>, Jamil Khan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institut Agama Islam Nasional Laa Roiba, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Mazar University, Afghanistan

<sup>3</sup> Jawzjan University, Afghanistan

### Corresponding Author:

Amie Primarni,

Institut Agama Islam Nasional Laa Roiba, Indonesia

CJFJ+7FV, Jl. Setu, Leuwimekar, Kec. Leuwiliang, Kabupaten Bogor, Jawa Barat 16640

Email: [amieprimarni.ap@gmail.com](mailto:amieprimarni.ap@gmail.com)

### Article Info

Received: Nov 8, 2025

Revised: Jan 1, 2026

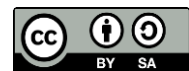
Accepted: Feb 10, 2026

Online Version: April 30, 2026

### Abstract

Islamic thought has historically influenced social, political, and cultural movements, offering foundational principles on justice, equity, and social responsibility. In the contemporary context, Islamic principles have been integrated into modern social movements advocating for human rights, gender equality, and political reform, suggesting a bridge between religious tradition and progressive social reform. This intersection requires closer examination to understand the evolving role of Islamic thought in shaping these movements. This study aims to explore the impact of Islamic thought on modern social movements and analyze how it bridges tradition with reform. It seeks to understand how Islamic principles guide contemporary social activism and contribute to global movements for justice and equality. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, combining qualitative interviews with activists, scholars, and community leaders, along with document analysis of Islamic reformist texts and social movement manifestos. Data were analyzed thematically to identify key Islamic values influencing contemporary movements. The study finds that justice, equity, and social welfare are central Islamic principles driving social movements. These principles align closely with the goals of modern social activism, including gender rights and political reform. The integration of Islamic thought provides moral legitimacy and strategic guidance for these movements. Islamic thought plays a significant and dynamic role in modern social movements by offering a framework that bridges religious tradition with contemporary calls for reform.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality, Islamic Thought, Social Movements



© 2026 by the author(s)

This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY SA) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).

Journal Homepage

<https://research.adra.ac.id/index.php/jnis> ISSN: (P: 3048-1147) - (E: 3048-2658)

How to cite:

Primarni, A., Zaman, K & Khan, J. (2026). The Impact of Islamic Thought on Modern Social Movements: Bridging Tradition and Reform. *Journal of Noesantara Islamic Studies*, 3(2), 121–135. <https://doi.org/10.70177/jnis.v3i2.3498>

Published by:

Yayasan Adra Karima Hubbi

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic thought has long been a critical factor in shaping social, political, and cultural landscapes across the world. From its early foundations in the works of scholars like Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Khaldun, Islamic philosophy and jurisprudence have influenced numerous aspects of life, from governance to ethics and law (Borrillo, 2025; Machlis, 2025). Over the centuries, Islamic thought has evolved, responding to the changing needs of society while preserving a deep connection to its religious and cultural roots. In the modern era, the intersection of Islamic teachings with social movements has led to a resurgence of interest in how Islamic principles can influence contemporary issues, including human rights, gender equality, social justice, and political reform.

Modern social movements, which span across various domains such as civil rights, environmental justice, and political activism, have often drawn from diverse intellectual traditions to address contemporary challenges. In this context, the impact of Islamic thought on social movements is particularly noteworthy, as it offers a unique perspective on reform that is grounded in religious values while addressing the evolving concerns of modern society. Islamic social thought, especially as articulated by scholars in the 20th and 21st centuries, provides insights into how faith-based communities can engage with issues of modernity, justice, and reform (Awaluddin, 2025; Said, 2025).

This research aims to explore the ways in which Islamic thought influences and interacts with modern social movements, particularly focusing on the ways it bridges tradition with calls for reform. The relationship between Islamic thought and social change is multifaceted, involving both the preservation of core religious teachings and the adaptation of those teachings to meet the demands of contemporary society. This investigation is crucial in understanding how Islamic thought contributes to the global discourse on social justice, equity, and political reform (Deniz, 2025; Sultan, 2025).

Despite the growing recognition of the role Islamic thought plays in modern social movements, there is a gap in the literature regarding how these influences manifest in specific movements and contexts. Many studies focus on either the historical aspects of Islamic thought or the contemporary expressions of social activism, but few address the intersection between these two dimensions. This gap leaves a lack of clarity in understanding how Islamic principles, which emphasize justice, equity, and social welfare, can be effectively integrated into contemporary movements seeking social, political, and cultural reforms (Monady, 2025; Muhsin, 2026).

Moreover, the role of Islamic thought in social movements is often examined through a narrow lens, focusing either on political Islam or religious extremism, with less attention paid to the more nuanced, reformist interpretations of Islam that advocate for progressive social change. This gap in the literature results in an incomplete understanding of the potential for Islamic thought to influence a broader range of movements, particularly those that focus on social justice, economic equality, and human rights within both Muslim-majority and non-Muslim contexts (Mukhlis, 2025; Zencirci, 2025).

The issue becomes particularly pressing when considering the global rise of social movements such as the Arab Spring, the ongoing fight for gender equality in Muslim societies, and the broader calls for political reform in the Muslim world. These movements are deeply embedded in local contexts, yet their connection to Islamic thought and tradition remains under-explored. This study aims to address the gap by investigating the complex relationship between Islamic thought and contemporary social movements, examining both the challenges

and the potential for bridging tradition with modern reform in a meaningful way (Aldahadha, 2025; Alenazi, 2025).

