

Construction of Religious Moderation at Nahdlatul Ulama Online Media in East Java

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Abstract

This research focuses on how journalists at Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Online Media in East Java construct news presented to the public about religious moderation. It showcases news framing on religious moderation from the perspective of Nahdlatul Ulama through online media in East Java. This research aims to understand how NU's religious moderation is disseminated in society through media produced by journalists. The research method employed is qualitative, utilizing media text analysis with framing by Zhondang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, analyzing four syntactic structures: script, thematic, and rhetorical. The research also involves validation of the truth and news construction with the editorial board of NU Online East Java. The results of this research explain that journalists at NU Online East Java construct news on religious moderation by presenting the teachings of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah Nahdliyah through the practice of *Hubbul Watan Minal Iman* (Love of the Homeland is Part of Faith), with the vision of Islam as a mercy to all creations (*rahmat lil 'alamin*). Conflicts arise in online media concerning narratives of violence, liberalization, and radicalism. Consequently, journalists construct the values of religious moderation from the perspective of NU figures, namely Alisha Wahid and Gus Miftah, to create alternative narratives in online media that promote positive content rather than content that divides intergroup relationships.

Keywords

Religious Moderation; Framing; Online Media

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1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the Nusantara region, Indonesia encompasses various religions, particularly Islam. (Boenga 2020). The different perspectives held by individuals and religious groups give rise to an idea or concept called religious moderation. This understanding is regulated to foster mutual respect in the practice of diverse religious beliefs or ideologies. This also includes the emergence of fundamentalist Islamic activities, heavily influenced by a limited mindset that rejects democracy and opposes the West. (Hanani and Nelmaya 2020). Islam regulates religious practices with the term "religious moderation."

The emergence of religious moderation has gained significant momentum in online media, including NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>), which reports on religious moderation from various perspectives. In 2022, NU Online Media published 29 news articles on religious moderation.



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The emphasis of these news articles is on the presence of conflicts and issues in Indonesia, cases of intolerance disguised as religious acts, the proliferation of radicalism and liberalism, the rising prevalence of sexual violence within educational settings, and the circulation of social media content that aims to sow discord among different religions.

Starting from the elements of students, Islamic boarding school students (*santri*), religious scholars (*ustadz*), members of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) movement (IPNU, IPPNU, and PCNU), university students, civil servants (ASN), and lecturers, each of them have their perspectives on the practice of religious tolerance. In an article on NU Online East Java titled "Gus Hamid Presents Six Messages of Religious Moderation," a distinction is made between religious moderation and one's religious beliefs. This is because being religious refers to a group of people who have faith in and embrace the views of the Almighty. At the same time, religion encompasses a system and principles of trust in God. (Nurdin 2021).

Out of 29 news articles, 19 are about religious moderation leading to the promotion of religious moderation in the educational environment. This indicates that the vulnerability of religious conflicts is widespread among students, religious school students, and university students, as online media enables the dissemination various information without limitations of distance and time. (Hasan 2021). *Pesantren* is strongly influenced by Nahdlatul Ulama, adheres firmly to Islam Nusantara, instilling religious moderation through the practice of national identity and maintaining a balance between *Ukhuwah Basyariah* (brotherhood of humanity), *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (brotherhood of Muslims), and *Ukhuwah Wathaniyah* (brotherhood of fellow citizens). (Mahdi, Rahmat, and Agung 2003). So that the ideas within oneself are actualized in the form of ethics and activities, they must be by His command. (Fajron and Hum 2020).

NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) endeavors to promote the concept of religious moderation through the movement of IPNU and IPPNU students, as well as the activities of PCNU in their respective regions, to encourage the spread of moderate religious values in schools. Following the *Ahlusunnah waljamaah Annahdliyah* ideology, religious moderation is conveyed through the Islamic principle of "*Rahmat lil 'alamin*" (mercy to all creation). Religious moderation signifies moderation in understanding, practicing, and creating something without going to extremes. Consequently, the message to students is to understand religious moderation as a guiding principle, guiding what knowledge they should acquire and how to implement it in their daily lives. This idea is in line with the writings of Akhmadi (2019), regarding religious moderation entails decreasing behavior that leads to violence and avoidance of extremism. Another term for moderation is being moderate, which balances morals, beliefs, and character when interacting with others.

