

## Navigating Tradition and Territory: The Islamic Business Ethics of Minangkabau Traders in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

*This study explores Islamic economics and business anthropology with a focus on the commercial ethics of the Minangkabau diaspora in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. The central problem addressed is the growing challenge faced by diaspora Muslim entrepreneurs in maintaining Islamic business ethics and cultural identity while navigating increasingly competitive market environments and multicultural business interactions. In Southeast Asia, cross-border trade among ethnic communities continues to expand, yet reports of declining ethical practice and weakened cultural ties in diaspora business networks raise concerns for the sustainability of moral economic conduct. These conditions underscore the urgency to investigate how traditional Islamic values and Minangkabau customs are preserved, negotiated, and transformed within contemporary business settings. This research aims to understand the internalization of Islamic values and Minangkabau adat within the business practices of migrant traders, as well as how these values adapt to Malaysian socio-cultural contexts. Employing a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving 10 key informants consisting of Minangkabau traders and community leaders in Negeri Sembilan. Thematic data analysis highlights the dynamic interplay between religious principles, customary norms, and economic behavior. Findings reveal that Minangkabau traders uphold Islamic business ethics through the values of honesty, trust, and ukhuwah, while simultaneously adjusting to local business norms and regulations. Their ethical approach forms a contextual model of entrepreneurship that balances spiritual commitments with economic pragmatism. This study contributes to the formulation of the concept of Islamic Entrepreneurial Diaspora, offering an integrative model for understanding how Islamic belief systems interact with local culture in cross-national economic practices. The discovery provides theoretical enrichment to Islamic business ethics discourse and demonstrates the enduring importance of local cultural values in navigating global commercial pressures.*

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi ekonomi Islam dan antropologi bisnis dengan fokus pada etika komersial diaspora Minangkabau di Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. Permasalahan utama yang diangkat adalah meningkatnya tantangan yang dihadapi pengusaha Muslim diaspora dalam mempertahankan etika bisnis Islami dan identitas budaya ketika berhadapan dengan lingkungan pasar yang semakin kompetitif serta interaksi bisnis yang multikultural. Di kawasan Asia Tenggara, perdagangan lintas negara antar komunitas etnis terus berkembang, namun laporan tentang menurunnya praktik etika dan melemahnya ikatan budaya dalam jaringan bisnis diaspora menimbulkan kekhawatiran terhadap keberlanjutan praktik ekonomi yang berlandaskan moral. Kondisi ini menegaskan urgensi untuk meneliti bagaimana nilai-nilai Islam dan adat Minangkabau dipertahankan, dinegosiasikan, dan ditransformasikan dalam praktik bisnis kontemporer. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami internalisasi nilai-nilai Islam dan adat Minangkabau dalam

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praktik perdagangan para perantau, serta bagaimana nilai-nilai tersebut beradaptasi dengan konteks sosial budaya Malaysia. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen terhadap 10 informan kunci yang terdiri dari pedagang dan tokoh komunitas Minangkabau di Negeri Sembilan. Analisis tematik menyoroti dinamika hubungan antara prinsip keagamaan, norma adat, dan perilaku ekonomi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa para pedagang Minangkabau tetap menerapkan etika bisnis Islami melalui nilai kejujuran, kepercayaan, dan ukhuwah, sekaligus menyesuaikan diri dengan norma dan regulasi bisnis lokal. Pendekatan etika ini membentuk model kewirausahaan kontekstual yang menyeimbangkan komitmen spiritual dengan pragmatisme ekonomi. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada perumusan konsep Islamic Entrepreneurial Diaspora, yaitu model integratif untuk memahami interaksi antara sistem keyakinan Islam dan budaya lokal dalam praktik ekonomi lintas negara. Temuan ini memberikan pengayaan teoretis pada wacana etika bisnis Islam serta menunjukkan pentingnya nilai budaya lokal dalam menghadapi tekanan ekonomi global.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

The Minangkabau community is widely recognized for its deeply rooted religious traditions framed within the philosophical foundation of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, positioning Islamic values as the primary guide in social, economic, and political spheres.<sup>1</sup> These principles emphasize honesty, fairness, accountability, and social responsibility, making Islamic ethics inseparable from commercial behavior among the Minangkabau people. Historically, the Minangkabau have been known as successful migrants, where trading activities have become their main economic livelihood across regions.<sup>2</sup> Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia has long been a focal destination for Minangkabau migration since the 18th century, resulting in strong socio-cultural and economic ties between both regions. In the contemporary era, however, Minangkabau traders within this diaspora are confronted with challenges related to adapting Islamic business ethics amid competitive market pressures, multicultural interactions, and differing regulatory systems.<sup>3</sup> These conditions raise essential questions regarding the extent to which Islamic ethical values and customary principles are preserved, negotiated, or transformed within cross-cultural business environments—highlighting a research gap that remains insufficiently explored.<sup>4</sup>

A number of prior studies demonstrate increasing academic interest in Islamic business ethics and diaspora commerce, yet most remain limited in scope. Robert examined Islamic

<sup>1</sup> Zainal Fadri and Andhika Gilang Prayoga, "The Surau 's Ethnopedagogy: Weaving Faith and Culture in Minangkabau" 23, no. 2 (2025): 189–204, <https://doi.org/10.24090/ibda.v23i2.14005>.

<sup>2</sup> Rossidi Usop et al., "Adoption of Islamic Business Ethics among Malay Entrepreneurs in Terengganu: An Insight from Qualitative Approach Adoption of Islamic Business Ethics among Malay Entrepreneurs in Terengganu: An Insight from Qualitative Approach" 8, no. 5 (2018): 1094–1105, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i5/4485>.

<sup>3</sup> Nofiardi and Ismail, "Shifting Inheritance Patterns in the Minangkabau Tribe in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia," *El-Usrah* 7, no. 1 (2024): 294–309, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v7i1.23998>.

