

Social Construction of Inclusive Education as Peace Practice in Islamic Schooling

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain how inclusive education practices at Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School, Bandung, West Java, contribute to building a culture of peace through the social processes formed in the daily interactions of the school community. The analysis focuses on how Islamic-based values, relationships, and school programs shape inclusive social identities, particularly for students with special needs. This research employs a qualitative approach through participant observation, in-depth interviews with the principal, teachers, and students from Grades X–XII, as well as document analysis. The findings demonstrate that peace values are constructed through inclusive routines that normalize differences, foster peer support, and reduce social distance among students. Islamic religious programs such as Friday Reflections, akhlak mentoring, and cross-identity dialogue serve as key arenas for reconstructing stereotypes, strengthening empathy, and expanding social solidarity. In addition, collaboration among the principal, teachers, the inclusion coordinator, parents, and students creates a coherent and supportive educational ecosystem that nurtures open-minded, egalitarian, and cooperative student character. This study concludes that an inclusion model grounded in Islamic values holds transformative potential for cultivating sustainable peace within schools. As its original contribution, this research proposes the concept of “inclusivity as a peace practice” within Islamic schooling—an area still rarely explored in Indonesian sociology of education.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menjelaskan bagaimana praktik pendidikan inklusif di Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School, Bandung, Jawa Barat, berperan dalam membangun budaya damai melalui proses sosial yang terbentuk dalam interaksi sehari-hari warga sekolah. Fokus kajian diarahkan pada bagaimana nilai, relasi, serta program sekolah berbasis Islam berkontribusi terhadap pembentukan identitas sosial yang inklusif, khususnya bagi siswa

berkebutuhan khusus. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam dengan kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa level X–XII, serta analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai perdamaian dikonstruksi melalui rutinitas inklusif yang menormalisasi perbedaan, menghadirkan dukungan sebaya, dan menurunkan jarak sosial antar siswa. Program keagamaan Islam seperti Refleksi Jumat, mentoring akhlak, dan dialog lintas identitas menjadi arena penting dalam rekonstruksi stereotip, penguatan empati, dan perluasan solidaritas sosial. Selain itu, kolaborasi antara kepala sekolah, guru, koordinator inklusi, orang tua, dan siswa menghasilkan ekosistem pendidikan yang koheren dan suportif, membentuk karakter siswa yang terbuka, egaliter, dan kooperatif. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa model inklusi berbasis nilai-nilai Islam memiliki potensi transformatif dalam membangun perdamaian berkelanjutan di sekolah. Secara orisinal, penelitian ini menawarkan konsep “inklusivitas sebagai praktik perdamaian” dalam konteks sekolah Islam, yang masih jarang dieksplorasi dalam sosiologi pendidikan Indonesia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Patterns of intolerance and discrimination in Indonesian schools have increased alarmingly over the past several years (Setia & Haq, 2023). The Ministry of Education and Culture (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2022) reported a rise in identity-based bullying, religious stereotyping, and the exclusion of vulnerable students, particularly students with special needs. Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (2025) revealed that more than 50 percent of students have witnessed or experienced discriminatory practices at school. These findings indicate that intolerance remains embedded in the everyday life of Indonesian education. At the same time, growing sociopolitical polarization in society has reinforced exclusive attitudes among adolescents. The Wahid Foundation (2022) noted that nearly half of Indonesian youth demonstrate exclusive religious orientations, which are likely to be reproduced through social interactions in schools.

The rapid expansion of inclusive schools nationwide adds a new paradox to Indonesia's educational landscape. Parliamentary records (Fauzan, 2023; Tempo.co, 2023) show a significant increase in the number of inclusive schools—from approximately 35,800 in 2021 to 44,400 in 2023. However, this expanded access has not been followed by adequate improvements in service quality. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2022) reported that out of more than 200,000 schools across Indonesia, only around 17,000 meet the criteria to be registered as inclusive schools. As a result, thousands of students with special needs continue to face barriers to equitable educational services. These barriers are both internal—such as low self-confidence and communication challenges—and external, including insufficient facilities, limited government support, and low public understanding (Maharani & Widiana, 2024). The interaction of these barriers creates a cycle of discrimination that affects the mental health and social identity of students with special needs. This situation underscores the urgency of examining how schools can cultivate social environments that are safe, inclusive, and oriented toward peace.

Research on inclusive education, peacebuilding in education, and Islamic schooling reveals three major trends. First, studies focusing on the technical and pedagogical aspects of inclusive education highlight teacher competence, school readiness, and the adequacy of facilities as key determinants of

successful inclusion. Studies such as Pratiwi et al. (2024) emphasize these factors, while Supriyanto et al. (Supriyanto et al., 2025) find that adaptive learning spaces strengthen students' sense of belonging and reduce discriminatory behavior. However, this body of research tends to limit inclusion to managerial and pedagogical dimensions, leaving the social and relational dimensions of inclusion—especially its role in reducing social distance—relatively underexplored.

Second, studies on peacebuilding in education concentrate on developing empathy, conflict mediation, and dialogical engagement. Harris and Morrison (2012) conceptualize peace education as a systematic effort to inculcate nonviolent conflict resolution. Research by Sintapertiwi et al. (2023) demonstrates the effectiveness of dialogue and peer mediation in reducing student aggression. Yet studies in this field rarely link peacebuilding processes to inclusive education, even though interactions across different identities serve as a crucial arena for cultivating a culture of peace.

Third, studies on Islamic schools and the formation of tolerant identities show that faith-based educational institutions can promote inclusivity when they adopt dialogical pedagogies. Arar and Haj-Yehia (2018) find that faith-based schools can encourage diversity through collaborative teaching. Fitriyah (2024) affirms that an inclusive Islamic curriculum can reduce exclusivist tendencies among adolescents. However, most of these studies focus on curriculum and doctrine rather than the social interactions that emerge within Islamic schools implementing inclusive education.

These three trends reveal a clear research gap. Studies on inclusive education have yet to examine inclusion as a social mechanism for peace formation. Research on peace education has not incorporated inclusion as a site of interaction among differences. Meanwhile, studies on Islamic education rarely address how inclusive Islamic schools build cultures of peace through everyday practices. Consequently, no comprehensive study has yet explained how inclusive education in Islamic schools functions as a site of social construction for peace.

The primary aim of this study is to explain how inclusive education practices at Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School construct a culture of peace through the social interactions, religious values, and institutional practices embedded in everyday school life. More specifically, the study seeks to uncover the social mechanisms linking inclusion to peacebuilding—namely how the normalization of difference, peer support, and Islamic religious programs contribute to the formation of inclusive social identities among students, including those with special needs. This study therefore addresses gaps in the literature that privilege technical, pedagogical, or curricular perspectives, offering instead a comprehensive sociological understanding of inclusion as a relational process that directly strengthens social cohesion and reduces social distance in Islamic schools.

This study argues that inclusive education in Islamic schools does not merely function as a service mechanism for students with special needs, but also as a social practice that builds peace through the construction of inclusive values, relationships, and identities. Its preliminary hypothesis is that the stronger the integration between Islamic values (such as *rahmah*, *ukhuwwah*, and *akhlak*), school programs (character mentoring, religious reflection, and cross-identity dialogue), and supportive social interactions, the greater the potential for cultivating a culture of peace characterized by empathy, solidarity, and reduced stereotyping among students. In other words, when inclusion is implemented coherently at structural, cultural, and interpersonal levels, it becomes a transformative force that not only enhances the participation of students with special needs but also elevates the quality of social relations among all members of the school community. This argument aligns with peacebuilding literature that underscores the importance of interaction across differences as a site for learning peace, while extending Islamic education scholarship by demonstrating that religious values can ground inclusive and non-discriminatory social practices.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study focuses on an in-depth understanding of how peace values are constructed through inclusive education practices in the everyday life of Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School. The unit of analysis encompasses the actors and activities involved in the implementation of inclusive

education, including the principal, teachers, the inclusion coordinator, students with special needs, and the social interactions that occur in classrooms and school activities. The school is understood as a social arena in which shared meanings are formed through relationships among members of the school community. Accordingly, this study does not aim to generate numerical generalizations but seeks to capture the processes, dynamics, and social meanings that emerge from inclusive practices.

