

## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah



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**ABSTRACT:** In recent times in Indonesia, the outlook and attitudes of a person or group of people with religious devotion are likely to be severe, extreme, and intolerant. Furthermore, some are too liberal. Based on the phenomenon, the authors were moved to seek a solution of a sensible way of view and religious attitude (taking a middle and peaceful path) through religious moderation performed by the Nahdlatul Ulama and the Muhammadiyah. This type of research is field research with a qualitative approach, and the method used is a comparative description. A combination of interviews, observation, and documentary studies do the writer's data collection. As for the analysis, the authors used descriptive analytic data analysis techniques. According to research, Nahdlatul Ulama is an Islamic organization practicing modernity and religion, accommodating tradition and culture, culinary activity, and its deep-rooted message base. In comparison, Muhammadiyah's religious moderation was performed through Muhammadiyah charity enterprises in formal education, health, and religious dialogue. Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, in certain aspects, are different, though not principles, only branches in the doctrine of Islam. When it comes to religious moderation, both are moderate, having a tolerant attitude with members of other faiths and those of differing religious people, being impartial and neither extreme.

**KEYWORDS:** Religious Moderation, Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah

### I. INTRODUCTION

Most of Indonesia's population is Muslim (Nuridin et al., 2021; Pratomo & Kuswati, 2022). Radicalism, branded as the religion that leads to acts of terrorism, is an important problem for Indonesian Muslims today (Hidayat et al., 2022; Ulfa et al., 2021). These issues have caused Islam to be branded as a religion of terror, and Muslims prefer religious violence to spread their religious teachings. Even though this assumption is easy to counter, the fact that the perpetrators of terror in Indonesia are hard-line Muslims weighs heavily on the psychology of Muslims as a whole. (Rokhmad, 2012).

The root of social conflicts with a religious background is the failure of dialogue between religious understanding and social reality in Indonesia, which is multicultural, plural, and diverse. Failure to dialogue on understanding is experienced by hard-line groups who do not want to tolerate it and find it difficult to compromise with understandings of other religions that differ, even if they are of the same religion. (Yunus & Arhanuddin, 2018).

Cases like this require the state to have its own way of thinking and narrative. So as not to be trapped in the bulkhead of social spaces. Religious moderation is the mainstream in the religious pattern of Indonesian society. The reason is clear and precise, that being religious in moderation has become a characteristic of religious communities in Indonesia and is more suitable for the culture of a pluralistic society. In the current era, moderate religion is still needed even though this religious model has been practiced for a long time. (Sutrisno, 2019). The word moderation has a middle meaning, not extreme to the right or extreme to the left. If it is related to religious issues, then moderation does not follow the current to the right or left (Muhibbin, 2019). According to the Ministry of Religion (Kanwil Kemenag Central Java, 2019), religion should be oriented towards actualizing religious understanding in a moderate way, not extreme and not excessive. Religious moderation must be conveyed to all levels of society, given the many conflicts in the name of religion. Religion, which exists to protect human dignity, is misused to humiliate fellow human beings.

Therefore, there is a need for religious moderation in order to ward off radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia. Islamic organizations are a very appropriate place to sow religious moderation. They are considering that in recent years there have been indications of radical Islamic organizations in terms of understanding and action (Agung & Amrazi, 2018). In Indramayu Regency, West Java Province, in 2018, there was an act of terror throwing 'Pot Bombs' at the Indramayu Police Headquarters by the married couple Galuh Rosita (26 years) and Nur Hasanah (26 years). Who turned out to be a member of the *Jama'ah Ansharut Daulah* (JAD) group (<https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/3590067/terduga-teroris-serang-mapolres-indramayu-masuk-dalam->

## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

[jaringan-jad](#)). The Densus 88 team also arrested five other suspected terrorists in several locations in Indramayu Regency. One of them is a 16-year-old youth named Imam, a school student. He was arrested with his father, Ahmad Muhazan (43 years). In addition, some documents and flags of the ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) movement were also found at the residence of suspected terrorist Arif (30 years) during a shakedown (<https://www.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/daerah/18/07/15/pbw7rx383-densus-88-amankan-lima-terduga-teroris-di-indramayu>).