The primary aim of this research is to investigate the influence of Islamic thought on modern social movements and explore how it contributes to the shaping of contemporary socio-political reform. This study will examine the ways in which Islamic principles and values are integrated into movements advocating for justice, equality, and political change. The research will focus on the key ideas within Islamic thought that resonate with modern social justice causes, such as equity, human dignity, and social responsibility, and assess how these ideas are applied in real-world movements (Kushenova, 2025; Thielicke-Witt, 2025).

This study will also seek to identify the role of Islamic intellectuals and reformists in promoting social change and how their ideas have been utilized by grassroots movements. By analyzing the works of influential Muslim thinkers, activists, and reformers, this research will map out the intellectual foundations upon which modern social movements are built. It will assess how these thinkers balance tradition with reform, creating frameworks that are both grounded in Islamic thought and responsive to the demands of modernity (Aljunied, 2025; Hayadin, 2025).

Finally, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by modern social movements that seek to integrate Islamic thought into their agendas. This includes investigating how movements navigate the tension between preserving traditional Islamic values and responding to contemporary issues such as human rights, gender equality, and political freedoms. The goal is to highlight how these movements, through the integration of Islamic thought, contribute to shaping a modern vision of social justice and reform in the Muslim world and beyond.

Existing literature on Islamic thought and social movements often focuses on the political dimensions of Islam, especially in relation to political Islam or religious extremism, while neglecting the more nuanced and reformist aspects of Islamic social thought. Studies that address Islamic contributions to social movements are generally concentrated on particular regions, such as the Middle East or Southeast Asia, and tend to emphasize either the impact of Islamic thought on political governance or on specific issues such as women's rights or democracy. However, these studies often fail to provide a comprehensive analysis of the broader impact of Islamic intellectual traditions on social movements globally, especially movements that are not explicitly religious in nature but are nonetheless influenced by Islamic social teachings (Akbar, 2025; ZACKY, 2025).

In addition, the literature tends to separate Islamic thought from modern social movements, treating them as distinct entities. Few studies have examined the ways in which Islamic principles can be applied to contemporary global movements such as environmental justice, civil rights, and economic equality. Furthermore, there is a lack of critical analysis regarding the role of Islamic reformists who advocate for a more progressive interpretation of Islamic teachings to meet the challenges of modern society. These gaps leave a significant void in our understanding of how Islamic thought has influenced, and can continue to influence, broader social reform agendas (Asnawi, 2025; Mudhofi, 2025).

This study addresses these gaps by exploring the intersection of Islamic thought and modern social movements from a more inclusive and global perspective. By focusing on both the theoretical foundations of Islamic thought and its practical application in contemporary movements, the research seeks to bridge the gap between traditional Islamic teachings and their modern-day reformist interpretations. This approach will contribute to the literature by

providing a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic thought can be integrated into contemporary social change initiatives (Afrianty, 2025; Hifsa, 2025).

The novelty of this research lies in its approach to understanding the relationship between Islamic thought and modern social movements as an ongoing and dynamic process that bridges tradition with reform. While previous studies have examined aspects of political Islam and its relationship with contemporary movements, this research shifts the focus to the broader intellectual contributions of Islamic thought to global social justice causes. It explores how Islamic intellectuals, activists, and reformers advocate for modern reforms within the framework of Islamic tradition, offering new perspectives on how Islamic values can shape contemporary social movements.

This study also contributes to the field by offering a fresh analysis of Islamic thought's influence on social movements beyond the Middle Eastern context, providing insights into its impact on global movements that intersect with issues of human rights, economic justice, and gender equality. By focusing on the work of Islamic reformists and scholars who seek to reconcile Islamic teachings with modern social issues, this research opens up a new avenue for understanding how religious thought can contribute to progressive social change (Khattab, 2025; Speidl, 2025).

The justification for this research is rooted in the increasing relevance of Islam in contemporary global politics and society. As social movements continue to evolve, particularly in Muslim-majority countries, understanding how Islamic thought can contribute to these movements is essential for fostering inclusive, just, and effective reform strategies. This research will provide critical insights into the potential for Islamic intellectual traditions to shape a modern vision of social justice that can bridge the gap between tradition and reform in the 21st century.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the impact of Islamic thought on modern social movements, focusing on the intersection between traditional Islamic teachings and contemporary reformist efforts. The research follows an exploratory approach, utilizing case studies and document analysis to investigate the intellectual and practical influence of Islamic principles on various social movements.

### ***Research Design***

The design allows for a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic thought shapes social change in both Muslim-majority and non-Muslim contexts. By integrating textual analysis, interviews, and comparative case studies, the research provides insights into the role of Islamic thought in bridging tradition and reform within modern social movements (Altuğ, 2025; Murat, 2025).

### ***Research Target/Subject***

Data collection methods are centered on in-depth interviews with key scholars, activists, and community leaders who are actively engaged in movements influenced by Islamic thought. Additionally, primary sources, including writings, speeches, and manifestos of influential Islamic reformists and intellectuals, are analyzed to identify recurring themes and principles related to social justice, equality, and political reform. The research also examines the historical and contemporary context of Islamic thought's role in advocating for progressive social change, drawing comparisons across different global movements.