<sup>4</sup> David M Reid, "Whose Business Values?," in *Some Asian and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, ed. Sally Stewart and Gabriel Donleavy (Hong Kong University Press, n.d.), 55–68, <https://doi.org/doi:10.1515/9789882203082-006>.

entrepreneurial ethics in Indonesia and emphasized honesty (*amanah*) as the core of Muslim trade practices<sup>5</sup>, while Khaulah explored Malay Muslim entrepreneurs in Malaysia and found that religious values shape trust-based trade networks.<sup>6</sup> Their works align with this study in terms of examining ethics, yet neither investigates the context of Minangkabau diaspora specifically. Meanwhile, Nurdin studied Minangkabau merchants in domestic markets who practice cultural-based trading norms; however, his focus remains localized and not cross-border.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, Anom highlighted cultural negotiation among Acehese diaspora traders in Penang, demonstrating shifts in customary values when interacting with a multicultural business environment, a perspective that becomes comparable to this research.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Asyari discussed the tension between market rationality and Islamic morality among Middle Eastern diaspora entrepreneurs in Europe, which resonates with the adaptive behavior observed among Minangkabau merchants in Malaysia.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Hong analyzed trust networks among migrant traders in Singapore and concluded that kinship accelerates economic integration<sup>10</sup>, whereas Obaji revealed that religious ethics can function as a form of social capital in sustaining competitive businesses.<sup>11</sup> These findings reinforce the concept that cultural and religious values shape diaspora economic behavior.

Other studies also provide relevant insights. Dina, for instance, examined Minangkabau adat transmission among migrants but lacked a focus on economic practice.<sup>12</sup> Omri, reviewed the commercialization of culture in diaspora communities, suggesting that identity may shift due to market pressures—implying a dynamic negotiation similar to what this research intends to explore.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, Keith found that globalization tends to erode cultural identity in diaspora settings unless supported by strong community institutions.<sup>14</sup> From these ten works, it becomes clear that while Islamic business ethics, diaspora identity, and Minangkabau cultural values have been individually studied, research integrating all three elements within an ethnographic lens in Negeri Sembilan remains scarce. None of the

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<sup>5</sup> Robert W Hefner, *Shari'a Law and Modern Muslim Ethics* (Indiana University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt2005t30>.

<sup>6</sup> Khaulah Hilaluddin et al., "Islamic Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Literature Review BT - Islamic Finance: New Trends in Law and Regulation," ed. Nadia Mansour and Lorenzo Bujosa (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 1–8, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48770-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48770-5_1).

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Nurdin, Amin dan Rido, *Identitas Dan Kebanggaan Menjadi Orang Minangkabau : Pengalaman Perantau Minang Asal Nagari Sulit Air*, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Anom Wahyu Asmorojati, Suyadi, and King Faisal Sulaiman, "Asymmetric Decentralization in A Unitary State: The Legitimization of The Sultan's Daughter as The Governor of the Special Region of Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Hukum Novelty* 13, no. 2 (2022): 171–88, <https://doi.org/10.26555/novelty.v13i2.a24079>.

<sup>9</sup> Asyari Asyari, "Identity , Rationality and Economic Behavior of Moslem Minangkabau," no. Iciebp 2017 (2018): 37–42.

<sup>10</sup> Danielle Hong, "At Arm?S Length: Acceptance and Integration of Migrant Labour in Singapore," in *Immigrant Integration in Contemporary Singapore* (World Scientific, 2022), 129–54, [https://doi.org/doi:10.1142/9789811267536\\_0005](https://doi.org/doi:10.1142/9789811267536_0005).

<sup>11</sup> Obaji Agbiji and Emem O Agbiji, "The Role of Religious Practitioners in Sustaining Social Morality BT - The Palgrave Handbook of African Social Ethics," ed. Nimi Wariboko and Toyin Falola (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 501–23, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36490-8\\_28](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36490-8_28).

<sup>12</sup> Dina Nasution, Zulfikar Zulfikar, and Sri Hasibuan, "Intercultural Communication Strategy of Minang Migrants in Panyabungan, North Sumatera: Building Harmony in Diversity," *Journal of English Language and Education* 10 (March 1, 2025): 590–602, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i1.742>.

<sup>13</sup> Omri Asscher, "Translation as a Probe into Homeland-Diaspora Relations," *Translation Studies*, June 18, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14781700.2020.1773307>.

<sup>14</sup> Keith Nurse, "Globalization And Trinidad Carnival: Diaspora, Hybridity And Identity In Global Culture," *Cultural Studies* 13, no. 4 (October 1, 1999): 661–90, <https://doi.org/10.1080/095023899335095>.

reviewed studies formulates an integrative framework that examines the intersection of Islamic ethics and Minangkabau customs within cross-cultural trading practices.

Therefore, this research introduces a novel contribution by formulating the concept of Islamic Entrepreneurial Diaspora—an analytical model showing how traders internalize Islamic values and Minangkabau culture while adapting to the socio-economic landscape of Negeri Sembilan. The originality lies in its ethnographic approach to uncover lived experiences, negotiation processes, and ethical reasoning behind business decisions—moving beyond normative discussion toward contextual interpretation. This study is expected to enrich Islamic business ethics discourse, shifting scholarly attention from domestic Muslim business environments to a diaspora-based perspective that reflects contemporary global mobility. Practically, the findings provide insights for Minangkabau youth and Muslim entrepreneurs in global markets to strengthen cultural-based entrepreneurship as sustainable economic capital. Moreover, the results can inform policy development on diaspora empowerment in Indonesia and Malaysia, reinforcing transnational cultural bonds while supporting ethical trading ecosystems. Through this contribution, the study holds importance not only academically but also socio-culturally, ensuring that the legacy of Minangkabau migration continues with resilience, adaptability, and ethical integrity.

## B. METHODS

This research employs an ethnographic qualitative methodology<sup>15</sup> that enables researchers to get profound insights into the lives, values, and social behaviors of Minangkabau traders in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. This methodology was selected for its capacity to investigate the significance and life experiences of individuals and groups within a particular social and cultural framework. The primary emphasis is on both their trading practices and the influence of Islamic principles and Minangkabau customs in defining their ethics and interaction patterns within their economic operations in the diaspora. In this environment, the researcher serves as a participant observer, engaging in field activities, talking with informants, and scrutinizing daily behaviors and routines to acquire an authentic and contextual comprehension. This ethnographic methodology enables researchers to comprehend socio-economic dynamics from an internal perspective, rather than relying solely on theoretical assumptions. The study involved analyzing vendor relationships within their market, shop, and community engagements. Through direct engagement, researchers can elucidate the nuanced aspects of cultural values that are not necessarily articulable, such as courteous negotiation techniques, manifestations of respect in professional discourse, or collaborative assistance among compatriots. This methodology situates the researcher as both an observer and a learner, interpreting social experiences via the viewpoints of the participants.

