



The Concept of Justice According to Abdurrahman Wahid and Its Implications for Islamic Education

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Abstract

This study examines the construction of the concept of justice in the thought of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) and its implications for Islamic education as a response to the persistent problems of discrimination, intolerance, and exclusivism in contemporary Islamic educational practices. The novelty of this study lies in its analytical perspective, which positions justice not merely as a derivative value of Gus Dur's ideas on humanism and pluralism, but as an independent analytical category and an overarching principle that integrates humanism, equality, pluralism, democracy, and the protection of minority groups within a unified conceptual framework. This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design. Data were collected through a systematic literature review of Gus Dur's primary works and relevant scholarly literature, while data analysis was conducted using content analysis combined with a philosophical and conceptual approach. The findings reveal that Gus Dur's concept of justice is epistemologically rooted in the ideas of the indigenization of Islam, Islamic universalism, and the rejection of defensive and exclusive forms of religiosity. Consequently, his understanding of justice is transformative in nature because it emphasizes structural correction of injustice rather than merely providing normative recognition of equality. Furthermore, this concept of justice has practical implications for six essential components of Islamic education, namely educational objectives, curriculum development, teacher-student relationships, learning processes, assessment systems, and educational culture. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of contemporary Islamic thought by formulating a model of transformative justice-based Islamic education. Practically, it provides a conceptual reference for educators and educational policymakers seeking to develop Islamic education that is more humanistic, inclusive, democratic, and oriented toward the common good. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its reliance on textual analysis and does not include empirical verification within contemporary Islamic educational institutions.

Keywords: Abdurrahman Wahid; Islamic education; justice; pluralism; transformative education.

Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti konstruksi konsep keadilan dalam pemikiran Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) dan implikasinya terhadap pendidikan Islam sebagai respons terhadap masalah diskriminasi, intoleransi, dan eksklusivisme yang terus-menerus dalam praktik pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Keberhasilan studi ini terletak pada perspektif analitis, yang memosisikan keadilan bukan sekadar sebagai nilai turunan dari gagasan Gus Dur tentang humanisme dan pluralisme, tetapi sebagai kategori analitis independen dan prinsip menyeluruh yang mengintegrasikan humanisme, kesetaraan, pluralisme, demokrasi, dan perlindungan kelompok

minoritas dalam kerangka konseptual yang terpadu. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain penelitian perpustakaan. Data dikumpulkan melalui tinjauan pustaka sistematis terhadap karya-karya utama Gus Dur dan literatur ilmiah yang relevan, sementara analisis data dilakukan dengan menggunakan analisis konten yang dipadukan dengan pendekatan filosofis dan konseptual. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa konsep keadilan Gus Dur secara epistemologis berakar pada gagasan indigenisasi Islam, universalitas Islam, dan penolakan terhadap bentuk-bentuk religiositas defensif dan eksklusif. Akibatnya, pemahamannya tentang keadilan bersifat transformatif karena menekankan perbaikan struktural terhadap ketidakadilan daripada sekadar memberikan pengakuan normatif terhadap kesetaraan. Selain itu, konsep keadilan ini memiliki implikasi praktis untuk enam komponen penting pendidikan Islam, yaitu tujuan pendidikan, pengembangan kurikulum, hubungan guru-murid, proses pembelajaran, sistem penilaian, dan budaya pendidikan. Secara teoretis, studi ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan pemikiran Islam kontemporer dengan merumuskan model pendidikan Islam berbasis keadilan transformatif. Secara praktis, ini memberikan referensi konseptual bagi pendidik dan pembuat kebijakan pendidikan yang berusaha mengembangkan pendidikan Islam yang lebih humanis, inklusif, demokratis, dan berorientasi pada kebaikan bersama. Namun demikian, studi ini terbatas pada ketergantungannya pada analisis tekstual dan tidak mencakup verifikasi empiris dalam institusi pendidikan Islam kontemporer.

Kata kunci: Abdurrahman Wahid; pendidikan Islam; keadilan; pluralisme; pendidikan transformatif.

