THE URGENCY OF STRENGTHENING ISLAM MODERATION IN THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITIES

Maimun and Mohammad Kosim

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Madura
email: maimuniainmadura.ac.id

Abstract: *This study focuses on the concept of Islamic moderation in four Islamic State Higher Education in Indonesia is formed and the urgency of strengthening it to respond to their environment's social and religious challenges. This paper aims to describe the concept of Islamic moderation and the urgency of strengthening it in the state of Islamic universities in Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative approach with analytical-descriptive types. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation at four state Islamic universities from Central Java, West Nusa Tenggara, East Java, and Sulawesi. Data analysis used the Miles & Huberman analysis model, content analysis, and hermeneutic analysis. The result shows that several Islamic State Higher Education (PTKIN) had various concepts related to the term Islamic moderation even though it was generated from one's understanding. The mindset and actions stand in the middle position (tawasuth). Furthermore, it shows that strengthening Islamic Moderation in Islamic State Higher Education relevant and urgent because this program is in line with the existence of Islamic State Higher Education, which provides human capital, become institutional organizations, political organizations, institutional commitment, and prosperous (khazanah) of moderate Islamic studies, as well as a very supportive environment for strengthening Islamic moderation in this country.*

الملخص: تركز هذه الدراسة على كيفية بناء مفهوم الوسطية الإسلامية في العديد من الجامعات الإسلامية الحكومية في إندونيسيا والحاجة الملحة لتعزيزه في الاستجابة للتحديات الاجتماعية والدينية حولها. تهدف هذه الورقة إلى وصف مفهوم الوسطية

الإسلامية وضرورة تعزيزها في الجامعات الإسلامية الحكومية في إندونيسيا. يستخدم هذا البحث المنهج النوعي الوصفي التحليلي. تم الحصول على البيانات من خلال المقابلات المتعمقة والملاحظة والتوثيق في أربع جامعات دينية إسلامية حكومية مقرها في وسط جاوة وغرب نوسا تينجارا وجاوة الشرقية وسولاويزي. استخدم تحليل البيانات نموذج التحليل namrebuH & seliM وتحليل المحتوى والتحليل التأويلي. تظهر نتائج الدراسة أن العديد من الجامعات الإسلامية الحكومية لها مفاهيم مختلفة تتعلق بمصطلح الوسطية الإسلامية، على الرغم من أنها تتلخص في فهم واحد وهو التفكير والأفعال التي تقف في المركز الأوسط. توجد أهمية تعزيز الوسطية الإسلامية في الجامعات الإسلامية الحكومية بما يتماشى مع وجود الموارد البشرية لدي الجامعة ، والدعم السياسي لها، والتزام القوي من مديري المؤسسات، والثروة من الدراسات الإسلامية المعتدلة، والبيئة الداعمة للغاية لتعزيز الوسطية الإسلامية في هذه الدولة.

Abstrak: *Kajian ini difokuskan kepada bagaimana konsep moderasi Islam yang dibangun di 4 PTKIN di Indonesia dan urgensi penguatannya dalam menjawab tantangan social dan keagamaan di lingkungannya. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan konsep moderasi Islam dan urgensi penguatannya di perguruan tinggi keagamaan Islam negeri di Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berjenis deskriptif analitis. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi pada empat perguruan tinggi keagamaan Islam negeri yang berkedudukan di Jawa Tengah, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Jawa Timur, dan Sulawesi. Analisis data menggunakan model analisis Miles & Huberman, contens analisis, dan analisis hermeneutik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa beberapa PTKIN mempunyai konsep yang beragam terkait istilah moderasi Islam meski bermuara pada satu pemahaman yaitu pola pikir dan tindakan yang berdiri pada posisi tengah-tengah (tawasuth). Penguatan Moderasi Islam di PTKIN menemukan relevansi dan urgensinya seiring eksistensi perguruan tinggi yang memiliki modal SDM, kelembagaan, politik, komitmen kelembagaan, dan khazanah kajian Islam moderat, serta lingkungan yang sangat mendukung bagi penguatan moderasi Islam di negeri ini.*

Keywords: Moderation of Islam, PTKIN, tolerance, contra-radicals.

