
NAHDLTUL ULAMA' RELIGIOUS MODERATION EDUCATION: Analyzing the Social Character Attitudes of Nahdliyin

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ABSTRACT

This study will discuss the values of wasathiyah or religious moderation that have become a tradition in the Nahdlatul Ulama which were actually initiated by NU figures in the early days of its establishment and continued to be maintained in the following period, especially in terms of thought. Previous studies on NU's religious moderation already exist, such as the Historical Roots of Islamic Moderation in Nahdlatul Ulama (Fuad, 2020), Contribution and Role of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari framing Moderation Reflecting on NU and Muhammadiyah in Realizing Islamic Moderation Values (Almu'tasim, 1019). Religion based on the Qur'an and Hadith in Indonesia (Farida, 2020), however, the previous studies did not present chronologically and comprehensively the roots of NU's moderate thinking, so that research can complement NU's moderation values and emphasize more on the analytical aspects of thought that developed in NU so that it is more conceptual and easy to understand.



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INTRODUCTION

In the last four years, the Ministry of Religion has been actively promoting the mainstreaming of religious moderation. Religious moderation is our perspective on religion in a moderate way, namely understanding and practicing religious teachings without being extreme, either extreme right or extreme left (Kemenag RI, 2019).

Extremism, radicalism, hate speech, and even the breakdown of relations between religious communities are problems currently faced by the Indonesian nation. Therefore, the existence of this religious moderation mainstreaming program is considered important and has found its momentum. (Halid 2024)

The form of extremism is manifested in two excessive forms. Two opposing poles. One on the right pole is very rigid in religion. Understanding religious teachings by throwing away the use of reason. While on the other hand, the opposite is true, very loose and free in understanding the sources of Islamic teachings. This freedom is seen in the excessive use of reason, so that reason is placed as a benchmark for the truth of a teaching. Groups that give an excessive portion to the text, but turn a blind eye to the development of reality tend to produce textual understanding. On the other hand, some groups give too much portion to reason or reality in understanding a problem. Thus, in making a decision, this group actually places great emphasis on reality and provides free space for reason.

The pattern of Indonesian Islam displays a relaxed, non-rigid, and fluid Islam, but also does not lose the principles or commitments bound by Islamic tradition. Indonesia also has a pattern of cultural life that is open (open mind) to foreign influences that are accepted in an easy going or exciting way (Zuhri, 2022). In contrast to the conflict areas in the Middle East (Arab) with the Arab spring which failed to bring about changes towards a more democratic direction in the Arab world. Indonesia was actually able to make a fairly smooth democratic transition because the social formation in Indonesia was different from the Arab world (Yasmine, 2016). In the first three quarters of the 20th century, Islamic reform in Indonesia gave birth to two groups of Islamic schools of thought, namely modernism and traditionalism. The two schools of thought had caused quite heated religious conflicts in various ideological and political battles (Dhofir, 2015). It is also important to note that although it is easy to accept outside influences, it does not mean that Indonesia is easily influenced. So it can be said that Indonesian society can accept influences from anywhere, but it does not mean that it is easily influenced. This means that Indonesian society has its own way of managing influences that come from outside (Surahman, 2013).

The importance of religious moderation in this study has two reasons first, religious populism that is presented to the public space is spiced with a tone of hatred towards adherents of a particular religion, race, and tribe.

Second, sectarian politics that deliberately use religious symbols to justify the truth of certain political maneuvers so as to lead society towards radical conservatism in thought. Religious populism arises from a narrow perspective on religion, so that it feels the most correct and cannot accept different opinions.

These two factors are related to each other. Both are presented to the public space in the context of practical political interests, where on the other hand it sacrifices the common sense of religious society. Because, there is no religious doctrine that teaches hatred, violence and infidelity just because of differences in political choices. The bad impact that we feel now is waiting for these hateful actions to spread from cyberspace to the real world.

Hat is why this research is entitled NAHDLTUL ULAMA' RELIGIOUS MODERATION EDUCATION: Analyzing the Social Character Attitudes of Nahdliyin.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a research that applies the type of qualitative research by sharpening the strength of descriptive analysis and rationality. This method relies on the strength of broad and comprehensive analysis. The method of data collection through the library method, studies on articles and books that are related to the problems of this research.

The validity of this research data uses triangulation by communicating the results of this research with the works of previous experts. So that the position of the results of this research can contribute to the development of religious moderation in Indonesia including the international world.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

NU Religious Moderation Education

Moderation is the middle way. In a number of discussion forums, there are often moderators who mediate the discussion process, do not side with anyone or any opinion, and are fair to all parties involved in the discussion. Moderation also means "something that is best". Something that is in the middle is usually between two bad things. An example is courage. Courage is considered good because it is between carelessness and fear. Generosity is also good because it is between wastefulness and stinginess, (Halid and Ilyas 2017).

Religious moderation means a middle way of practicing religion according to the definition of moderation. With religious moderation, a person is not extreme and does not go overboard when practicing the teachings of his religion. (Halid 2023c). People who practice it are called moderate. Extreme people are often trapped in practicing religion in the name of God only to defend His greatness while ignoring the aspect of humanity. Religious people in this way are willing to kill fellow human beings "in the name of God" even though maintaining humanity itself is part of the core of religious teachings. The term "moderate" etymologically comes from English, namely the adjective moderate which means not extreme, limited; having reasonable limits (not extreme, limited, having limits that can be accepted by reason. According to Arabic is wasatha which means middle and reasonable or ordinary, (Halid 2020a). The word moderate can also be an intransitive verb which means make or become less violent or extreme. From this root word also comes the word moderator (a person who acts as a mediator), moderation (noun) which means moderation or a condition that is usual, normal, not excessive., (Halid and al-Ghafir, Siddiq, Aman 2024). A moderate position means a position that is not excessive, not too soft and not too rigid, so taking a middle position is acceptable to reason, (Halid et al. 2024).