Even though the Government has taken concrete actions by banning and disbanding religious organizations indicated to have radical views through Government Regulation instead of Law Number 2 of 2017 concerning Community Organizations. However, the problem of radicalism in religion is not easy to solve to its roots because this group continues to metamorphose and develop under other terms and continues to carry out massive cadre formation with the target man youth who are prone to identity crises and moral shocks (Azca, 2013).

Regarding religious moderation, Islamic organizations are considered to have a strategic role in dialogue on moderate religious views and ways in a pluralistic society. Especially, Islamic mass organizations already moderate in understanding, such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. The several mass organizations that have a moderate viewpoint and prioritize a humanist approach as part of a religious moderation strategy besides that both have solid and broad organizational networks that can reach the grassroots so that they are strategic in preventing the spread of radicalism and terrorism. Through the path of religious moderation. This basis motivates the writer to be interested in conducting in-depth studies and research on religious moderation among Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah in Indramayu Regency.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Conceptual Study of Religious Moderation

In Arabic, moderation is known as *Wasath* or *Wasathiyyah*, which has the equivalent meaning of the words *Tawassuth* (middle), *Itidal* (fair), and *Tawazun* (balanced). People who apply *Wasathiyyah* principles can be called *Wasith*. The word *Wasathiyyah* is defined as "the best choice" (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). According to Arabic language experts, the word *Wasath* means "everything good according to its object". For example, the word "generous", which means the attitude between stingy and extravagant, or the word "brave", which means the attitude between coward (*Al-jubn*) and desperate (*Tahawur*), and many other examples in Arabic (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Whatever word is used, they all imply the same meaning: fairness, which in this context means choosing a middle-ground position between various extreme choices.

The analogy of moderation is like a movement from the periphery, which tends towards the center or axis (centripetal). In contrast, extremism is the opposite movement away from the center or axis, towards the outer and extreme sides (centrifugal). Like the pendulum of the clock, a dynamic movement. It does not stop at one extreme on the outside but moves toward the middle (Suprpto, 2020). Borrowing this analogy, in the context of religion, a moderate attitude is thus a choice to have a perspective, attitude, and behavior in the middle between the existing extreme choices. At the same time, religious extremism is a perspective, attitude, and behavior that exceeds the limits of moderation in understanding and religious practice. Therefore, religious moderation can then be understood as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes a position in the middle, always acts fairly and is not extreme in religion (Nurdin, 2021).

There needs to be measurements, limits, and indicators to determine whether religious perspectives, attitudes, and behavior are classified as moderate or extreme. These measurements can be based on reliable sources, such as religious texts, state constitutions, local wisdom, consensus, and mutual agreements (Nurdin, 2021).

Religious moderation must be understood as a balanced religious attitude between one's religious practice (exclusive) and respect for other people's religious practices with different beliefs (inclusive). This balance or middle way in religious practice will undoubtedly prevent us from extreme extremes, bigotry, and revolutionary religious attitudes. As previously indicated, religious moderation is a solution to the presence of two extreme poles in religion, the ultraconservative or extreme right on the one hand and the liberal or extreme left on the other (Hermanto, et. al., 2021).

Religious moderation is an understanding of religion that takes the middle way to reach a balance: not going to the right and not going to the left. This understanding seeks to form a balanced life, respecting each other, especially in carrying out God's commands (Junaedi, 2019). Four indicators of religious moderation must be known: national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence or anti-radicalism and violence, and accommodating local religions (Saifuddin, 2019). Moderation has a vast scope and covers a wide variety of things, including moderation guaranteeing the right to freedom that is balanced with obligations, moderation guaranteeing a balance between the worldly and the hereafter, as well as material and spiritual, and moderation guaranteeing a balance between intellectual abilities and moral goodness (Taher, 2007).