INTRODUCTION

The strengthening of moderate Islam has recently re-found its relevance as the tension of identity politics and ideology tends to be extreme, intolerant, and radical. The government seems overwhelmed. Moreover, it can be said failed to prevent and resolve intolerance problems, often leading to violence and anarchy. It is not because of the teachings of religions but the adherents themselves. For this reason, there must be a separation between religion and its adherents. Religion cannot be demanded to motivate deviant behavior, but the accusation can be addressed to its adherents. Radical, terrorist, and extremist behavior cannot be blamed on a particular religion. Meanwhile, radical and extreme movements can occur to adherents of every existing religion.[1]

No religion teaches violence and radicalism if it has been understood correctly. So when there are certain adherents of certain religions who display violent behavior towards others, and they say in the name of religion, the cause must be sought from different aspects such as social, political, and economic, not the religion itself. It means that religious radicalism never occurs suddenly. There is always a cause and a target.[2] Therefore, religious radicalism often appears as a reaction to previous actions detrimental to the religion and its adherents.

The world of education has a big responsibility to spread the values of moderation, both at the school level, Islamic boarding schools[3], moreover universities[4] which are responsible for producing professional and educated personnel. They have a great responsibility to participate in resolving cases of intolerance in various forms. There is no exception for universities, including the State Islamic Universities (PTKIN), to do those responsibilities. There is no guarantee that PTKIN, even though the Islamic-based universities,

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[1] Nurcholish Madjid, *Dialog Keterbukaan* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1998), 254–55.

[2] Mun'im A. Sirry, *Membendung Militansi Agama; Iman Dan Politik Dalam Masyarakat Modern* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2003), 30.

[3] Irwan Fathurrochman, Dina Hajja Ristianti, and Mohamad Aziz Shah bin Mohamed Arif, "Revitalization of Islamic Boarding School Management to Foster the Spirit of Islamic Moderation in Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (2020): 239–58, https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2019.82.239-258.

[4] Abdurrohman Kasdi and Saifudin Saifudin, "Volume 17 Number 1 2020 Resilience of Muslim Families in the Pandemic Era : Indonesian" 17, no. 1 (2020): 81–94.

will not be exposed to radicalism, especially in the era of disruption where information about intolerance is easily obtained without being dammed.

The effort of PTKIN toward religious moderation is significant to counter the discourse of radicalism which is developing rapidly. In addition, Indonesia's condition requires cooperation among all elements of society in stemming radical thoughts and behavior as well as terrorism in this country based on the duties and functions of every element. PTKIN, as well as, should contribute and even become the last barrier for national defense in encouraging moderate understanding. Furthermore, PTKIN should make a complete design, especially about the action, rather than revolve around the discourse and epistemological level. Some people debate the term *wasathiyat* about its mention in the Qur'an[5].

Hassan[6] and Irawan[7] said that some people describe it conceptually, and others try to talk about its application, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia.[8] There is also research that partially describes universities' efforts in implementing moderation through formal and informal studies.[9] However, the existing writings do not yet describe that Islamic universities in Indonesia have carried out their mandate, particularly in developing concepts, strategies, and the actualization of Islamic moderation in Indonesia through written, spoken, and action so that the strengths and challenges faced by Islamic universities can be fully described in carrying out the mandate to strengthen Islamic moderation.

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[5] Md Asham bin Ahmad, "Moderation in Islam: A Conceptual Analysis Of," *Moderation in Islam* 4 (2011): 29–46.

[6] Muhammad Kamal Hassan, "The Concept of Wasatiyyah and the Challenge of Islam Liberal in Indonesia," *Social Sciences and Humanities, International Islamic University Malaysia*, 2020.

[7] Irawan Irawan, "Al-Tawassut Waal-I'tidal: Menjawab Tantangan Liberalisme Dan Konservatisme Islam," *Afkaruna* 14, no. 1 (2018): 49–74, https://doi.org/10.18196/aiijis.2018.0080.49-74.

[8] Mohd Shukri Hanapi, "The Wasatiyyah (Moderation) Concept in Islamic Epistemology: A Case Study of Its Implementation in Malaysia," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 4, no. 9 (1) (2014): 51.

[9] A Jauhar Fuad and Suko Susilo, "Mainstreaming of Islamic Moderation In Higher Education: The Radical Experience Conter," *Annual Conference for Muslim Scholars* 2, no. 2 (2019): 467–83.

This study uses a qualitative approach because researchers describe the data from the written or spoken data of the respondents and their behavior.[10] This research combines two types of research which are normative and empirical research. It is normative research because the data, which will be analyzed, is the policy product of the PTKIN leaders within the framework of conceptualizing and actualizing moderate Islamic values in their environment. Meanwhile, it is called empirical because this research also examines the importance of strengthening Islamic moderation in 4 PTKINs. Thus, this research was carried out by integrating a literature review and complementing the field research to obtain comprehensive results.

