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Comparative Analysis of Inclusive Leadership Models in PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan

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Abstract

This study examines and compares patterns of inclusive leadership implemented by the Nahdlatul Ulama Special Branches (*Pengurus Cabang Istimewa Nahdlatul Ulama*/PCI NU) in Japan and Taiwan. The study is motivated by the increasing diversity of Indonesian Muslim communities in both countries, reflected in differences in ethnic background, occupation, educational attainment, migration status, and organizational affiliation. Despite this diversity, PCI NU has successfully fostered organizational cohesion and collective identity among Indonesian Muslims living as minorities abroad. This study aims to identify leadership practices that promote organizational inclusivity while maintaining the ideological values of Nahdlatul Ulama. A qualitative comparative case study approach was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with board members and organizational members of PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan, conducted both face-to-face and via Zoom between June and July 2026. Field observations were conducted at the offices of both organizations. Documentary data were obtained from organizational archives, field photographs, official social media content, and information published on their official websites. Data were analyzed using thematic comparative analysis to identify recurring leadership patterns across the two cases. The findings reveal three interrelated models of inclusive leadership. First, transformative inclusive leadership creates opportunities for participation, empowerment, and collective action by encouraging active engagement between leaders and members. Second, accommodative inclusive leadership promotes representation by incorporating individuals from diverse ethnic, professional, and educational backgrounds into organizational structures, thereby strengthening collaboration and social cohesion. Third, ideological inclusive leadership integrates inclusive organizational practices with the principles of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*, enabling diversity to be embraced without compromising the religious identity and foundational values of Nahdlatul Ulama. Together, these three models demonstrate how diaspora Islamic organizations can cultivate inclusivity, organizational resilience, and community solidarity within multicultural minority contexts. The study contributes to the literature on inclusive leadership by offering a context-sensitive framework for understanding leadership in diaspora Muslim organizations.

Keywords:
Inclusive Leadership; PCI NU; Diaspora Muslim; Organizational Inclusivity; Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah

A. INTRODUCTION

From its inception, NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) has possessed a framework of inclusive leadership. Although these values have never been explicitly articulated, they have been practiced and sustained culturally. This framework serves as a foundation for everyone involved in and devoted to NU (Syamsuriadi, 2019). The framework of inclusive leadership has remained relatively resilient, even though changing times and various circumstances have inevitably influenced the character of leadership in organizations, including NU. The initial framework of inclusive leadership is reflected in the tradition of respecting the kiai (Islamic scholars) (Marno et al., 2024). Santri have also traditionally been accustomed to helping one another. Norms and morality constitute fundamental values in organizational life within NU. Serving and empowering the community has become one of the defining identities of NU, an identity that has been maintained to the present day (Samsul Hady et al., 2025). A fundamental point concerning NU's framework of inclusive leadership is how these values have continued to be culturally embedded and have become an organizational identity that consistently accompanies NU throughout its historical journey (Wang & Shi, 2021) .

Inclusive leadership is not merely a way of leading the NU organization; it is also an important instrument for creating an equitable environment that encourages every member to participate and contribute optimally. Every leader brings their own understanding and experience of leadership, which has been shaped prior to joining the NU organization (Prastyo et al., 2022). To prevent misunderstandings or differences in leadership styles that may create friction within the organization, inclusive leadership serves as an approach to understanding the dynamics and realities within NU. Therefore, the concept of inclusive leadership is not constructed spontaneously but is developed through sustained interactions between organizational leaders and members. Inclusive leadership serves as an instrument for establishing a system of interaction among members, leaders, and the NU organizational environment (Rosdina et al., 2015). In this sense, inclusive leadership constitutes a model for bridging the complexity of members' and leaders' backgrounds while simultaneously enabling a deeper understanding of the realities of the NU organizational environment.

Inclusive leadership in PCI NU Japan and Taiwan has brought about significant changes in the way the organization operates and constructs NU's organizational identity abroad. Inclusive leadership has driven fundamental changes, particularly by establishing a more equal relationship between members and organizational leaders, despite their complex and diverse backgrounds (Chan & Busari, 2023). In an increasingly globalized era, marked by the emergence of concepts such as the Millennial era, the virtual era, Generation Z, artificial intelligence (AI), and other technological developments, a new paradigm has emerged in understanding the relationship between NU members and organizational leaders. Today, NU can no longer be understood merely as a religious organization; it is also an invaluable organizational heritage and one manifestation of Indonesian civilization that has gained global recognition (Asrori et al., 2025). NU plays an important role in shaping and strengthening Indonesian identity and enriching Indonesian culture, both within Indonesia and abroad.