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Introduction

The Qur'an explicitly commands the establishment of justice without regard to group background, as stated in QS. *Al-Ma'idah* verse 8 and QS. *An-Nisa* verse 58. Justice (*Al-'adl*) is one of the most fundamental values in Islamic teachings, occupying a central position in theological, social, and educational dimensions. Contemporary exegesis studies emphasise that the essence of justice in the Qur'an is multidimensional, encompassing legal, social, economic, and political justice as a collective responsibility to realise an inclusive and just life (Al Jumhuri and Nitalia, 2024). Thus, justice should not be understood merely as a norm that stops at the textual level, but it is necessary to examine how the principle is constructed, interpreted, and translated into social practices, including in the administration of Islamic education (Jubaedi and Bachtiar, 2024).

Nevertheless, the implementation of justice values in Islamic education still faces various challenges. The phenomena of discrimination, intolerance, exclusivism, and low appreciation for diversity continue to be issues found in the practice of religious education. Several studies indicate that the tendency for religious-based intolerance in Indonesia has increased in recent years, indicating a gap between the values of Islamic

moderation and their implementation in social life (Muhaemin & Das, 2026). At the same time, the development of an exclusive culture in educational environments has the potential to reinforce intolerant attitudes, especially among the younger generation (Akbar, 2024). The condition indicates that Islamic education still faces the challenge of integrating the value of justice into educational practices more substantively.

In this context, the thoughts of K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) are chosen not merely because of his position as an Indonesian Islamic figure, but because of the characteristic of his thinking that uniquely connects Islamic teachings with the plural social reality of Indonesia. Unlike several Islamic thinkers who discuss justice primarily from normative, *fiqh*, or political perspectives, Gus Dur developed a concept of justice that is contextual, transformative, and orientated towards the protection of human dignity. Through the ideas of indigenisation of Islam, universality of Islam, democracy, pluralism, and respect for human rights, Gus Dur sought to translate the universal principles of Islam into the context of Indonesia's multicultural society (Wahid, 2007). In the same context, Banks (2020) emphasises that multicultural education should encourage the recognition of diverse group identities to reduce discriminatory practices. In other words, his thinking offers a perspective that is closer to educational issues because it places humans, diversity, and equality at the core of social transformation.

The choice of Gus Dur is also based on the consistency between his thoughts and practices. As a scholar, intellectual, activist, leader of religious organisations, and President of the Republic of Indonesia, Gus Dur not only articulated ideas about justice in his intellectual works but also implemented them through various public policies that favoured marginalised and minority groups (Wahid, 1999a), as well as through a contextual approach rooted in Indonesia's social realities (Barton, 2002). Therefore, his thoughts provide a rich source for examining how the concept of justice is constructed, developed, and applied in social life, including in the field of education.

However, this research does not start from the assumption that Gus Dur's concept of justice can automatically resolve issues of injustice in Islamic education. On the contrary, this research first seeks to critically reconstruct how the concept of justice is built within the entirety of his thought framework. This step is important because Gus Dur's thoughts on justice are not systematically organised in a single work, but rather scattered across various writings that discuss themes such as democracy, pluralism, culture, human rights, and Islam (Chandra & Ulum, 2025). Thus, an analysis of the

conceptual construction of justice becomes a prerequisite before examining its implications for Islamic education.

Previous Research and Research Gaps

Table 1. Previous Research

Author	Focus	Findings	Limitations
Anam (2019)	Pluralism	Liberation	Justice not analyzed
Rohimat and Hakim (2020)	Democracy	Liberation theology	No educational analysis
Burhani et al. (2020)	Multiculturalism	Diversity	Justice implicit
Kurniawan and Muzakki (2021)	Humanism	Human dignity	Justice derivative
Khoiruddin and Prasetya (2024)	Comparative study	Diversity	Justice insufficient

The study of Gus Dur's thoughts has developed widely over the past decade. Anam (2019), analysed Gus Dur's concept of pluralistic education through a critical discourse analysis approach and concluded that education from Gus Dur's perspective is orientated towards the liberation of humanity through respect for diversity. Nevertheless, the research focused more on pluralism as a paradigm of education without examining the construction of justice as a standalone concept.