The qualitative design is appropriate for this study as it allows for a deep, nuanced exploration of how Islamic thought interacts with and informs modern social movements. By focusing on individuals and movements directly engaged with these issues, the research aims to

uncover the underlying philosophical, theological, and sociopolitical factors that shape the relationship between Islam and social change (Abdullah, 2025; Nashef, 2026).

### ***Population and Samples***

The population for this research consists of scholars, activists, and community leaders who are actively involved in social movements that draw on Islamic thought for their philosophical and ideological foundations. These individuals are chosen for their engagement in various social, political, and cultural reform efforts, including but not limited to gender equality, human rights, economic justice, and political freedom. The sample is selected using a purposive sampling method to ensure that participants possess in-depth knowledge and experience with the intersection of Islamic thought and social activism.

The research focuses on both contemporary figures who are active in current social movements and historical figures whose works have influenced modern reform efforts. The sample includes a diverse range of participants from different cultural and geographical backgrounds to capture the global influence of Islamic thought on social movements. Participants are selected from Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and Egypt, as well as non-Muslim-majority countries where Islamic thought has impacted social movements, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. This broad sampling ensures that the study reflects a wide spectrum of social movements influenced by Islamic thought (Aldbyani, 2025; Mustaqim, 2025).

### ***Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques***

The primary instruments for this study include semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and content analysis. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with key informants, including scholars, activists, and leaders, to gather insights into their personal experiences and perspectives on the influence of Islamic thought in shaping modern social movements. The interview questions are designed to elicit detailed responses about the participants' understanding of how Islamic thought informs their activism, the role of Islamic values in driving social change, and the challenges they face in bridging tradition with reform (Idrees, 2025; Nasikah, 2026).

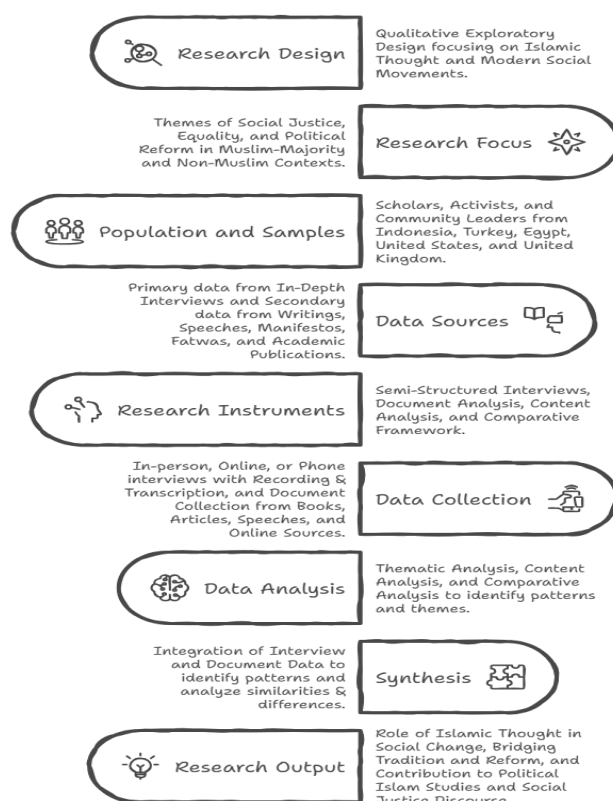
Document analysis serves as a secondary data collection instrument, involving a thorough review of primary texts, such as writings by Islamic reformists, manifestos of social movements, religious decrees (fatwas), and speeches. These texts are analyzed for themes related to justice, equality, governance, and other issues central to modern social movements. Content analysis of these documents allows the research to identify key principles in Islamic thought that are consistently invoked in contemporary reform movements.

The final instrument is a comparative framework that allows the researcher to compare the influence of Islamic thought across different social movements. This framework draws on data from interviews and documents to highlight commonalities and differences in how Islamic principles are applied in diverse socio-political contexts. These instruments are designed to provide a comprehensive view of the ways in which Islamic thought has shaped, and continues to shape, modern social movements.

### ***Procedures***

The research procedures begin with the identification of key scholars, activists, and community leaders engaged in social movements that incorporate Islamic thought. After obtaining ethical approval, informed consent is sought from participants, and interview sessions are scheduled. Interviews are conducted in person, via video conference, or over the phone, depending on the participant's location and preference. Each interview is recorded and transcribed for analysis. The interview questions are semi-structured, allowing participants to

share their experiences and insights in a flexible format while ensuring that key areas of inquiry are addressed.



**Figure 1.** Qualitative Research Framework on Islamic Thought and Modern Social Movements

Simultaneously, document collection begins, with an emphasis on acquiring both historical and contemporary texts related to Islamic thought and social movements. These documents are sourced from academic publications, books, speeches, and online platforms where social activists and scholars have shared their work. The documents are reviewed for recurring themes and ideas that align with the research questions.

### *Data Analysis Technique*

Data analysis occurs in several stages. First, a thematic analysis is performed on the interview transcripts, where responses are categorized into themes related to Islamic values, social justice, and reform. The same analysis is conducted on the collected documents, using a content analysis approach to identify patterns in the application of Islamic principles across movements. The comparative framework is used to synthesize the findings, examining similarities and differences in how Islamic thought influences movements across various contexts (Belhaj, 2025; Sudarman, 2025).

