



From Religious Doctrine to Constructive Dialogue: A Phenomenological Analysis of Religious Moderation Practices among NU and Muhammadiyah Students

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pengalaman hidup mahasiswa NU dan Muhammadiyah dalam praktek moderasi beragama di UIN Sunan Kudus melalui pendekatan fenomenologi. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bagaimana pengalaman mahasiswa dalam memahami, menghayati serta menegosiasikan antara doktrin organisasi keagamaan dan dialog konstruktif dalam dinamika kehidupan sosial kampus. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, data didapatkan melalui wawancara mendalam melalui teknik *purposive sampling*, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi terhadap mahasiswa yang terafiliasi dengan ormas NU dan Muhammadiyah. Keabsahan data dijaga melalui triangulasi sumber, metode, dan teori. Data dianalisis melalui proses reduksi, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa NU dan Muhammadiyah mampu menunjukkan kesadaran inklusif dalam menginterpretasikan konsep ajaran moderasi beragama dalam tataran dinamika dialog sosial kampus yang plural. Kebaruan penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa moderasi beragama tidak hanya relevan antar agama, namun juga memberikan penguatan pemahaman tentang moderasi intra-agama untuk mencegah konflik, dan membangun komunitas harmonis dengan merekomendasikan penguatan program moderasi beragama melalui kegiatan kemahasiswaan.

Kata kunci: Analisis Fenomenologis, Dialog Konstruktif, Doktrin Agama, Moderasi Beragama



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Abstract

This study aims to describe the lived experiences of NU and Muhammadiyah students in practicing religious moderation at UIN Sunan Kudus through a phenomenological approach. It reveals how students understand, internalize, and negotiate between their organizational religious doctrines and the demands of constructive dialogue within the dynamics of campus social life. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through in-depth interviews using purposive sampling techniques, participatory observation, and documentation involving students affiliated with NU and Muhammadiyah organizations. The validity of the data was ensured through triangulation of sources, methods, and theories. Data were analyzed through the processes of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that NU and Muhammadiyah students are able to demonstrate inclusive awareness in interpreting the concept of religious moderation within the dynamic context of pluralistic campus dialogue. The novelty of this study confirms that religious moderation is not only relevant in interreligious settings, but also significantly contributes to strengthening intra-religious moderation to prevent conflict and foster harmonious communities. It further recommends enhancing religious moderation programs through student-based activities.

Keywords: Constructive Dialogue, Phenomenological Analysis, Religious Doctrine, Religious Moderation

INTRODUCTION

Data released by the Ministry of Religion's Diverse Harmony Index reports that inter-religious harmony in Indonesia shows an improving trend — with the Index value reaching 76.47 in 2024, up from 73.09 in 2022 (Ministry of Religion, 2024); however, the reality on the ground still shows serious problems. According to the SETARA Institute, in 2022 there were 175 incidents with 333 acts of violations of freedom of religion/belief (KBB) throughout Indonesia, including the rejection of the establishment of houses of worship, the prohibition of religious activities, and discrimination by state and non-state actors (Setara, 2022). This fact raises ambivalence: on the one hand, quantitative data indicate that tolerance and harmony are increasing, but on the other hand there are conflicts and violations that indicate that moderation and formal harmony have not had a full impact on the real practice of tolerance and respect for religious freedom. Diversity or plurality is inevitable in this life, because it is part of the *sunnatullah* that is evident in the universe. God created everything based on the principle of diversity within the framework of unity. In fact, within the framework of the unity of mankind (*ummattan wahidah*), Allah

created various religions (Fahri & Zainuri, 2019). However, the concern that arises today is whether we are able to understand the differences that exist, respect each other, appreciate, understand, and be tolerant. Can we put aside our ego and personal views, while being willing to dialogue and communicate with each other? (Hasan, 2021) One of the problems faced by Indonesia is the existence of a number of religious groups that are reluctant to accept or acknowledge differences in religious diversity (Irsyada & Zafi, 2020). Intolerance and radicalism are a real threat to life in the global world. Differences are often seen as a threat to be fought, so there is no room for tolerance for diversity (Syeban, 2018).