This study employs a qualitative design to provide a comprehensive and contextual explanation of the phenomenon. This approach is appropriate for the research aim, which emphasizes an in-depth exploration of social processes rather than quantitative measurement. Creswell (2018) asserts that qualitative research is relevant when researchers seek to describe social realities that are complex and multidimensional. In this context, inclusive education and peace formation are understood as ongoing social processes that continually influence one another. The qualitative design therefore enables the researcher to portray the phenomenon holistically, capturing both the structural aspects of school policy and the dynamics of everyday interaction.

The study draws on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct observation of teaching and learning activities, informal student interactions, Islamic religious activities, and in-depth interviews with purposively selected informants. Informants included one principal, five teachers, one inclusion coordinator, and five students with special needs who actively participated in inclusive classes at Grades X, XI, and XII. The selection of informants follows Patton's (1990) recommendation that qualitative research requires information-rich subjects. Secondary data were collected from school documents such as the school's vision and mission, inclusion program guidelines, curriculum documents, character development reports, photographs, instructional videos, and internal policy records. These documents were used to corroborate and enrich the findings obtained from fieldwork.

Data collection techniques consisted of participant observation, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and literature review. Observations were conducted throughout one academic year to capture the social dynamics of inclusive practices, including classroom activities, school ceremonies, religious programs, and informal student interactions. The researcher adopted Geertz's (1973) technique of thick description to illustrate the social context and the meanings that emerged from each activity. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to explore key themes consistently while providing space for informants to elaborate on their experiences reflectively. All interviews were recorded with informants' consent and transcribed systematically. Document analysis was used to understand school policies and cultural practices that support inclusive and peace-oriented education.

Data analysis was conducted through iterative stages of data reduction, data display, and verification. Following the model of Miles and Huberman (2013), data from observations, interviews, and documents were first sorted to identify significant patterns. A thematic analysis technique was applied to categorize data into major themes such as inclusive instructional practices, patterns of social interaction, forms of cross-identity dialogue, conflict management, and school cultural symbols that support peace. Source and methodological triangulation were employed to ensure data credibility. The thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify the relationship between inclusive practices and the construction of peace values within the school environment.

The theoretical framework for this study draws on Berger and Luckmann's (1991) theory of social construction and Lederach's (1996) approach to peacebuilding from below. Social construction theory is used to explain how peace values and realities are formed through daily interactions, routines, and symbolic practices in the school. Meanwhile, Lederach's perspective illuminates the idea that peacebuilding is not solely structural but also rooted in interpersonal relationships and community-based cultural practices. By integrating these frameworks, this study conceptualizes inclusive education not merely as a technical policy but as a social process that shapes collective identity and a culture of peace in the context of Islamic schooling.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

About Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School, Bandung

Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School in Bandung is an integrated Islamic educational institution that offers schooling from kindergarten through senior high school. The school adopts the national curriculum, enriched with the philosophy of God-Centered Education and *Sirah Nabawiyah*-based learning, which frames intellectual, spiritual, and character development as a unified learning process. With an educational orientation grounded in the values of monotheism, the school seeks to cultivate learning experiences that emphasize not only academic mastery but also the formation of students' perspectives toward themselves, others, and their broader social environment (Sekolah Islam Cendekia Muda, 2024b).

As an inclusive school, Cendekia Muda welcomes students with diverse abilities, including students with special needs, and provides adaptive and supportive learning environments for all learners. The school understands inclusion not merely as an administrative policy but as an everyday practice that ensures equal learning opportunities. In practice, inclusion is implemented through various forms of academic and social support, such as student assistance, differentiated instructional methods, and the strengthening of peer relationships anchored in empathy and Islamic moral values.

The school's programs demonstrate an integration of spiritual development and twenty-first-century competencies. Daily religious routines, *Friday Reflection*, Qur'an memorization using the UMMI method, and character-building activities form part of the practices that shape students' discipline and moral character. At the same time, extracurricular activities such as STEM, robotics, innovative project-based learning, coding, archery, and outdoor learning broaden students' learning experiences within collaborative social settings. The school also applies gender-segregated classrooms, not as a form of exclusivity, but to maintain propriety and a comfortable learning environment in accordance with the principles of Islamic education (Sekolah Islam Cendekia Muda, 2024a).

Institutionally, Cendekia Muda has operated for nearly two decades and has been trusted by thousands of parents as a school that successfully balances academic achievement with character formation. The principle that every student must be known, supported, and personally guided is reflected in the school's warm and supportive culture. Islamic values such as *rahmah*, *ukhuwwah*, and moral integrity serve as frameworks that guide social interactions among teachers, students, parents, and staff (Sekolah Islam Cendekia Muda, 2024a).

Within the context of this research, Cendekia Muda functions as a social arena in which values of inclusion and peace are practiced through everyday interactions. The presence of students with special needs in regular classrooms, the collaboration between teachers and the inclusion coordinator, and the internalization of Islamic values through school rituals make this environment highly relevant for examining how inclusive education is constructed as a peace practice. With these characteristics, the school serves not only as a research site but also as a social laboratory that illustrates how contemporary Islamic education fosters inclusive, egalitarian, and cooperative social identities (Sekolah Islam Cendekia Muda, 2024b).

Inclusive Education Practices as a Mechanism for Constructing Peace Values in Everyday Interaction

Everyday interactions in the inclusive classrooms of Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School reveal patterns of social relations that are warm, supportive, and naturally accepted by all students. Across numerous classroom observations conducted throughout one academic year, both regular students and students with special needs were consistently seen sitting together in mixed formations without physical or social distance. In a Mathematics lesson, for instance, a student with attention difficulties repeatedly struggled to follow the teacher's instructions. Instead of expressing frustration, the teacher knelt beside the student's desk and gently guided him, saying in a calm tone, "*Let's try it slowly, just follow my hand one step at a time.*" At the same moment, two students seated in the back row approached and whispered, "*We'll help you after class.*" Similar moments occurred across several subjects, indicating that peer assistance had become a spontaneous and routine practice rather than a teacher-directed intervention.

During other learning activities, especially group-based subjects such as History and Civic Education, students with differing academic performances appeared to collaborate through flexible role distribution. In one Grade X History group, for example, a student with special needs was asked to identify types of historical artifacts, while regular students developed the subsequent analysis. Another group elected a student with special needs to deliver the opening presentation because, as a group member stated in an informal interview, *“his voice is the loudest.”* In a different instance, when a student experienced mild anxiety during a reading activity, a peer immediately tapped his back softly and reassured him, saying, *“It’s okay, just read one sentence first, I’ll continue after you.”* Such forms of support appeared consistently in observation notes, suggesting that they were habitual rather than exceptional occurrences.

Inclusive interactions were also prominent in informal school spaces such as the canteen, courtyard, and classroom corridors. During breaks, regular students and students with special needs often sat together at long canteen tables, sharing meals or chatting casually without signs of segregation. On several occasions, students with special needs who looked uncertain about choosing food were patiently guided by their peers: *“Take this one, it’s easier to eat.”* In an extracurricular arts activity, a student with special needs was supported by peers in memorizing drama lines as they alternated reading short sentences to facilitate understanding. Field notes captured these scenes with the description: *“No one appeared to be a caretaker or the one being cared for; everyone seemed like playmates who adjusted to each other’s rhythm.”*

Inclusive practices also emerged strongly in religious activities, particularly in Friday Reflections. In one session in April, students sat in a circle and took turns expressing gratitude or offering apologies. A student with special needs softly said, *“Thank you for wanting to sit with me in class.”* The student beside him immediately replied, *“We’re in the same group. It’s okay, don’t worry.”* The teacher facilitating the session provided only minimal guidance, allowing the conversation to unfold naturally. In another session, a student shared that he had felt nervous during a presentation, and a peer responded, *“Let’s practice together tomorrow.”* These reflective activities demonstrated how encouragement and mutual affirmation occurred routinely without being driven by formal rules.

