AMBIGUITY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION ON AHMADIYYA AND SHI'A SECTS IN INDONESIA

AMBIGUITAS IMPLEMENTASI MODERASI BERAGAMA PADA ALIRAN AHMADIYAH DAN SYIAH DI INDONESIA

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Abstract

The government is currently expanding its religious moderation program as a response and effort to minimize the problem of extremism and exclusivism. Ahmadiyya and Shi'a are two secs that often get discrimination from various parties, even from within the religious community itself. The implementation of religious moderation is apparently only felt by some religious groups in Indonesia. The ambiguity of this phenomenon undermines the assumption that the State prioritizes tolerant and moderate practices towards various religious groups; in fact, the application of moderation does not apply to different sect groups even though they adhere to the same religion. This study aims to analyze the ambiguity of implementing religious moderation on the Ahmadiyya and Shi'a sect groups in Indonesia. This research uses qualitative methods and literature studies as additional references. The informants in this research are representatives of young people from Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) and Ahlul Bait Indonesia (ABI). Data collection used observation, interview, and library research from journal articles, books, and information from the internet as secondary sources. The results of this study conclude that the ambiguity of the application of religious moderation in Indonesia is still not fully felt by minority sect groups such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'a. The majority of Muslims, especially those of the Sunni faith, show greater tolerance and moderation towards followers of

other religions. Consequently, the idea of religious moderation is only fully practiced for those who belong to different religions.

Keywords: *Ambiguity; Religious of Moderation; Ahmadiyya; Shi'a;.*

Abstrak

Pemerintah saat ini tengah memperluas program moderasi beragama sebagai respon dan upaya untuk meminimalisir masalah ekstrimisme dan eksklusivisme. Ahmadiyah dan Syi'ah merupakan dua dari sekian banyak kelompok sekte minoritas yang sering mendapatkan diskriminasi dari berbagai pihak, bahkan dari kalangan internal umat beragama itu sendiri. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ambiguitas penerapan moderasi beragama terhadap kelompok sekte *Ahmadiyah* dan *Syi'ah* di Indonesia. Implementasi moderasi beragama ternyata hanya dirasakan oleh sebagian kelompok agama di Indonesia. Ambiguitas fenomena ini meruntuhkan anggapan bahwa Negara mengedepankan praktik-praktik toleran dan moderat terhadap berbagai kelompok agama, yang nyatanya penerapan moderasi tersebut tidak berlaku pada kelompok-kelompok aliran yang berbeda meskipun menganut agama yang sama. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan studi literatur sebagai referensi tambahan. Informan dalam penelitian ini adalah perwakilan anak muda dari Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) dan Ahlul Bait Indonesia (ABI). Pengumpulan data menggunakan metode observasi, wawancara, dan penelitian kepustakaan dari artikel jurnal, buku, dan informasi dari internet sebagai sumber sekunder. Hasil penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa ambiguitas penerapan moderasi beragama di Indonesia masih belum sepenuhnya dirasakan oleh kelompok-kelompok aliran minoritas seperti *Ahmadiyah* dan *Syiah*. Mayoritas umat Islam, terutama yang beraliran Sunni, menunjukkan toleransi dan moderasi yang lebih besar terhadap pemeluk agama lain. Akibatnya, ide moderasi beragama hanya dipraktikkan sepenuhnya bagi mereka yang menganut agama yang berbeda.

Kata kunci: *Ambiguitas; Moderasi Beragama; Ahmadiyah; Syiah;.*

INTRODUCTION

Moderation is an adjective derived from the Latin *moderâtio,* which means moderation, medium, or middle (Abror, 2020). It means that the term refers to an attitude that reduces violence and avoids extreme forms towards those of different religions and internal religious sects themselves. The state, in this case, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, has provided a concept in accordance with *sharia*, that humans should act kindly towards each other, be tolerant of differences, be balanced or proportional, and not do harm (Sumarto, 2021). The government's commitment to religious moderation can be seen in the formation of the vision of the President of the Republic of Indonesia in Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2020 concerning the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) for 2020-2024, namely *"The realization of an advanced Indonesia that is sovereign, independent and has a personality based on Gotong Royong"*. In which resulted in 7 National Development Agendas (APN) with 3 of them being the responsibility of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Regulation of the Minister of Religious

Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2020 concerning the Ministry of Religious Affairs Strategic Plan 2020-2024. The application can be seen from various spaces and lines of Religious Moderation Program activities from the center to the regions in various forms such as workshops, seminars, conferences, syllabus curricula and even in physical forms such as Religious Moderation Houses at State Islamic Universities (Tanjung, 2022). The Ministry of Religious Affairs has set four indicators of religious moderation, namely: 1) national commitment, 2) tolerance, 3) non-violence, 4) and accommodating to local culture. From these four points it can be concluded that those are the benchmarks of individuals in implementing religious moderation (Litbang, 2019). The four indicators have actually become representative in increasing national commitment and strengthening the values of Pancasila in the life of state and religion.

