

Measuring the Potential of the Islamic World in the International Geopolitical Constellation

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Abstract: *This study explores the strategic potential of Islam as a foundational force in shaping a fair and sustainable global geostrategy. Islamic values such as justice (al-'adl), brotherhood (ukhuwwah), responsibility (amanah), and peace (salam) are identified as key ethical principles that can strengthen international relations among Muslim countries and serve as a moral alternative to the dominant geopolitical paradigms based on power and hegemony. Geographically, the Islamic world occupies highly strategic regions rich in natural resources and key trade routes, making it a critical player in global energy and economic systems. However, internal fragmentation, ideological divergence, and political conflicts have hindered the Islamic world from capitalizing on this potential in a unified and strategic manner. The study highlights the role of diplomacy, soft power, and the emergence of non-state Islamic actors as new instruments of influence in the global arena. It concludes that a collective, inclusive, and ethical Islamic geostrategy is feasible and necessary to respond to contemporary global challenges. This requires visionary leadership, institutional reform, and the development of Islamic geopolitical education to build long-term strategic capacity. Ultimately, Islam is not only a spiritual tradition but also a civilizational force capable of contributing to a more just and balanced global order.*

Keywords: *Islamic Geopolitics, Soft Power, Strategic Unity, Global Ethics, Muslim World.*

Abstrak: *Studi ini mengeksplorasi potensi strategis Islam sebagai kekuatan fundamental dalam membentuk geostrategi global yang adil dan berkelanjutan. Nilai-nilai Islam seperti keadilan (al-'adl), persaudaraan (ukhuwwah), tanggung jawab (amanah), dan perdamaian (salam) diidentifikasi sebagai prinsip-prinsip etika utama yang dapat memperkuat hubungan internasional antar negara Muslim dan berfungsi sebagai alternatif moral terhadap paradigma geopolitik dominan yang berbasis pada kekuasaan dan hegemoni. Secara geografis, dunia Islam menempati wilayah-wilayah yang sangat strategis yang kaya akan sumber daya alam dan jalur perdagangan utama, menjadikannya pemain penting dalam sistem energi dan ekonomi global. Namun, fragmentasi internal, perbedaan ideologis, dan konflik politik telah menghambat dunia Islam untuk memanfaatkan potensi ini secara terpadu dan strategis. Studi ini menyoroti peran diplomasi, kekuatan lunak, dan munculnya aktor-aktor Islam non-negara sebagai instrumen pengaruh baru di arena global. Kesimpulannya, geostrategi Islam yang kolektif, inklusif, dan etis dapat dilakukan dan diperlukan untuk menanggapi tantangan global kontemporer. Hal ini membutuhkan kepemimpinan visioner, reformasi kelembagaan, dan pengembangan pendidikan geopolitik Islam untuk membangun kapasitas strategis jangka panjang. Pada akhirnya, Islam bukan hanya tradisi spiritual tetapi juga kekuatan peradaban yang mampu berkontribusi pada tatanan global yang lebih adil dan seimbang.*

Kata kunci: *Geopolitik Islam, Kekuatan Lunak, Persatuan Strategis, Etika Global, Dunia Muslim..*

Pendahuluan

Islam as a religion of rahmatan lil 'alamin not only regulates aspects of individual worship, but also includes social, economic, political systems, and even defense strategies and regional management. Throughout its history, Islam has given birth to a broad and profound civilization, with significant political and military power, as seen in the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Ottoman caliphates (Alverdian, 2022). This position shows that Islam is inseparable from the dynamics of power and world geopolitical governance.

Geostrategy, as part of the study of geopolitics, refers to the planning and implementation of a country or group's foreign and defense policies based on geographical position and strategic resources. In the context of the Islamic world, geostrategy plays an important role considering that the majority of Muslim countries are located in strategic areas such as the Middle East, South Asia, North Africa, and Southeast Asia (Rawls, 2011).

This geographical fact makes Islamic countries have high strategic value in the global arena, both in terms of energy, international shipping routes, as well as economic markets and areas of cultural influence (Sihombing, 2023). However, this potential has not been fully utilized optimally within the framework of strategic global Islamic solidarity (Kadir, 2022). On the contrary, many Islamic regions have become the focus of geopolitical conflict and intervention by foreign powers.

Weaknesses in the strategic integration of the Islamic world are caused by differences in political ideology between Muslim countries, weak institutions of cooperation between Islamic countries, and the influence of Western hegemony in the internal affairs of Muslim regions. In fact, historically Islam has been a respected center of global power with a geopolitical strategy based on the values of revelation and the wisdom of civilization.

Contemporary developments such as the emergence of international Islamic organizations (for example the OIC), as well as various regional economic forums and military cooperation, show efforts to build Islamic geostrategic power. However, these efforts still face various challenges, both from within Muslims themselves and from external pressures (Marwah, 2012).