B. METHODS

A qualitative comparative case study approach was employed to examine the characteristics and practices of inclusive leadership in PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan (Cresswell, 2016). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with

organizational leaders and members from both organizations, conducted both face-to-face and via Zoom between June and July 2026. Field observations were also conducted at the organizational offices of PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan to gain contextual insights into their leadership practices, organizational interactions, and activities.

In addition, documentary data were collected from organizational archives, field photographs, official social media platforms, and information published on the organizations' official websites. The data were analyzed using thematic comparative analysis to identify recurring themes, patterns, similarities, and differences in inclusive leadership practices across the two cases. This approach enabled the study to examine how inclusive leadership is constructed and practiced within different social and cultural contexts while maintaining the shared organizational values of NU.

C. RESULT & DISCUSSION

This section presents research findings regarding a comparative analysis of inclusive leadership models within PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan. The findings are systematically organized, presenting empirical evidence of inclusive leadership practices in these two countries. Subsequently, the findings are examined through an analytical lens that explores how inclusive leadership is developed based on the identity and values of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*. The discussion focuses on three interconnected leadership models: transformative inclusive leadership, which fosters active participation; accommodative inclusive leadership, which strengthens the representation of member diversity; and ideological inclusive leadership, which integrates organizational openness with the fundamental principles of Nahdlatul Ulama.

PCI NU Japan serves as an organization for Nahdliyin members and the Indonesian Muslim community in Japan. Its secretariat is located at the NU At-Taqwa Mosque (2nd Floor), 933-3 Higashi Yamata, Koga City, Ibaraki Prefecture, 306-0112, Japan. Regarding its leadership structure, Achmad Gazali, Ph.D., serves as the Tanfidziyah Chairman (Executive Chairman), while KH. Agus Sulipan, A.Md., serves as the "Rais Syuriah" (Supreme Council Chairman). As part of its organizational development, PCI NU Japan has initiated the formation of *Majelis Wakil Cabang Istimewa Nahdlatul Ulama* (MWCINU)—Special Branch Representative Councils—spread across various regions of Japan. According to the list on the official PCI NU Japan website, there are 17 MWCINU branches: Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Osaka, Kyoto-Shiga, Aichi, Gifu, Ishikawa, Shizuoka, Tokyo, Ibaraki, Niigata, Miyagi, Hokkaido, Toyama, Nagano, Saitama, and Wakayama. This structure demonstrates an institutional network that spans nearly the entire country. In addition to building its organizational network, PCI NU Japan established Nine Stars Co. Ltd. in early 2024 in Koga, Ibaraki. The company operates several business units, including halal food, travel services, and "Bakso Koga" (meatball products). Regarding ownership, the official PCI NU Japan website notes that PCI NU Japan holds a 51% stake, while the remaining 49% is owned by individuals.

PCINU Taiwan is a Nahdlatul Ulama organization officially established by Indonesian students and workers in Taiwan on October 5, 2008. Over time, PCINU Taiwan obtained official legal recognition from the Taiwan government via a certificate issued by the Taipei City Department of Social Welfare on May 13, 2018. The PCINU Taiwan secretariat is located at 1F, No. 13, Alley 10, Lane 40, Chang'an W Rd, Zhongshan District, Taipei City, Taiwan 10491. Currently, PCINU Taiwan has established 14 local branches covering Hsinchu, Taichung, Kaohsiung, Hualien, Changhua, Chiayi, Keelung, Guanyin, Taoyuan, Yilan, Daxi, Donggang, Pingtung, and Penghu. PCINU Taiwan's activities span various fields, including health and humanitarian programs through LAZISNU, Ramadan *zakat* services, guidance for new converts, moderate religious outreach and education, educational development and cadre training, the construction of the NU Islamic Center, as well as support for Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) and the handling of funeral arrangements for Indonesian citizens. Through this network,

PCINU Taiwan plays a strategic role in facilitating various social services for the Muslim community in Taiwan.

