Critical Analysis of Siddiq Fadzil's Thought and Its Implications for Malaysia's Culture of Peace

Siti Nur Ismahani[1]*, Ng Ming Yip[2], Hasri Harun[3]

[1] Faculty of Education and Social Sciences, Universiti Selangor (UNISEL), Bestari Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

[2] Faculty for the Development of Students of Noble Character, Universiti Selangor (UNISEL), Bestari Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

[3] Faculty of Business and Accountancy, Universiti Selangor (UNISEL), Bestari Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This article critically examines Siddiq Fadzil's thought and its implications for strengthening a culture of peace in multicultural and multireligious Malaysia. Diversity is a valuable resource for the country, but social segregation, prejudice, unequal participation, and polarising discourse remain a challenge to the process of peaceful coexistence. The study uses a qualitative approach, utilizing conceptual and critical textual analysis, along with the pertinent scholarly literature and documents from Malaysian policy. The analysis is conducted under five themes, namely diversity and reciprocity, inclusive citizenship through *Sahifah Madinah*, diversity and local wisdom, *salam* as a culture of peace, and peace education. The results reveal the moral value of *ta'aruf*, reciprocity, justice, mutual recognition, human dignity, and shared responsibility, as they are essential elements in achieving peaceful coexistence without uniformity of culture, ethnicity, or religion. However, the analysis points to the problems of relying on moral appeals for harmony without addressing structural inequalities, minority rights, equal participation, and accountability of institutions. The article accordingly suggests an overarching ethical-institutional model that links the ethical underpinnings with the institutional environment and actual peacebuilding practices. The article concludes that Siddiq Fadzil's thinking is still applicable as an ethical basis for peacebuilding in Malaysia, as long as it is contextualised in the Malaysian context and implemented through inclusive governance, experiential peace education, youth engagement, and continuous community engagement. The proposed framework provides an idea for future empirical studies, but the explanatory power and usefulness of the framework still need to be investigated.

Keywords: Siddiq Fadzil, Culture of Peace, Peaceful Coexistence, Inclusive Citizenship, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

In this regard, peace culture plays a crucial role in establishing political stability, social harmony, and sustainable development in Malaysia. Peace is not just the lack of violence or open conflict; it also entails justice, respect, dialogue, cooperation, and human dignity. The health of a peaceful community is based on citizens' capacity to handle differences in a constructive way and build relationships of trust and reciprocity. Efforts to promote intercultural understanding, social inclusion, and peaceful coexistence in Malaysia are aligned with the National Unity Policy 2021-2030 that defines national unity as a key pillar of building a united, harmonious, and prosperous nation in a multiethnic, multireligious, and multicultural society (Ministry of National Unity, 2021b).

The policy framework also highlights the need to advance the national identity, aspirations, and national unity ecosystem in Malaysia. The National Unity Action Plan 2021–2030 is a programmatic and sectoral action plan that implements the strategies in the National Unity Policy and the National Unity Blueprint (2021a, 2021b, Ministry of National Unity). These policy frameworks can be used to look at Siddiq Fadzil's focus on reciprocity, shared responsibility, and peaceful coexistence.

Malaysia is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation characterised by diverse social identities. Malaysians live in a society with ethnic, cultural, religious, and historical diversity. It is a valuable asset of the country, but it can also be a cause of segregation in society, access to power, polarization in politics, religious conflict, or different perceptions of national identity. Coexistence should not be assumed, not only because residents are living on the same land, but also because it is a matter of peace. There needs to be constant work done to develop mutual understanding, respect, and acceptance. It is Malaysia's official position that there is an need for positive engagement and dialogue between communities, leading to peace and social stability.

In this quest for a culture of peace, the intellectual challenge is to transcend the institutional frameworks, laws, and government decisions. A culture of peace requires citizens' empathy, moral responsibility and solidarity, along with institutional arrangements and legislation. There is potential to build empathy, moral responsibility and true citizens' solidarity. Furthermore, justice, reciprocity, respect, inclusiveness and recognition of human dignity are also fundamental pillars of a culture of peace. Education is needed to raise awareness about differences, and social practices are needed to foster social cooperation between ethnic and religious groups. Local knowledge and local culture are important in this context, as the meaning of peace that is contained within it can be understood in a context familiar to Malaysian society.

The reflection Siddiq Fadzil gave on nation-building, diversity, and peaceful co-existence is an important contribution to this discussion. He suggested in his book *Membina Kesatuan Bangsa: Kerukunan Hidup Bersama dalam Budaya Damai*, a foundation for developing a harmonious and prosperous society, that is, living together peacefully. It emphasizes the moral and religious values and principles that are needed to manage diversity, including respect for others, reciprocity, inclusion, social responsibility, and peace-building through education by Siddiq Fadzil (2019). It also emphasises learning from previous experiences of co-existing between communities. The book is thus relevant to the Malaysian context since it is connected with peace culture and nation building, citizenry, and the moral responsibility of persons and communities.

Current research on the thinking of Siddiq Fadzil, however, may place too much emphasis on the significance of his thinking and not enough on analysing the implications and potential constraints of his thinking in the current context. His knowledge and understanding of diversity, inclusive citizenship, reciprocity, local wisdom, peace culture, and peace education, which address the existing challenges in Malaysia, still need to be assessed. It should take into account both the validity of his arguments and the issues of relevance and applicability in a complex society. It is also crucial to examine whether his ideas will provide a unifying concept for all and whether they will be used in conjunction with national concepts of unity and social cohesion. This is a crucial conversation to have and can enrich the knowledge of his contribution.