Religious moderation is cultivated within educational environments and among civil servants (ASN). President Joko Widodo emphasized this during an Interfaith Meeting. (Kemenag RI 2017), I urge you to strengthen the relationships between religious groups by refraining from disparaging one another, fostering mutual respect, and honoring each other. These points are integral to religious moderation. Subsequently, the President of the Republic of Indonesia issued a direct order to the Minister of Religious Affairs to disseminate religious moderation to all elements of society and civil servants. An article from NU Online East Java emphasizes the urgency of promoting the concept of religious moderation. This urgency arises due to the negative stigma attached to civil servants, resulting from arbitrary actions such as corruption and the oppression of vulnerable communities.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia provides a perspective on religious moderation for individuals to practice their faith in a more balanced manner. This involves maintaining

a moderate and balanced approach in personal spiritual practices while respecting others with different beliefs and engaging in various forms of worship. By achieving this balance, one can avoid excessive understanding and behavior (extremism), excessive love and devotion (fanaticism), and disruptive behavior in implementing these practices within their communities. (Apriani and Aryani 2022).

Understanding not only religious moderation but also national understanding is essential to uphold the development of harmonious relationships within society and prioritize the welfare of the people. Said Aqil Siraj stated that Nahdlatul Ulama is a reformist and dynamic organization underpinned by moral strength and moderate values. (Nasikhin, Raaharjo, and Nasikhin 2022). Religious moderation implies the moderation of behavior, steering clear of violence, and avoiding extremism. Another term for moderation is being average, which balances morals, beliefs, and character when interacting with others. (Alfazri 2021), understanding Quraish Shihab's words simultaneously (2007) That the existence of diversity in life is willed by Allah (God) and is recorded in the Quran, Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13.

Practicing religious values by reading and understanding sacred religious texts exists. There is diversity in applying spiritual teachings, sometimes in extreme ways (Supriyanto 2021). On the one hand, some interpretations of religion rely solely on text and disregard reason or rationality. On the other hand, some interpretations incorporate reason and rationality. This has led to increasingly radical understandings and intolerance towards fellow religious communities. Several recorded discrimination cases have occurred in Indonesia's internal and external contexts. (Fitriyana et al. 2020), The existence of religiously-based community organizations engaging with minority sects is perceived as misleading or deviating from the Islamic faith. Tensions arose in 2004 in Ternate due to the emergence of Ja'fari Shia, leading to the issuance of the Provincial Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) Fatwa No. 45 of 2015, declaring the teachings of Ja'fari Shia as deviant. The truth does not lie solely in the claims of one religion while considering others as incorrect. In reality, all religions carry teachings of salvation. (Shihab 1998). The value of religious moderation also emphasizes that Islam is a religion of mercy for all of humanity (rahmatan lil 'alamin). This sentiment is also echoed by Alisha Wahid in an article on NU Online Jawa Timur, stating that we should love our country, Indonesia (hubbul waton minal iman), and support one another.

The projection of Nahdlatul Ulama figures in promoting religious moderation is expected to be effective due to the community's adherence (tawadhu') to the words of their religious leaders, such as kyai or ustadz. NU Online Jawa Timur (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) sees this potential continually growing, further strengthening the dissemination of the narrative of religious moderation through online media. Journalistic constructs inevitably influence news presentations on religious moderation in NU Online Jawa Timur (East Java). While the recorded outcomes are based on actual events occurring in the field, they undergo a process of filtration and selection of which events to feature. These factual accounts support NU's goal of being a diversity pioneer with the understanding of *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah An-Nahdliyah*. This is because media outlets tend to have their inclinations and differing perspectives when it comes to writing, determining the angle of a news story, selecting sources, and depicting actors and events. (Sari, Adawiyah, and Moefad 2021). Journalist is involved in constructing social reality and is then interpreted and written in news articles (Pinontoan & Wahid, 2020).

It is undeniable that there is a tendency for journalists to favor the groups affiliated with the media they work for. This is because online media has a powerful influence in spreading information. (Mahriva and Wuryanata 2021), This will ultimately affect the image of individuals or groups being reported. As in the case of violence among students in Ponorogo Islamic Boarding School, which

resulted in a fatality, the news quickly vanished and was replaced by other trending issues. The harmful behavior of individuals towards others, influenced by their experiences, education, culture, media exposure, and indoctrination, contributes to such occurrences. (Qodir 2018). Hence, destructive cultural patterns that marginalize individuals or groups should not be upheld. Doing so may inadvertently support violence because our beliefs suggest it is justified.

