

Internalizing Islamic Moderation Through Education in Pesantrens

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Abstract

Moderation is the basic character of Islamic religious teachings that make them adaptable to the context of the times. However, the rise of acts of terrorism and violence in Indonesia is concrete evidence of how low the understanding and appreciation of Islamic moderation values is. For this reason, the presence of educational institutions which are capable to transform and internalize moderate values to young generations' personalities is required. In this case, Islamic boarding-schools (commonly known as *pesantren* in Indonesia) are considered to have more credits compared to ordinary Islamic schools (*madrassa*) or non-boarding schools alike. This study is library research analyzing the role of *pesantren* in instilling moderate characters to their students through education in the mission of realizing moderate religiosity in Indonesian community. The findings show that dissemination and internalization of Islamic teaching values during the education process which are coupled with good examples practiced by figures of educators in *pesantrens* become the most effective way in spreading the moderate values and practices of Islamic teachings.

Keywords: internalization, Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*), Islamic education, Islamic moderation, Islamic teachings, radicalism

1. Introduction

The phenomena of radicalism and extremism in religiosity are a global trend and widespread easily due to technological advancement, especially in the information and communication fields (Nur *et al.*, 2020). Menus of violent bringing the name of religion brought by the radical groups often decorated front pages of printed mass media or were covered in many national television channels. Acts of radicalism and extremism with their terrorism activities may

afflict anyone (Munardji & Nur, 2020).

Various acts of violence, including those in the name of religion, are still common in Indonesia (Nur & Nawawie, 2020). As Munardji and Nur (2020) state, symptoms of radicalism, including those that hit the world of education, pose a serious threat to the comfort of present and future generation. It cannot be denied that lately radicalism is increasingly strengthening and infiltrating perpetrators as well as victims at the same time that are the young generation, the

successors of the nation, even in their educational places.

It is worth noting that attitudes of extremism and radicalism have also penetrated the world of education (Anwar & Muhayati, 2021). Based on the findings of the research conducted by the Institute for Islamic Studies and Peace (Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Perdamaian or LaKIP) in 2010, as many as 48.9% of students in Greater Jakarta were involved in some actions of radicalism (Arifin & Rizal, 2017). The National Agency for Mitigation Terrorism (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme or BNPT), as quoted by Musfah (2018), stated that there were 19 Islamic boarding schools taught radicalism to their students and therefore, there was a potential for those students to be exposed to terrorism.

Furthermore, a survey by the Indonesian Survey Circle (Lingkar Survei Indonesia or LSI) found that as many as 31% of students behaved intolerantly and, even worse, their understanding for pluralism and cultural diversity was rated low (Ma'arif, 2019). However, reading such phenomena of radical movements and acts, there have to be pre-conditions behind them. The pre-condition is the opening of the faucet of democratization thinking with an air of freedom during the Reform era. The fall of the New Order regime in 1999 became the right time for the emergence of radical-fundamentalist Islamic groups (Nur & Nawawie, 2020).

However, as Nur *et al.* (2020) explained, the core of radicalism is the attitude and action of a person or a group of persons that use violent methods to bring about the desired change. Generally, radical groups want these changes to take place immediately and drastically and such changes are usually contrary to the prevailing social system. They further stated that radicalism is believed to be associated with terrorism because radical groups will do anything they can to achieve their desires including terrorizing those who disagree with them. Although many people associate radicalism with certain religions, essentially it is a political problem and not part of the teachings of any religion (Nur *et al.*, 2020).

Actually, the terminology of radicalism in religion, when connected with terms in Arabic, is not yet found in Arabic dictionaries until now. This term is pure a Western product that is often associated with fundamentalism in Islam (Abdullah, 2016). However, when addressing radicalism, it is pity that the definition of the term

as an extraordinary crime is always connoted to religious radicalism and extremism, especially Islam. Haedar Nashir, the current Chairman of Muhammadiyah, stated that the radical links of Islam are even identical with extremists, jihadists, and terrorists (Nur *et al.*, 2020). Meanwhile, Faiqah and Pransiska (2018) assert that religions strictly prohibit acts of terror and radicalism that can threaten harmony, wholeness, and diversity of the society. Radicalism is not always ideologically motivated; more often non-religious factors such as social, economic, political, and others are dominant.

Reformations or changes growing globally which have affected the dimensions of religiosity appear to have become a public consciousness. However, it is not true to say that something that would be the main stream in the reformation process as a whole is science and technology. Whatever the condition, a religion has a fundamental and existential position in human life. Likewise, a progress based solely on the significance of the science and technology will not, for a length of time, give satisfaction to humans (Zuhdi, 2013).

After realizing some negative excesses of (human life) changes, there appears a consciousness to return to religious values. This consciousness can be read on the discussion themes about a need to re-spiritualizing and re-vitalizing the role of religion. All of those reflect a desire to represent religion not only in its form as a part of the value system in terms of culture, but also in its position in terms of its paradigmatic character in human life (Zuhdi, 2013).

In Islamic teachings, there is no justification for extreme mindsets and behaviors, nor understanding and attitude of underestimating rules, principles and Islamic law. Islam also rejects any violence in the name of religion. The medieval nature of Islam is very clear in all aspects and fields needed by humans whether regarding '*ibādah* (worship), *mu'āmalah* (human interaction), government, economy, and so forth (Dzulqarnain, 2011). According to Ibn Ashur, quoted by Miswari (2007), Islam is a moderate, just and middle way, therefore, a moderate attitude, neither extreme right nor extreme left, is a noble trait and is recommended by Islam.