The article critically analyzes Siddiq Fadzil's ideas relating to diversity, reciprocity, inclusive citizenship, local wisdom, peace culture, and peace education and how they relate to the development of a culture of peace in Malaysia. It brings up the concepts of *Membina Kesatuan Bangsa*, discusses the pros and cons of these concepts, compares them to the state of Malaysian society, and evaluates their relevance.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses conceptual and critical textual analysis, a qualitative approach, to analyse Siddiq Fadzil's thought and implications for fostering a culture of peace in multicultural Malaysia. His 2019 publication, *Membina Kesatuan Bangsa: Kerukunan Hidup Bersama dalam Budaya Damai,* is the primary source, which addresses the issue of diversity, peaceful coexistence, inclusive citizenship, nation-building, and peace education.

There are four steps in the analytical process. The primary text is analyzed in terms of close reading, with a purposive selection of relevant passages based on their relevance to the research questions, their contribution to Siddiq Fadzil's key arguments, and their relevance to the understanding of the contemporary use of his ideas in Malaysia. Special attention is paid to passages relating to intergroup relations, ethical responsibility, social justice, and peaceful living. Second, the selected passages are categorized analytically by the following themes: diversity and reciprocity, inclusive citizenship through *Sahifah Madinah*, diversity and local wisdom, culture of peace (*salam*), and peace education. The categories are based on the research question of the study and developed through multiple readings of the primary text to establish common ideas and arguments. Third, the arguments in

each category are analyzed to explore the ethical assumptions, concepts, and implications for living in peace. Lastly, the arguments are subjected to a critical examination through three lenses: philosophical merits, conceptual and practical drawbacks, and the relevance of the arguments in contemporary Malaysia within a multicultural, constitutional, and institutional setting.

The analysis is contextualised using secondary scholarly literature and relevant policy documents in Malaysia to evaluate the applicability of Siddiq Fadzil's ideas in the contemporary society in Malaysia. It gives special attention to the link between Islamic moral values and citizenship, namely inclusive constitutional arrangements, institutional justice, and the structural conditions for peaceful coexistence. This method allows for the identification of Siddiq Fadzil's original arguments and the critical interpretation and contemporary uses that have been developed in this article to allow for a systematic evaluation of Siddiq Fadzil's contributions to peacebuilding in Malaysia.



Figure 1. Authors' Analytical Framework for the Critical Textual Analysis of Siddiq Fadzil's Thought

RESULTS

Diversity and the Spirit of Reciprocity

The concept of ta'aruf in the Qur'anic verse (49:13) was used by Siddiq Fadzil (2019) when he sought to understand the concept of human diversity. His discussion is not just about mutual acquaintance but also about reciprocity as an integral part of good social relations. He says "getting to know" others should go beyond the first meeting: The message in the Qur'an is not detailed regarding the consequences and implications of 'knowing one another ', but it might be interpreted to be more than just knowing each other; it might mean knowing each other in a manner of mutual recognition, respect, benefit, and assistance.

It shows that *ta'aruf* is a continuous dialogue and interaction, not an acknowledgment of difference. Siddiq Fadzil also holds that reciprocity has played an important role in the process of actualisation in shaping a civilisation with unity and diversity. In identifying the concept of 'harmony', Siddiq Fadzil (2019) explains that it is a concept that can be understood in various ways. Siddiq Fadzil gives an explanation of the concept of 'harmony', which can be understood in various ways because diverse communities may retain their distinct identities while at the same time being connected within a common architecture that fosters harmony, peace, and national unity (p. 2).

In Siddiq Fadzil's argument, one of the main strengths is that he does not believe that differences need to be eliminated in order to create national unity. Rather, his vision embraces the idea of unity and diversity, enabling each community to affirm its own identity without losing sight of the larger community's peaceful coexistence. This role embodies an ethical vision of inclusive nation-building. However, it is important to reflect on how it can be made use of, and whether there are opportunities for equal engagement with reciprocal social connections in other communities. So reciprocity must be considered beyond the level of interpersonal morality and as an idea that underlies inclusive social relations and nation-building.

This is in line with the National Unity Policy of Malaysia, which focuses on fostering unity and unity of purpose beyond the differences, instead of eradicating ethnic identity per se (Ministry of National Unity, 2021b). Both viewpoints argue for the relevance of Siddiq Fadzil's argument to current nation-building efforts as well as the need for continuous interaction between communities.

