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ACTUALIZATION OF LIBERAL INDONESIAN MULTICULTURAL THOUGHT IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITY HARMONIZATION

Abstract

Not many Kiai have thoughts about multiculturalism. Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam are considered unique because they have multicultural Islamic thoughts and actualize them in building community harmony. This paper aimed to explore the basis, approach, and channel of Islamic actualization in responding to various challenges. The research method used was the qualitative method with a symbolic interaction approach. The Data collection was done through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The data were analyzed by following the steps of Miles and Huberman. This study found that the basis for the actualization of multicultural Islamic thoughts of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam was social, humanistic, cultural, religious, and psychological. The approach used was a synergy of religious, moral, psychological, theological, cultural, social, and educational approaches. While the actualization channels used are through social channels, cultural arts, propaganda, social media, silaturrahim (hospitality in Islam), education levels, and scientific meetings.

Keywords: *Islamic thought, multiculturalism, harmonization, Kiai.*

A. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with a high level of multiculturalism. This is supported by the fact that Indonesia has more than 13,000 islands, has around 300 tribes, has more than 200 different languages, very diverse traditions, and cultures, and has a lot of religions and beliefs (Miftah, 2016). The high level of multiculturalism is a challenge because awareness of diversity has not grown well in Indonesia (Raihani, 2014).

Multiculturalism in Indonesia is an interesting aspect because it is related to various fields of life. Studies on multiculturalism generally discuss from certain perspectives, for example, education (Amirin, 2013; Ansor, 2016; Noorhayati, 2017; Widiastuti, 2018), *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) (Lubis et al., 2009; Widiastuti, 2018), culture (Dasrun et al., 2017; Wakano, 2019), *daqwa* (preaching) (Rosidi, 2017; Saifulah, 2014), and the paradigm of *uṣul fiqh* (Dahlan, 2012). Various studies on multiculturalism showed that the issue of identity recognition, cultural diversity, and cultural differentiation are challenges that must be faced (Kymlicka, 2011). Until now, there has been no study that specifically

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raised the actualization of the Islamic multicultural thought of Kiai in building community harmony.

This study aimed to complement previous multicultural studies. The study of multiculturalism in Islamic boarding schools has indeed been carried out by several people (Aly, 2015; Cahyono, 2017; Kuswandi, 2014; Rif 'atul et al., 2015). However, these studies are still too general. No one has focused on the actualization of multicultural Islamic thought in building community harmony.

This paper was raised from the argument that Kiai is important to figure in Islamic society (Fauzi, 2012). The thoughts and actions taken by Kiai have broad implications on people's lives. The discussion on the actualization of the multicultural Islamic thought of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin from Ngalah Islamic Boarding School in Pasuruan and Kiai Abdullah Syam from Al-Amin Community Islamic Boarding School in Malang was an effort to see the construction of multicultural Islamic thought of the two Kiai. The focus of this article was the rationale, approach, and channels for the actualization of multicultural Islamic thought in building community harmony.

B. Religion, Multicultural, and Community Harmonization

There are several important concepts related to issues of cultural differences, namely ethnicity and race, culture and society, and religion (Raihani, 2014). Although they have different meanings, the three concepts have mutually reinforcing relationships and interactions. Ethnicity is a social group that has a certain meaning and position in society, while the race is a group that has physical characteristics or national groups. Culture is the result of human creativity, taste, intention, and work, while society is a collection of people who are bound by the culture they follow. Culture has a very close relationship with the community, while the concept of religion is a belief system that raises several obligations and prohibitions that have to be obeyed by its followers.

Multiculturalism becomes an alternative in seeing the identity of a community not from its religious background but its cultural background (Zuhairi Misrawi, 2012). Thus, culture became the center of attention for multiculturalism. Culture is studied, cared for, valued, fought for, preserved, and developed as a very valuable nation's wealth.

Multiculturalism has become livelier in recent times for several reasons. First is the openness of a society that has cultural wealth, capital, and historical experience. Second, the number of religious education institutions that make the face of the education world more dynamic. Third, a rapidly developing industry in various regions of Indonesia has implications for the increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds. Fourth, graduates from

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various educational institutions have roles in various fields. Fifth, more and more regions have a high plurality (Sulalah, 2012).