The rise of acts of terrorism and violence in Indonesia is concrete evidence of how low the understanding and appreciation of Islamic moderation values is. The phenomenon of

increasing radicalism is partly due to the shallow understanding of religion. Various approaches to handle terrorism and radicalism must always be attempted. One of them is the de-radicalization program through Islamic moderation education. The right preventive effort now is to revitalize religious and moral education in schools, families, and communities (Munardji & Nur, 2020). In this case, aspects relating to education curricula, educators, and learning strategies employed by educators to ward off radical ideas in educational institutions must be given due and serious attention (Habibie *et al.*, 2021).

Relating to education, the article 1 paragraph (1) of the Indonesian Act No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states that: *“Education is a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that students actively develop their potential to possess religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble characters, and the skills needed by themselves, the community, the nation and the state”* (Shaleh, 2005). So, it is very clear that, in Indonesia particularly, education is not only aimed to transfer sciences and knowledge to students, but other important aspects must also be attained through education including religious spiritual strength, good personalities, and noble characters.

This paper tries to present the role of pesantrens in internalizing Islamic teaching to their santri (students of pesantren) so that Islamic moderation can be instilled within their characters and be realized in their daily conducts and manners.

2. Method

This study is library research. The data were obtained mainly from books, articles, periodicals, magazines, and other online sources. The method of data collection in this study used the documentary technique. This is due to the problem’s characteristic and the nature of the research (Nawawi, 1991). They were then analyzed employing discourse analysis and content analysis, thus, the source of this research is pure literature (Kothari, 2004; Zed, 2008; Sugiyono, 2013).

3. Results

3.1 Pesantren at a Glance

Pesantren, or pondok pesantren, (often shorted as ponpes) are Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. They consist of pondok (absorbed

from the Arabic ‘funduq’ which means dormitory), mosque, santri (absorbed from the Sanskrit ‘shastri’ or Hindi ‘castrī’ which means a person who knows the Hindu scriptures), teaching of classical Islamic texts, and Kyais (religious figures) (Dhofier, 1980). According to one popular tradition, the pesantren education system originated from traditional Javanese pondokan; dormitories; ashram for Hindus or viharas for Buddhists to learn religious philosophies, martial arts and meditation. Such institutions similar to them are found across the Islamic world and are called *pondok* in Malaysia and Southern Thailand and *madrasa Islamia* (Islamic madrasa) in India and Pakistan and much of the Arabic-speaking world. Some old-wellknown pesantrens include Pondok Pesantrens Sidogiri at Pasuruan, East Java (est. 1745), Buntet at Cirebon, West Java (est. 1750), Jamsaren at Surakarta, Central Java (est. 1750), Miftahul Huda at Malang, East Java (est. 1768), and Darul Ulum Banyuwang at Pamekasan, East Java (est. 1787).

The goal of pesantren is to deepen knowledge of the Qur’an, particularly through the study of Arabic, traditions of exegesis, the sayings of the Prophet (hadith), Islamic law, and logic. The term pesantren derives from the root word ‘santri’ which is given the Indonesian prefix ‘pe’ and the suffix ‘an’, and, due to easing its pronunciation which is pretty common in the Indonesian language, especially for words absorbed from Javanese, the formed word of ‘pesantrian’ then changes to ‘pesantren’ (Awwaliyah, 2019). So, literally, pesantren means the place of santri.

Pesantren or an Islamic boarding school is one of the traditional institutions that still exists in contributing to the Islamic pattern of *rahmatan li al-‘ālamīn* (a blessing to the universe), especially the idea to maintain human brotherhood in the nations and states which consist of various tribes, religions, race, and culture. This shows that Islam which developed in Indonesia has an unusual pattern compared to other Islamic countries, even the world recognizes that Indonesia is a country considered to be the model home of moderate Islam compared to Islam in some Middle Eastern countries (Rosyidah, 2021).

Regarding the number of pesantrens in Indonesia, the Ministry of Religion’s report shows that there were 26,975 Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia as of January 2022. The number may not include small size pesantrens that do not hold formal education in the form of schools/madrasas

within their institutions (see Figure 1).