Referring to the Religious Moderation Guidebook published by the Research and Development and Education Agency of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, it has been reaffirmed that it is necessary to practice moderate and inclusive religious practices by respecting other beliefs (Litbang, 2019). This means that tolerance has been campaigned for a long time and then reinforced through policy. Nevertheless, the mainstreaming of religious moderation has only become the focus of the program because of the government's concern about the social religious conflicts that occur. Based on the study of patterns, types and roots of conflicts that occur, the government sees the importance of anticipatory (preventive) action against social religious conflicts (Azizah, 2022). Furthermore, the results of data conducted by the Setara Institute in 2021 show that several community groups are still victims of violations of freedom of religion and belief including Ahmadiyah eight times, and Shi'a seven times. (Sigit et al., 2021). This consists of various forms of discrimination and persecution, such as the sealing of mosques and even the destruction that occurred at the Miftahul Huda Mosque owned by JAI (Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia) in Sintang Regency (Setara Institute, 2023). In addition, the incident of threats and persecution in the celebration of Ashura day in the Bandung City Building of Huseinsyah Azh Zahro, which occurred in July 2023 (BBC Indonesia, 2023). Between the preventive measures taken by the government through the moderation policy and the reality of the community is illustrated in PPIM survey. According to PPIM which involving 846 students of State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) including UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, and UIN Bandung which is summarized in a

portrait of religious moderation (PPIM, 2021). The research shows that the application among youth is still *"Internal Rejection"*. As a result, some people agree with the opinion to commit violence against the existence of adherents of other sects in Islam who are considered heretical. These findings reinforce that Muslims in general, especially in Indonesia, still find it difficult to tolerate and be openly to Muslims who are different from *mazhab* or sects than different religions. In some articles, such as *Moderasi Beragama dan Urgensinya dalam Perspektif Tokoh Jemaat Ahmadiyah di Banjarmasin* by Irawan, Denna Riscania (2023), religious moderation is seen as a principle that regulates every religious adherent in how to behave and behave while living a religious life (Irawan, 2023). However, in the context of the Ahmadiyah conflict, the religious moderation policy by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs can be considered ambiguous because it does not specifically provide clear instructions for resolving heresy conflicts and avoiding blasphemy. Subsequently, the application of religious moderation is a top priority specifically for interfaith and local wisdom. In addition, many aspects that need attention that are categorized periphery are still put aside for the sake of '*maslahatan ummah'* needs.

Research that discusses *Ambiguity* requires consistency in the implementation of religious moderation so that the organizers of the religious moderation program, in this case, the Ministry of Religion, as *the guardian of faith* and the mediator, are able to accommodate all groups without exception. Subsequently, the research question is related to Why are Indonesian Muslims more tolerant and open to those of different religions rather than to the internal Muslims such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'ah? Furthermore, this critical question arises that the government acts inconsistently and indecisively in develop a harmonious religious life. Although the government encourages Muslims, in particular, to uphold moderate behavior (Kamseno & Putri, 2022). However, Muslim societies, in general, are still shackled by the reality of so-called *'confessional ambiguity,'* the Muslim phenomenon has been accustomed to many internal differences in terms of intermingled structures and sectarian doctrines (Mohseni et al., 2022). Therefore, there is also confusion and a sense of dichotomy between two groups that subjectively believe in one absolute truth that is considered to be of internal scale. Thus, Indonesian Muslims, in particular, are still exclusive to small minority sects. Finally, this research aims to analyze the ambiguity of the impact of religious moderation on Ahmadiyah and Shi'a sects in Indonesia. It is hoped that the religious moderation program

can apply properly by embracing all groups of elements and implemented without exception.

METHOD

This study delves into the complexities surrounding the implementation of religious moderation policies in Indonesia, particularly in relation to the Ahmadiyah and Shi'a communities. These two sects, despite adhering to Islam, have faced challenges in integrating with the broader religious landscape. This research uses qualitative method and literature study as a additional reference, opting to understand the lived experiences and interpretations of religious moderation within these sects. The research analyses the apparent disconnect between the government''s stated commitment to religious tolerance and the experiences of these communities. While Indonesian policy emphasizes inclusivity towards diverse religious groups, the application of this principle seems uneven. The current approach to religious moderation, it appears, prioritizes interfaith harmony but neglects intra-religious differences. This focus on broader religious tolerance leaves sects like the Ahmadiyyah and Shi''ah questioning the true scope of moderation within their own faith. To gain a richer understanding of these complexities, the researcher goes beyond a traditional literature review. Interviews with young members of Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) and Ahlul Bait Indonesia (ABI) provide valuable first-hand perspectives. These interviews explored their experiences with religious moderation initiatives, allowing the researcher to assess the effectiveness of these programs from the viewpoint of the intended beneficiaries. This triangulation of data collection methods, encompassing interviews, observations, and analysis of secondary sources like journals, books, and online information, aims to capture a holistic picture (Hadi, 2015). By combining these approaches, the research hopes to shed light on the ambiguities and potential shortcomings of Indonesia's religious moderation efforts.