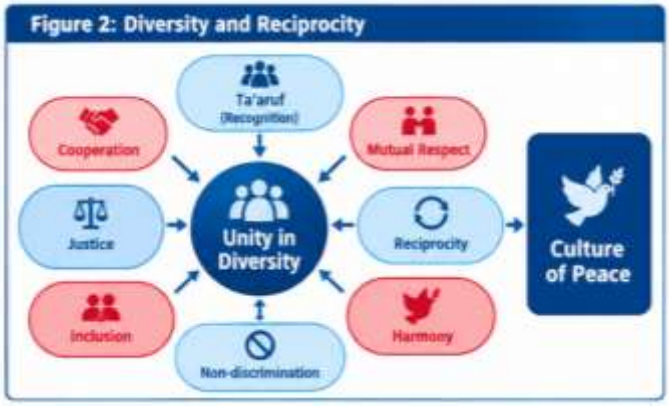


Figure 2. Authors' Conceptual Reconstruction of the Relationship Between Diversity, Reciprocity and a Culture of Peace

The Charter of Medina: An Inclusive Charter

Siddiq Fadzil (2019) regards the *Sahifah Madinah* (Charter of Medina) a historical manifestation of a political agreement based on reciprocity and inclusiveness. He says the Charter is an inclusive document; that is, Muslims and non-Muslims form a common political community. The Charter exemplifies in his discussion the possibility of constructing an *ummah siyasiyyah*, a political community, not on the condition of religious or ethnic uniformity but based on citizenship. The "mix" of the Charter offers a template for "nation building" for different communities to engage in within a shared political system (2019, p.4).

His speech also underscores the importance of citizenship (*muwatanah*) based on the equality of rights and responsibilities, justice, and freedom from discriminatory practices. The focus here indicates that a sense of nation does not require common religious and ethnic backgrounds. Rather, it can be realised by the understanding of equal citizenship and the safeguarding of the rights of various communities.

Siddiq Fadzil's interpretation is filled with the concept of justice. In his argument, he refers to *Surah al-Hujurat* (49:13) to stress that human dignity is not supposed to be based on ancestry or ethnicity. He also associates justice with the principle of fairness that is mentioned in *Surah al-Ma'idah* (5:8). His argument can thus be interpreted as the principle of justice should be applied consistently irrespective of the ethnicity of the needy and/or the need to be protected (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019, p. 5).

The following discussion shows that peaceful coexistence does not mean "tolerance" and that open conflict is not necessarily absent. Instead, it depends on a social and political space that values the rights, dignity, and participation of various communities. In this context, the Charter of Medina can serve as a historical reference to explore the link between inclusive citizenship, justice, and peaceful coexistence in modern Malaysia. However, this historical model cannot be applied unalterably to Malaysia's nation-building process without considering its constitutional structure, institutional framework, and current issues of equality and social participation.

This understanding is also in line with Islamic teachings on the ethics of constructive relationships between different religious and ethnic groups, *fiqh al-ta'ayush* (Khambali et al., 2021). In this literature, the concept of the Charter of Medina is used as an historical and ethical reference for thinking about cooperation and common political life in a plural society. However, these historical principles ought to be understood through a critical lens of the existing constitutional and institutional landscape in Malaysia.

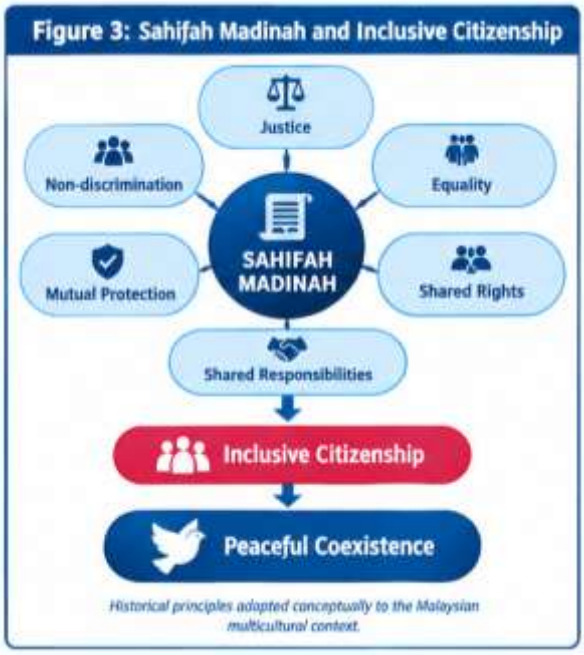


Figure 3. The Conceptual Reconstruction of Inclusive Citizenship in Sahifah Madinah's Interpretation by the Authors

Diversity and Local Wisdom

Siddiq Fadzil (2019, p. 6) associates the spirit of inclusiveness of the *Sahifah Madinah* with the wisdom of the people of the region in the form of "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*", which is Indonesia's national mantra translated as "Unity in Diversity". The notion of unity within diversity is not new in the Nusantara region, he believes, but has been embedded in their historical and cultural experiences. He explains: "The aspiration of unity in diversity is not a new phenomenon in the societies in this region; it has been present in the history and culture of the Nusantara" (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019, p. 6, author's translation).

Siddiq Fadzil goes on to discuss this principle in terms of Malaysia's national motto, *Bersekutu Bertambah Mutu*, which talks of unity through federation as a means of augmenting collective quality and achievement without losing out the distinctiveness of the communities they constitute. He suggests that religious and cultural resources are potential resources which can be mobilised constructively to achieve a model of nation building that embraces diversity in a unity framework (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019, p. 6).

This is a testament to Siddiq Fadzil's attempt to contextualise the Islamic moral principles in the region's historical and cultural background. His work does not simply impart a spiritual or religious element to the idea of living together peacefully, but he makes use of all the local meanings to show how diversity can coexist with national unity. This view will be helpful in developing culturally knowledgeable peacebuilding. However, its use in present-day Malaysia needs to be based on the various experiences and contributions of all communities so that local wisdom may be understood inclusively. This would reinforce the notion of unity in diversity in the Malaysian plural society, but without claiming that the experiences of various Southeast Asian countries are all equal.