This section presents empirical findings regarding three interrelated models of inclusive leadership. First, transformative inclusive leadership creates opportunities for the active participation of all members. Second, accommodative inclusive leadership strengthens collaborative organizational representation. Third, ideological inclusive leadership integrates inclusive organizational practices with the principles of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah* and the core values of Nahdlatul Ulama. These findings are based on qualitative evidence gathered through interviews, direct observation, and Zoom meetings conducted during the research process. These three data sources were utilized to gain a more comprehensive understanding of inclusive leadership practices within PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan.

Transformative Inclusive Leadership

An interview with R (30), Secretary of PCI NU Taiwan, reveals that transformative, inclusive leadership is fostered through the active engagement of the organization's leadership in various activities. This leadership model is developed through initiatives that create synergy with Taiwanese society. As the informant explained: "When looking at leadership within PCI NU Taiwan, I view transformative, inclusive leadership as a leader's ability to create opportunities for members to participate. We strive to conduct outreach—or *dakwah*—targeting both the Indonesian community in Taiwan and foreign nationals residing there. Given the multicultural nature of society in Taiwan, our approach is tailored to the local context." This statement underscores that transformative, inclusive leadership at PCI NU Taiwan is realized through the active participation of its members. In practice, this is evident in the strengthening of cadre development through programs such as PD PKPNU and other tiered training initiatives. Thus, leadership is exercised through a collective process aimed at bolstering organizational capacity, with a particular emphasis on enhancing the social contributions of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in Taiwan.

One informant stated, "Initially, we established our own platform because the religious practice needs of the *Nahdliyin* community were not being met within existing communities." (G, 40 years old, Chair of PCI NU Japan). This quote illustrates that the inclusive, transformative leadership within PCI NU Japan emerged in response to the genuine needs of members living in Japan. Accounts of the informants' life experiences reveal that the presence of the *Nahdliyin* community in Japan historically created a demand for NU religious traditions. In Fukuoka, for instance, mosques, halal certification bodies, and Indonesian Muslim communities with diverse religious characteristics had already developed. However, the need for worship practices specific to the NU tradition—such as *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, and *manaqiban*—was not fully accommodated, prompting NU expatriates to establish their own organizational platform. In the early stages, management was rudimentary, resembling that of a student organization. Growth became evident when the inauguration of the leadership team succeeded in attracting broader participation from the community, including Indonesians who had long resided in Japan and were married to Japanese nationals. "What began as a response to the community's needs evolved into a more structured organization, expanding across various regions and involving an increasing number of Indonesians." (G, 40 years old, Chair of PCI NU Japan).

Inclusive leadership in PCI NU Japan and Taiwan has brought significant changes to the way NU organizations operate and construct their organizational identities abroad. It has driven fundamental transformations, particularly by fostering more equitable relationships between members and organizational leaders, despite their diverse and complex backgrounds (Fahrowi, 2023) (Morita, 1988). In an increasingly globalized era, characterized by the emergence of the Millennial generation, virtual

spaces, Generation Z, artificial intelligence (AI), and other technological developments, a new paradigm has emerged in understanding the relationship between NU members and organizational leaders. Today, NU can no longer be understood merely as a religious organization; it is also an invaluable organizational heritage and a significant manifestation of Indonesian civilization on the global stage. NU plays an important role in shaping and strengthening Indonesian identity while enriching Indonesian cultural heritage, both within Indonesia and abroad.he Discussion should focus on the significance of the findings, rather than merely restating them. A combined Results and Discussion section is often appropriate. Avoid extensive citations and unnecessary repetition of published literature (KOBAYASHI, 1998).

Accommodative Inclusive Leadership

The inclusive and accommodative leadership within PCI NU Japan is demonstrated by the organization's ability to accommodate the diverse backgrounds of its members. One informant explained, “The presence of active postgraduate students strengthens the cadre-building process and broadens the organization's base of participation. As it has developed, community management has become increasingly structured, and the network of NU-oriented activities has expanded to Hiroshima and Matsuyama through the Indonesian Community Communication Forum (FKMI)” (E, 40 years old, member of PCI NU Japan). This statement indicates that the cadre-building process creates opportunities for the direct involvement of postgraduate students and Indonesian residents in Japan. The network's expansion to Hiroshima and Matsuyama also illustrates a leadership style that accommodates the Indonesian community in Japan through the establishment of new MWCI NU branches. Thus, inclusive and accommodative leadership evolves through expanded access for PCI NU Japan members—who are distributed across these various regions—to become active cadres.