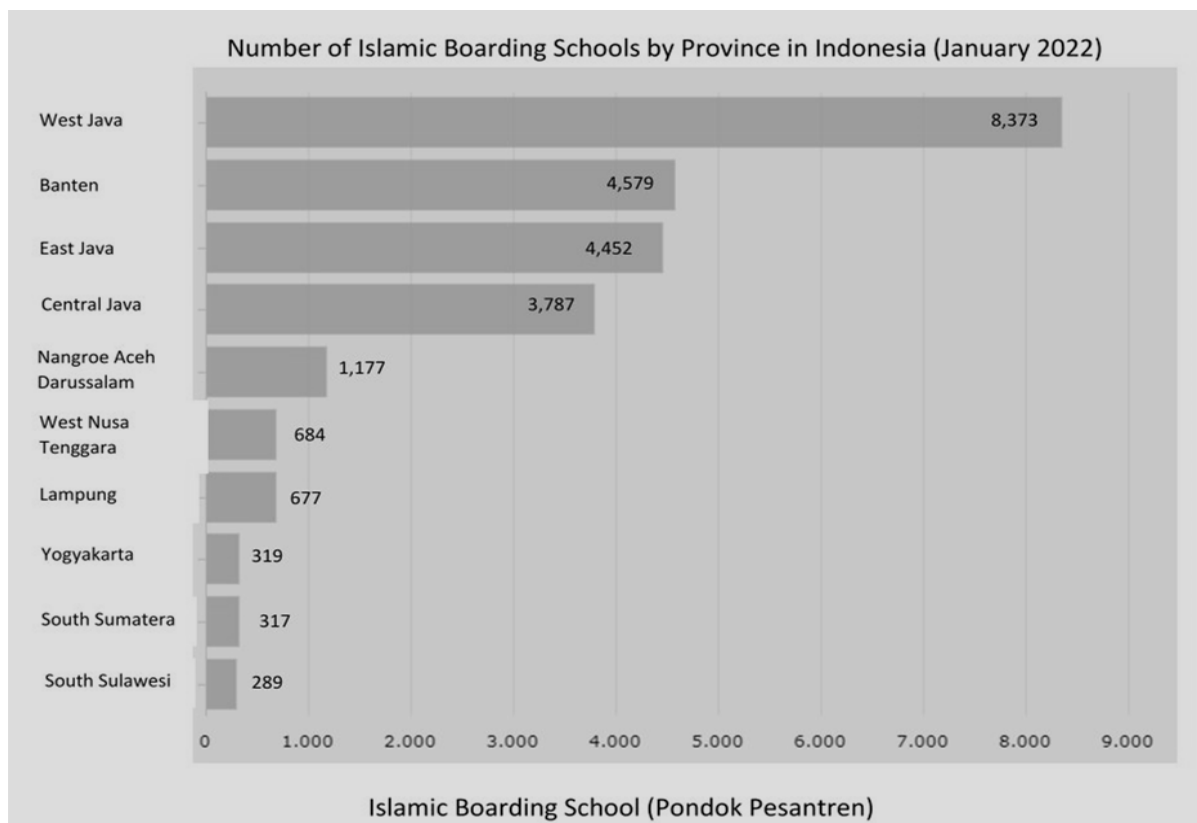


Figure 1. Distribution of Islamic Boarding Schools in the Top 10 Provinces

Source: Annur, 2022 (edited)

The province of West Java contributed the highest number, namely 8,343 pesantrens or around 30.92% of the total national pesantrens. Banten was in the second place, with 4,579, East Java followed in the third place with 4,452 pesantrens. A total of 3,787 pesantrens were recorded to locate in Central Java. Then, Nangroe Aceh Darussalam and West Nusa Tenggara had as many as 1,177 and 684 pesantrens respectively. Lampung was recorded as having 677 whereas Yogyakarta, South Sumatra and South Sulawesi each had 319, 317 and 289 pesantrens. Meanwhile, the province with the least number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia was Maluku with only 16 pesantrens (Annur, 2022). In general, on average, there are no more than 1,000 Islamic boarding schools in each province. As of April 2022, only Nangroe Aceh Darussalam has 1,186 Islamic boarding schools, and the provinces of West Java, Banten, Central Java and East Java each has more than 3,000 Islamic boarding schools.

Regarding the number of santri by province, its distribution is shown in Figure 2. The report from the Directorate of Diniyah and Islamic Boarding

Schools Education of the Ministry of Religion noted that there were 4.37 million students spread across Indonesia in the 2020/2021 academic year who were spread over 30,494 pesantrens (Annur, 2023).

East Java was recorded as the province with the highest number of santri in that period. The number reached 970,541 santris or 22.19% of the total santris in the country. The province with the next highest number of santris is West Java with 901,222 santris. Then, Central Java followed its position with a total of 558,620 santris. Banten was in the fourth place with a total of 467,175 santris. Next, there were West Nusa Tenggara and Aceh with a total of 291,464 and 272,601 santris respectively.

Meanwhile, the least number of santris in Indonesia was in Maluku with only 1,200 santris. Above Maluku, there were West Papua and North Kalimantan with 1,564 and 3,406 santris respectively. Based on their gender, male santris was more than females. It was noted that the number of male santris was 2.3 million while female santris were 2.07 million. Regarding their

place of residence, the majority of santris in Indonesia lived in pesantrens which was around 3.85 million santris. The rest, 523,927 santris, did not live in the pesantrens' dormitories, either they lived with their parents who resided close to

the pesantrens or rented rooms or houses with other santris nearby the pesantrens, but they still did their education at the pesantrens' schools (Annur, 2023).