From *Ta'aruf* to a Culture of Peace (*Salam*)

Siddiq Fadzil's discussion on diversity, reciprocity and unity triggers a more general reflection on the common values that need to be shared for peaceful coexistence in a plural society. He applies the Qur'anic idea of *ta'aruf* to an understanding of the role of human diversity, of course, with the assumption that the initial stage of *ta'aruf* is a stage of acquaintance leading to peaceful coexistence. He writes: "The Qur'an states that the purpose of creating diversity is for people to know one another (*lita'arafu*). It is important to remember that, in this context, mutual acquaintance is the starting point of a process of interaction that culminates in peace in living together

(coexistence). *Ta'aruf* is an important concept with far-reaching implications such as 'culture of peace' development" (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019, p. 9, author's translation).

In this passage, there is a conceptual link between *ta'aruf* and culture of peace. This is in line with the Islamic principles of peaceful relations, which see tolerance, love, and positive interaction as key foundations for relationships in a multicultural society (Khambali et al., 2021). These principles, when read together with Siddiq Fadzil's interpretation of *ta'aruf*, demonstrate the need to engage, not merely accept differences, in order to live in peace with others.

It is important to note that mutual acquaintance is not an end; it is a beginning toward which people and communities should strive to build mutual recognition, respect, and a positive social relationship. In this manner, *ta'aruf* serves as an ethical foundation for transcendence of difference to a more substantive and peaceful way of living together. Siddiq Fadzil's definition of peace is broader, meaning that nation-building is not just about political organisation, territorial boundaries, or administrative arrangements. It requires a common culture that can bring together different cultures without demanding uniformity. In this context, *salam* means a more general attitude towards peace, harmony, and positive human relationships. Siddiq Fadzil also equates peace with the goals of Islam, making it an ethical choice that is applicable to the social life and relations between communities (2019, p.9).

This argument is extended in the present analysis: *ta'aruf* and *salam* are seen as a developmental continuum: recognition occurs through mutual acquaintance; recognition fosters mutual respect and reciprocity; mutual respect and reciprocity help to promote peaceful coexistence. That is not to imply that harmony is the inevitable result of difference. On the contrary, peaceful coexistence is only possible through continued ethical commitments to justice, respect for rights, tolerance, reciprocity, and rejection of domination.

This interpretation can also be linked to the prophetic mission of *Nabi al-Rahmah,* who is concerned about the welfare of humanity and kindness in social relations (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019, p. 10). In turn, peace is not simply a lack of conflict; it is a culture and way of life that requires to be nurtured through daily relationships, fair social relations, and mutual respect for the inclusion of the various communities in the nation's life. This gives an idea of how the concept of *ta'aruf* and *salam* can be used to build a culture of peace among urban youths in Malaysia.



Figure 4. Authors' Conceptual Reconstruction of Salam as a Culture of Peace

Peace Education Grounded in Belief in God

Siddiq Fadzil's knowledge of peace education has various aspects of human relationships and responsibilities. The peace education based on the principle of belief in God must make every individual at peace with God, at peace with himself, at peace with his family, at peace with society, and at peace with the surrounding natural

environment; he writes, “so that every individual can be at peace with every individual, and respect the rights of each one; one's right, one's family's right and the right of others” (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019, p. 14, author's translation).

This passage not only defines peace as a lack of interpersonal conflict but as a broad ethical duty as well. Siddiq Fadzil's formulation includes spiritual, personal, familial, social, and environmental aspects, implying that peaceful living requires balancing individual responsibilities with relationships with others.

This focus on respecting the rights of God, self, and others also underscores the principle of ethical behavior and social responsibility. This view can be used in a plural society to reflect on the role of personal values and duties in fostering positive social relations. However, in a multicultural environment, it must account for the diverse religious and philosophical frameworks through which communities understand human dignity, responsibility, and environmental management.

This view can serve as a basis for comprehensive peace education and be transferred to the present time through the provision of experiential learning, intercultural participation, community involvement and environmental awareness. The following are proposed, not programmes specifically developed in the original work, but rather applications of Siddiq Fadzil's educational thought. This would be an effective way to bring the ethical values of peace to life in the daily lives of urban youths and to foster mutual respect, social responsibility and peaceful coexistence between them.

DISCUSSION

Critical Analysis of Siddiq Fadzil's Thought

Diversity and Reciprocity: From Ethical Recognition to Social Justice

The understanding of *ta'aruf* by Siddiq Fadzil is the ethical basis in the context of managing diversity in Malaysia. In the discussion of mutual recognition, he focuses on the concept of mutual respect, mutual reciprocity, cooperation, and mutual assistance between communities with different identities (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019). The primary benefit of this perspective is its emphasis on the positive aspects of diversity rather than the negative aspects of difference. *Ta'aruf* emphasises recognition and responsibility in a reciprocal manner, which defies the notion that social cohesion must be based on cultural or religious uniformity.

However, the meaning of reciprocity is somewhat dependent on the social context in which intergroup relationships are formed. Access to economic resources, educational opportunities, political representation, and public institutions can vary and have an impact on how the community can participate equally in national life. In such a context, a call to respect each other might not be enough to tackle structural inequalities or long-standing experiences of exclusion. This constraint does not take away from the ethical importance of *ta'aruf*, but rather underscores the importance of the institutional setting that supports the possibility for reciprocal relationships to emerge.