Then, Rohimat and Hakim (2020) examined the relationship between liberation theology, democracy, and Gus Dur's thought through a literature review. The research shows that democracy is viewed by Gus Dur as a moral instrument to uphold justice and reject the politicisation of religion. However, the discussion places more emphasis on the theological-political aspect, thus not explaining the implications of the concept of justice on Islamic education.

Meanwhile, Burhani et al., (2020) studied multicultural education in the thought of Gus Dur and found that cultural diversity is the main foundation of education based on universal humanity. The results of the study show that justice is implicitly understood as part of multiculturalism, rather than as a main concept analysed in depth.

The research by Kurniawan and Muzakki (2021), integrates humanism and pluralism into the educational paradigm of Gus Dur. This study emphasises that the orientation of Gus Dur's education is centred on respecting human dignity. However, conceptually, justice is still placed as a consequence of humanism, not as a principle with its own epistemological structure.

In addition, Khoiruddin and Prasetya (2024), conducted a comparative study between the thoughts of Gus Dur and Syafi'i Ma'arif. The research findings indicate that Gus Dur emphasised the importance of active recognition of diversity. However, the

comparative nature of the research design caused the discussion on the concept of justice to be less in-depth because the research attention was divided between two figures simultaneously.

Based on the review of those studies, there are two main gaps, namely the conceptual gap and the methodological gap. Conceptually, most previous research has placed justice as a value inherent in pluralism, humanism, democracy, or multiculturalism, so the concept of justice has not been analysed as an independent category. As a result, the epistemological basis that forms the concept of justice in Gus Dur's thought has not been systematically explained.

On the other hand, methodologically, previous studies tend to use a thematic approach with a focus on a specific aspect, such as pluralism, democracy, or multicultural education. This approach has not yet conducted a comprehensive conceptual reconstruction through direct analysis of Gus Dur's primary works to identify the conceptual structures of justice scattered throughout his various writings. Furthermore, studies on normative justice in Islam (al Jumhuri and Nitalia, 2024), and research on issues of injustice in contemporary Islamic education (Akbar, 2024) are still developing separately without any effort to connect the two through the thoughts of a single figure.

The novelty of this study lies in three aspects. First, this study reconstructs justice as an independent analytical category rather than as a derivative value of pluralism or humanism. Second, it systematically identifies the epistemological foundations of justice in Gus Dur's primary works through content analysis. Third, it develops a transformative justice model that bridges Islamic theories of justice, Gus Dur's thought, and Islamic educational philosophy within a single conceptual framework.

Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur)

K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid, also known as Gus Dur, was born in Jombang, East Java, on September 7, 1940, and passed away in Jakarta on December 30, 2009 (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2017). Gus Dur's education began in a *pesantren* environment before continuing to various educational institutions, including Al-Azhar University in Cairo and Baghdad University in Iraq. The intellectual experiences he gained from various educational environments shaped his open-minded perspective towards differences, while also strengthening his commitment to substantive Islamic values.

His intellectual and organisational career flourished when he was active in Nahdlatul Ulama, eventually being elected as the General Chairman of PBNU for three terms (1984-1999). In 1999, he was elected as the fourth President of the Republic of Indonesia. Experience as a cleric, leader of religious organisations, public intellectual, and head of state provided Gus Dur with the space to implement his ideas in social and political life.

Gus Dur's biography is an inseparable part of the construction of his thoughts on justice. His siding with minority groups, his defence of the rights of marginalised communities, and his commitment to democracy and pluralism demonstrate a continuity between ideas and practice. Therefore, Gus Dur's biography in this study is not positioned merely as a historical description, but as an intellectual context that helps explain how the concept of justice in his thinking was formed and developed.

Method

This study uses a qualitative research design with a library research method (Zed, 2008), to examine the concept of justice in the thoughts of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) and its implications for Islamic education. This approach aligns with the character of qualitative research, which aims to reconstruct meaning from various textual sources (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, the choice of this method is also because the object of study consists of ideas, values, and systems of thought expressed in written works, rather than social phenomena observed directly (Nazir, 2015). Therefore, this research focuses on the interpretation, reconstruction, and critical analysis of Gus Dur's writings in order to formulate a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of his theory of justice.