Agreeing with what Arsyad and his colleagues said (Nizwardi & Ambiyar, 2016), Media is a tool for delivering informational messages through writing, visuals, and audiovisuals. Traditional media is gradually transitioning towards online media. (Creeber and Martin 2009), Due to the acceleration of information delivery, NU Online East Java attempts to seize this opportunity to convey information quickly. However, every individual receiving information from online media has the right to interpret or interpret what they have read and seen. With the speed of information, everyone must be cautious in believing and using this online media. (Mondry 2016).

The practice of journalism is not limited to news published through traditional means but also includes reports published online. Online media is responsible for disseminating information quickly and accurately, not just uploading it (Dharmasaputra, 2011). The speed of information also has the potential to spread hoaxes aimed at worsening the image of a group. (Nurrahmi and Syam 2020). NU Online East Java should also adhere to the press's work and fulfill the Press Law requirements, which the Press Council then ratifies. (A. S. M. R. & I. Kurniawan 2012).

The coverage of religious moderation in NU Online media in East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) results from journalistic construction or framing where reporters have processed events. The potential issues or messages can significantly impact societal incidents (Eriyanto, 2002). One example is the child molestation committed by a religious teacher (kyai) at a boarding school in Jombang. Consequently, there has been public outrage as the kyai of the boarding school attempted to cover up the wrongdoing committed by their child. However, this information has not been widely disclosed by the online media.

Social reality is constructed in a specific meaning based on news value, further specified according to the angle used in writing news (Sudarman, 2008). The framing device will present the details of events the media presents to readers. Journalism turns journalists into workers who control and inform the public audience. The themes presented vary, such as economy, culture, entertainment, and religion. (Ismail and Ismail 2017)

In the context of religious moderation, as uploaded by NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>), there is also a need to filter the absorption of various perspectives on religious moderation circulating in online media. Every group holds different views on religious moderation, which can foster closeness or disrupt the relationships between religious understandings. Based on these perspectives, news in mass or online media about religious moderation results from journalists' constructions when writing news articles. This represents the manifestation of a constructed reality in the news regarding religious moderation due to the multi-interpretative or polysemous nature of understanding news on religious moderation (Boxman-Shabtai, 2021). Journalists also wrote a news article about religious moderation based on interpretations drawn from field observations. (Juditha 2013).

The NU Online Jawa Timur (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) news regarding religious moderation, analyzed using framing analysis tools, is considered subjective rather than objective from a constructionist perspective. News posts are believed to have circulated in society with framing, altering their objectivity (R.Surbakti, 2013). Due to the framing of selected aspects based on field facts and then shaping them according to media needs, the presented news results can be justified through individual interpretations in line with constructivism within oneself (Syamsuri et al., 2022).

This research will focus on analyzing the framing of moderate interfaith news on NU Online Jawa Timur (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>), examining the aspects of writing, interpretation, and the images produced by journalists. Furthermore, the news texts will be analyzed using a critical approach. The object of this research is the online media NU Online Jawa Timur (www.jatim.nu.or.id), using the framing analysis model developed by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki.

2. METHODS

The method used in this writing is qualitative, which focuses on the meaning of an individual or group. The descriptive method presents only the meanings and descriptions without including numerical data or calculations. This research aims to discover and address the issue of religious moderation, using framing analysis as the research approach to answer the research questions. The framing analysis is within the context of qualitative research and takes the form of textual analysis.

Based on the background of the problem, the presentation of media information is considered to be in line with the perspective of social constructivism, which posits that what is seen has already been influenced by people, thus constructing the existing reality. From a constructivist standpoint, journalists do not write objective facts but interpret factual events and present them in writing or news. In this view, the subjectivity of journalistic writing remains consistent.

Therefore, it is appropriate for the presented research to adopt a critical approach and employ framing analysis to understand the construction of reality after the media construct news texts. Framing analysis refers to the model developed by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, which encompasses four significant structures: syntax (how journalists arrange facts), script (how journalists narrate facts), thematic (how journalists write facts), and rhetoric (how journalists emphasize facts).