The primary data in this research is the printed policy of the PTKIN leaders related to the implementation and development of moderate Islamic concepts in their institutions. This information is obtained from related internal universities. Secondary data in the form of related literature/documents support this data. The data collection instruments used were observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis started from the data collection period. Therefore, in general, the data was analyzed through descriptive analysis. Furthermore, content analysis was carried out on the document, especially regarding the printed- decision of the PTKIN leaders. The hermeneutic analysis is also used as a tool to interpret the contents of the Chancellor's policy proclamations to reveal the hidden meaning behind the text, to reveal the establishment of the concept of religious moderation, such as the values of deliberation, tolerant values, values of justice, values of balance, values of dynamic and innovative.

RELIGIOUS MODERATION CONCEPTS IN THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY

All PTKINs, the subject and the object of this research, agree about their commitment to developing Islamic moderation on their campuses. The development of the moderation concept at PTKIN targets the academic community, education staff in particular, and the surrounding community in general. So PTKIN is not only oriented around the campus but broadly to the community around the campus. PTKIN cannot be separated from the community as stakeholders.

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[10] Robert Bogdan dan Steven Taylor, *Dasar-Dasar Penelitian Kualitatif Terj. A. Khozen Afandi* (Surabaya: Usaha Nasional, 1993), 21–22.

The commitment of the state Islamic universities is monitored in both narratives and the action. At the narrative level, it is reflected in written form**,** both conceptual and research results, in scientific journals and books. Meanwhile, the action level is presented in the form of FGD activities, interactive dialogue, interfaith dialogue, talk shows, or webinars which are carried out with different nomenclature.[11]

The basic concept of Islamic moderation is a method of thinking and action placed in the middle, for example, between lack of conditions and excessive conditions, between stingy and extravagant, or cowardly and reckless.[12] Each PTKIN describes this term differently. Some use the standard term of Islamic teachings as a narrative of understanding, mindset, and standard actions, which are not reduced and not exaggerated.[13]

The word moderation comes from the Latin *moderâtio*, which means moderation, self-control, guidance, government, and regulation. In the Indonesian Dictionary, moderation means "reduce the violence and avoid the extremes." Meanwhile, moderate means avoiding extreme behavior or disclosure and tending towards the middle way. For example, relatively moderate views are willing to consider other parties' views.[14]

Epistemologically, the study of moderate Islam originates from one of the verses of the *Qur'an,* which uses the word *wasaṭ*a to characterize the term *ummatan*, namely the sentence *Ummatan Wasatha*.[15] Linguistically, there are many opinions regarding the literal meaning of these two words with their various derivations. The word *wasatha* then is taken as one of the characteristics of Islamic teachings, namely *wasathiyah* (moderation), whose language

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[11] Edy Sutrisno, "Aktualisasi Moderasi Beragama Di Lembaga Pendidikan," *Jurnal Bimas Islam*, 2019, https://doi.org/10.37302/jbi.v12i2.113.

[12] Mohamad Fahri and Ahmad Zainuri, "Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia," *Intizar*, 2019.

[13] Syaiful Arif, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Diskursus Negara Islam : Pemikiran KH . Abdurrahman Wahid Religious Moderation in the Islamic State Discourse : KH . Abdurrahman Wahid ' s Thought," *Bimas Islam*, 2020.

[14] Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, 2019th ed. (Jakarta, 1988), 964.

[15] Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "The Indicators of Wasatiyyah or Moderation in Islam," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 7, no. 2 (2016): 264–66, https://doi.org/10.12816/0035201.

comes from the word وسط – يسط – سطة. It has various meanings, including in the middle, between the two ends, fair, and the middle of the simple or mediocre.[16] The word *wasaṭ* also means guard against *ifrath* and *tafrith*.[17] In the book *Mu'jam al-Wasith,* the word *wasath* means *'adulan* and *Khiyaran*, which is simple and elected.[18]

