

RESEARCH ARTICLE • OPEN ACCESS

Dialectics of Mass Media: Framing of Islam Nusantara News in NU Online and Panjimas.com

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Received	Peer Reviewed	Revised	Accepted	DOI
2026-04-14	2026-05-23 & 2026-07-19	2026-08-03	2026-08-05	https://doi.org/10.35672/jnus.v7i2.116-128

Abstract

This study examines the dialectics of media framing surrounding Islam Nusantara in NU Online and Panjimas.com. Islam Nusantara is a concept of Islamic practice initiated by Nahdlatul Ulama and conceived as a contextual expression of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin. Its emergence has generated both supportive and critical responses, including competing representations in the mass media. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using textual analysis. The data consisted of news reports on Islam Nusantara published by NU Online in January 2023 and by Panjimas.com in July 2018. The data were analyzed using Robert N. Entman's framing model. The findings reveal that: (1) NU Online frames Islam Nusantara as a form of Islamic practice that brings blessings and promotes a peaceful model of civilization, whereas Panjimas.com frames it as a potentially divisive deviation whose advocates are perceived as disparaging non-Nusantara expressions of Islam; (2) these contrasting frames are shaped by the institutional backgrounds of the two media outlets, with NU Online operating as an Islamic media platform affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, while Panjimas.com presents itself as unaffiliated with any particular organization; and (3) despite their opposing positions, the contrasting frames ultimately reinforce the need to situate Islam Nusantara within the boundaries of a contextual expression of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin rooted in Indonesian society, without allowing it to develop into an exclusivist or fanatical discourse that devalues non-Nusantara Islamic traditions. This study contributes to the literature on Islamic media framing by offering a critical understanding of the construction and contestation of Islam Nusantara discourse in the media sphere.

Keywords: Islam Nusantara; Media Framing; NU Online; Panjimas.com; Islamic Media Discourse.**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dialektika dalam pembingkai berita Islam Nusantara oleh media NU Online dan Panjimas. Islam Nusantara merupakan konsep berislam yang digagas oleh Nahdlatul Ulama' serta diklaim sebagai representasi Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin. Kemunculannya memicu pandangan pro dan kontra yang juga turut melibatkan media massa, diantaranya adalah NU Online dan Panjimas.com. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif-kualitatif berupa analisis teks. Berita yang diteliti yakni berita Islam Nusantara yang dipublikasi oleh NU Online pada Januari 2023 dan Panjimas pada bulan Juli 2018 dengan menggunakan analisis framing model Robert N. Entman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 1) Islam Nusantara dinarasikan oleh NU Online sebagai cara berislam yang mempunyai keberkahan bagi dunia, sedangkan Panjimas menarasikannya sebagai penyimpangan yang dapat memecah belah umat sebab para pegiatnya memandang rendah Islam non-Nusantara. 2) Perbedaan pembingkai berita dikarenakan latar belakang media yang berbeda, dimana NU Online merupakan media keislaman yang berafiliasi dengan Nahdlatul Ulama, sedangkan Panjimas.com merupakan media keislaman yang tidak terafiliasi dengan pihak manapun. 3) Meski begitu, perbedaan pembingkai berita justru mempertegas kedudukan Islam Nusantara, bahwa gagasan tersebut harus berjalan dalam koridor hanya sebagai sebuah konsep representasi Islam rahmatan lil' alamin yang khas dari masyarakat Nusantara. Di lain sisi, para pegiat Islam Nusantara tidak boleh fanatik atas gagasan yang digandrungi hingga berujung pada sikap merendahkan Islam non-Nusantara. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam memperkaya kajian framing media Islam serta memberikan pemahaman kritis mengenai konstruksi dan kontestasi wacana Islam Nusantara di ruang media.

Kata Kunci: Islam Nusantara; Pembingkai Media; NU Online; Panjimas.com; Wacana Media Islam.**How to cite:** Mahmud Latifkhan, & M. Fahrudin Yusuf. (2026). Dialectics of Mass Media: Framing of Islam Nusantara News in NU Online and Panjimas.com. *Journal of Nahdlatul Ulama Studies*, 7(2), 116-128. <https://doi.org/10.35672/jnus.v7i2.116-128>**Copyright © 2026 by Author(s)**

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1. Introduction

Islam Nusantara is an idea initiated by one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama, during its 33rd Muktamar. Islam Nusantara broadly refers to a way of practicing Islam that can engage in dialectics with the local aspects of the Nusantara community (Moqsith, 2016, p. 22). The idea promoted by Nahdlatul Ulama serves as a relay or continuation that carries the spirit of the da'wah of the Wali Songo, who grounded Islam in a way that is friendly to local traditions, while also responding to the doctrinal approach to Islam by extremist groups that often create turmoil on the global stage (Siregar, 2020, p. 20).

Referring to the views of Moqsith (2016, p. 21–24), Islam Nusantara is the Islam that exists in the Nusantara region with its distinctive characteristics, capable of harmoniously intertwining with various forms of civilization and cultures of any society, not destroying what already exists, flexible and not rigid in facing issues, yet providing a new perspective. In this regard, Islamic values are present to perfect what already exists in the Nusantara community.

However, shortly after Nahdlatul Ulama declared the idea of Islam Nusantara in the public sphere in 2015, various responses from different parties emerged. Many agreed with and supported the idea, but many also opposed and rejected it. The struggle between pro-Islam Nusantara and anti-Islam Nusantara groups was inevitable and colored the media landscape (Siregar, 2020, p. 18–19).