Global issues such as the Palestinian conflict, the Syrian crisis, instability in the Sahel region, and tensions in the South China Sea, are examples of how geostrategic issues involve and influence Muslim countries. In these cases, the position of Islam as the basis of ethics and geopolitical ideology is tested in global dynamics full of competing interests (Murniati, 2015).

The study of Islam and geostrategy is important to understand how Muslims can reshape their position in the global game through an integrated strategic approach (Mudzakkir, 2016). This includes the utilization of natural resources, strengthening shared identity, and the role of diplomacy based on just, peaceful, and dignified Islamic values.

In the context of today's multipolar world, where power is no longer concentrated at one pole, there is a great opportunity for the Islamic world to play a

role as an alternative power capable of offering global solutions based on the principles of justice and balance. Islamic geostrategy does not have to imitate the western paradigm which tends to be hegemonic, but can develop its own model based on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (the objectives of sharia).

The main purpose of this writing is to explore how Islamic values and principles can interact with global geopolitical strategies, as well as encourage Muslim countries to be more actively involved and aware of their position on the world power map. This is also an effort to examine the potential of Islam as a power capable of changing global dynamics towards a more just and balanced world order.

Thus, this study is expected to be able to provide conceptual and practical contributions in understanding the relationship between Islam and geostrategy, as well as encourage strategic thinking of Muslims that is not only spiritualistic but also geopolitical and visionary in facing the challenges of the times.

In addition to having a strategic geographical position, the Islamic world is also blessed with a wealth of natural resources, especially oil, natural gas, and mining metals that are greatly needed by industrial countries. However, this wealth has not fully provided sustainable strategic advantages for Muslims as a whole. In fact, in many cases, these resources have become a source of conflict and dependence on global powers. Therefore, a geostrategic approach is needed that is not only economic, but also visionary and collective based on Islamic brotherhood. More than just regional analysis, geostrategy is also closely related to the narrative of identity and the formation of global perceptions of Islam. Unfortunately, in recent decades, Islam has often been positioned negatively in the global framework, especially after the events of September 11, 2001, which strengthened the stereotype that Islam is identical to violence and radicalism. This narrative has a major geopolitical impact and influences the foreign policies of major countries towards the Muslim region. In fact, in Islamic teachings, the principles of peace, justice, and harmony are basic values that can be the foundation of alternative strategic power.

In this context, it is important to build an Islamic geostrategy based on the universal values of Islam, not merely on short-term pragmatic interests. Developing the power of Islamic public diplomacy, economic and educational cooperation networks, and stronger political solidarity between Muslim countries are important agendas in building balanced geopolitical power. This strategy can also be a counter-narrative to the dominance of global discourse that is detrimental to the image of Islam.

Ideally, Islamic geostrategy does not lead to expansionism or narrow political domination, but emphasizes the active contribution of Muslims in creating world stability and peace. This is in accordance with the role of the *khilāfah fil ardh* (leadership on earth) which emphasizes the moral and social responsibility of humanity in maintaining global balance and justice. Islam as a universal religion must be able to show its relevance in solving global crises, whether in the economic, environmental, or international conflicts. By referring to historical and contemporary realities, this paper attempts to offer a new understanding of the potential for integration between Islamic values and global geopolitical strategies. It is hoped that this discussion can be a foundation for Muslims to develop a collective strategy in facing the challenges of the times, while building strength that is not only based on material power, but also moral and spiritual strength.

Metodologi Penelitian

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because it is able to explore in depth the social and cultural phenomena that occur in multicultural classes, especially related to the strategies implemented by teachers in managing them. The subjects of the study were teachers in schools that have diverse student backgrounds, both in terms of ethnicity, religion, and language. The location of the study was determined purposively, namely schools that are known to have high cultural diversity (Nazir, 1998).

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, direct observation in class, and documentation of learning activities and teaching materials. Interviews were conducted with teachers as the main informants, and involved students and the principal as supporting informants. Observations were conducted to directly see the classroom management practices by teachers, such as teaching methods, social interactions between students, and the overall learning atmosphere. Documentation was used to complete the data, especially in the form of syllabuses, lesson implementation plans (RPP), and learning media used by teachers.

Data analysis was carried out descriptively-qualitatively with interactive analysis techniques that include data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the data was tested through triangulation of sources and techniques, to ensure that the data obtained truly represented field conditions (Ramdhan, 2021). The analysis process was carried out continuously from the data collection stage to the writing of the research report. Through this method, it is hoped that a comprehensive picture can be found regarding the concrete strategies used by teachers in managing multicultural classes, as well as the factors that influence the effectiveness of these strategies. In addition, this method also allows researchers to capture the social dynamics that occur in the interaction between teachers and students in the context of cultural diversity.