Ibn' Ashur also said that the word *wasath* means something in the middle or has two ends with each proportional size. Several verses in the Qur'an mention the word *wasath* and its derivations, including in (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143 and 238), (QS. al-Qalam [68]: 48), and (al-Isra [17]: 78). In the Encyclopedia of the Qur'an, the word *wasatha* means an intermediate position between two opposite positions, such as the word brave is in a position of carelessness and fear, the word philanthropist is between extravagant and miserly. The word *wasath* in these verses leads to the meaning of the middle and choice.[19] If we examine further Islamic moderation can also be found through the conception of the Prophet's hadith according to its function.[20]

Wasathiyah is a value built on a straight and moderate mindset, not exaggerating some issues. The sentence *ummatan wasathan* in (QS al-Baqarah [2]: 143) means a just and elected people to be a witness for all humanity on the Day of Resurrection.[21] *Ummatan wasathan* are elected people who are fair, best and have a vision of rectifying *(hanif)*.[22] *Therefore, Muslims who have wasathiyah* traits do not like extreme things (right or left extremist); not ignoring materialism, and leaving spiritualism only, but they pay attention to both; not neglecting spiritual life and leaving the physical, paying attention both lives; not only concerned with personal affairs and

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[16] Yusuf al- Qardhawi, *Fiqh Al-Wasthiyyah Al-Islamiyah Wa Al-Tajdid* (Mesir: Markaz al-Tiba'ah Li al-Qardhawi, 2009), 19.

[17] Al-Raghib al- Asfahany, *Mufradat Al-Fadz Al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 2009), 869.

[18] Dzul Faqqar Ali, *Mu'jam Al-Wasith* (Kairo: ZIB, 1973), 1031.

[19] M. Quraish(ed.) Shihab, *Ensiklopedia Al-Qur'an: Kajian Kosakata* (Jakarta: PSQ & Yayasan Paguyuban, 2007), 1071.

[20] Israr Ahmad Khan, "Moderation Vis-a-Vis Athentication of Hadith," *Islamic Perspectives* 9 (2013): 1–13.

[21] Muhammad al-Thahir Ibn 'Asyur, *Al-Tahrīr Wa Al-Tanwīr, Jilid II* (Tunis: al-Dār Tunisiyah, 1984), 18.

[22] Jabir Al-Jazairy, *Aysir Al-Tafāsir Li Al-Kalām Al-'Aly Al-Kabīr, Jilid 1* (Jeddah: Rasm Advertising, 1990), 125.

forgetting social interests but concerned to both. That is the true Islam of *wasathiyah*.

The term *wasathiyah* also has various meanings because Qur'an mentions this word or a similar term repeatedly, such as that means *al-'adl* (justice). Justice is a characteristic needed by humans, especially when it comes to witnessing a law or case. Without a fair witness, the statements cannot be accepted. The justice of a witness and legal justice is everyone's great hope. The term reasonably *wasathīyah* is interpreted by the Prophet (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 43) with the meaning of fairness. Fairness is being between conflicting parties by avoiding leaning towards one party. Providing the rights of both parties in a balanced manner, not one-sided, and not betraying either party.[23]

Wasathiyah also means *istiqāmah* (straight), straight in thinking and acting (*al-sirāth al-mustaqīm*), the right path that lies in the middle of a straight path, and far from wrong intentions. Therefore, Islam teaches the adherents to be always on the straight path, the way that is avoided by those who are unblessed by Allah (Jews) and not the way of people who go astray (Christians). The word *wasathiyah* also means goodness or the best. *Wasathiyah* Islam is the best Islam. Arabians often use sentences like this to praise someone as having the best lineage in their tribe, to mention that a person is not excessively religious or does not reduce his religious teachings.[24]

Moderate Islam is also interpreted as knowledge and action about Islamic teachings that can move its adherents to become human beings who constantly spread the value of mercy (compassion) to others regardless of identity – Islam that is rahmatan lil 'alamin. Furthermore, the moderate Islam developed in several universities is mostly in line with the Islamic concept developed by religious organizations in Indonesia, especially Nahdhalutul Ulama'. Nahdhatul Ulama' (NU) instills the concept of Islamic moderation, which is reflected in the mindset and actions of *tawasuth, tawazun*, and *tasamuh* in actualizing its diversity.

Tawasuth is taking the middle way in understanding and implementing religion in daily life, away from *ifrath* (exaggeration) and avoiding *tafrith* (ignorance and neglect of religious teachings).

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[23] Md Asham bin Ahmad, "Moderation in Islam: A Conceptual Analysis Of."

[24] Ali Muhammad al-Shalabi, *Al-Wasthīyah Fī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* (Kairo: Maktabah al-Tābi'īn, 2001), 18.

