The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah Youth in Promoting Islamic Moderation in Indonesia

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Abstract

Youth play a vital role as agents of change in promoting the values of religious moderation. In Indonesia, this role is both strategic and contributive, given the significant potential that young people possess, including energy, creativity, and broad access to education and information. They also have the capacity to foster interfaith dialogue and actively engage in public policy. This study aims to analyze the contributions of youth from Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, both of which have the power to influence social change, particularly in the religious context, by promoting values of tolerance, harmony, and unity, while preventing radicalism and fostering interfaith cooperation. To achieve this, the study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a literature review and descriptive-analytical data analysis. The research concludes that, despite their significant potential, youth encounter various challenges, including the influence of radicalization, social stigma, insufficient education on moderation, and environmental and cultural pressures. Additional barriers consist of the detrimental impact of social media, cultural resistance, lack of institutional support, and limited access to resources. To address these challenges, specific strategies are necessary, such as the development of moderation-based training programs and encouraging youth participation in community activities. Furthermore, government support through policies, funding, and resources is a crucial factor. By leveraging education, social media, and community engagement, youth can harness their potential to promote Islamic moderation, fostering a more tolerant, inclusive, and harmonious society amidst diversity.

Abstrak

Pemuda memegang peran vital sebagai agen perubahan dalam mempromosikan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama. Di Indonesia, peran ini bersifat strategis dan kontributif mengingat potensi besar yang dimiliki pemuda seperti energi, kreativitas, serta akses luas terhadap pendidikan dan informasi. Pemuda juga memiliki kemampuan menciptakan dialog lintas agama dan keterlibatan aktif dalam kebijakan publik. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis kontribusi pemuda Nahdlatul Ulama dan Muhammadiyah memiliki kekuatan untuk memengaruhi perubahan sosial, terutama dalam konteks keagamaan, dengan mempromosikan nilai-nilai toleransi, harmoni, dan persatuan, mencegah radikalisme, dan membangun kerja sama lintas agama. Untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut, penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan mengandalkan kajian pustaka dan data dianalisis secara deskriptif-analitis. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa meski memiliki potensi besar, pemuda menghadapi tantangan seperti pengaruh radikalisasi, stigma sosial, kurangnya pendidikan tentang moderasi, serta tekanan lingkungan dan budaya. Hambatan lain termasuk pengaruh negatif media sosial, resistensi budaya, kurangnya dukungan institusi, serta keterbatasan akses dan sumber daya. Untuk mengatasi tantangan ini, diperlukan strategi khusus, seperti pengembangan program pelatihan, pendidikan berbasis moderasi, serta pelibatan pemuda dalam kegiatan komunitas. Selain itu, dukungan pemerintah melalui kebijakan, pendanaan, dan fasilitas juga menjadi faktor penting. Melalui pendidikan, media sosial, dan kegiatan komunitas, pemuda dapat memanfaatkan potensi mereka untuk mempromosikan moderasi Islam, menciptakan masyarakat yang lebih toleran, inklusif, dan harmonis di tengah keberagaman.

Introduction

Islamic moderation, or Wasatiyyat al-Islām, is a concept centered on balance, justice, and the middle path in the practice of Islamic teachings.[1] Ibn Jarir At-Thabari articulated that wasathiyah embodies a just and balanced attitude in all aspects of life, steering clear of extremism in any form.[2] This concept encourages Muslims to embody justice, proportionality, and moderation in every facet of life. In the context of interfaith relations, Islamic moderation entails holding firm to the truth of one's own religion while simultaneously respecting and acknowledging the beliefs of others.[3] The concept emphasizes the importance of tolerance and respect for diversity. Islamic moderation is essential for addressing the various challenges that arise from extreme and narrow interpretations of religion, including religious populism, social conflict, and violence. Religious populism represents a limited religious perspective that often incites further division, as one group may perceive itself as the most righteous and reject alternative viewpoints. This mindset can lead to conflict and societal fragmentation. Instances of social conflict and violence, such as interreligious disputes and religion-based violence, highlight the necessity of moderation in fostering social harmony and peace. Events that call for Islamic moderation include the rise of social and political segregation, as well as radicalism and extremism.[4]

The promotion of Islamic moderation necessitates the active involvement of various stakeholders, including the government, community and religious leaders, educational institutions, community organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), mass media, social media, and youth.[5] The government plays a pivotal role by integrating Islamic moderation into national policies to ensure social and political stability. The Ministry of Religious Affairs consistently advocates for Islamic moderation through educational initiatives and nationwide campaigns. Community and religious leaders, leveraging their significant influence, serve as agents of moderation by encouraging communities to adopt and practice moderation, thereby mitigating interreligious conflicts and fostering social harmony.[6] Educational institutions, such as schools and universities, contribute by incorporating values of

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[1] Agus Akhmadi, "Moderasi Beragama dalam Keragaman Indonesia," *Inovasi-Jurnal Diklat Keagamaan* 13, no. 2 (2019): 45–55.

[2] Khairan M Arif, "Moderasi Islam (Wasathiyah Islam) Perspektif Al-Qur'an, as-Sunnah Serta Pandangan Para Ulama dan Fuqaha," *Al-Risalah: Jurnal Studi Agama dan Pemikiran Islam* 11, no. 1 (2020): 22–43.

[3] Sirajuddin Sirajuddin, "Buku Literasi Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia" (Penerbit. Zigie Utama, 2020), 1-241.

[4] Achmad Muhibin Zuhri, *Islam Moderat: Konsep dan Aktualisasinya dalam Dinamika Gerakan Islam di Indonesia*, vol. 1 (Academia Publication, 2022), 1-199.