This research is empirical and descriptive-interpretative, originating from field realities and aiming to characterize and interpret behavioral patterns and their underlying meanings. Data was gathered through direct engagement with the research subjects, specifically Minangkabau traders who had resided and built enterprises in Negeri Sembilan. The primary objective is not merely to capture the phenomenon through photography, but to elucidate the

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<sup>15</sup> Mahendra Arivan et al., "Metode Etnografi Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif," *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan* 10, no. 17 (2024): 159–70.

significance of their economic behaviors—how Islamic precepts, such as honesty (*sidq*), trustworthiness, and justice (*‘adl*), integrate with Minangkabau customary principles like *barek samo dipikua, ringan samo dijinjang* (heavy burdens are carried together, light burdens are carried together). The research data sources comprise primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through comprehensive interviews with Minangkabau traders engaged in many industries, including culinary, textiles, and retail. Furthermore, interviews were held with community leaders and administrators of the Minangkabau community in Negeri Sembilan who comprehend the socio-economic dynamics of that society. Secondary data was sourced from scientific literature, documentation from diaspora organizations, Malaysian governmental trade restrictions, and local media stories and reports.

This multifaceted strategy enhances the research setting and bolsters the validity of the findings. The research will take place during four months, from July to October 2025, in numerous significant locations including Seremban, Kuala Pilah, and Bahau. This site was selected due to its significant population of Minangkabau merchants who have been here for over a generation. In addition to the historical motivations of migration, the region exemplifies excellent cultural fusion between Minangkabau values and Malaysian societal norms. The site was selected deliberately to ensure that the research would yield a representative depiction of the community's economic and social dynamics. The researcher employed three primary strategies for data collection: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were performed directly in the markets and commercial establishments of Minangkabau traders to examine their everyday operations. Researchers recorded contacts between vendors and consumers, promotional tactics, and their approaches to competition.

Comprehensive interviews were performed with 10 key informants, comprising traders, traditional leaders, and administrators of Minangkabau organizations, utilizing a semi-structured guide to facilitate the informants' narrative while maintaining study focus. The interview procedure is executed meticulously and with compassion. Every interview was recorded, subsequently transcribed, and verified to assure data accuracy. This is crucial for preserving validity and trust between researchers and participants. Documentation comprising activity photographs, organizational archives, and financial records is utilized to substantiate the field findings. Observations were conducted to document the community's behavior during that period. The researcher employed layered thematic analysis to examine the data. The initial phase is data reduction, entailing the selection of salient information from the outcomes of interviews, observations, and documents. The data was subsequently classified into primary categories including business ethics practices, cultural adaptation, migrant solidarity, and the implementation of Islamic values in business.

Upon the establishment of the theme, the researcher conducts an interpretation by correlating the field findings with the principles of Islamic business ethics and economic anthropology. The analytical method is executed iteratively. Preliminary findings are reassessed against additional data until coherent and comprehensive conclusions are attained. Data veracity is guaranteed through source and technique triangulation. The interview outcomes were corroborated using the observational findings and documentary evidence. Validation was conducted through direct discussions with Minangkabau community leaders in Negeri Sembilan to ensure the researcher's interpretation aligned with local significance. The researchers practiced self-reflection to recognize personal biases throughout

the research procedure. This is a crucial aspect in preserving the objectivity of qualitative research.

This study employs five primary parameters for field observation. The comprehension of Islamic ethics pertains to the degree to which traders grasp and implement Islamic moral precepts inside their enterprises. Secondly, daily trade activities encompass pricing strategy, negotiation, and social engagement with consumers. Third, social and cultural adaptation refers to traders' capacity to conform to Malaysian conventions and regulations. The incorporation of Minangkabau traditions, particularly on communal cooperation and solidarity among migrants. Fifth, the socio-economic ramifications, specifically their economic and social contributions to local communities and the diaspora. This technique enables the research to elucidate how Minangkabau merchants negotiate identity and values within the realm of trade.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Principle of Islamic Business Ethics and Minangkabau Diaspora and Commercial Culture

In linguistic terms, ethics refers to morals or values, however in the Islamic context, ethics (*akhlaq*) is drawn from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Islamic business ethics encompasses a collection of moral and spiritual principles that Muslims are obligated to follow in economic endeavors, including honesty (*ṣidq*), justice (*'adl*), responsibility (*amanah*), and the prohibition of detrimental economic practices such as usury, gharar, and deception (*tadlīs*).<sup>16</sup> In the contemporary landscape, marked by competition and free market dynamics, Islamic business ethics functions as both a normative framework and a tool for cultivating the integrity of Muslim business professionals. The implementation of Islamic business principles positively influences business sustainability, consumer trust, and the enduring reputation of business proprietors. Nonetheless, the implementation of these principles does not consistently align with the espoused values. Under varying social contexts, these values may be reinterpreted based on context and environmental factors.<sup>17</sup>

The Minangkabau group possesses a rich history as a prosperous diaspora engaged in commerce. For the Minang people, migration transcends mere physical relocation; it embodies cultural ideals ingrained from childhood, such as self-reliance, social obligation towards their community, and the reinforcement of customary and religious identity.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, moving beyond Minang territory, these values encounter adaption difficulties. This behavior parallels the dynamics observed in the literature concerning the religious conversion of the Minangkabau people.<sup>19</sup> Historically, numerous Minang migrants are documented to have changed to different religions influenced by their social milieu and life

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<sup>16</sup> Faried Kurnia Rahman et al., "Maqashid Al-Shari'ah-Based Performance Measurement for the Halal Industry," *Humanomics* 33, no. 3 (January 1, 2017): 357–70, <https://doi.org/10.1108/H-03-2017-0054>.

<sup>17</sup> Unun Roudlotul Janah, "Implementasi Prinsip Etika Bisnis Islam Pada Skripsi Oleh : Refilia Fatmawati Nim : 210717028 Pembimbing," 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Muhammad Sabri, "Harta Dalam Konsepsi Adat Minangkabau Oleh: Mohamad Sabri Bin Haron, Iza Haniffuddin," *Juris* 11 (2012): 1–13.

