

Analysis of the Strengthening Program of Religious Moderation Values in Islamic Boarding School Students

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the program of strengthening the values of religious moderation in students of Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School in Bandar Lampung. Religious moderation is an important concept that emphasizes a middle and balanced attitude in carrying out religious teachings, which supports diversity and tolerance. This research uses a qualitative approach with interview, observation, and documentation methods to collect data from various sources, including leaders, administrators, and students of the boarding school. The results show that the programs to strengthen religious moderation at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School have succeeded in increasing interfaith tolerance, strengthening intercultural relations, and increasing the social involvement of students. In addition, these programs also have a positive impact on the image of the boarding school in the eyes of the surrounding community, as well as contributing to local social and economic development. Santri are taught to understand and respect religious diversity, which helps to reduce interfaith tensions and promote peace and tolerance. The article also identifies some challenges in the implementation of these programs, such as the need to update the education curriculum to include more materials on religious moderation, as well as the need for specialized training for staff and teachers. Recommendations include developing cooperation with other educational institutions, government agencies and civil society organizations to expand the positive impact of religious moderation values. Thus, this article concludes that strengthening the values of religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools is very important to shape the character of santri who are inclusive, tolerant, and contribute positively to society. Continuous efforts and support from various stakeholders are needed to improve the effectiveness of these programs.

Keywords: Religious Moderation; Islamic Boarding School; Tolerance; Islamic Education; Interfaith Relations

Introduction

Islamic boarding schools, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, have a very important role in shaping the character and religious values of the younger generation of Muslims (Nurul Romdoni & Malihah, 2020). In the midst of the dynamics of social change and the challenges of the times, it is important for Islamic boarding schools to continue to adapt and strengthen educational programs that are relevant to the demands of the times, including in terms of strengthening the values of religious moderation (Misbah et al., 2019).

Religious moderation, as a concept that emphasizes a middle and balanced attitude in carrying out religious teachings, is a solid foundation in maintaining diversity and tolerance in society (Saihu, 2022). In the context of boarding school education, strengthening the values of religious moderation does not only involve aspects of religious knowledge, but also includes the development of inclusive attitudes, a deep understanding of plurality, and skills in dialoguing and interacting with interfaith communities (Daheri, 2022).

The urgency of this research lies in the importance of religious moderation in shaping inclusive and tolerant religious characters and values in the younger generation of Muslims (Arifinsyah et al., 2020). In the midst of increasing global challenges, such as extremism and intolerance, the role of Islamic boarding schools as traditional Islamic educational institutions is becoming increasingly vital (M. A. Q. Pratama et al., 2023). Islamic boarding schools have a great responsibility in educating students to be able to face the complexity of diversity and maintain social harmony (Atsani & Hadisaputra, 2024). Therefore, this study seeks to identify and analyze effective programs in strengthening the values of religious moderation in the pesantren environment.

In addition, religious moderation serves as an important foundation in promoting a middle and balanced attitude in practicing religion (Mughtar et al., 2022). This moderate attitude not only prevents radicalism but also encourages tolerance and respect for plurality (Alam, 2020). Thus, this research is crucial to understand how Islamic boarding schools can play an active role in developing and implementing programs that teach the values of religious moderation (Dumiyati et al., 2023). This research not only contributes to the development of more inclusive religious education but also to social stability and harmony in the wider community (Huda et al., 2020).

This research also has practical urgency in helping Nashihuddin Islamic boarding school and similar educational institutions to identify challenges and opportunities in implementing religious moderation programs. By understanding the success factors and obstacles faced, the boarding school can devise more effective strategies to overcome these problems. In addition, the recommendations generated from this research can serve as a guide for stakeholders, including the government and community organizations, in supporting efforts to strengthen religious moderation in various educational institutions.

Finally, the urgency of this research is also related to efforts to strengthen the positive image of Islamic boarding schools in the eyes of the community (Khoiri et al., 2022). By implementing effective religious moderation programs, Islamic boarding schools not only act as educational institutions but also as agents of peace and social development (Reza et al., 2023). This is important to build trust and cooperation between the boarding school and the surrounding community, which in turn can improve mutual welfare and progress (Aman et al., 2022; FitzGerald & Quiñones, 2019; Grzegorzczak, 2019; Khoiri et al., 2022; Kutsiyah, 2020; Kyambade et al., 2024; Reza et al., 2023; Yuliami et al., 2020). This research, therefore, is an important step in supporting positive transformation in the pesantren environment and the wider community (Mujahid, 2021).