Interviews with several teachers reinforced these observational findings. A Civic Education teacher explained, *“The students here are already used to seeing differences. So when someone struggles, their reflex is to help, not wait for instructions.”* A History teacher added, *“The groups that work best are usually the ones with diverse members. They complement one another.”* Interviews with students further confirmed that the sense of acceptance was genuine rather than superficial. A student with special needs remarked, *“I’m never afraid to learn in class because everyone helps if I don’t understand.”* A regular student similarly noted, *“We’re used to working together. He remembers pictures quickly, I remember text quickly. So we match well as a group.”*

Field notes also documented several non-verbal moments that demonstrated social acceptance, such as a student tapping a peer’s shoulder when he appeared anxious, groups of students waiting for a classmate who walked more slowly, or others automatically holding the door for a friend carrying multiple books. These small gestures, as recorded in daily reflections, created a classroom atmosphere that was warm, safe, and mutually supportive. Across all field documentation, inclusive interactions did not emerge as a formally constructed program but as a pattern shaped by continuous everyday routines.

Table 1. Inclusive Education Practices in Everyday Interactions at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School

Data Category	Findings	Forms of Inclusive Interaction
Academic Interaction in Classrooms	Teachers accompany students with special needs by kneeling beside their desks and giving step-by-step instructions in a calm manner.	Empathy-based academic support; personalized guidance.

Non-Academic Interaction (Canteen, Break Time, Extracurricular Activities)	Regular students spontaneously offer help after class sessions.	Peer support without teacher instruction; spontaneous solidarity.
	Students with special needs are assigned roles based on their strengths (e.g., a strong voice during presentations).	Flexible role assignment; recognition of competence.
	Regular students and students with special needs sit together without segregation and share food.	Spontaneous inclusion in informal activities.
	Students help peers memorize drama scripts during arts extracurriculars.	Creative learning support; cross-ability collaboration.
	Students hug or gently pat anxious peers on the back.	Emotional support; psychological reassurance.
Religious Activities (Friday Reflection)	Students with special needs express gratitude for feeling accepted.	Safe space for expression; social affirmation.
	Peers respond with acceptance without formal prompts.	Emotional validation; strengthened relationships.
	Students ask forgiveness and commit to practicing together.	Emotional regulation; interpersonal reconciliation.
Field Notes (Non-Verbal Behavior)	Students wait for peers who walk more slowly, hold doors open, or give space for others to calm down.	Inclusive and attentive non-verbal interaction.
Teachers' and Students' Perspectives	Teachers observe that students support one another without being instructed.	Normalized empathy; supportive classroom culture.
	Students with special needs feel safe and accepted.	Sense of safety; sense of belonging.
	Regular students view diversity as a group strength.	Appreciation of differences; inclusive teamwork.

Field findings indicate that everyday interactions at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School consistently generate patterns of peaceful and supportive social relations. In classroom routines, students are accustomed to learning alongside peers who differ in ability, learning pace, and individual needs. Peer assistance emerges spontaneously without teacher directives, creating classroom environments that are calm, cooperative, and free from negative expressions. Emotional support—such as soothing a panicked classmate, helping a peer organize assignments, or offering assistance after lessons—appears as a natural and widely accepted practice.

In informal spaces such as the canteen, the school courtyard, and extracurricular activities, these inclusive patterns become even more visible. Students sit together without segregation, share meals, practice drama roles collaboratively, and offer small gestures of encouragement through both verbal and non-verbal communication. During these moments, field notes describe the atmosphere as one in which students relate to each other not as caretakers and dependents, but as peers who navigate social rhythms together.

Religious activities, particularly Friday Reflection, further demonstrate how spiritual spaces function as safe arenas for expressing gratitude, offering apologies, and attending to one another's

emotional needs. In one session, for example, a student with special needs softly stated, *"Thank you for wanting to sit with me in class."* His peer immediately replied, *"We're in the same group. It's okay, don't worry."* Such interactions exemplify how reflective practices nurture mutual affirmation and strengthen empathy among students.

These experiences show that peace values are not taught through formal instruction but are constructed through recurring everyday habits that gradually form shared norms. Daily interactions cultivate empathy, reduce stigma toward differences, and reinforce a sense of belonging for all students, including those with special needs.

To provide a more comprehensive understanding of how inclusive practices evolve into internalized peace values, a visual mapping is needed to illustrate the social construction of peace emerging from field findings. Figure 1 summarizes this process, showing how everyday interactions—academic, non-academic, and spiritual—gradually shape shared meanings, cultural norms, and ultimately the formation of a peaceful school culture. This visualization clarifies the relationship between micro-level practices occurring in classrooms and school environments and the development of institutional identity as an inclusive, peace-oriented Islamic school.

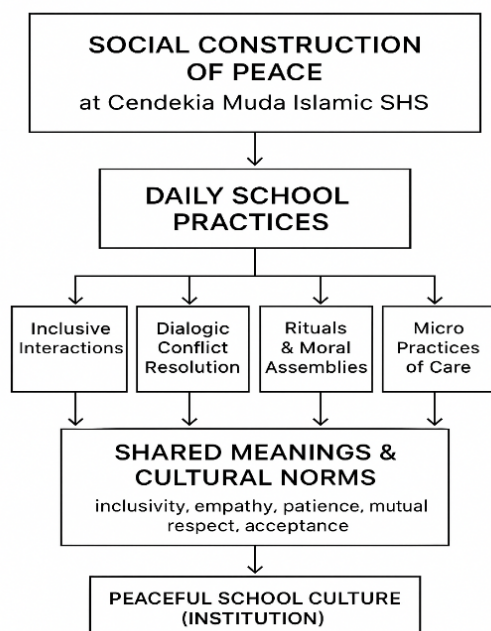


Figure 1. Social Construction of Peace at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School

Figure 1 illustrates the gradual process through which peace values are socially constructed in Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School. At the top layer, the process begins with direct interactions that occur in the everyday life of the school—whether in academic learning, nonformal activities, or religious practices. These daily practices, such as inclusive interactions, dialogical conflict resolution, reflective rituals, and micro-practices of care, form the initial foundation for creating relational patterns that are safe, supportive, and empathetic among students. Following Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory, these repeated micro-practices undergo processes of objectivation and internalization, gradually forming shared meanings and new cultural norms within the school community.

From these practices emerges a second layer of shared meanings and cultural norms, consisting of values associated with inclusivity, empathy, patience, acceptance, and respect for differences. These values do not arise from formal rules but develop organically through emotional experiences, egalitarian interactions, and repeated social routines. At the final stage, these internalized meanings transform into a peaceful school culture, which becomes institutionalized in the school's identity as a learning environment that is safe, warm, and appreciative of diversity.

Thus, Figure 1 clarifies that peace at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School is not the result of a single policy but the product of micro-level mechanisms embedded in daily school life. Each simple interaction—helping a student with special needs, offering emotional support, engaging in dialogue during conflict, or expressing gratitude in Friday Reflection—contributes to a broader social process that fosters a peaceful and inclusive school culture. The diagram underscores that peacebuilding develops from below, grounded in consistent and internalized everyday practices across the school community.