The types of data used consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes the original works of Abdurrahman Wahid, particularly those discussing themes of justice, Islamic teachings, democracy, diversity, education, and humanity. Secondary data includes books, proceedings, and articles published in SINTA-accredited journals and internationally reputable journals that discuss Gus Dur's thoughts, the philosophy of Islamic education, social justice, humanity, and diversity (Sugiyantoro & Haryono, 2025). Data collection was carried out through a systematic literature review. The stages of literature selection include: determining relevant publications, establishing eligibility and exclusion criteria, grouping literature based on topic relevance, assessing source quality, and categorising references into analysis

categories. This step ensures that the study materials being analysed meet the criteria of scientific relevance and reliability (Sugiyono, 2016).

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis enriched with a descriptive-analytical approach. Content analysis is considered very appropriate because it can reconstruct abstract ideas from various writings (Krippendorff, 2018). This technique allows researchers to find units of meaning scattered across various works and periods of Gus Dur's publications, and then group them into discussion categories related to justice, humanity, diversity, democracy, and Islamic education. The analysis process takes place in four stages: first, identifying the main ideas and statements found in the primary works; second, grouping these ideas according to their relevant discussions; third, interpreting the relationships between discussion groups to understand the basic framework and foundational thoughts of Gus Dur's concept of justice; fourth, compiling the study results into a comprehensive framework to explain the meaning of justice and its impact on Islamic education.

This approach was chosen because Gus Dur's ideas have not been compiled into a single work, but are instead scattered across various writings, speeches, and scholarly works (Lutfiana et al., 2023). Therefore, understanding his concept of justice needs to be built through systematic and careful examination, not merely by referring to a limited discussion of Islamic education.

To strengthen the methodological foundation, this research constructs a study framework based on the humanist and open-minded Islamic thought of Gus Dur, which views justice as a comprehensive concept inseparable from respect for human dignity, cultural wealth, democratic values, and social justice. Thus, justice is not only understood as a legal provision but also as a worldview that serves as a guideline for human relationships and the direction of educational administration. The framework is elaborated through two complementary approaches. First, a philosophical approach is used to examine the foundational thoughts and values underlying Gus Dur's concept of justice. From the perspective of foundational thoughts, the study investigates how the concept of justice is constructed by combining Islamic teachings, national cultural values, humanitarian spirit, and the ideals of a democratic life. From the perspective of values, the meaning, purpose, and application of justice in social life and the world of education are elaborated (Muarifah et al., 2025).

Second, a conceptual approach is used to recognise and map the reciprocal relationships between the main ideas of Gus Dur's thought, namely justice, humanity,

diversity, and democracy. This relationship map serves as a guide throughout the entire analysis process. Justice is placed as the main idea, while humanity, diversity, and democracy become supporting aspects that are interconnected and together form Gus Dur's perspective on education. Through this framework, it is also explained how these ideas are interconnected to form a comprehensive view of Islamic education (Sugiyantoro & Haryono, 2025).

This research framework is designed to address two main issues. First, how the concept of justice is constructed in Gus Dur's thought based on respect for humanity, diversity, democracy, and human rights. Second, how this concept of justice is applied to the six main elements of Islamic education, namely the goals of education, the structure of teaching materials, the teaching-learning process, the roles of educators and learners, assessment methods, and the atmosphere of educational administration (Ramayulis, 2008). Therefore, the analysis is conducted in two interrelated stages. The first stage is to identify and categorise the values of justice found in Gus Dur's works. The second stage is to translate these values into guidelines that can be practiced in Islamic educational institutions. These two stages cannot be separated: understanding the concept of justice requires a clear grasp of its foundational thinking, while its application in the world of education is necessary to ensure that the discussion does not merely become a discourse far removed from reality (Muarifah et al., 2025).

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Justice in Abdurrahman Wahid's Thought: Epistemological Basis and Value Construction

Analysis of Abdurrahman Wahid's primary works shows that justice was never formulated as a standalone theory in a single specific work. The idea is spread across various writings that discuss Islam, democracy, pluralism, human rights, culture, and education. Therefore, this research conducts a conceptual reconstruction through the identification of units of meaning found in "*Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela* (1999b)", "*Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita* (2006)", "*Islam Kosmopolitan* (2007)", and "*Prisma Pemikiran Gus Dur* (2010)".