The presence of Islamic moderation is expected to provide solutions through the approach of the religious way offered. Islamic moderation is the application of universal values such as justice, equality, compassion, and balance (Dawing, 2018). In addition to the community, religious moderation also needs to be instilled in the younger generation in order to create a successor to the nation who has a moderate attitude in their lives. Therefore, the values of religious moderation must be applied in various places, one of which is through educational institutions (Syahri et al., 2024). This emphasizes the importance of efforts to improve the quality of education (Partono & Syarofi, 2023), especially in the application of the value of religious moderation. Acceptance of diversity on the pluralistic campus of UIN Sunan Kudus, especially of differences in religious organizations/sects, not only requires textual recognition, but also a sincere contextual understanding, so that each individual is able to realize and appreciate differences in daily life practices, along with the dynamics of changing times.

Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah are two Islamic organizations that have long played a role in fighting for forms of Islamic moderation, both through the educational institutions they manage and through their involvement in the social, political, and religious fields. Therefore, these two organizations deserve to be called two *civil society institutions* that are very important in the process of moderation in this country. Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah are two socio-religious organizations that are active in maintaining and strengthening networks and institutions that support Islamic moderation, even making Indonesia an example of tolerance for the international world. As the largest Islamic organizations in

Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have a significant role in carrying out peaceful and tolerant Islamic ideas (Haris et al., 2022).

This research on religious moderation is closely connected to previous studies that serve as references and comparative material. *First*, a study conducted by Fathoni (2022) analyzed the efforts of the State Islamic University (UIN) Raden Mas Said Surakarta in implementing the values of religious moderation in the modern era, using observation and literature review methods. The study focused on moderation education through indicators such as national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and local cultural accommodation (Fathoni, 2022). *Second*, research conducted by Wahidin, et al. (2024) discusses the implementation of religious moderation at Pasundan University as an effort to counter terrorism, radicalism, intolerance, and separatism by strengthening national commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and appreciation for local culture in various academic and non-academic activities (Wahidin et al., 2024). *Third*, a study conducted by Syahri et al. (2024) explored the implementation of religious modernization at the UIN Raden Fatah Palembang Campus, which aims to enhance intercultural and interreligious tolerance through the application of the concept of religious moderation (tawassuth). This study highlighted four key stages-planning, strategy, implementation, and evaluation-to create a peaceful campus atmosphere, reduce potential conflicts, and equip students with insights on moderation (Syahri et al., 2024).

Given these findings, there remains a need for more in-depth research that goes beyond measuring "harmony index number" or levels of perceived tolerance. A more comprehensive analysis must also consider the dynamics of conflict, the plurality of religious interpretations, and the actual practice of moderation in everyday social life to understand the extent to which religious moderation has been able to promote real harmony in Indonesian society. While previous studies have explored the implementation of religious moderation values in the university settings – primarily focusing on strengthening tolerance, national commitment, anti-violence, and appreciation of local culture to create harmony and prevent radicalism, intolerance, and conflict – these works have largely examined interreligious contexts. In contrast, our research focuses specifically on the practice of religious moderation within interactions between the two largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, NU

and Muhammadiyah, in the campus environment. This is a dimension that has received little scholarly attention, as discussions of campus-based religious moderation typically address relations between different religions rather than differing streams within Islam. Therefore, in this study the researcher aim to examine how the values of religious moderation are implemented in the interactions between NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus, which constitutes the core contribution of this research.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to explore in depth the experiences and perceptions of NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus regarding the application of religious moderation values in their daily interactions. A descriptive qualitative approach is used to portray an object, phenomenon, or social setting through detailed narrative writing (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018).

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the field through observation, interviews, and documentation (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). Axial sampling was used to identify informants who were considered to represent five faculties at UIN Sunan Kudus (Syahbudi et al., 2023). Primary data collection was conducted in November 2024 through in-depth observations and interviews with NU and Muhammadiyah students. Secondary data were gathered from books, journal articles, reports, and other relevant literature (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015).

All primary data from interviews and observations were transcribed by retyping the recorded information and field notes into analytic text (Suprpto et al., 2024). The transcribed data were then categorized by organizing complex and varied information into clearer and more manageable thematic categories (Karya et al., 2024). The themes were aligned with the indicators and values of religious moderation relevant to the scope of this study.