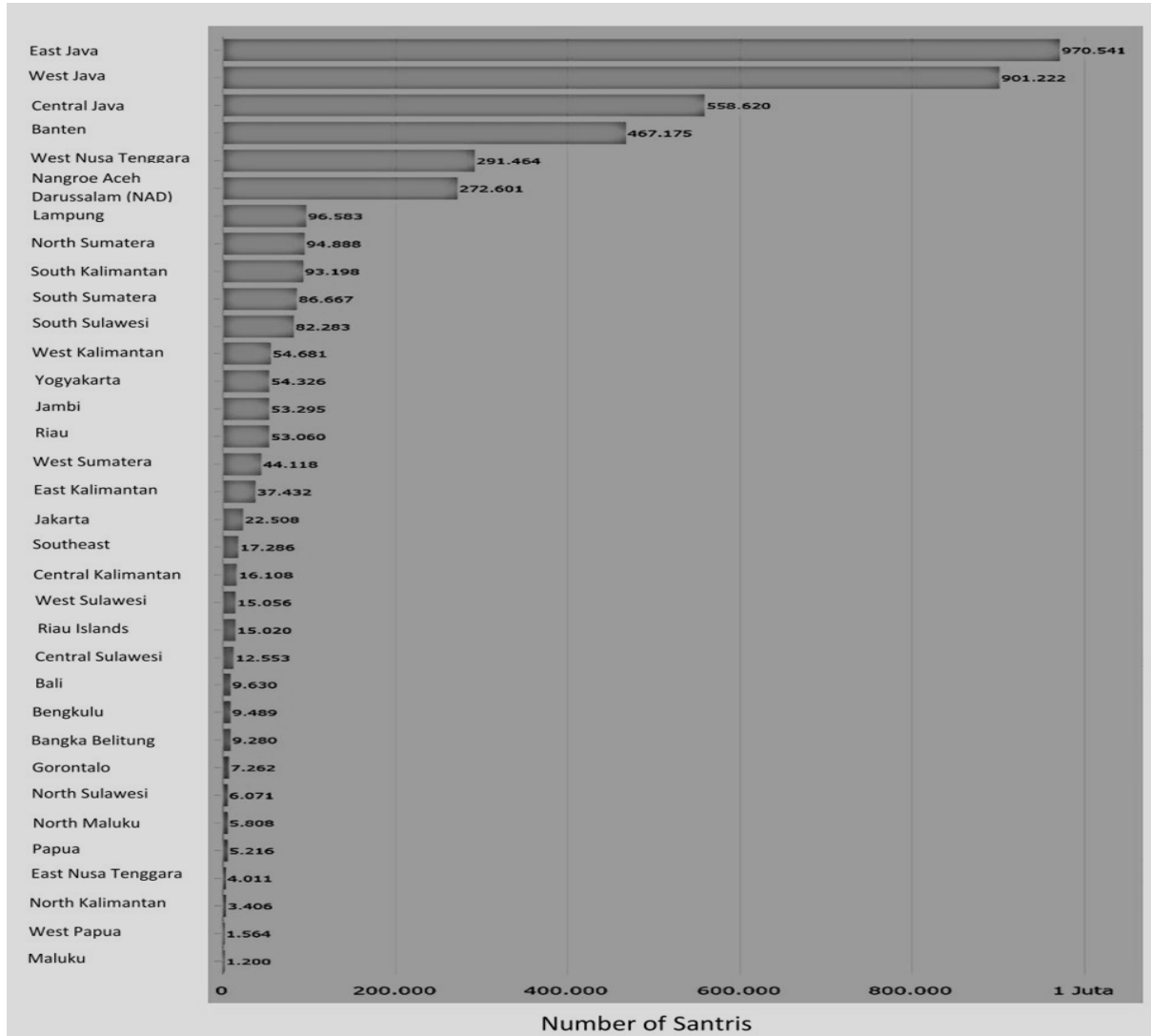


Figure 2. Distribution of Santris by Province at the Academic Year 2020/2021

Source: Annur, 2023 (edited)

3.2 Islamic Moderation

Religious moderation can be interpreted as an attitude of mutual respect for the appreciation of one's religious beliefs with the adherents of other religions in a balanced and proportional way so that blind bigotry and extremism can be avoided (Christiantina, 2021). This is in line with the opinion of Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs (2014-2019), who stated that religious moderation means an understanding and practice of religious law fairly and balanced, so as not to lead to excessive behaviour when applying it. Religious

moderation does not mean to moderate religion because the religious law itself has taught the principle of moderation. Religion should not be moderated, but it is the religious adherent's mindset which needs to be pushed towards the middle way and their attitudes need to be moderated or, otherwise, they will lead to extreme, unjust, and even exaggerated attitudes (Gani & Jumadi, 2022).

Moderate Islam focuses on glorifying all human beings regardless of their ethnicity, nation, language, position, social status, and religion (Imarah, 2006). This is because Muslims believe

that a person's status in the sight of God is determined by his/her piety alone as mentioned in the Holy Quran Sura al-Hujurat [49] verse 13 in which God says: "...The most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you" (Ali, 2008).

Moderation is the basic character of Islamic religious teachings that make them adaptable to the context of the times. Islamic moderation is a very relevant attitude in dealing with diversity in various aspects of life, be it ethnicity, customs, race, nation, and religion itself. What cannot be avoided is the diversity of religious views because this has become a historical fact in Islam. The diversity of views and understandings is caused by different perspectives on understanding a text related to reality as well as the perspective of reason in understanding revelation. Islamic moderation is here to take an approach so that it can compromise and mediate in addressing differences, be it different views, sects, and religions. Islamic moderation requires tolerance, mutual respect, and acceptance of differences as reality while still holding fast to their respective sects, beliefs, and religions. Only with this attitude can all forms of diversity or differences in beliefs be properly accepted without having to conflict with each other (Husain, 2020).

In the Indonesian context, Masdar Hilmy (2013) in his essay identifies that the concept of moderation at least possesses some characters as follows: 1) in propagating Islam, it is an ideology that does not recognize violence, 2) it takes and utilizes the positive side of the modern way of life with all its forms, including science, technology, democracy, human rights, and others, 3) it appreciates and employs a logical and rational thought, 4) it uses a contextual approach in understanding the teachings of Islam, and 5) it gives space for the use of *ijtihad* (intellectual exercise to obtain legal conclusions if there is no explicit justification from the Quran and Hadith). These characteristics, in its implementation, can be extended to other characteristics such as tolerance, harmony, and cooperation among diverse religious groups (Nur *et al.*, 2020).

The difference in the terminological meaning of Islamic moderation considers that its derivative involves a balance between logic and revelation, material and spirit, rights and obligations, individualism and collectivism, transcendental texts and individual interpretations based on *mujtahid's* (revivalist's) thought, ideality and

reality, being permanent and temporal, absolute and relative, all of which are intertwined (al-Qardhawi, 2000). *Wasatiyyah* (moderation) can be claimed as a comprehensive and integrated approach. This concept invites Muslim people massively to personalize Islam in a balanced and comprehensive way in all aspects of community life by focusing on improving and developing the quality of life, knowledge, development, economic system, political system, education system, nationality, defence, unity, equality, egalitarianism and equality between ethnicity, race and religion (Hanapi MS, 2014). *Ummatan wasatan* (moderate people) becomes a model that will be contested in front of other people in the whole world.