Based on the content analysis of those primary works, three epistemological foundations that shape Gus Dur's concept of justice were found, namely Islamic universalism, the indigenisation of Islam, and *pesantren* as a subculture (Siswanto & Fakhruddin, 2022). These three foundations show that justice in Gus Dur's thought is not

understood as a legal-formal concept, but rather as a universal Islamic value that must be contextually translated according to the social realities of Indonesian society (Wahid, 2009). Thus, justice does not stop at the normative dimension, but must be realised through concrete social transformation.

Through the process of categorising various units of meaning in those works, this research identifies five main dimensions that shape Gus Dur's construction of justice, namely humanism, equality, active pluralism, democracy, and protection of minority groups (Wahid, 2006). These five dimensions do not exist independently, but are interrelated in shaping what this study refers to as transformative justice. This finding constitutes the study's primary conceptual contribution, as previous studies have tended to analyze each of these dimensions separately (Barton, 2002).

1. Humanism: Justice as a Defense of Human Dignity

In his analysis of "*Tuhan Tidak Perlu Dibela*," Gus Dur criticized the tendency among Muslims to treat religion as a symbol that must be defended (Wahid, 1999b). According to him, religious energy should not be expended on defending symbols, but rather directed toward resolving humanitarian issues. This view is reinforced in "*Islam Kosmopolitan*", where Gus Dur positions standing up for the *mustadh'afin* as part of the Muslim community's social responsibility. When analyzed through the theory of Islamic justice, which defines *'adl* as the obligation to treat things in accordance with their rights in a proportional manner (Al Jumhuri & Nitalia, 2024), It appears that Gus Dur's humanism is justice translated into the realm of personal and social ethics: active advocacy for the vulnerable as a concrete expression of religious devotion. This perspective shares similarities with the critical education paradigm developed by (Freire, 2005), which views education as an instrument of liberation. Giroux (2020) It also emphasizes that education must serve as a means of social transformation through the strengthening of critical awareness.

These findings indicate that humanism in Gus Dur's thought is not merely respect for human beings as individuals, but rather a concrete form of justice realized through solidarity with groups experiencing injustice. In other words, humanism is the operational manifestation of justice. This interpretation differs from the research Anam (2019), which concludes that Gus Dur's education was open and liberating. That study has not yet explained why openness was a defining characteristic of Gus Dur's education. Through an analysis of primary sources, this study demonstrates

that this openness is a direct consequence of a concept of justice centered on respect for human dignity.

From the perspective of transformative justice, humanism serves as a mechanism to correct educational practices that disregard human dignity. Its conceptual implications for Islamic education lie in the formulation of educational goals that are oriented not only toward mastery of religious knowledge but also toward the formation of individuals who value humanity universally. This is also in line with the paradigm of transformative Islamic education developed in contemporary studies of Gus Dur's thought (Chandra & Ulum, 2025).

2. Equality: Justice as a Remedy for Structural Inequality

In "*Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita*", Gus Dur emphasizes that justice is the core of Islamic teachings, which must be fully realized without distinction based on a person's religious identity, social status, or political position (Wahid, 2006). He explicitly rejects discriminatory practices that result in certain groups enjoying greater rights than others. Gus Dur's conception of equality shows a stronger affinity with substantive justice than with procedural justice.

These findings indicate that equality, as conceived by Gus Dur, is not synonymous with formal equality. Rather, equality is understood as an effort to reform social structures that produce inequality. Thus, Gus Dur's concept of equality aligns more closely with the idea of substantive justice than with procedural justice. Equal treatment will not lead to justice if the underlying social structures continue to perpetuate inequality. These findings align with research Rohimat and Hakim (2020), that links Gus Dur's thought to liberation theology. However, this study found that the dimension of liberation in Gus Dur's thought operates not only at the theological level but also at the structural level. Thus, equality in Gus Dur's thought is best understood as a mechanism for transforming unjust social structures.

