

Reconciliation Amongst Islamic-Based Groups as a Solution to the Tolerance Issue and the Accomplishment of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

Rekonsiliasi Antarkelompok Berbasis Islam sebagai Solusi atas Krisis Toleransi dan Terwujudnya Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia

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ABSTRAK

Fenomena meningkatnya ketegangan dan konflik antara Aliran Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah dan Aliran Salafi menunjukkan adanya krisis toleransi yang mendalam, yang mengancam kerukunan dan stabilitas sosial di masyarakat Indonesia yang plural. Adapun tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melakukan upaya rekonsiliasi toleransi pemikiran beragama yang dapat menjadi dasar fondasi yang kuat untuk membangun masyarakat Indonesia yang harmonis dan toleran, serta mampu menghadapi tantangan krisis toleransi keberagamaan di masa depan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi literatur sistematis. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui penelaahan berbagai sumber tertulis seperti buku, artikel ilmiah, jurnal penelitian, dan dokumen yang relevan dengan topik penelitian. Analisis data dilakukan dengan cara mengkaji, membandingkan, dan mengintegrasikan informasi dari berbagai sumber pustaka untuk memahami akar permasalahan serta merumuskan solusi yang komprehensif. Hasil temuan mengungkapkan Aswaja dan Salafi merupakan dua aliran utama Islam di Indonesia yang memiliki perbedaan pendekatan dan pemikiran. Aswaja terbelang lebih moderat, menghargai ijtihad dan warisan keilmuan, sementara Salafi lebih literalis, menolak bid'ah dan tradisi lokal. Perbedaan keyakinan dan kepercayaan, politik identitas, ekstremisme, hoaks, dan kurangnya pendidikan toleransi menjadi faktor konflik antara kedua aliran ini. Upaya rekonsiliasi dapat dilakukan mengintegrasikan kearifan lokal dalam dialog agama, pelibatan tokoh lokal dalam pendidikan dan penyuluhan, kolaborasi antar-komunitas berbasis wilayah, penyusunan program pendidikan yang sensitif terhadap keberagaman lokal dan keterlibatan masyarakat dan pemerintah. Moderasi pemikiran beragama sangat penting di era kontemporer untuk menciptakan harmoni persatuan, menangkal paham ekstremis, mendukung dialog antaragama, pembangunan sosial, serta mendukung integrasi sosial dan kebhinekaan.

Kata Kunci: Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah; Moderasi Pemikiran Beragama; Salafiyah

ABSTRACT

The growing friction and conflict between the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) and the Salafiyah (Salafi) sects in several Indonesian cities reflect a fundamental tolerance problem that endangers harmony and social stability in Indonesia's multicultural society. This study aims to explore ways to bridge differing perspectives on religious tolerance, which can serve as a solid foundation for the development of a peaceful and respectful Indonesian society, as well as to be prepared to encounter future problems of religious tolerance crisis. This research uses a systematic literature review method. Data collection is conducted through the examination of various written sources such as books, scientific articles, research journals, and documents relevant to the research topic. Data analysis is carried out by reviewing, comparing, and integrating information from various bibliographic sources to understand the root of the problem and formulate a comprehensive solution. Findings indicate that Aswaja and Salafi are Indonesia's two primary sects of Islam, with distinct approaches and ideas. Aswaja is more moderate, valuing ijtihad and scientific heritage, whilst Salafi is more literalist, condemning heresy and local traditions. Differences in beliefs and convictions, identity politics, extremism, hoaxes, and the lack of tolerance education are factors of conflict between these two streams. Reconciliation efforts can be carried out by integrating local wisdom into interfaith dialogue, involving local figures in education and outreach, fostering collaboration between community-based regions, and developing educational programs that are sensitive to local diversity, and involving both the community and the government. The moderation of religious thought is very important in the contemporary era to create harmony and unity, counter extremist ideologies, support interfaith dialogue and social development, and promote social integration and diversity.

