



The Practice of Religious Moderation in Muhammadiyah Higher Education (A Case Study in The Hadith Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University)

Parjiman Lathifa^{a,1*}

Email: 1parjiman@ilha.uad.ac.id

^aUniversitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Correspondent

ABSTRACT

Religious moderation is an urgent necessity in the era of globalization to maintain social stability and interfaith harmony. Islamic-based higher education institutions, such as Ahmad Dahlan University, play a strategic role in shaping students' moderate and tolerant character. This study examines the practice of religious moderation in the Hadith Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University, aiming to understand how moderation values are applied in the academic environment and student life. This research employs a descriptive quantitative and causal approach using a survey method. The research population consists of students from the Hadith Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University, with a sample of 61 students selected through a simple random sampling technique. Data collection was conducted using a Likert-scale-based questionnaire to measure attitudes, understanding, and practices of religious moderation. The study reveals that students' attitudes toward religious moderation play a significant role in shaping moderate behaviors. Furthermore, a deep understanding of moderate religious values supports the effective implementation of religious moderation, while moderate religious practices enhance its application in daily life. The findings contribute to the development of religious moderation theory, demonstrating that students' attitudes, understanding, and practices have a substantial impact on moderating religious views. These insights can serve as a foundation for designing more effective educational programs aimed at fostering moderate attitudes and understanding among students.

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Introduction

Religious moderation has become an urgent necessity in the era of globalization to maintain social stability and interfaith harmony. The diversity of society, characterized by various cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, increases the potential for conflict if not managed wisely. Religious moderation encompasses tolerance, respect for differences, and adaptability as crucial efforts to prevent radicalism and maintain social peace. According to research by (Shalahuddin et

al., 2023) the practice of religious moderation faces challenges such as issues of religious pluralism, biased interpretations of tolerance, and the relativity of truth that affect the concept of moderation. (Zuhriyandi, 2023) states that in an era where globalization accelerates intercultural and interfaith interactions, diverse beliefs and perspectives intersect, potentially triggering conflicts that threaten peace and social stability. Thus, religious moderation is considered essential as a strategy to prevent potential conflicts and foster peace. The values of moderation serve as a foundation for harmonious relationships.

Islamic-based higher education institutions play a strategic role in shaping a young generation with moderate and tolerant characteristics. As educational institutions that function not only as places to acquire knowledge but also as platforms for instilling positive societal values, universities bear the responsibility of nurturing religious moderation. This is crucial to ensure that graduates develop a broad perspective and can apply the principles of Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin in their lives. Research by (Afwadzi & Miski, 2022) explains that Muhammadiyah students' understanding of moderate Islam varies but generally leans toward a dynamic view associated with modernity. While some students reject the conceptual terminology of "moderate Islam," their mindset remains inclined toward moderation. Meanwhile, a study by (Selvia et al., 2022) found that the understanding of religious moderation among students in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at General Universities (PTU) and State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) falls into the moderate category, with significant differences between the two. At PTU, 66.25% of students have a moderate understanding, and 33.75% fall into the high category, whereas at PTKIN, 77.5% are in the moderate category, and 21.25% in the high category.

Muhammadiyah, as a moderate Islamic organization, has a long history of promoting inclusive and tolerant preaching (dakwah). It is committed to guiding its followers in understanding and practicing Islam wisely and peacefully. Religious moderation is a core value integrated into various aspects, including the education system. Therefore, Muhammadiyah universities are expected to set an example in implementing religious moderation, both within the campus environment and in broader society. Muhammadiyah strives to avoid both radical and overly conservative stances that interpret the Qur'an and Sunnah strictly textually, while also steering clear of liberal tendencies that prioritize reason over religious texts. Muhammadiyah's approach to moderation is reflected in its proportional and rational use of reason in understanding Islamic teachings (Lorinda, 2022). Education serves as Muhammadiyah's primary tool for instilling the values of moderation in the younger generation through schools and universities, not only transferring religious knowledge but also shaping character that supports social harmony (Oktriyani et al., 2024).