The struggle among mass media, which serves as a mouthpiece for the conflicting views of these two groups, needs attention as it often causes confusion for the general public, especially when these views come from well-known circles that are widely followed. The influence of mass media on society can be seen in the statement by Bill Kovach, quoted by Andreas Harsono (2010, p. 10);

"The higher the quality of journalism (news) in society, the higher the quality of information that the public receives. Consequently, the decisions made will also be of higher quality... When journalism in a society has quality, the life of that society will also be of quality".

The differing perspectives of a media outlet on the same issue are based on the different backgrounds of the two media. In the perspective presented by Eriyanto (2002, p. 122), media is a social actor with its ideology as a tool to define

how a reality, event, or issue should be understood by the public. This way of working is more simply known as framing. Among the various mass media that are pro-Islam Nusantara and anti-Islam Nusantara, this study identifies NU Online and Panjimas as the research subjects. Through the observations conducted, the researcher assesses NU Online as a media outlet that serves as a mouthpiece for pro-Islam Nusantara views. This can be seen from its publications regarding Islam Nusantara news presented in a positive light. In contrast, Panjimas tends to be a mouthpiece for anti-Islam Nusantara views.

In summary, the two opposing viewpoints from these media outlets stem from their different backgrounds. NU Online is a media outlet affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, the main proponent of Islam Nusantara. This relationship certainly explains why NU Online actively reports on Islam Nusantara from a positive perspective. On the other hand, Panjimas is an Islamic media outlet that explicitly states in its organizational profile that it is not affiliated with any group, party, or organization.

Seeing the brief background differences between NU Online and Panjimas, the framing regarding Islam Nusantara that contrasts between the two media is a normal occurrence, as expressed by Eriyanto, "framing determines whether an event is considered a social issue or not." Nevertheless, the researcher views this phenomenon of opposing perspectives as a dialectical phenomenon that needs to be clarified so that it does not become a source of tension that triggers social fractures among Muslims in Indonesia.

Through the framing analysis method, the researchers attempt to explore the coverage of Islam Nusantara conducted by NU Online and Panjimas. Previously, research using the framing method can be seen from several earlier studies, such as that conducted by Fitri Fadiyah Rahma (2023) on the topics and narrative construction of news regarding Islam Nusantara on the website www.nu.or.id or the domain of NU Online. The research conducted by Zanniro Sururi (2019) on the polemic of the Indonesian Ulema Council regarding the concept of Islam Nusantara in the media Detiknews.com, Kompas.com, and CNNIndonesia.com. The research conducted by Muthaqin, Syam, and Wahyuni (2021) on the framing of news about the destruction of Musala in the North Minahasa region carried out by the online media Kompas.com and Republika.co.id.

From the observations made by the researchers on various previous studies related to framing analysis of media coverage on an issue, there has been no research that examines the dialectical views between NU Online and Panjimas regarding Islam Nusantara. Therefore, this study aims to examine the differences in framing between NU Online and Panjimas in viewing Islam Nusantara. Subsequently, the results of the framing analysis are drawn into the dialectical realm with the hope of finding a common thread amidst the contrasting views of both media to serve as a mediator for the opposing groups.

2. Methodology

This research departs from a constructivist paradigm. Through this paradigm, NU Online and Panjimas are viewed as media institutions that not only disseminate information but also play a role as actors in constructing reality adjusted to their ideology, values, and objectives (Eriyanto, 2002, p. 130; Muzakkir, 2018, p. 185). The type and approach of this research are descriptive-

qualitative. This research employs a media text analysis method with the research instrument using Robert N. Entman's framing analysis to obtain an overview of how NU Online and Panjimas view the concept of Islam Nusantara. Robert N. Entman's framing analysis model focuses on four dimensions: (1) defining the problem, (2) diagnosing causes, (3) making moral judgments, and (4) recommending treatment (Eriyanto, 2002, p. 221). The researcher takes a sample of two news articles on Islam Nusantara from NU Online and Panjimas as the main sources being studied. On the NU Online side, the researcher targets news from January 2023, specifically during the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Nahdlatul Ulama. On the Panjimas side, the researcher targets news from July 2018, when the controversy regarding Islam Nusantara was heating up in public spaces. The selection of news from both media is based on the assumption that these articles have discussions relevant to the research topic and can enrich the findings.

Table 1. Dimensions of Robert N. Entman's framing analysis model (Eriyanto, 2002, p. 221)

No	Dimension	Description
1	Define problems	How is a reality/issue depicted? As what? Or as what kind of problem?
2	Diagnose cause	What causes the event or issue? What is considered to be the cause of the event? Who is considered to be the cause of the problem?
3	Make moral judgement	What moral values are presented to explain the problem? What moral values are used to legitimize or delegitimize actions in the event?
4	Treatment recommendation	What solutions are presented to address the problem/issue?

3. Theoretical Framework: Robert N. Entman's Framing Analysis Model

The concept of framing originates from the constructivist assumption that social reality is not presented in the news naturally and entirely objectively; rather, it is selected, interpreted, and constructed through particular frameworks of meaning. Goffman (1974) describes a frame as an interpretive framework that enables individuals to identify, organize, and assign meaning to the events they experience. In media studies, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) subsequently conceptualize a frame as an interpretive package containing a central organizing idea supported by metaphors, examples, catchphrases, visual representations, causal reasoning, and moral principles. Building upon this intellectual tradition, Entman (1993) defines framing as the process of selecting certain aspects of perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicative text. Such salience directs audiences toward particular problem definitions,

causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and treatment recommendations. Therefore, the media do not simply report facts but organize them within structures of meaning that influence how an issue is understood. Frames may be located in the communicator, the media text, the audience's cognition, and the broader culture that provides shared categories for interpreting social reality (Entman, 1993; Reese, 2001; Scheufele, 1999).