To ensure data validity, this research applied triangulation of sources, methods, and theories (Helaludin & Wijaya, 2019). This process enabled the researcher to cross-check findings and strengthen the credibility of interpretations.

The data analysis followed the interactive model consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Majid, 2017).

1. Data reduction involved filtering and simplifying the data by removing irrelevant information while adding or clarifying data that were incomplete.
2. Data presentation was carried out by organizing the reduced data into thematic categories, allowing patterns and relationships to emerge.
3. Conclusion drawing included interpreting the findings, formulating them into concise and meaningful statements, and re-verifying the conclusions to ensure consistency with the research objectives, questions, and theoretical framework.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Religious Moderation According to the Perspective of NU and Muhammadiyah Students of UIN Sunan Kudus

The interviews reveal that both NU and Muhammadiyah students share a common understanding of religious moderation as an attitude of tolerance, balance, and respect for difference. A Muhammadiyah student of the Faculty of Tarbiyah described religious moderation as:

“Tolerance between religious people, meaning respecting each other's existing differences, living in harmony, and not imposing our beliefs on others. Differences are natural and must be accepted openly to create social harmony.” (*A. Ulya, private interview, November 22, 2024*)

This view highlights moderation as an attitude rooted in mutual respect and social harmony.

Meanwhile, a NU student from the Faculty of Sharia conceptualized religious moderation as a balanced position between extremes:

“Religious moderation must be in the middle--not too far to the right or left. We must be fair, not biased, and still hold on to religious truth, but also not too rigid. The important thing is that we are not extreme in words and actions, so that religious life can be more harmonious.” (*M. Izul Islam, personal interview, November 25, 2024*)

This opinion emphasizes the importance of balance (*wasatiyah*) in religion. This student sees religious moderation as a middle way between two extremes, by maintaining justice without ignoring religious principles.

A student of NU Faculty of Ushuluddin UIN Sunan Kudus expanded the concept further:

“Religious moderation prioritizes tolerance and respect for differences—whether in religion, culture, or religious views. Individuals must avoid bigotry. The main principles are *wasatiyah* (balance), justice, equality, and respect for mutual agreements.” (N. Durrotul Machilah, personal interview, November 22, 2024)

This opinion broadens the scope of religious moderation, to include not only interreligious relations but also diverse cultures and religious views. The emphasis on the principles of *wasatiyah*, justice, and equality shows that religious moderation is seen as a concept that supports an inclusive social order.

A NU students of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business emphasized compassion and justice:

“The application of Islamic principles justly and compassionately, regardless of differences in sects, while accommodating diversity of views in a heterogeneous society.” (A. Khabibah, personal interview, November 22, 2024)

This view highlights the aspects of compassion and justice in implementing religious moderation. By prioritizing acceptance of different streams, this student showed that religious moderation not only creates harmony but also provides space for diversity of views in society.

Similarly, a Muhammadiyah student of the Faculty of Da'wah described moderation as avoiding both liberal and conservative extremes:

“Religious moderation is an attitude that prioritizes a balance between conservatism and liberalism in religion. Individuals maintain religious principles without falling into extremism, while respecting differences through inclusive and tolerant attitude.” (A. Fitri, personal interview, November 22, 2024)

Overall, the students' explanations converge on several shared themes: respect for differences, avoidance of extremism, balance in religious practice, and the importance of justice and compassion.

Practice of Religious Moderation Among NU and Muhammadiyah Students

From the in-depth interviews with five students from across five faculties four key values of religious moderation emerged consistently: *tawasuth*, *i'tidal*, *tasamuh*, and *shura*. These values were expressed in different language styles but reflected similar meanings and experiences:

1. *Tawasuth*

Tawasuth refers to taking a balanced, middle position. A Muhammadiyah student from the Faculty of Tarbiyah explained:

“If someone invites a debate about NU and Muhammadiyah, I try to mediate so it doesn’t become a problem.... I prefer to be an impartial mediator. I apply this principle both in the organization and in my daily life.” (A. Ulya, *private interview, November 22, 2024*)

The attitude of *tawasuth* can be practiced by choosing to respect differences and avoid prolonged debates between different groups. Respect for each other and choosing to mediate in debates is a tangible manifestation of moderation.