<sup>19</sup> Azhari Akmal Tarigan et al., "Islam and Christianity at Rumah Gadang: The Household Characteristics of Minangnese Interfaith Marriage," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 23, no. 1 (2024): 27–39, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v23i1.11926>.

partners.<sup>20</sup> The transformation of belief systems did not occur instantaneously or without societal turmoil, but rather through rigorous engagement between their foundational principles and the prevailing social structures.

The Minangkabau people's religious traditions remain robust, as evidenced by the idea *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah*, signifying that customs are founded on law, and law is derived from the Quran. The Minangkabau people's capitalist ethos was influenced not only by Islamic economic teachings but also by local wisdom encapsulated in proverbs (*pepatah-petitih*), which permeated their discourse, behaviors, and practices. The amalgamation of religious doctrines and indigenous knowledge fostered the emergence of capitalism, which was applied in commercial endeavors. The kinship-oriented family network business model, influenced by local wisdom, is a noteworthy discovery about the durability and sustainability of their enterprises. This research highlights the substantial role of religious doctrines and indigenous values in fostering the spirit of capitalism, an element that has hitherto been neglected. It can effectively serve to promote the preservation of local wisdom as a valuable asset in the face of current cultural encroachment in the digital era.<sup>21</sup> This effect is also observable in commercial procedures. Minangkabau merchants in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, reside in a cosmopolitan culture characterized by diverse legal and commercial frameworks. Their engagement with non-Muslim consumers, economic constraints, and local market demands can affect the degree to which Islamic business norms are uniformly implemented or may alternatively yield to pragmatic concessions.

Prior research on Muslim business ethics within the diaspora indicates that numerous Muslim entrepreneurs overseas encounter a conflict between the idealism of Islamic principles and the pragmatism of business practices. Research conducted by Khan & Badar in the UK indicates that Muslim entrepreneurs frequently adjust to the local economic framework while symbolically upholding fundamental Islamic principles.<sup>22</sup> In the Malaysian context, Mazlan and Leman assert that local Muslim traders often engage in ethical business practices, taking into account societal harmony and national regulations, despite the fact that not all Sharia precepts are officially implemented. This indicates that the implementation of Islamic ethics in the trading practices of the diaspora is not a binary matter, but rather a complex interplay of social adaptation.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, a historiographical analysis investigated the cultural, political, and economic effects of intra-regional migration and diaspora communities, particularly contrasting the intertwined histories of the Chinese, Bugis, Arab, and Minangkabau communities during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The study underscores the

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<sup>20</sup> Kurnial Ilahi, Jamaluddin Rabain, and Suja'i Sarifandi, "Dari Islam Ke Kristen Konversi Agama Pada Masyarakat Suku Minangkabau," *Madania: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 8, no. 2 (2019): 201, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jiik.v8i2.5728>.

<sup>21</sup> Mochlasin Mochlasin and Budiharjo Budiharjo, "Islamic Work Ethics, Local Wisdom, and Spirit of Capitalism: Insight from a Perantau Minangkabau," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 14, no. 2 (November 21, 2024): 289–318, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v14i2.289-318>.

<sup>22</sup> Ahmad Rofiq, Johan Arifin, and Purwanto, *Harmoni Dalam Perbedaan - Strategi Diaspora Muslim Indonesia Menghadapi Tantangan Anti-Islam Di Belanda*, 2024, [www.insightmediatama.co.id](http://www.insightmediatama.co.id).

<sup>23</sup> Ahmad Rizal Mazlan and Mohd Adha Leman, "Determinants of Financial Distress: The Case of Government-Linked Companies in Malaysia," *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Management and Communication (ICMC 2023)*, 1-2 March, 2023, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia 132 (2023): 682–91, <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2023.11.02.53>.

necessity for specialists in the Malay realm to acknowledge the significant influence of mobility and external agents.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. Adaptation Strategies of Minangkabau Merchants in Negeri Sembilan

The existence of Minangkabau traders in Negeri Sembilan is not a recent occurrence, but rather an integral aspect of the extensive history of Minang migration to Peninsular Malaysia. These migrants arrived with a spirit of commerce and religious principles profoundly embedded in their traditions. The value of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, emerged as the principal moral tenet directing all aspects of their endeavors. Researchers discovered that the social adaptation of Minang traders was exceptionally great. They not only assimilated into the Negeri Sembilan Malay culture but also reinforced their identity as devoted Muslims. Zahrul Buyung, a Seremban local, remarked.

Since integrating into Malaysian society, we have consistently adhered to the adage, where the foot treads, there the sky is upheld. The primary objective of our forebears' arrival was not competition, but the enhancement of the trading wealth we transported from Minangkabau. Engaging in honest and courteous trade is vital; it fosters trust and encourages repeat business.

This statement embodies the amalgamation of faith and professionalism in commerce. Their work ethic is founded on the belief that labor constitutes a form of reverence. Traders are seeking not only profit but also favor. Uni Maryam, proprietor of a rendang stall in Nilai, stated:

Certainly, when engaging in commerce, one aspires for profit; however, our understanding, derived from ancestral practices, is that not all matters are viewed through that lens. There is a profound sense of fulfillment when the same customers return to purchase from us repeatedly.

In their daily operations, they uphold cleanliness, timeliness, and cordial service as a demonstration of respect for consumers. The Islamic business ideals they adhere to is shown in their transaction management. There exists no aspect of deceit or fraudulence. The concepts of *al-ṣidq* (honesty) and *al-amānah* (trustworthiness) constitute the foundation for establishing a corporate reputation. In a separate interview, Mr. Talib, a member of the Bahau community, stated:

To preserve our business reputation, purchasers will inherently consider our trading practices. Any instance of deceit, particularly towards customers, will result in significant disappointment and the dissemination of that information to others. This will tarnish our corporate reputation.