Entman's framing model consists of four principal analytical components. The first is *define problems*, which refers to how the media identify an event as a particular problem, determine which aspects are important, and position particular parties as principal actors, victims, or disadvantaged groups. The second is *diagnose causes*, namely the process of identifying the factors, actions, conditions, or actors considered responsible for causing the problem. The third is *make moral judgments*, which involves employing values, norms, religious principles, ideological assumptions, or ethical

standards to legitimize or delegitimize particular actors and actions. The fourth is *treatment recommendation*, which refers to the solutions, actions, policies, or attitudes presented as appropriate responses to the identified problem. These four components are not necessarily expressed explicitly or proportionally in every media text. A news report may strongly emphasize its problem definition and causal interpretation while communicating its moral evaluation or proposed solution only implicitly. Salience may be produced through headlines, leads, source selection, repetition, terminology, quotation placement, and the omission of information that does not support the preferred media frame (Entman, 1993; Eriyanto, 2002; Chong & Druckman, 2007).

In news analysis, Entman's model is employed to reveal how media organizations select facts and construct particular perspectives on an issue. The analysis is directed not only toward the visible content of news reports but also toward the underlying patterns of selection and salience that structure the text. Researchers may identify how a media outlet formulates an issue through headlines and leads, attributes causality through particular causal relationships, establishes legitimacy through source selection, and produces judgments through words, labels, metaphors, and moral arguments. This model is relevant for comparing the framing of Islam Nusantara by NU Online and Panjimas.com because the two media outlets have different institutional backgrounds, ideological orientations, source-selection practices, and communicative interests. NU Online may frame Islam Nusantara as an expression of *wasathiyah* Islam that accommodates local culture and supports Indonesian national life. In contrast, Panjimas.com may frame it as a concept that produces theological controversy, identity dichotomies, or fragmentation among Muslims. Such differences cannot be adequately explained merely by counting the frequency of particular words. They must be examined through the ways in which each outlet defines the problem, identifies its causes, constructs moral evaluations, and recommends solutions. This approach is consistent with the understanding

that framing is part of the construction of news discourse, although Entman's model is operationally different from Pan and Kosicki's model, which emphasizes the syntactic, script, thematic, and rhetorical structures of news texts (Pan & Kosicki, 1993; de Vreese, 2005).

The application of Entman's model should be conducted systematically to prevent the analysis from becoming solely dependent on the researcher's subjective interpretation. Each news article should be mapped through an analytical matrix containing textual excerpts or quotations as evidence for each framing component. Researchers must also distinguish between textual findings and conclusions concerning the effects of news framing on audiences. Textual analysis can reveal the interpretive frameworks provided by the media, but it cannot directly demonstrate that audiences accept or follow those frameworks without additional reception studies, surveys, or experiments. Scheufele (1999) distinguishes between frame building by media institutions, the presence of frames in media texts, and framing effects on audiences. Similarly, de Vreese (2005) understands framing as a process involving media production, content, and use. D'Angelo (2002) further argues that framing research constitutes a multiparadigmatic research program that can be developed through cognitive, constructionist, and critical perspectives. Accordingly, Entman's framing model in this study is primarily used to identify the construction of reality and the distribution of symbolic power within news coverage of Islam Nusantara. The reliability of the analysis can be strengthened through clearly formulated analytical categories, the presentation of textual evidence, intercoder checking, and transparent explanations of the procedures used to determine each frame (Entman, 2007; Matthes & Kohring, 2008; Matthes, 2009).

4. Framing Analysis Study on Islam Nusantara News

The study conducted by the researchers on both NU Online news articles about "Islam Nusantara" using framing analysis yielded the following results:

Table 2. First news: "PBBU Chairman: The World Regards Islam Nusantara as a Model of Civilization"

Framing element	Finding
Define problems	Islam Nusantara is a model of Islamic civilization that is worthy of being a world example.
Diagnose cause	Islam in Syria and Iraq is not free from conflict.

Framing element	Finding
Make moral judgement	Islam Nusantara is a tolerant Islam
Treatment recommendation	President Joko Widodo disbanded parties that potentially threaten Islam Nusantara.

Define problems. The first element regarding Islam Nusantara, which is believed to be a model of Islamic civilization worthy of being emulated by the world, can be understood through the news lead featuring a statement from KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf,

"The world recognizes Indonesia's Islam Nusantara as a model of Islamic civilization worthy of emulation by Muslim communities worldwide."

The statement from KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf seems to indicate that Islam Nusantara is an ideal concept of practicing Islam and can serve as a model for Islamic civilization in other parts of the world. This is further reinforced by the narrative construction of subsequent statements from KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf regarding Islam Nusantara, which is one of the icons of Islam wasathiyah that has become an important topic of discussion worldwide.

"Islam Nusantara has become one of the most prominent icons and one of the most influential discourses in global discussions of wasathiyah Islam."

The embedding of the term Islam Wasathiyah in its subsequent statement is an affirmation made by KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, who seeks to connect that Islam Nusantara is part of Islam Wasathiyah. This is done not without intention. In the discourse of Islamic civilization, the term Islam Wasathiyah or practicing Islam in a wasathiyah manner has always been echoed by Muslim scholars to provide a counter-narrative against extremist Islamic ideologies while also demonstrating the ideal concept of practicing Islam.

The discourse of Islam Nusantara, which is said to be a topic of discussion worldwide, serves as a reinforcement in portraying a positive image of the popularity of Islam Nusantara that has reached the international discourse arena.

Diagnose Causes. This element serves as a tool to diagnose the sources of problems presented in the news. In this section, the researcher finds that journalists present the sources of problems through President Joko Widodo's statements about Islam in Iraq and Syria, which are often in conflict.