This article aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the programs used in strengthening the values of religious moderation in santri in Islamic boarding schools. Through a comprehensive review of the various

programs that have been implemented, this article will identify the success factors as well as the challenges faced in the implementation of these programs. In addition, this article will also provide recommendations and guidelines for Islamic boarding schools and related stakeholders to improve the effectiveness of programs to strengthen the values of religious moderation.

This research offers novelty by focusing on the concrete implementation and impact of the program to strengthen the values of religious moderation in the context of Islamic boarding schools, especially at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School in Bandar Lampung. In contrast to previous studies that tend to be theoretical or based on general concepts, this study incorporates an in-depth qualitative approach through interviews, observations, and documentation to explore the effectiveness of religious moderation programs directly in the field. In addition, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of how these programs not only improve tolerance and intercultural relations among santri, but also contribute positively to the social and economic development of the surrounding communities. As such, this research enriches the literature on Islamic education and religious moderation by providing practical insights and strategic recommendations that can be implemented by other Islamic educational institutions.

Methods

This research adopts a qualitative approach to explore and understand in depth the process and impact of the program to strengthen the values of religious moderation at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School in Bandar Lampung. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the experiences, perceptions, and views of various stakeholders involved in the program. Data were collected through a combination of in-depth interview methods, participatory observation, and documentation analysis, all of which provide a holistic picture of the implementation and effectiveness of the program.

In-depth interviews were conducted with various key informants, including the boarding school leaders, administrators, as well as a number of santri. The selection of informants was done purposively, taking into account their involvement and knowledge of the religious moderation program. The interviews aimed to obtain information on the background, objectives, implementation, and challenges of the program, as well as its impact on santri and the surrounding community. The interview process was recorded and transcribed for further analysis.

In addition, participatory observation is used to directly observe the implementation of the program and interactions between students in daily activities. Observations were conducted in various settings, including classes, extracurricular activities, and religious events, to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics and practices of religious moderation in the field. Documentation analysis was also conducted on various written materials such as curriculum, training modules, and activity reports related to the religious moderation program. The collected data were thematically analyzed to identify patterns and main themes that reflect the effectiveness and challenges in the implementation of the program. This triangulation approach ensures the validity and reliability of the research findings, providing a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the practice of religious moderation at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School.

Results and Discussion

Mohamad Hasyim Kamali confirmed that moderate in Arabic "wasathiyah" is inseparable from the word balance (balance) and fairness (justice) is the basic principle of moderation in religion (Sukarti, 2023). A religious person should not have an extreme or even radical view by only seeing things from one point of view but must be able to find a middle point from the two points of view, with that as an interfaith relationship will create a harmonious and comfortable relationship.

There are views related to indicators of religious moderation where it is put forward by the Ministry of Religious Affairs which there are several indicators in measuring the level of religious moderation, namely

national commitment; tolerance; anti-violence; and accommodating to local culture (D. Pratama, 2020). Where national commitment is a very important indicator to see the extent to which a person's religious views, attitudes and practices have an impact on loyalty to the basic national consensus, especially related to acceptance of Pancasila as a state ideology, his attitude towards ideological challenges that are opposite to Pancasila, and nationalism.

Tolerance is an attitude to give space and not interfere with other people's rights to believe, express their beliefs, and express their opinions, even though it is different from what we believe (Muhammad, 2021). Thus, tolerance refers to an open, airy, voluntary and gentle attitude in accepting differences. Tolerance is always accompanied by respect, accepting different people as part of ourselves, and thinking positively (Prakosa, 2022). As an attitude in dealing with differences, tolerance is the most important foundation of democracy, because democracy can only work when people are able to hold their opinions and then accept the opinions of others.

As non-violence, religious moderation promotes tolerance, teaching the importance of tolerating different religious beliefs and practices (Ikhwan et al., 2023). By understanding and appreciating these differences, communities can reduce conflict and violence. Accommodative of local culture can be used to see the extent of willingness to accept religious practices that accommodate local culture and traditions (Wulan & Fajrussalam, 2021). If these 4 indicators have been embedded especially in the Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School, the program to strengthen religious moderation will be achieved well.

From the results of the interview with the Head of the Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School conducted by the researcher, he said that religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools can have a significant impact on the relationship between Islamic boarding schools and the surrounding community, the impact of which is to reduce interreligious tensions, meaning that with the practice of religious moderation in Islamic boarding schools, students are taught to understand and respect religious diversity. This can help reduce interreligious tensions in the surrounding community, because boarding schools become agents of peace and tolerance. Strengthening intercultural relations means that religious moderation often has an impact on the acceptance and appreciation of different cultures and beliefs.