Religious moderation in research is limited to NU Online media in East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>). News on religious moderation analyzed is limited to the population in 2022, with samples taken from February and September. Alisha Wahid and Gus Miftah are representative figures of Nahdlatul Ulama's ideology, and their news on religious moderation in February and September is examined. The choice to use the framing analysis model by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki is based on the description of the analysis form that reveals the details of news framing.

The points of the framework for discussing framing are explained in the table below:

Table 1. Concept framing Zhondang Pan Gerald & Kosicki (Sobur, 2015).

Structure	Framing Device	Unit yang Diamati
Syntax (The way journalists organize facts)	News scheme	Headline, lead, background information, quote, source, statement, closing
Article (How a Journalist Narrates Facts)	Completeness of News	5W + 1 H
Theme (How journalists write facts)	Details, sentence intent, nominalization between sentences, coherence, sentence form, pronouns.	Paragraph, Proporsi

Retoris (How Journalists Manipulate Facts)	Lexicon, graphics, metaphors, suppositions	Words, idioms, pictures/photos, graphics.
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Sintaksis is one of linguistics discussing discourses, sentences, clauses, and phrases (Wijana, 1996). Journalists will interpret writing from the results of observations of events that occur. The editor has processed the news results and wonders whether the writing is presented correctly or not. Review the results of the construction of journalists' writings using a syntactic structure, where this structure will help how journalists present news.

A script is a news text presented by a journalist. The Script Structure will review the completeness of 5W + 1H news. The question will be the basis for the news presented, whether it has a flaw or not.

Thematic is a structure that looks at the themes and messages journalists present through the news to readers (Gorys, 1994). This structure looks at whether the topic specification described by the journalist from the scop theme is written at the beginning of the title.

Rhetoric is the structure of emphasizing the word news to find the truth of the events. The language style (word) used, whether it is worded in delivering news messages, has been published.

According to Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, more than the way to know how the media frames an event is needed through text or news scripts, but also through images presented to readers. Journalists use elements of images or photojournalism to clarify the meaning of the writing that has been made. Journalism

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the research results were reviewed in the discussion section. Then some theories and analyses are compiled through the confirmation of implementation from direct sources. In the analysis of the news text, this is not announced or calculated with false numbers as in the view of positivism. Two news objects will be studied on the East Java NU Online channel (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>), with a period of 2022.

Tabel 2. Objek berita NU Online Jawa Timur

No	Title	Period
1	Alissa Wahid explains Two Ways to Face the Challenges of Religious Moderation.	23 September 2022
2	Gus Miftah: Do not Mix Culture and Religion	22 February 2022

Table 3. Contents of NU Online East Java News

"Alisha Wahid: Two Ways to Face the Challenges of Religious Moderation" (Aningrum, 2022)

Ponorogo, NU Online Jatim (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) Alissa Qotrunnada Wahid, also known as Alissa Wahid, the coordinator of the Gusdurian Indonesia network, stated that there are two ways to respond to the challenges of religious moderation. "The first is whether we are discussing the life of religious diversity and its challenges, or the second is the challenges to the religious moderation movement itself," she said at

the 3rd International Conference on Islamic Studies at IAIN Ponorogo, on Thursday (22/09/2022).

The challenge mentioned is how, as religious individuals who are also citizens of Indonesia, we can achieve a balance where diversity and national identity mutually reinforce each other. As quoted by Luqman Hakim Saifuddin.

"We, as Muslims, uphold Indonesia with 'hubbul wathon minal iman' (love for the homeland is part of our faith) because we are Indonesians. Therefore we practice our religion well, mutually reinforcing one another," he explained.

According to him, the critical aspect of Islamic civilization is how Islam can thrive in diverse spaces without violence, just like Islam in Indonesia, which adopts a cultural approach.

"Therefore, for Gus Dur, Islam in Indonesia is a form of Islam that is highly prepared to coexist amidst diversity," he explained.

He continued building the religious moderation movement. Four aspects must exist, among others, aspects of urgency and vision, namely Islam *rahmatan lil 'alamin*.

"The third is the capacity for change. I hope this international conference is an effort to enlarge Muslims themselves to build wasathiyah diversity," he explained.

Moreover, the last is the steps that can be implemented; for example, religious moderation can be delivered through this conference, which can then be carried out.

"Working on religious moderation through conferences, writings, research, all of these are needed but must be used if only there is no change in society," he said.

