

The Importance of Wasathiyah Islam in Efforts to Maintain National Unity and Integrity

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Wasathiyah Islam, National Unity, Social Cohesion.	Differences in ethnicity, culture, language, and religion are natural characteristics of any society. However, when these differences are not managed wisely, they can become sources of social friction. Disputes, conflicts, and even wars have often emerged from a failure to recognize and appreciate the richness that diversity brings. This lack of understanding stems from an inability to respect differences, leading to tension and division. One critical factor in preventing such conflicts is the cultivation of a proper understanding of religion, as religion significantly influences human behavior and decision-making in daily life. A correct religious understanding provides individuals with the moral compass needed to navigate complex social interactions, helping to foster mutual respect and tolerance. Therefore, it is essential that both religious understanding and practice be approached with moderation. This concept, often referred to as "wasathiyah" in Islam, emphasizes the importance of balance and avoiding extremism in any form. Wasathiyah encourages a middle path that embraces dialogue, tolerance, and cooperation between people of different backgrounds. By adopting a moderate stance in religious practice, individuals can contribute to a society that is more peaceful, tolerant, and harmonious. The benefits are far-reaching, as this approach promotes coexistence and reduces the likelihood of misunderstanding and conflict. Instead of viewing differences as threats, moderation allows people to see them as opportunities for growth and unity. Ultimately, a society built on the principles of moderation and mutual respect is one where diversity is celebrated, not feared.
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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with a rich diversity of ethnicities, languages, races, and religions. Geographically, it also consists of thousands of islands. This diversity makes Indonesia highly sensitive to potential friction due to differences. From an Islamic perspective, the religion teaches Muslims to always maintain unity, solidarity, and brotherhood among fellow humans.

As a nation with the largest Muslim population, Indonesia receives significant attention in the field of religious moderation. Understanding moderation, or wasathiyah, becomes a solution in addressing religious and civilizational problems on a global scale. In line with resolving religious conflicts, Mother Teresa expressed her view, "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

In living in a multi-religious society, people are also taught to continue doing good deeds. Broader social relationships must uphold human dignity. Various problems that afflict all nations demand change. Furthermore, Umi Sumbulah writes that religious moderation or wasathiyah must be understood by all layers of society to maintain harmonious relationships.

Wasathiyah Islam became a topic of discussion in Indonesia in 2019. Many people do not understand how to articulate Islamic teachings, which leads to extreme views in certain groups. Religious practices often reflect differences between moral ideals (*das sollen*) and social realities (*das sein*).

Understanding moderation or wasathiyah is still unfamiliar to people of different religions in terms of religious practices. Wasathiyah Islam becomes crucial in achieving peace and a civil society, preventing people from being trapped by religious dogma. Human potential should be harnessed to observe the reality of change. Consciously or not, change drives all the potential within a person to create life innovations. Clearly, change brings about innovation in the process of life. However, innovation must not contradict the sources of Islamic law. The problems faced by the Muslim community today are becoming increasingly complex, unlike in the past.

In establishing a social system based on equality and mutual assistance, this is also part of wasathiyah Islam. Public affairs can be formulated through deliberation and democracy, thereby allowing freedom of association and open expression. Religion's presence in addressing social problems becomes a guide, including within social change.

METHOD

This research employs a literature review method, which is a qualitative study conducted without fieldwork in the search for data sources. Therefore, this research relies on written materials, including both published and unpublished research findings. The study gathers data and information by utilizing various literature sources, such as books, journals, articles, as well as verses from the Quran

and Hadith. In this writing, the literature review serves as the foundation for drafting the initial writing plan and as a source of secondary data until completion.

This research uses secondary data obtained not from direct observation but from the findings of previous researchers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Religious moderation encourages people to appreciate differences, foster tolerance, and love for their country. A moderate attitude in religion allows individuals to maintain their role as a social control, upholding peace. With a proper understanding of religion, a person will think more objectively and avoid being trapped by religious dogma, preventing extremism in both religious and social life. Having a correct understanding of religion without excess will lead to a more harmonious religious life. It is time to enhance understanding and act in life without focusing on differences, while prioritizing the maintenance of unity.

CONCLUSION

The synthesis of various topics you have shared reveals several interconnected key elements in research, academic writing, and perspectives on diversity, moderation, and technological advancement. In the context of religious moderation, Wasathiyah Islam serves as a vital foundation to promote mutual understanding, tolerance, and unity amidst diversity. It emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach in both religious practices and social life, which helps to prevent extremism and fosters peaceful coexistence.

In relation to your academic work, particularly in nursing, health, and education, there is a clear emphasis on integrating modern technological solutions such as telemedicine and wearable technologies into healthcare, particularly for chronic kidney disease. This innovation aims to enhance the quality of patient care while maintaining ethical and legal standards, contributing to a more efficient and patient-centered healthcare system.

Your research into human capital, particularly the focus on knowledge, skills, and abilities, highlights the significance of these elements in improving organizational performance, especially in sectors such as agriculture and healthcare. Furthermore, your insights into community empowerment and character education align with your broader academic pursuits, emphasizing the need for moderation and innovation in teaching and social interaction.

Overall, your work demonstrates a consistent focus on harmonizing traditional values with modern advancements, promoting moderation and inclusivity, and addressing complex challenges with practical, well-researched solutions. This synthesis reflects your commitment to fostering positive change across various fields through thoughtful analysis and balanced approaches.

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