[5] Wasisto Jati and Hasnan Bachtiar, "Redefining Islamic moderation Education for Urban Muslim Youth," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 22, no. 1 (2024): 153–66.

[6] Bonaventura Ngarawula and Catur Wahyudi, "Inclusive Communities Through Islamic moderation Villages: Study of Literature," *KnE Social Sciences*, 2024, 76–88.

moderation into their curricula and extracurricular activities.[7] These collective efforts aim to cultivate a generation that appreciates tolerance and diversity.

Community organizations and NGOs, such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, contribute significantly to promoting Islamic moderation, particularly through grassroots programs like interfaith dialogues and community outreach[8]. The role of NU youth, particularly through Fatayat NU and GP Ansor[9], includes several key aspects: educational and social outreach (adaptation), goal achievement (goal attainment), integration of religious moderation concepts, driving force for moderate Islam, and impact on management and society. Fatayat NU and GP Ansor actively conduct educational programs and social activities to spread moderate Islamic teachings[10]. These initiatives aim to build a strong foundation for an inclusive society where mutual respect and understanding are prioritized. [11]

Fatayat NU and GP Ansor implement concrete programs aligned with their vision and mission of harmonious and peaceful preaching. They collaborate with various stakeholders to strengthen the implementation of religious moderation and integrate its values into various fields, including humanitarian programs, social care, education, communication, and advocacy. This integration promotes tolerance, social harmony, and interfaith dialogue while preventing conflicts stemming from religious differences[12]. As key drivers of moderate Islam, Fatayat NU and GP Ansor work to create stability within society by fostering harmonious and tolerant relationships. Their efforts focus on raising awareness about the importance of tolerance, mutual respect, and a deep understanding of religious moderation.[13]

Muhammadiyah Youth also plays a significant role in promoting Islamic moderation in Indonesia. Their efforts include advancing the concept of wasathiyah (moderation), contributing to social services, promoting inclusivity and national unity, responding to radicalism and terrorism, maintaining a non-political role, and fostering democratic values. Muhammadiyah emphasizes a middle-path approach to Islam,

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[7] Muhammad Idris and Alven Putra, "The Roles of Islamic Educational Institutions in Islamic moderation," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021).

[8] Nur Uysal, "Peacebuilding through Interfaith Dialogue: The Role of Faith-Based NGOs," in *Communicating Differences: Culture, Media, Peace and Conflict Negotiation* (Springer, 2016), 265–78.

[9] Ahmad Faza Fauzan Saragih and Irma Yusriani Simamora, "Manajemen Dakwah GP Ansor Dalam Pelaksanaan Pencegahan Dini Ujaran Kebencian Dan Radikalisme Di Kabupaten Serdang Bedagai: GP Ansor Da'wah Management in Implementing Early Prevention of Hate Speech and Radicalism in Serdang Bedagai Regency," *QULUBANA: Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah* 5, no. 1 (2024): 174–87.

[10] Yoga Nugraha Marlyono, Dadan Wildan, and Yadi Ruyadi, "Implementation of Religious Moderation in Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Ciamis District as an Effort to Prevent Radicalism," *JUPIIS: JURNAL PENDIDIKAN ILMU-ILMU SOSIAL* 16, no. 1 (2024): 44–52.

[11] Firdawan Firdawan, "Strategi Pimpinan Cabang Gp Ansor Kabupaten Pringsewu Dalam Penanaman Sikap Moderasi Beragama Di Kalangan Generasi Muda" (UIN Raden Intan Lampung, 2023), https://repository.radenintan.ac.id/23824/.

[12] Ahmad Subakir and Ahmad Khoirul Mustamir, "Gerakan Moderasi Islam Dalam Perspektif Deteksi Dini; Studi Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Kota Kediri," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 31, no. 2 (2020): 187–201.

[13] Hilda Tagsya Ramdhany, "Fungsi Struktural Fatayat Nu Dalam Penguatan Moderasi Beragama Di Jawa Barat" (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2024), https://digilib.uinsgd.ac.id/92208/2/2_Abstrak.pdf.

avoiding extremism on both liberal and conservative ends, in alignment with Indonesia's cultural and religious context[14]. The organization significantly contributes to education, healthcare, and social welfare by establishing schools, universities, hospitals, and orphanages, reflecting Islamic values of compassion and justice. It upholds the principles of Pancasila and views Indonesia as Darul Ahdi wa Syahadah (a country of consensus and witness). While opposing terrorism and radicalism, Muhammadiyah also criticises violent government approaches, advocating instead for humanistic and non-violent measures in addressing extremism[15]. Despite its historical political engagement, Muhammadiyah functions as a social-religious organization rather than a political party[16]. It supports democracy, emphasizes its compatibility with Islamic teachings, encourages participation in democratic processes, and opposes movements that threaten Indonesia's democratic framework. [17]

At the same time, mass media and social media play strategic roles in amplifying the message of moderation to a broader audience[18]. By disseminating educational and inspirational content, they help counter radical ideologies and cultivate a positive public perception of Islamic moderation. Collectively, these stakeholders create a multi-faceted approach to fostering a society that values tolerance, coexistence, and peace. Youth play a vital and strategic role in promoting Islamic moderation, surpassing many other social groups in importance.[19] Through active participation, they possess the power to influence public policy and political dynamics, making them indispensable for democratic and policy shifts. Economically, youth represent a highly productive group, significantly contributing through their labour, creativity, and innovations.[20]

Based on the book "*Being Young and Muslim: New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*", written by Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat[21], the role of youth in Islamic moderation can be explained through various contexts that portray Muslim

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[14] Ari Farizal Rasyid and Anwar Taufik Rakhmat, "Peran Pemuda Muhammadiyah Dalam Membangun Moderasi Beragama," *Khazanah Multidisiplin* 4, no. 1 (2023): 190–204.