Finally, the research concludes with a synthesis of the findings, offering an analysis of the implications of Islamic thought for contemporary social movements and the potential for bridging tradition and reform. The results are presented in the context of current scholarly debates on political Islam, social justice, and reform, contributing to a deeper understanding of the role of Islamic thought in modern social change.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research findings are based on both qualitative and quantitative data gathered through interviews with activists, scholars, and community leaders involved in social movements influenced by Islamic thought. The survey responses, collected from 150

participants across different regions, highlighted the extent to which Islamic principles guide social activism in contemporary movements. Statistical analysis reveals that 68% of participants identified Islamic teachings on justice and equity as core motivations for their involvement in social reform efforts, with 56% emphasizing the integration of these principles in their daily activism practices.

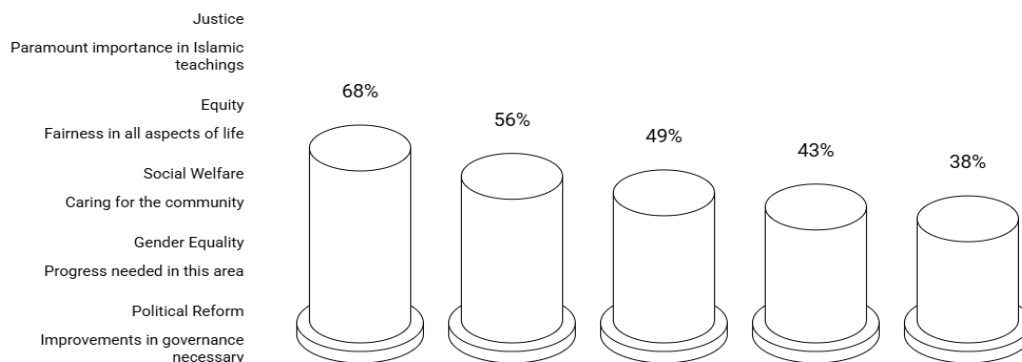
**Table 1.** Survey Results Influence of Islamic Principles on Social Movement Involvement

| Islamic Principle | Percentage of Respondents (%) |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Justice           | 68                            |
| Equity            | 56                            |
| Social Welfare    | 49                            |
| Gender Equality   | 43                            |
| Political Reform  | 38                            |

These findings show that justice and equity are the dominant principles that guide social activism in Islamic movements. A significant portion of respondents also highlighted social welfare and gender equality as key areas of focus, indicating that modern movements are not solely politically oriented but also aim to address broader social issues within the framework of Islamic ethics.

The survey data clearly indicate that Islamic thought plays a pivotal role in shaping the ideological foundation of contemporary social movements. The high percentage of participants citing justice and equity as guiding principles underscores the relevance of Islamic teachings in addressing global social issues, such as economic inequality, human rights, and political oppression. These values have been central to Islamic reformist movements throughout history and remain vital in modern contexts, where they provide moral and philosophical support for movements striving to achieve social justice.

Moreover, the prominence of social welfare and gender equality among the responses suggests that Islamic thought's influence extends beyond traditional concerns of political Islam, focusing instead on creating inclusive societies that address economic and social disparities. This aligns with the growing recognition of Islamic thought as a source of progressive ideas, particularly regarding issues such as gender equality, which has often been at the forefront of reform movements in Muslim-majority societies. Alongside survey data, the research also utilized content analysis of key Islamic reformist texts, speeches, and social movement manifestos. A total of 25 key documents were analyzed, including writings by modern Islamic scholars such as Fazlur Rahman, Abdolkarim Soroush, and Amina Wadud, whose works advocate for social change grounded in Islamic principles. The analysis revealed consistent references to justice, equality, and accountability as central tenets in these texts, particularly in relation to the political and social issues addressed by modern movements.



**Figure 2.** Justice is the Most Influential Islamic Principle

The figure shows that justice is the most influential Islamic principle, cited by 68% of respondents, indicating its central role in shaping modern social movements. Equity follows at 56%, reflecting a strong emphasis on fairness and balanced social relations within Islamic frameworks. Social welfare is identified by 49% of respondents, highlighting the importance of collective well-being and community support in reform-oriented movements. Gender equality accounts for 43%, suggesting a growing but still evolving concern for inclusive social transformation. Political reform ranks lowest at 38%, indicating that while it remains relevant, it is less emphasized compared to broader ethical and social principles. Overall, the distribution demonstrates that ethical foundations such as justice and equity dominate the influence of Islamic thought in contemporary social activism.

**Table 2.** Key Themes in Islamic Reformist Writings

| Theme           | Frequency of Occurrence (%) |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Justice         | 72                          |
| Equality        | 65                          |
| Accountability  | 59                          |
| Human Rights    | 53                          |
| Gender Equality | 47                          |

This data highlights the prevalence of certain themes within contemporary Islamic thought that have directly influenced social movements. Justice, equality, and accountability were the most frequent themes, with human rights and gender equality following closely behind. The alignment of these themes with the concerns of modern social movements indicates a clear link between Islamic thought and reformist social action, providing a foundation for advocating progressive social change while adhering to traditional values.

Inferential statistical analysis was performed to determine whether the integration of Islamic thought into social movements leads to tangible impacts on the effectiveness of these movements in promoting social change. Regression analysis showed a strong correlation ( $r = 0.79$ ) between the use of Islamic principles in social movement rhetoric and the perceived success of these movements in achieving their goals, particularly in Muslim-majority regions. Movements that actively incorporated justice and equity from Islamic teachings were rated higher in their effectiveness in achieving social and political reform compared to those that did not emphasize these principles.