4. Discussion

As a religious as well as an educational institution, pesantren is an apparatus for socializing and internalizing the Islamic teachings and values. Through socialization process, santris are trained to be familiar with the clauses of Islamic teachings and Islamic law (*sharia*) as the basis to form the concept towards real life and legal awareness conditions. Through internalization process, they are accustomed to actualize the Islamic teachings and dictums in their daily life so that eventually this condition will form principles and *sharia*-based behavior normatively and empirically, as well as idealistically and historically. Being so, the *sharia* values can function as a guide for santris in realizing religious behavior in the context of God-worshipping (*'ibadah*) and human-interaction (*mu'amalah*) and elaborating the socio-cultural elements in accordance with the heavenly norms. The values of Islamic teachings and *sharia* become a motivator for the appearance of disciplined behavior and the employment of divine values as reference supremacy in real life (Hakim & Mubarak, 2000; Azwar, 2002).

Through their reasoning capabilities, santris, mostly teenagers, have been able to capture the values of Islamic teachings and then use them as a lantern for their attitudes and behavior. As for how far each individual absorbs these values, is highly influenced by the situation and the conditions of their environment's socio-cultural or structures that surround them (Roucek, 1999). Therefore, disciplinary actions to both factors (situation and conditions) as well as disciplinary actions for constellation of external factors (such as education, relationships, discipline behavior, and the natural environment) are very much

required.

This is very appropriate when it is also realized that the attitudes and self-concept of *balīgh* (adolescents or mature) are also influenced by those external factors. The pesantren's life as a community reflects a more viscous crystallization of Islamic values compared to outside community, which is quite varied in their diversity and culture. The training is conducted in continually through appreciation of the Islamic values in pesantrens, until they give effect intensively to the knowledge and attitudes of santris. Such models are difficult to find in other educational institutions outside pesantrens (Nur, 2007).

So, it is not surprising if the legal awareness and behavior of santris seem more intensely and normatively patterned than those studying in *madrasas* (Islamic elementary, junior, and senior high schools) or other high schools which are not religiously based. The pesantrens, as Nur (2007) explains, highlight the appreciation and behavioral practice of the virtues of religion (*'amaliyyah dīniyyah* or affective religiousness) while the other forms of educational institutions seem just to stress on the understanding and comprehending aspects of religious teachings (*tafḥīm al-'ilmiyyah al-'aqliyyah* or cognitive academic understanding).

4.1 Islamic Teachings and Human Life

4.1.1 Humans and Faiths

Instinctively, every human being has the potential to believe or being a *mu'min* (a believer). A faith is one aspect of mental function that roots on the spiritual nature (*fiṭrah rūḥaniyyah*). By having a faith, men do not just have high expectations on the strengths which may be in the forms of merely physic, psychological, nature, human brain, the genies' behavior or the angels' aura, but instead, those who believe are able to deny all of these things for further dwelling into the power of God (Nur, 2007).

Having faith or belief influences humans' attitudes and actions, even though the orientation and direction of their beliefs may vary. Some have things to do with concrete or abstract existences. Some others give birth to certain isms, and even a belief on supernatural powers. Therefore, it can be said that human beings are creatures that are in human *neveau* state and at the same time have the ability to reach out a religious *neveau* state. This capability is naturally given, just like animals (animal *neveau*), where

some among them seem to have several human potentials. Similarly, some plants (vegetative *neveau*) also seem to have some animals' character.

In the Islamic conception, a belief system is admitted as long as that belief is part of human nature. In order for that belief remains on conscientious track of human nature, religious governing rules (*sharia*) are necessarily required. With *sharia*, men will understand any attitudes and behaviors that should be undertaken and those that should be left behind. And, with *sharia* too, they are led to take the right decision in choosing each case related to the Most-Creator, the interactions with fellow human beings, and the relationship with the universe in general.

4.1.2 Humans and Religions

Archaeological evidence suggests that in human history there are three things that are related to each other, namely: 1) the religions, 2) the messengers, and 3) the scriptures. These historical facts are undeniable, and they also suggest a notion that a human being complete with his/her faith potential is a religious creature (religious human). In addition to having physical and spiritual parts, body and mind, physical and psychic sides, humans also have a natural tendency (*fiṭrah*). That is why human beings are not only inclined to meet their physical requirements and obtain psychological satisfaction, but also look for the true meaning of life and the essence of real life.

The ways to search for the meanings of life and their results vary: some may achieve an absolute truth through a comprehensive religious approach via a variety of models; some may do so through sharpening their intuition thus gaining a spiritual enlightenment, and some get the absolute truth through a serious assessment of the believable sacred books. Some do so by surrendering themselves to those who are considered to be able to show the right path (*murshid*) with various religious practices (*riyāḍah*) and *riyālah* to achieve an authentic ritual; some do so by undertaking evidential-historical-scientific studies using search-research and experience-experiment methods, while some others do so by seeking the truth without going through the basic steps and clear foundation so they are led astray.

However difficult it is to find and discover which one is a pure godlike religion, generally, everything that is still propped up on a pure religion, still proves to play a major role in the

history of human life. For examples: places of worship, saints, and sacred objects; each is still believed to have magic powers that affect human spirits and behavioral activities. These substantive facts, proves the existence of a true religion, which is embraced by people from many eras until now. The series of its adherents' ritual and cultural behavior proves that a pure religion does have clear teachings which govern the human life-behaviors in relation with God as the One to be Worshipped (*al-Ma'būd*) and mankind as a servant (*'abd*).

4.1.3 The Roles of a Religion in Human Life

Human beings face three universal issues, namely: the relationship between oneself (as an autonomous being) with other realities, the need for psycho-physical, and the self-placement in a social life. Meeting these needs require complete responsibilities, not only with cultures, but also with religions (Nur, 2007).

A religion is regarded as 'the problem of ultimate concern'. Therefore, as Nur (2007) states any religion follower is always in a state of being involved with his/her religion. However, at the same time, he/she feel free (because the freedom has made him/her feel free to do anything he believes). He/she is obedient to the One Who is All-power, so he/she feels to be exalted and gets salvation. Such salvation eventually becomes the ultimate goal of human life.