In addition to honesty, the principle of *ta'āwun* (mutual support) constitutes a fundamental value throughout the Minang merchant community in Negeri Sembilan. They established informal social networks to assist one another with financing, marketing, or moral

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<sup>24</sup> Keng We Koh, "Familiar Strangers and Stranger-Kings: Mobility, Diasporas, and the Foreign in the Eighteenth-Century Malay World," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 48, no. 3 (2017): 390–413, <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.1017/S0022463417000558>.



support. For them, the achievement of an individual equates to the success of all. This community functions as a medium for safeguarding cultural identity. Each community meeting encompasses discussions on corporate problems, religious studies, and mutual help events. This endeavor fortifies the essence of Islamic camaraderie and sustains the perpetuation of ancient values. Within the local market framework, Minangkabau traders successfully tailored their products and services to align with the preferences of the community. They embraced the flavors of Negeri Sembilan, renowned for its piquant food, while preserving the originality of Minang spices. Interview with Uni Rahmah:

In Seremban, a local market is predominantly frequented by the Minang community or their descendants. The market's processed products are typically seasoned with Minang spices according to the local Malaysian taste. Despite being a local market, people can still savor our cuisine.

This adaptation exhibits adaptability while maintaining its uniqueness. The observational results indicate that tenacity and discipline are critical determinants of success. They are accustomed to laboring from dawn till sunset, with a well-defined allocation of responsibilities among family members. The enterprise is operated by family members, each assigned a distinct responsibility. Minangkabau merchants in Negeri Sembilan engaged not only in the commerce of food and textiles but also in service industries, including accommodation, catering, and transportation. This business diversification stems from the capacity to discern market opportunities and utilize a broad social network. In a progressively competitive environment, they continue to emphasize sincerity and patience.

The presence of Minangkabau traders positively influenced the surrounding society from a sociological perspective. They are recognized for their industriousness, piety, and affability. Numerous local inhabitants subsequently embraced their work ethic, with some even acquiring culinary skills or economic acumen from Minang migrants. The relationship with the Malay people in Negeri Sembilan is amicable owing to shared cultural and religious foundations. Research indicates that Minang merchants preserved their cultural identity through specific languages and traditions, such as *baralek* and *makan bajamba*. Researchers highlighted the significant contribution of Minangkabau women to the household economy. They assist in the kitchen and also assume the primary management of the family business. Minang women in the diaspora actively contribute to business continuity, adhering to the principle of *bundo kanduang*, esteemed in Minang traditions. In an interview with Uni Nur, the proprietor of a Nasi Padang restaurant in Bahau, she asserted:

We continue to uphold the Minang tradition here, particularly in honoring women. Women are not permitted to remain idle at home; rather, they diligently contribute, assist their spouses, and uphold the family's reputation.

This comment illustrates an understanding of women's multiple roles within the household and the economy. The Minangkabau commerce network significantly bolstered the local economy. They integrated into the conventional market supply chain and facilitated the absorption of local workers. Their operational business approach is both inclusive and sustainable. Within the framework of Islamic business ethics theory, their behaviors demonstrate the congruence between *maqāṣid al-syarīah* and contemporary economic reality.

Trading practices grounded on integrity, equity, and social responsibility exemplify the aims of Sharia, which is to promote public welfare.<sup>25</sup> This study revealed that Minangkabau dealers encounter contemporary obstacles, including digitalization and evolving purchasing trends. Nevertheless, some have commenced adaptation by initiating online orders or utilizing social media for marketing. This shift exemplifies their capacity to amalgamate traditional values with contemporary innovation.

The Minangkabau community's presence in Negeri Sembilan sociologically reinforces the transnational connections between Indonesia and Malaysia.<sup>26</sup> They served as a conduit for culture and business, enhancing the bond between the two interconnected nations. The findings indicate that Islamic business ethics are not merely theoretical; they actively influence humanistic economic behavior. Attributes such as integrity, reliability, reciprocal support, and civic duty are their primary assets in sustaining their presence in a foreign territory.

### 3. Work Ethic and Principles of Integrity

Minangkabau merchants in Negeri Sembilan have always constituted an integral component of the local economy. Despite being distant from their hometown, their identity as *urang awak* persists robustly in their interactions and business practices. Haji Roni, an elderly trader in Seremban, stated:

In all our endeavors on this land, we consistently acknowledge our identity as descendants of the Minangkabau. We consistently endeavor to ensure that individuals we encounter feel at ease in our presence.

This assertion illustrates the emotional and ethical connections that influence their economic conduct. The work ethic of Minangkabau traders is founded on Islamic beliefs that are profoundly embedded in traditional ideas. They labor assiduously and with discipline, perceiving work as a form of reverence. Uni Rahmah, proprietor of a *rendang* booth in Nilai, remarked:

Diligently and honestly striving to earn a livelihood is regarded as a form of worship. Allah is aware of our endeavors. Divine assistance will be granted, and there is no cause for fear if we maintain integrity in our endeavors.

These spiritual principles direct them to uphold integrity and excellence in every interaction. The principle of integrity is the fundamental cornerstone of corporate operations. Traders contend that client trust constitutes a more significant asset than immediate revenues. This perspective corresponds with the principles of *al-ṣidq* (truthfulness) and *al-amānah* (trustworthiness) in Islamic business ethics. The success of Minangkabau traders in Negeri Sembilan stemmed not only from their economic acumen but also from their capacity to cultivate strong social relationships. They cultivate relationships with customers through

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<sup>25</sup> Suparman Kholil, "Etika Produksi Islami Berbasis Maqashid Al-Shariah: Pilar Kesejahteraan Sosial Dan Ekonomi," *Equality: Journal of Islamic Law (EJIL)* 3, no. 1 (January 27, 2025): 13–25, <https://doi.org/10.15575/ejil.v3i1.1220>.

<sup>26</sup> Tonny Dian Effendi, "Strategi Pelibatan Diaspora Indonesia Dalam Diplomasi Publik," *Jurnal Studi Diplomasi Dan Keamanan* 14, no. 1 (February 10, 2022): 18–42, <https://doi.org/10.31315/jsdk.v14i1.5306>.

amiability and courteous communication. In Malay culture, which places great importance on etiquette, this presents a notable benefit.<sup>27</sup> A local client, Hafsah, stated:

One of the factors that local individuals contemplate when purchasing from vendors is their comfort during service and transparency regarding prices. If we wish to negotiate or seek clarification regarding the products we intend to purchase, they will graciously provide a detailed explanation.

Minangkabau traders are recognized for their principles of mutual collaboration and assistance to fellow migrants. They assist one another with funding, logistics, and marketing. During a group interview, multiple dealers asserted that the Minang social network in Malaysia is exceptionally robust. Haji Roni remarked in an interview:

The network of Minangkabau traders in Malaysia is predominantly well-preserved. Members of the diaspora participate in the WhatsApp group Diaspora Minang Global, consistently sharing information when assistance is required for their commercial operations.