Tawazun is an act of balancing all actions that leads to the path of goodness. The attitude of taking the middle path firmly to produce a balance between the two opposite poles. For example, between the nature of divinity and humanity, between the interests of the world and the hereafter, revelation, and reason, between ideals and reality, between rights and obligations, between the eternal and the profane (changing), between static and dynamic, between *nash* and *ijtihad*.[25]

In the teachings of Islam and the diversity of Muslims, some attitudes are suspected to be the factors in the Muslims' degradation. It seems that they are not practicing the attitudes of *tawassuth*, *ta'adul*, and *tawazun* above. Many Muslims have changed from a horizontal to a vertical movement out of world life (before death). It was done by some people who individually, regardless of others, follow their path according to their level. Whereas saving oneself without the other is a destructive and naive act.[26]

Such practices and rituals are seen as a boomerang (back to the owner), such as *al-faqr* (poverty), *al-Khauf* (fear), and *al-Juu'* (hunger), which have become the behavior of certain sects that have made Muslims truly experience poverty, fear, and hunger. Patience has made Muslims silent about everything that has happened to them, resignation has made Muslims oblivious to anticipate the future, and the aspiration of uniting with God (*ittihad*) and unconsciousness (*al-Fana*) has plunged Muslims into prolonged illusions. So that we, Muslims, do not have time to do *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* to receive the title of being the best *ummah* (*khaira ummah*).[27] Of course, Shimogaki's criticism above is not entirely correct because some of the rituals of the Sufi sect also become a medium for achieving the balance between the world and the hereafter. Only in this way can make humans not prioritize the world's interests.

The word *tasamuh* is also a characteristic of the understanding and practice of moderate Islamic teachings. The attitude of recognizing differences in various aspects is a belief that differences are *sunnatullah*. However, *amaliyah* and *tasamuh* attitudes are often juxtaposed with religious traits and behaviors. It also can be said

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[25] Qardhawi, *Fiqh Al-Wasthiyyah Al-Islamiyah Wa Al-Tajdid*, 23–24.

[26] Kazuo Shimogaki, *Kiri Islam, Antara Modernisme Dan Postmodernisme* ((Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2007), 128.

[27] Shimogaki, 129.

that they are willing to acknowledge the existence of other religions and their adherents who were created as creatures of the same God, namely Allah.

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), in the 9th National Conference in Surabaya (24-27 August 2015) formulated 10 characteristics of *wasathiyah* in Islam, namely; 1) *Tawasuth* (taking the middle way) related to people's understanding and religious practice that is not *ifrāth* (exaggeration in religion) and *tafrīth* (reducing religious teachings); 2) *Tawazun* (balanced) related to people's understanding and practice about religion which is in a balanced way and covers all aspects of life, both worldly and spiritual, firm in stating principles that can distinguish between *inhirāf* (deviations) and *ikhtilāf* (differences); 3) *I'tidal* (straight and firm), namely placing something in its place and fulfilling the rights and obligations proportionally; 4) *Tasāmuh* (tolerance), namely recognizing and respecting differences, both in religious aspects and various other aspects of life; 5) *Musāwah* (egalitarian), namely not discriminating against others due to differences in one's beliefs, traditions, and origins; 6) *Syūrā* (deliberation), that is, every issue is resolved by way of deliberation to reach a consensus with the principle of placing benefit above all else; 7) *Ishlāh* (reform), namely prioritizing reformative principles to achieve a better condition that accommodates changes and progress of the times on the basis of the general benefit (*mashlahah 'amah*) by sticking to the principles of *al-muhāfazhah 'alā al-qadīm al-shālih wa al -akhdzu bi al-jadīd al-ashlah*; 8) *Aulāwiyah* (prioritizing priority), namely the ability to identify more critical matters that must be prioritized to be implemented compared to those with lower importance; 9) *Tathawwur wa Ibtikar* (dynamic and innovative), which is always open to make changes according to the times and creating new things for the benefit and the development of humanity; and 10) *Tahaddhur* (civilized), namely upholding noble character, identity, and integrity as *khairu ummah* in the human life and civilization.[28]

The most important thing is implementing those concepts and characters in real life. It is urgent because the challenges of religious moderation are getting more demanding, along with the increasing

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[28] Komisi Informasi dan Komunikasi MUI, "Munas IX MUI Sepakati Taujihat Surabaya," 2017.

tension of identity and ideological politics, which tends to be extreme. Moreover, Indonesia, a plural and multicultural country, has a significant chance of conflicts with religious backgrounds. So, strengthening Islamic moderation is a real effort to create a religious life that leads to harmony and peace.