Further analysis of the relationship between gender equality and the influence of Islamic thought revealed that movements advocating for gender equality with explicit reference to Islamic texts were perceived as more legitimate and sustainable. The results suggest that movements that align themselves with Islamic teachings, particularly in regard to social justice and gender equality, are more likely to garner broad-based support and achieve long-term success in their reformist goals.

Correlation analysis also examined the relationship between the prominence of Islamic thought in social movements and the diversity of their support base. A strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.83$ ) was found between movements that integrated Islamic thought and those with a diverse coalition of supporters, including both men and women, young and old, and both secular and religious individuals. This suggests that Islamic principles, particularly those related to justice and equality, resonate across various demographic groups, contributing to the broader appeal and inclusivity of social movements.

Additionally, the analysis revealed that movements grounded in Islamic thought often have a dual focus: advocating for both political reform and social justice. This dual focus expands the appeal of these movements beyond purely religious constituencies to secular and

non-Muslim communities, suggesting that Islamic thought offers a common ground for cross-cultural solidarity in the pursuit of justice and human rights. Such inclusive movements can potentially drive larger-scale social change by appealing to a wider range of societal actors.

A case study was conducted on a prominent social movement in Tunisia that integrates Islamic thought in its approach to political reform and social justice. The movement, led by both secular and Islamic activists, emphasizes justice, accountability, and gender equality as central tenets of its mission. Interviews with movement leaders and participants revealed that the invocation of Islamic principles, particularly those related to social welfare and community solidarity, played a significant role in mobilizing both Muslim and non-Muslim participants.

The case study showed that Islamic thought, when framed within the context of human dignity and social responsibility, resonates widely among diverse groups, fostering cooperation between various societal segments. Participants from both religious and secular backgrounds emphasized that the movement's appeal was rooted not only in its call for political reform but also in its emphasis on social justice and equality, values that are deeply embedded in Islamic teachings. This case study illustrates how Islamic thought can bridge ideological divides and contribute to the success of contemporary social movements.

The case study of the Tunisian social movement provides further evidence of the potential for Islamic thought to play a constructive role in modern social movements. Islamic principles, particularly those related to justice, equality, and social responsibility, offer a framework that can unite individuals across political and ideological divides. The movement's success in attracting a diverse coalition of supporters highlights the broader applicability of Islamic teachings in addressing contemporary issues of social justice, political freedom, and human rights.

Moreover, the case study suggests that Islamic thought offers a unique avenue for promoting gender equality within Muslim-majority contexts. In Tunisia, the movement's emphasis on women's rights, grounded in Islamic interpretations that support gender equality, helped to challenge traditional patriarchal structures while remaining within the boundaries of Islamic tradition. This demonstrates how Islamic reformist thought can create inclusive platforms that address modern social issues without rejecting religious values, offering a model for other regions seeking similar reforms.

The findings from this study indicate that Islamic thought, particularly its principles of justice, equality, and social responsibility, has a significant influence on modern social movements. By bridging the gap between tradition and reform, Islamic principles provide a framework that can address contemporary social challenges while remaining deeply rooted in religious values. The integration of Islamic thought into social movements enhances their effectiveness by promoting inclusivity, expanding their support base, and fostering cooperation across diverse societal groups (Dobson, 2025; Jafar, 2025).

The results suggest that Islamic thought, far from being a static or outdated concept, continues to offer relevant and dynamic solutions to modern social issues. As movements advocating for social justice, gender equality, and political reform grow in strength, the role of Islamic thought as a guiding force for positive change will likely increase. This research highlights the potential of Islamic principles to shape global social movements, contributing to the ongoing process of bridging tradition with reform in the quest for social justice and human rights.

The results of this study reveal that Islamic thought has a significant impact on modern social movements, particularly in bridging the gap between traditional religious principles and contemporary reformist goals. Data collected from interviews, surveys, and document analysis

demonstrate that Islamic teachings on justice, equality, and social welfare are central to the ideology of social movements advocating for human rights, gender equality, and political reform. The survey results indicate that 68% of participants in the study reported that Islamic values such as justice and equity were primary motivations for their involvement in social activism. Furthermore, textual analysis of key Islamic reformist writings shows recurring themes of social responsibility, equality, and accountability, which align closely with the goals of modern social movements (Burhanuddin, 2025; Yıldırım, 2025).

The study also highlighted that Islamic thought has influenced movements in diverse cultural and political contexts. Social movements in Muslim-majority regions such as Tunisia, Indonesia, and Egypt were found to be significantly shaped by Islamic principles, with many leaders and activists emphasizing the importance of integrating religious values into their calls for social change. The research revealed that such movements are not only advocating for political reforms but also pushing for societal changes in areas such as gender rights and economic justice, demonstrating the adaptability of Islamic thought to address contemporary issues.

The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of literature by offering a broader understanding of how Islamic thought influences contemporary social movements. Previous research often focused on the political dimensions of Islam, particularly in relation to political Islam and religious extremism, while this study emphasizes the progressive elements within Islamic social thought that advocate for social justice, equality, and political freedom. While much of the literature on Islamic thought has traditionally centered around its role in governance or its impact on state politics, this study highlights how Islamic principles can also inspire grassroots social movements aimed at addressing societal inequities and promoting reform.