This concern can be seen in the context of Malaysia's National Unity Policy, which focuses on the principles of national unity that include equitable opportunities, empowerment of the vulnerable, and good governance (Ministry of National Unity, 2021b). The above policy considerations indicate that there must be opportunities for meaningful participation and institutional structures in place to safeguard the legitimate interests of various communities, in addition to interpersonal recognition.

Ta'aruf is still relevant in today's society as it can bridge the gap between ethical recognition and social justice. However, inclusive decision-making, equitable access to opportunities, and effective mechanisms for resolving grievances are required for its practical realisation. This is an interpretation that broadens the implications of Siddiq Fadzil's ethical outlook, with the desire to avoid taking credit for the institutional recommendations that are given. Peaceful coexistence for sustainable development is not just about acceptance, but also about the possibility for various communities to contribute and participate meaningfully and equitably in national life.

Sahifah Madinah: Historical Inspiration and Contemporary Applicability

Sahifah Madinah as interpreted by Siddiq Fadzil, provides a historical and ethical reference to understand the cooperation of political parties between communities of different identities. His discussion of *ummah siyasiyyah* points to the potential for having a common political identity without having a common religion or ethnicity (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019). The primary virtue of this view is its focus on a shared political community, difference, collective responsibility, and justice.

Nevertheless, the relevance of the *Sahifah Madinah* to the modern context must be considered within the context of the historical background when the Charter was revealed and the constitutional framework of Malaysia. There are significant differences between the political and social circumstances in the 7th-century Medina and the present-day constitutional state. The Charter should therefore not be considered as a blueprint for a contemporary constitution to be copied directly into the modern form of governance.

Rather, its concepts can be used as ethical tools to consider inclusive citizenship, political responsibility, and peaceful co-existence. Any modern application is always considered in the context of the Federal Constitution, existing legal arrangements, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Malaysia. This contextual approach respects the importance of *Sahifah Madinah*, but also makes sure not to overlook the fact that historical precepts cannot be used to pre-judge modern constitutional and political issues.

Siddiq Fadzil's contribution, then, is most important in this respect: its ability to give a sense of moral reflection on common political identity. It can be valuable today if it is examined with regard to the constitutional and multicultural framework of Malaysia. The difference helps to guide nation-building through the historical case while not neglecting to consider the institutional context of the contemporary state.

Local Wisdom and the Challenge of Inclusive Representation

Siddiq Fadzil's involvement with local wisdom adds to the contextual relevance of his thought. The discussion of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* and *Bersekutu Bertambah Mutu* by him shows how historical and cultural expressions can communicate the compatibility between unity and diversity (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019). The power of this approach is that it draws on culturally meaningful references to help explain how to build collective belonging, co-operation, and ideas about maintaining difference in a shared national community.

However, local wisdom in nation building should not be overlooked, with consideration of diversity in historical experience and cultural contribution in Malaysia. If one definition of national identity is based on a single cultural or intellectual heritage, then other communities' cultural or intellectual experiences may be poorly represented. Thus, local wisdom can contribute to social cohesion only when it is open to different cultural views and experiences.

Studies on education and social cohesion in Sarawak underscore the need for educational experiences that build knowledge of the histories, cultures and experiences of other citizens, those of both Sabah and Sarawak (Ong et al., 2014). This view highlights the value of representing inclusively in creating a sense of a national identity. Local wisdom, however, does not necessarily ensure a shared understanding in and of itself, as its contribution is dependent on the way cultural narratives are communicated, interpreted, and translated into public life.

Hence, a peacebuilding context that is inclusive must be inclusive of ideas, thoughts and histories of the various cultures in Malaysia, while at the same time respecting their differences without diminishing the Malaysian identity to their particular cultural narratives. Its relevance to today is that it can serve as a platform for understanding today's world using common cultural elements and respecting the uniqueness and contribution of various cultures.

Salam: Beyond the Absence of Conflict

Siddiq Fadzil's conception of *salam* offers an ethical understanding of peace that is connected to the notions of justice, compassion, human dignity, and responsible relationships (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019). It recognises that peace doesn't necessarily mean the absence of outward violence. Constructive relationships, mutual recognition and

respect for others are essential elements of a sustainable culture of peace. While there was no obvious armed fighting, this does not imply social harmony in all aspects. Communities can live together without overt conflict, but feel excluded, unequal opportunities, or minimal involvement in public life. So, social order is not enough to be taken as proof of a culture of peace.

It is in line with a multidimensional model of social cohesion that includes aspects of belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition, legitimacy, and equality (Beh & Pue, 2021). Their research with the *Rukun Tetangga* people also revealed high levels of social cohesion, and ethnic issues still played a role in community life (Beh & Pue, 2021). The results indicate the need to focus on the quality of social relationships, not just a general assessment of harmony.

Salam is a concept that is relevant today because it has the ability to give meaning to how well citizens can live in peace. Practical application can be evaluated as a measure of meaningful involvement of communities, opportunities for them to participate, and their ability to engage in constructive ways of addressing their concerns. These goals are complemented by institutional accountability and equal opportunity. This reading goes beyond the idea of peace as the lack of confrontation to include social relations and institutional situations that contribute to maintaining peace.