In the context of Islamic education, equity implies the development of a curriculum that not only transmits knowledge but also fosters critical awareness of various forms of injustice. This concept is closely related to the idea of substantive justice in education, which emphasizes that equal access does not necessarily lead to justice if the quality of education remains unequal (Diniati & Sayekti, 2025).

3. Active Pluralism: Rejection of the Monopoly on Interpretation

An analysis of *"Islamku, Islam Anda, Islam Kita"* shows that Gus Dur consistently criticized the monopoly on religious interpretation (Wahid, 2006). According to him, the dominance of a single group in determining religious truth has the potential to give rise to exclusivism and eliminate space for dialogue in social life. Meanwhile, in *"Islam Kosmopolitan"*, diversity is viewed as a treasure that must be preserved, not eliminated through a process of standardization (Wahid, 2007). Pluralism in Gus Dur's thought does not merely mean recognition of diversity, but also calls for active engagement in building equitable relationships within a diverse society. In the field of education, Banks (2020) explains that recognition of diversity is the cornerstone of multicultural education.

Based on an analysis of the text, pluralism in Gus Dur's thought cannot be understood as passive tolerance. Rather, pluralism is positioned as an active effort to prevent the domination of any particular group in determining the truth. Thus, pluralism is not only related to the acceptance of differences, but also to the distribution of authority in the process of forming religious knowledge. This interpretation confirms the research Safitri (2024), which refers to Gus Dur's pluralism as "active pluralism." However, this study makes a more specific contribution by demonstrating that the primary target of Gus Dur's criticism is the monopoly on religious interpretation. Thus, pluralism is understood as an instrument to prevent the reproduction of injustice stemming from claims of a single truth.

From the perspective of Islamic education, active pluralism demands an epistemological shift in learning—from knowledge-transmission-oriented learning toward dialogue-oriented learning. Thus, the implications of pluralism are not limited to learning content but also encompass how knowledge is produced and exchanged in the classroom. These findings are also consistent with research on the implementation of Gus Dur's pluralism in contemporary social practices (Khairiyah & Nabilah, 2026).

4. Democracy: Justice as Participation and the Distribution of Power

In *"Prisma Pemikiran Gus Dur"*, democracy is understood not merely as a political procedure, but as a moral value related to respect for human rights, equality, and social justice (Wahid, 2010). Gus Dur also rejected the use of religion as a tool to gain or maintain political power. In Gus Dur's thinking, democracy is not understood merely as a political system, but also as an ethical value that guarantees

participation, equality, and freedom. This perspective aligns with Dewey's (2018), view, which positions democracy as the foundation of education that encourages active student participation. These findings indicate that democracy, in Gus Dur's thought, functions as a mechanism to prevent the abuse of authority, both in the political and religious spheres. Democracy serves as a means to ensure that every individual has equal opportunities to participate in social life.

Research Rohimat and Hakim (2020), also found a connection between democracy and justice in Gus Dur's thought. However, this study shows that democracy is not merely a political instrument, but rather one of the key dimensions that shape the concept of transformative justice. In the context of Islamic education, democracy implies the formation of more dialogical relationships between educators and students. However, since this study is a literature review, these implications remain at the conceptual level and cannot yet be considered an empirically tested model.

5. Protection of Minority Groups: The Highest Manifestation of Transformative Justice

An analysis of the body of primary literature shows that the protection of minority groups represents a common ground between humanism, equality, pluralism, and democracy (Barton, 2002). Gus Dur's advocacy for marginalized groups did not occur sporadically, but rather constituted a consistent pattern throughout his thought. Islam is understood as a religion that brings mercy to all humanity (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*). The protection of minority groups identified in this study is also consistent with the human capabilities approach Nussbaum (2020), who argue that justice must prioritize vulnerable populations through the creation of just social structures.

These findings form the basis for the formulation of the concept of transformative justice. Justice in Gus Dur's thought is not aimed at preserving the status quo, but at transforming the structures that produce discrimination. Thus, justice in Gus Dur's thought has three main characteristics:

- 1) It is humanistic because it is oriented toward human dignity.
- 2) It is inclusive because it recognizes diversity.
- 3) It is corrective because it aims to change unjust structures.