The observational findings suggest that the amalgamation of Islamic principles with Minang traditions fosters a distinctive work ethic characterized by honesty, frugality, and resilience. The study indicated that the rapport between Minangkabau traders and the local people was amicable, attributable to shared religious and cultural affiliations. From an anthropological viewpoint, the success of Minangkabau merchants in Negeri Sembilan illustrates their capacity for cultural bridging, integrating Islamic principles, Minang traditions, and Malay culture while maintaining their identity.<sup>28</sup> This exemplifies a model of social adaptation for other Muslim diasporas. From an Islamic economic viewpoint, their trading methods conform to the principles of *maqāṣid al-syariah*, especially in the preservation of wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) and honor (*ḥifẓ al-ʿird*). Economic activity is conducted for the sake of welfare, rather than solely for the growth of riches.<sup>29</sup> This discovery indicates that Islamic ethical norms can serve as a robust social capital for expatriate communities in sustaining their economic viability. Despite globalization and the currents of capitalism, they continue to prioritize morality as the cornerstone of their business practices. Minangkabau traders' business activities exemplify sustainability by adhering to ecological and socio-economic principles, minimizing waste, preserving environmental equilibrium, and empowering local communities. They recognized that genuine success encompasses not just profit but also the welfare of numerous individuals.

#### 4. Social Dynamics and Communal Cohesion

The Minangkabau merchant community in Negeri Sembilan demonstrates a unique social structure, wherein solidarity and familial bonds serve as the primary basis for navigating life in the diaspora. They constitute not merely a collective of individuals pursuing subsistence,

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<sup>27</sup> Halimatu Sa'diah et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Anak: Kajian Etnoparenting Dalam Adat Dan Adab Islam Melayu," *JIIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 8, no. 4 (April 4, 2025): 3888–95, <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v8i4.7612>.

<sup>28</sup> Talma Leviatan, "Bridging a Cultural Gap," *Mathematics Education Research Journal* 20, no. 2 (2008): 105–16, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03217480>.

<sup>29</sup> rizal Fahlefi, "Implementasi Maṣlaḥah Dalam Kegiatan Ekonomi Syariah," *Juris (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)* 14, no. 2 (October 18, 2016): 225, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v14i2.310>.

but a mutually reinforcing social network that establishes an economic system grounded in Islamic principles and Minangkabau traditions. This attachment is seen in their interactions inside the marketplace, at home, and during religious events at the local surau or mosque. Field observations indicate that their solidarity transcends language and is evident in tangible deeds. When community members from West Sumatra arrive, the veteran merchants assist in locating temporary accommodations, facilitate introductions to suppliers, and offer interest-free loans.

Social unity is also manifested in the communal religious activities they engage in. Every Friday night, certain merchants convene at the residence of a community member to conduct a religious study session. This gathering serves as both a spiritual venue and an economic consultative platform. They exchanged business experiences, deliberated on product pricing, and pursued resolutions to commercial challenges.

We frequently conduct both formal and informal meetings to converse and deliberate on familial, personal, and commercial issues. We also share information regarding our enterprises during those meetings, stated Yutiman, who has been in business for almost twenty years. Frequently, those discussions serve as the resolution to numerous business challenges we encounter.

Through this study, the community sustains a balance between the spiritual and economic components. They contend that commercial success relies not alone on diligence, but also on the advantages derived from unity and prayer. This incident demonstrates that solidarity within the Minangkabau community in Negeri Sembilan possesses significant moral and religious implications. Researchers discovered that this network of solidarity significantly contributes to the establishment of a trust-based economy.

This incident demonstrates that the Minangkabau merchant community in Negeri Sembilan retained its social orientation despite being under a capitalist economic framework. They persist in upholding the notion of sustenance as a communal benefit that should be shared, rather than regarded as individual possession. This indicates that their economy is infused with the principles of brotherhood and blessings, which are central to Islamic business ethics. In intergenerational interactions, solidarity functions as a conduit for information transfer. The older age imparts knowledge to the youth regarding trading, work ethics, and the principles of honesty and accountability. Anisa Zahra, a young seller, remarked, *"We acquire knowledge from our parents, not only regarding the sale of goods but also concerning customer satisfaction."*

This indicates that social and spiritual values are transmitted throughout generations, hence insuring the continuation of the Minangkabau business mentality in the diaspora. Researchers observed that women's participation is significantly influential in preserving communal cohesion. The spouses of merchants functioned as financial managers of the household and participated actively in social and religious endeavors. In numerous instances, they served as the conduit between Minangkabau families and the local Malaysian population, reinforcing cross-ethnic social networks. This solidarity functions as an adaptive mechanism to the local culture of Negeri Sembilan, which has historical ties to Minangkabau. The resemblance in the matrilineal system and language facilitated their integration, however internal cohesion was preserved to avert the dissolution of Minangkabau identity into complete assimilation. Researchers identified a flexible social hierarchy within this society.

Esteemed leaders are valued not for their affluence, but for their expertise and sagacity in preserving cohesion. They assumed the roles of mediators, counselors, and exemplars, preserving traditional and Islamic principles in the face of evolving circumstances. Nonetheless, this social dynamic does not always function seamlessly. Occasionally, discord emerges between older and younger generations about trading methodologies and technological utilization. Nonetheless, these disparities are typically resolved via dialogue and reciprocal respect. Haji Rahman stated:

Younger individuals exhibit greater online intelligence; we older generations are acquiring knowledge from them. However, they remain courteous and have not forsaken traditional customs.

This phenomenon demonstrates that solidarity within the Minangkabau society is both adaptive and flexible. It can adapt to change while preserving its fundamental principles. Their survival was attributable not to the formal economic system, but to the social resilience derived from a profound sense of mutual trust, assistance, and camaraderie. Islamic ideals furnish moral guidance, whilst customs establish a social framework that facilitates adaptation within Malaysia's heterogeneous milieu. The findings of this study affirm that the cohesion of the Minangkabau community in Negeri Sembilan accurately represents the embodiment of Islamic social capital. It emerged from a synthesis of traditional and sharia principles that were ingrained in all facets of economic and social existence. In the context of globalization and modernity, this group demonstrates that solidarity grounded in faith and culture can significantly sustain the Minangkabau diaspora in foreign territories.