Keywords: Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah; Moderation of Religious Thought; Reconciliation; Salafiyah

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, home to the largest Muslim population in the world, boasts a rich and diverse Islamic heritage. This diversity is reflected in various aspects of life, ranging from traditions and cultures to different religious practices in each region (Abidin et al., 2022). Despite their differing perspectives and customs, all Islamic sects that have emerged in Indonesia have contributed to the growth of Muslims in Indonesia. They play a significant role in spreading Islamic teachings, promoting people's values and spirituality, and enriching Indonesia's Islamic heritage. This difference should be acknowledged and exploited as a strength to complement one another rather than to assert the truth (Ali Muhtarom & Sahlul Fuad 2020).

However, nowadays, instances of religious intolerance have become increasingly visible, such as the spread of hate speech, slander, and provocation that trigger conflicts between certain religious sects or groups. This situation further muddies the situation and divides the unity of the people. In some cases, this intolerance can even trigger anarchic and violent acts, such as attacks on places of worship, expulsions, or physical clashes between groups of different beliefs (Rahma et al. 2022). This kind of intolerance phenomenon is really very worrying and contrary to the values of diversity and unity that the Indonesian nation upholds. This intolerance can threaten the unity and harmony of religious people, which has been well maintained so far (Yahya, F, and A 2020).

One of the most noticeable contrasts is between two major standpoints, Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafiyah. Although both organizations believe that the Qur'an and Hadith are the primary sources of Islamic teachings, their theological interpretations and practices differ from one another. Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah, commonly known as Sunni, is a theological understanding that follows the sunnah or tradition of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, as well as the traces of the companions, tabi'in (generation after generation), and prior scholars (Bahri 2020). They emphasized the importance of following the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. However, they also admit that there is a difference of opinion among scholars on the issue of *furu'* (branches) as long as it does not deviate from the main teachings of Islam (Zaini 2023).

Differences of opinion between these two groups often trigger friction and tension in society, especially related to certain religious practices. One example that is often a source of debate is the celebration of the Mawlid an-Nabi. The Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah group considers the celebration of the Mawlid to be a good tradition based on historical histories, while the Salafiyah group rejects it because it is considered a heresy that was never done by the Prophet and his companions (Waksito 2014).

In addition, the practice of pilgrimage to the grave and Sufism tradition are frequently sources of disagreement. The Salafiyah sect considers these practices as heresy and deviates from the pure teachings of Islam, while the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah sect considers them as part of the tradition and culture that does not contradict the teachings of Islam if it is not accompanied by shirk practices or condemnation of Allah (Subair 2023). This situation is further exacerbated by the increase in intolerance and radicalism among some sects of society. Provocations, hate speech, and mutual suspicion frequently occur, resulting in tension and confrontation between these two groups. This is very worrying and could negatively impact the unity of the pluralistic Indonesian nation as a whole.

Therefore, efforts are needed to reconcile and moderate religious thought to bridge differences of views and prevent greater conflicts. This reconciliation aims to create a broader understanding and mutual respect between the two groups and avoid extreme and radical attitudes that can divide the people (Rahmawati 2024). Governments, religious leaders, and communities must work together to promote tolerance, mutual respect, and constructive dialogue between these two groups (Arifand et al. 2023). The importance of prioritizing the values of humanity, unity, and peace must always take precedence over existing differences of view.

Research on religious moderation has indeed been conducted by many, and there is already a substantial amount of literature related to religious moderation. Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah, in the context of religious moderation, demonstrates a consistent and ongoing line of thought. Research findings (Anggraini 2022) reveal that Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah considers religious moderation important through the balance of religious teachings based on the Qur'an and a tolerant attitude towards followers of other religions. This understanding is reinforced by research (Zaenal Mustofa, Rifai, and Pangeran Dharma Kusuma Indramayu 2023) that examines the book "Risalah Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah" by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari identifies fourteen values of moderate education, such as orientation towards religion and civilization, upholding the Sunnah of the Prophet, prioritizing unity, being accommodative to local culture, and prioritizing the common good. Both of these studies emphasize that Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah not only stresses the importance of religious moderation conceptually but also provides practical guidance in its implementation.