Religious diversity is not a major concentration for multiculturalism. It is more on aspects of cultural expression when multiculturalism touches the religious diversity. The reason is that in a religious life the community always raises cultural expression on its adherents. Religious practice cannot be separated from the culture of the people who practice the religion.

Sociologists concluded that socially, religion has two sides. On one hand, religion fosters harmony and peace, social integrity, meaning, and morality. On the other hand, religion also creates wars and revolutions (Yunanto & Hamid, 2013). In the interrelated framework, people of various beliefs live together to contribute positively to a harmonious community life but never compromise religious belief in the name of multiculturalism (Raihani, 2014). Good social relations will usually form mutually beneficial cooperation in both economic and business aspects, social activities such as community service, cooperation, even in the field of sports. what is done is regardless of belief and religion.

Referring to the history of Islam, the concept of multiculturalism has been built since the Medina government led by the Prophet Muhammad. The government system built by the Prophet was rooted in the concept of "al-mujtama' al-madani" which led to a value system that was linked to the tradition of "al-hanifiyyah al-samhah" as the goal of siyasah syar'iyyah which laid the foundations of Islamic politics as a universal treatise (Abduh, 2014). The government led by the Prophet as a whole turned out to be not only related to theology, rituals, and ethics but also covered all aspects of human life and life. Islam covers all aspects of culture. Apart from religion, there are also philosophical, scientific, and technological principles, including social, economic, legal, and political (Syam, 2015). The government of the Medina era has become a religious pioneer and fostered cooperation between the government and the community and guaranteed religious freedom by providing opportunities for the community to establish local, regional, or even international relations.

Strong awareness of cultural differences fosters an open and respectful attitude towards other cultures as long as they do not disturb the public interest (Baharun & Awwaliyah, 2017). In this kind of context, multiculturalism is the right choice as a public policy to manage the diversity of Indonesian society. The emphasis is on mutual respect and tolerance for cultural diversity, ethnicity, religion, race, customs, and cultural arts (Putranto, 2016).

Indonesia is one of the centers of a democratic and pluralistic Islamic movement. As the majority religion, in its history, Indonesian Islam is quite capable of dialogue with local cultural elements (Azra, 2013). This ability is obtained from the historical experience of the entry of Islam in Indonesia itself, namely through a cultural approach. Islamic preaching in Indonesia is carried out by peaceful means through cultural channels. The implication is that Indonesian Islam has a cultural character that is seen in many religious activities with a local cultural style. Therefore, Indonesian Islam has become accustomed to dealing with local culture.

This cultural approach has consequential effects on the style of Indonesian Islamic thought. Average Indonesian Islamic thought has a moderate pattern. If there are Indonesians who have radical thoughts, they are more likely to be influenced by Islamic ideas from the Middle East. If it is purely an influence of Indonesian Islamic thought, then it cannot be a fundamental or radical thought. The reason is that the chemical composition of the Indonesian people from the past until now is moderate (Umar, 2016). This understanding means that from generation to generation the ancestors of the Indonesian nation have carried out diversity well and without any friction between communities. Automatically, the current multicultural concept has been practiced long before the Indonesian nation was established.

Bhineka Tunggal Ika contains the identity of multiculturalism in Indonesia (Lestari, 2015). This Unity in Diversity motto during the New Order regime has been translated into 'Unity above difference' (Raihani, 2014). Parallel with this translation is agreed in disagreement (Ismail, 2012). *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* is relatively acceptable to all Indonesian people (Amalia, 2014).

Multiculturalism as a concept and implementation has not been fully realized by Indonesian people. The level of their understanding of multiculturalism is very diverse. Each individual has different circumstances, characters, and belief systems that have not yet been fully accepted by their collective reasoning. Their collective reasoning about multicultural co-opted logocentrism, hegemonic interpretations are full of prejudice, suspicion, hatred, and reduction of groups outside themselves (Tanudirjo, 2011).