"In Syria and Iraq, there is turmoil. Praise be to God, we have Islam Nusantara an expression of Islam characterized by courtesy, civility, and tolerance."

The narrative construction carried out by journalists in this section aims to strengthen the image of Islam Nusantara, which is considered never to have been involved in conflict, by comparing the ways of practicing Islam in Syria and Iraq.

One of the framing efforts made by journalists is to highlight certain parts to reinforce the meaning of the news they produce. In this section, NU Online journalists use a pattern that tends to polish the advantages of Islam Nusantara, one of which is by juxtaposing it with the development patterns of Islam in Syria and Iraq.

This highlighting is an effort to emphasize the meaning for public acceptance of the uniqueness of the Islam Nusantara way of practicing Islam compared to other forms of Islam, particularly the Islam present in Iraq and Syria. This comparison signals why Islam Nusantara exists and is needed, not only as an idea but also as an ideal way of practicing religion. For a country like Indonesia, which has a high level of multiculturalism, the framing of Islam Nusantara with the selection of vocabulary about tolerance and full etiquette reinforces the relevance of applying the idea of Islam Nusantara to the cultural conditions of Indonesian society.

Make Moral Judgement. In this section, to support what is raised in defining problems, journalists deliberately present President Joko Widodo's statement that Islam Nusantara is an Islam full of tolerance, which also emphasizes that the Islam Nusantara model is different from the Islam present in Syria and Iraq, as previously explained.

Upon closer examination, President Joko Widodo's statement presented is an effort at narrative construction that reinforces the legitimacy of the existence of Islam Nusantara as an ideal conceptual idea that can build a harmonious social order. From the perspective of professional journalism, this is not surprising, as President Joko Widodo is a credible source because he belongs to an elite group that has a significant influence on society. Therefore, the selection of statements from him gives greater emphasis on the legitimacy of Islam Nusantara. Borrowing the term from Stuart Hall, President Joko Widodo is a primary definer of reality.

Treatment Recommendation. The element that means “problem-solving,” the researcher found an intention by journalists to strengthen the existence of Islam Nusantara within the constellation of civilization. This intention is expressed by journalists through the statement of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, who appreciates President Joko Widodo's efforts in preserving Islam Nusantara.

“(President Joko Widodo) neutralized potential sources of disruption posed by various groups and even took firm action by dissolving organizations considered capable of threatening Islam Nusantara.”

This statement is then followed by KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf's statement, which indirectly calls on everyone to always uphold the Nusantara civilization.

“All of this convinces everyone that we possess both the resolve and the tangible strength to preserve and

sustain this civilization as the foundation of our struggle for a better future.”

Framing has a consequence of legitimizing one party and delegitimizing another. In this news, there is a treatment recommendation that is indirectly constructed by journalists in the form of the necessity to maintain and make Islam Nusantara the way of practicing Islam for the community.

If with KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf's statement, the supporters of Islam Nusantara are legitimized in their existence as an important presence for the ideal order of society, in this part, journalists also construct the news by delegitimizing the anti-Islam Nusantara parties as an existence that threatens the ideal order of society. This is rooted in the narrative that has developed regarding Islam Nusantara, which is believed to be a guarantor of the idea for creating a harmonious socio-cultural state of society.

Table 3. Second news: “The Great Blessing in the Tradition of Islam Nusantara According to the PBNU Chairman”

Framing element	Finding
Define problems	The Chairman of PBNU, KH Yahya Cholil Staquf, believes that the Islam Nusantara tradition contains immense blessings for this world and the hereafter
Diagnose cause	The Chairman of PBNU, KH Yahya Cholil Staquf, stated that in the history of human civilization, tradition serves as an important foundation to ensure a better future
Make moral judgement	Islam Nusantara has become a strong topic of discussion on an international scale as one of the wasathiyah Islam.
Treatment recommendation	President Joko Widodo invites the Indonesian people to emulate the scholars who preach through cultural channels.

Define problems. It can be noted that this element presents the statement of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf that the tradition of Islam Nusantara has great blessings for both this world and the hereafter.

“We believe that the tradition of Islam Nusantara contains not only highly valuable cultural elements, but also immense blessings in this world and the hereafter.”

The news titled “Barakah Raksasa dalam Tradisi Islam Nusantara menurut Ketum PBNU” provides an overview of the great blessings of Islam Nusantara, indicating that Islam Nusantara is not only about culture but also possesses blessings for both this world and the hereafter. This statement is reinforced by the narrative constructed by journalists, citing the shalawat badar composed by KH. Ali Mansur, which according to KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf has benefits that are felt not only by Nahdlatul Ulama but also by the nation and the state.

This emphatic statement indirectly gives the impression of clarifying the campaign for Islam Nusantara, which is far from the exclusivity of

groups. This is reflected in the narrative construction that states the blessings of Islam Nusantara have benefits for the nation and the state, not just for Nahdlatul Ulama. This narrative construction is an effort to build Islam Nusantara as a concept of Islam that is relevant to society with a broader scope.

Diagnose Causes. In fact, there is a shortcoming constructed by journalists in determining the source of the statement about why Islam Nusantara is said to have great blessings, which can be seen in the lead of the news cited by the journalists, that KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf mentions traditions recorded in the history of human civilization as an important foundation in building the future of that civilization.

However, in this section, there are no direct quotes from KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf that represent the narrative construction in the lead of the news. Although the news originates from the official NU Online media, this shortcoming could potentially impact negative assumptions regarding the credibility of the source and the

impression of forcing a positive portrayal of the idea of Islam Nusantara.