Peace Education: From Moral Awareness to Everyday Practice

In Siddiq Fadzil's work on peace education, the focus is on ethics, or moral consciousness, and the development of good relationships with God, with self, with the family, with society, and with the environment (Siddiq Fadzil, 2019). The power of this whole-person approach is in grasping peace not as a body of knowledge about conflict or harmony, but as a process of character formation and social responsibility.

But there is a problem with a reliance on moral understanding as proof of peaceful behaviour. People might be experiencing an awareness of respect, compassion and tolerance, but not have the social skills to put those into practice when things get tough or when there is conflict. The moral-framing of peace education needs, therefore, to take into account the link between moral understanding and the ability to respond to differences in a constructive manner.

Studies on learning and social cohesion emphasise the need for learning places that accept diversity and enable active interactions between learners from diverse backgrounds (Ong et al., 2014). In this context, experiential learning can serve as an addition to ethical education by offering a chance to practice dialogue, active listening, empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution skills. These will be considered as potential applications of Siddiq Fadzil's perspective on education and not as programmes which are specifically designed in the selected publication.

In the Malaysian context, the applications of the 21st century might be intercultural learning, working together on community projects, discussion in a structured way, and responsible digital communication. The activities might be relevant to situations where learners disagree, have cultural differences, and may have conflicting perspectives, and could be used to apply ethical principles. Their effectiveness, however, should not be taken for granted in advance, but must be well assessed through the learning outcomes and the transposition of peaceful practices in real-life situations.

Siddiq Fadzil's contemporary contribution to thinking, then, is that he provided an ethical base for peace education. The potential of its applications could be enhanced through the integration of moral awareness and experiential learning with opportunities for ongoing interaction. This relationship is especially crucial for the promotion of "how-to" interpersonal skills, not just normative knowledge in peace education.

Integrating Islamic Ethics, Constitutional Principles and Institutional Responsibility

The analyses above conclude that Siddiq Fadzil's thought provides an ethical view on diversity, political belonging, peaceful living, and education. The moral duties of living together in a multicultural society can be explored through complementary means like concepts of *ta'aruf,* reciprocity, *salam* and shared citizenship

(Siddiq Fadzil, 2019). They share the power to link up personal action with issues of social responsibility and social good.

However, ethics alone does not solve every problem of social inequality, political representation, or institutional exclusion. The way they are applied should be weighed against legal and constitutional mechanisms that regulate citizen-to-citizen and citizen-to-government relations. This encompasses the Federal Constitution and legal and policy aspects related to religion, citizenship, equality, and the legitimate interests of various communities in Malaysia.

The contemporary relevance of Siddiq Fadzil's thought is therefore rooted not only in its ability to shape the individual on his/her actions but also in its ethical principles with regard to responsible engagement in public life. This framework is not only based on ethical principles, but also on accountability, equity, inclusion, and grievance resolution principles. These principles are an analytical extrapolation of Siddiq Fadzil's ideas, not the institutional mechanisms which were explicitly prescribed in the selected publication.

The analysis indicates that the notion of a culture of peace should be seen as a relationship between ethical values, the institutional framework, and common social behaviour. Ethical principles serve as a normative foundation for mutual recognition, and institutional frameworks can contribute to creating the conditions for meaningful participation and fair treatment. Such principles, in turn, can be manifested in relationships between persons and communities through practical engagement. The practical implications and conceptual framework outlined in the next section are based on this synthesis.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CULTURE OF PEACE IN MALAYSIA

The critical analysis shows that Siddiq Fadzil's thought is an ethical basis for peaceful coexistence, whereas the application of his thought in the present day needs to be given attention to educational, social, and institutional conditions. Therefore, the implications in this section address the translation of the preceding analysis into the practical field of educational institutions, youth organisations, community networks, civil society and public authorities.

Strengthening Inclusive Citizenship

Siddiq Fadzil's rendition of *Sahifah Madinah* emphasizes the potential of a common understanding of political belonging without the need for uniformity among communities. As such, this view can be applied to initiatives in modern Malaysia that promote civic engagement, mutual recognition and meaningful engagement between ethnic, religious and cultural groups.

National unity programmes, therefore, should include opportunities for citizens to engage in public dialogues, community activities and decision-making. There should be opportunities for citizens to voice their concerns, share ideas and shape initiatives that impact their communities beyond attending organised events. These should take place within the framework of the Malaysian Constitution and foster a sense of shared responsibility, respect and justice.

Participation numbers should be complemented by levels of meaningful involvement and a sense of belonging for the people taking part in inclusive citizenship initiatives. This would link the ethical notion of shared responsibility and practical opportunities to be involved in national and community life.

Integrating Experiential Peace Education

Ethical development, as emphasised by Siddiq Fadzil, provides grounds to improve peace education through experiential learning. An educational environment that values and fosters dialogue between people from diverse backgrounds has been a key theme in education and social cohesion research (Ong et al., 2014). Thus, the elements of peace education should be integrated with the classroom in such a way as to enable students to acquire interpersonal skills and to practice peaceful methods of resolving disagreements.

Intercultural dialogue, group learning, community service, and formal conflict resolution are possible methods in educational institutions. There may also be an opportunity to include responsible digital communication to enable learners to interact constructively with others' views and not become involved in negative intergroup communication. These are suggested uses of Siddiq Fadzil's ethical vision, but not programmes that have been prescribed in his writing.