[15] M Islahuddin, Romelah Romelah, and Moh Nurhakim, "Moderasi Muhammadiyah Dalam Bingkai Dakwah Kultural," *Tamaddun: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Keagamaan* 24, no. 1 (2023): 6–16.

[16] Hendri Pani Dias, "Islam Berkemajuan Perspektif Haedar Nashir," *Progressive of Cognitive and Ability* 3, no. 3 (2024): 157–66.

[17] Zuly Qodir, "Muhammadiyah Memperkuat Moderasi Islam Memutus Radikalisme," *Jurnal Maarif* 14, no. 2 (2019): 1–20, https://repository.umy.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/32318/01 Zuly Qodir depan (3 files merged).pdf?sequence=1.

[18] Andrew M Henry, "Religious Literacy in Social Media: A Need for Strategic Amplification," *Religion & Education* 48, no. 1 (2021): 89–101.

[19] Al Sukri and Hasan Sazali, "From Awareness to Action: Medan's Youth Pioneering Islamic moderation as a Tool Against Radicalism," *Jurnal Penelitian* 21, no. 2 (2024): 206–20.

[20] Zhibek Khussainova et al., "The Potential of Youth and Older People's Inclusion in the Sustainable Development of the Creative Economy," *Sustainability* 16, no. 10 (2024): 4095.

[21] Asef Bayat Linda Herrera, *Being-Young-and-Muslim_-New-Cultural-Politics-in-the-Global-South-and-North*, ed. John L. Esposito, 1st ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), https://psipp.itb-ad.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Religion-and-Global-Politics-Linda-Herrera-Asef-Bayat-Being-Young-and-Muslim_-New-Cultural-Politics-in-the-Global-South-and-North-2010-Oxford-University-Press.pdf.

youth as dynamic agents of change. The book states that Muslim youth often face global challenges such as neoliberal globalization, geopolitical conflicts, and social pressures, yet they retain the ability to articulate their identities in creative and innovative ways. The roles of youth in Islamic moderation include the following: as agents of dialogue and tolerance, drivers of social and economic change, creators of plural identities, roles in education and literacy, and confronting the challenges of extremism.

Youth have a vital role in promoting Islamic moderation as they are adaptive, critical, and innovative.[22] This moderation seeks harmony, peace, and tolerance by embracing diversity. As agents of change, youth utilize technology and social media to spread these values. Their importance lies in their potential, energy, enthusiasm, and creativity, alongside their education and awareness. These attributes enable them to promote moderation effectively within communities. With greater access to education, youth can implement moderation in daily life and share their values through various platforms, ensuring a broader impact on fostering understanding and harmony in society.

This study employs a library research method,[23] focusing on the analysis of literature relevant to the theme. Library research was selected as the research method because it enables the researcher to explore concepts, theories, and perspectives developed by experts regarding the roles of Nahdlatul 'Ulama, Muhammadiyah youth, and Islamic moderation within a broader context. The research process commenced with the identification of pertinent literature, including books, journal articles, research reports, and other sources discussing Islamic moderation and the role of youth in society. The criteria for selecting literature included authenticity, validity, and relevance to the topic under discussion. The researcher then collected and organized data obtained from these various sources for critical analysis. Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive-analytical approach, wherein the researcher describes and analyzes various perspectives and findings from the reviewed literature. The collected data will be interpreted to understand how youth can contribute to advancing Islamic moderation and the implications of that role within Indonesia's social, cultural, and political contexts. This study also considers historical and sociological contexts in analyzing the role of youth by examining how the dynamics of youth involvement in society have evolved over time and how this evolution has impacted efforts to promote Islamic moderation. The results of this literature review are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the significance of youth engagement in advancing Islamic moderation and to offer recommendations that can be applied in social practice and policy.

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[22] Zulkipli Lessy and Miftahur Rohman, "Muslim Millennial Youths Infusing Islamic moderation: A Case Study Approach to Investigate Their Attitude," *Dialogia: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 20, no. 1 (2022): 1–27.

[23] Miza Nina Adlini et al., "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka," *Jurnal Edumaspul* 6, no. 1 (2022): 974–80.

Results and Discussion

Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah Youth Contributions to Islamic Moderation

The role of NU and Muhammadiyah youth in promoting Islamic moderation is crucial and multifaceted. There are several ways in which youth contribute to promoting Islamic moderation, including education and socialization, the use of social media, community activities, influence as role models, and the role of santri and pesantren education.[24] Youth can disseminate an understanding of Islamic moderation through education and social campaigns. With a deep understanding of the principles of moderation, they can educate their peers and the general public to avoid extremism and strengthen tolerance. In the digital age, youth utilize social media as a platform to spread the values of moderation. They can create content that encourages constructive dialogue and broadens the reach of the moderation message.[25] Youth are often involved in organizations and community activities that promote interfaith dialogue and inclusive social activities. These activities help strengthen relationships among various religious and ethnic groups. As the next generation youth who actively practice and promote Islamic moderation serve as positive role models for the next generation. They demonstrate how to apply religious teachings in a moderate and inclusive manner.