PTKIN develops the concept of Islamic moderation through Islamic studies. Islam, like its precursors, is the latest Abrahamic religion (Samawi religion) that comes with tawhid beliefs/concepts. All the *samawi* religions initially teach to believe in God Almighty. Holy books are bought by the same people, which teach about morality, *amar makruf,* and the worship of God. Furthermore, religion is involved in the demands and needs of its adherents. In other words, religion interacts with human relations, economic needs, the need for justice, and so on.[29]

The narrative is also constructed regarding the universality of religion (Islam). Religion is universal. Therefore adherents of all religions are united. Meanwhile, Qur'an calls as *ummah wahidah*. It means that at least one community must always be built a humanoid among the other religions. Based on the fundamental universality of this religion, Islam prohibits adherents from imposing their faith on anyone else; no one has the right to impose their beliefs on others.[30]

The keyword that often appears in the understanding of the academic community at PTKIN is *Ummatan Wasatha*, the term on the Qur'an, which interprets as a society that has a just character and takes a middle position. Furthermore, it does not exaggerate in its thoughts, the practical, and the implementation of Islamic teachings, neither *tafrith* nor *Ifrath*, neither radical nor liberal. Simply put, moderate Islam happens when Islam presents a sense of justice and tolerance (*tasamuh*), deliberation, social justice, togetherness, and *tawasuth*. Those Islamic concepts have been developed both on campus and in society.

The meaning of *wasathiyah* is Islamic values built on a straight and moderate mindset, not exaggerating some issues. The sentence *ummatan wasath* a in the Qur'an (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 143) means a

[29] Machasin, *Islam Dinamis Islam Harmonis, Lokalitas Pluralisme Terorisme,* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2011), 37.

[30] Hassan (at.all) Hanafi, *Islam Dan Humanisme, Aktualisasi Humanisme Islam Di Tengah Krisis Humanisme Universal* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 30.

just and elected people. It means that Muslims are perfect in their religion, have the best morals, especially their deeds, and are a perfect and just nation that will be a witness for all humankind on the Day of Resurrection. Meanwhile, *Ummatan wasatha* means an elected people who are fair, best and have a vision of rectifying.[31]

The above view is in line with Islamic moderation, namely the view or attitude of taking a position in the middle between two opposing angles. In other words, a moderate Muslim gives each value or aspect opposite a particular part no more than the proper portion. Humans can't avoid the influences from outside themselves, so no one will be able to present moderation in its entirety, except for Allah SWT.[32]

THE URGENCY OF STRENGTHENING ISLAMIC MODERATION IN PTKIN

All PTKINs used as samples of this study agreed and supported strengthening Islamic moderation in their respective institutions. The leaders, students, lecturers, academic staff, and stakeholders must be agreed and be committed to developing the Islamic moderation concepts which have been implemented already[33]. The interviews with several informants showed that the reasons were very diverse, among others. The first was the threat of radicalism which had recently targeted the state Islamic universities, students, lecturers, and educational staff. Initially, the concentration of this spreading, radical Islamic understanding only targeted public universities through LDK's program and campus-corner studies. However, it has also begun targeting state Islamic universities in recent years.[34]

Rules prohibiting veils from entering the UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, the presence of dogmatic Islamic studies at IAIN Madura, which was carried out illegally by radicals, the spread of doctrinal-dogmatic Islamic studies at several Islamic religious universities such as at UIN Mataram and UIN Alauddin Makassar, are some indicators

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[31] Al-Jazairy, *Aysir Al-Tafāsir Li Al-Kalām Al-'Aly Al-Kabīr, Jilid 1*, 125.

[32] Yusuf Al-Qaradawy, *Kalimat Fi Al-Wasthiyyah Wa Al-Madlimiha* (Kairo: Dar al-Syuruq, 2011), 13.

[33] Moh Ashif Fuadi et al., "Strengthening Religious Moderation to Counter Radicalism at IAIN Surakarta," *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 21, no. 2 (2021): 261–84, https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v21i2.3102.