Based on the complete set of observation data, interviews, and field notes, everyday interactions clearly serve as the primary arena where peace values are produced, negotiated, and internalized by both students and teachers. What appears in daily practices—from how students sit together without segregation, offer spontaneous help to classmates facing difficulties, to how they express mutual appreciation in reflective activities—shows that peace in this school is not constructed through formal instruction but through social habits that continually recur. Small verbal and non-verbal acts over time form relational patterns that move consistently toward a classroom atmosphere characterized by safety, support, and inclusivity.

Four main thematic patterns emerge from these experiences. First, the normalization of difference through inclusive classroom routines is evident in the ways students and teachers treat diversity as an ordinary aspect of daily learning. Students with special needs learn alongside their peers, participate in group work, and are assigned roles based on their strengths. This process dismantles stigma related to differences in ability and renders diversity a natural part of classroom dynamics.

Second, the habituation of empathy through peer support appears as a dominant pattern. Peer assistance emerges spontaneously—students comfort a classmate experiencing panic, offer additional help after lessons, or wait for peers who walk more slowly. Empathy develops not as a response to teacher instruction but through warm interactional models, the habitual exposure to diversity, and social norms that promote mutual care. This environment strengthens emotional safety and minimizes the risk of marginalization.

Third, the reduction of social distance through spontaneous interactions in informal spaces is strongly visible in various school settings such as the canteen, courtyard, and extracurricular activities. There is no separation between regular students and those with special needs; they eat together, rehearse drama scenes collaboratively, and converse without boundaries based on labels. These spontaneous interactions cultivate authentic experiences of coexistence, reinforce a sense of togetherness, and reduce the likelihood of social grouping that could lead to exclusion.

Fourth, the internalization of peace values through reflective religious activities is evident in the Friday Reflection ritual, where students express gratitude, offer apologies, or provide moral support to one another. This space allows students to articulate emotions constructively, receive others' presence with empathy, and reflect on the meaning of their social relationships. These spiritual-emotional experiences reinforce *rahmah* (compassion), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) as moral foundations of the school's peace culture.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that everyday interaction is the most significant mechanism in constructing peace values at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School. Through inclusive learning routines, peer solidarity, egalitarian nonformal interactions, and reflective religious practices, values of empathy, tolerance, and coexistence grow organically and sustainably. In other words, peace within the school is not the outcome of a top-down policy, but a living culture shaped through social practices that are repeatedly enacted and collectively experienced by all members of the school community.

Stakeholder Collaboration Patterns in Sustaining a Peaceful School Culture

Collaboration among stakeholders at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School emerges as a foundational mechanism that supports inclusive education practices and the construction of a peaceful school culture. Findings from interviews with the principal, teachers, the inclusion coordinator, shadow teachers, and observations conducted over one academic year show that the inclusion process does not operate individually but through a structured collective work system that functions consistently. The principal emphasized that the school's inclusive vision was deliberately designed "so that every student

feels safe and valued," and this vision is translated into internal policies, behavioral routines, and learning activities that prioritize students' emotional well-being. During several unannounced classroom visits, the principal took time to greet students individually, listen to their concerns, and remind teachers to *"create a calm learning space for every child."* This leadership style demonstrates that inclusion is not merely a pedagogical strategy but an institutional value actively upheld by school management.

Interviews with teachers reveal strong collaboration in designing and implementing adaptive learning for students with special needs. Teachers described routine collaboration with the inclusion coordinator and shadow teachers, particularly in developing instructional modifications, differential assessments, and emotional support strategies. One history teacher explained, *"At the beginning of every month we meet to review students' progress—whether they need content modifications, extended time, or additional support."* These practices were corroborated by observations of monthly coordination meetings, in which the inclusion team discussed students' progress, identified specific challenges, and formulated follow-up strategies. The inclusion coordinator presented formative assessment results covering academic development, emotional regulation, and notes on students' social interactions. *"We don't only evaluate academics, but also how they relate to their peers,"* the coordinator stated, underscoring the extensive scope of attention to student well-being.

Collaboration between the school and parents also characterizes the inclusive approach at Cendekia Muda. At the end of each month, teachers and parents engage in consultative sessions to discuss their children's development. In one documented meeting in March 2024, a parent expressed confusion about her child's withdrawal from group activities. Rather than offering a hasty explanation, the school counselor invited the parent to join a reflective session with her child. After a gradual dialogue, the parent realized that her child felt intimidated by classmates' abilities. She responded, *"I finally understand what he has been feeling. The school helped me understand how to support him."* Such collaboration reflects alignment between school-taught values and parenting practices at home, consistent with Pratiwi et al. (2024) argument that parental involvement strengthens students' emotional safety and reduces intrapersonal conflict.

Observations also show that teachers play a mediating role in conflict situations. In one case in a Grade X classroom, two students who disagreed over group project responsibilities were guided into a dialogical circle facilitated by the homeroom teacher. The teacher began the session with the statement, *"We are here to understand, not to judge,"* allowing each student to express their feelings. This process resembles restorative justice practices described by Hopkins (2003), in which conflict is viewed as an opportunity to repair relationships rather than as grounds for punishment. Throughout the session, the teacher simply directed the conversation to remain safe and focused, while the students independently formulated their own solutions. Similar patterns were observed repeatedly over the year, indicating that dialogical practices have become a stable pedagogical habit within the school.

Beyond teachers and parents, students themselves play a crucial role in collaborative peacebuilding. Student council members initiated the *"Dialogue Corner"* program held every Friday, providing a safe space for students to discuss personal experiences, challenges, or social tensions. In one observed session, a student facilitator asked, *"What made you feel appreciated this week?"* This simple question generated reflective responses such as *"My group waited for me during the presentation"* or *"The teacher listened when I was anxious."* Such activities embody Lederach's (2010) concept of relational peace, emphasizing that peace grows from reciprocal recognition, care, and equitable dialogical spaces.

Cross-stakeholder collaboration becomes even more visible during school-wide events such as Unity Day, Peace Week, and various community activities combining artistic performances, collaborative games, and inter-student dialogue. During Unity Day 2024, for instance, students with special needs performed in a drama themed around solidarity. During rehearsals, regular students adjusted the script to make it easier for their peers to memorize and helped coordinate stage movements. A teacher commented, *"We do not divide students based on labels. Everyone stands in the same circle."* Such activities reduce social distance and demonstrate that collaboration is not merely a formal strategy but a living cultural practice embedded in daily school life.

The following table summarizes these collaboration findings:

Table 2. Stakeholder Collaboration Patterns in Sustaining a Peaceful School Culture		
Stakeholder	Evidence	Role in Collaboration
Principal	Spontaneous classroom visits, listening to students’ concerns, ensuring an inclusive atmosphere.	Relational leader; guardian of values and direction of the peace culture.
Teachers	Conflict mediation, adaptive instruction, routine coordination with the inclusion team.	Dialogue facilitator; social mediator; manager of classroom well-being.
Inclusion Coordinator	Assessments, progress reports, consultations with shadow teachers.	Technical advisor for inclusion; assurer of support quality.
Parents	Routine meetings to discuss children’s emotional and social development.	Parenting partner; extension of peace values at home.
Students	Managing the “Dialogue Corner,” assisting peers with special needs in tasks and interactions.	Peace actors; agents of peer solidarity.

The findings indicate a highly cohesive and multilayered pattern of collaboration. The principal provides strong value-based direction, teachers enact dialogical practices, the inclusion coordinator ensures technical support, parents extend the school’s peace values into the home, and students serve as internal drivers of peace within the school community. This collaboration forms an interconnected social network that reinforces and institutionalizes the school’s peaceful culture.