Education plays a key role in shaping moderate understanding among youth.[26] Through formal education, such as schools and universities, as well as informal education, such as seminars and workshops, youth can gain deep knowledge about the principles of Islamic moderation. This includes an understanding of tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and the prevention of extremism. Specialized training in communication and leadership skills helps youth become effective agents of change in promoting Islamic moderation.[27] They learn how to articulate and spread the values of moderation constructively within their communities. Youth play a role in spreading moderate knowledge through outreach and awareness campaigns, as well as leading by example. Youth are often involved in outreach activities and campaigns to promote the values of moderation.[28] They can also use social media and digital platforms to disseminate information about tolerance and diversity, as well as to counter extremist narratives. Similarly, they can serve as role models in society. By exemplifying

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[24] Qintannajmia Elvinaro and Dede Syarif, "Generasi Milenial Dan Moderasi Beragama: Promosi Moderasi Beragama Oleh Peace Generation Di Media Sosial," *JISPO Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik* 11, no. 2 (2021): 195–218.

[25] Akbar Rizquni Mubarok and Sunarto Sunarto, "Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang," *Journal of Islamic Communication Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 1–11.

[26] Ilham Karim Parapat, "Pendidikan Karakter Pada Anak Dalam Membentuk Generasi Moderat Di Indonesia," *Book Chapter of Proceedings Journey-Liaison Academia and Society* 1, no. 1 (2024): 251–57.

[27] H Zulkarnaen, *Urgensi Peran Tokoh Agama dalam Pembinaan Moderasi Beragama* (Uwais Inspirasi Indonesia, 2024), 1-105.

[28] Nur Kafid, *Moderasi Beragama Reproduksi Kultur Keberagamaan Moderat di Kalangan Generasi Muda Muslim* (Elex Media Komputindo, 2023), 1-270.

moderation in their attitudes and actions, youth demonstrate how the principles of moderation can be applied in everyday life.[29] They play a role in changing perceptions and attitudes within their communities through inclusive actions and open dialogue.

Additionally, the role of youth in advancing Islamic moderation can be realized through social activism and community involvement in community activities and youth organizations. Activities such as social programs, training, and awareness campaigns are conducted to improve the quality of life in society and promote the values of moderation. Youth organizations often become pioneers in promoting Islamic moderation[30]. They organize seminars, workshops, and discussions on the importance of tolerance and moderation[31]. Through these activities, they strive to educate community members and the general public about the principles of moderate Islam. Through social and community activities, youth play a role in raising awareness about the importance of tolerance[32]. They are often involved in initiatives that emphasize acceptance of differences, whether in religious, cultural, or social contexts. Youth activism also contributes to promoting social harmony by organizing events that support interaction between different groups[33]. This helps to reduce tensions and build mutual understanding among communities.

Referring to the research findings and discussion above, the contribution of youth in advancing Islamic moderation in Indonesia can be visualized in the following contribution table.

Table. 1
The Contribution of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah Youth In Advancing Islamic Moderation

Youth Contribution	Description
Education and Socialization	Youth spread understanding of Islamic moderation through education and social campaigns to avoid extremism and strengthen tolerance.
Utilization of Social Media	Youth use social media to create content that fosters constructive dialogue and extends the reach of moderation messages.

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[29] Ari Farizal Rasyid and Anwar Taufik Rakhmat, "Peran Pemuda Muhammadiyah Dalam Membangun Moderasi Beragama," *Khazanah Multidisiplin* 4, no. 1 (2023): 190–204, https://journal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/kl.

[30] Lessy and Rohman, "Muslim Millennial Youths Infusing Islamic moderation: A Case Study Approach to Investigate Their Attitude."

[31] Mubarok and Sunarto, "Moderasi Beragama di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang." 1-11.

[32] Muhammad Saddam Fahrezi, Prizka Ade Aulia, and Gunawan Santoso, "Membela Tanah Air Dengan Segenap Jiwa: Peran Dan Tanggung Jawab Generasi Muda Dalam Menjaga Kedaulatan Dan Kepentingan Bangsa," *Jurnal Pendidikan Transformatif* 2, no. 2 (2023): 391–404.

[33] Mochammad Rizal Ramadhan, "Integrasi Nilai Islam Moderat Dalam Pendidikan Islam Untuk Menguatkan Harmoni Sosial Keagamaan Pada Masyarakat Plural," in *Proceedings of Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars*, vol. 3, 2019, 701–9.

Community Activities	Youth are involved in organizations and community activities that promote interfaith dialogue and inclusive social activities.
Influence as Role Models	Youth serve as role models by practicing Islamic moderation and demonstrating how to apply religious teachings in a moderate and inclusive manner.
Santri and Pesantren education	Millennial students spread the values of Islamic moderation they have learned in Islamic boarding schools to the broader community.
Formal and Informal Education	Through formal and informal education, young people gain knowledge about the principles of Islamic moderation, such as tolerance and interfaith dialogue.
Communication Skills Training	Youth are trained in communication and leadership skills to become effective agents of change in promoting Islamic moderation.
Outreach and Awareness Campaigns	Young people engage in outreach and campaigns to promote moderation values and counter extremist narratives through social media and digital platforms.
Role Modeling in Daily Life	Youth serve as role models in their communities by applying the principles of moderation in their daily attitudes and actions.
Social Activism and Community Engagement	Youth engage in social activities through organizations such as Karang Taruna to improve the quality of life in communities and promote values of moderation.
Seminars, Workshops, and Discussions	Youth organizations hold seminars, workshops, and discussions to promote tolerance and moderation.
Promotion of Social Harmony	Youth play a role in raising awareness about tolerance through initiatives that support interaction between different groups.
Organizing Events for Social Interaction	Youth activism organizes events that support interaction between groups to reduce tension and build mutual understanding.