The inclusive and accommodative leadership within PCI NU Taiwan is reflected in the organization's ability to manage the diverse religious practices of its community. An official from PCI NU Taiwan, identified by the initial J, stated, "If someone claims to be NU but acts in an extreme manner—readily blaming or labeling others as infidels simply due to differences regarding *qunut*, *tahlilan*, or *shalawatan*—then they need to undergo re-indoctrination. That is not the character of NU." This statement demonstrates that accommodating differences is integrated into PCI NU Taiwan’s member development process. The NU understanding of *Aswaja* encompasses three primary areas: *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tasawwuf* (Sufism), and *aqidah* (theology). Regarding *fiqh*, NU refers to the four schools of thought (madhhabs): Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali; in *tasawwuf*, it follows the traditions of authoritative Sufi scholars; and concerning aqidah, it adheres to the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama’ah* teachings inherited from religious scholars. This framework provides the foundation for PCI NU Taiwan to accept diverse religious practices in Taiwan. These findings indicate that inclusive and accommodative leadership is realized through the management of differences within the community, utilizing *Aswaja An-Nahdliyah* principles as the fundamental values guiding this management.

Inclusive leadership also serves as a space for actualizing and strengthening Indonesian identity in the present context. In Japan, this practice continues to be carried out so that people who are not yet familiar with NU can gain greater awareness of and concern for NU’s presence abroad. Similarly, in Taiwan, NU has a mission to introduce Indonesian cultural roots, pesantren traditions, and Islamic values, thereby contributing to a strong representation of Indonesian culture on the global stage. In this way, Indonesian identity can develop greater resilience in responding to the forces of globalization, even though NU currently operates in countries where Muslims constitute a minority (Abdurahman, 2018).

Ideological Inclusive Leadership

The ideologically inclusive leadership of PCI NU Taiwan is demonstrated through efforts to uphold the identity and fundamental values of Nahdlatul Ulama within the Taiwanese context. Informant R (30), an official of PCI NU Taiwan, explained, "NU remains politically engaged—specifically in the sense of national and people-oriented politics—by playing an active role in safeguarding the integrity of the nation and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. NU adheres to the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* (or *Aswaja An-Nahdliyah*) doctrine. Consequently, NU embodies a distinctive stance characterized by *tawasuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), tasâmuh (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice)." This statement indicates that the leadership of PCI NU Taiwan strives to ground the organization's inclusive character in *Aswaja An-Nahdliyah* values. The principle of tawasuth emphasizes moderation, tawazun prioritizes balance, tasâmuh creates space for diversity, and i'tidal asserts the importance of justice in social relations. These values serve as the ideological framework for PCI NU Taiwan in preserving its NU identity within Taiwan.

The ideologically inclusive leadership within PCI NU Japan is reflected in the organization's ability to maintain its distinct NU identity in the country. E (30), an official with PCI NU Japan, stated, "In Fukuoka, the growth of the Muslim community stems not only from Indonesian nationals but also involves native Japanese people who have converted to Islam. Some of them have married Indonesians or other Asians and subsequently become active in religious activities. Meanwhile, the development of non-NU forms of Islam is also taking place, typically spearheaded by international students." This statement illustrates the heterogeneous nature of the environment in Japan, which encompasses individuals from diverse backgrounds. PCI NU Japan has expanded while upholding its organizational mission within the country. The informant also explained that some non-NU Islamic activists continue their *dakwah* (missionary) activities after completing their education, noting that non-NU Islamic movements had already established a presence in Japan. These circumstances have prompted NU to take a serious approach to upholding the *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* tradition. These findings indicate that ideologically inclusive leadership operates by strengthening the institutional identity of PCI NU Japan amidst a heterogeneous society.