Literature Review

The application of religious moderation in recent years is a concrete idea in minimizing all forms of religious extremism (Sumarto, 2021). This is supported in Sri Rahayu Tanjung's research that the concept of Religious Moderation implementation is an idea or paradigm that has been institutionalized in many lines, spaces, and events formed and programmed in the medium term (Tanjung,

2022). Referring to Akhmadi's research the religious moderation program is all forms of multicultural understanding and awareness that respect differences, plurality and willingness to interact with anyone fairly (Akhmadi, 2019).

An attitude of moderation is needed as a form of recognition of the existence of other parties and not committing acts of violence. This is in line with the state's version of the concept of religious moderation that religious moderation is a way of seeing and practicing religion in common life by manifesting the essence of religious teachings that protect human dignity on the basis of public benefits based on fairness and balance (Mukhibat, Nurhidayati Istiqomah, & Hidayah, 2023). However, in the application of religious moderation in general, there are still some weak gaps when talking about the context of application. As stated by Sigit Kamseno and Putri in the article *Problematika Paradox of Tolerance dalam Implementasi Pengarusutamaan Moderasi Beragama, sebuah Perspektif Filsafat* is discussing *"paradoxical problem"* in the religious moderation mainstreaming program (Kamseno & Putri, 2022). The article explains the *"paradoxical moment"* of the implementation of the Religious Moderation mainstreaming program, especially towards groups that they are not wanted. The connection in the article is that the state is sometimes inconsistent in generalizing a policy. The article described by Kamseno and Putri highlighted the absence of the implementation of religious moderation by the Ministry of Religious Affairs towards intolerant groups. However, this article focuses more on the sectarian minority groups of Ahmadiyya and Shi'a who have escaped the attention of the community in implementing *wasatiyah* attitudes due to the historical impact of Islam itself. Historically, Islam shows that there are many *Madzhab* or sects that emerged due to differences in perspective, giving birth to different ideas. The main cause of the emergence of these sects is an attempt to reform the sects that have been in effect for a long time. This renewal resulted in new things to the classical teachings, which, for some groups, became a problem. However, according to Khusna Amal in his article *"Towards a Deliberative Conflict Resolution? A Reflection on State Inclusive Response to Sunni-Shi'a Tension in Indonesia's Democracy,"* sectarian refers to divisions or conflicts based on differences in religious beliefs or sects, which always involve exclusion or hostility between groups with different religious interpretations (Amal, 2020). In addition, the definition of sectarian is also explained in the article *"Sectarianism in the Middle East,"* by Lawrence G. Potter, emphasized that defining sectarianism is notoriously challenging. A broad definition of sectarianism would include religious, tribal,

and ethnic organizations; alternatively, it could be regarded as the politics of identity (Potter, 2015). Sectarian cases have long occurred within Islam itself, often triggered by political interests, theological disagreements, and competing interpretations of the truth within Islam. The study of intra-religious divisions is often referred to by the term *firaq* (read: *firqa*)*, nihal* (read: *nihla*)*, tawa'if* (read: *ta'ifa*), atau *madzhab* (read: *mazhab*) (Gaiser, 2017).

This narrative identity approach directs the study of Muslim intra-religious divisions to questions of the extent to which Muslims maintain their communal group affiliations. The academic discussion began with one of the founding fathers of modern sociology, the German theorist Max Weber (1864-1920). Weber describes in terms of his concerns that have offered the first sociological characterization of sects by comparing the institution of churches (Hashemi & Postel, 2017). Furthermore, Weber specifically criticizes Marx's assumption that social institutions are based on the economic structure of society, which aims to show that religion, in reality, provides an independent variable in history (Bendix, 2024). For Weber, the church has certain sectarian-related features, dogmas as well as rites and universal claims that transcend individuals forcing it to discipline those who deviate from it. Furthermore, the link between sectarian issues is no more than a mode of political machinations of the membership in relation to the institution (Hashemi and Postel, 2017). Michael Cook argues that Weber's notion of church sects is, in fact, not very useful when brought into the Islamic context: first, true Islamic sectarianism is first and foremost a response to religious-political developments after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, while Weber characterizes sects as apolitical (Gaiser, 2017). Moreover, based on an article written by Taufani entitled *Sunni-Syiah sebagai Belenggu Sejarah: Mengurai Pemikiran Ahmad Syafii Maarif tentang Konflik Internal Umat Islam,* in the case between Sunni and Shi'a can be traced back to the early era of Islam, which has left a black stain in the form of political conflict between the companions of the Prophet. The discussion of Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif's thought shows that the root of the problem began as a result of the legacy of conflict among Arab elites that began with the Prophet's companions. The conflict not only left the people and political divisions but also brought theological implications to the body of Islam (Taufani, 2023). After the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD, a debate arose within the early Muslim community on the question of succession (Hashemi & Postel, 2017). Apart from the impact of these political feuds, there are many sectarian conflicts today.