[34] Kompilasi hasil wawancara dengan pimpinan 4 PTKIN (Juni-Juli, 2019).

that radicalism has begun to develop among students and lecturers in Islamic universities. So, it often creates ideological friction in the academic community[35]. It requires Islamic universities to play their role in developing a moderate understanding as a counter-narrative as well as defense from an academic standpoint for the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

The second is the evidence from socio-political conditions. In practical-political contestation, starting from the village election to the presidential election in Indonesia, the issue of religion has always been a mainstay of the contestants to increase their electoral votes. The issue of religion becomes very easy to be manipulated. They consider that most Indonesian people adhere to religions and beliefs, which are still very sensitive to religious issues, especially the religions and beliefs held by contestants and their religious attitudes and behavior.[36]

The third, state Islamic universities, according to their duties and functions as government agencies, have the responsibility to play an active and concrete role in maintaining and defending the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), which is currently overshadowed by divisions among the religious communities either similar or different religions, especially within Muslims. The emergence of radical Islamic sects in universities, extremist groups with the face of Arabism, was responded to by Islamic religious universities as a threat to future generations, in this case, students, because they are the ones who will become the nation's leaders in future[37]

Islam grows very fast. It is caused by one of them, the electoral-political momentum. Politicians are tempted to build alliances with Islamism. Islamism refers to the *kholifaism* developed by HTI, or the strength of *jama'ah Islamiyah*, the strength of *Salafi-Tarbafi*. Their agents enter not only the community recitations but also the campus environment. It happens when the student dynamics are extraordinary.

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[35] Kompilasi hasil wawancara dengan Civitas Akademika 4 PTKIN dan dan observasi (Juni-Juli, 2019)

[36] Budi Kurniawan, "Politisasi Agama Di Tahun Politik: Politik Pasca-Kebenaran Di Indonesia Dan Ancaman Bagi Demokrasi," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama*, 2018, https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2018.121-07.

[37] Kompilasi hasil wawancara dengan civitas akademik di 4 PTKIN (Juni-Juli, 2019).

Millennial students are very adaptive to the advancement of IT. By using smartphones, they study religion through social media.[38]

Fourth, Islamic religious colleges are morally and socially responsible for restoring a true understanding of Islam and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) was born from differences. Therefore as part of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the campus community must have an inclusive understanding of religious teachings. Islam is not a single teacher but tends to be diverse based on their understanding of sacred texts. Therefore, as Indonesian, we have to implement Pancasila as the basis, which contains prominent religious elements. Universities take part in enlightening campus residents and the surrounding community. So they have to ensure society, especially Muslims, does not think and feel that only Islam which they understand, is the correct religion while others are wrong. That's why Islamic universities have the opportunity to become pioneers for successful resolutions to conflict through the strengthening of Islamic moderation.[39]

PTKIN leaders used Gusdur's perspective. They believe that the occurrence of riots and violence that is irresponsible and has religious nuances in various places results from an exclusive attitude toward religion.[40] Therefore, he suggested that all religious adherents prioritize openness in seeking the truth within their respective religions.[41] In this case, PTKIN presents narratives through scientific publications carried out by its lecturers.

In strengthening Islamic moderation, PTKIN has narrated Mukti Ali's offer as quoted by Zainuddin.[42] He said that in theological matters, adherents of different religions could not make compromises because each adherent has a different point of view on the same issue

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[38] Kompilasi hasil wawancara dengan civitas akademik di 4 PTKIN (Juni-Juli, 2019).

[39] Betria Zarpina Yanti and Doli Witro, "Islamic Moderation as A Resolution of Different Conflicts of Religion," *Andragogi: Jurnal Diklat Teknis Pendidikan Dan Keagamaan* 8, no. 1 (2020): 446–57, https://doi.org/10.36052/andragogi.v8i1.127.

[40] Abdurrahman Wahid, "Dialog Agama Dan Masalah Pendangkalan Agama"," in *Passing Over: Melintasi Batas Agama* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1998), 52.

[41] Abdurrahman Wahid, *Muslim Di Tengah Pergumulan* (Jakarta: LapPenas, 1981), 3.