Hasil Penelitian

Result

The results of this study indicate that Islam has an inherent strategic value concept and is very potential to be used as a foundation in building a fair and sustainable global geostrategy. Fundamental values such as justice (al-'adl), brotherhood (ukhuwwah), responsibility (amanah), and peace (salam) are the main principles in Islamic teachings which, if implemented consistently in relations between Muslim countries, have the potential to form a new geopolitical power based on global ethics and civilization.

Geographically, the Islamic world is spread across very strategic regions such as the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. These regions include the world's main shipping lanes such as the Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Strait of Malacca, and have the largest oil and gas reserves in the world. In addition, the significant Muslim population in this region makes Islamic countries important players in the global energy game, international trade, and geopolitical stability. Therefore, the geostrategic potential of the Islamic world lies not only in natural resources, but also in the geographical and demographic position of the large and

widely spread Muslim community.

However, this study also found that this great potential has not been fully utilized collectively. Political fragmentation, ideological differences, and internal conflicts are the main factors that hinder the geostrategic integration of the Islamic world. Sectarian tensions and competing national interests cause Islamic countries to be positioned more often as objects of foreign intervention rather than as subjects that determine the direction of world geopolitics. This is exacerbated by the weak political and diplomatic solidarity among Islamic countries in responding to global issues that concern the interests of Muslims.

A real example of the weakness of the collective geostrategy of the Islamic world can be seen in the prolonged conflicts in Palestine, Syria, and Yemen. In this case, Islamic countries have not shown joint strategic steps in responding to crises that have a direct impact on the dignity and safety of Muslims. Although there are international forums such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), this study found that the role of the OIC is still symbolic and has not been effective in formulating concrete and unifying geostrategic steps.

On the other hand, this study also identified the existence of great potential in Islamic diplomacy based on the values of peace and justice. Countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and Qatar are examples of how moderate and flexible foreign strategies can make Islam a moral force in global diplomacy. Indonesia, for example, actively voices issues of world peace, economic justice, and defense of Palestine in various international forums, including the UN and G20. This approach reflects the application of Islamic soft power that is rooted in universal values but remains contextual.

Furthermore, non-state actors such as international Islamic organizations, global Islamic educational institutions, and modern Islamic media have also begun to play an important role in shaping the strategic perception of the Islamic world. They are present as a public diplomacy force that is able to balance the dominance of global narratives that are often biased against Islam. The existence of these actors is an important marker that Islamic geostrategy is not only determined by large countries, but also by civil society networks and socio-religious institutions.

This study also reveals that Islamic geostrategic power does not solely rely on military or economic power, but rather on the ability to build coalitions, strategic networks, and international trust. In this context, Islamic values can be a very effective source of soft power in creating a positive influence globally, as long as these values are understood and applied contextually and modernly. This approach can strengthen Islam's position in creating a more just and humane world order.

The results of the analysis also show that the ideal Islamic geostrategy is collective, inclusive, and ethical. This strategy must be able to integrate the potential of resources, geographical position, the world's Muslim population, and religious values to form a more balanced international relations system. In other words, this strategy is a form of resistance to the global geopolitical approach that has been dominated by the logic of power and hegemony.

However, this study also found that there are still limitations in the internal strategic thinking of Muslims. Many Muslim countries do not yet have a strong and independent strategic study center to formulate foreign policies rooted in Islamic values. Therefore, the development of education Islamic geopolitics is one of the

important recommendations from the results of this study. This includes the integration of Islamic value-based geopolitical curriculum in higher education institutions, strengthening strategic research in Islamic countries, and increasing visionary and independent diplomatic capacity.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that despite enormous internal and external challenges, the Islamic world has a strong foundation to form a global geostrategy that is relevant, moral, and able to contribute to a more peaceful and just world order. However, to realize this requires a collective vision, strategic leadership, and the courage to develop an Islamic strategy that is not only symbolic but also substantive and planned. Islam, with its rich values and history, is not only a religion, but also a source of inspiration in building a better world civilization.

Discussion

The results of the study show that Islam has a strategic value concept that is inherently capable of becoming a foundation in building a fair and sustainable geostrategy. Values such as justice (*al-'adl*), brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*), responsibility (*amanah*), and peace (*salam*) are the main principles that if applied in relations between Muslim countries can form a new geopolitical power based on global ethics and civilization.

Geographically, the Islamic world is spread across very strategic areas, such as the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. This region includes major shipping lanes (such as the Suez Canal and the Strait of Hormuz), the world's largest oil and gas reserves, and has a significant Muslim population. These conditions make Islamic countries important players in global energy affairs and international trade (Khasanah & Paryanto, 2023).