According to Ahmad Najib Burhani, the concept of conflict between sectarian orthodoxy and heresy refers more to the politics of domination between competing groups to determine who is considered the bearer of the *'correct'* belief. The winning side will claim its teachings are orthodox, while the losing side will be condemned as heretics (Burhani, 2013). For instance, the historical conflict between Shi'a, and the Sunnis extends over more than a millennium (Zaman, 1998). In fact, sectarian conflicts between Sunni Shi'a often occur in Muslim-Sunni-majority countries such as Indonesia (Formichi 2014), Egypt (Brooke, 2017), Pakistan (Zaman, 1998) and Afghanistan (Saikal, 2012). In every sectarian strife that appears in the Muslim world, especially between Sunnis and Shi'a; the Shi'ites are always the minority and oppressed. In the context of sectarian conflict between Sunnis and Shi'as in Indonesia, it is influenced by the Islamic transnational process of *Shi'ism* directly from the Islamic Republic of Iran and openly after the end of Suharto's New Order government in 1998 (Formichi 2014).

Nevertheless, according to Christine D. Baker, in her book, namely *"Medieval Islamic Sectarianism,"* the sectarian history within Islam cannot be reduced to a simple one between Sunnis and Shi'a. Baker's dissertation outlines the objective sectarian history especially in the medieval era specifically during the prime Shi'a Buyids and Fatimids. In addition, Baker explains that sectarian identities are only relevant at specific points in history. Furthermore, sectarian conflicts include external impacts including the Iranian Revolution and the struggle for finite resources in the contemporary era. Another aspects is political economy, as well as conflicting myth-symbol complexes such as debates and polemics regarding religious rituals, contribute to the relevance of sectarian identities (Haddad, 2020). These factors determine whether a sectarian identity is passive and politically irrelevant or whether, at times of crisis or when a sect is under threat, this identity sect becomes assertive. Narratives depicting Sunni dominance throughout time have been the top holders of orthodoxy since the beginning. Sectarian identities do not always correspond to the binary division between Sunni and Shi'a. While Sunni and Shi'as have not always gotten along, they have peacefully coexisted more often than not. For example, in the 10th-century Islamic world, the period called the *"Shi'a Century""* the Sh"ia Fatimids dynasty established policies and authority that often followed the model of the Sunni Abbasid dynasty that had preceded them (Baker, 2019). This shows that there is a relationship that their claims of legitimacy are not always based on Shi'a entities alone but on a broader concept that is rather blended concepts

from Sunni, Shi'a, Persian, and Arab modes of authority. Thus, medieval history itself has authentic evidence of the coexistence of the two sects that were often at odds during the Fatimids dynasty.

Therefore, scholar Sayyed Hossein Nasr notes that Sunni-Shiite connections were reinforced by a historical occurrence through the *tariqah* in his article *"Sh"ism and Sufism: Their Relationship in Essence and History"*. The article outlines the relationship the Nūrbakhshī order formed by Muhammad ibn 'Abdallah, known as Nurbakhs, a Persian from Quhistan, whose creator aspired to build a sort of bridge between Sunnism and *Shi'ism* in his person and gave his movement a Mahdiist flavor (Nasr, 1970). Mīr Muhammad Nūbakhsh was not a Shi'a, nor did he claim to be a Mahdī. However, he tried to remove the sectarian differences among varied Muslim sects by adopting a way of moderation. He was a Sufi Master who was initiated in the Kubravī-Hamadānī order in 1417 CE. In his book, Kashf al-Haqāiq, he gave a complete genealogy of his Sufi predecessors, which starts from 'Alī b. Abī Tālib and reaches him through Khavājah Ishāq (Abbas & Ahmad, 2024). Hence, one of the causes of this fusion of *Shi'ism* and Sufi movements that produced the Safavid era was the diffusion of ideas. However, through these examples of historical events, while in some cases; sectarian can lead to conflict, in other cases history has proven that they can actually coexist and cooperate with each other. Despite these differences, there are some examples of cross-sectarian tolerance, especially in the areas of policy and mysticism regardless of sect identity.

DISCUSSION

Addressing the Ambiguity of Religious Moderation: Religious Authority Challenges to the Implementation of Ahmadiyya and Shi'a Moderation Policies

The literature on ambiguity has been widely discussed in various studies related to contradictory meanings. As explained by Whitman and Yeager's theory explains that ambiguity is a sentence that has a usual interpretation more than one which has the nature of being easily doubted and understood because it has a double meaning (Crane, Yeager, & Whitman, 1981). While the study *"Ambiguity and Rationality"* by Deborah Frisch and Jonathan Baron discusses uncertainty in decision-making and probability assessment, as well as its impact on normative models of decision-making such as value theory (Frisch & Baron, 1988). This uncertainty is an implication of the gap in religious moderation

policies carried out by the state. On the other side, the majority of Muslims have a high level of tolerance towards those of different religions, while on the other hand, it has decreased towards those of different sects.