From the explanation above, the writer can conclude that the definition of moderation is fair, equality, in the middle, and not exaggerating. That is, all actions must be strived to be in the middle, not too extreme right or extreme left. More specifically, moderate behavior is carried out in religious matters and every aspect of life.

## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

### B. About Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was born on January 31, 1926, as a representation of traditionalist scholars, with *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* (*Aswaja*) ideology. The figures who played a role included K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, K.H. Wahab Hasbullah, and the *Ulama* (Islamic scholars) at that time when reform activities began to develop widely. Where the clergy is not yet very organized, but they already have a solid relationship with each other (Hasyim, 2002).

The establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama cannot be separated from efforts to defend the teachings of *Aswaja*. This teaching comes from the Al-Qur'an, Sunnah, Ijma' (decisions of previous Islamic scholars or Ulama), and Qiyas (cases in the stories of the Al-Qura'n and Hadith) as quoted by Marijan from K.H. Mustofa Bisri has three substances, namely: (1) in the field of Islamic law adheres to one of the teachings of the four Islamic schools of thought (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i, and Hambali), in practice NU Kyai's adherents firmly to the Mazhab of Syafi'i, (2) in the matter of monotheism (divinity), adheres to the teachings of Imam Abu Hasan al-Ash'ari and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidzi, (3) in the field of Sufism, adheres to the basic teachings of Imam Abu Qasim al-Junaidi (Ida, 2004).

Nahdlatul Ulama is an Islamic religious organization born from a *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school), and its founder is K.H. Hasyim Ash'ari. This organization adheres to the *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* ideology. According to NU, *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* is a group that understands, lives, and practices Islamic teachings using the Mazhab approach. Nahdlatul Ulama believes that by following a *Mazhab* of thought with a straightforward method (*Manhaj*) and opinion (*Aqwal*), NU members will be more assured of being on the straight path and receiving pure Islamic teachings. (Thoza, 2012).

Da'wah strategy in NU consists of three pillars: (1). *Tawassuth* (moderate) is a middle attitude centered on the principle of life, which upholds being fair and square during life without taking extreme attitudes. Implementing this attitude in the legal context is a balance in using revelation and reason. In the context of *Aqidah* it is not easy to give a verdict of the infidel heretical to other people. Taking a middle attitude between revelation and reason, destiny and endeavor, as well as between *Taklid* and *Ijtihad*, (2). *Tawazun* and *Ta'adul* (balance) this attitude reflects in the social order of both the political and cultural dimensions, namely by taking a critical accommodative attitude by developing calls for *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Mungkar*, and (3). *Tasamuh* (tolerance), namely developing and cultivating an attitude of respect for the diversity of understandings, actions, and movements in the Islamic context. This principle is intended in an effort to build *Ukhuwah* both *Ukhuwah Islamiyah*, *Basyariyah* and *Wathaniyah*. (Machmudi, 2013).

Since its establishment until now, the role of NU towards the nation has been divided into several fields, Islamic da'wah, social, educational, economic, and political. In the field of Islamic da'wah, NU has made a significant contribution to spreading Islam by grounding Islam with the ideology of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah*. NU is now an Islamic organization with the most followers in Indonesia. NU has manifested itself since its inception in education by forming Islamic boarding schools based on Islamic religious education and natural sciences. To create a pious, virtuous, broad-minded, and skilled society. In addition, NU was also the initiator of the establishment of the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) as a higher education institution for the study of Islamic thought in the country (Machmudi, 2013).

NU also has a role in the social sphere, one of which is forming various organizations from various walks of life and other social activities. Forming various efforts to build an independent economy were also carried out by NU in the economic field, one of which was the formation of *Nahdlatul Tujjar*, or the movement of traders to advance the nation's economy in 1920. Meanwhile, in the political field, NU has played an important role since its inception. NU clerics bravely fought against colonialism like the fatwa issued by K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari's obligation to jihad against the Dutch. The election of KH Abdurrahman Wahid as President is also one of NU's contributions to the nation in the political field (Machmudi, 2013).