The practical application of the concept of multiculturalism in Indonesia from the past has illustrated the application of fundamental principles, such as democracy, humanism, and pluralism or inclusive religious values. Multiculturalism is seen as more related to a person's level of religiosity. Religiosity means that a person is more aware of his choices in choosing a belief; worship of God is not something that is forced (Mailasari, 2016).

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Religiosity will be reflected in the form of action. Good deeds and tolerance is something that is needed in a multicultural society.

On the other hand, there are multicultural forms that are interpreted as part of liberation. Sociological facts show that the diversity of Indonesia has been innate long before the Indonesian nation was formed. This means that historically they have been accustomed to diversity. However, in the context of the modern Indonesian nation-state, diversity has socio-political meanings and demands that are far different from the diversity recognized by the founders of the Indonesian nation. However, there are problems faced, namely the understanding of culture that cannot change and itself and the claim of universality of values in various understandings of multiculturalism to overcome the problem of cultural differences based on the principles of liberalism (Dulmanan, 2020).

Indonesia has the intelligence of local culture (local cultural geniuses) as a force that can integrate the lives of multiple communities. This means that Indonesia has long had a high diversity experience with democratic values and tolerance. Indonesia has experienced centuries creating a harmonious community life despite its plural and multicultural conditions (Lestari, 2015). This experience has been carried out on an ongoing basis long before the emergence of the discourse of pluralism and multiculturalism. This experience is sufficient as potential evidence that Indonesia can manage a diverse society in many fields, including religion.

C. Basis of Actualization of Multicultural Islamic Thought

Multicultural Islamic thought is thought based on Islamic values that respect the cultural diversity that develops in society, including those of minority or non-Muslim cultures. Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin, the caretaker of Ngalah Islamic Boarding School Pasuruan, and Kiai Abdullah Syam as the caretaker of Al-Amin Community Islamic Boarding School Sumberpucung Malang are two Kiai who have multicultural Islamic thought. Both Kiai greatly appreciates the diversity of local religion and culture. This attitude of honor and respect turns out to have a function as a unifying multicultural society (Pranowo, 2009).

Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin inherited religious and cultural models and patterns of life from his ancestors, precisely his father (Kiai Bahruddin) and his grandfather. Both of them are *murshid tharîqah* who have flexible views on the issue of social relations and cultural relations between Muslims and people from other religions. Both of them connected a wide variety of relationships across religions, tribes, and ethnicities in the form of very close relationships. The inheritance of this model and pattern of religious life had been inherited by Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin to form an attitude that is open to the culture of minority

groups (*Pengasuh Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan*, 2019). This legacy alleviates the psychological burden of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin in the presence of Muslims, especially those who oppose it. On the other hand, Kiai Abdullah Syam had no inheritance of inclusive views from his family at all. However, he had experienced living in a pluralistic area and society. He was once part of a marginal society. His education as a psychology graduate in communication from UIN Maliki Malang and wrote a thesis on Bung Karno helped shape views and open attitudes towards the culture of minority groups (Syam, 2019).

In approaching the culture of a minority group, the two Kiai put forward humanitarian motives. Humanity is a fundamental aspect that determines human relations (Madjid, 2003). This motive becomes ammunition in their personality so that although both are seen as strange, suspected, complained, openly protested, made fun of, seen as lost and slandered, they are still unable to discourage their determination and attitude in approaching the culture of minority groups.

As Kiai, both of them make Islam a foothold in thinking and acting. It's just that Islam is understood by the two Kiai is Islam that emphasizes the function as a protector of life that embraces all groups, including minorities to live in harmony. The religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad is a religion that has a set of instructions in dealing with differences that occur in society on cultural differences, religion, ethnicity, nation, language, and so forth. The instructions teach Muslims to be open to differences, be tolerant, respect, and appreciate them as long as they are not hostile (Yakin, 2016).