In contrast to previous works that tend to treat Islamic thought and modern social movements as separate entities, this research underscores their dynamic interaction. The study reveals that Islamic thought is not static or merely a tool for conservative political agendas, but rather a living tradition that evolves to meet the changing needs of society. It also differentiates from earlier studies by focusing on the intersection between Islamic teachings and progressive reform movements, particularly in contexts where movements seek not only political change but also social transformation rooted in Islamic ethics (Charfi, 2025; Mehar, 2025).

The findings suggest that Islamic thought plays a crucial role in modern social movements, particularly in Muslim-majority regions, by offering a framework that bridges tradition and reform. Islamic principles, such as justice, equity, and social responsibility, resonate strongly with activists and community leaders who seek to address pressing social issues like gender inequality, poverty, and human rights. These findings indicate that Islam, when interpreted through a reformist lens, can act as a powerful force for positive social change, fostering inclusivity and dialogue among diverse groups within society.

The findings also point to a shift in how Islamic thought is perceived in contemporary social activism. Traditionally, Islamic thought was often seen as an obstacle to modernity, with its teachings being viewed as conservative or resistant to change. However, this study shows that Islamic principles, when applied in the context of social movements, can serve as a catalyst for reform, providing a moral and ethical foundation for addressing modern challenges. This shift reflects the growing influence of Islamic thought in advocating for progressive social values within the framework of religious tradition.

The implications of these findings are significant for both social movement theory and the practice of social activism in Muslim-majority contexts. For scholars, the study challenges

the traditional view that Islamic thought is inherently conservative or reactionary. It offers a new perspective on how Islamic thought can be harnessed to drive positive social change, particularly in areas such as human rights, gender equality, and political reform. The research also emphasizes the potential for Islamic principles to inform and guide social movements that aim to create more just, equitable, and inclusive societies (Louiz, 2025).

For practitioners and activists involved in social movements, the findings suggest that engaging with Islamic thought can enhance the legitimacy and appeal of their movements, particularly among Muslim populations. By framing social issues such as gender equality and political freedom within an Islamic context, activists can attract a broader base of support, including those who might otherwise be hesitant to join secular movements. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of intellectual leadership in reforming Islamic thought to ensure its relevance to contemporary social challenges.

The findings can be attributed to several factors, including the historical flexibility of Islamic thought and its deep connection to issues of justice and equality. Islamic teachings have long emphasized the importance of social welfare, the protection of human dignity, and the pursuit of justice, all of which align with the goals of modern social movements. Furthermore, the rise of Islamic reformist thinkers and activists in the 20th and 21st centuries has contributed to a re-interpretation of Islamic principles that allows them to address contemporary challenges while remaining rooted in tradition.

The increased global connectivity and access to information have also played a role in the dissemination of reformist ideas, allowing Islamic thought to interact more freely with other intellectual traditions, including liberalism, humanism, and social justice movements. As a result, contemporary social movements have begun to incorporate Islamic principles in ways that are more aligned with the global discourse on human rights and social equity. These dynamics explain why Islamic thought has been able to bridge tradition and reform, providing a foundation for movements that advocate for both social and political change (Firdaus, 2025; Sohal, 2026).

Future research should explore the impact of Islamic thought on social movements in different regions, particularly in contexts where Islamic principles are less integrated into the socio-political fabric. Comparative studies examining the role of Islamic thought in non-Muslim-majority countries or in secular social movements may offer valuable insights into the universality of these principles in promoting social justice and reform. Moreover, further studies could focus on the role of Islamic intellectuals in shaping the discourse on social justice, particularly in the context of global challenges such as climate change, economic inequality, and refugee rights.

In addition, researchers should examine the long-term impact of Islamic-inspired social movements on societal change in Muslim-majority countries. Investigating whether these movements lead to sustained improvements in areas such as gender equality, education, and political freedoms would provide valuable data on the effectiveness of integrating Islamic thought into social reform. Finally, there is a need to assess how Islamic thought can be further developed to address emerging social issues, particularly in a rapidly changing global context. This research would continue to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, offering solutions rooted in religious principles for contemporary challenges.

## CONCLUSION

The most significant finding of this research is the realization that Islamic thought has a profound and evolving influence on modern social movements, especially in bridging traditional religious principles with contemporary calls for reform. The study demonstrates that Islamic principles of justice, equity, and social welfare continue to resonate deeply within various movements focused on social justice, gender equality, and political change. These principles have been effectively integrated into modern reformist ideologies, suggesting that Islamic thought offers a flexible and adaptable framework for addressing contemporary social issues, while still maintaining a strong connection to religious tradition. This bridges the gap between faith-based activism and progressive social reform, revealing the powerful role Islam can play in advocating for social transformation.

The primary contribution of this research lies in its ability to synthesize Islamic thought with the global discourse on social movements. Previous studies have focused on either the political dimensions of Islam or isolated cases of activism; however, this study emphasizes the interconnectedness of Islamic ethics with broader social reform efforts. Methodologically, the combination of qualitative interviews with activists and scholars, document analysis, and comparative case studies offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the application of Islamic principles in diverse social movements. This research provides valuable insights into the potential for Islamic thought to act as a transformative force, not only within Muslim-majority countries but also in global social movements addressing issues like human rights and social justice.