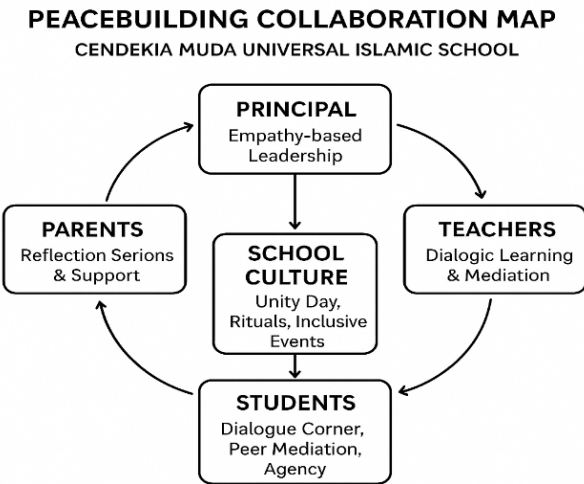


Figure 2. Collaboration Map for Peacebuilding at Cendekia Muda Universal Islamic School

Figure 2 illustrates the synergistic relationships among all stakeholders—principal, teachers, students, and parents—in cultivating a peaceful school culture through empathetic leadership, dialogical practices, student agency, and familial support. The school culture becomes the convergence point of these collaborative efforts, manifested through rituals, inclusive activities, and community events that emphasize coexistence and togetherness.

Research findings show that stakeholder collaboration at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School operates through a coordinated, systematic, and continuous working pattern embedded in the school’s daily life. The principal functions as the value leader, ensuring that all policies align with principles of inclusion and student well-being. Teachers implement adaptive learning strategies, manage classroom dynamics, and facilitate dialogue during conflicts. The inclusion coordinator and shadow teachers conduct periodic assessments, develop individualized learning plans, and provide

direct support to students with special needs. Meanwhile, parents participate in routine consultations to harmonize educational support between school and home.

This collaborative rhythm is evident in monthly coordination meetings, spontaneous classroom visits, consultative parent sessions, and student reflection forums that take place consistently throughout the academic year. Synergy among stakeholders emerges because each party understands its mandate and sphere of responsibility clearly, yet remains flexible in responding to students' social and emotional needs. Consequently, the school's peaceful culture is not the product of a single actor's effort but a collective outcome of relationships continuously negotiated within the school's social structure.

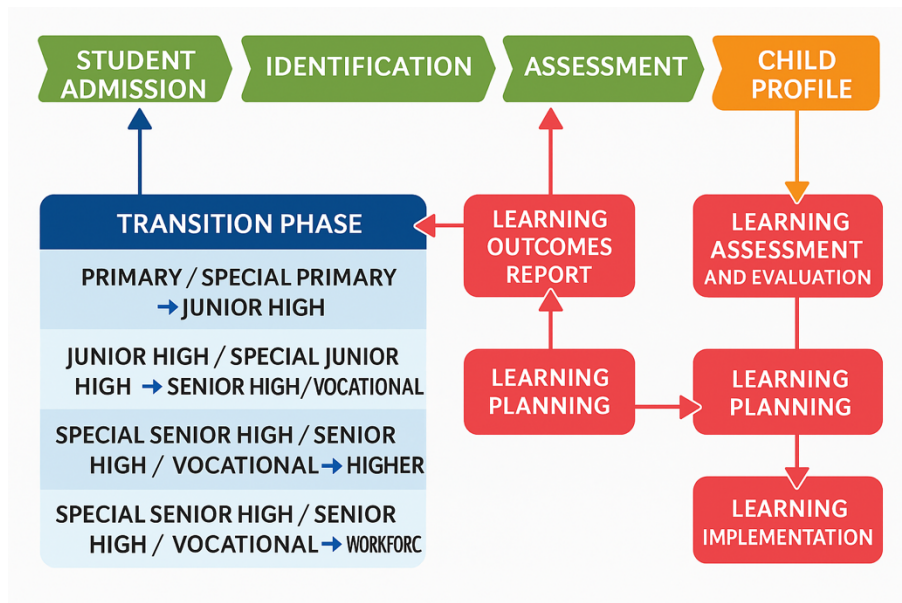


Figure 3. Mechanisms of Transition and Learning Support in Inclusive Education

Figure 3 illustrates how transition mechanisms and learning support for students—including students with special needs—operate through a systematic and coordinated pathway at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School. The process begins with *student admission*, during which the school identifies the students' initial needs and develops a preliminary understanding of their characteristics. This stage continues with *identification* and *assessment*, which involve academic evaluations, socio-emotional assessments, and more detailed mapping of special needs. The results of these assessments produce a *child profile* that forms the basis for all learning plans.

The diagram further shows that the *learning outcomes report* and *learning planning* serve as crucial connectors between the evaluation of student needs and classroom implementation. Teachers, the inclusion coordinator, and shadow teachers use these outcome reports to design adaptive strategies—such as task differentiation, adjusted time allocation, or emotional support—which are then implemented through the *learning implementation* stage. This mechanism ensures that each instructional decision is not made in isolation, but rather is part of a reflective cycle beginning with assessment, continuing through planning, and materializing in daily classroom practice.

Transitions across educational levels (from primary to junior high, junior high to senior high, and onward to vocational pathways or higher education) are presented as an integral part of this mechanism, reinforcing the idea that inclusion is not confined to the classroom but extends across the continuity of students' educational trajectories. Thus, the diagram demonstrates that the inclusive support system at Cendekia Muda operates through a structured, longitudinal, and collaborative process in which assessment, planning, implementation, and transition are interlinked within an ecosystem that places students' well-being and development at its core.

Based on the data collected through observations, interviews, and school document analysis, several collaboration patterns consistently support the formation of a peaceful school culture at

Cendekia Muda. First, inclusive leadership that promotes peace is evident in the principal's role, which goes beyond administrative duties to embody empathetic, presence-based leadership. The principal routinely visits classrooms, greets students, and reassures them when they experience academic anxiety. In one case, the principal told a student, "*Your peace matters more than your grades,*" a statement underscoring a leadership orientation that prioritizes emotional well-being. This practice creates a psychologically safe atmosphere that enables both teachers and students to build harmonious and equitable relationships.

Second, clearly defined roles among teachers, the inclusion coordinator, shadow teachers, and parents form a collaborative system that mutually reinforces each actor's contribution. Teachers are responsible for implementing adaptive instruction, managing classroom dynamics, and facilitating conflict resolution. The inclusion coordinator oversees assessments, provides progress reports, and offers technical guidance to shadow teachers regarding individual needs. Parents serve as active partners in providing support at home and participate in consultative sessions to better understand their child's socio-emotional development. This pattern ensures that each stakeholder contributes according to their capacity, preventing role overlaps and avoiding an undue burden on any single actor.

Third, routine coordination functions as a problem-solving mechanism that sustains a peaceful school culture. Monthly meetings, joint reflection sessions, and informal communication among teachers, shadow teachers, and the inclusion coordinator provide structured spaces to evaluate student progress, address emerging challenges, and formulate new intervention strategies. When conflicts arise, teachers facilitate dialogical circles, while parents and counselors are involved if issues persist or have broader emotional implications. The consistency of this mechanism ensures that socio-emotional concerns are addressed promptly, fairly, and restoratively.

Fourth, spiritual-cultural collaboration reflected in empathy-oriented religious activities plays a vital role in strengthening peace values. Activities such as Friday Reflection, collective prayers, character mentoring, and Unity Day allow students, teachers, and parents to share emotional experiences, express gratitude, offer apologies, and acknowledge one another's contributions. These rituals reinforce a sense of togetherness and nurture *rahmah* (compassion) as a foundational value of inclusive Islamic education within the school. Collective participation in such activities expands opportunities for dialogue and enables cross-identity interactions to occur within safe and supportive spaces.