"Gus Miftah: Do not Mix Culture and Religion" (Mu'awanah 2022)

Pacitan, NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) - Geographical conditions in an area affect the way of culture. Thus, a Muslim must be able to distinguish between religion and culture in a particular region.

KH Miftah Maulana Habiburrahman conveyed this affirmation at the momentum of Ngaji Bareng. Activities in Pacitan's 277th Anniversary framework were centered in Nglaran Village, Tulakan District, Monday (21/02/2022) night.

"Today is going viral about the banning of puppet culture. The Wahhabis severely reviled me for maintaining wayang as a Javanese tradition," said Gus Miftah.

In the activity, which was also broadcast live through Rama Production Pacitan's Youtube channel, he explained that the pattern of da'wah he brought was to cultivate religion, not make culture a religion. He reminded the audience to keep the two things the same.

For example, he told about how the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) dressed in robes. It is a culture because the clothing tradition existed before the Prophet SAW delivered da'wah. Abu Jahal and Abu Lahab also used the same thing.

"The robes that were original as a culture because the Prophet wore them turned into sunnah. However, that does not mean you in Pacitan must also wear robes because our current condition differs from that time. Moreover, most jobs here are farmers, rickshaw drivers, and truck drivers," he explained to laughter from worshippers.

He explained that it had become an obligation to carry out the Shari'a in the context of worship. However, different cultures are from one region to another in implementing the Shari'a. As a good Muslim, you should not force others to follow the way of worship of one race.

"Covering the aurat is mandatory, the way to cover the aurat is cultural. Pacitan people do not have to wear veils like in Arabia. Because there is indeed a desert

condition, and it is very different from our conditions here," said the caregiver of Ora Aji Sleman Islamic Boarding School Yogyakarta.

In delivering da'wah, he urged us to use reasonable methods using an approach and language readily accepted by the community. The job of a preacher is to remind, not impose a belief.

"To anyone, if preaching, take his heart first. Inshaallah, the message we will deliver will be well received. Furthermore, the matter of hidayah is left to Allah SWT," he said.

3.1. The first news, "Alisha Wahid Two Ways to Face the Challenge of Religious Moderation," is analyzed in a 4-part news framing structure of Zhondang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, including Syntactic, Script, Thematic, and Rhetorical structures.

Syntax

The syntactic structure describes how journalists present the factual information of a news article through the composition of news writing using the title "Alisha Wahid: Two Ways to Face Religious Moderation Challenges." It is written using the straight news genre and the inverted pyramid scheme, where the most critical information is placed at the beginning of the paragraph, and the less important details are presented further down.

"Firstly, are we discussing the challenges of religious coexistence and its implications, or secondly, the challenges faced by the religious moderation movement itself?" The headline discusses understanding diverse life and activities to support a harmonious life. The inclusion of the word *"Challenge"* indicates that advocating religious moderation is not an easy task.

The information is set in the environment of the Ponorogo State Islamic Institute during the 3rd International Conference. The quoted statement from Luman Hakim Saifuddin, "menjaga Indonesia atau hubbul waton minal iman," indicates an invitation to love and preserve Indonesia's independence collectively. Other statements emerged supporting the notion that Islam can thrive in a diverse religious environment without violence. The term "menjaga" (to preserve) can be depicted as a condition where religious-based violence still occurs in Indonesia.

The closing statement of the news highlights the changes taking place in the International seminar room. As a participating student in the conference, the desired changes involve contributing through writing, research, and disseminating materials on religious moderation.

Script

Analysis of the script structure in 5W + 1H (What, Who, Why, When, Where, and How). What: Alisha Wahid provides two events to address the challenges of religious moderation in the modern era. Who: Alisha Wahid is mentioned in the news. Why: Due to the inadequate religious practices in Indonesia and the occurrence of violence in the name of religion, promoting and supporting the spread of proper moderation by the Islamic vision of rahmatil lil alamin is necessary. When: The International conference took place on September 23, 2022. Where: It was held at the State Islamic Institute of Ponorogo. How: The conference participants were provided with an understanding of the practices of religious moderation that need to be widely implemented. Islam, as brought by Gus Dur, embraces

differences and diversity. The presented news can be considered valid as it fulfills the 5W + 1H news reporting criteria.

Thematic

Thematic structure examines how journalists perceive and present events through extensive sentence usage in news articles. "...discussing the religious life and what challenges it faces, or secondly, the challenges of the religious moderation movement..." The sentence indicates the diverse life in Indonesia and the support for activities to promote moderation, resulting from thoughtful considerations. Journalists strive to view understanding and the Movement as an excellent combination to pursue.

