



Research Article

Islam and customs in Minangkabau: Analysis of the Indigenous Concept of Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (in the Perspective of Buya Hamka and A.A. Navis)

Abdul Aziz Romdhoni

Fakultas Agama Islam Universitas Wiralodra, Indonesia; romdhoniaiziz98@gmail.com

Copyright © 2026 by Authors, Published by **Values: Jurnal Kajian Islam Multidisiplin**. This is an open access article under the CC BY License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Received : November 13, 2025
Accepted : January 19, 2026

Revised : December 17, 2025
Available online : February 26, 2026

How to Cite: Abdul Aziz Romdhoni. (2026). Islam and customs in Minangkabau: Analysis of the Indigenous Concept of Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (in the Perspective of Buya Hamka and A.A. Navis). *Values: Jurnal Kajian Islam Multidisiplin*, 3(1), 861-866. <https://doi.org/10.61166/values.v3i1.173>

Islam and customs in Minangkabau: Analysis of the Indigenous Concept of Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (in the Perspective of Buya Hamka and A.A. Navis)

Abstract. This research discusses the concept of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) from the perspective of Buya Hamka and criticism by A.A. Navis towards its application in Minangkabau society. Buya Hamka views ABS-SBK as an ideal foundation that emphasizes harmonious integration between customs and Islamic law. According to him, customs function as social tools that gain legitimacy as long as they are based on the values of the Koran and Sunnah, as emphasized in the QS. An-Nisa' verse 59. In this view, Islam is the main source of values, while custom is a means of implementing moral values and justice in social life. In contrast, A.A. Navis expressed criticism of the ABS-SBK practice, which was considered to often stop at a symbolic level and had not been fully realized consistently in social reality. He highlighted the deviations that occur when customs and religion are exploited for the sake of power or social status, thus deviating from the moral substance of Islam as emphasized in the Prophet's hadith regarding adhering to the Qur'an and Sunnah. A

comparison of the two figures shows that their differences are complementary: Hamka emphasizes the normative and philosophical dimensions, while Navis emphasizes the empirical and evaluative dimensions. Thus, the ABS-SBK concept remains relevant as an integrative framework between customs and religion, as long as it is accompanied by moral commitment and real implementation in facing the social dynamics of contemporary Minangkabau society.

Keywords: ABS-SBK, Buya Hamka, A.A. Navis, Minangkabau customs, integration of Islam and culture

INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau society has a unique value system which is formulated in the Basandi Syarak Indigenous philosophy, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK). This philosophy emphasizes that Minangkabau customs must be based on Islamic teachings, while Islamic teachings are based on the Al-Qur'an and the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. This principle is the basis for regulating social life, culture and customary law of the Minangkabau people, as well as forming a collective perspective in understanding the relationship between custom and religion.

In practice, ABS-SBK is understood not only as a normative guideline but also as a cultural identity of the Minangkabau people. However, its application in social life does not always align with the ideal concept formulated. This situation has given rise to various interpretations and criticisms, particularly from Minangkabau intellectuals. Buya Hamka views ABS-SBK as an ideal form of integration between custom and Islam, so that custom must always refer to the Qur'an and Hadith to remain within the corridor of Islamic law and moral values.

In contrast to this view, A.A. Navis sees a gap between the ideal concept of ABS-SBK and the social reality of Minangkabau society. Through his literary works and essays, Navis critiques customary and religious practices that tend to be formalistic and do not always reflect values of justice and morality. The differences in views between Buya Hamka and A.A. Navis demonstrate that ABS-SBK is a dynamic concept open to study, particularly in understanding the relationship between custom and Islam amidst social change in Minangkabau society.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is descriptive-analytical with normative-philosophical and sociological approaches. The normative-philosophical approach is used to examine the theological foundations of Buya Hamka's thinking, referring to the Quran, particularly Surah An-Nisa' verse 59, and relevant hadiths of the Prophet. Meanwhile, a sociological approach is used to understand the social context of Minangkabau society and A.A. Navis' empirical critique of ABS-SBK practices.

DISCUSSION

Buya Hamka's views on the ABS-SBK concept

Buya Hamka views the concept of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) as an ideal foundation in the life of the Minangkabau people.