Thus, the peaceful culture at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School does not emerge spontaneously; rather, it results from a structured and continuous collaboration among the principal, teachers, the inclusion coordinator, shadow teachers, students, and parents. Through empathetic leadership, clear role distribution, routine coordination, and spiritual-cultural practices, the school successfully builds a stable, supportive, and inclusive social environment. Stakeholder collaboration, therefore, stands as the central foundation for the development of a sustainable peace culture in the school.

Integration of Islamic Values, Inclusive Education, and Peace Education in the Formation of Students' Social Identity

Observations of various religious activities at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School reveal that the integration of Islamic values plays a significant role in shaping students' peaceful, open, and inclusive social identities. Activities such as Friday Reflection, inter-class collective prayers, *akhlak* mentoring, and thematic events like Peace Week provide spaces in which the values of *rahmah* (compassion), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) are not merely taught as normative concepts but are practiced through everyday interactions. In one observed Friday Reflection session, a student stated, "*I learned that we are all different but still one,*" a comment reflecting his personal interpretation of the diversity experienced within the school's inclusive environment. The religion teacher emphasized that *rahmah* is the ethical foundation for treating all students equitably, including those with special needs. In an interview, the teacher explained, "*If we practice rahmah, then no child should ever feel alone; we must be present for all of them.*"

The application of Islamic values appears not only in verbal instruction but is also embedded in the school’s governance and cultural ethos. The school’s vision and mission documents explicitly incorporate the principle of *rahmatan lil ‘alamin*, an appreciation of diversity, and a commitment to a discrimination-free educational environment. These values are reinforced through character development guidelines that emphasize mutual respect, cooperation, and empathy. Field observations documented how students embodied *tasamuh* while working collaboratively with peers of differing abilities. During one Islamic Religious Education lesson, for instance, students participated in mixed-ability discussion groups in which regular students supported peers with special needs by reading hadith passages slowly and offering additional processing time. After the session, a student remarked, “It’s okay to be slow; what matters is that we learn together.” This expression reflects the internalization of patience and respect for each individual’s learning process.

Documentation of *akhlak* mentoring activities further demonstrates that the formation of peaceful social identities occurs consistently through reflective practices and intergroup interactions. In one mentoring session, the teacher asked students to write down “a small action that made someone feel appreciated this week.” Responses such as “I stayed with a friend when he was anxious” and “I listened when she was upset” indicate that empathy is not simply discussed but enacted in daily life. Observations in informal spaces—such as the school courtyard and canteen—show that students frequently use warm, friendly greetings while avoiding language that is demeaning or exclusive. These patterns demonstrate that inclusive Islamic values intersect closely with social practices across school settings.

Interviews with students also highlight how cross-identity activities help them perceive differences as a blessing. One student explained, “When I joined Peace Week, I learned the stories of friends from other religions. It turns out we all want to be respected.” Activities such as interfaith dialogue forums, collaborative art projects, and discussions on social issues provide opportunities for students to listen deeply to differing perspectives. These findings align with Zembylas (2025), who argue that cross-identity dialogue helps dismantle stereotypes and build empathy through meaningful emotional encounters.

Field notes from collective prayer activities further demonstrate the integration of spiritual values within inclusive social practices. During a morning prayer gathering, the teacher invited all students to pray for a classmate who was ill. A student with special needs became visibly emotional, and a peer gently held his shoulder and said, “We are all praying for you; you are part of us.” Such interactions illustrate that *ukhuwwah*—a core Islamic value—is not merely an abstract concept but enacted in practice, strengthening communal bonds and reinforcing a peaceful collective identity.

The school’s physical environment also supports the integration of Islamic values and inclusion. Posters displaying messages such as “Different But Still One,” “Rahmah as a Way of Life,” and “Difference Is a Blessing” are prominently placed in classrooms and corridors. The counseling space, named *Ruang Bahagia* (Room of Joy), is located centrally rather than in an isolated area, symbolizing that emotional well-being is a right afforded to all students. Observations also note that classrooms are frequently arranged in circular or semi-circular formations, reflecting principles of equality and openness in interaction. These findings echo Campbell (2019), who emphasize that spatial design and visual symbolism in schools significantly shape inclusive social climates.

Overall, the integration of Islamic values, inclusive education, and peace education does not operate as separate processes but mutually reinforces one another within the school’s daily life. *Rahmah* strengthens inclusive practices, inclusive practices expand spaces for cross-identity dialogue, and such dialogue shapes peaceful social identities. Ultimately, Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School becomes a social space where Islamic values are not only taught but also embodied through everyday habitus that affirms difference, promotes empathy, and encourages compassionate interactions.

Table 3. Integration of Islamic Values, Inclusive Education, and Peace Education

Data Category	Findings	Representation of Peace Values
Islamic Activities (Friday Reflection,	Students sit in a circle, express gratitude, offer apologies, and share emotional	Internalization of <i>rahmah</i> , mutual respect, and the

collective prayer, <i>akhlak</i> mentoring)	experiences. Collective prayers are conducted across class groups.	creation of safe emotional spaces.
	In <i>akhlak</i> mentoring, students describe small acts that made others feel appreciated (e.g., accompanying anxious peers, listening when someone was upset).	Practicing empathy through religious reflection.
Religious Studies Teacher Interview	Teacher explains <i>rahmah</i> as the basis for equal treatment of all students, including those with special needs; <i>tasamuh</i> as the obligation to respect differences.	Inclusive Islam as a foundation for peace-oriented pedagogy.
Student Interviews	Students perceive Islamic and inclusive activities as helping them see differences as social assets; students feel more accepted and confident to speak.	Social acceptance; patience; appreciation of individual learning rhythms.
	Students engage in cross-identity dialogue during Peace Week and collaborative activities.	Cross-identity dialogue → reduction of stereotypes.
School Documents (Vision–Mission, character values)	The school vision incorporates <i>rahmatan lil ‘alamin</i> , inclusion, and anti-discrimination; character modules emphasize empathy, cooperation, and <i>akhlak</i> .	Peace values institutionalized in school policy structures.
Physical & Symbolic Space Observations	Posters stating “ <i>Different But Still One</i> ,” “ <i>Difference Is a Blessing</i> ,” circular classroom layouts, and the centrally located <i>Ruang Bahagia</i> .	Space and symbols as media for peace education.
Interaction in Islamic and Religious Education Classes	Mixed-ability groups: students with special needs receive assistance reading hadith; peers provide additional time.	Cooperative practice— <i>rahmah</i> enacted through action.
Cross-Identity Activities (Peace Week, external dialogues)	Students create “Peace Corners,” lead dialogue forums, design tolerance posters, and collaborate with other schools.	Student agency and active participation in peace production.

The findings demonstrate that the Islamic values taught and practiced at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School intertwine closely with inclusive educational practices, thereby shaping a warm, supportive, and peaceful social environment. Values such as *rahmah* (compassion), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) do not appear merely as normative teachings but take form through the everyday actions of teachers and students—from the ways teachers treat students with special needs, to the ways students make room for one another’s learning processes, to the ways they engage in dialogue about religious and cultural differences. Activities such as Friday Reflection, *akhlak* mentoring, collective prayer, and Peace Week serve as bridges linking Islamic teachings with inclusive practice, allowing students to understand diversity not only as a social fact but as a moral value that must be upheld. The integration of Islamic values and inclusion produces a distinctive form of social identity within the school: students learn to perceive difference as a natural part of life rather than a threat, and they regard diversity as an asset for building harmony.

Several major patterns emerge from these findings. First, Islam functions as an ethical foundation that strengthens inclusive practices—particularly through the values of *rahmah*, compassion, and appreciation of difference. Religious studies teachers emphasize that *rahmah* entails ensuring that no student feels isolated or left behind, including students with special needs. In an interview, one teacher

stated, *"If we practice rahmah, no child should ever feel alienated."* This value is embodied in students' actions as they help peers with special needs read materials, offer additional time, or provide encouragement during group discussions. Thus, inclusion extends beyond pedagogical strategies and is anchored in an Islamic ethical framework that demands kindness and fairness for all.