Another sentence, "Islamic individuals uphold Indonesia through their love for the homeland arising from faith, as we are Indonesian people, we practice our religion in a good manner, mutually strengthening one another." words mutually reinforcing indicates that the activity of promoting religious moderation cannot be done by just one person, but requires the involvement of many people to make it more extensive and to reach a more significant number of individuals who can accept it. The concept of "hubbul waton" means loving one's country and partially manifests one's faith.

"Indonesia for Gus Dur represents a highly prepared Islamic pattern to thrive amidst diversity." Journalists want to showcase that Gus Dur's way of practicing Islam was highly prepared to thrive amid diversity, making it a reference for practicing religious moderation.

Various sentences emphasize continuity, from providing ways to enhance the understanding of religious moderation and how to practice religion in a heterogeneous environment.

Rhetorical

Rhetorical structure discussing the lexicon term (depicting an event): Building a movement, challenges, conference, continuity, diversity, writings, and research. The news emphasizes the words challenges, movement, love of the country, and without violence. This structure includes a graphic featuring Alisha Wahid as the coordinator of the Gurdurian Network, delivering a presentation at the International Conference at IAIN Ponorogo, providing an understanding of religious moderation. Based on the discovered words, the journalists attempt to frame the news by using the words challenges and understanding, as there is a proliferation of misinterpretations leading to violence in the name of religion in Indonesia.

Table 4. Findings from news analysis "Alisha Wahid: Two Ways to Face the Challenges of Religious Moderation."

Structure	Findings
Syntax	How to understand the diverse patterns of life and practice religious moderation. The thoughts of Gus Dur can be used as a foundation for living in diversity. As an activist in the field of education, I can engage in activities such as writing, conducting seminars, and researching relevant themes.
Script	The news is now complete with the 5W+1H. It overviews how Alisha Wahid encourages education activists to push for a movement.

Thematic	Tama must portray Islam, particularly Nahdlatul Ulama, in a manner befitting the face of Islam, the mercy to all of creation.
Rhetorical	The main focus of journalists in conveying words in news lies in challenges, the face of Islam as a mercy to all creatures, and love for the country (hubbul Waton). The image displayed shows Alisha Wahid during an International conference on religious moderation.

Criticism of the news presented in this title, referring to an interview with the Chief Editor of NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>), stating, "So NU does not follow either Right Islam or Left Islam, our position is in the middle." (Saifullah, Interview December 28, 2022).

According to Saifullah, the editor-in-chief of NU Online East Java, it can be said that NU's religious moderation serves as a middle path amidst religious diversity in Indonesia. It does not involve contradicting each other regarding who is the most correct. Instead, it seeks a middle ground as a solution to problems through respectful behavior towards those who are different (tolerance).

The NU community, in general, is conservative and normative towards religious texts and the words of religious leaders (kyai). The application of Islamic teachings through a cultural approach is only partially accepted by the community, as there are differences in perspectives and attitudes shown in rejecting what other groups have done.

In the conference, Alisha Wahid raised the urgency of emphasizing the vision of *rahmatul lil 'alamin* (blessings for all creation) through NU's cultural approach of *hubbul waton minal iman* (love for the nation is part of faith). She highlighted the importance of promoting moderate religious views through writing and research. However, she did not provide a reminder regarding the appropriate terminology for religious diversity. Terms or labels used to describe other groups, such as 'Kristen' (Christian), are often referred to as 'non-Islam' by the majority of Muslims in Indonesia. Why not use the term 'Kristen'? This term is more relevant and commonly used in daily life. By incorporating such terminology, the written work by the students at IAIN Ponrogo will have higher quality.

As the daughter of Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), Alisha Wahid certainly follows her father's thinking. The ideas of Gus Dur can be appropriately applied to living and interacting in a heterogeneous environment. Therefore, journalists attempted to delve deeper into the practices associated with student culture, which are often dismissed as jokes or mistakes justified by the majority.

Another statement made by Alisha Wahid regarding 'wasathiyah diversity' needed to be elaborated on in detail by the journalist. This could lead to biased interpretations by readers, and their understanding will be shaped by the religious teachings they have received. From there, new conflicts may arise as a result.