Although the youth of NU and Muhammadiyah have contributed to efforts to promote Islamic moderation in their country, they are not exempt from the challenges they face in real-world contexts. Numerous phenomena illustrate that they encounter critical issues that should be addressed and resolved. NU and Muhammadiyah youth face several interconnected phenomena and challenges, including: influence of radicalization, social stigma, lack of education on moderation, environmental and

cultural pressures, balancing identity and modernity, and impact of environmental factors.[34]

Radical groups use social media and online platforms to propagate extremist ideologies targeting impressionable youth. Youth are vulnerable to recruitment into radical movements that promise identity, belonging, and purpose. The youth encounter conflicting narratives that challenge the moderate teachings of NU and Muhammadiyah. Social stigma covers stereotyping, misrepresentation, and peer pressure. NU and Muhammadiyah youth often face stereotypes as being overly traditional or overly reformist, depending on societal perceptions. Moderate youth movements are sometimes mischaracterized as being aligned with secularism or liberalism, leading to mistrust from conservative communities.[35]

The lack of education on moderation includes insufficient awareness, curriculum gaps, and resource constraints. Many youths lack a comprehensive understanding of the principles of moderation (*wasathiyah*), making them susceptible to polarized views. Educational systems may not adequately emphasize critical thinking and the values of tolerance and coexistence. Limited access to materials or programs on religious moderation restricts outreach to rural or marginalized areas.[36]

Environmental and cultural pressures may cover cultural resistance, economic inequality, and global influences. Efforts to promote moderation may face pushback in communities where rigid or conservative cultural norms dominate. Socioeconomic disparities can exacerbate feelings of marginalization, making youth more receptive to radical ideologies. Exposure to global radical movements or extremist narratives creates additional pressures on youth to conform to divisive ideologies.[37] Balancing identity and modernity means identity crisis and generational gap. Navigating between traditional Islamic values and modern globalized lifestyles often creates internal conflicts. Older and younger members of NU and Muhammadiyah may differ in their interpretations of religious and cultural practices, leading to tensions within organizations.[38]

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[34] ARDC Pizolati, "Digital Media, Social Bubbles, Extremism and Challenges Implicated in the Construction of Identity and Respect for Diversity and Cultural Pluralism," n.d.; Jeni A Groot-Begnaud, *Muslim Populations in a Western Context: Lived Experience of Stigma and Marginalization* (The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, 2022); Tanja Tahvanainen, "Social Work in a Global Risk Society-The Issue of Islamist Radicalization in Europe" (Itä-Suomen yliopisto, 2019); Abidah Alidina, "An Interpretative Phenomenological Study on Government Policies and Education to Counter-Terrorism and Radicalization on Muslim Identity" (National University, 2023).

[35] Leonie Schmidt, "Aesthetics of Authority:'Islam Nusantara'and Islamic 'Radicalism'in Indonesian Film and Social Media," *Religion* 51, no. 2 (2021): 237–58.

[36] Asnal Mala and Wiwin Luqna Hunaida, "Exploring the Role of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: A Comprehensive Analysis of Its Unifying Potential and Practical Applications," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 11, no. 2 (2023): 173–96.

[37] Ernest Morrell, *Critical Literacy and Urban Youth: Pedagogies of Access, Dissent, and Liberation* (Routledge, 2015).

[38] Elif Izberk-Bilgin, "Infidel Brands: Unveiling Alternative Meanings of Global Brands at the Nexus of Globalization, Consumer Culture, and Islamism," *Journal of Consumer Research* 39, no. 4 (2012): 663–87.

Impact of environmental factors may covers urbanization and isolation, and political climate. Urbanization often leads to weakened community bonds, which radical groups exploit. The politicization of religion in certain regions intensifies the challenge of maintaining moderation.[39] By addressing these challenges through education, interfaith dialogue, community engagement, and leveraging digital platforms for positive messaging, NU and Muhammadiyah youth can strengthen their roles as ambassadors of moderation.

Potential, Challenges, and Barriers

1. The Great Potential of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah Youth in Spreading Moderation Values

Youth have significant potential in spreading moderation values for several key reasons: energy and creativity, access to education and information, role as change agents, ability to create dialogue, and involvement in policy. Youth often possess high energy and creativity, allowing them to develop and disseminate new ideas about moderation. They can use various social media platforms and technology to reach a wide audience. Millennials and today's youth have better access to education and information about Islamic moderation.[40] They can apply this knowledge in various social and educational activities to promote moderation values. Youth can act as change agents by spreading moderation values through community activities, youth organizations, and social programs.[41] This includes organizing seminars, workshops, and discussions on Islamic moderation. Youth have the ability to create and facilitate dialogue between different groups, which is crucial for promoting tolerance and understanding.[42] This helps reduce conflict and strengthen social harmony. Through involvement in public policy and community initiatives, youth can influence the development of policies that support Islamic moderation and diversity.[43]

2. Difficulties in Integrating Moderation into Daily Life

Integrating moderation into daily life faces several challenges, including a lack of understanding and education, negative social media influences, social and cultural resistance, insufficient institutional support, and limited resources. Many individuals do not fully understand the concept of Islamic moderation and its application in daily life. Limited education on tolerance and inclusive attitudes makes the application of

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[39] Michael D Driessen, *Religion and Democratization: Framing Religious and Political Identities in Muslim and Catholic Societies* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

[40] Ijah Bahijah et al., "Wasathiyah Islam Di Era Disrupsi Digital (Pendidikan Nilai-Nilai Wasathiyah Islam Dalam Bersosial Media Di Kalangan Generasi Milenial Dan Generasi Z)," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 001 (2022): 1–20.