An NU student of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business added:

“I try to be moderate in responding to various issues and avoid extreme attitudes to keep relationship harmonious.” (A. Khabibah, *personal interview, November 22, 2024*)

This student's view shows the importance of respecting differences and staying away from extreme attitudes. This attitude of *tawasuth* encourages balance in thinking and acting. They emphasized that avoiding extremism is the key to maintaining harmony in social relations.

Another NU student stated:

“I don't feel my group is the most righteous. I prefer to be in the middle, not extreme.” (M. Izul Islam, *personal interview, November 25, 2024*)

This reflects humility and rejection of sectarian superiority, which is the very essence of *tawasuth*.

2. *I'tidal*

I'tidal is a commitment to fairness and proportion. An NU student from the Faculty of Ushuluddin explained:

“I try to listen to all parties fairly before making a decision. For committee work, we divide tasks equally between NU and Muhammadiyah students without any discrimination. Every opinion, whether from the majority or the minority, is always heard and respected.” (N. Durrotul Machilah, *personal interview, November 22, 2024*)

This approach reflects the value of moderation that avoids partiality and discrimination.

A Muhammadiyah student from the Faculty of Da'wah similarly stated:

“I always try to treat everyone fairly, regardless of their background.” (A. Fitri, *personal interview, November 22, 2024*)

Both views show that students operationalize *i'tidal* by ensuring equal treatment and participation.

3. *Tasamuh*

Tasamuh is an attitude of tolerance and mutual respect for differences. A Muhammadiyah student of the Faculty of Tarbiyah shared:

“NU students continue to perform *tahlilan* and recite *barzanji* during Maulid, and Muhammadiyah students participate even though it is not recommended in Muhammadiyah. I accept different views.” (A. Ulya, *private interview, November 22, 2024*)

This statement reflects high levels of practical tolerance across traditional boundaries.

An NU student further explained:

“Some friends don't recite *qunut* in the dawn prayer while I do. We respond with mutual tolerance and never blame each other.” (A. Khabibah, *personal interview, November 22, 2024*)

These examples show that everyday worship differences are managed peacefully, strengthening unity rather than creating conflict.

4. *Shura*

Shura refers to resolving differences through deliberation. A Muhammadiyah student from the Faculty of Tarbiyah recalled a classroom debate:

“There was a heated debate between NU and Muhammadiyah students. The lecturer intervened and took a middle ground, advising both sides to respect differences. The debate calmed down.” (A. Ulya, *private interview, November 22, 2024*)

This illustrates deliberation as a conflict-resolution tool that reinforces respect for differences.

An NU student of the Faculty of Ushuluddin added:

“Deliberation is the main means to reach agreement. I always prioritize it in class discussions to avoid misunderstandings.” (N. Durrotul Machilah, *personal interview, November 22, 2024*)

This shows that *shura* is embedded in classroom culture and serves to maintain harmony and mutual understanding.

Analysis Of Religious Moderation Practices Among NU And Muhammadiyah Students at UIN Sunan Kudus

Maintaining national unity is a shared responsibility of all citizens, including university students. Previous studies indicate that one effective strategy for sustaining unity in a plural society is the practice of religious moderation. Moderation, which comes from the Latin word "*moderatio*," means avoiding excess and deficiency (moderate). In Islamic thought, this principle is articulated through "*wasathiyyah*", which emphasizes fairness, balance, proportionality, and benefit for the wider community (Bakir & Othman, 2017; Hidayat, 2022).

In the context of religion, moderation represents a middle ground that rejects violence and extremism while promoting peace, tolerance, and openness to contextual interpretations. As Hasan (2021) argues, moderation includes the acceptance of changes and updates for the common good, as well as religious interpretations that consider geographical, social, and cultural contexts. Religious moderation must be understood as a balanced religious attitude, which is between the exclusive practice of religion and respect for the religious practices of others who have different beliefs (Helmy et al., 2021).

Religious moderation is basically the application of the values of tolerance (*tasamuh*). This concept also emphasizes the values of equality (*musawah*), which avoids discriminatory attitudes towards others. Differences in beliefs, traditions, religions, languages, tribes, and factions should not trigger tensions that can damage brotherhood (Hefni, 2020). Most of the respondents were NU and Muhammadiyah students of UIN Sunan Kudus stated that religious moderation means living in harmony and respecting each other's differences. It affirms the importance of an open attitude towards plurality, both in religion and culture, as the foundation for creating social harmony.