The concept of transformative justice identified in this study differs from the concept of distributive justice, which emphasizes the equitable distribution of

resources, as well as retributive justice, which focuses on the imposition of sanctions. Instead, transformative justice prioritizes the transformation of social structures as its primary goal.

The implications of the concept of justice for Islamic education encompass educational goals, curriculum, the learning process, evaluation, the relationship between educators and students, and educational culture. UNESCO (2021), emphasizes that 21st-century education must be oriented toward social justice and sustainability. Noddings (2018), It also explains that equitable education must be built through relationships that respect students as active participants. This study did not conduct field observations, interviews, or assessments of specific educational institutions. Therefore, the implications discussed in this section are theoretical consequences derived from the reconstruction of Gus Dur's concept of justice. These findings are not intended as empirically validated pedagogical recommendations, but rather as a conceptual model that can be further tested through field research.

Table 2. Implications of the Concept of Transformative Justice for the Six Components of Islamic Education

Dimensions of Justice	Findings from Primary Sources	Conceptual Implications for Islamic Education
Humanism	Education focused on respect for human dignity	Educational Goals
Equality	The curriculum as a tool for addressing inequality	Curriculum
Active Pluralism	Dialogue-based learning and diversity of perspectives	The learning process
Democracy	Participatory educational relationships	The Relationship Between Educators and Students
Protection of minorities	An inclusive and non-discriminatory educational environment	Assessment and Educational Culture

The concept of transformative justice in Gus Dur's thought has implications for the goals and curriculum of Islamic education. Humanism suggests that Islamic education should not focus solely on the transfer of religious knowledge but also develop individuals who respect human dignity and are able to coexist with differences. In this regard, "the competency to coexist with differences" can be included as an explicit learning outcome alongside mastery of fiqh and aqidah, consistent with Anam's (2019) findings on the openness of Gus Dur's educational philosophy. The curriculum should likewise function as an instrument of social transformation by developing critical awareness of inequality, discrimination, and diversity. This can be implemented through the inclusion of comparative Islamic schools of thought, the history of religious minority

groups in Indonesia, and inclusive narratives of Islamic history that recognize the contributions of diverse communities, in line with Burhani et al. (2020). In addition, democracy implies a more participatory and dialogic relationship between educators and students. Teachers should not remain the sole source of authority, while students should be encouraged to ask critical questions through open classroom forums and Socratic-style dialogue on contemporary religious issues, consistent with Kurniawan and Muzakki (2021).

The learning process should further reflect active pluralism by providing opportunities for diverse perspectives, critical dialogue, and constructive engagement with differences. This may include interfaith discussions, visits to places of worship as learning activities, and case studies of religious conflict and conflict resolution, in line with Khoiruddin and Prasetya (2024). In terms of assessment, the concept of equity suggests that evaluation should consider not only cognitive achievement but also social and human dimensions, such as tolerance and empathy, which can be assessed through participation in discussions and related behavioral indicators. Meanwhile, protection of minority groups implies an educational culture that values diversity and prevents discriminatory practices. Possible applications include non-discriminatory admission policies, spaces for expressing diverse local traditions, and dialogue forums among student organizations across different faiths. However, these implications remain conceptual because the study did not test their implementation in specific educational institutions. Their practical relevance is therefore supported at the conceptual level and is consistent with Muhaemin and Das (2026), who emphasize multicultural learning as a means of strengthening religious moderation.

Synthesis and Conceptual Model: Islamic Education Based on Normative Justice

Based on the entire analysis above, this study produces a conceptual synthesis that justice in Abdurrahman Wahid's thought is a transformative umbrella principle that binds humanism, equality, pluralism, democracy, and the protection of minority groups into a single ethical-practical framework oriented toward structural correction of injustice. The main conceptual contribution of this study is the formulation of a model of Islamic education based on transformative justice, as illustrated in the following diagram.