Then, several studies show the important role of *salafiyah pesantren* in implementing religious moderation. The results of the research (Sutrisno Edy 2019) reveal that *salafiyah pesantren* have implemented religious moderation through teaching yellow books (Islamic classical texts) with a contextual approach and applying tolerance values. This finding is reinforced by research (Musyafiq 2020), which found that the moderate characteristics of *salaf pesantren* are reflected in the curriculum that combines religious knowledge with an understanding of the Indonesian context. Furthermore, another research (Fahmi 2021) deepens both studies by identifying three aspects of religious moderation development in *salaf pesantren*, namely the contextual teaching of yellow books, the exemplary behavior of *kyai* in tolerance, and the daily practices of santri that reflect moderate values. These three studies show that *salafiyah pesantren* not only consistently teaches religious moderation but also successfully integrates it into the education system and the students' daily lives.

This research takes a unique position by bridging two main categories of religious moderation studies in Indonesia. The first group includes theoretical studies represented by Anggraini (2022) and Mustofa (2023), which examine the doctrinal basis of Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah on religious moderation, focusing on the balance of the teachings of the Qur'an and the moderate educational values from the works of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. The second group encompasses implementation studies by Sutrisno (2019), Musyafiq (2020), and Fahmi (2021) which investigate practical applications in *salafiyah pesantren*, including contextual teaching, *kyai* leadership, and the integration of moderate values in the lives of santri. This research fills the gap by analyzing how the principles of religious moderation from various streams are translated into practical conflict resolution mechanisms through identifying key moderation principles, field implementation analysis, and formulating conflict resolution models that integrate theoretical and practical aspects.

The novelty of this study is that this research seeks to contribute new ideas to overcome the religious tolerance crisis in Indonesia, especially between the two major mainstreams in Islam, namely Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafiyah. By identifying the root of the specific intolerance problem between the two sects, this study seeks to understand the dynamics and context of the problem in more depth (Budiman 2020). This research provides practical recommendations related to reconciliation efforts and moderation of thoughts that can be done to bridge differences and prevent greater conflicts between Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafiyah. By exploring the noble values and moderate principles contained in both sects, this research will make it a foundation in the process of reconciliation and strengthening tolerance of religious life.

Furthermore, the concepts of thought and movement from each camp that have the potential to incite intolerance will be critically examined. This research will present alternative options for *da'wah* that are friendlier and highlight human values

in order to encourage the moderation of religious thought more successfully (Husayn, 2020).

By exploring these aspects of novelty, it is hoped that this research can contribute new ideas and real solutions to overcoming the crisis of religious tolerance that occurs and promoting a more harmonious life in the midst of Indonesia's pluralism. This research is expected to be an important reference for stakeholders in efforts to realize reconciliation and moderation of religious thought in the country.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict Theory

Conflict Theory, developed by Lewis Coser and Ralf Dahrendorf, emphasizes that conflict is an unavoidable part of social dynamics. Coser argues that conflict can have a positive function in strengthening group identity and promoting innovation (Coser 2017). While Dahrendorf sees conflict as a result of the uneven distribution of power in society (Dahrendorf 2017).

Social Identity Theory

The Social Identity Theory developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner explains how individuals categorize themselves into social groups and how this affects inter-group behavior (Tajfel and Turner 2004). Turner et al. then expanded this theory with the concept of Self-Categorization Theory, which explains the dynamics of self-identification at various levels of individuals, groups, and humanity (Turner et al. 2014).