In recent decades, the gap between the West's understanding of Islam and that of the Islamic world has increased, especially with regard to sectarianism (Haddad, 2020). The sectarian narratives referred to are the privileging of sects in a religious tradition. Payam Mohseni and Mohammad Sagha explain that there are Five Myths of Sectarianism, one of which relates to the Muslim world in ancient times is very broad, and has historical facts where many Muslim sects coexist with each other, and is described as the term *'confessional ambiguity,'* where Muslims are open to each other, especially *Shiites* and *Sunnis* and combine what are considered different aspects of doctrine in the authority of two sects such as *Shiites* and *Sunnis* (Mohseni et al., 2022). Some forms of assimilated sectarian traditions such as *barzanji, shalawatan, suroan, tabut* in Sumatera, and many more (Muwahidah, 2016). This evidence of the many aspects of diversity in sectarian affiliation, for example, *Shi'a* and Sunni coexist with each other, shows the fluid and peaceful relationship between Muslims of all sects (Iran Project, 2019). In the context of Indonesian history, the Ahmadiyya and Shi'a congregations have long inhabited the archipelago. The Ahmadiyya congregation is a religious (Islamic) movement that began in Qadian, Punjab, India, by H. Mirzam Ghulam Ahmad in 1889 (M. Ahmad, Bunyamin, Nawawi, Pratama, & Junior, 2022). The history of the Ahmadiyya congregation in Indonesia dates back to the early 20th century. The movement was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1889 and later gained followers in Indonesia through the efforts of individuals such as Abubakar Ayyub, Ahmad Nuruddin, and Zaini Dahlan (Media, 2021). In 1935, the center was in Jakarta, and in 1987, it moved to Parung in Bogor (Sujadmi, 2013). Nevertheless, *Shi'a* has a long history in Indonesia, dating back to the arrival of Islam in the archipelago. However, the development of *Shi'a* in Indonesia has gone through four stages. *Firstly,* it was during the arrival of Islam in Indonesia; *secondly,* it was after the Islamic revolution in Iran, *thirdly* it was through Indonesian Muslim intellectuals who studied in Iran; and *lastly,* it was during the after-political reforms era when there was an establishment of an association called Jamaah Ahlul Bai't Indonesia (JAI) (Hasyim, 2012).

Furthermore, the history of religious authority in Indonesia covers various important and dynamic periods, starting with the conflict between *Wali Sanga* and Syaikh Siti Jenar in the 15th and 16th centuries, in which Syaikh Siti Jenar

was accused of spreading heresy by *Wali Songo*. In the 17th century, Nuruddin ar-Raniry in the Sultanate of Aceh played an important role in upholding Islamic orthodoxy and opposing teachings deemed deviant. During the colonial period, religious authority was used by the colonial government to control the Muslim population, with accusations of heresy often used to suppress dissent. In new order era, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) was established in 1975 and became one of the main religious authorities in Indonesia, issuing highly influential fatwas, including one against pluralism, liberalism, heresy, and secularism in 2005 (Hicks, 2023).

Political freedom in the reform era opened up the possibility for various religious groups to freely express their ideologies and identities and debate competing values in public (Muwahidah, 2016). In the historical context, violence in the name of religion in Indonesia increased sharply after the 1998 political reforms as radical Islamic movements gained strength (Hamdi, 2014). This is related to the landscape of political power undergoing significant changes in the reform era. The collapse of state control that accompanied the democratic opening of 1998 allowed for a revival of the kind of Islamic constituency associated with heresy. Furthermore, in this era, radical groups such as the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) and the Islamic Reformist Movement (GARIS) found new freedom to organize and lobby in the post-Soeharto era Field (Hicks, 2023). Additionally, the collapse of the New Order regime saw struggles for power that affected the relations among religious groups and state organs, as well as between different religious groups. In this rapidly changing political context, the *Shi'a* community found itself caught between encouragement and victimization, which contributed to the rise of violence against them (Formichi, 2014b). As is the case according to the narrative of Cima Tahir Ahmad, who is the demissioner of AMSA (Ahmadiyyah Muslim Student Associations) 2022-2023.

> *"The current condition of the Ahmadiyya congregation still has concerns, but it is not too significant when compared to 1998, where the preaching of the preacher at that time was frightening currently the case that is often faced is the prohibition of mosques and IMB (Building Permit) is still often detained"* (C. T. Ahmad, 2023).