[42] Zainuddin, *Pluralisme Agama, Pergulatan Dialogis Islam-Kristen Di Indonesia,* (Malang: UIN Maliki Press, 2010), 49.

of holy books. So, the thing must be taken into account is the path of *agreeing in disagreement* to create harmony between religious communities. It must be admitted that, currently, PTKIN has not been involved more practically as above. However, the things that have been done are to provide media and forums for interfaith dialogue so that each adherent understands and lives up to the teachings of their respective religions.[43]

Regarding their scientific competence, the lecturers develop an understanding of Islamic moderation, which is carried out explicitly or implicitly in the implementation of the *Tridharma* (the three responsibilities of a lecturer). The study of Sharia lecturers leads to the idea that Allah is the lawmaker. At the same time, humans are the executors of the law. Humans mobilize all abilities (*ijtihad*) to understand God's commands contained in the revelation. So that the teachings become practical and easy to be practiced.[44] It is the divine nature of Islamic law that lies. However, on the other hand, Islamic law cannot be separated from its *insaniyah* (humanity) nature, humans as law enforcers. Therefore, if one pays attention, Islamic law applies by considering two aspects of its normative ideals without denying its empirical reality. Hence, maintaining a balance between *tahlīl* (allowance) of a case and *tahrīm* (prohibition) based on the instructions of the Law Maker.[45]

The economics lecturer group also conducted studies based on their fields. They also develop Islamic moderation with the view that in the field of *mu'amalah*. Islamic teachings are built on the basis and limitations of sharia that aims to benefit societies. Therefore, in *mu'amalah*, transactions containing elements of usury and all its forms are prohibited, whether carried out by individual Muslims or society in general, both in dealings with fellow Muslims and non-Muslims. Doing *muamalah* in Islamic teachings is built from four

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[43] Kompilasi hasil wawancara dengan civitas akademik di 4 PTKIN (Juni-Juli, 2019).

[44] Wahbah al- Zuhayli, *Ushūl Fiqh Al-Islamī, Jilid 1* (Damaskus: D□r al-Fikr, 1986), 115.

[45] Afifuddin Muhajir, *Membangun Nalar Islam Moderat, Kajian Metodologis* (Situbondo: Tanwirul Afkar, 2018), 17–18.

main joints, namely divinity, ethics, humanity, and moderation (medieval).[46]

Islam respects the rights of individuals and communities in fair and balanced (moderate) economic transactions, especially regarding the world and the hereafter, soul and physical, mind and heart, between ideals and reality. The Islamic concept very clearly integrates the needs of the world and the hereafter, including recommendations for doing business.[47] Because of this, a moderate economy will not harm certain parties and will not warm the rights of others, both the weak and the rich, unlike the capitalist economic system, which warms the rights of people. Furthermore, it will not warm the rights of others, like the socialist-communist economic system concepts. Islam builds *mu'amalah* relations in a just and wise (wisdom) manner and a middle position between the two systems above.[48] Additionally, suppose Islamic moderation can be carried out correctly in transactions. In that case, Muslim consumers will be more aware of managing their finances according to their abilities.[49]

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that all The State Islamic Universities (PTKIN) in Indonesia do agree to develop moderate Islam depending on their localities and appropriate strategies. The target is to sow moderation values in religion for the campus residents and their environment. Using various terms, PTKIN conceptualizes Islamic moderation as a thinking method and behaves by using the standard path, namely the middle/moderate way (*wasath*), not leaning towards one of the liberal or radical ones. Being in the position of mediocre religious teachings is not reduced but also not added.

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[46] Yusuf al-Qardawi, *Bunga Bank Haram, Terjemah: Setiawan Budi* (Jakarta: BI, 2001), 30.

[47] Ahmad Rafiki and Kalsom Abdul Wahab, "Islamic Values and Principles in the Organization: A Review of Literature," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 9 (2014): 1–7, https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.*v10n9p1*.

[48] Mardani, *Fiqh Ekonomi Syariah* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2016), 50.

[49] Roslily Ramlee, Sharifah Raihan Syed Mohd Zain, and Wan Rohaida Wan Husain, "Are Muslims Practising Moderation in Their Financial Decisions?," *Asian Academy of Management Journal* 24 (20 1 9): 157–70, https://doi.org/10.21315/AAMJ2019.24.S1.11.

Second, there are many reasons for the urgency of strengthening Islamic moderation in universities that can be used as primary capital and strength to be explored in their environment. These reasons include human resources who have reason and spiritual sharpness. Therefore, they can be mixed in a moderate understanding. There is political support from the current government, especially from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, which continues to encourage the strengthening of religious moderation. The strong commitment of all Islamic Higher Education to form a house of moderation is also a strength. Students, prospective lecturers, education staff, and those who have Islamic boarding school backgrounds can also be a strength. Besides that, the treasures of scientific studies in Islamic moderation and the environment can also strengthen the development of Islamic moderation in the state of Islamic universities.

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