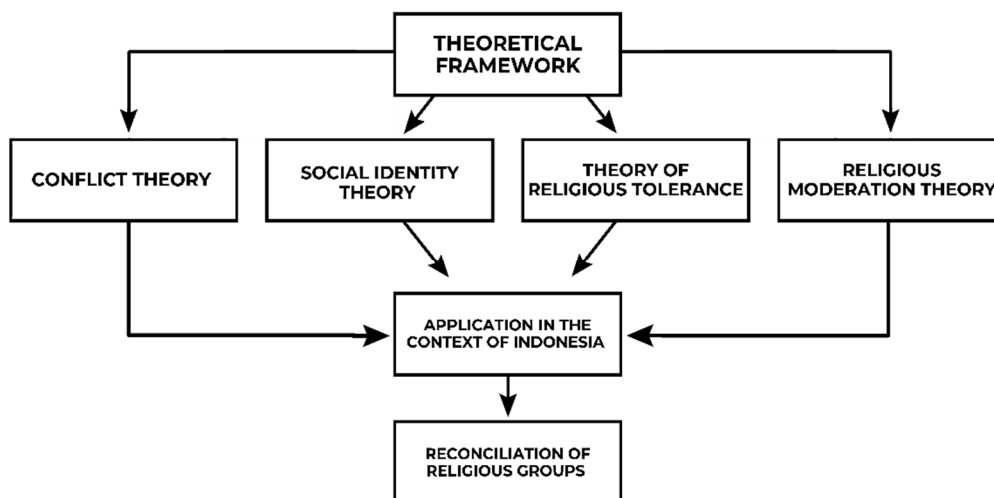
Theory of Religious Tolerance

In the context of religion, the concept of religious pluralism developed by John Hick and Paul Knitter acknowledges the diversity of religious traditions as a legitimate spiritual path. This is different from the exclusive approach that claims a monopoly on truth by a particular religion (Hick 2004)

Religious Moderation Theory

Al-Qaradawi's concept of wasatiyyah in Islam emphasizes the importance of balance and moderation in religious practice. This includes rejecting extremism and emphasizing flexibility in religious interpretation (Al-Qaradawi 2013). The model of balance in religious practice proposed by Kamali (2015) extends the concept of wasatiyyah by emphasizing the importance of contextualizing religious teachings and avoiding rigid or literal understanding (Kamali 2015).

Flow Chart 1. Theoretical Framework



Source: Authors' conceptualization

This diagram shows that this research's theoretical framework centers on the "Theoretical Framework," which serves as the main foundation. Conflict Theory provides a perspective for understanding the dynamics and potential conflicts between groups in society. This theory aids in analyzing how differences in interests, ideologies, or resources can trigger disputes and tensions among social groups. Understanding conflict theory is crucial for identifying the root causes and patterns of conflicts that may arise. Meanwhile, Social Identity Theory helps analyze how individual and group identities are formed and their implications. This theory explains that individuals tend to categorize themselves and others into social groups, influencing their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

Furthermore, the Theory of Religious Tolerance and the Theory of Religious Moderation provide a framework for examining issues related to diversity and moderation in a religious context. The Theory of Religious Tolerance focuses on how religious groups can appreciate differences and create space for pluralism. Meanwhile, the Theory of Religious Moderation discusses how moderate religious understanding and practice can serve as a unifying factor in a diverse society. These four theories are then applied in the "Indonesian Context" to produce a more specific and relevant understanding of the local situation. Ultimately, the integration of these various theoretical perspectives leads to "Religious Group Reconciliation," which is the main objective of this research.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher employed the literature research method (Library Research), which involves collecting data from a variety of sources relevant to the object of research, such as books, scientific papers, and journals. Library research is a traditional research method that researchers have widely used to evaluate various scientific studies. Using this method, researchers strive to conduct in-depth and comprehensive analysis and obtain optimal results (Zakariah 2020). The approach used is qualitative, where data is obtained through literature studies by carefully examining articles, books, and scientific journals related to the Reconciliation of Religious Thought Moderation in the Midst of the Crisis of Religious Tolerance between the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and the Salafiyah in Indonesia. Data is collected by browsing and collecting information from various sources that are a reference for research (Assyakurrohim, D., Ikhrum, D., Sirodj, R. A., & Afgani 2023). After the data is collected, a discussion is carried out on all the problems studied to produce accurate and appropriate data and study materials. The data that has been collected is then analyzed qualitatively, using a general approach and a special approach (Sutriani and Octaviani 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History and Thought of the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafi Sects

Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Sect

Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah has historically emerged as a response to various theological sects such as Mu'tazilah, Khawarij, and Shi'a that are considered too rational or extreme in interpreting the teachings of Islam (Asrori 2015). This sect emerged in the 3rd century Hijri as a response to various divisions and differences of opinion among Muslims at that time (Qomar 2021). This sect was first echoed by Abu Mansyur Al Ashari and Abu Manshur Al Maturidi. Then, the matter of faith, Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah, takes a middle ground between Jabariyah (fatalism) and Qadariyah (absolute freedom). They believe that humans have limited free will, while absolute will be in the hands of Allah SWT. In addition, they also believe in the attributes of Allah broadly and without limits (tafsir) or resemble them with creatures (*tamtsil*) (Kosasih 2020).