There needs to be clear learning goals and the right assessments for implementation. Teachers can evaluate students' knowledge and understanding of diversity, along with their capacity to have respectful conversations and to cooperate with others. This evaluation would give an indicator as to whether the education activities are leading to the practical application of peaceful values or awareness of them only.

Enhancing Youth Participation in Peacebuilding

Young people as contributors to peacebuilding should be recognised rather than being treated as recipients of national unity programmes. Youth organisations, universities, and community institutions can offer forums for youth from diverse backgrounds to engage in cooperative social action, intercultural projects, youth volunteering, and community engagement.

These are concrete measures to put *ta'aruf* into practice in a hands-on approach, with the involvement of all parties. Participants have the opportunity to build understanding and connections beyond the scope of the programme, through shared goals. But the impact of this engagement will rely on the extent to which young people have opportunities to engage meaningfully, not just to participate in activities organised by others.

In youth-led initiatives, it is important that young people are allowed to form their own ideas of challenges that exist in their community, establish plans to address them, and be involved in decision-making. Special care should be taken to ensure that youth from a variety of socio-economic, cultural, and regional backgrounds can participate. This strategy links to ethical recognition and might be a way to promote more inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding processes.

Strengthening Community Dialogue and Local Engagement

In the discussion about reciprocity and local wisdom, Siddiq Fadzil emphasized how important it is to have a relationship within the community. The research on *Rukun Tetangga* in this study gives a relevant background to examine the social cohesion of people whose backgrounds are different (Beh & Pue, 2021). Likewise, interfaith storytelling studies examine how interfaith dialogue centred on bridging the divide by connecting with each other's personal reflections and listening to each other can foster understanding between faiths (Khambali et al., 2019).

Community institutions such as *Rukun Tetangga* and civil society organisations can expand on these strategies by hosting neighbourhood dialogues, intercultural exchanges, community-based conflict resolution, and working together for common causes of social action. These should be opportunities not just for residents to voice concerns, but to share experiences and be engaged in joint decision-making, and should not be restricted to ceremonial events.

Local wisdom may also be used to further contribute to the community discussion as long as local cultural experiences and contributions are represented inclusively among different communities. Organisers should also question whether participants can offer a constructive way of expressing disagreement and raising sensitive issues. This would help to ensure that community engagement is not only an appearance of harmony, but it does provide for some meaningful communication and mutual understanding.

Connecting Ethical Values with Institutional Justice

The foregoing analysis shows that ethical commitments can only be realized to their wider social potential when there are supportive institutional conditions. Public institutions and community groups should thus review the ways in which their policies and programmes fail to address issues of barriers to participation, inequitable access, discrimination, and grievance between communities.

Transparency of programme goals, consulting with all stakeholders, easy access to participation procedures, accountability for implementation, and monitoring and evaluation are examples of practical measures. All these measures should be applied consistently with the Federal Constitution and the relevant laws and policies. They're not about institutionalizing ethical obligations, but creating circumstances for practicing mutual respect and peaceful coexistence to be more regular.

The evaluation should include programme implementation and the experiences of the communities participating in the programme. For instance, the assessment can assess who participates in the engagement, whether there are opportunities for different groups to participate, and whether concerns raised throughout engagement activities are addressed. This can link to the moral principles that are discussed by Siddiq Fadzil and institutional responsibility, and can also be used to assess the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts in practice.

Proposed Integrated Ethical-Institutional Framework

This article, based on the foregoing analysis, offers an integrated model of an ethical–institutional approach to consolidate a culture of peace in Malaysia. It brings together the ethical views of Siddiq Fadzil with the reading of the institutional setting and practical procedures needed to facilitate peaceful co-existence. It is also taken into consideration when juxtaposing it with Malaysia MADANI, which makes sustainability, prosperity, innovation, respect, trust, and compassion core values for the country's development. These principles offer a national contemporary standard to evaluate the degree to which ethical commitments are fulfilled through institutional responsibility. The proposed framework, however, should not be confused with the Malaysia MADANI framework since it is an analytically synthesized framework that is created in this article and is not stated explicitly by Siddiq Fadzil.

The proposed framework has 3 parts of interconnected dimensions and an aimed outcome. Ethical foundations are the first dimension, which is hailed as *ta 'aruf*, reciprocity, local wisdom, shared citizenship, peace education, and *salam*. These ideas underlie the principles of mutual recognition, human dignity, justice, and shared responsibility. They provide direction for the relationships between people and communities and for dealing with differences in a plural society.

The second dimension concerns institutional factors like inclusive governance, equitable participation, accountability, and grievance redress. They are suggested as supplementary conditions to be imposed on the translation of moral principles into sustainable social practices. They recognise that attitudes of people alone are not the only thing that affects the opportunities for peaceful living together; the structures in which people engage in public and community life are also significant.

The last dimension is experiential peacebuilding processes like experiential education, intercultural dialogue, youth participation, community engagement and responsible digital communication. These processes offer chances for people and communities to live and work in an ethical way in their daily lives and as a community. They must be participatory and sensitive to various communities' needs, and be properly judged to evaluate their contribution to peaceful relationships.