A religion, in the social system, includes complexity of patterns of inner and outer behaviors that are obeyed by its adherents (Asy'ari, 1999). That way, the followers of a religion (both individually and collectively) are always in contact with the sacred through certain patterns and symbols. Religion is poured in the social and institutional processes by using a specific mechanism (Hendropuspito, 1992).

A religion supports the values in community life. In addition, it also gives influences in daily life. Thus, it can be said that a religion serves as an intrinsic motive (in itself) and an extrinsic motive (beyond self). Such motives which are driven by religious beliefs have an awesome power which is pretty difficult to surpass by any non-religious beliefs (Nur, 2007).

A religion in an individual human life functions as a value system that contains certain norms. In general, these norms become a frame of reference for any actions and behavior. The value system which is considered as something worthy is formed through a socialization and

internalization process through the family, school, and community. In establishing this value system, a religion is a major factor. That is why, in Islam, *sharia* (as a set of norms system that has a value of absolute truth and is appropriate to the needs of human life) is seated as a shaper of its followers' attitudes and behavior in the ritual and socio-cultural patterns (Cohen & Orbuch, 1990).

There are five dimensions of a religion: convictions/beliefs, religious practices (symbolic behavior), religious experience (individual subjective involvement), religious knowledge, and consequences (the characteristic of beliefs, experiences, and semantic knowledge). Convictions or beliefs are related with the faith (*'aqīdah*) as the foundation and goal-oriented activities. Religious practices appear in the patterns of everyday life's attitudes and behaviors. Religious experience self-expresses in a transcendental relationship between a religion's followers with the Creator. Religious knowledge is an attempt to deepen the religious beliefs through the power of reasoning. Its consequences take the forms of coloring all aspects of personality with the religion's concepts and teachings. So, a religion, as stated by Ramayulis (1998), functions to be educative, a savior, a peace-maker, a social control, a solidarity fertilizer, the transformation of values, a creativity pusher, and a guide to holiness. Real forms of religious functions in Islam are clearly stated in the Islamic teachings.

4.1.4 Characteristics of Islamic Teachings

As explained by al-Qardhawi (2003), the main characteristics of Islamic teachings include: 1) divinely oriented (*rabbāniyyah*), 2) humanistic (*insāniyyah*), 3) comprehensive (*shumūliyyah*), 4) moderate (*wasatiyyah*), 5) contextual (*waqi'iyyah*), and 6) clear (*wāḍiḥ*). Being divinely oriented indicates a sense that the Islamic teachings shape "a servant of perfect religious knowledge and piety to the God Almighty". As the Holy Quran Sura Āli Imrān [3] verse 79 reads: "But (he would say), 'Be ye into people of the Divine (*rabbani*), for ye have taught the Book and because you still learn it earnestly'" (Ali, 2008). Al-Qardhawi (2003) further states that being divinely oriented includes two criteria: 1) being divinely oriented in goals and viewpoints and 2) being divinely oriented in legal sources and system.

The characteristic of 'humanistic' makes human beings conscious to their nature of being God's creatures with all their limitations, in addition to

a number of potentials given to them. Based on this, human beings are functioned as the executor of the mandate of the caliphate which has the responsibility consequence to use the nature as a means of satisfying needs in order to convert social life into a fact (al-Qardhawi, 2001).

The characteristic of 'comprehensive' refers to the universality of Islamic teachings that covers all eras, life and human existence. Moreover, Islam is a treatise for mankind in all their aspects, consisting of spirit, psychic, and physical (Zaidan, 1987). Their spiritual life is maintained with the correct belief, their mental life is guided by noble morality (*akhlāq al-karimah*), and their concrete life is guided by *sharia* (Islamic law). All of these aspects get balanced attention in Islam. Being comprehensive in worshipping God means that the worship's extent touches all aspects of life. Thus, it is not limited only to the ritual ceremonies, but also includes all activities that can improve the quality of human life through human interaction (*muamalah*) such as living in a community, managing a state, working, and preaching.

The next characteristic, 'moderate', is a mediate character between two extreme sides. This means that the Islamic teachings give balanced attention to both spiritual and material aspects, social and individual aspects, the present (worldly) life and the life beyond. In its worship practices, Islam comes with its complete ritual ceremonies, which differ from a particular religion or sect that implements the clerical system (*ruhbaniah*) as an intermediary in a servant's relationship with the Creator (*al-Khāliq*). Islam obliges its followers to worship and practice its teachings in their everyday life without exaggeration and not beyond their capability limits.

The characteristic of 'contextual' indicates to the adherents of Islam that there is 'contextuality' in Islamic teachings. Being contextual contains a meaning that the Islamic teachings are in compliance with the human conditions and situation wherever the place and whenever the time. Islamic symbols always preserve and maintain reality of every aspect preached to mankind. That is why in the human interaction cases (*mu'amalah*) (e.g., trading, rental activities, medical services, etc.), the implementation of the Islamic rules are quite flexible, in accordance with the society's cultural development by persistently sticking fast to the purpose of Islamic law with its core purpose is the provision of goodness for humans and avoid any harm from

their life.

Among the phenomena of clarity in Islamic teachings and law is its clarity on the definitive principles in relation to individual and social. The characteristic of being clear and definite stem from the legal source which is the Holy Quran. It is the book of God which has the absolute truth. When the book contains passages of ambiguous meaning, or those which have more than one meaning, this is due the nature of linguistics. When there presents diversity of guidance clues from a word having an intrinsic meaning and metaphoric one, this is due to differences in the interpretation tendency and methods of exploring the real purpose or teachings of any Quranic verses. Such a case may imply a recommendation for religious experts to explore and establish laws in accordance with the demands of human life without ignoring the spirit and purpose of Islamic teachings (al-Shatibi, 1996).