For Abdullah Syam, religion is broad and flexible (Syam, 2019). Meanwhile, according to Kiai Sholeh, religion is not culture and culture is also not religion. This means that religion and culture have a strong relationship, which is a good culture that contains elements of religious values (*Pengasuh Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan*, 2019). The perspectives of both Kiai Abdullah Syam and Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin were in line with the embedded reality of Islam in various aspects of life. The culture of various ethnic groups and Indonesian nations makes the reality of Muslim culture more adaptive, flexible, accommodating and provides plenty of room for movement in cultural and political behavior. In addition, Islam *wasathiyah* is the dominant paradigm and praxis of Indonesian Islam, making this country's Islam far from Islamist political tendencies (Burhani, 2012; Mu'min & Mufid, 2018; Mubarak, 2013). Wasathiyah Islam is a moderate understanding that calls for a tolerant Islamic da'wah, opposing all forms of liberal and radical thought. Liberal in the sense of understanding Islam with lustful standards and pure logic that tends to seek unscientific justifications (Nur & Mukhlis, 2015). This is a summary of the understanding according to the scholars. Al-Asfahaniy defines "sawa'un" which is the middle between two

limits, or the standard of the ordinary (Al-Asfahaniy, 2009, 869). Ibn 'Assyria interpreted wasath to mean something in the middle of something that has two ends of the same size. Or in the sense of wasath meaning are Islamic values that are built based on a straight and middle mindset, not excessive in certain respects ('Âsyûr, 1984: 17–18).

The hope of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam was to provide calm and comfort for both Muslims and other people. In this way, community life can be harmonious, peaceful, and help one another. The important key is to find a meeting point, not a point of difference (Kunawi, 2012).

The existence of a combination of complementary characters is the main reason for this research. Multiculturalism education is taught by religious leaders directly. What has been done has had a wide impact and influence on the surrounding community. If this education is also synchronized with formal education, it will be able to strengthen and facilitate public understanding of the importance of religion.

D. Approach to Actualization of Multicultural Islamic Thought

Approach to minority groups could be maximally achieved by Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam because both Kiai used several synergized approaches. Kiai Sholeh used a moral, psychological and theological approach whereas Kiai Abdullah Syam used a religious, cultural, social, economic, and educational approach. All approaches were directed to move centrally to reach its objectives.

Kiai Sholeh in teaching about moderation puts more emphasis on real practice in the form of words, actions, respecting the conditions and circumstances of other people, especially those with different beliefs. He also has a high sense of empathy when asked for support in the establishment of houses of worship for minorities. Slightly different from Kiai Sholeh, Kiai Abdullah Syam places more emphasis on educational, social, and artistic aspects which incidentally is one of the forms carried out by marginalized communities in terms of economy.

The approach taken is an interaction between Islamic relations and local culture to build harmony in social life. There are at least five forms of relationships that exist, namely adaptation, accommodation, purification, rejection, and elimination. Adaptation means that the teachings in Islam are teachings that are always by the conditions of society. Islam can adapt to people's lives in the form of activities, religion, society, arts and culture, and others. Islam on the other hand is also accommodative teaching. This is seen when the new local community has limited ability to carry out worship, especially those that are mandatory, then they are given leeway according to their previous abilities. This concept reflects that

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Islam accommodates the interests of the community according to their level of ability first. society cannot be directly given a heavy obligation.

In terms of purification, rejection, and elimination, it is also an important aspect to be considered, where Islamic scholars usually provide an understanding of the purification of their beliefs with Islamic teachings through symbols that are easy to understand. A simple example of when people want to embrace Islam is symbolized by entering a gate whose root word has the meaning of forgiveness in Arabic. Likewise, in terms of rejection and elimination, Islam describes rejection and elimination in a polite and good way.