Second, religious rituals provide essential spaces for cultivating empathy and emotional closeness. During Friday Reflection, students sit in circles to express gratitude, apologize, or share emotionally meaningful experiences. Statements such as *"We are different but still one"* indicate that students internalize spiritual values in ways that shape concrete understandings of social relations. Collective prayer, *akhlak* mentoring, and Peace Week deepen students' ability to reflect on themselves, listen to others, and nurture peaceful relational practices. These ritual spaces reinforce the school as a moral community grounded in care and mutual support.

Third, cross-identity dialogue within an Islamic school context plays a significant role in shaping students' multicultural awareness. During Peace Week, students participate in sessions where they exchange experiences with peers from different religious or cultural backgrounds. One student explained, *"I learned the stories of friends from other religions. It turns out we all want to be respected."* Such forms of dialogue allow students to test, expand, and revise their perspectives on difference. In Islamic Studies and Civics classes, teachers facilitate ethical and social discussions that require students to practice tolerance, engage critically, and understand conflicts from multiple viewpoints. This demonstrates that Islamic schooling can function as a universal dialogical space that cultivates peace literacy.

Fourth, these practices collectively shape a new social identity among students—one that is more open, cooperative, and egalitarian. Students display non-hierarchical interaction patterns, reflected in circle seating arrangements, mutual assistance without coercion, and collaborative mixed-ability group work. Students who were previously shy or anxious become more confident after experiencing sustained social and spiritual support within the school environment. Posters such as *"Different But Still One,"* the centrally located *Ruang Bahagia*, and student-led dialogue forums illustrate that inclusion has become part of the school's collective identity, cultivated through consistent emotional and social experiences.

Overall, the findings indicate that the integration of Islamic values, inclusive practices, and peace education forms a strong foundation for constructing students' social identities oriented toward coexistence and harmony. *Rahmah* supports inclusion; inclusion expands spaces for cross-identity dialogue; and dialogue deepens students' understanding of peace. Through intertwined spiritual, social, and intellectual interactions, students grow into individuals who can accept difference, collaborate across diverse groups, and address conflict through peaceful means. Thus, the school becomes a site of social transformation that prepares a generation not only intellectually capable but also morally and socially grounded.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the construction of peace values at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School operates through three interrelated mechanisms. First, inclusive educational practices embedded in everyday interactions create safe and supportive social spaces through shared learning routines, peer assistance, and reflective religious activities. Second, collaboration among stakeholders—including the principal, teachers, the inclusion coordinator, parents, and students—establishes a support system that enables peace values to take root and persist consistently. Third, the integration of Islamic values, inclusive education, and peace education generates student social identities that are more open, cooperative, and egalitarian through the internalization of *rahmah*, *tasamuh*, and *ukhuwwah* within diverse learning contexts. Overall, the school does not merely provide inclusive services; it functions as a social arena where peace is produced through micro-practices, symbolic relations, religious rituals, and mutually reinforcing policy structures.

The interconnection among these findings emerges because inclusion at Cendekia Muda is not positioned as an administrative policy but as a social habitus lived by the entire school community.

Supportive and non-hierarchical daily interactions generate norms of empathy, reduce stigma, and cultivate repeated positive emotional experiences—processes that, according to Berger and Luckmann (1966), underlie the objectification and internalization of social realities. At the same time, the strong collaborative system allows each actor to assume complementary roles. Teachers mediate conflicts, the inclusion coordinator provides technical interventions, the principal ensures a psychologically safe environment, and parents reinforce peace values at home. These practices converge with Islamic values emphasizing *rahmah* and *tasamuh*, which provide a moral foundation that frames inclusion as social justice. For this reason, the mechanisms reinforce one another and explain why a stable culture of peace can develop within the school community.

This study deepens and extends prior literature in three major areas: inclusive education, peace education, and Islamic schooling in relation to the formation of tolerant identities. In the field of inclusive education, previous studies such as Pratiwi et al. (2024) and Supriyanto et al. (2025) have focused primarily on technical dimensions, including teacher competence, learning tools, facility readiness, and curriculum adaptation. However, this study demonstrates that the success of inclusion does not rest solely on these technical factors; it is more strongly shaped by relational and emotional dynamics embedded in everyday interactions. Peer support, informal engagement, and non-verbal actions such as waiting for a slower-moving friend or offering help unprompted reveal that inclusion is a social construction process that meaningfully reduces social distance among students.

In the field of peace education, studies such as Harris and Morrison (2012) and Sintapertiwi et al. (2023) emphasize empathy, conflict mediation, and peaceful resolution. Yet these studies rarely link peacebuilding to the context of diverse abilities inherent in inclusive practice. This study finds that peacebuilding becomes even more robust when it occurs in inclusive spaces where students with varying abilities interact. Peace, therefore, emerges not solely from formal mediation programs but from engagement among heterogeneous identities—an important contribution that remains underexplored in the literature.

Within the context of Islamic schooling, research by Arar and Haj-Yehia (2018) and Fitriyah (2024) shows that Islamic curricula can cultivate inclusive identities when delivered through dialogical approaches. However, this study adds a significant insight: Islamic values are not present merely as curricular doctrines but are enacted through social practices such as religious rituals, *akhlak* mentoring, and symbolic spatial arrangements that cultivate a peaceful school habitus. The organic integration of Islamic teachings, inclusive practices, and peace education demonstrates that Islamic schools can serve as spaces where tolerant and cooperative social identities are formed through lived daily experiences.

Accordingly, the central novelty of this research lies in its ability to show that peace within Islamic schools does not arise from policy or curriculum alone. Instead, it emerges from inclusive micro-interactions, relational collaboration, and the internalization of Islamic values enacted through consistent social practices.

Historically, Islamic education in Indonesia has been associated with two major streams: the *pesantren* tradition, which emphasizes communal life and the transmission of moral values, and the modern school model, which prioritizes academic development. Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School demonstrates a new synthesis by adopting inclusive education as a moral mandate aligned with the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. The presence of students with special needs who are fully accepted as members of the school community signifies a historical shift from an exclusive model of Islamic education toward a form of social Islam that places human dignity at its core. This finding is consistent with recent studies on Islamic inclusive education, which show that the integration of Islamic values with inclusive practices creates a learning ecosystem grounded in empathy, justice, and respect for difference (Bakti et al., 2025). Research also indicates that inclusive curricula in modern Islamic schools increasingly adopt humanistic modifications and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to ensure that spiritual and academic development proceed in tandem for all students, including those with special needs (Fitri, 2022; Nurdin et al., 2024). Furthermore, studies in inclusive schools and madrasas in Indonesia demonstrate that values such as *rahmah*, *tasamuh*, and *ukhuwwah*, internalized through religious education, serve as ethical foundations that reinforce inclusive practice and reduce social exclusion (Mareta et al., 2024; Suharjo et al., 2024). Ethnographic research in modern Islamic boarding

schools likewise shows that Islamic moderation and the hidden curriculum play significant roles in fostering tolerant and open attitudes toward diversity (Syarifah et al., 2024). Thus, the transformation of Islamic education seen in Cendekia Muda reflects not only pedagogical adaptation but also an epistemological shift toward reinterpreting Islamic education as a social space that affirms equality, humanity, and inclusion as integral components of religious praxis.