Religious moderation is not a new concept, because the phenomenon of extremism and liberalism is one of the causes of the emergence of this concept. Extremism is a school that tends to go beyond boundaries and be harsh in following its teachings. Meanwhile, liberalism is a way of understanding religion by relying on freedom of soul and reason, and accepting strict rules that only suit their own views

(Susanti, 2022). Furthermore, according to Hamka, moderation means being in the middle, not only focusing on worldly affairs, but also not fully prioritizing the spiritual aspect. Religious moderation is a balance between the two (Hamka, 2015).

In line with the opinion of Quraish Shihab quoted by Islam (2020), the character of Islamic moderation is reflected in an attitude that does not tend to be excessive (*ifrath*) or underestimating (*tafrith*) in dealing with religious and world problems. Islamic moderation does not belong to the extreme group, because it combines the rights of spirit and body without neglecting either of them. Religious moderation is the key to creating tolerance and harmony at the local, national, and global levels. By choosing moderation and rejecting extremism and liberalism, balance can be maintained for peace and civilization. This allows religious people to respect each other, accept differences, and live in peace. In a multicultural society like Indonesia, religious moderation is not only an option, but also a must (Khobir et al., 2021; Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

Despite differences of opinion regarding the concept of religious moderation among NU and Muhammadiyah students, both groups share a common understanding that religious moderation prioritizes balance, tolerance, and respect for differences in religious life. Religious moderation is perceived as a way of living harmoniously through mutual respect, accepting differences as natural, and avoiding the imposition of beliefs on others. Both NU and Muhammadiyah students agree that balance, or the principle of *wasathiyah* is the core of religious moderation, where a fair and non-extreme attitude is essential for maintaining harmony. In addition, they emphasize the application of compassionate Islamic principles, including respect for diverse viewpoints and wisdom in addressing social and economic differences. Religious moderation is also practiced by avoiding fanaticism and insulting others, while maintaining a balance between personal beliefs and respect for the beliefs of others. Overall, this shared perspective indicates that religious moderation aims to foster a harmonious living at both the individual and community levels, particularly within the context of NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus. The awareness of fostering harmony supports the theory that the sustainability of a nation and state depends on how its human resources are nurtured

and educated, so that they are ready to assume responsibility for future nation building (Partono, 2020).

Observation data corroborate that, within the context of campus social life at UIN Sunan Kudus, religious moderation is a crucial element. As an institution that accommodates students from various religious organizational backgrounds, such as NU and Muhammadiyah, the practice of religious moderation values is essential for fostering harmony amid differences. To apply moderation (*wasathiyah*) in everyday life, three key elements are required: first, accurate and comprehensive knowledge of religious teachings and the diversity of interpretations within them; second, the ability to control and balance emotions in order to avoid excessive attitudes; and third, vigilance and prudence in decision-making (Faruq & Noviani, 2021). Within this context, the present study identifies four values of religious moderation practices by NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus, namely *tawasuth*, *i'tidal*, *tasamuh*, and *syura*.

The term "*Tawasuth*" comes from the word "*wassatha*," which literally means to be in the middle or has two comparable ends. Terminologically, *tawasuth* refers to Islamic values grounded in a balanced mindset and practice, avoiding excess in any particular aspect. The opposite of *tawasuth* includes excessiveness, such as *al-ifrat* and *al-ghuluw*, as well as deficiency, such as *al-tafrit* and *al-jafa'* (Azis & Anam, 2021). Through the application of *tawasuth*, individuals develop balanced attitudes and behaviors, avoiding extremes to either side while maintaining a balance between rights and obligations. This principle also enables believers to position worldly life and the hereafter in balanced proportions (Azis & Anam, 2021). As Berger (1991) notes, the reality of religion is continually vulnerable to worldly influences, making the practice of *tawasuth* essential for maintaining balance in religious life.