## 5. Business Strategies and Localization Adaptation

Minangkabau traders in Negeri Sembilan exhibited exceptional adaptation in sustaining their commercial operations despite Malaysia's social and cultural changes. This adaptation encompasses economic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. They adeptly modified their commercial practices to align with the local community's characteristics while preserving their Islamic identity and the Minangkabau customary norms deeply rooted in their upbringing. The interview data indicate that the primary initial adaption occurred in customer service tactics. Minang merchants are recognized for their amiability and communicativeness, attributes they leverage to gain a competitive edge. Ibu Rina, a Padang rice vendor in Seremban, noted that one of our adaptive strategies is to be amicable towards everyone we encounter. *We consistently incorporate friendliness into our customer service strategy, striving to ensure client comfort and encourage repeat purchases of our meals.*

They perceive this cordiality as an aspect of akhlaq tijārah business ethics that reflect the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The second adaptation is observed in product and menu administration. Minangkabau merchants adeptly adapted the flavors of their cuisine to align with the preferences of the Malaysian populace. They diminished the spiciness and coconut milk content, and modified the price to render it accessible for local consumers. Mrs. Rina further stated that the second method.

We are employing is to acclimate their tastes and palates to our cuisine. In Sumatra, every food is required to be spicy, whereas here, the preferred dishes are savory and enriched with thick coconut milk. Furthermore, we frequently share our diverse cuisines throughout

multiple social media sites. This illustrates adaptability in preserving culinary individuality while retaining competitiveness. A crucial tactic is the implementation of digital technologies.

The youth of Minangkabau are increasingly utilizing social media sites such as TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp Business for product promotion. They produce straightforward yet captivating content that emphasizes the genuineness of Minangkabau culture. In marketing, the word-of-mouth strategy remains highly powerful. A customer community is developed thru strong social networks between fellow migrants and the local community. Adaptation is also apparent in business location strategy. Numerous merchants opt to establish shops in regions with a substantial Malay Muslim minority owing to common values and beliefs. The selection of this location pertains not only to business potential but also to the convenience of engaging in religious and social activities.

Minangkabau traders had exceptional cross-cultural communication abilities in the realm of intercultural relations. They successfully adjusted their speech style and social etiquette to align with the inhabitants of Negeri Sembilan, who, despite their Minang heritage, have integrated into Malaysian Malay culture. They eschew fighting and accentuate humility, as articulated in the Minang proverb: *Alun takilek alah takalam, alah takilek alah takalam*. Before it is perceived, it is already sensed; before it is listened to, it is already comprehended. The primary problem they encounter is competition from local vendors and contemporary retail chains. They fought this by upholding personal excellence in service and product authenticity. They also enhance cultural distinctiveness by emphasizing the authentic Minang flavor and heritage recipes from Sumatra. This method not only draws clientele but also functions as a mechanism for safeguarding cultural identity. In response to market fluctuations, certain merchants are diversifying their enterprises. In addition to food, they offer traditional Minangkabau products such as songket, packaged rendang, and balado chips. Adaptation transpires not alone in the economic realm but also in the spiritual domain. Traders understand that conducting business in a foreign nation necessitates much patience, honesty, and integrity. They transform their endeavor into a sphere of reverence, rather than merely a means of sustenance.

An intriguing discovery from this study is the emergence of a diaspora community-oriented business model. They do not engage in intense competition; rather, they complement one another within an extensive economic chain: some serve as suppliers, others oversee logistics, and some operate retail establishments. This collaboration enhances their economic resilience to market volatility and regional regulations. The dealers exhibited adherence to Malaysian legislation, specifically with business licensing and food hygiene. They recognized that a company's reputation is significantly contingent upon public trust. Mr. Talib stated:

The business framework we are developing adheres to Malaysian standards and regulations to guarantee that the enterprise we are establishing will not face issues in the future. This will significantly influence individuals' propensity to purchase due to its connection to laws.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that the established commercial contacts encompass several ethnic groups. Certain traders work with Chinese or Indian business associates in the distribution of goods. This indicates that the Islamic ideals they introduced were not insular, but rather promoted collaboration within a context of reciprocal advantage. This study concluded that the adaptation of Minangkabau traders is organic and driven by values. They

acclimate to their surroundings while preserving their ethical and cultural foundations. This adaption functions within the context of Islam, where every corporate plan is inherently connected to social and spiritual accountability. Consequently, it may be inferred that the commercial practices of Minangkabau traders in Negeri Sembilan represent a cohesive integration of economic logic and Islamic ethical principles. They can incorporate the principles of trust, fairness, and ihsan into competitive and sustainable business processes. Adapting to the local market does not entail abandoning values; instead, it exemplifies ethical and cultural sophistication in the context of globalization. This study's findings underscore that the Minangkabau diaspora's success in Negeri Sembilan is attributable not only to their commercial acumen but also to their capacity to harmonize tradition with innovation, religion with economy, and individual interests with communal welfare. In the dynamic cross-cultural realm, they illustrate that being a merchant transcends mere commerce; it encompasses the preservation of one's individuality in every daily transaction.

The findings of this study reveal that the process of social adaptation undertaken by Minangkabau traders in Negeri Sembilan occurs within a complex multicultural environment shaped by Malay, Chinese, and Indian socio-economic dynamics. While they face challenges in navigating local business regulations and competition, their cultural identity is not diminished; instead, it becomes a foundation for adaptive innovation. The traders demonstrate flexible strategies by modifying certain business practices to comply with Malaysian commercial norms while upholding core Islamic values such as honesty, fairness, and accountability. This supports the view of Geertz and Hefner, who argue that diasporic communities negotiate identity through cultural continuity while engaging in intercultural economic spaces.<sup>30,31</sup> In line with Oswald, Islamic ethics serve as moral capital that strengthens trust-based transactions, suggesting that the Minangkabau diaspora embodies a form of ethical entrepreneurship that balances spiritual principles with market demands.<sup>32</sup>

The socio-cultural setting of Negeri Sembilan, which is deeply rooted in the Adat Perpatih system, further facilitates the integration of Minangkabau merchants. The matrilineal kinship structure provides a strong foundation for reciprocal relationships, inheritance networks, and the distribution of business roles.<sup>33</sup> This resonates with the work of Lyn, who emphasize the role of kinship in shaping economic networks among Minangkabau migrants.<sup>34</sup> The traders utilize kinship networks as social capital to sustain trust, mutual assistance, and collective resilience, which reflects Putnam's concept of social capital in strengthening cooperative economic behavior.<sup>35</sup> The interaction of Islamic business ethics with kinship norms demonstrates that ethical values not only serve as moral guidelines but also function as

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<sup>30</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Publishers, 1973).