Based on the explanation of the resource person, the reality of Indonesian society today still needs to be based on the concept of religious moderation, in which there are values of tolerance. The results of the Lembaga Survey Indonesia or Indonesian Survey Circle (LSI) Survey in 2022 National Survey Report "Violent extremism, democracy, and religious attitudes in Indonesia"

(diagram 1) roughly 46.6% of respondents do not accept coexistence with Ahmadiyya, and 41.8% do not accept Shi'ah people as neighbors (LSI, 2023). From this phenomenon, it can be concluded that the reality of implementing religious moderation still cannot touch the community.
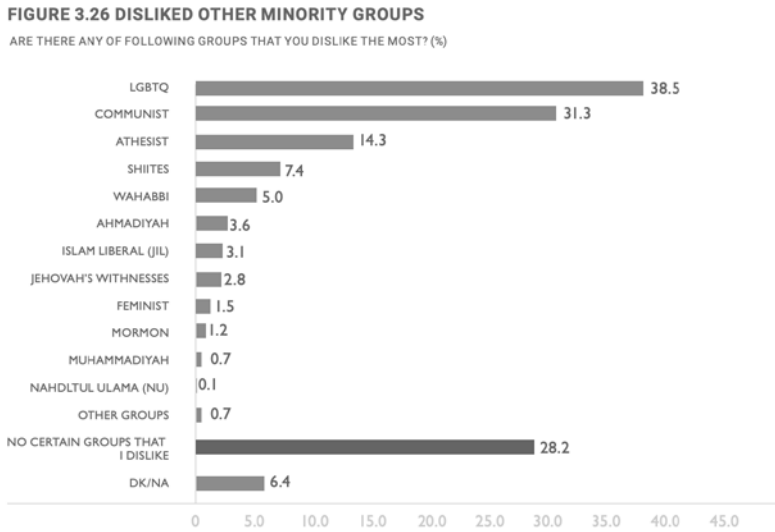
FIGURE 3.26 DISLIKED OTHER MINORITY GROUPS

ARE THERE ANY OF FOLLOWING GROUPS THAT YOU DISLIKE THE MOST? (%)

Group	%
LGBTQ	38.5
COMMUNIST	31.3
ATHESIST	14.3
SHIITES	7.4
WAHABBI	5.0
AHMADIYAH	3.6
ISLAM LIBERAL (JIL)	3.1
JEHOVAH'S WITHNESSES	2.8
FEMINIST	1.5
MORMON	1.2
MUHAMMADIYAH	0.7
NAHDLTUL ULAMA (NU)	0.1
OTHER GROUPS	0.7
NO CERTAIN GROUPS THAT I DISLIKE	28.2
DK/NA	6.4

Diagram 1.
Violent extremism, democracy, and religious attitudes in Indonesia
Source: (LSI, 2023)

Furthermore, the LSI survey revealed Intolerance towards Disliked Minority or Socio-Religious Groups respondents dislike social groups based on political affiliation, belief system, and sexual/gender orientation. The table above shows that only 28.2 percent of respondents said there are no socio-religious groups they dislike. Respondents in this category were more willing to name groups they disliked. The Shi'ah minority group, approximately 7.4 percent, is ranked fourth in terms of hate, followed by Ahmadiyya in sixth place, roughly 3.6 percent (LSI, 2023). Based on this data, the reality of Indonesian society is still not ready to accept to coexist with minority groups that are considered heretical by religious authorities. Religious authority in Indonesian Islam is widespread. Using Bourdieu's perspective, all religions are seen as a competition field where agents continuously struggle for symbolic and legitimate authority (Hicks, 2023). The authority in question is MUI as the holder of the role of authority that issues fatwas that can mobilize masses with incredible strength from various groups of Muslim society. Subsequently, the state's role seems weaker than that of the MUI (Indonesian Ulama Council) (Sujadmi, 2013). The

legitimacy product of the 1980 heretical *fatwa* then strengthened in 2004, and the SKB 3 Minister is a discriminatory legal product that legitimizes various cases of violence, persecution, and limitation of the Constitutional rights of the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Congregation by committing violence, attacking houses of worship, demanding dissolution and so on (Yosarie, Insiyah, & Buntara, 2021). Based on the three Ministers' (SKB 3 Menteri) policies and the fatwa, the impact on society is to inherit hatred towards those who are heretical. So, the implementation of religious moderation is not too fulfilled in the sectarian category because people inherit hatred based on regulations and fatwa authority. This is expressed by MUI firmly placing itself on the conservative side and taking a militant stance against all things it considers heterodox, including mystical sects, Ahmadiyya and Shi'a minorities, liberal interpretations of Islam, and the concept of religious pluralism(Bruinessen, 2018).