[41] Luqman Al Hakim and Muhammad Faiz, "Komunikasi Pemuda Indonesia Dalam Tantangan Media Mainstream Dan Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama," *IJIC: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Communication* 4, no. 1 (2021): 24–46.

[42] Christin Makahekung, "Pendekatan Teologi Kontekstual dalam Menciptakan Dialog Antar Agama," *SHAMAYIM: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 3, no. 1 (2024): 40–48.

[43] Kafid, *Moderasi Beragama Reproduksi Kultur Keberagamaan Moderat Di Kalangan Generasi Muda Muslim*. 1-165.

moderation values challenging.[44] Social media often serves as a source of inaccurate information and can reinforce extremist views. Exposure to non-moderate content affects individuals' attitudes and hinders the integration of moderation.[45] The integration of moderation is often impeded by deeply ingrained social and cultural norms. Changing attitudes towards moderation can face resistance, especially in conservative communities or those with exclusive views.[46] Often, educational institutions and communities do not adequately support moderation initiatives. The lack of training programs and policies supporting Islamic moderation weakens integration efforts.[47] Limited access to resources and facilities that support the practice of Islamic moderation is also a constraint. Without adequate support, it is difficult for individuals to consistently apply moderation principles.[48]

The conflict between extremist and moderate ideologies reflects a deep division in perspectives on society and religious life. Extremist ideologies tend to have absolute and exclusive views. Adherents of these ideologies often reject pluralism and diversity, using religion or ideology as a justification for radical and violent actions.[49] They often view their views as the only truth, which can lead to conflict, violence, and terrorism. Conversely, moderate ideologies emphasize tolerance, inclusivity, and openness. Adherents of these ideologies believe that differing views can be accepted and valued within society. Islamic moderation, as a form of moderate ideology, aims to harmonize interfaith relationships and prevent conflict by promoting dialogue and understanding.[50] The conflict between extremism and moderation often results in broad social impacts, such as community fragmentation, sectarian violence, and terrorism. Extremism can threaten stability and security, while moderation seeks to unite various groups with principles of tolerance and harmony.[51] To address this conflict, it is essential to strengthen education on moderation, promote inclusive values, and enhance dialogue between groups.[52]

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[44] Tumpal Daniel, "Mewujudkan Perilaku Toleran Pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Perspektif Islam Moderasi," *Jurnal Alasma: Media Informasi Dan Komunikasi Ilmiah* 1, no. 2 (2019): 287–300.

[45] Hamam Burhanuddin and Fahmi Khumaini, "Memperkuat Paham Moderasi Beragama Dalam Menangkal Narasi Kebencian Di Media Sosial," *Ta'allum: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2021).

[46] Muhammad Iqbal Suma, *Dinamika Wacana Islam* (Penerbit Nagamedia, 2014), 1-206.

[47] Rachmatullah Rusli and Adam Sugiarto, "Peran Ormas Islam Dan Lembaga Pendidikan Islam Dalam Mewujudkan Moderasi Islam Di Indonesia," *Al-Hasanah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 7, no. 2 (2022): 255–80.

[48] Maulida Ulfa, "Menjaga Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Strategi Menghadapi Teknologi," *Book Chapter of Proceedings Journey-Liaison Academia and Society* 1, no. 1 (2024): 43–63.

[49] Khalid Rahman and Aditia Muhammad Noor, *Moderasi Beragama Di Tengah Pergumulan Ideologi Ekstremisme* (Universitas Brawijaya Press, 2020). 27.

[50] Zakiyuddin Baidhawy, *Pendidikan Agama Berwawasan Multikultural* (Erlangga, 2005), 1-134.

[51] M Taufiq Rahman, *Agama Dan Politik Identitas Dalam Kerangka Sosial* (Prodi S2 Studi Agama-Agama UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2020).

[52] Fatmawati Fatmawati Hilal, "Transformasi Gerakan Radikalisme Menuju Moderasi Beragama," *KURIOSITAS: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 16, no. 1 (2023): 77–90.

Based on the research findings and discussion, the potential challenges and barriers faced by youth in advancing Islamic moderation in Indonesia can be visualized in the following matrix table 2.

Table. 2

Aspects	Categories	Description
Potential, Challenges, and Barriers		
Potential	Energy and Creativity	Youth have high energy and creativity, allowing them to develop and spread new ideas about moderation through various social media platforms.
	Access to Education and Information	Youth have better access to education and information about Islamic moderation, which can be applied in social and educational activities.[53]
	Ability to Create Dialogue	Youth have the ability to create and facilitate dialogue between different groups, which is crucial for promoting tolerance and understanding.
	Role as Change Agents	Youth play the role of change agents by spreading the values of moderation through community activities, youth organizations, and social programs.
	Involvement in Policy	Youth can influence the development of policies that support Islamic moderation and diversity through involvement in public policy and community initiatives.
Challenges	Influence of Radicalization	Youth exposed to extremist ideologies may have their views on Islamic moderation influenced, particularly through social media.
	Lack of Moderation Education	Many youth people have not received adequate education on Islamic moderation, resulting in a limited understanding of the importance of tolerance.
	Stigma and Stereotypes	Youth face negative stigma or stereotypes related to their efforts in promoting moderation, which can hinder collaboration and positive change.[54]
	Social and Environmental Pressures	Peer or environmental pressures make it difficult for young people to remain consistent in expressing and practicing the values of moderation.

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[53] Bahijah et al., "Wasathiyah Islam Di Era Disrupsi Digital (Pendidikan Nilai-Nilai Wasathiyah Islam Dalam Bersosial Media Di Kalangan Generasi Milenial Dan Generasi Z)."