Then, in terms of fiqh (Islamic law), this sect follows one of the four major schools, namely Shafi'i, Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali. Nevertheless, they still recognize the validity of other *madhhabs* and respect differences of opinion. The Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah sect also

emphasizes the importance of Sufism (spirituality) in Islam, but with certain limitations so as not to deviate from the actual teachings of Islam (Zulki 2017). They take a middle ground between extreme Sufism and moderate Sufism.

In addition, Aswaja is also known for his tolerance of differences of opinion in matters that are *ijtihad*, or individual interpretations, in aspects that are not essential (Husnan 2021). *Ijtihad* is part of the efforts of scholars to explore Islamic law in new issues that are not directly regulated by the Quran and Hadith. In this context, disagreement is something that is recognized and accepted as long as it is within the limits that can be accepted by the consensus of scholars (Nasikhin, Raaharjo, and Nasikhin 2022). This attitude of tolerance is reflected in the acceptance of various schools of jurisprudence in Aswaja, such as Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali, each of which has different methodologies and interpretations of Islamic law.

Salafiyah Sect

Salafi emerged as an Islamic purification movement that sought to restore the teachings of Islam to their original source, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, as well as to eliminate all forms of *bid'ah* (practices that did not exist in the time of the Prophet and his companions) and local traditions that were considered deviant. Modern Salafi has its roots in the 18th-century reform movement spearheaded by Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab in Saudi Arabia. This movement is often associated with the term Wahhabism, which refers to followers of Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab (Yunan Athoillah 2011). In terms of faith, Salafis adhere to the literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith and reject interpretations that are considered excessive or contain elements of heresy. They also reject Sufism and all forms of spiritual practices that are not sourced from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Adhari et al. 2021). Regarding Fiqh, Salafis tend to follow the Hanbali madhhab, which is considered the closest to the original source. Salafi strongly emphasizes the purification of religious beliefs and practices from all forms of heresy and local traditions that are considered deviant. They tried to restore Islam to its original source as practiced by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his companions (Muin and Basri 2012).

With this strict approach, Salafi movements often contradict the local cultural practices and traditions that have developed in various Muslim communities. They consider that many of these practices have been contaminated by foreign elements that are incompatible with the pure teachings of Islam. Therefore, Salafis seek to purify Islam from these influences while at the same time inviting Muslims to return to the teachings and practices they believe to be true representations of Islam as taught by the Prophet Muhammad and the Salafs generation (Saleh M 2018).

Factors Causing Conflicts that Lead to Religious Tolerance Crisis

The following are some key factors contributing to conflicts and the religious tolerance crisis:

Differences in Beliefs and Understandings

Differences in religious beliefs often serve as the main trigger for social conflicts in various parts of the world, including Indonesia, which is known for its diversity. This happens because religion not only touches on the spiritual aspect but also relates to moral values, life goals, and views on the existence of God or supernatural powers. When two groups or communities have different religious beliefs, there are often profound differences in the way they view the world and life. These differences often trigger suspicion, prejudice, and even hatred between groups (Saihu 2019).

Conflict can escalate further when each group feels the need to uphold its beliefs and spread the truth to other groups. This can encourage conversion efforts or even pressure other groups to follow their teachings. As a result, competition for influence and power emerges, which in turn can trigger acts of violence. In Indonesia, this phenomenon is evident in a number of religion-based violent incidents, such as those that occurred in Ambon and

Poso, which demonstrate how religious differences can trigger social tensions and horizontal conflicts (Jamal Ghofir 2020).

However, although religion often becomes a source of conflict, Indonesia has a strong tradition of reconciliation, which is reflected in various initiatives to reduce tensions between religious groups. The Indonesian government, for example, has implemented policies of pluralism and religious moderation in an effort to promote tolerance and harmony among religious communities. In addition, the role of religious institutions and religious leaders in fostering interfaith dialogue is also very important in the reconciliation process. Social conflict theories, such as the intergroup conflict theory, explain how differences in identity and religious beliefs exacerbate tensions between groups and provide insights into how a deeper understanding of religious differences can help alleviate tensions (Turner et al. 2014).