Make Moral Judgement. The moral decision that legitimizes Islam Nusantara is found in the statement of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, who describes Islam Nusantara as one of the wasathiyah Islam that is a strong topic of discussion in the world, as reflected in the words of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf.

"The world recognizes Indonesia's Islam Nusantara as a model of Islamic civilization worthy of emulation by Muslim communities worldwide."

The narrative about the great blessings found in Islam Nusantara in this news is based on and reinforced by the views of KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf regarding the positive popularity of Islam Nusantara on the global stage. The term "great blessings" itself, when interpreted literally and contextualized with this issue, means that the existence of Islam Nusantara can add or bring great goodness. This is supported by the direct quote above, which states that Islam Nusantara, as believed by KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, can serve as a model for other Islamic civilizations around the world to improve.

Treatment Recommendation. the final element, the resolution recommendation is reflected in the narrative construction that mentions President Joko Widodo urging the Indonesian people to emulate the scholars, particularly the walisongo, who used cultural media as a means of da'wah.

The emphasis on the call to follow the da'wah pattern practiced by the walisongo carries an implicit message for the community to accept and adopt the ideas of Islam Nusantara. This is because the idea of Islam Nusantara, championed by Nahdlatul Ulama, represents the da'wah of the walisongo that accommodates local aspects as a medium for its propagation.

However, this narrative construction also has a weakness similar to the part that constitutes the diagnosis cause, namely the absence of a direct quote from President Joko Widodo in the body of the news. This raises issues and questions regarding the credibility of the sources and the quality of the news.

Furthermore, the study conducted by the researcher on both Panjimas news articles about "Islam Nusantara" with framing analysis yielded the following results:

Table 4. Third news: "KH Luthfi Bashori: Anti-Arab Interpretations of Islam Nusantara Are Racist and Could Lead to Disbelief"

Framing element	Finding
Define problems	KH Luthfi Bashori rejects Islam Nusantara
Diagnose cause	Islam Nusantara has created a dichotomy among its followers, belittling other Muslims, especially Arab Muslims.
Make moral judgement	Humans have equal status before Allah, and what distinguishes them is their piety.
Treatment recommendation	If what is meant by Islam Nusantara is <i>isahlussunnah wal jamaah</i> , then there is no need to create the term Islam Nusantara, as it will lead to contradictions and generate negative stigma towards Arab Islam.

Define Problems. This news highlights KH. Luthfi Bashori's rejection of Islam Nusantara. The rejection is due to the fact that Islam Nusantara has caused divisions among the people and has the potential to lead individuals to apostasy.

"When Islam Nusantara was promoted, some parties began disparaging Arab Islam. This became even more problematic when claims emerged that Islam Nusantara was superior to Arab Islam. Such views create a dichotomy and amount to insult or racism by negatively portraying forms of Islam outside Islam Nusantara..."

KH. Luthfi Bashori, who is appointed as a member of the Fatwa Commission of MUI Malang, holds the status of primary definers that exerts a certain influence on the existence of Islam Nusantara through his views.

The emphasis on the issue of Islam Nusantara in this news is highlighted in terms of the impact scale on the unity of the Muslim community. KH. Luthfi Bashori's rejection stems from his observation of the fanaticism arising from the activists of Islam Nusantara who belittle other Muslims, particularly Arab Muslims.

Diagnose Causes. Similar to the previous explanation, KH. Luthfi Bashori's rejection of Islam Nusantara is due to the fact that Islam Nusantara not only creates a dichotomy among Muslims, but there are parties that compare Islam Nusantara as superior to Arab Islam. This reason can be seen from the direct quotation of KH. Luthfi Bashori's views.

"When Islam Nusantara was promoted, some parties began to disparage Arab Islam. This became even

more problematic when claims emerged that Islam Nusantara was superior to Arab Islam. Such views create a dichotomy and constitute an insult or a form of racism by negatively portraying forms of Islam outside Islam Nusantara. This creates an opposition between Islam Nusantara and non-Nusantara Islam, which is not consistent with Islamic teachings, as all forms of Islam are fundamentally equal."

For KH. Luthfi Bashori, the existence of Islam Nusantara causes Muslims to become polarized and trapped in group fanaticism. The analogy of the phenomenon vis a vis between Islam Nusantara and non-Islam Nusantara is one of the impacts of the polarization of Islam Nusantara, which ultimately drives his rejection of Islam Nusantara.

In the body of the news, it is also mentioned that there are dangerous impacts from the phenomenon of activists of Islam Nusantara who feel superior to other forms of Islam, especially Arab Islam. KH. Luthfi Bashori considers this phenomenon also affects the consequences of rejecting anything that originates from Arab.

"This would also imply rejecting the Qur'an because it is in Arabic, rejecting prayer because it is performed in Arabic, and rejecting the Prophet's hadiths because they use Arabic. If that were the case, it would amount to creating a new religion."

In this regard, KH. Luthfi Bashori seems to associate the activities and ideas of Islam Nusantara activists as a rejection of Arab Islam. Interestingly, in the construction of his narrative, the following news journalist also refers to him as *"a student of Sayyid Muhammad Alawi bin Maliki..."* as a substitute title for KH. Luthfi Bashori. Upon closer examination, the use of this title is not without reason. The designation of KH. Luthfi Bashori as a student of Sayyid Muhammad Alawi bin Maliki reinforces his status as a primary definer in addressing the issue of Islam Nusantara. This is because Sayyid Muhammad Alawi bin Maliki is one of the renowned scholars admired by activists of Islam Nusantara, who

predominantly come from the Nahdlatul Ulama community.

Make Moral Judgement. The moral reason supporting the issues presented is Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 *"...Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you."*

This construction reinforces the existence of Islam Nusantara among other Islams. The inclusion of this evidence also serves as a statement by KH. Luthfi Bashori to eliminate Islam Nusantara so that Muslims do not become polarized and trapped in group fanaticism that leads to mutual degradation.