However, this geostrategic potential has not been fully utilized collectively. The study found that political fragmentation, ideological differences, and internal conflicts are the main factors that hinder the geostrategic integration of the Islamic world (M. Abduh Wahid, 2019). Sectarian tensions and competing national interests have made Islamic countries more often positioned as objects of foreign intervention rather than geopolitical subjects that determine global direction.

One real example is the prolonged conflict in Palestine, Syria, and Yemen, which shows the absence of a joint strategy of Islamic countries in responding to major issues that touch on the interests of the people. Although there are international forums such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), their role tends to be symbolic and less effective in formulating concrete and united geostrategic steps (Murniati, 2015).

Other findings show that there is great potential in Islamic diplomacy based on the values of peace and justice (Mustofa, 2019). Countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and Qatar demonstrate a more flexible and moderate strategic approach in the international arena. Indonesia, for example, is known to be active in voicing issues of peace, economic justice, and defending Palestine in various international forums.

In addition, non-state powers such as international Islamic organizations, global Islamic educational institutions, and modern Islamic media have also begun to play a role in shaping the strategic perception of the Islamic world (Permana, 2020). They have become new actors in public diplomacy that are able to balance the dominance

of global narratives that tend to be biased towards Islam.

The study also revealed that the strength of Islamic geostrategy does not solely depend on military or economic power, but on the ability to build coalitions, networks, and international trust. Islamic values can be a very effective source of soft power in creating positive global influence, as long as these values are understood and applied in a contextual and modern way (Rasyid, 2008).

The results of the analysis show that the ideal Islamic geostrategy is collective, inclusive, and ethical. This strategy combines the potential power of resources, geographical position, the world's Muslim population, and religious values to form a balanced system of international relations. This is a form of resistance to the global geopolitical approach that has been dominated by the logic of power and domination.

The study also found that there are still limitations in the internal strategic thinking of Muslims. Many Muslim countries do not yet have a strong and independent strategic study center to formulate foreign policies based on Islamic values. Therefore, the development of Islamic geopolitical education is one of the important recommendations from the results of this study.

Overall, the results of this study show that despite the enormous internal and external challenges, the Islamic world has a strong foundation to form a global geostrategy that is relevant, moral, and able to contribute to a more peaceful and just world order. However, this requires a collective vision, strategic leadership, and the courage to develop an Islamic strategy that is not merely symbolic but also substantive and planned.

Kesimpulan

Based on the results of the study that has been conducted, it can be concluded that Islam has great potential as a basis for building a just, moral, and sustainable geopolitical strategy. Islamic teachings include universal values such as justice, brotherhood, peace, and responsibility which are very relevant to be the basis for formulating foreign policy and global strategy of the Islamic world.

Geographically, the Islamic world occupies very strategic areas on the global map. These areas have major trade routes, abundant energy resources, and a large population of people. However, this geographical potential has not been fully translated into an organized and solid strategic force due to political fragmentation, internal conflict, and lack of a shared vision.

One of the main weaknesses of the Islamic world in the context of geostrategy is the lack of effective and long-term cooperation between Muslim countries. Although there are organizations such as the OIC, their role and effectiveness are still limited in responding to real and complex strategic challenges. This shows that the Islamic world does not yet have a collective strategic platform that is able to optimally integrate power and resources.

In addition to internal challenges, the Islamic world also faces great external pressure, including the intervention of global powers, Islamophobic propaganda, and the dominance of western narratives in geopolitical issues. This worsens the position of the Islamic world in the global arena, because they are often in a reactive and divided position in responding to international issues.

However, there is strong hope that the Islamic world can rise as a new strategic force in the current multipolar era. Countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and

Malaysia have shown initial steps in building inclusive and peaceful Islamic diplomacy. They can become a new axis in forming a global Islamic strategic consensus.

The importance of building an Islamic geostrategy based on the noble values of Islam is becoming increasingly urgent. This strategy is not just a matter of political alliances or military strength, but more about strengthening collective identity, increasing cooperation between communities, and formulating foreign policies that reflect the vision of Islam as a blessing for all nature.

This conclusion also emphasizes that the development of an Islamic geostrategy requires strong strategic political education, the development of an independent Islamic geopolitical study center, and the courage to reform the way of looking at global power and leadership. Islam needs to build strength from within before it can compete in the global arena.

Furthermore, Islamic geostrategy must be collaborative, not confrontational. The Islamic world needs to show that it is capable of being part of the solution to various global crises, not just an object in conflict. By strengthening soft power, expanding economic and educational networks, and increasing internal solidarity, the Islamic world can occupy a strategic position of honor in the new global order. Finally, this study shows that the integration of Islamic values and geopolitical strategy is not utopian, but is very possible to achieve with the right, systematic, and visionary approach. Islam has all the strong values and history of civilization to become a global actor that is not only able to compete, but also to provide direction to the world that is currently seeking a new balance and justice.

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