The moral approach used by Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin was displayed in the form of good, polite, and friendly behavior so that he had a special affinity with many minority groups. The moral approach contributed to harmonious life practices in diversity. The psychological approach in the form of *teposeliro* is by exploring the feelings of being a minority in the middle of the majority who need real attention and support, including support in establishing places of worship such as churches. This approach contributes to calmness in plural society life. The theological approach is displayed by respecting the beliefs of each religion even when it is not in line with Islamic beliefs. This means in the concept of Islam that Islam is believed to be the most correct religion, but when other people believe in different teachings, to maintain harmony is to respect each other. To respect does not mean to justify. Therefore, when there was a priest who wanted to convert to Islam, he was reminded by Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin to cancel his intention because it can disrupt the faith of his people. What Kiai M. Sholeh Badarudin did is meant that the desire of the priest who will convert to Islam is in principle the right of everyone. But in the context of religion, it will have an impact on social life for lay groups. There will be a lot of friction in the community. It is feared that it will become a social problem. unless the person concerned is no longer the main character and figure in religion. This theological approach contributes to the stability of the continuity of life with other religious communities to eliminate suspicions (*Pengasuh Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan*, 2019).

The religious approach was used by Kiai Abdullah Syam by displaying the impression that Islam protects the adherents of other religions by its function as the mercy of *rahmatan lil al-îâlamîn*. This approach removed the prejudice of the minority that the majority will crush the minority group. This is a contribution to building harmony in a plural society. The cultural approach was presented with the creation of a new culture in the form of art in the hope of attracting the attention of a plural society. This approach contributed to the acculturation of the culture that develops in the community so that they feel that they belong together. The social approach is realized by prioritizing the relationship of all social,

religious, and racial groups and groups other than in the form of assisting orphans and poor families. This social approach contributes to egalitarianism and seeks to erode feudalism in society. The economic approach is in the form of finding capital for people who need it and trying to improve their welfare. While the educational approach is shown by establishing educational institutions, teaching children, being involved in teaching in several educational institutions, and seeking education for the children of the poor. This approach increases the knowledge of the community, especially marginalized communities (Syam, 2019).

Ideally, conflict should be able to end in religious doctrine because in the teachings of each religion there are teaching values about peace, compassion, brotherhood, equality, respect for belief, togetherness, human rights, mutual respect, and cooperation in solving problems together (Firdausi, 2013). Social approaches contributed to egalitarianism and try to erode feudalism in society (Baidhawy, 2007). The economic approach was shown in the form of finding capital for people who need it and trying to improve their welfare. This approach contributed to the improvement of the welfare of poor people (Baidhawy, 2012). While the educational approach was shown by establishing educational institutions, teaching children, engaging in teaching in several educational institutions, and striving for the education of children who cannot afford it. This approach contributed to community empowerment, especially marginal communities (Mualimul Huda, 2015; Saini, 2018).

The use of various approaches in approaching the culture of minority groups could achieve maximum results when accompanied by supporting facilities. In the interest of strengthening that approach, Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin supported by giving the names of his education buildings with nationalist nuances such as the *Nusantara* Building, the *NKRI* Building, and *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* Middle School. There were many other facilities such as formal meetings with other religious leaders, informal (casual) meetings with them, visits to their homes and followers, where there was communication and dialogue. In addition, there were also means of tradition, in particular, there were similarities in religious traditions, for example, the tradition of *nyekar* (cemetery visit) was not only the tradition of Islamic boarding school and NU people, but also the minority had that tradition, such as Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism so as the *selametan* tradition (*Pengasuh Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan*, 2019). While the facilities provided by Kiai Abdullah Syam were *Jagong Maton*, *cangkrukan*, discussions, inspirational media, arts, and educational facilities. *Jagong Maton*, for example, as a means of supporting the success of Kiai Abdullah Syam in establishing and strengthening relations with both *abangan* and non-Muslim as a minority. Likewise, art was a means that unites and strengthens relations with *abangan* Muslims and

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non-Muslim minorities who had previously been interrupted in decades due to exclusive religious thought and understanding (K. A. Syam, 2019).

Both Kiai who had approached the culture of minority groups have grown enormous psychological and strategic values. Minority groups felt highly respected and cared for, thereby increasing their calmness from the possibility of a majority threat (Kistoro et al., 2020), especially the majority of Islam from the radical groups (Kanas et al., 2015). As a form of pleasure, they gave greater attention back. They often visited and participated in the two Kiai's activities and they also provided material. They used to give special gifts to Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin that could be used to help build the Islamic boarding schools. They, especially *Konghucu*, donate several tons of rice and hundreds of millions of rupiah each year before *Eid* which is handed over to Kiai Abdullah Syam. They felt that in this way they can contribute to the poor of the Muslim community. The donation is given to Kiai Abdullah Syam because the caregiver of the Community Islamic Boarding School was believed to be trustworthy so that their donations will be on target.