Treatment Recommendation. The news "KH Luthfi Bashori: Anti-Arab Interpretations of Islam Nusantara Are Racist and Could Lead to Disbelief" encourages the resolution of the Islam Nusantara issue by eliminating the term Islam Nusantara, as reflected in KH. Luthfi Bashori's views.

"If Islam Nusantara is intended to mean Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Islam, then there is no need to use the term Islam Nusantara; it is sufficient to call it Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah without adopting a new label. Rebranding it as Islam Nusantara creates negative implications and contradictions because it appears to disparage Arab Islam. This is the fundamental mistake made by proponents of Islam Nusantara."

The mention of Islam Nusantara is considered by KH. Luthfi Bashori as a contradiction that tends to have negative consequences. In his statement, the negative traits highlighted by KH. Luthfi Bashori stem from narratives produced by Islam Nusantara activists who position Islam Nusantara as superior to Arab Islam.

Through this, KH. Luthfi Bashori views that if Islam Nusantara activists always refer to Islam Nusantara as one of the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Islams, then it is sufficient to simply use the term Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Islam without promoting Islam Nusantara, which he believes only leads to division among the ummah.

Table 5. The fourth news: "KH. Tengku Zulkarnaen: Ada KH. Tengku Zulkarnaen: Ada Penumpang Gelap Memanfaatkan Islam Nusantara"

Framing element	Finding
Define problems	The Deputy Secretary-General of the Indonesian Ulema Council (Wasekjen MUI), KH. Tengku Zulkarnain, mentioned the existence of dark passengers who exploit Islam Nusantara.
Diagnose cause	The existence of opportunistic individuals who, for their own interests, have the potential to distort the term Islam Nusantara.
Make moral judgement	Islam Nusantara, initiated by Nahdlatul Ulama, is similar to the Progressive Islam proposed by Muhammadiyah; however, it cannot be denied that there are parties that distort this term.
Treatment recommendation	The Deputy Secretary-General of the Indonesian Ulema Council (Wasekjen MUI), KH. Tengku Zulkarnaen, supports the statement from MUI West Sumatra that rejects Islam Nusantara.

Define Problem. This news highlights the statement from the Deputy Secretary-General of the Indonesian Ulema Council, KH. Tengku Zulkarnain, who believes that there are opportunistic individuals or parties deliberately exploiting Islam Nusantara by distorting its meaning and concept. This can be seen from the following statement.

"What the West Sumatra Indonesian Ulema Council stated was based on concerns about opportunistic actors who might distort the meaning of Islam Nusantara by portraying it as anti-Arab, anti-turban, anti-robe, and so forth. This is precisely what we must remain vigilant against."

KH. Tengku Zulkarnain's view on the existence of parties suspected of having a hidden agenda behind the development of the Islam Nusantara concept, in his opinion, needs to be watched closely. This cautious attitude is a precaution to ensure that Islam Nusantara does not impact the unity of the Muslim community in the future.

Diagnose Cause. Not much different from what was raised in the define problem element, in this element, the researcher finds that the journalist of this news highlights the source of the problem, which is the presence of parties suspected of exploiting Islam Nusantara, as conveyed by KH. Tengku Zulkarnain.

"This can be seen in statements portraying Islam Nusantara as anti-Arab while being friendly toward Israel, describing Arab Islam as colonial Islam, and making similar claims. These meanings have been deliberately distorted by certain proponents of Islam Nusantara."

The highlighting of the issue developed around the term "dark passenger" is illustrated by some activists of Islam Nusantara who have good relations with Israel and refer to themselves as anti-Arab, as well as labeling Arab Islam as colonial Islam. This phenomenon reinforces the notion of the "dark passenger" as mentioned by KH. Tengku Zulkarnain.

Make Moral Judgement. The researcher found that KH. Tengku Zulkarnain explained the position of Islam Nusantara, which shares similarities with the progressive Islam of Muhammadiyah. Not only that, KH. Tengku

Zulkarnain appreciates KH. Ma'ruf Amin's writings on Islam Nusantara. However, on the other hand, he also believes that there are dark passengers within Islam Nusantara.

"Islam Nusantara refers to Aswaja Islam; it is neither merely 'Sunni,' nor radical, Ahmadi, liberal, or textualist. His writing is excellent. However, we cannot deny that, in practice, there are opportunistic actors seeking to distort the meaning of the term Islam Nusantara."