Socially, this study demonstrates that everyday interaction serves as the strongest mechanism in shaping a peaceful student identity at Cendekia Muda. Daily routines—such as sitting together, sharing food, offering assistance, and engaging in reflective dialogue—create inclusive social capital that reduces the potential for social segregation and fosters stable emotional connectedness. This finding aligns with Katz and Galbraith (2006), who argue that everyday practices in inclusive classrooms—especially during transitions and open-ended activities—constitute key spaces for nurturing positive social relationships. Additionally, the presence of students with special needs in close physical and social proximity to peers, as identified by Chung et al. (2019), strengthens the social conditions necessary for natural acceptance and solidarity. Jose and Shanuga (2018) similarly show that inclusive school climates foster stronger social identities and reduce experiences of “otherness.” Bullying and social exclusion also tend to decrease within warm and appreciative school cultures, as shown in Quezada et al. (2004). Consistent peer support and nonhierarchical relationships—also reflected in Tuttle and Carter’s (2022) study on students with visual impairments—demonstrate that equal social interaction enhances academic engagement and sense of belonging. Within Indonesia’s plural and increasingly polarized society, the school functions as a microcosm of a peaceful community, illustrating that coexistence is cultivated not through normative discourse but through consistent, relational, and repetitive social practices—a dynamic similarly emphasized by Sánchez-Martí and Ramírez-Iñiguez (2012) in their study of inclusive social networks and student identity formation.

Ideologically, this study shows that Islam does not stand in opposition to inclusivity or pluralism; rather, values such as *rahmah*, *tasamuh*, and *ukhuwwah* serve as the moral foundation that strengthens a commitment to universal humanity. The field data—showing emotional engagement, peer support, character mentoring, and reflective spaces—are consistent with the concept of Islamic inclusive pedagogy, a pedagogical approach that cultivates empathy, compassion, and social responsibility through everyday activities such as worship, cooperation, and acts of care (Bakti et al., 2025). In this context, Islamic values do not remain at the doctrinal level but manifest through pedagogical strategies such as cooperative learning informed by faith-based ethics, *adab* in interaction, and spiritual accompaniment for students with special needs to ensure that they do not feel alienated (Suharjo et al., 2024; Usman, 2025). These spiritual-emotional experiences illustrate that the social identity of students is shaped not through indoctrination but through lived practices of coexistence, positioning inclusive Islamic education as an anti-exclusivist, anti-stigma, and pro-social justice paradigm rooted in Islam itself (Yusoff, 2024).

Reflection on these findings shows that the integration of inclusive education, Islamic values, and peace education has several positive functions as well as potential dysfunctions that require careful attention. Functionally, this study demonstrates that inclusive practices embedded in daily school life enhance students’ emotional safety, particularly those with special needs. Equal interaction, peer support, and warm learning environments reduce social stigma and strengthen solidarity and school community cohesion. Moreover, internalized values of *rahmah*, *tasamuh*, and *ukhuwwah* cultivated through religious rituals and social interaction shape student identities that are more open, tolerant, and cooperative. These findings indicate that a progressive Islamic education model can grow organically in Indonesia’s diverse context when spiritual values are connected with inclusive and dialogical everyday practices.

Despite the apparent effectiveness of inclusive and peace-oriented practices at Cendekia Muda, this study also identifies several challenges or dysfunctions that may weaken the sustainability of the ecosystem. One major risk is the excessive reliance on certain teachers with high empathetic capacity, which creates an imbalance of emotional labor—an issue commonly found in inclusive education worldwide, where teachers often lack adequate training and emotional support (Ackah-Jnr & Appiah, 2025; Donath et al., 2023). Additionally, the inclusive awareness built through daily culture may

weaken if it is not institutionalized through formal policy, a recurring issue when inclusive structures remain unstable or inconsistent (Tah, 2025). Peer support, while a key strength of the school, may also generate uneven emotional burdens among regular students if not accompanied by proper supervision—a phenomenon found in international studies where peer-support systems are implemented without sufficient pedagogical oversight (Tuttle & Carter, 2022). Moreover, parental capacity for involvement varies widely, creating gaps in support—another global challenge in inclusive education in which socioeconomic differences influence parental participation (Mironov et al., 2024). Finally, interpretations of inclusive Islamic values are not always uniform; some conservative parents may view certain practices differently, potentially leading to interpretive tension—an issue that echoes findings that cultural beliefs can pose significant barriers to inclusive education (Pathak et al., 2019). These combined factors suggest that the sustainability of a peaceful school culture requires stronger structural reinforcement, ideological dialogue, and systematic emotional support for all stakeholders.

Based on these dysfunctions, several policy actions need to be formulated to ensure the sustainability of a peaceful and inclusive school culture. First, institutionalizing inclusive and peace education practices is essential—for example, through the development of standard operating procedures grounded in Islamic values and the principle of *rahmah* to maintain consistency despite changes in teachers or leadership. Second, ongoing teacher training should include emotional labor management, conflict mediation techniques, and dialogical pedagogy, supported by peer supervision or emotional support systems to prevent psychological overload among teachers. Third, peer-support programs should be formalized through student leadership structures and teacher guidance to ensure equitable distribution of emotional support and provide all students with training in empathy and healthy communication. Fourth, parental involvement should be strengthened through parenting forums focused on inclusion and peace, as well as educational modules introducing the principle of *rahmah* and the family's role in supporting children's socio-emotional development. Fifth, inter-identity dialogue initiatives should be expanded through collaboration with other schools, including non-Islamic institutions, to enrich coexistence experiences and broaden students' horizons. Sixth, the physical and symbolic environment should be reinforced through the use of inclusive-value posters, open classroom layouts, accessible infrastructure, and welcoming communal spaces so that every student feels like an integral member of the school community. Collectively, these action plans address the identified dysfunctions and strengthen the positive functions already developing, allowing Cendekia Muda to grow as a sustainable and replicable model of inclusive Islamic education in Indonesia.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the construction of peace values at Cendekia Muda Islamic Senior High School emerges from consistent social interactions shaped by inclusive educational practices, stakeholder collaboration, and the internalization of Islamic values in daily school life. The findings reveal that peace does not originate solely from formal policies but grows from recurring micro-routines—such as peer support, spontaneous empathy, dialogical conflict resolution, and religious rituals that reinforce a sense of togetherness. The integration of these practices produces student identities that are more open, cooperative, and tolerant, while simultaneously cultivating a school culture that is safe, supportive, and inclusive.

Scientifically, this study offers important contributions to the fields of inclusive education, peace education, and Islamic education. First, it proposes a new perspective showing that inclusion does not depend solely on technical or pedagogical readiness but also on the relational dimensions that develop through everyday interactions among students and teachers. Second, it enriches peace education scholarship by demonstrating that peacebuilding becomes more effective when it occurs within inclusive spaces that bring together students of diverse abilities and identities. Third, it integrates Islamic values as social ethics—*rahmah*, *tasamuh*, and *ukhuwwah*—that meaningfully strengthen a culture of peace, thereby illustrating how Islamic schools can function as spaces of dialogue and coexistence. These findings introduce the concept of an *inclusive Islamic peace habitus*, a form of peace-

oriented habitus that emerges from the intersection of Islamic teachings, inclusive practices, and social dialogue.

Despite the depth of insight offered, this study has several limitations. First, it focuses on a single school; therefore, generalizing the findings to other Islamic or non-Islamic educational contexts should be done cautiously. Second, although the data were generated through extensive long-term observations and rich interviews, the study does not include quantitative analyses that could systematically measure the impact of inclusive practices on student behavioral indicators. Third, parental involvement—an important dimension of inclusive education—was examined only through limited interviews and observations, leaving more complex domestic dynamics unexplored.

Future research should include multiple schools with diverse characteristics to identify variations in peace-construction patterns across broader educational contexts. Studies may also benefit from mixed-methods approaches to measure longitudinal behavioral changes among students, as well as deeper analyses of the roles of families and communities in reinforcing—or weakening—the culture of peace within schools. Such developments would enable a more comprehensive understanding of inclusive education and peacebuilding in Islamic educational settings and provide meaningful guidance for national education policymaking.

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