MUI began the process of providing unsolicited advice to the government and advocating for the adoption of its fatwas, including anti-minority fatwas, as the basis for legislation. Prof. Ismatu Ropi, sectarian conflict is a new pattern of fundamental Muslims channeling prejudice and stigma that has long been harbored by violence as a form of solving problems. *Firstly*, the state as a third party has failed to solve the issues between the two Muslim internal sects. *Secondly*, the highest authority institution in Indonesia has conducted a systematic campaign against cults under the pretext of *'syariatization'* so that these deviant sects become easy targets after negotiating Islamizing all aspects of Indonesia's social and political life (Ropi, 2010). The authority of the MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) dramatically impacts the pressure on Ahmadiyya and *Shi'a* congregations in Indonesia. Despite increasing pressure from anti-Shi'a organizations, the central MUI has not revised its attitude towards *Shi'a*, which is different from Ahmadiyya. MUI still places within the boundaries of Islamic orthodoxy and does not prohibit *Shi'a* activities. However, some branches of the MUI in East Java, for example, still consider *Shi'a* to be a deviant sect. This means that *Shi'a* cannot conduct public activities, including discussions, public celebrations, etc (Muwahidah, 2016). The reality of the majority Muslim community, in this case Sunni, and the strengthening of institutionalized religious authority is clear evidence in the emergence of an attitude of intolerance towards differences in sects; subsequently, understanding between other sects has decreased and led to stigmatization. Mujib Bengawan, a Pandu Ahlul Bait Indonesia (ABI) central youth division, said that the Ahlul Bait congregation felt that although their existence had been publicized, it still gave rise to stigma due to religious authorities.

> *Most Muslim communities often misunderstand their religion, which should be understood rationally and with an open mind. The habit of following the authority of textualist Muslim leaders so that the implementation and feelings of wanting to know other schools are* reduced *(Munawan, 2023).*

Based on Mujib Munawan's statement, the habit of Muslims, in general, is more often following textualist religious leader authorities, and usually, Muslims themselves lack understanding of their religion. Consequently, the presence of religious authorities can determine heresy not only limited to theological debates but also depends on institutional legitimacy (Hicks, 2023). In addition to the dominant religious discourse, the state's political authority has historically provided. This ambiguous reality shows that the role of the state and quasi-government agencies is often moderate. At the same time, there is another paradoxical side that provides a gap or distance to those who are different.

Religious Moderation and Sectarian Moderation

Essentially, moderation has been taught by Islam, as mentioned in the Quran. The concept of moderation is known as *Al-Wasathiyyah* in the Qur'an, but there needs to be more controversy about how it should be used in today's context. The term *"al-wasathiyyah"* is derived from the words al-wasth (with the letter sin, which is sanctioned) and *al-wasath* (with the letter fathah-kan), both of which are *isim mashdâr* from the verb *washath*. The terminological definition of *Wasathiyyah* is derived from etymological definitions that refer to a good attribute that prevents a person from being extreme (Abror, 2020). Religious moderation is necessary to mediate in the face of differences. It allows religious followers to adopt a reasonable approach that is both tolerant and faithful to the core principles of their religion. Moderation is a process of reviewing and ensuring compliance with established regulations. In the Ahlusunnah method congregation, we understand that Tawazzun refers to adopting a moderate and balanced approach (Muchtar, Dwi Noviani, Mardeli, Mutiara, & Manna Dey, 2022). Religious moderation is an approach to religious practice that emphasizes the principles of justice and balance (Kamseno & Putri, 2022). This religious paradigm, attitude, and practice embodies the essence of religious teachings to protect human dignity and build benefits in religious life (Al-Asyhar, 2023). Religious harmony is the state of relations among religious communities based on tolerance, mutual understanding, mutual respect, respect for equality in the practice of their religious teachings, and cooperation in the life of society, nation, and state within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, based

on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Sinaga et al., 2022). Indonesia, as a pluralistic country in terms of ethnicity, culture, and religion, requires a strategy to create and maintain an atmosphere of religious freedom and religious harmony, which is very important to realize a prosperous, safe, peaceful, united, and serene Indonesian society.

Currently, religion's dimensions continue to expand with time. Religious institutions, the products of religious organizations, continue to evolve by their distinct paradigms. The growth of religious institutionality influences the interpretation of religious teachings and discourses (Kamseno & Putri, 2022). Indonesia currently has a religious institution known as the Ministry of Religious Affairs that is authorized and has the power to make policies around religion. The most intriguing and innovative thing is the idea of "religious moderation" to prevent extreme and radical thought in understanding religion. It is often forgotten that bigotry towards internal religions leads to ignorance and harshness towards those with different beliefs. So, the concentration of policymakers frequently only seeing from one side of the glass eye is not comprehensive.

On the one hand, prioritizing religion is urgent. On the other hand, they are ignoring the many sectarian groups in Indonesia. Indonesia's diverse sectarian groups are part of a minority group that is often discriminated against.

On the one hand, according to the Alvara Institute, the impact of implementing Religious Moderation nationally has a decent record in terms of national commitment, acceptance of local traditions, dimensions of non-violence, and dimensions of tolerance (Alvara Institute 2021). On the other hand, the implementation of Religious Moderation is not very significant in changing the perspective of Muslim society in general towards different sect groups. This is supported by the state needing to be more active in providing space for participation from the JAI (Jamaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia) and ABI (Ahlul Bait Indonesia) organizations in the Religious Moderation Program.