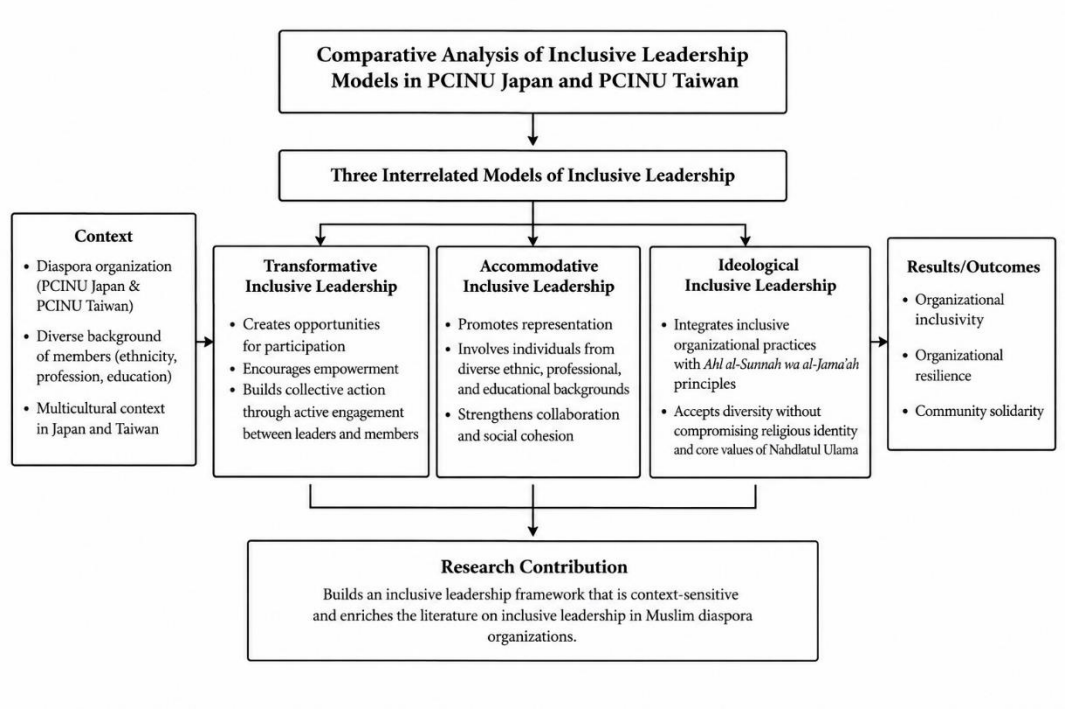
Building NU culturally and with civility abroad presents a significant challenge. In this process, NU encounters different forms of leadership and organizational approaches from one context to another. Such differences should not be regarded as obstacles but rather as circumstances that can stimulate members' potential and provide opportunities for self-actualization. At the same time, diverse contexts may generate increasingly diverse ways of thinking among organizational leaders and members. However, it is important to understand that an inclusive leadership approach should not be introduced only occasionally; rather, it should become an integral and sustained organizational practice (Ar & Kadri, 2019). Inclusive leadership is cultivated and institutionalized so that Indonesians living abroad do not lose touch with their cultural values and are able to become driving forces for religious life within the social environments in which they live.

Speaking about the influence of inclusive leadership within PCI NU Japan and Taiwan, it is important to acknowledge that this leadership approach has been inspired by events and experiences in other contexts. However, it is important to note that the capacity of inclusive leadership to mobilize members is grounded in networks that had already been established. In Japan, for example, numerous groups and communities have long been active, including those involving workers, agricultural communities, and students. In Taiwan, in particular, various NU groups comprising workers and homemakers had previously been engaged in issues related to national identity and Indonesian civic life (Miera & Sala Pala, 2009). These groups subsequently became more actively involved in NU through an inclusive leadership approach.

Comparative Analysis of Inclusive Leadership Models

The research framework is built upon a comparative analysis of inclusive leadership practices within PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan. The analysis reveals that inclusive leadership manifests through three models: transformative, accommodative, and ideological inclusive leadership. These models serve to understand how leaders create spaces for member participation while simultaneously reinforcing NU values in Japan and Taiwan.