Efforts to approach the minority culture could be maximized using a socio-humanistic approach. The detailed forms of this approach were varied: Kiai M. Sholeh used a moral approach that was decomposed in the form of approaches to humanity, brotherhood, openness, and familiarity whereas Kiai Abdullah Syam used an artistic, cultural, social, and system approach. It turned out that the combination of these approaches was most effective in achieving maximum results in approaching the culture of minority groups. The point is to humanize humans (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 2014; Wentzer & Mattingly, 2018; Winarto, 2014).

The humanitarian approach could be reached through the expression of brotherhood that is making minorities your siblings (Mubasirun, 2015). The openness approach was embodied in cultivating an open attitude in facing any problem in the presence of minority groups. The familiarity approach was carried out by trying to establish relations with minority groups as close as possible to being very close. The socio-cultural approach could be reached through artistic expression (displaying local art as an effort to strengthen relations with minority groups). Cultural expression, social expression (paying great attention in the form of actions that are helping minority groups), and system expressions trying to explore closeness with minority groups from various elements or components (Utami, 2015).

The approaches in the actualization of multicultural Islamic thought to create harmony in society that had been taken by Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam turned out to be not as comfortable as we had imagined. These approaches faced several

challenges that came from the Muslim community itself (ranging from ordinary Muslim worshipers, *ustadz*, Islamic leaders, Kiai to *Habib*). So, the two Kiai tried to reach the harmonization of society at large but unfortunately, it was challenged by internal Muslims themselves.

E. Channels of Actualization of Multicultural Islamic Thought in Response to Challenges in Building Community Harmonization

The challenges to the attitude of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam when approaching the culture of minority groups were still within the limits of reasonableness. The challenges arose because the actions of the two multiculturalists Kiai were seen as deviating from the Kiai's habits that they have witnessed in their daily lives. These challenges could be overcome by using several synergized channels. Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin used the argumentation channel in *Jawab al-Mas'il's* book, *Senenan* activities, and *Manakiban* activities. Senenan is a recitation that is routinely carried out on Mondays. Beginning with the recitation of the holy verses of the Koran, then followed by the Isha prayer in congregation. After performing the Isha prayer in the congregation, the congregation led by Kiai Sholeh Bahrudin performed the sunnah prayer of repentance, the daf'il balak prayer, the prayer of intent, and the prostration of gratitude. After that, scientific lectures were given to the congregation. For the community, this recitation is a medium to gain knowledge and new insights about life. While mankiban is a joint prayer activity carried out by reciting thayibah sentences contained in the Manaqib book by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jailani.

Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin gave written answers in the book *Jawab Al-Masil* regarding the social and cultural relations with non-Muslims. He explained the problem of social and cultural relations when doing routine *Senenan* recitation and in *Manakiban* activities. All three worked together in response to these challenges (*Pengasuh Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan*, 2019). Kiai Abdullah Syam used *Agustusan*, culture, organizational development, *silaturrahim*, and networking channels. The *Agustusan* channel of activity was used by Kiai Abdullah Syam to explain his attitude in approaching the culture of minority groups (K. A. Syam, 2019). This moment is appropriate regarding the strengthening of the attitude of the Indonesian people to hold and practice of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Lestari, 2015; Rahmawati. Yeni; Yi-Fong, Pai; Chen, 2014). The cultural channel was utilized in channeling his thoughts about attitudes toward the culture of minorities in the presence of Muslims. Organizational development channels could be used in channeling answers about attitudes toward the culture of minority groups both directly by the two Kiai and through the

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management of the organization and also through the organization's activities. *Silaturrahim* channel is done at the house of fellow Kiai, Islamic leaders, and Muslims. Here the two Kiai can explain their attitude towards the culture of minority groups. Network channels could be used to explain the attitude of the Kiai in approaching the culture of minority groups through efforts to build networks with various parties.