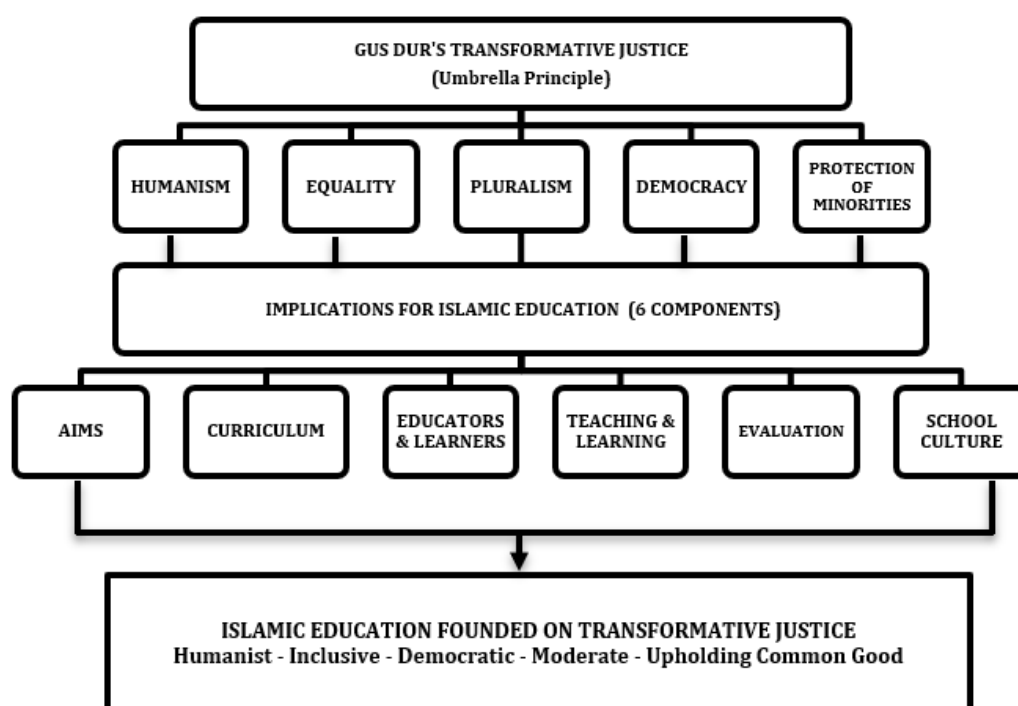


Figure 1. Synthesis and Conceptual Model: Islamic Education Based on Normative Justice

This model addresses the first research question by demonstrating that Gus Dur's concept of justice is rooted in an active and corrective respect for human dignity; at the same time, it addresses the second research question by showing that this value can be concretely translated into the following six components of Islamic education along with their operational indicators. Thus, this study contributes to filling an academic gap that has long positioned justice as a derivative value of Gus Dur's pluralism and humanism, by asserting that the opposite is true: pluralism, humanism, and democracy are operational manifestations of a single principle of transformative justice that lies at the core of his thought.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the concept of justice in Abdurrahman Wahid's thought is constructed on three epistemological foundations: Islamic universalism, the indigenization of Islam, and pesantren as a subculture. These foundations are reflected in five interconnected dimensions, namely humanism, equality, active pluralism, democracy, and the protection of minority groups. Together, these dimensions form a concept of transformative justice that views justice not merely as equal treatment, but as an active effort to protect human dignity, prevent discrimination, and transform unjust

social structures. The findings also indicate that this concept has important implications for Islamic education, particularly in educational goals, curriculum, teacher-student relationships, learning processes, assessment, and educational culture. Thus, Islamic education can be oriented not only toward religious knowledge but also toward the development of an inclusive, dialogical, democratic, and humanistic educational environment.

The study contributes a conceptual framework that connects Gus Dur's thought on justice with the philosophy of Islamic education and provides a basis for developing more inclusive educational policies, curricula, and practices. However, this study is limited by its reliance on textual and conceptual analysis and does not empirically examine the implementation of the proposed model in specific Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, the findings should be understood as a conceptual contribution rather than an empirically validated educational model. Future research should test this framework through field studies, case studies, or mixed-methods research in pesantren, madrasahs, Islamic schools, or universities to examine how the five dimensions of transformative justice can be operationalized across the six components of Islamic education and to assess their effectiveness in contemporary educational practice.

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