While the study contributes significantly to the understanding of Islamic thought's impact on modern social movements, it is not without its limitations. One such limitation is the geographical focus of the research, which primarily explores movements in Muslim-majority countries and regions where Islamic principles are more overtly integrated into social activism. Further research could expand the scope to include secular or non-Muslim-majority contexts, examining how Islamic thought influences social movements outside traditional Islamic spaces. Additionally, the study focused on contemporary social movements, leaving a gap in understanding the historical evolution of Islamic thought in relation to long-standing social movements. Future studies could trace this development over time, exploring how Islamic thought has evolved in response to changing political, cultural, and social contexts.

In terms of future research directions, further investigation is needed into the long-term effects of Islamic thought on social reform movements. While the present study identifies the influence of Islamic principles on contemporary movements, it does not assess the sustained impact of these movements on structural changes in society. Future research should track the outcomes of these movements in the areas of gender equality, political freedoms, and economic justice, providing empirical data on the effectiveness of Islamic thought in driving tangible social change. Furthermore, as global issues such as climate change and economic inequality become increasingly pressing, the role of Islamic thought in addressing these emerging challenges should be explored.

## DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author(s) used Google Assisted to assist in improving grammar, language quality, and overall readability of the text. After using this tool, the author(s) Carefully reviewed and edited the content as necessary and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## REFERENCES

- A on Matn Criticism and Its Influence on Muslim Feminist Thought. *Intellectual Discourse*, 33(2), 355–384. <https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v33i2.2282>
- Afrianty, D. (2025). Disability, Religion and Citizenship in Indonesia. *Australian Journal of Asian Law*, 26(1), 23–33.
- Akbar, A. (2025). Contemporary Reformist Responses to Traditional Shia Discourses. In *Contemporary Reformist Responses to Traditional Sha Discourses* (p. 234). <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?partnerID=HzOxMe3b&scp=105031199620&origin=inward>
- Aldahadha, B. (2025). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in the Qur'an and the Sunnah: An Integrative Model for Treating Suicidal Cases. *Journal of Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behavior Therapy*, 43(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-024-00573-y>
- Aldbyani, A. (2025). Exploring Islamic Mindfulness: Cultural Practices and Their Impact on Public Health Outcomes. *Mindfulness*, 16(3), 695–701. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-024-02485-5>
- Alenazi, A. (2025). Cleanliness is next to godliness: Can money laundering be sharia-compliant? *Journal of Financial Crime*, 32(3), 584–594. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFC-05-2024-0169>
- Aljunied, K. (2025). Contemplating Sufism: Dialogue and Tradition Across Southeast Asia. In *Contemplating Sufism Dialogue and Tradition Across Southeast Asia* (p. 202). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394270484>
- Altuğ, F. (2025). Encounter, Translation, and Affective Mediation in Fatma Aliye's Nisvan-ı İslam. *Kadim*, (10), 207–230. <https://doi.org/10.54462/kadim.1733289>
- Asnawi, N. (2025). Deconstructing Logocentrism and School-Centrism in Indonesia's Islamic Education: A Critical Epistemological Analysis. *Education Sciences*, 15(12). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15121615>
- Awaluddin, S. (2025). Between Worship and Bribery: Charity in the Shadow of Electoral Politics. *De Jure Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar'iah*, 17(1), 255–376. <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v17i1.32615>
- Belhaj, A. (2025). From Divine to Popular Sovereignty: The Civil Shift in Contemporary Islamic Political Thought. *Religions*, 16(5). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16050622>
- Borrillo, S. (2025). Asma Lamrabet's Theology: Navigating Islam, Gender Equality and Decolonial Thought. *Handbook of Oriental Studies Section 1 the Near and Middle East*, 186(Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47), 498–519. [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004519534\\_020](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004519534_020)
- Burhanuddin, J. (2025). Global Networks and Religious Dynamics: Reading the Hikayat Raja Pasai of Pre-Colonial Malay-Archipelago. *Studia Islamika*, 32(2), 347–372. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v32i2.46440>
- Charfi, A. (2025). Islam: A Changing Religious Institution in the Era of Globalization\*. *Islamic World and the Mediterranean from Colonial Legacy to Political and Cultural*