3.2. The Second Story, Titled "*Gus Miftah: Do not Mix Culture and Religion.*"

Syntax

Gus Miftah's news article in NU Online Jatim (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) follows the structure of a straight news format, where the critical essence of the news is placed at the beginning. At the same time, the following parts are considered less significant, following the inverted pyramid style in journalism. The syntax structure is reviewed based on the headline, lead, body, and conclusion.

The headline of Gus Miftah's news article boldly states, *"Do Not Mix Culture and Religion."* The journalist attempts to frame this headline as the core of the news, where the word "do not" indicates a prohibition against combining or conflating the understanding and origins of culture and religion. *"...went viral regarding the prohibition of wayang culture. I was vehemently criticized and insulted by Wahhabi followers for defending wayang as a Javanese tradition."* The presentation of the lead by the journalist indicates a critical element, deeming Gus Miftah's defense of Wayang culture as forbidden (haram) and further stating that it is considered haram by Wahhabi followers. The news content provides an example of clothing worn in the past, such as robes, highlighting that even Abu Lahab and Abu Jahal wore similar attire. While it is true that Prophet Muhammad did wear such clothing, and his practices are considered Sunnah, it is essential to consider the context and the existing conditions surrounding it. *"...it does not mean that all of you in Pacitan should also wear robes. Because our current circumstances are different from that time..."*

In conclusion, the news emphasizes the importance of preaching (dakwah) by first capturing people's hearts, as taking that initial step will make the path easier. The rest is entrusted to Allah (Swt).

The background of the text discusses the judgment of Wahhabi followers towards Gus Miftah for defending wayang culture, as it is considered innovation (*bid'ah*) and therefore forbidden (haram). The journalist's closing of the news frames the importance of conveying the message of dakwah using suitable methods and approaches, unlike the beginning of the news, where Wahhabi followers have long prohibited the wayang culture that has been deeply rooted in the land of Java.

Script

Script Structure Analyzing Dai with 5W+1H: What: Gus Miftah prohibits blending cultural and religious understanding, considering it a misconception. When: The statement was delivered during a lecture in May 2022. Who: Gus Miftah is the person mentioned in the news. Where: The prohibition of Javanese wayang culture was expressed on social media. Gus Miftah's message delivery occurred during the 277th anniversary of Pacitan in Nglaran, Tulakan, Pacitan. Why: The expression of 'forbidden' by Wahhabi followers stems from the fact that it is not part of the culture during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, known as the Sunnah. How: Gus Miftah provides insights and opinions regarding the cultural aspects of Islam, emphasizing the differences between the time of Prophet Muhammad and our modern era. He further highlights the appropriate steps for preaching that Wahhabi followers should take.

The journalist structured the news by focusing on the misguided approach of Wahhabi followers in their preaching, highlighting the importance of conducting dakwah using suitable methods, approaches, and language.

Thematic

The thematic structure of the angle of analysis in terms of pronouns, sentences presented, nominalization, intent, detail, and coherence.

"Covering the aurat is obligatory, the way of covering the aurat is cultural." The statement means that covering the aurat (private parts) is mandatory in Islam. Covering the aurat is one form of cultural practice (a result of human behavior) that has been consistently observed. Another sentence says: *"cultivating religion, not making culture"* The journalist wants to explain that as individuals who follow a

religious faith, it is essential to preserve and practice the teachings of the religion rather than turning them into mere habits that lose the essence of right and wrong. Practicing religious teachings can be done through various cultural processes, acknowledging the diversity of cultural expressions in carrying out religious practices, *“Ideally, as a good Muslim, one should not impose one’s way of worship on others.”*

The theme to be highlighted in the news is the importance of cultivating cultural practices that are wrapped in goodness and virtue. It emphasizes the significance of spreading the message of Islam through good language and approaches. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the understanding of religion without extremism and promote moderate religious views to minimize misunderstandings that can harm other groups.

Rhetorical

The news is structured rhetorically, focusing on specific lexicographic terms, including culture, wayang, viral, forbidden, preaching, reminding, and imposing. The journalist highlights certain words in the news, such as forbidden, aurat, culture, forbidden, Wahhabi, preaching with suitable methods, sharia, not imposing, and worship. The news also includes a graphical element depicting Gus Miftah delivering a lecture in Pacitan.

Table 5. Findings from news analysis "Gus Miftah: Do not Mix Culture and Religion."