Political Identity

Political issues are often closely related to religious, ethnic, or cultural identities, which, if not managed carefully, can lead to significant conflicts. The process of identity politics occurs when a group of political leaders or certain groups attempt to use these identity sentiments to gain support or power (Khamdan and Wiharyani 2018). For example, in the context of religion, a group of politicians may claim that they are the main guardians of certain religious values and promise to protect the interests of that religious group if they succeed in gaining power. Such claims can attract support from conservative groups or the majority religious group, but on the other hand, these claims can also make other religious groups feel threatened and marginalized.

Identity politics becomes more dangerous when exclusive claims to religious truth or the superior position of a group accompany such claims. For example, if a religious group claims that only their teachings are true and considers other groups as heretical or infidels. Or if an ethnic group claims that it is a superior race compared to other ethnic groups. Claims like these can incite feelings of hatred and justify discriminatory actions or even violence against other groups. Tensions like this can worsen intergroup relations and trigger prolonged conflicts (Moh. Shofan 2011). In the context of Indonesia, a country with a high diversity of religions and ethnicities, identity politics has the potential to exacerbate existing social conflicts. Indonesia's history shows how identity politics, whether based on religion or ethnicity, has been a driving factor in various incidents of social unrest and violence, such as those that occurred in Ambon and Poso in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Hefner 2011).

According to social conflict theory, explicit identity politics can be seen as an effort to strengthen the boundaries between different social groups, which in turn leads to intergroup tensions. This theory, developed by sociologists such as Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1986), explains how strong group identities can exacerbate the feeling of "us versus them," which ultimately leads to polarization and conflict (Tajfel and Turner 2004).

Religious Extremism

The presence of religious extremist groups poses a serious challenge in efforts to create conflict reconciliation in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. These groups often have a narrow and rigid view of religious teachings, claiming that only their interpretation is correct. As explained by Widyaningsih (2017), extremist groups tend to see differences as threats, so they often use violent methods to enforce their views (Widyaningsih 2017). Bloom and Reenen note that terrorist actions such as bombings, killings, and assaults carried out by extremist groups are often based on claims of religious legitimacy (Bloom and Reenen 2013).

In Indonesia, various events, such as one of the prominent religious-based conflicts in Indonesia, involve the Ahmadiyah community. This conflict reflects the tension between religious freedom and the majority interpretation of Islamic teachings. Ahmadiyah, which is considered by many mainstream Islamic groups to deviate from Islamic teachings, has faced discrimination, persecution, and violence in various regions of Indonesia. The case in Cikeusik, Banten, in 2011 is one of the most striking examples. This incident occurred when

a mob attacked the Ahmadiyah community, resulting in the deaths of three Ahmadiyah members and injuring several others. This attack was triggered by the view that Ahmadiyah's teachings are contrary to Islam and are considered a threat to the faith of Muslims (Institute 2013). In facing this challenge, the theory of religious tolerance introduced by John Hick and Paul Knitter provides a relevant conceptual framework. Hick asserts that religious pluralism can be a solution to address the claim of absolute truth, which often becomes a source of conflict. According to Hick, each religion has its own way of understanding the same Ultimate Reality, so no single religion has the right to claim absolute superiority (Hick 2004). Paul Knitter expands on this idea by emphasizing the importance of interfaith dialogue as a means to achieve mutual understanding. In Knitter's view, pluralism is not just about accepting the existence of other religions but also about mutual learning through respectful interaction (Knitter 2008).

Propaganda and Spread of Hoaxes through Social Media

The spread of hoaxes through social media has become one of the biggest threats to social harmony in Indonesia, especially in the context of religious diversity. False information that exploits religious issues is often designed to create fear, hatred, and suspicion toward certain religious groups. For example, hoaxes circulating about plans to attack places of worship or accusations against certain groups that are considered to harm other religions quickly spread through social media and trigger emotional reactions from the public. A study by Cinta Insani et al. (2023) shows that the majority of people exposed to religious hoaxes tend to believe them immediately, especially if the hoaxes reinforce existing prejudices or stereotypes (Cinta Insani et al. 2023).

This phenomenon is exacerbated by the nature of social media, which allows for the rapid and massive spread of information without adequate verification. Video clips, manipulated images, or provocative narratives are often used to manipulate the audience's emotions, amplify fear, and trigger polarization between religious groups (Ulfa 2024). Situations like this create tension and increase the risk of open conflict, especially when false information is used as a basis for collective actions, such as protests, boycotts, or even violence. This dynamic can be explained through the Social Identity Theory developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner. This theory highlights how individuals tend to identify themselves with a certain group (ingroup) and distinguish themselves from other groups (outgroup). In the context of religion, hoaxes often reinforce group identity by portraying other groups as threats.