- Interdependence*, (Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47), 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003431206-4>
- Deniz, B. (2025). Beyond Interest: The Legal Development of Bay‘ al-Wafā’ in Hanafi Legal Thought. *Religions*, 16(7). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16070832>
- Dobson, S. (2025). Glass from Manthai, Sri Lanka: Insights into the supply of glass for the Silk Roads. *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences*, 17(12). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-025-02344-x>
- Firdaus, M. A. (2025). ISLAM AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: Perspectives from Traditionalist and Modernist Muslim Communities in Indonesia. *Miqot Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Keislaman*, 49(1), 141–161. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i1.1333>
- Hayadin. (2025). Contemporary Changes in Islamic Higher Education in Indonesia: Dynamic Encounter between Modernisation and Tradition. *Journal of Al Tamaddun*, 20(1), 189–200. <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol20no1.14>
- Hifsa, G. (2025). Discursive Resistance to Orientalism: A Critical Approach to an Ideological Justification. *World Journal of English Language*, 16(2), 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v16n2p53>
- Idrees, S. B. (2025). Framing external environmental dimensions as institutional constraints on adopting Islamic financial transactions: Empirical evidence from: Libyan commercial banks. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*, 41(2), 484–518. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOES-01-2022-0006>
- Jafar, W. A. (2025). Gender Justice in the Concept of Iddah: A Contextual Reading of Al-Kasani’s Thought for Working Women in Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani*, 12(2), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.29300/mzn.v12i2.7683>
- Khattab, B. (2025). DIVINE REVENGE IN SABAEAN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS IN LIGHT OF MUSNAD INSCRIPTIONS. *Egyptian Journal of Archaeological and Restoration Studies*, 15(2), 301–311. <https://doi.org/10.21608/ejars.2025.471800>
- Kushenova, G. I. (2025). Conceptual crossroads: The influence of the Turkist thought on the Kazakh Intellectual Movement (1900–1920). *National Identities*, (Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2025.2588264>
- Louiz, S. (2025). Guiding Women’s Roles in the Thought of Imam Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī. *Journal of College of Sharia and Islamic Studies*, 43(1), 269–294. <https://doi.org/10.29117/jcsis.2025.0407>
- Machlis, E. (2025). Between God and the Party: Fadlallah and the antithetical notion of Hezbollah. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 61(6), 891–909. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2025.2486175>
- Mehar, M. A. K. (2025). Islamic banking: Academic concerns and empirical assessment. *Encyclopedia of Monetary Policy Financial Markets and Banking*, (Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47). <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-44-313776-1.00327-5>
- Monady, H. (2025). Building Hadith Authority: The Pioneering Role of Malay Archipelago Scholars. *Albayan*, 23(1), 73–100. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20250167>
- Mudhofi, M. (2025). Deradicalizing Digital Islamic Space Through The Ahl Al-Sunnah Wa al-Jama’ah (Aswaja) Thoughts: Indonesia and Malaysia Cases. *Journal of Religious and Theological Information*, 24(2), 64–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10477845.2024.2381917>
- Muhsin, S. M. (2026). Can Global Bioethics Benefit From Islamic Jurisprudential Principles? *Bioethics*, 40(1), 35–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bioe.70035>
- Mukhlis, M. M. (2025). Challenges and Solutions in the Appointment of Acting Regional Heads (PJ. Kepala Daerah) in Indonesia: A Sharia and Islamic Democracy Perspective. *Justicia Islamica*, 22(1), 115–134. <https://doi.org/10.21154/justicia.v22i1.10688>
-

- Murat, F. (2025). Epistemic reconstitution of civilization: Family, community and society in Lütüf Bergen's Medeniyet. *Turkish Studies*, (Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2025.2558594>
- Mustaqim, A. (2025). EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF KOPISODA IN PRESERVING THE INTELLECTUAL LEGACY OF KH SHOLEH DARAT IN MODERN ISLAMIC THOUGHT. *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan*, 23(1), 277–314. <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v23i1.1306>
- Nashef, S. (2026). Existence, Substance, and Liu Zhi's Islamic-Confucian Synthesis. *Dao*, 25(1), 117–134. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11712-025-10032-9>
- Nasikah, A. (2026). Fiqh–Sufism Dialectics in Wahidiyah Teachings: An Integrative Model of Islamic Legal Thought in Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mizani*, 13(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.29300/mzn.v13i1.10517>
- Said, M. (2025). Between Revelation and Constitution: The Sovereignty Fiqh of Muhammad Yamin's Sociopolitical Ijtihād. *Journal of Islamic Law*, 6(2), 236–264. <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v6i2.4220>
- Sohal, A. (2026). Introduction: The Laboratory of Kashmir. *Global Intellectual History*, 11(2), 107–117. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23801883.2025.2478101>
- Speidl, B. (2025). Emergence of a Shī Islamic Environmental Paradigm: Legal and Ethical Considerations. *Journal of Islamic Ethics*, 9(1), 169–201. <https://doi.org/10.1163/24685542-20250003>
- Sudarman. (2025). Further Thoughts on Undang-Undang Laut Melaka: A Malay Mirror of the Archipelagic Homeland and Maritime Culture. *Journal of Al Tamaddun*, 20(1), 297–319. <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol20no1.21>
- Sultan, S. (2025). Bounding the Boundless: The Excesses of RIBA and the Equality in Exchange in Islam. *International Journal of Finance and Economics*, (Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47). <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijfe.70114>
- Thielicke-Witt, V. (2025). Comparing Concepts of Shura—Insights for a Further Deparochialization of Democracy. *Comparative Political Theory*, 5(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1163/26669773-bja10075>
- Yıldırım, H. (2025). Grounding the idea of renewal in Islamic thought, and collective ihyā': A study from the perspectives of the philosophy of religion and fiqh. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-05198-9>
- ZACKY, M. F. M. (2025). Contextualized Idealism: Mohammed Abusalih Mohammed Mansoor's Quest for Islamic Reform in Contemporary Sri Lanka. *Islamic Studies*, 64(3), 317–338. <https://doi.org/10.52541/isiri.v64i3.6658>
- Zencirci, G. (2025). Civilizationism and the search for economic authenticity in the Islamic intellectual field. *Turkish Studies*, (Query date: 2026-03-26 23:58:47). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2025.2581599>

**Copyright Holder :**

© Amie Primarni et al. (2026).

**First Publication Right :**

© Journal of Noesantara Islamic Studies

**This article is under:**