The Hadith Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University, as an institution under

Muhammadiyah, holds a responsibility in maintaining and implementing religious moderation. This program focuses on Hadith studies as one of the primary sources of Islamic teachings. With its emphasis on moderate values, the Hadith Studies Program plays a crucial role in shaping students' moderate attitudes, enabling them to act as agents of moderation in society. Menurut (Suryadilaga, 2016) the Hadith Studies Program aims to produce graduates with in-depth knowledge of Hadith studies, capable of conducting research, and explaining Hadith accurately to benefit the community. In addition to fundamental Hadith scholarship, students are also expected to master information technology to contribute to the preservation of Sunnah. This demonstrates the program's commitment to shaping graduates who are both moderate and relevant to contemporary developments.

The implementation of religious moderation in Islamic higher education institutions is not without challenges. These challenges include conservative views, resistance to new ideas, and opposition from groups that perceive moderation as an effort to weaken religious values. (Anzaikhan et al., 2023) explain that the emergence of radical ideologies that cause conflict poses a real challenge, even within universities. The challenges of religious moderation in Islamic education in Indonesia are related to issues of diversity, radicalization, and fundamentalism that continue to develop in society (Thoyib, 2020). Therefore, universities must develop effective methods and approaches to instill religious moderation in students, ensuring they comprehend moderation as an essential value aligned with Islamic teachings.

Based on the discussion above, research on The Practice of Religious Moderation in Muhammadiyah Higher Education: A Case Study in the Hadith Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University is relevant in understanding how Muhammadiyah universities apply moderation values in Islamic education. The findings of this study can contribute to the development of effective educational strategies for instilling religious moderation. Additionally, this research can serve as an inspiration for other Islamic educational institutions to implement religious moderation in order to create a tolerant and peaceful society.

Discussion

The Relationship Between Attitude and Religious Moderation

The analysis shows that the Attitude variable has a significant influence on the religious moderation variable in the Islamic Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University. Based on the t-test, the t-value for Attitude is 2.656 with a significance of 0.010, which is smaller than 0.05, thus accepting hypothesis H1. This indicates that students' attitudes toward religious moderation significantly contribute to shaping their moderation attitudes, highlighting the importance of attitude in fostering moderate religious understanding among students. Tolerance among

students and educators, regardless of religious differences, serves as a crucial foundation for implementing religious moderation (Pahrul et al., 2024). The positive relationship between religious moderation attitudes and student attitudes toward religious moderation contributes to fostering interfaith tolerance (Setiadi et al., 2022). Students' attitudes toward religious moderation significantly influence the formation of moderate understanding and interfaith tolerance in the Islamic Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University.

The Relationship Between Understanding and Religious Moderation

The Understanding variable has a significant influence on the religious moderation variable in the Islamic Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University. The t-value for Understanding is 2.603 with a significance of 0.012, indicating that students' understanding of moderate religious values positively contributes to their religious moderation attitudes. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is accepted, emphasizing that the better one's understanding of religion, the more likely they are to practice religious moderation. A balanced understanding and moderation in religion, which avoids extremism and violence, and encourages a friendly, gentle, and compassionate life (Nurdin, 2021). Understanding of religious moderation among students in various private and public universities shows slightly higher understanding, even though both are in the moderate category, and both demonstrate national commitment, tolerance, and an anti-violence attitude in daily life (Selvia et al., 2022).

The Relationship Between Practice and Religious Moderation

The Practice variable also has a significant influence on the religious moderation variable in the Islamic Studies Program at Ahmad Dahlan University. The t-value for Practice is 3.085 with a significance of 0.003, which is smaller than 0.05, thus accepting hypothesis H3. This indicates that moderate religious practices, reflected in daily behavior, strengthen the implementation of religious moderation among students. Moderate practices can foster harmony and better understanding in interactions with various parties. Moderate religious practices aim to maintain balance in daily life (Surini & Kurniasih, 2020). Religious moderation facilitates the understanding that religion can be practiced in a balanced way, avoiding extremism from both conservative and liberal sides (Yumna et al., 2023). Moderate religious practices significantly contribute to strengthening the application of religious moderation, fostering harmony and better understanding in social interactions.

Conclusion

Students' attitudes toward religious moderation significantly contribute to shaping moderate attitudes among them. A good understanding of moderate religious values supports the application of religious moderation among students. Moderate religious practices strengthen the implementation of religious moderation in students' daily lives.

This research contributes to the development of religious moderation theory, showing that students' attitudes, understanding, and religious practices significantly affect the application of religious moderation. This research can be used as a basis for designing more effective educational programs to shape students' moderate attitudes and understanding.

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