Table 1.
The Differences between Religious Moderation and Sect Moderation

	Religious Moderation	**Sectarian Moderation**
Coverage	Extensive	Narrow
Aspect	All aspects of religious life	Madhab/theology/sect
Purpose	Preventing extremism and radicalism	Preventing sectarian fanaticism

	Religious Moderation	Sectarian Moderation
Act	Tolerance, dialog, mutual cooperation	Respect for different sect/madhab, tolerance for different theology.

The main difference between religious and sectarian moderation is the primary focus used in making decisions and dealing with differences *(Table 1)*. Religious moderation focuses on maintaining balance and reducing violence in religion, while sectarian moderation may focus more on maintaining balance and reducing violence in life decisions and priorities. However, in praxis, the implementation of religious moderation can be realized by dialogue between theologies by emphasizing human values. In this case, the characteristics of Cak Nur's spiritual way of trying to build a tolerant Islamic paradigm. The character of moderation is built through theological and inclusive approaches (Al-Asyhar, 2023). This involves creating an inclusive theology and finding a middle ground by looking for similarities between the values of Islam and other religions.

Nevertheless, in the context of relations with sects such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'a, religious moderation demands an attitude of openness to existing differences, recognizing the other side, having a tolerant attitude, and not imposing one's will with violence. This includes building an inclusive theology and finding a middle way by looking for similarities in the values of Islam and other religions. However, in the context of relations with sects such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'a, religious moderation requires an attitude of openness to existing differences, recognizing other parties, having tolerant behavior, and not imposing the will with violence (Akhmadi, 2019). In this context, sectarian moderation is an attitude of moderation towards intra-Islamic sects such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'a that involves dialogue and a greater understanding of theological differences by upholding human values.

RECOMMENDATION

Taking into consideration the findings of the study as well as the discussion of the study results that have been detailed thoroughly and methodically in the previous section, this section contains strategic points that become recommendations based on the findings of this study. These recommendations are as follows:

1. The government, particularly the Ministry of Religious Affairs, should provide clearer guidance and support to ensure the recognition and

protection of all Islamic sects. This involves addressing the ambiguity of existing regulations related to Islamic sects and differences in *fiqh* or *madhhab*, contributing to societal reluctance to accept sect differences. By clarifying these regulations, the government can help foster a more inclusive environment for religious practice and belief.

2. Resolving the dilemma between the recognition and protection of all Islamic sects and the efforts to maintain religious harmony. This involves balancing the need to protect minority sects with the broader goal of social cohesion and unity among different religious groups. The government is encouraged to include representatives of other Islamic sects, such as JAI and ABI/IJABI, in discussions and decision-making processes to ensure that their needs and perspectives are considered. This collaborative approach can help address the challenges faced by minority sects and promote a more inclusive and tolerant society. These recommendations aim to improve the situation for minority sects in Indonesia by promoting a more inclusive, tolerant, and protective approach towards intra-religious and inter-religious diversity.

CLOSING

The implementation of religious moderation towards the Ahmadiyya and Shia minority groups in Indonesia still faces significant challenges. Although the government has expanded religious moderation programs in response to extremism, these sects still face discrimination from various parties, including from within their religious communities. Those, especially the Sunni, show moderation acts towards followers of other religions; subsequently, religious moderation is only fully practiced by those of different religions. In addition, the reality of a society that cannot be moderate towards different religious sects can be seen from the impact of the policy and MUI fatwa in Indonesia. These policies, which have resulted in discrimination, violence, and restrictions on the constitutional rights of minority groups such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'a, have reinforced attitudes of intolerance and stigmatization of different religious sects. This has led to the general public inheriting attitudes of hatred towards groups deemed heretical, making the application of religious moderation ambiguous and challenging to apply inclusively to Muslims as a whole. This ambiguity in the application of religious moderation suggests that efforts to create inclusiveness and tolerance regarding sectarian moderation in religious practice in Indonesia still require a more profound understanding and more concrete action.

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SPIRITUAL COUNSELING APPROACHES IN RELIGIOUS POLICY FOR HANDLING ROHINGYA REFUGEES

PENDEKATAN KONSELING SPIRITUAL DALAM KEBIJAKAN KEAGAMAAN UNTUK PENANGANAN PENGUNGSI ROHINGYA

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Abstract

This research aims to explore and analyze the application of the spiritual counseling approach in religious policies for handling Rohingya refugees. Rohingya refugees who have experienced trauma and psychological stress due to genocide and oppression in Myanmar need special assistance in recovering their mental health. A spiritual counseling approach, which integrates religious values in the counseling process, is considered effective for overcoming psychosocial problems faced by refugees. This study uses a literature study research method by collecting and analyzing various secondary sources such as books, journal articles, policy reports and official documents. The results of this research show that spiritual counseling can have a significant influence in recovering the mental health of Rohingya refugees by restoring their psychological function and strengthening their religious values. The implementation of spiritual counseling carried out by various institutions, such as UNHCR, IOM, and local religious organizations, has