### C. About Muhammadiyah

Muhammadiyah is the name of an Islamic movement born in Kauman, Yogyakarta, on November 18, 1912 (Tim Penyusun, 2008). When it was established and submitted for approval to the Dutch East Indies Government, it used the AD date and year. The date coincides with the *Hijriah* calendar, namely 8 Dzulhijjah 1330 Hijriah. The founder of Muhammadiyah was a Kiai who was known to be pious, intelligent, and had a reformer spirit, namely Kiai Haji Ahmad Dahlan, who was previously named Muhammad Darwis. Muhammadiyah was founded as an official organization, association, or association often referred to as "*Persyarikatan*", which then used the term "*Persyarikatan Moehamdijah*" (Nashir, 2010).

Muhammadiyah's efforts at first could have been smoother. K.H. Ahmad Dahlan widely accepted rejection, threats, obstacles, and insults. However, thanks to his perseverance and patience, Muhammadiyah finally received a warm welcome from his family and close friends. Profession K.H. Ahmad Dahlan as a trader, supported his invitation so that in a short time, his invitation spread outside the village of Kauman, even outside the island of Java. To organize these activities, *Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah* was founded. Moreover, now Muhammadiyah has existed in all corners of the Indonesian homeland.

Muhammadiyah is an association that is an Islamic movement. The movement's aim is "Islamic da'wah and *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar*," aimed at individuals and society. Da'wah and *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* in the first field are divided into two groups,

## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

namely: (1). To those who have embraced Islam as a form of renewal (*Tajdid*), namely returning to the original and pure teachings of Islam, and (2). To those who are not yet Muslim, it is an appeal or an invitation to embrace Islam. (Hazmi, et. al., 2020).

Islamic da'wah and *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* in the second area, namely to the community, are of kindness, guidance, and warning. All of this is carried out together with deliberations based on piety and hoping for the pleasure of Allah. By carrying out Islamic da'wah and *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* appropriately, Muhammadiyah moves society towards its goal, namely "The realization of a main, just and prosperous society that pleases Allah SWT."

Muhammadiyah is an organization that has made a significant contribution to the nation, especially in the field of education. Until now, Muhammadiyah is still characterized by its well-organized educational activities. Muhammadiyah focuses more on modern education than Islamic boarding schools. Besides education, Muhammadiyah is well known for its reputation in the social and health fields. Many hospitals were established in the regions and coordinated by the Central Muhammadiyah Board. The universities and hospitals that Muhammadiyah developed all significantly contributed to Muhammadiyah da'wah's activities in general (Machmudi, 2013).

Being a religious movement, Muhammadiyah plays a vital role in the nation's journey. The background of Muhammadiyah organization has an association of bodies that manage organizational activities or programs called Muhammadiyah Charity Business (UAM). Muhammadiyah Charity Business covers the fields of da'wah, education, and social services. Da'wah activities include *Tabligh* and recitation activities. The field of education includes all types of formal education from Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle School, High School/Vocational School, Islamic Boarding Schools, and Universities. The field of social services includes RB (Maternity Home), PKU Hospital (Hospital for Helping People's Misery), PAY (Orphanage), and Nursing Homes (Su'ud, 2003).

### III. METHOD

This type of research is field research with a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is relevant to the research field in the form of two mass organizations (NU and Muhammadiyah) with special attention and concern for religious moderation programs. In this case, the qualitative approach emphasizes the actual situation in the two mass organizations. The complexity includes various conditions that exist in the two organizations and within certain limits will experience its complexity, but this can be overcome through the detailed collection of data and source selection. Qualitative research is not just a collection of information data, but is structured in a certain and meaningful way of thinking (Fatimah et al., 2022; Kholil et al., 2022; Madakir et al., 2022; Rizkiawan et al., 2022; Sumarna et al., 2021).

The appropriate method applied in this study is a comparative descriptive method. This research also focuses on problems that occur in the present and belongs to actual problems. Its implementation is not limited to collecting and compiling data but includes analysis and interpretation of the meaning of the data. The data collected was first compiled, explained, and analyzed (because this method is often called the analytical method). In the last stage, this method must arrive at conclusions based on research data (Surakhmad, 1998).