The desired goal is a sustainable culture of peace built on the principles of mutual recognition, socially meaningful inclusion, social justice, and peaceful co-existence. The outcome is envisioned to be a result of the interplay between ethical foundations, institutional conditions, and the processes of peacebuilding in practice. Relationships are defined by principles of ethics; institutions set the framework for equitable, and practical activities provide opportunities to apply those principles.

The conceptual strength of the framework is that it synthesizes aspects that are separately discussed when the issues of peace and national unity are considered. While ethical commitments offer a normative foundation for living in peace with each other, their manifestation also relies on institutional structures and the possibilities for effective interaction. It links these dimensions and provides an analytical suggestion that a culture of peace does not simply happen if people are good and there are no open conflicts.

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The proposed framework is not a framework that has been specially developed by Siddiq Fadzil himself, but a conceptual synthesis that is obtained from a critical interpretation of his thought. The explanatory power and usefulness of this framework have not been tested in the empirical sense in this article. Future studies may explore the links between ethical understanding and the conditions necessary for its implementation in the institution, as well as the links between ethical understanding and the practices of everyday peacebuilding and how these vary from one community to another and one social context to another.

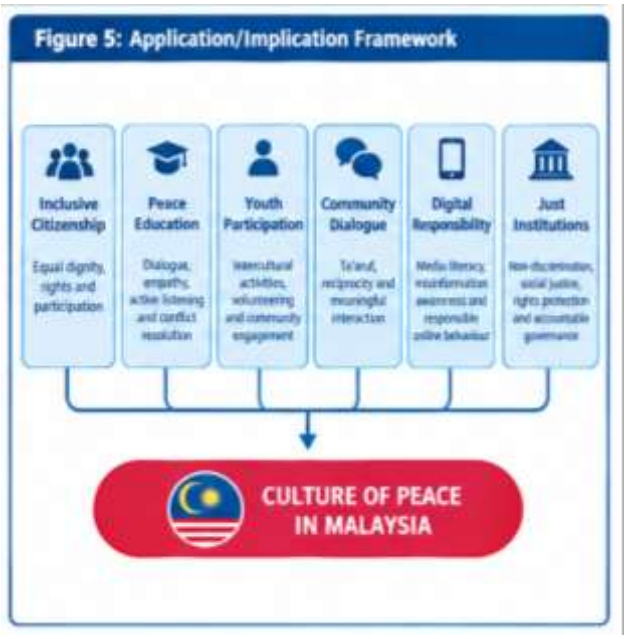


Figure 5. Proposed Integrated Ethical–Institutional Framework for Strengthening a Culture of Peace in Malaysia

The framework serves as a conceptual starting point for future empirical studies on the link between ethical understanding, institutional conditions and the practice of peacebuilding. The dimensions and relationships that it proposes should be considered as propositions rather than causal relationships. The dimensions could be further operationalised into measurable indicators and evaluated for their applicability in various settings in Malaysia in the future. Such studies would contribute to understanding the framework's explanatory power and the circumstances under which it can lead to a sustainable culture of peace.

CONCLUSION

This article has critically discussed Siddiq Fadzil's thought and its influence in empowering the culture of peace in Malaysia. His intellectual input offers an ethical basis for the understanding of peace that is not simply the absence of violence, but rather is based on justice, mutual recognition, dialogue, reciprocity, compassion, and human dignity. In the context of *ta'aruf* (mutual acquaintance), inclusive citizenship, *salam* (peace), local wisdom, and peace education, Siddiq Fadzil provides a way of managing diversity without uniformity in cultural, ethnic, or religious backgrounds. His understanding of *Sahifah Madinah* also gives a historical and ethical framework to reflect on the issue of common political affiliation, collective responsibility, and coexistence of various communities with different identities.

Despite this, the critical analysis explains that ethical promises and moral calls for harmony are not enough to overcome the structural problems of a plural society. Coexistence for the sake of sustainability should be peaceful, with a real possibility of interaction, equal opportunities for participation, recognition of the rights of minorities, and institutional mechanisms tackling discrimination and social exclusion. Hence, Siddiq Fadzil's thought must not be interpreted as a blueprint of institutions and/or the constitution. It needs to be contextualized with the current Malaysian situation and context in terms of the constitution, institutional structures, and social experiences.

On the basis of this analysis, the article offers a comprehensive ethical-institutional framework linking the ethical foundations, institutional conditions, and the processes of peacebuilding in practice. Inclusive governance, institutional accountability, experiential peace education, youth participation, intercultural dialogue, and community engagement are the complementary fields identified in the framework to help connect values and morals to social practices in everyday life. Such methods can foster opportunities for personal and community empathy, understanding, positive communication, and a sense of shared responsibility. In the context of Malaysia, the proposed framework can also serve as an analytical ground to relate Siddiq Fadzil's thought to the national aspirations of unity and social cohesion, which are linked to the values of Malaysia MADANI.

The article adds to the literature in that it illustrates the need for a dynamic relationship between ethical commitments, equitable institutional arrangements and substantive opportunities for social engagement in order to achieve a culture of peace. The proposed framework, however, is preliminary and has not been empirically tested in this study. Further study is therefore needed to operationalise and assess its dimensions at various community, school and local levels in Malaysia. This study would enable one to assess the explanatory power and effectiveness of the framework in enhancing inclusive citizenship, social justice and peaceful co-existence.

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