In terminology, "moderate" means an attitude or action that is carried out according to its proportion, neither excessive nor lacking. The views of experts on moderation, with the opinion of Khaled el Fadl in his book *The Great Theft* as quoted by Zuhairi Misrawi that moderate is an understanding that takes the middle path of two paths, namely neither extreme right nor extreme left. Still according to al Fadl, that a moderate Muslim means that they do not treat their religion like a dusty monument, but they treat it within the framework of an active and dynamic faith. They are able to appreciate the achievements of others who preceded them even though they live in the present era. Similar views are also expressed by several other figures.

Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi for example explains that moderate means a view or action that tries to take a middle path between two opposing attitudes, or between two excessive attitudes so that the attitude does not defeat one of the two. Meanwhile, according to Wahbah al-Zuhaily, moderation is a balance in everything from beliefs, practices or actions, attitudes, behavior and morality. From the opinions above, it can be explained that moderation is an attitude that seeks the welfare in all things, not only for certain groups, but for all humanity by realizing justice together or what is known as the term *al maslahah al-`ammah*.

NU's religious moderation education covers various aspects, from comprehensive religious teachings to learning social values, interfaith interaction skills, and inclusive personality development. NU emphasizes the importance of understanding and implementing Islamic teachings in a balanced way, avoiding extremism and intolerance (Halid 2023a).

NU strongly emphasizes the importance of developing cadres who understand and are able to practice the values of religious moderation in everyday life. (Halid et al. 2024). This is done through various formal and non-formal education programs organized by NU at the local, national, and international levels. NU's religious moderation education does not only focus on classroom teaching, but is also active in developing social and religious programs that help strengthen interfaith harmony in society. (Halid 2022b)

NU is also involved in building global awareness of the importance of religious moderation in maintaining world peace and stability. Through interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural cooperation, NU seeks to expand the network of harmony between religious communities at the international level. NU's Social Attitude. Tawassuth and I'tidal Attitude. Tasamuh Attitude, Tawazun Attitude, Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar, (Halid 2021)

Tawassuth is a neutral attitude that is based on the principle of life that upholds the value of justice in the midst of life together, not extreme left or extreme right. This attitude is also known as moderate (al-wasathiyah) meaning, a Muslim who has a tawassuth attitude will place himself in the middle in a matter, not extreme right or left. (Halid 2022a)

Halid explained that there are five reasons why a Muslim is encouraged to have a humble attitude, namely:

1. The attitude of tawassuth is considered a middle way in solving problems, so a Muslim always views tawassuth as the most just attitude in understanding religion.
2. The essence of Islamic teachings is compassion, so a Muslim who is tawassuth always prioritizes peace and avoids conflict.
3. Adherents of other religions are also creatures of Allah who must be respected and honored, so a Muslim who is tawassuth always views and treats them fairly and equally

4. Islamic teachings encourage democracy to be an alternative in realizing human values, so a Muslim who is tawassuth always prioritizes human values and democracy.
5. Islam prohibits discrimination against individuals or groups. So it is fitting that a Muslim who is tawassuth always upholds equality. (Halid 2023c)

A concrete example of tawassuth attitude in everyday life is:

1. Do not discriminate between groups in interacting and communicating.
2. Establish friendships between each other so that conflicts do not arise.
3. Accept the opinions of others who disagree.
4. Accept suggestions, input, and constructive criticism from others.
5. Use polite and soothing language when communicating.
6. Be tolerant of all existing differences (Halid 2023a)

Tawazun attitude means balance in life. It means that humans are taught to live by fulfilling all their needs in a balanced way, so they don't focus too much on just one thing. (Halid 2021), In Islam, tawazun means balancing life in this world and the hereafter (Halid 2020b). With tawazun, life becomes more balanced and the heart feels calm. Because, all aspects of life have been fulfilled sufficiently. While 'savings' for the hereafter have also been prepared when detikers are still alive. (Halid and Faishol 2022)

The attitude of i'tidal is one example of a part of a commendable attitude. The attitude of i'tidal is the attitude of a person who is upright and fair in doing something (Halid 2020a). Examples of i'tidal attitudes in people's lives

1. Someone who always obeys the rules of society
2. A teacher or lecturer who gives fair assignments and grades to all students or college students
3. Justice to all humans
4. Always upholding the truth in society
5. Never wavering or losing heart in upholding truth and justice in society
6. Able to accept criticism and patient in fighting for goodness (Halid 2023b)

The attitude of tolerance in society of the Nahdliyyin is an attitude or character of tolerance in the diversity of society, respecting each other, helping each other and not cooperating in the field of faith, (Halid 2020a).

1. Do not forbid friends or others who want to worship according to their own religion.

2. Appreciate every advantage possessed by others, as you appreciate your own advantages.
3. Help people who are affected by disasters regardless of race, tribe, region, and other things (Halid 2020a).

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that NU's strength lies in its tradition of thought that has been rooted since its founding, which is moderate in nature. NU's inclusive Islam is now called Wasathiyah Islam or religious moderation. The religious moderation movement within NU is integrated in several ways, namely by accepting one of the four madzhab, following the thoughts of the Ash'ariyah creed, finalizing the pattern of relations between Islam and nationality, and practicing interfaith dialogue. In addition, NU's moderation values are manifested in the attitudes of tasāmuh, tawasuth, tawāzun and the synergy of the ukhuwah trilogy (Islamiyah, Insaniyah, Wathaniyah). With a moderate tradition, NU plays a very important role in maintaining the diversity of the Indonesian nation. Based on this study, the author recommends to researchers.

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