In various scientific studies discussing Hamka's thoughts, he is positioned as a figure who emphasizes the importance of integration between Islamic customs and teachings. According to Hamka, custom and religion are not two conflicting systems, but rather complement each other. Custom functions as a social device that regulates society's life, while syarak (Islamic religion) is the main source of values that determine truth, justice and morality. Therefore, customs only have legitimacy if they are based on Islamic teachings.

Buya Hamka's views are in line with the words of Allah SWT. in QS. An-Nisa' verse 59:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

Meaning: "O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), and the ulil amri among you. Then if you differ in opinion about something, then return it to Allah (the Qur'an) and the Messenger (sunnah), if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day" (QS. An-Nisa': 59).

This verse emphasizes that obedience to social authority is conditional, meaning it must adhere to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. In the Minangkabau context, custom is viewed as a legitimate form of social authority (ulil amri) as long as it does not conflict with Islamic law. Several journal articles examining Hamka's thinking explain that this verse serves as the theological basis for his view that custom is a social rule subject to Islamic values.

Furthermore, Buya Hamka emphasized that Minangkabau customs are not static and absolute. Customs must be continually criticized and adapted to current developments, as long as they do not deviate from sharia principles. In academic studies, Hamka is understood as a figure who rejected the absolutization of customs without religious basis, as this has the potential to give rise to social practices that conflict with Islamic values of justice and morality. Therefore, if a custom conflicts with sharia, it must be corrected or abandoned.

Thus, in Buya Hamka's view, the ABS-SBK concept serves not only as a symbol of cultural identity but also as a normative framework for the life of Minangkabau society. Through this principle, Hamka positions Islam as the primary source of values, while custom serves as a means of implementing Islamic values in social and cultural contexts. This view affirms that ABS-SBK is an ideal form of harmony between custom and religion in realizing a just and moral social order.

A.A. Navis's Criticism of the Implementation of ABS-SBK

Unlike Buya Hamka, A.A. Navis views the implementation of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) more critically. In various studies of Minangkabau literature and culture, Navis is known to highlight the gap between the ideal concept of ABS-SBK and actual social practice. According to Navis, ABS-SBK is often only used as a cultural slogan without being consistently realized in everyday life. This indicates that the values contained in this philosophy, both from the

perspective of customs and Islamic law, have not fully touched the social life of society in real terms.

Navis also criticized the tendency to use customs and religion for specific interests, such as maintaining power or social status. He argued that such practices contradict the moral and just goals that should be at the core of ABS-SBK. In this context, Navis emphasized that customs and religion should not be used as mere political tools or symbols, but rather should reflect ethical, moral, and just values in the social life of the Minangkabau people. Previous journal studies have reinforced this view, stating that Navis's critique is not only sociological but also moral-religious, as he links social practices to the substance of true Islamic teachings.

Navis' criticism is in line with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad saw. narrated by Imam Malik:

تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا : كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَ سُنَّةَ رَسُولِهِ

Meaning: "I have left you two things. You will not go astray as long as you adhere to them, (namely) the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger" (HR. Imam Malik).

This hadith emphasizes that the fundamental values of Islamic teachings must be truly embodied in real life, not merely used as symbols or formalities. A.A. Navis's critique demonstrates the need to evaluate ABS-SBK practices so that the values of justice and morality are not merely normative, but rather tangible and felt in social life. In other words, ABS-SBK must serve as a guideline for life that concretely regulates societal behavior, not merely a cultural identity or a tool for social legitimacy.

Through this critical perspective, Navis emphasizes the importance of collective societal awareness to consistently uphold the ABS-SBK principles, ensuring that the philosophy remains relevant in the face of social change and the challenges of modernization. Navis's critique also serves as a reminder that harmonization between custom and religion does not occur automatically, but requires moral oversight and concrete implementation in the lives of Minangkabau people.

Comparison of the Perspectives of Buya Hamka and A.A. Navis

Buya Hamka and A.A. Navis's views on the concept of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) show significant differences in focus. Buya Hamka emphasizes the normative and ideal side of ABS-SBK, namely how customs should be in harmony with Islamic law. According to Hamka, the integration of customs and religion is the main principle for building a just, moral, and religious society. This approach places Islam as the primary source of values, while customs serve as a means of implementing these values in social life. Academic studies of Hamka's thinking emphasize that this normative focus serves as a philosophical and theological framework that serves as a reference in evaluating Minangkabau social practices.