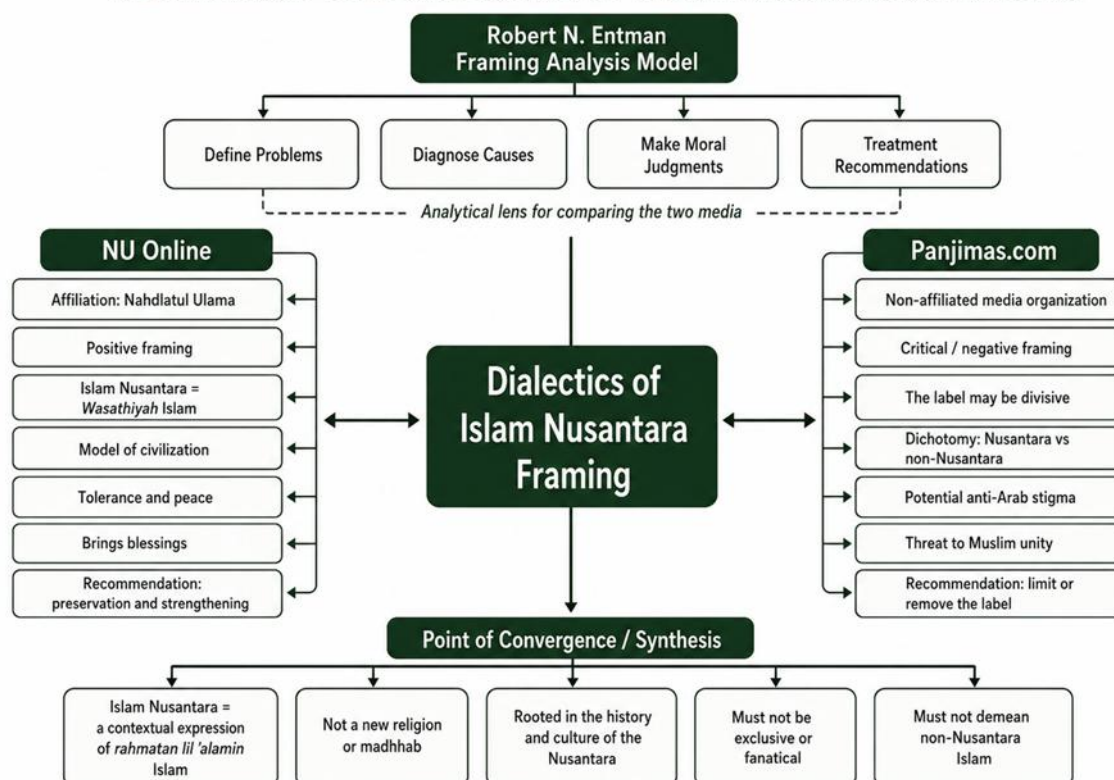
This quote shows that KH. Tengku Zulkarnain actually has a positive view of the existence of Islam Nusantara. He affirms that through KH. Ma'ruf Amin's writings, Islam Nusantara represents Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Islam and concludes that its position is equivalent to the progressive Islam of Muhammadiyah. However, due to the phenomena that have occurred recently following the controversies raised by activists of Islam Nusantara, KH. Tengku Zulkarnain chooses to be cautious by supporting the statement of MUI West Sumatra, which rejects Islam Nusantara.

Treatment Recommendation. The resolution of the conflict is found in KH. Tengku Zulkarnain's statement supporting the rejection from MUI West Sumatra against the idea of Islam Nusantara.

"Therefore, we support the position expressed by the West Sumatra Indonesian Ulema Council because of concerns that opportunistic actors may exploit the term Islam Nusantara for short-term interests."

The narrative about "*penumpang gelap*" is an effort to delegitimize the existence of Islam Nusantara used by KH. Tengku Zulkarnain. In this case, KH. Tengku Zulkarnain tries to weigh the positive values of Islam Nusantara. This is shown through his previous statement regarding the status of Islam Nusantara as Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Islam and equivalent to the progressive Islam of Muhammadiyah. Nevertheless, KH. Tengku Zulkarnain also sees the potential concerns arising from Islam Nusantara, which he simplifies through the notion of the existence of dark passengers. This underlies the call for the abolition of Islam Nusantara.

NETWORK OF THE DIALECTICS OF ISLAM NUSANTARA FRAMING



5. Dialectics of Framing News on Islam Nusantara in NU Online and Panjimas

Framing or framing is the way media presents reality or events in their reporting. Through two working methods of "selecting facts" and "writing facts," the representation of media interests, represented by journalists through these two methods, aims to emphasize meaning in the news to influence the audience's understanding of the reality presented by the media (Eriyanto, 2002, p. 186–187).

In other terms, framing is referred to as the definition of reality. Therefore, the definition of reality will differ if the framing is different. This difference is generally caused by the interpretation and meaning of events influenced by the complex social factors and values of the media, especially the journalist themselves (Eriyanto, 2002, p. 122).

From the presentation and analysis of the news provided by NU Online and Panjimas using the framing analysis model by Robert N. Entman, the researcher generally found a counter-argument from the two media reflected in their news content. NU Online, as a media affiliated with the Nahdlatul Ulama organization, tends to be pro-Islam Nusantara ideas. Meanwhile, Panjimas, which in its organizational profile states its

independence from any group, party, or organization, tends to oppose NU Online's stance, namely counter-Islam Nusantara.

The news about Islam Nusantara reported by NU Online contains the main point that the idea of Islam Nusantara is constructed as one manifestation of the concept of Islam wasathiyah, which is a characteristic of the universality of Islam or Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin that can serve as a model of civilization for Muslims around the world, bringing great blessings in this world and the hereafter.

On the other hand, the news about Islam Nusantara published by Panjimas contains a rejection of the Islam Nusantara idea. In general, the reasons for the rejection found in the two news articles from Panjimas are that the labeling of Islam Nusantara could lead to division and confusion among the community. This is suspected to be due to the potential for a dichotomy among the community and elements of racism in its manifestation. Therefore, Islam does not need to be given another label as the name of Islam is already perfect.

Despite being contradictory, the researcher finds a common ground between the two narrative constructions through an alternative interpretation that the Islam Nusantara reported by NU Online remains valid as a narrative of real Islam Nusantara. However, on the other hand, the

rejection of Islam Nusantara constructed by Panjimas is still accommodated and interpreted as a boundary marker for the interpretation and implementation of Islam Nusantara.

Previously, to find the common thread, it is necessary to explain that the essence of Islam Nusantara, if referring to previous definitions, is a characteristic model or typology reflected from two interconnected realities, namely historical reality and territorial reality, which ultimately influence the way of practicing Islam in complex dimensions of life.