Structure	Findings
Syntax	The news highlights the prohibition of preserving wayang culture by Wahhabi followers. Geographical and cultural differences exist within each society; consequently, the forms of religious practices may vary. There is a need for understanding and promoting religious moderation. The conclusion emphasizes the importance of conducting preaching with suitable approaches and language.
Script	The news has already covered the 5W+1H in a critical section, mentioning the issue of online defamation and banning wayang as a form of cultural preservation.
Thematic	The topic to be developed in the news regarding culture and religion revolves around maintaining a balanced perspective and avoiding misconceptions that would lead to the unjust prohibition of individuals who preserve their culture in their respective communities.
Rhetorical	The news highlights the keywords: forbidden, culture, preaching, social media, viral, dakwah, aurat, worship, language, and surrender to Allah SWT. The graphic features a photo of Gus Miftah delivering a lecture during the 277th Haul of Pacitan.

The construction advocated by NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) aligns with the Nusantara values as articulated by KH. Aqil Siraj, which emphasizes the pursuit of peaceful means

through moderate values. It also embodies the mindset of Gus Dur, who remarkably embraced diversity and supported marginalized groups in attaining equal rights. This understanding of religious moderation becomes crucial, as acts of violence and labeling certain worship practices as forbidden are often the root causes of conflicts.

The news should not be biased against any particular group, and journalism has an ethical responsibility to protect the identity of groups that may support the ideals of Nahdlatul Ulama. For instance, in the phenomenon of the youth migration movement, which is under the guidance of Ustadz Hanan Attaki, when he was about to deliver a sermon in East Java, there was rejection because he was considered to have affiliations with Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). However, on May 16, 2023, Ustadz Hanan Attaki was sworn into the Nahdlatul Ulama group.

Different from the results of an interview with the editor-in-chief of NU Online East Java. (Saifullah, Interview 28 December 2022) We have validated the news related to Alisha Wahid and Gus Miftah regarding religious moderation, and it aligns with what was discussed without any specific additions. 'We did not have any specific framing regarding the news on religious moderation as stated by Alisha Wahid and Gus Miftah, so it is by the news.' The statement conveyed relates to the religious moderation built by NU Online, discussing how this perspective aligns with NU's vision and mission, statements from scholars, and the results of *bahtsul masail* (a forum discussing issues that still need evidence or solutions). This response is a cautious statement to avoid further in-depth questioning regarding the written news.

The term "validating" in the context of the journalist's writing to the NU Online East Java editor is a construct built to support a media objective, including news about religious moderation. How religious moderation is supported on NU Online East Java news channel primarily focuses on education. However, NU has a solid connection to culture, and it is appropriate for journalists to try to report on cultural practices existing in East Java in order to promote the value of religious moderation.

The news presented aligns with the objective of NU Online East Java, which is to encourage individuals to love their country (*hubbul waton minal iman*) through a combination of cultural and religious approaches. The online media platform makes the content of NU Online East Java an alternative to counterbalance the negative narratives that are widespread in online media (Saifullah, interview December 28, 2022).

The unaddressed issue regarding religious moderation becomes important in practicing social interactions within the community. More than simply simply simply understanding religious moderation is required to build an inclusive environment. Concrete practices that demonstrate religious moderation are necessary. Nahdlatul Ulama should seek a middle ground and support communities affected by violence, both verbally and non-verbally. Furthermore, the journalists of NU Online East Java have full authority to construct events that embody the concepts of *ukhuwah insaniyah* (human brotherhood), *ukhuwah basyariah* (religious brotherhood), and *ukhuwah wathaniyah* (national brotherhood). This aims to promote the value of religious moderation in NU Online East Java, not only accommodating the views of the Nahdliyin but also being accepted by other groups.

4. CONCLUSION

The journalists of NU Online East Java (<https://jatim.nu.or.id>) construct news about religious moderation by presenting the principles of *Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah*, particularly the Nahdliyin, with the practice of *hubbul waton minal iman* (loving the country as part of faith), and the vision of Islam as a mercy for all humanity. The construct of NU Online East Java in the news text on religious moderation

brings forth alternative narratives in online media, aiming to increase positive content and foster unity among different groups. Additionally, the use of NU figures in the photographic representation of religious moderation practices adds to the appeal of the news for readers with an NU background, generating further interest.

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