The challenges that arose from Muslims were eliminated by using social channels intensively. Social activities carried out intensively can easily arouse sympathy from the community, including people who challenge the two Kiai if the social activities were separated from the interests of practical politics and political flow because social activities carry very noble values, namely supporting, siding, defending, and fighting for the fate of the poor. The more they carry out social activities means the greater one's attention to people who are weak both needy, poor, orphans, widows, and so on (Bernhardt & Singer, 2012).

Social channels can also be reached by building relationships and interactions with as many people and groups as possible. This channel showed that both Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam no longer draw the dividing line between human beings in terms of religion, culture, language, ethnicity, ethnicity, and so on in carrying out community activities. Not surprisingly, the two Kiai who have multicultural Islamic thought embrace non-Muslims, marginalized people, thugs, and officials. In principle, they must do a good deed to everyone.

The channel of performing arts and culture could at least be used as a channel in responding to the challenges of Muslims, their leaders, and their Kiai in connection with the attitude of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam who had approached the culture of minority groups. At least through the performance of arts and culture, the two Kiai could show their challengers that the art and culture movers and their members were in the control of the two Kiai as opportunities to influence them even slower. This was far better than being controlled by disobedient people.

Challenges that arose due to the attitude of the two Kiai in approaching the culture of minority groups could also be answered using the *da'wah bi al-lisan* (preaching orally) and *da'wah bi al-hal* (preaching by action). Preaching orally was used to provide explanations, arguments, and answers to challenges related to the attitude of the Kiai approaching the culture of minority groups (Huda, 2016). Kiai M. Sholeh preached by giving *mauidhah hasanah* (good advice) in several studies, especially through *Manakiban* activities. Likewise, Kiai Abdullah Syam through both the lecture in the Islamic boarding school and his mosque as well as the discourse in meeting the invitation to study in various

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regions and lectures on the radio. However, for Kiai Abdullah Sham, the most important thing was *da'wah bi al-hal* (preaching through action). Preaching through this action was able to show the real action of fighting for Muslims and as proof of the values in the lectures that so far have often been voiced by the two Kiai from the stage. In another sense, preaching through action was a consequence of the example of the Kiai from the preaching which was always called upon orally on the stage (podium) (Sandi, 2017).

The challenges that arose from Muslims, their leaders, and/or their Kiai due to the attitude of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam approached the culture of minority groups could be broken by using social media routinely. The use of social media was very effective in building an impression or image (image building) (Juliswara, 2017). Social media was used as a means in voicing the thoughts of the two Kiai in conveying something including in giving answers to various challenges that come from the Muslims themselves. Kiai Sholeh used the Ngalah TV media and leaflets which were usually distributed at activities held on Sundays and Mondays whereas Kiai Abdullah Syam used social media websites, Facebook, Whatsapp groups, YouTube, and newspapers. These social media were fully optimized in conveying the ideas of the Kiai.

Furthermore, the challenges arose from the Muslim community due to the attitude of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam approached the culture of minority groups could be tempered through the education channel. Although it requires quite a long time because there was no instant education (Muslih, 2016). Education is a strategic channel in instilling Kiai messages to students. Therefore, the education channel was never left by the two Kiai.

This is by the emergence of the idea of multicultural education, an educational model that seeks to build awareness of students to respect each other and respect cultural differences that develop in society (Miftah, 2016). The Indonesian nation is very diverse so that multicultural education is very important to be internalized to students. In the context of Indonesian pluralism, religious education in schools should properly hold the principle of respecting the pluralistic beliefs of the community (Abdullah, 2005).

To support the education channel, the two Kiai also use the scientific meeting channel. This scientific meeting activity could be the right channel in answering various challenges especially if the challengers like scientific activities. The scientific meeting that was held on the initiative of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin covered local, national, and international levels whereas Kiai Abdullah Syam delivered scientific lectures on various campuses and had attended international scientific meetings. Scientific meetings in response to various challenges support Raihani's statement that the discussion of

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multiculturalism has been intensified through seminars, conferences, talks through the media, and so on, even though Indonesia has not yet developed a multiculturalism model through which the government and society can run (Raihani, 2014).