This historical reality refers to the history of the spread of Islam in Indonesia, where Islam Nusantara is a representation of the da'wah pattern inherited from the past Islamic preachers who approached da'wah through peaceful means, especially through cultural assimilation (Faruq dkk., 2024, p. 65). Meanwhile, territorial reality refers to the aspect of locality, which in this case is reflected in the geographical and cultural aspects present in the archipelago (Siregar, 2020, p. 17–20).

This also refutes the narrative of the news by “KH Luthfi Bashori: Anti-Arab Interpretations of Islam Nusantara Are Racist and Could Lead to Disbelief” which presents KH. Luthfi Bashori's statement that Islam Nusantara, which is anti-Arab Islam, has the consequence of rejecting everything from Arab and has the potential to give birth to a new religion that is nothing more than a generalization of KH. Luthfi Bashori's views.

Nevertheless, the researcher views that those who are against Islam Nusantara and narrate it as a new religion, such as KH. Luthfi Bashori, derive their conclusions from statements made by parties or individuals who twist the terms and implementation of Islam Nusantara as mentioned in the Panjimas news titled “KH Tengku Zulkarnaen: Opportunistic Actors Are Exploiting Islam Nusantara”

“Islam Nusantara refers to Aswaja Islam; it is neither radical, Ahmadi, liberal, nor textualist. KH Ma'ruf Amin's writing on Islam Nusantara is excellent. However, we cannot deny that, in practice, there are opportunistic actors seeking to distort the meaning of the term Islam Nusantara.”

Furthermore, regarding the labeling of the name Islam questioned by Panjimas about Islam Nusantara initiated by Nahdlatul Ulama and Progressive Islam initiated by Muhammadiyah, the underlying reason for this rejection is the concern over the potential for a dichotomy among the community and confusion among the community in understanding Islam. At an

extreme point, the labeling done by pro-Islam Nusantara groups can also lead to racism and demean non-Islam Nusantara, especially Arab Islam.

In this matter, the labeling of Islam Nusantara by Nahdlatul Ulama may only be intended to provide a casing that emphasizes the image of Islam in the archipelago as peaceful, despite the multi-faceted social reality. The promotion of this idea is inseparable from the events of extremist Islamic groups originating from several regions in the Middle East and developing in several other countries, which have increased global security and ultimately led to the phenomenon of Islamophobia. This also applies to Progressive Islam by Muhammadiyah.

This aligns with the view of KH. Ma'ruf Amin (Hadi, 2019) that the ideas and casing of Islam Nusantara are produced not only to differentiate the image of the model of practicing Islam based on regional typology but also to internationalize it so that it becomes a pioneer of the way of practicing Islam for the global Muslim community, emphasizing characteristics that are portrayed with a nuance of wasathiyah in facing complex life issues.

Through this exposition, the researcher emphasizes that the counter-narratives of the Islam Nusantara idea from Panjimas can be interpreted as a limiting corridor in the understanding, interpretation, and implementation of Islam Nusantara. The ideas put forward by Nahdlatul Ulama at the 30th Congress should serve as a corridor and its original understanding, namely the typology of Islam. Furthermore, in terms of understanding, interpretation, and implementation, pro-Islam Nusantara groups should not tend to feel superior and belittle the practices of Islam in other regions, nor glorify Islam in the Middle East or specifically Islam in Arabia with negative labels. Moreover, to the extreme point of denying all things Arab because they feel superior.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that NU Online and Panjimas.com construct contrasting frames of Islam Nusantara because of their different institutional positions, ideological orientations, and choices of news sources. Based on Robert N. Entman's framing model, NU Online defines Islam Nusantara as a model of wasathiyah Islam rooted in local culture, religious tolerance, and the principle of rahmatan lil 'alamin. It attributes the relevance of Islam Nusantara to the need for a

peaceful and culturally adaptive form of Islam, morally evaluates it as a valuable model of Islamic civilization, and recommends the preservation and wider implementation of its cultural da'wah principles. In contrast, Panjimas.com defines Islam Nusantara as a potentially divisive and theologically problematic label. It attributes the controversy to the tendency of some proponents to distinguish or privilege Nusantara Islam over other expressions of Islam, evaluates this tendency as a threat to Muslim unity, and recommends either restricting the use of the term or returning to the more general designation of Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah. Despite these opposing frames, the dialectical analysis reveals a possible point of convergence. NU Online's framing affirms Islam Nusantara as a contextual expression of Islam that accommodates Indonesian history, culture, and social diversity, whereas Panjimas.com's criticism provides a normative boundary against exclusivism, excessive fanaticism, and the devaluation of non-Nusantara Islamic traditions. Therefore, Islam Nusantara should not be understood as a new theological school or as an alternative form of Islam opposed to Arab or other regional expressions of Islam. Rather, it should be positioned as a contextual model of Islamic practice that embodies the universal values of rahmatan lil 'alamin within the cultural realities of the Indonesian archipelago. The study demonstrates that differences in media framing not only reflect ideological contestation but can also open a critical space for clarifying the meaning, limits, and implementation of Islam Nusantara in contemporary Indonesian Muslim society.

The recommendation of this article is that NU Online should strengthen its coverage of Islam Nusantara by providing more conceptual, contextual, and balanced explanations. Meanwhile, Panjimas.com and other media outlets should clearly distinguish between the official concept of Islam Nusantara and individual opinions so that criticism does not intensify polarization. Future studies are recommended to expand the number of news articles, research periods, and types of media analyzed, as well as to combine framing analysis with editorial interviews, critical discourse analysis, and audience reception studies.

7. Declaration

Author Contributions: M.L. contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, data analysis,

and writing of the manuscript. M.F.Y. contributed to supervision, critical review, and editing of the manuscript. Both authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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