This meaning indicates that the workings of the comparative descriptive method are through procedures for collecting data and information classified as factual, actual, and contemporary cases found among the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah in Indramayu Regency. The data is related to practice, understanding, and differences in religious moderation, which are then analyzed comparatively. Therefore, the research method used is a comparative descriptive, namely comparing the practice and understanding of religious moderation among Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah in Indramayu Regency. The comparative descriptive method was used to collect and analyze data from the two mass organizations that will be examined about history, development, activity programs, practices of religious moderation, understanding of religious moderation, and differences in religious moderation among Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, Indramayu Regency.

The author's data collection was carried out by triangulation (combined) methods of interviews, observation, and documentation studies. As for the analysis, the authors used descriptive analytic data analysis techniques. The objects in this study were the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah members of Indramayu Regency, which consisted of branch/regional administrators, NU and Muhammadiyah education figures, Nahdliyin and Muhammadiyah members, and the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) of Indramayu Regency, Indonesia.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Religious Moderation among Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

From the results of observations and interviews, cultural moderation of religion among Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah existed and was already being practiced by Nahdliyin and Muhammadiyah before the religious moderation program was promoted by the Government of Indonesia in the National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020-2024.

NU figures have carried out religious moderation among NU since its founding. NU figures not only practice it in their own lives but also teach it to *Santri* and other members of the *Nahdliyin* community. The values of religious moderation taught by NU figures themselves, namely: national commitment, rejecting violence, and tolerance towards fellow citizens. NU which



## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

understands *Ahlussunah Wal Jama'ah* tries to build a religious understanding that is pluralism and inclusive. Consequently, NU is required to actualize it in various aspects of society (Hilmy, 2013). Especially with the rise of the actions of certain Islamic groups who use radical methods has positioned Islam, in general, as a religion that perpetuates intolerance with violence (Muqoyyidin, 2012).

In general, NU is a social organization that participates in the process of educating the nation's life. NU has great concern for the world of education regarding religious moderation. *Madrasah* and Islamic boarding schools prove the contribution of NU members. Substantially, the teachings of *Ahlussunah Wal Jama'ah* emphasize and teach the values of religious moderation such as *Tawasuth-i'tidal* (balance-justice), *Tasamuh* (tolerant), *Tawazun* (moderate), and *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* (Masyhudi, et al., 2007). NU circles always respect local culture and traditions in a dynamically developing society. Their method follows Islamic teachings, which are more tolerant of local culture. The same is the persuasive methods developed by *Walisongo* in Islamizing the island of Java and replacing Hindu-Buddhist forces in the XVI and XVII centuries (Mas'ud, 2006).

The attitude of moderation in religion among the Muhammadiyah has been built from the start by the founder of this organization, namely K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. One of the essential lessons from the leadership of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is a solid commitment to moderation and religious tolerance. During his leadership, there was creative and harmonious cooperation with almost all community groups (Shihab, 1998).

As a renewal movement (*Tajdid*), Muhammadiyah invites people to purify their faith and Islam to realize an actual Islamic society. Muhammadiyah wants to invite people to return to pure teachings by referring to the original texts of the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah with the correct understanding. Through preaching *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* in actual proportions, not using coercion and violence (Sucipto, 2010).

Abdul Mu'ti explained that Muhammadiyah carried out religious moderation through two domains, structurally and culturally (Zuhri, 2017). Structurally, Muhammadiyah circles are trying to reinforce the ideology of Progressive Islam and *Dar Al-Ahdi Wa Al-Syadah*. This was carried out starting from the Muhammadiyah leadership to the branch level. In practice, this ideology is confirmed through recitation materials, regeneration, assemblies, autonomous organizations, and Muhammadiyah Charity. Then, at the cultural level, Muhammadiyah members also transform religious moderation in delivering materials at Islamic boarding schools to Muhammadiyah universities (Zuhri, 2017).