In contrast, A.A. Navis highlights the empirical side of ABS-SBK, namely how the concept is applied in real life. In his literary works and essays, Navis shows that ABS-SBK practices are often inconsistent with the ideal values upheld, for example

when customs or religion are used for the sake of power or social status. Navis's critique is evaluative and reflective, encouraging society to ensure that the values of justice, morality, and religion are truly realized in social practices. Previous research in the journal *Minangkabau culture and sociology* emphasizes that Navis' empirical perspective is important to avoid mere formality or symbolism in the implementation of ABS-SBK.

The differing perspectives between Hamka and Navis are not absolute contradictions, but rather complementary. Hamka's perspective provides a normative and philosophical foundation, while Navis's critique serves as a reminder that the ABS-SBK concept should not be confined to theory. Thus, these two perspectives create a comprehensive analytical framework: Hamka emphasizes ideals and moral principles, while Navis ensures the application of these principles in social reality. This synergy between normative and empirical approaches is crucial for ABS-SBK to remain relevant in the face of the dynamics of contemporary Minangkabau society, while maintaining a balance between cultural values and Islamic teachings.

The Relevance of the ABS-SBK Concept in Today's Era

Amidst social change and the influence of globalization, the ABS-SBK concept remains relevant in the lives of the Minangkabau people. Its values, such as balance between custom and religion, justice, and morality, remain crucial in maintaining the community's cultural identity.

Various research results indicate that ABS-SBK is still applied contextually, particularly in the fields of education and character building. Research by Aldi and Kawakib (2025) demonstrated that the integration of traditional and Islamic values based on ABS-SBK positively contributed to the development of students' character. Meanwhile, a study by Mariana, Sibawaihi, and Nur Anna (2024) confirmed that ABS-SBK serves as an integrative framework between local traditions and Islamic values amidst social change.

Other research also shows that ABS-SBK values continue to influence customary law practices, such as prohibiting intermarriage and serving as a foundation for Minangkabau culture-based character education. This demonstrates that ABS-SBK is not only a cultural heritage but also a dynamic way of life that can adapt to changing times.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that Buya Hamka views the concept of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) as the normative and ideal foundation for Minangkabau society. According to him, custom and Islamic law are not two conflicting systems, but rather complement each other in forming a just and moral social order. Islam is positioned as the primary source of values that determine truth, while custom serves as a social instrument that implements these values in everyday life.

Hamka's view is based on the theological principle that all forms of social authority, including custom, must be subject to the Quran and Sunnah. Therefore, the legitimacy of custom is conditional, as long as it does not conflict with Islamic

law. He also emphasized that custom is not static and absolute, but rather must be open to renewal and correction in accordance with changing times, as long as it adheres to the principles of Islamic teachings.

Overall, the ABS–SBK concept, from Buya Hamka's perspective, is not merely a symbol of cultural identity, but an ethical and philosophical framework that emphasizes the harmony between custom and religion. Through this integration, ABS–SBK is understood as the ideal foundation for building a Minangkabau society that is religious, just, and virtuous.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Al-Qur'an al-Karim.

Azra, A. (2002). *Islam Nusantara: Jaringan Global dan Lokal*. Bandung: Mizan.

Abdullah, T. (1987). *Islam dan Masyarakat: Pantulan Sejarah Indonesia*. Jakarta: LP3ES.

Abdullah, Taufik. (1987). *Islam dan Masyarakat: Pantulan Sejarah Indonesia*. Jakarta: LP3ES.

Aldi, M., & Kawakib, A. N. (2025). Reconstruction of Islamic Education Philosophy in Minangkabau Customary Values: Actualizing the Principles of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah. *JHIP – Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, **8**(2), 1548–1557.

Azra, A. (2002). *Islam Nusantara: Jaringan Global dan Lokal*. Bandung: Mizan.

Hamka. (1982). *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas.

Hamka. (1984). *Islam dan Adat Minangkabau*. Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas.

Mariana, M., Sibawaihi, & Nur Anna, D. (2024). Integration of Islam in the Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah in Minangkabau society. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic History and Culture*, **5**(2), 111–124.

Naim, M. (1979). *Merantau: Pola Migrasi Suku Minangkabau*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.

Navis, A. A. (1984). *Alam Berkembang Jadi Guru: Adat dan Kebudayaan Minangkabau*. Jakarta: Grafiti Pers.

Navis, A. A. (1995). *Dialog dengan Tradisi*. Jakarta: Grafiti Pers.