Figure 1: Comparative Analysis of Inclusive Leadership Models



Thus, this conceptual framework positions the three inclusive leadership models as organizational processes operating within PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan. Transformative leadership focuses on member participation, accommodative leadership emphasizes the representation of Indonesian identity abroad, and ideological leadership provides a value-based foundation through the principles of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*. The interplay of these three models shapes the inclusivity of both PCI NU branches. This framework serves as a basis for understanding the character of PCI NU leadership abroad in a more contextual manner.

This is clearly reflected in the fundamental values of inclusive leadership practiced within PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan. The movement's agenda encompasses a range of religious and national issues, as well as the preservation of religious practices such as *tahlil*, *yasinan*, and *hadrah*, which have long been concerns among NU activists in Japan and Taiwan.

Interestingly, although the movement addresses issues that have been present for some time, its primary demands focus on strengthening Islamic values, appreciating and preserving local Japanese culture, promoting religious harmony and national solidarity, and advocating for greater recognition and equal treatment of Muslim minorities (Fuad, 2018).

The character of inclusive leadership cannot be separated from the teachings and legacy of the *kiai*, whose values have been instilled in Indonesia. One manifestation of this inclusive character is respect for tradition. The leaders of PCINU Japan and Taiwan are not rigidly bound by organizational rules that may limit their flexibility in managing the organization. In Taiwan, for example, when organizational rules need to be aligned with Taiwanese traditions and the local social context, the leaders have

chosen a humanistic and harmonious approach. Through this approach, PCINU Taiwan has been accepted and respected as an officially recognized organization in Taiwan. As a result, PCINU Taiwan has obtained legal recognition as a religious organization that commands considerable respect within the local community.

The practice of inclusive leadership in PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan demonstrates how the same organizational values can be adapted to different social, cultural, and institutional contexts.

Aspect	PCI NU Japan	PCI NU Taiwan	Key Difference
Basis of Inclusivity	Relies on established community networks, including workers, students, activists, and religious communities.	Relies on groups of workers and homemakers who had previously been active in national issues.	Japan emphasizes network mobilization, while Taiwan emphasizes group integration.
Relationship with Local Culture	Respects Japanese culture and builds harmonious relationships between NU identity, Islam, and local society.	Adapts organizational rules and practices to Taiwanese traditions and the local social context.	Japan emphasizes cultural appreciation, while Taiwan emphasizes cultural adaptation.
Leadership Strategy	Creates opportunities for participation and connects members from diverse backgrounds through established networks.	Uses a humanistic and harmonious approach to bridge the organization with the local community and social environment.	Japan focuses on participation and networking, while Taiwan focuses on harmonization and adaptation.
Orientation and Outcomes	Strengthens NU identity, Islamic values, Indonesian identity, religious harmony, and the acceptance of Muslim minorities.	Strengthens NU identity while gaining social acceptance and legitimacy as a religious organization in Taiwan.	Japan focuses on strengthening community identity, while Taiwan focuses on legitimacy and social acceptance.

Thus, while both PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan share the fundamental principles of inclusive leadership, their practices reflect different contextual strategies: network-based inclusion in Japan and culturally adaptive inclusion in Taiwan.

D. CONCLUSION

Inclusive leadership in PCI NU Japan and PCI NU Taiwan demonstrates that inclusive leadership is not a uniform practice but is shaped by the social, cultural, and institutional contexts in which an organization operates. In both contexts, inclusive leadership is rooted in openness, participation, respect for diversity, and the recognition of members' contributions. However, PCI NU Japan tends to practice inclusivity through the mobilization of established community networks involving workers, students, activists, and religious communities. This approach emphasizes participation, networking, and the strengthening of NU, Islamic, and Indonesian identities within a multicultural and minority-Muslim context.

In contrast, PCI NU Taiwan demonstrates a form of inclusive leadership that places greater emphasis on cultural adaptation, social harmony, and organizational legitimacy. Its leaders seek to align organizational practices with local traditions and social realities while maintaining NU's religious and cultural identity. The comparison therefore shows that inclusive leadership can operate through different mechanisms: network-based inclusion in Japan and culturally adaptive inclusion in Taiwan. Despite these differences, both approaches contribute to strengthening NU's identity, expanding

participation, fostering harmonious relationships with local communities, and sustaining Indonesian cultural and religious values in overseas contexts..

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