In addition, the aspect of religious moderation formulated by Muhammadiyah members in Islamic education is the teaching of morality. Muhammadiyah circles consider that easy morality is essential in building individual character to achieve a good relationship with their God and within their community, as stated in the Beliefs and Aspirations of Muhammadiyah Life (MKCH). (Joseph, 2005).

### B. Understanding among Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah regarding Religious Moderation

The religious moderation displayed by NU can be seen from the religious understanding it adheres to. In the field of theology, NU claims to be a follower of *Ahlussunah Wal Jama'ah* (*Aswaja*). In the study of the flow of knowledge of Kalam (theology), *Aswaja* is known as a school that stands between the two extremities of the *Muktazilah* and *Khawarij* schools, between the *Qadariyah* and the *Jabariyah*. The *Muktazilah* and *Qadariyah* groups have rationalist-liberal characteristics, while the *Khawarij* and *Jabariyah* groups have the characteristics of being traditionalist-literalist groups. Meanwhile, in the field of Fiqh, NU prefers the *Shafi'i* sect as a reference point for its religious doctrines (Darajat, 2017).

The NU group actively develops friendly Islamic insights by emphasizing the importance of democracy, tolerance, pluralism, human rights, and social justice. For example, K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (NU figure) formulated that moderation must always encourage efforts to realize social justice, which in religion is known as *Al-Maslahah Al-'Ammah*. However, this must be used as the foundation of public policy because we truly translate the essence of religion into the public space. Moreover, every leader has a high moral responsibility to translate it into real life, which is truly felt by the Islamic public. Always being moderate in addressing every issue, even this principle of moderation, is a characteristic of Islam in responding to all problems (Misrawi, 2010).

Referring to the Islamic Moderation book, according to NU circles, there are at least six characteristics of being moderate in Islam, namely: understanding reality, understanding priority Fiqh, making it easy for others to practice religion, understanding religious texts comprehensively, being tolerant, and understanding *Sunatullah* in creation.

The moderate Islamic concept of Muhammadiyah (*Wasathiyah*) refers to the meaning of *Ummatan Wasathan* (Al-Baqarah verse 143). The word *Wasath* in verse means *Khiyar* (best, most perfect) and *Al-Adl* (fair). Thus, *Ummatan Wasathan* means the best and just people in a broad corridor of meaning. In practice, moderate Islam, chosen by Muhammadiyah, always seeks a middle way to solve problems. 'Differences' in any form with fellow religious communities are resolved through a compromise that upholds tolerance and justice so that both parties can accept it. This way, the problems encountered can be solved without resorting to violence.

First, the moderate Islam chosen by Muhammadiyah must depart from the belief that Islam is a moderate religion. Second, the Islamic moderation chosen by Muhammadiyah above must be followed up in understanding and practicing Islam by avoiding

## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

*Tatharruf* (extreme) attitudes. Third, the concept of moderate Islam chosen by Muhammadiyah does not mean an attitude that is not in favor of the truth and does not have a position to determine what is right and wrong. Muhammadiyah members as moderate Muslims are also not hypocrites who always look for security, are 'fickle,' and pick and choose Islamic teachings according to their interests. Moderate Muslims believe that the totality of Islam is a religion that is always modern, not hostile to the dynamics of the world and people of other religions (<http://www.muhammadiyah.or.id/id/news-12243-detail-moderat-dalam-bersikap-berfikir-dan-bertindak.html>)

From the explanation above and based on the results of observations and interviews with NU and Muhammadiyah circles, religious moderation in the perspective of NU and Muhammadiyah circles can be concluded as a person's perspective and way of being firm in respecting and responding to differences in religious diversity, as well as differences in race, ethnicity, culture, customs, and ethnicity in order to maintain unity among religious communities and maintain the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

### C. Differences in Religious Moderation among Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah differ in certain aspects (*Ikhtilaf*) but not in terms of national and state doctrine. In this aspect, they have the same vision, defend the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, and be moderate and tolerant. Nahdlatul Ulama, with the doctrines of *Tawazun*, *Tawassuth*, *I'tidal*, and *Tasamuh*, continues to reject the penetration of extreme Western ideology and all kinds of religious violence.