Islamic boarding schools that practice religious moderation can be a place where the surrounding community can interact, share experiences, and strengthen intergroup relations. Increasing social engagement means that by practicing the values of religious moderation, boarding schools can motivate santri and alumni to engage in social activities in the surrounding community. This could include humanitarian projects, educational programs, or other activities that benefit the community.

Strengthening a positive image means that these boarding schools that practice religious moderation tend to gain a positive image in the eyes of the surrounding community. They are seen as institutions that not only focus on religious aspects, but also contribute to social development and community welfare. Enhancing local development means that with a good relationship between the boarding school and the surrounding community, the potential for collaboration in local development projects increases. For example, boarding schools can play a role in facilitating education, skills training, or infrastructure development that benefits the community. Encouraging economic growth means that the involvement of Islamic boarding schools in local economic activities, such as small and medium enterprise development or poverty alleviation, can be one of the positive impacts of religious moderation. This can help improve the standard of living and welfare of the surrounding community.

Then the researchers also obtained interview data from one of the asatidz of Nashihuddin Islamic boarding school, who said that strengthening the values of religious moderation in this Islamic boarding school could

involve several significant changes in various aspects, including that this Islamic boarding school could change their educational curriculum to include more materials that emphasize the values of religious moderation, such as tolerance, interfaith cooperation, a deep understanding of other beliefs, and rejection of extremism. These materials can be taught both in religious studies and in other subjects. Pesantren can provide specialized training and coaching to teachers and staff to strengthen their understanding of the values of religious moderation. This could include training on interfaith dialog, how to address religious-based conflicts, and strategies to promote tolerance and interfaith harmony.

Then these pesantren can also change their communication and proselytization approaches to emphasize messages of religious moderation. This can be done through lectures, sermons, writings, and other activities that promote tolerance, mutual understanding, and interfaith dialog. The Nashihuddin boarding school can develop extracurricular programs that emphasize the values of religious moderation, such as interfaith student exchanges, social activities with non-Muslim communities, and community service projects that involve interfaith participation. This pesantren can strengthen cooperation with other institutions that also promote religious moderation, such as educational institutions, government agencies, and civil society organizations. Through this cooperation, they can support each other and expand the positive impact of religious moderation values. The boarding school can strengthen the organizational culture that promotes religious moderation, for example by ensuring that internal policies support tolerance and inclusiveness, and that the behaviour of staff and students is in line with these values.

Then the researchers obtained the results of observations at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School related to Observing the focus on strengthening the values of religious moderation at Nashihudin Islamic Boarding School, where the results of the data obtained were one of the most striking results of religious moderation at Nashihudin Islamic Boarding School was the high level of interfaith tolerance among students and staff. In observations, it was seen that students with different religious backgrounds were able to coexist peacefully and with mutual respect. Religious moderation has created an environment where daily interactions among santri and staff are filled with harmony. When interacting, there is no visible tension or conflict that arises based on differences in religion or belief.

Another significant result is the rejection of extremism among santri. They are educated to understand that violence or intolerance in the name of religion is not acceptable, and this is reflected in their attitude towards controversial issues or religious debates. Religious moderation at Pondok Pesantren Nashihudin also has an impact on the development of dialog skills. Santri are trained to communicate well, listen attentively, and respect other people's points of view, regardless of differences in beliefs.

One of the proudest outcomes of religious moderation in this pesantren is its positive influence on the surrounding community. Pondok Pesantren Nashihudin is actively involved in social activities that promote tolerance, harmony, and community empowerment, which has a far-reaching impact on the formation of an inclusive and harmonious society.

Conclusion and suggestion

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the strengthening program of religious moderation values at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School, Bandar Lampung, in order to form the character of inclusive and tolerant santri. Based on data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation analysis, it was found that the implementation of the religious moderation program at this boarding school succeeded in increasing awareness and practice of tolerance among students, as well as strengthening their intercultural relationships and social engagement. Programs such as interfaith discussions, joint social activities, and regular moderation training have had a real positive impact on the daily lives of santri. For example, santri become more open to differences and active in community activities involving various

religious groups, which ultimately helps to reduce social tensions and promote peace. This study concludes that strengthening the values of religious moderation through structured and sustainable programs at Nashihuddin Islamic Boarding School not only contributes to the character building of santri but also to social harmony and stability in the surrounding community.

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