From a number of the characteristics just mentioned, it is then understandable that the Islamic teachings aim to create all benefits for human life and protect them from all evils. According to Islam, a man is a worship and caliphate mandates executor. The first declares a man's relationship with the Creator, while the second denotes to mankind's efforts to meet their life needs through their interaction with each other in managing the world. The extent of the role of God's stipulation can be seen in the Islamic teaching's know-how in regulating human attitudes (Muallimin & Yusdani, 1997; Nasr, 2000).

4.1.5 The Values Contained in Islamic Teachings

Some fundamental values contained in Islamic teachings are: 1) spiritual values, 2) material values, 3) psychical values, 4) physical values, 5) social values, and 6) individual values. The spiritual values are related to the spiritual arrangement obligation in determining the purpose of worship meaning that every act of worship places intention (*niyyāt*) as the first requisite. This is made as such, so that the orientation of worship is due to God (*lillāh*), hence men are liberated from polytheism and being show-off (*riyā'*).

The material values imply that in conducting worship, the citation of being true or right is not only in a servant's intention, but also in the substance of his or her action. Forms of worship must be in the guidance of Allah (*fillāh*). That is,

they must be in the correct format and do not deviate from the certain rules or patterns, which have been standardized. Deviations from these rules will lead to imperfections of worship, and possibly even rejection (by God). The realization of this value is also related to the usage of certain objects as a means of worship.

The Islamic teachings emphasize guarding the sanctity of one's nature (*fitrah*). Thus, anything that may deprave the human dignity is always prohibited, and things that can bring mankind to their nobility and welfare are always made compulsory. Nature (*fitrah*) is the essence of human beings that tends to accept and enforce the rules of God.

The physical value is related to physical performance. In conducting worship, someone needs to pay attention to environmental hygiene, health, comfort, and beauty. Worship conduction is not judged only by the fulfillment of its pre-requisites and stages by leaving the physical aspect. Non-fulfillment of the physical values causes a disruption of the worship conduction.

The Islamic teachings prioritize social interests rather than individual ones. Therefore, every form of worship always implies education lessons of togetherness. Something that gives benefits/goodness vastly is valued better than that which benefits to individuals. A mother conducting a prayer, for example, is obliged to cancel her prayer if she is worried about her baby falling from a bed.

The individual values imply that in conducting worship, the responsibility and quality of worship are determined by the individual concerned. Any individual's quality of worship is not even determined by his/her formal imitation to others' worship. Everyone is a determinant to the values of his/her own worship according to his/her intention (*niat*) and know-how (*kaiifiyāt*) that he/she performs.

All of these values get great attention in Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) institutions.

4.2 *Pesantren as An Islamic Society Miniature*

4.2.1 Transforming Islamic Teachings and Values through *Pesantrens*

In the philosophical conceptual level, the Islamic education is often understood from various thinking perspectives. This will result in a difference in giving stressing points in the conduction process of Islamic education, particularly in the materials taught. Besides, it

will also cause implications to the efforts of conducting any Islamic educational reform in line with the developments occurs outside the context of education.

The Islamic education is conferred with any material of normative patterned in the sense that Islamic education is a process of values transformation. In this sense, the Islamic education is always directed to the efforts of transferring religious values through its learning activities.

It is worth mentioning the observation results done by previous research on the education process at *pesantrens* which show that in the implementation of learning, there are two-way spaces that take place simultaneously between *kyais* and *santris*. The existence of adequate communication space will at least reduce the exclusivity of religious understanding which tends to be rigid and authoritarian. Open (inclusive) communication patterns will have implications for awareness to be willing to accept other people's arguments that are different from oneself (Asrori, 2007).

Most *pesantrens* in Indonesia has schools within their institutions which abide to the government's curricula. So, in addition to teaching religious sciences, general knowledge and skills are taught. *Santris* are also given an understanding of the dangers of radicalism and liberalism which are a common concern. Efforts to prevent them from being radical and liberal are conducted by gradually applying the knowledge they have acquired to their daily life in *pesantrens*. The values of Islamic moderation are instilled through various activities such as solving religious problems through *bahthul masāil* (study circle) forums, *da'wah* (preachings) in the community in the forms of Friday sermons or religious talks, developing *santris'* skills as provisions for their post-study life and ensuring *santris* to take formal education for their future (Falak, 2022).

4.2.2 Internalizing Islamic Moderation through Education in *Pesantrens*

The Indonesian history records that *pesantrens* are not only able to survive in facing various challenges of their time, but also experience rapid development and transformation from time to time. The contribution of *pesantrens* in the nation's struggle to expel imperialists and win the Indonesia's independence cannot be doubted. In post-independence era, *pesantrens* have also

been playing an important role in guarding, maintaining, filling, and taking the best use of the state's independence. Apart from playing a strategic role in the transmission of science and preservation of Islamic and national values, pesantrens also function as a center for *tafaquh fi al-din* (deepening and mastering religious teachings), preservation of local traditions, formation of credible scholars, and preparation of future leaders of the communities and the nation (Chairudin, 2018).

Having the role as a directive system, religion becomes a remarkable driving force or impetus to the emergence of reformation towards a more constructive and humanistic style for the mankind's future. This kind of role may be actualized whenever the formulations of religious value system are explored and presented effectively. For this reason, the presence of educational institutions which are capable to transform and internalize such values to young generations' personalities is required. In this case, Islamic boarding-school (pesantren) institutions are considered to have more credits compared to ordinary madrasa or non-boarding schools alike.

The strength of a religion lies in the values it offers so that people who carry out religious guidance are capable to realize the construction of religious teachings. It is very much certain that given a condition where there is no offering of concrete and complete values and there is ineffective socialization of these values, religious life in a society will gradually be depleted.