<sup>31</sup> Robert W Hefner, "Islam and Covenantal Pluralism in Indonesia: A Critical Juncture Analysis," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 17, no. 1 (2020): 1–17.

<sup>32</sup> A Fauzan, "Etika Dan Filsafat Moral: Perspektif Islam" 01, no. 03 (2007): 527–40.

<sup>33</sup> Lynne P Sullivan, "Matrilineal Kinship Networks and Late Mississippian Politics in the Upper Tennessee Valley," ed. Rachel V Briggs, Michaelyn S Harle, and Lynne P Sullivan, *Mississippian Women* (University Press of Florida, June 11, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.5744/florida/9781683404149.003.0006>.

<sup>34</sup> Lyn Parker, "Matrifocal, Matrilineal, or Matriarchal? Cultural Resilience and Vulnerability Among the Matrilineal and Muslim Minangkabau in Indonesia BT - Matrilineal, Matriarchal, and Matrifocal Islam: The World of Women-Centric Islam," ed. Abbas Panakkal and Nasr M Arif (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 3–41, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-51749-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-51749-5_1).

<sup>35</sup> Robert D Putnam, "The Political Attitudes of Senior Civil Servants in Western Europe: A Preliminary Report," *British Journal of Political Science* 3, no. 3 (1973): 257–90, <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1017/S0007123400007870>.

strategic economic instruments that increase business sustainability—a point similarly highlighted by Ali & Al-Owaihian in the context of Islamic entrepreneurial ethics.<sup>36</sup>

Indigenous knowledge also plays a significant role in shaping Minangkabau commercial conduct. The use of ethnic markers such as the term *urang awak* fosters emotional closeness and strengthens customer loyalty within diaspora networks. Likewise, values such as *budi baso*, *ikhlas*, and *sabar* guide their conflict resolution, negotiation, and competition strategies. This finding aligns with Ayif, who argues that cultural wisdom can operate as an informal regulatory system in Southeast Asian Muslim business communities.<sup>37</sup> However, this study provides a novel contribution by demonstrating how these indigenous values are not merely preserved but recontextualized to fit the Malaysian economic landscape.<sup>38</sup> The traders are found to construct what this paper conceptualizes as an Islamic Entrepreneurial Diaspora Model, where Islamic ethics and *adat* operate synergistically to shape decision-making, market engagement, and moral accountability.

The contribution of this research lies in its interdisciplinary insight that combines Islamic economics, diaspora studies, and business anthropology. While earlier works often focus on Minangkabau migration or Islamic business ethics separately, this study bridges both and situates them within a cross-national commercial setting. Practically, the findings suggest that strengthening diaspora-based Islamic business networks can enhance ethical trade practices, support small and medium enterprises, and serve as a model for Islamic economic development in multicultural environments. For policymakers, this research highlights the importance of recognizing cultural capital within diaspora business clusters as a potential driver for halal economic growth. Future research may expand this study by exploring comparative cases across other Muslim diasporas, examining intergenerational changes in business ethics, or applying this model to digital and transnational trade.

#### D. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the commercial success of Minangkabau diaspora traders in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, is sustained through the integration of Islamic values, Minangkabau cultural ethics, and adaptive strategies within a multicultural environment. Their business orientation extends beyond profit accumulation to the cultivation of spiritual and social capital, reflecting the principle of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*. The findings indicate that Islamic business ethics—particularly trust, honesty, and relational integrity—play a crucial role in ensuring business continuity and strengthening social reputation within the diaspora community. This also intersects with the significant role of women as economic actors, reaffirming the persistence of matrilineal cultural heritage in contemporary cross-border trade interactions. Theoretically, this research contributes to Islamic economics and business anthropology by proposing the Islamic Entrepreneurial Diaspora Model, which demonstrates how economic behavior is shaped through the synergy of religious belief, cultural identity, and social adaptation. The study affirms that diaspora

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<sup>36</sup> Abbas J Ali and Abdullah Al-Owaihian, "Islamic Work Ethic: A Critical Review," *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal* 15, no. 1 (February 8, 2008): 5–19, <https://doi.org/10.1108/13527600810848791>.

<sup>37</sup> Ayif Fathurrahman, "Rediscovering Local Wisdom : A Cultural Turn in Islamic Economic Education" 9, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.18196/jerss.v9i2.27587>.

<sup>38</sup> Indrayuda Indrayuda and Mohd Effindi Samsuddin, "Changes in Form and Style in Randai Performance at The Minangkabau Diaspora in Malaysia," *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education* 21, no. 2 (2021): 340–55, <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v21i2.32043>.



entrepreneurship is not merely an economic phenomenon but also a mechanism for transmitting values, identity, and ethical conduct across generations and borders. However, this research recognizes several limitations. The sample size was restricted to ten key informants within a single diaspora cluster in Negeri Sembilan, which may not fully represent the diversity of Minangkabau migrant economic practices in other Malaysian states or global contexts. The qualitative ethnographic approach, while rich in depth, limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, this research focused primarily on ethical values and adaptation patterns, leaving other influencing factors such as digital trade, intergenerational business succession, and institutional support less explored. Future studies should expand the scope by comparing Minangkabau traders in different regions or examining other Muslim diaspora communities for broader theoretical validation. Longitudinal research could also provide deeper insights into the evolution of entrepreneurial ethics across generations. Furthermore, incorporating mixed-method approaches or quantitative measurements could help substantiate the model statistically. Practical research may examine how vocational and Islamic-based entrepreneurial education programs enhance diaspora business resilience and competitiveness internationally. By acknowledging these limitations and proposing paths for further inquiry, this study lays a foundation for continued scholarly exploration and serves as a reference point for policymakers, educators, and practitioners in strengthening Islamic entrepreneurial ecosystems within diaspora networks.

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