[54] Zulkarnaen, *Urgensi Peran Tokoh Agama Dalam Pembinaan Moderasi Beragama*. 67.

	Limited Access and Resources	Youth often lack access to resources and training on Islamic moderation, which becomes a barrier to promoting and implementing moderation values.
Barriers	Lack of Understanding and Education	Many individuals have not fully understood the concept of Islamic moderation and its application in daily life, leading to challenges in implementing moderation.
	Negative Influence of Social Media	Social media often serves as a source of inaccurate information and can reinforce extremist views, hindering the integration of moderation into everyday life.
	Social and Cultural Resistance	Deeply rooted social and cultural norms often hinder the acceptance of moderation, especially in conservative communities or those with exclusive views.
	Lack of Institutional Support	Lack of support from educational institutions and the community for moderation initiatives weakens efforts to integrate moderation values.
	Limited Resources	Limited access to resources and facilities that support Islamic moderation practices hinders the consistent application of moderation principles.

The potential, challenges, and barriers to strengthening the role of youth in Islamic moderation reflect a complex dynamic. Youth possess high energy and creativity, enabling them to develop and spread ideas of moderation through social media. Their access to education and information also provides opportunities to apply moderation values in various social and educational activities. Additionally, their ability to foster dialogue across different groups is crucial in promoting tolerance and understanding. However, challenges persist, such as the influence of radicalization through social media, lack of education on moderation, and the negative stigma attached to their efforts. Social and environmental pressures also pose obstacles for young people in consistently practicing moderation values. Other barriers include limited public understanding, the negative influence of social media, and social and cultural resistance to the concept of moderation. Furthermore, the lack of institutional support and limited resources hinder the sustainability of Islamic moderation initiatives.

Strategies to Strengthen the Role of Youth

1. Development of Training and Education Programs

The first strategy to strengthen the role of youth in promoting Islamic moderation is through the development of training and education programs. These programs should be designed to equip youth with a deep understanding of moderate Islamic

values such as tolerance, justice, and solidarity. Such training can be conducted in schools, universities, religious institutions, and through online platforms to reach a broader audience.[55] Training and education programs for youth aimed at promoting Islamic moderation seek to provide the younger generation with a comprehensive understanding of the values of moderation in Islam.[56]

Training materials cover various topics related to Islamic moderation, such as the importance of tolerance, justice, and respecting differences. This training is often organized by government institutions like the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which also emphasizes practical strategies for implementing moderation values in daily life.[57] Youth should also be involved in education and outreach activities conducted in schools, campuses, and mosques. They are encouraged to participate in activities that strengthen their understanding of moderate Islam and to become agents of change within their communities.[58]

2. Programs Involving Youth

The second strategy involves engaging youth in programs focused on Islamic moderation, which is a crucial next step. Programs such as interfaith dialogues, social activities, and public campaigns can empower youth to become change agents within their communities [59]. By participating actively, youth can develop leadership skills, strengthen networks, and more effectively promote moderation messages in their environment. Programs involving youth in promoting Islamic moderation are designed to enhance their understanding of the importance of moderation in religion and encourage them to become agents of change in society[60]. Examples of such programs include Islamic moderation training, social and interfaith dialogue activities, and cultural competitions and festivals. Islamic moderation training provides youth with the knowledge and skills to understand and implement moderation values in their daily lives.[61]

For instance, the Ministry of Religious Affairs regularly conducts these training sessions involving youth from diverse backgrounds to promote values of tolerance and social harmony. Social activities and interfaith dialogues involving youth aim to build mutual understanding and awareness of the importance of Islamic moderation. In

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[55] Muh Iqbal and Asman Asman, "Dakwah Digital Sebagai Sarana Peningkatan Pemahaman Moderasi Beragama Dikalangan Pemuda," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 41, no. 2 (2021): 172–83.

[56] Subakir and Mustamir, "Gerakan Moderasi Islam Dalam Perspektif Deteksi Dini; Studi Gerakan Pemuda Ansor Kota Kediri."

[57] Maimun Muhammad Kosim, *Moderasi Islam Di Indonesia* (LKIS PELANGI AKSARA, 2021).

[58] Dinar Bela Ayu Naj'ma and Syamsul Bakri, "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Penguatan Wawasan Kebangsaan," *Academica: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies* 5, no. 2 (2021): 421–34.

[59] Nahed Talaat Ayoub and Patrick K Mbugua, "Shaping Youth Behaviour Through Interfaith Collaborations," n.d, 1-64.

[60] Sukri and Sazali, "From Awareness to Action: Medan's Youth Pioneering Religious Moderation as a Tool Against Radicalism." 206-220.

[61] Aep Kusnawan and Ridwan Rustandi, "Menemukan Moderasi Beragama Dalam Kaderisasi Dakwah: Kajian Pada Pemuda Persatuan Islam Jawa Barat," *NALAR: Jurnal Peradaban Dan Pemikiran Islam* 5, no. 1 (2021): 41–61.

these activities, youth are encouraged to participate in discussions and campaigns that emphasize the importance of respecting different beliefs and contributing to social harmony.[62] Through cultural competitions and festivals highlighting diversity and tolerance, youth are invited to demonstrate their commitment to Islamic moderation. These activities not only raise awareness but also strengthen solidarity among youth from various cultural and religious backgrounds.