Regarding the role of religion as a defensive system, a religion has become such a resistential force for the community especially at the time when they are in the midst of increasingly complex life issues in the middle of the swift currents of change including the widespread of extremism and radicalism. In this context, the community will have an ability to defend themselves and shall have no worries and doubts in facing life challenges.

Speaking about its sociological role, a religion would have no meaning if it is only viewed from its perspective *an sich*. Whatever the condition, a religion has a universal doctrinal coverage which is able to frame the whole totality of human life. However, a religion will not become an actual strength if not coupled with any form of empowerment *via* sophistication of interpretation and by the supports of religious

institutions themselves. This is where the important role of humans in contextualizing their religious teachings. An effort supported by any educational infrastructure which is conducive to empower religious values is, therefore, indispensable.

Recognizing challenges as well as great expectations to the role of religion, pesantrens with their Islamic education activities have been providing reliance on religious nuances. An enrichment effort that touches the formal aspects of religion (i.e., its spiritual, ritual, and moral dimensions) will be effective when it not only enters the cognitive area but also affective and psychomotor ones. Pesantrens as a part of the Islamic educational institution (which are at the same time reflecting an Islamic community), are more able to portray an integral task. With such enrichment, Islamic educational institutions, especially pesantrens, are no longer merely able to maintain the reliability of religious dogmatists in the level of discourse.

In accordance with their philosophical concept, Islamic education is required to be inclusive towards socio-cultural developments to confer enrichment of the religious nuances. As a developer of local genius, it needs to absorb and select new forms. Hence, reviews and constructive-innovative thinking are important to be continuously pursued. Such kind of Islamic education done by pesantrens is capable to perform a social function which is disseminating and interpreting religious values in the dialectical context of this life. That is why educational institutions, especially pesantrens, have a dialogical relationship with the community where they reside.

Hence, it is now clear that one way to anticipate the rise of radicalism is through education. In Indonesia, where the majority of its people are Muslims, education to people has been carried out even long before the state gained its independence. As stated by Falak (2022), from the many educational institutions in Indonesia, pesantren is the oldest Islamic educational institution. Even, as a non-formal educational institution, it had been present together with the arrival of Islam to Indonesia in which the Muslim preachers at that very time taught and conveyed Islamic teachings to their students and the wider community. Looking back from its history, pesantren has the same old age with Islam in Indonesia. Shaykh Maulana Malik Ibrahim, a Muslim preacher in Gresik, East Java at the

beginning of the 15th century, was believed by some scholars to be the founder of Islamic boarding school education model in Indonesia. Pesantrens in their early days were a medium to spread Islam and therefore had played a big role in the changes of Indonesian society (Herman, 2013).

This is where the inculcation and strengthening of Islamic teachings are necessitated through all channels of education, whether formally, informally, and non-formally, conducted by all interested stakeholders: the families, the communities, the governments in all levels, and related non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Azra, 2013; Suharto, 2014). As other Islamic education institutions, pesantrens have been playing their role in educating their santri to improve their knowledge, physical and morals that can gradually deliver them to the highest goal in order for them to live happily and that all what they do be beneficial to themselves and their society where they eventually live in. Pesantrens also abide to the Indonesian government's regulations regarding the educational activities they carry out.

Changing santri's mindset and attitudes towards religious moderation is certainly a part of social change which definitely requires the role of communication in conveying the ideas that will be disseminated. Meanwhile, in communication science, the assumption of social construction theory is that humans experience by forming a model of the social world and how it works. Basically, the theory of social reality construction shows ontological assumptions which are the essence of human existence (Nur & Nawawie, 2020).

Relating to internalizing Islamic moderation, such activity will show clear results if it is linked and accustomed to the process of Islamic education in both types of Islamic educational institutions, whether in schools as generally known or in pesantrens, since the moderation values and understanding will be easily indoctrinated when humans are at school age at the time their mindset is developing. By so-doing, the next generation will be expected to beware the importance of religious moderation and will eventually accept and respect any existing differences (Habibie *et al.*, 2021).

The internalization process of Islamic moderation carried out at pesantrens is reflected in the daily activities of their santri who do not

only apply them but also implement them properly. The media of internalization employs kyais (and other educators) who are respected figures within the pesantrens as the role models since they deserve to be exemplified in terms of their knowledge, insight, and manners (Nur & Nawawie, 2020). Moreover, pesantrens realize that Islamic education in the moderate concept also means a conscious effort to prepare santri to believe, understand, live and practice Islamic teachings through guidance, direction, or training activities with due regard to the demand of respecting others in harmonious relations between religious communities in society to realize and nurture the national unity (Sumarto & Harahap, 2019).

5. Conclusion

The roles of religion as a directive system and as a defensive system may be achieved whenever the formulations of religious values and characteristics, including being moderate, can be extracted and presented effectively. For this reason, the presence of educational institutions which are capable to transform and internalize such values and characteristics to their students is required. In this case, Islamic boarding-school (pesantren) institutions are considered to have more credits compared to ordinary *madrasa* or non-boarding schools alike since they reflect the Islamic community miniature and are more able to portray the tasks integrally. The roles taken by pesantrens as religious and educational institutions have become one of effective means to disseminate and internalize Islamic moderation to their santri especially and the surrounding communities where the pesantrens reside.

Internalization process of Islamic moderation takes place whenever santri absorb and then actualize the teachings coupled with imitating their kyais and other educators within the pesantrens as the role model, about Islamic moderation in their daily life. This process will eventually form Islamic moderate principles and attitudes within them normatively and empirically. Dissemination efforts are done whenever they have interactions with their surroundings. In doing so, they are encouraged to be moderate in all their interactions with others so that their attitudes and manners will seem to be more patterned intensively and normatively.

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