The implementation of *tawasuth* values among NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus is reflected in a moderate attitude that prioritizes balance and middle position in various aspects of life. Students sought to avoid extremism and bigotry, both in their thinking, attitude, and behavior, emphasizing the importance of respecting differences and maintaining inclusive relationships. They tend to act as mediators in conflicts, strive to balance worldly life and the hereafter, and avoid attitudes that can exacerbate divisions. The application of

tawassuth values not only fosters harmonious social relationships, but also reduces polarization amid diversity, thereby contributing to the creation of a more balanced and moderate campus environment.

The practice of i'tidal values—recognized as a central value in religious teachings (Hasan, 2021)—among NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus is evident in their commitment to fairness and avoidance of partiality or discrimination. Observations show that students from diverse backgrounds apply these values by listening to and respecting the perspectives of, both majority and minority groups. In the context of committee works, NU and Muhammadiyah students strive to distribute responsibilities equally and fairly without discrimination. This approach reflects a deep sense of justice, where each individual is treated equally regardless of their background, thereby fostering harmonious and respectful relationships across different groups.

In addition to the principles of justice and balance, religious moderation in Islam also encompasses the principle of *al-Tasamuh*, which means tolerance. Linguistically, *tasamuh* is the term most commonly used to express the meaning of tolerance and derives from the word "*samhan*," which denotes ease or flexibility (Rohman, 2021). Conceptually, *tasamuh* represents an attitude of respecting the views, beliefs, habits, or actions of others that may differ from or even contradict one's own views (Khoiruddin, 2022; Mustopa et al., 2024).

The practice of *tasamuh* values among NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus is reflected in their tolerant attitude towards differences in religious traditions, viewpoints, and practices. Students from both groups demonstrate acceptance without judgment or imposition of their respective beliefs, both in the aspects of worship and in social interactions. Attitude of mutual support, non-discrimination, and the maintenance of harmonious relations amid diversity is tangible evidence of the application of *tasamuh*. This value constitutes an essential foundation for building unity, strengthening social relationships, and creating an inclusive, conflict-free environment.

The concept of *shura* originates from the word *shawara* which means to negotiate or exchange ideas in order to decide a matter or find a solution to a problem (Akbar et al., 2024). Deliberation refers to the process of expressing and considering

various opinions to reach a collective agreement. Accordingly, *ash-shura* denotes matters that are discussed and decided through deliberation (Azis & Anam, 2021).

Overall, the implementation of *shura* values among NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus underscores the importance of dialogue and deliberation as a means to resolve differences, fostering mutual understanding, and maintaining harmony. Through *shura*, students are able to express their views openly, listen to one another, and reach decisions that are fair and acceptable to all parties. This value is applied in various contexts, such as resolving debates about *fiqh* issues and making collective decisions. Deliberation not only helps to reduce conflicts, but also strengthens intergroup relations by preventing domination. Decisions taken through *shura* reflect justice, as they incorporate diverse perspectives and prioritize shared interests.

In summary, religious moderation among NU and Muhammadiyah students of UIN Sunan Kudus is manifested in the attitude of moderation, fairness, tolerance, and a strong commitment to deliberation. These values contribute to social harmony, reduce the potential for polarization, and foster an inclusive and balanced campus environment. The findings of this study support the previous research emphasizing the importance of religious moderation education in countering radicalism, strengthening unity, and shaping an inclusive generation within a diverse social and organizational context.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that NU and Muhammadiyah students at UIN Sunan Kudus have internalized key values of religious moderation, namely *tawasuth*, *i'tidal*, *tasamuh*, and *shura*, in everyday interactions. The findings indicate that students are able to transform differences into social capital that strengthens social harmony rather than allowing them to become sources of conflict. Moderate attitude manifested through practices such as cross-group dialogue, equitable distribution of organizational roles, and avoidance of fanaticism provide clear evidence that the values of religious moderation are deeply embedded in student life.

This study offers practical implications for educational institutions, highlighting the importance of strengthening religious moderation learning through

experiential approaches and direct social interaction. Theoretically, the findings affirms that religious moderation is not only relevant in interfaith relationships, but also in intra-religious contexts.

Based on these findings, UIN Sunan Kudus is encouraged to provide broader spaces for activities grounded in religious moderation and to recognize and support innovative student initiatives that promote these values. Futhermore, future research is recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of existing religious moderation programs and to explore alternative strategies, such as the use of digital media or creative approaches, to further strengthen the implementation of religious moderation values among students and higher education institutions.

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