Nahdlatul Ulama often advocates for marginalized religious groups or other sects, such as *Ahmadiyah* and *Shia*. Meanwhile, although it is a Puritan Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah also continues to reject extremism and the penetration of transnational Islamic ideologies such as the ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) movement. The difference between Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah is more on trivial Islamic law (Fiqh), *Furu'iyah-Khilaftiyah*, not theological-fundamental concerning state doctrine (Abidin, 2015).

Differences in the religious orientations of NU and Muhammadiyah can be traced based on the process of polarizing thoughts and educational experiences of the two principal founding figures of the organizations, namely K.H. Ahmad Dahlan and K.H. Hasyim Ash'ari. Both are representatives of Indonesian Ulama (Islamic Scholar) who lived in the 19th and 20th centuries. The difference in education and experience caused NU and Muhammadiyah to become two different organizations, even though this was not fundamental. Thus, the difference between NU and Muhammadiyah is still in the tolerance corridor and does not lead to conflict.

NU and Muhammadiyah have their characteristics in terms of religious moderation. NU has the characteristics of an Islamic boarding school (*Pesantren*) and Islamic Scholar (*Ulama*), while Muhammadiyah is a reliable educational institution and has produced many Muslim scholars. NU and Muhammadiyah both adhere to moderate Islamic teachings. With its *Pesantren* and *Ulama* as a basis, NU has become a solid stronghold to ward off liberalism or freedom. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah, with its intellectual base, is expected to be able to bring Indonesia to progress and glory and leave behind fundamentalist ideas that seriously threaten the progress of the nation because they have little thought and blind faith.

The Islamization of NU and Muhammadiyah is sharing Islamisation. The division of working areas is an unwritten agreement in the division of areas for Islamization and moderation of religion in Indonesia which was carried out by the "Founding Fathers", namely K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari and K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. Therefore, this is a significant capital of Indonesian Islam in dividing the areas of Islamic moderation and does not need to be questioned. Islam Nusantara (NU) and Progressive Islam (Muhammadiyah), which are carried out in the theme of the Conference of these two mass organizations, need to be adequately formulated so that the results can be used as a platform for insight into Indonesian Islam in the future (Darajat, 2017).

Doctrinally, NU and Muhammadiyah have several differences or distinctions, especially in the practice of worship, which is *Furu'iyah* (branches) in Islam. Even so, there is one common thread that unites the two. NU and Muhammadiyah tolerate other religions, are not one-sided, and carry out Pancasila values in their lives.

## CONCLUSIONS

Religious moderation among NU and Muhammadiyah has ways that are more persuasive in carrying out their mission of the struggle for religious moderation and are far from patterns of violence. NU, which represents traditionalist Islam in its practice of religious moderation, is more accommodating to tradition and culture, cultural *da'wah*, and the basis of the *Pesantren* and *Ulama*. While Muhammadiyah represents modernist Islam, its religious moderation is carried out through Muhammadiyah Charity in formal education, health, and religious dialogue.

NU understands religious moderation more towards perspectives related to understanding and practicing religious teachings so that in implementing them, they are always on a middle path, not exaggerated or extreme either to the right or the left. Whereas religious moderation in the view of Muhammadiyah members refers to the meaning of *Ummatan Wasathan* (Al-Baqarah verse 143), namely being the best and fairest people in religion, always seeking a middle way in solving problems while upholding tolerance and justice.

## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

NU and Muhammadiyah, in certain aspects, are indeed different (*Ikhtilaf*), although not in principle, only in the issue of *Furu'iyah* (branches) in Islamic teachings. In terms of religious moderation, both have a moderate understanding and a tolerant attitude toward followers of other religions. Also, fellow followers of different religions are not one-sided and not extreme. NU's religious moderation is carried out through Islamic boarding schools (*Pesantren*), Ulama, and cultural da'wah. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah's moderation of religion is displayed through Muhammadiyah's Charity Business, with the area working on formal education and health institutions.

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## Religious Moderation among the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah

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