Lack of Education and Tolerance Awareness

The lack of education, awareness, and understanding of religious tolerance is an important factor that can exacerbate inter-religious tensions and conflicts in society. In Indonesia, a country rich in religious and cultural diversity, education that emphasizes the values of pluralism and mutual respect is essential to create harmony amidst existing differences (Waruwu, Nyandra, and Diana Erfiani 2020). In this context, society, especially the younger generation, must be equipped with a sufficient understanding of the importance of tolerance and respecting other religious beliefs.

Lack of education about religious moderation can lead to the acceptance of extremist or radical ideologies that promote hatred and violence in the name of religion. Many young people, especially those who do not have sufficient education about the values of diversity, are more easily influenced by radical narratives that spread violent ideologies (Suhendi 2024). This phenomenon is seen in several cases where radical groups exploit the public's ignorance about religious differences to instill hatred and commit acts of violence. This further worsens Indonesia's social and political atmosphere, which relies on religious diversity as part of the national identity. Despite differences in religious beliefs, the community lives together peacefully in those areas. This shows that inclusive religious education based on pluralistic values is very important for maintaining social stability in Indonesia (Bahrul Alam, Aripin, and Rozalina 2023).

The Moderation Theory developed by Al-Qaradawi can provide very important insights into understanding how education can be a tool for introducing the values of moderation in social and religious life. In his work, Al-Qaradawi emphasizes that moderation in religion not only includes a compromised attitude towards differences but also highlights the importance of balance between various aspects of life, both in the spiritual, social, and political dimensions (Al-Qaradawi 2013). Therefore, the implementation of the theory of moderation in the education curriculum should be a priority in efforts to create a more tolerant, inclusive, and peaceful society.

Efforts to Reconcile the Religious Moderation thought in the Midst of a crisis of Religious Tolerance between the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and the Salafi

Efforts to reconcile the moderation of religious thought between the Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafi schools require an approach that is not only global but also considers the local context of society. This is very important considering each region's diverse social, cultural, and religious characteristics, which can influence perspectives on religious thought differences. Here are some efforts that can be undertaken with a local approach. Here are the reconciliation efforts that can be made:

Integrating Local Wisdom in Religious Dialogue

It is important to incorporate local wisdom values into inter-sect dialogue. Indonesia has a diverse culture rich in tolerance and peaceful coexistence principles, which can serve as a foundation for building reconciliation. In various regions, such as Java, Bali, or Sulawesi, there are traditions of mutual cooperation and appreciation for diversity that can be adapted to interfaith discussions. This can serve as a bridge to unite the differences between Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafi by highlighting the values of mutual respect and cooperation that have long been part of the local community's culture. This dialogue can begin with an approach that acknowledges and appreciates the existing local wisdom, which often emphasizes social harmony over mere dogmatic differences (Masduqi 1970).

Involvement of Local Figures in Education and Extension

In every region, religious leaders and local communities have a significant influence in shaping the mindset of society. Therefore, involving local figures in education and outreach about religious moderation is very important. They can provide concrete examples of maintaining tolerance and strengthening unity despite differences in beliefs. In areas with the potential for inter-religious conflict, such as Aceh or NTB, these local figures can play a role in facilitating discussions about the importance of moderation and mutual respect in Islam by introducing methods that align with local culture. Community-based programs that involve religious leaders and local community leaders can also be more easily accepted by the community (Ramdhan 2019).

Inter-Community Collaboration Based on Regions

The local approach can also be realized in the form of collaboration between religious communities at the village or sub-district level. Reconciliation efforts can be carried out by forming discussion groups or interfaith forums at the local level, where members of both streams (Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafi) can speak directly, listen, and understand each other's views in the context of everyday life. In such forums, social issues that are closer to their lives, such as poverty, education, and health, can become points of convergence for collaboration while continuing to promote the values of moderation. This collaboration can also build mutual respect among groups, thereby reducing the potential for conflict (Imami 2024).