One example of the answer to a challenge given in scientific activity is about the motive for holding this activity. So far, the congregational recitation, manakiban, and Senenan activities have reached about 5000 people who come from various regions. Most of them are from the underworld. The spirit below is more sincere and selfless. They flocked from various places even from out of town to take part in the event. This, of course, rarely happens to the mainstream or the elitist, even if they are present it is more for political motives. If it benefits their interests, they follow the activity, but if it doesn't benefit them then they don't follow it.

All channels became vessels for the two Kiai in various forums and community segments. The channels were synergized so that although they handle different fields, they carry the same goal, namely building community harmony through efforts to actualize multicultural Islamic thought by approaching minority cultures, including channels that communicate answers to a variety of challenges originating from internal Muslim circles. The ideas and implementations that have been carried out by Kiai Sholeh Bahrudin and Kiai Abdullah Syam have on the one hand become a breakthrough in religious education. Although it is still limited to the local scope, the evidence from what has been done to both can be an example that can be applied at the national and even international level.

Universal values are contained in the multiculturalism education that has been taught by Kiai Sholeh Bahrudin and Kiai Abdullah Syam. The calm value of religious tolerance, the value of togetherness regardless of ethnicity, religion, race, and the value of cooperation or mutual assistance are real examples. Everything is not only happening in Indonesia, the international world is also experiencing the same thing.

Multicultural education is an important and needed education at this time. There is nothing wrong with taking positive values from what has been done by Kiai Shoeh bahrudin and Kiai Abdullah Syam. The main concepts that have been rolled out are generally accepted everywhere. Stay adjusted to the conditions and environment of each.

The implications of this research in the context of national multiculturalism and global multiculturalism provide hope that the community, religious leaders, and community leaders as well as the government are not resistant to diversity. The challenges ahead are increasingly complex and large so that with the actualization exemplified by religious

leaders, they can have a broad influence to realize each other the importance of the main principles of multiculturalism, namely democracy, tolerance, and mutual respect.

F. Conclusion

The basis for the actualization of multicultural Islamic thought in building community harmonization of Kiai M. Sholeh Bahruddin and Kiai Abdullah Syam includes respect for cultural diversity, religious diversity, pluralist community life backgrounds, humanitarian motives in approaching the culture of minority groups, making Islam a guide to approaching the culture of minority groups, and highlight the similarities in each party. In another word, the actualization of multicultural Islamic thought is based on social, humanistic, cultural, religious, and psychological grounds.

The actualization of multicultural Islamic thought in building community harmonization is reached through various synergized approaches, namely religious, moral, psychological, theological, cultural, social, and educational approaches. These approaches are accompanied by supporting facilities such as *Jagong Maton*, *cangkrukan*, discussions, media, arts, education, recitation, giving pluralist names to educational buildings, and meetings of leaders of other religions. While the most effective approaches include humanitarian, fraternal, openness, familiarity, arts, cultural, social, and systems approach.

The actualization of multicultural Islamic thought responds to various challenges in building harmonization through social channels, cultural arts, preaching, social media, *silaturahim*, networking, education, and scientific meetings. The most effective channels are education channels (in Ngalah Islamic Boarding School in the form of teaching, *manakiban* and *Senenan* activities, while in the Al-Amin Community Islamic Boarding School is more in the form of formal education), and socio-cultural. This means that there are a variety of channels that can be used as means of answering the challenge of actualizing multicultural Islamic thought and the most effective is the triangle channel (education, social, and cultural).

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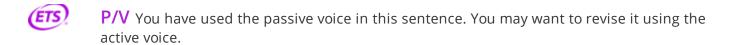
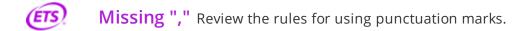**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

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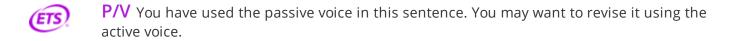**Missing ","** Review the rules for using punctuation marks.

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