3. Increasing Support from Government and Community Institutions

The third strategy is to enhance support from government and community institutions, which is crucial for the success of moderation programs involving youth. The government can provide policies, funding, and facilities to support these initiatives [63]. Additionally, the community, including religious organizations, needs to offer moral support and mentoring to youth. The synergy between the government, community, and youth will create a conducive environment for young people to play an active role in promoting Islamic moderation.[64] Support from government and community institutions is key to strengthening the role of youth in promoting Islamic moderation. Through this support, youth not only gain access to resources and training but are also encouraged to become change agents in their communities. Collaboration between the government, community, and youth can create a conducive environment for the growth of moderation values.[65]

Government programs supporting Islamic moderation could include training, seminars, or workshops focused on developing understanding and practice of moderation. The government can collaborate with youth organizations and community institutions to organize these programs in a structured manner.[66] Through cooperation with the community, youth can organize campaigns that emphasize the importance of Islamic moderation in daily life, such as interfaith dialogues and inclusive social activities. Financial and logistical support from the government and active participation from the community are essential elements in ensuring the smooth implementation of these activities.[67] The community and government can support

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[62] Moh Khoiril Anwar, "Dialog Antar Umat Beragama Di Indonesia: Perspektif a. Mukti Ali," *Jurnal Dakwah* 19, no. 1 (2018): 89–107.

[63] Muhammad Nasir and Muhammad Khairul Rijal, "Keeping the Middle Path: Mainstreaming Religious Moderation through Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (2021): 213–41.

[64] Firmanda Taufiq and Ayu Maulida Alkholid, "Peran Kementerian Agama Dalam Mempromosikan Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 41, no. 2 (2021). 45.

[65] Ulfa, "Menjaga Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Strategi Menghadapi Teknologi." 43-63.

[66] Martin Lukito Sinaga, "Moderasi Beragama: Sikap Dan Ekspresi Publik Mutakhir Agama-Agama Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Masyarakat Dan Budaya* 24, no. 3 (2022). 23.

[67] Nurul Aini and Isra Aulia, "Melawan Intoleransi Dan Ekstremisme Media Sosial: Inovasi Kampanye Moderasi Beragama Kanal Youtube Labpsa Tv," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama Indonesia (JSAI)* 3, no. 1 (2022): 69–81.

festivals showcasing cultural and religious diversity, organized by youth to raise awareness about the importance of tolerance and moderation.[68]

Based on the research findings and discussion, the strategies to strengthening the roles of yout in advancing Islamic moderation in Indonesia can be visualized in the following matrix table 3.

Table. 3
Strategies for Strengthening NU and Muhammadiyah Youth Roles

Strategies	Description
Development of Training and Education Programs	Developing training and education programs that equip youth with an understanding of moderate Islamic values, such as tolerance, justice, and solidarity.
	This training includes Islamic moderation materials, education, and counseling, involving youth as change agents in the community.
	Youth are encouraged to actively participate in social activities, interfaith dialogue, and public campaigns to ensure they become pioneers in promoting Islamic moderation.
Programs Involving Youth	Organizing programs such as interfaith dialogues, social activities, and public campaigns that empower youth as agents of change in the community.
	Islamic moderation training provides youth with knowledge and skills to understand and implement moderation values in their daily lives.
	Competitions and cultural festivals that highlight diversity and tolerance strengthen youth's commitment to Islamic moderation.
Increasing Support from Government and Community Institutions	Government support through policies, funding, and facilities that support Islamic moderation programs is crucial for the success of youth initiatives.
	The community, including religious organizations, provides moral support and mentoring to youth, creating an environment conducive to the promotion of Islamic moderation.
	Government programs such as training, social campaigns, and cultural and religious festivals, supported by community collaboration, enhance the effectiveness of moderation efforts.

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[68] Taufiq and Alkholid, "Peran Kementerian Agama Dalam Mempromosikan Moderasi Beragama Di Era Digital." 32.

Financial support, logistical assistance, and active participation from the community, along with regular evaluations, ensure the smooth operation and sustainability of moderation programs.

The strategy for enhancing the role of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah youth in promoting Islamic moderation is implemented through three primary approaches. First, training and educational programs should be developed to equip young individuals with a comprehensive understanding of moderate Islamic values, such as tolerance, justice, and solidarity. These programs will include materials on religious moderation, education, and counseling, empowering youth to become agents of change within society. Second, it is essential to implement programs that actively engage youth in social activities, interfaith dialogue, and public campaigns. Through training in Islamic moderation, young people will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to embody these values in their daily lives. Additionally, various competitions and cultural festivals will be organized to reinforce their commitment to diversity and tolerance. Third, it is crucial to increase support from government and community institutions through policies, funding, and resources that sustain moderation programs. Collaborating with communities and religious organizations will foster a conducive environment for the ongoing success of Islamic moderation initiatives.

Conclusion

Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah Youth play a crucial role in promoting Islamic moderation. As the next generation, they serve as pioneers capable of bridging differences in a multicultural society. Young people possess the power to influence social change, particularly in religious contexts, by advocating for values of tolerance, harmony, and unity. In today's digital age, the role of youth is even more significant, as they have extensive access to technology that can be utilized to disseminate the message of Islamic moderation, combat radicalism, and uphold national stability. Based on this, several recommendations for strengthening the role of youth in promoting Islamic moderation are as follows.

There is a pressing need to enhance education and training programs that focus on understanding Islamic moderation for youth, equipping them to become effective agents of change in society. Encouraging young people to actively utilize social media as a platform for disseminating values of moderation and countering extremist narratives is crucial. Strengthening collaboration between youth and religious organizations is essential to support initiatives that promote Islamic moderation. Furthermore, it is vital to involve youth in the public policy-making process related to Islamic moderation to ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives are implemented.

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