Development of Education Programs Sensitive to Local Diversity

Education programs that teach tolerance and religious moderation need to be adjusted to the local characteristics of the community. Each region has different challenges and needs, so the religious education curriculum must be designed with consideration of the local context. For example, in areas with a dominance of certain

sects, introducing the diversity of thought within Islam and emphasizing moderation values that are more accepted by the community can be an effective initial step. Thus, religious education can serve as an effective means to instill values of tolerance and appreciation for differences and to avoid violence in the name of religion from an early age (Bahrul Alam, Aripin, and Rozalina 2023).

Government Involvement in Formulating Local Policies that Promote Moderation

Local governments must play an active role in formulating policies supporting inter-religious reconciliation efforts in their respective regions. This policy could take the form of funding for interfaith dialogue programs, outreach on religious moderation, or training for religious and community leaders. The government can also invite educational institutions, community leaders, and the media to support the policy and facilitate discussions on the importance of living together in diversity. In conflict-prone areas, such as in some regions of Sulawesi or Maluku, preventive measures with a locality-based approach will be very helpful in building inter-religious harmony (Subhi, M., Hasani, I., & Yosarie, 2019)

Implications of Religious Thought Moderation on Life in the Contemporary Era

The moderation of religious thought does have very broad and profound implications in life in the contemporary era, including the following:

Creating harmony and tolerance in a pluralistic society

In this modern era, our society is increasingly diverse and plural in terms of religion and ethnic, cultural, ideological, and socio-economic background. Moderation of religious thought is very important to create harmony and tolerance in the midst of this diversity. With moderate thinking, each group can respect each other's differences, avoid exclusivity, and coexist peacefully (Akhmadi 2019).

Countering extremist and radical ideas

In this era of globalization, extremist and radical ideas are increasingly spreading and influencing society, especially through social media and information technology. These ideas often use religious pretexts to spread the ideology of violence, hatred, and intolerance. Moderation of religious thought is very important to ward off the dangers of these extreme ideas (Jamaluddin 2022). Moderate thinking in religion teaches openness, non-violence, and respect for dissent. This can be a powerful filter to prevent the spread of extremist ideas that endanger peace and harmony in society. With moderate thinking, society will be more resistant to radicalization efforts and better able to identify teachings that deviate from the noble values of religion.

Promoting interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding

In today's globalized world, interactions between adherents of many religions are growing increasingly intense and unavoidable. Moderation of religious ideas is critical for promoting communication and mutual understanding among religions. Moderate thought allows each religious group to participate in productive discourse, tolerate each other's differences, and find common ground in the universal ideals espoused by each religion (Saiful Bahri and Mumun Muniroh 2023).

Supporting social development and progress

Moderate thinking in religion can also support broader development and social progress efforts. Moderate thinking can be the foundation for inclusive and sustainable development efforts by prioritizing values such as tolerance, justice, and humanity. For example, in the context of economic development, moderate thinking can encourage policies that are fair and non-discriminatory against certain groups. In education, moderate thinking can support a curriculum that emphasizes multiculturalism and respects each other's differences (Assayuthi 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, the researcher concluded that Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafiyah are the two main sects of Islam in Indonesia, with diverse approaches and thoughts. Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah emphasizes the balance between reason and revelation, respects differences of opinion in terms of *ijtihad*, and accepts the intellectual heritage of previous scholars. In comparison, Salafis emphasize the purification of Islamic teachings by adhering to the literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith, rejecting heresy and local traditions that are considered deviant. Although both are sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah, Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah tends to be moderate and inclusive, while Salafis tend to be strict and exclusive in practicing Islamic teachings. Differences and conflicts between Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah and Salafiyah schools in Islam are caused by various factors, including differences in religious beliefs and interpretations, political identity, religious extremism, the spread of hoaxes on social media, as well as a lack of education and awareness of tolerance. Then, reconciliation efforts that can be carried out include integrating local wisdom in religious dialogue, involvement of local figures in education and extension, inter-community collaboration based on regions, the application of moderation values in social and religious activities, and development of education programs sensitive to local diversity and government involvement. Moderation of religious thought is also very important in the contemporary era to create harmony, ward off extremist ideas, support interreligious dialogue and social development, maintain the relevance of religious teachings, and support social integration and diversity.

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