

# INSANIYAT

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*Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia*

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*Departement of English Literature, Faculty of Languages and Cultures, Universitas Kristen Maranatha, Bandung, Indonesia*

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# INSANIYAT

## Journal of Islam and Humanities

### Religious Moderation Discourses on Digital Platforms: Upholding Diversity, Rejecting Violence, and Embracing Local Wisdom

<sup>1</sup>Rizqi Handayani, <sup>1</sup>Alfida

Faculty of Adab and Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah  
Jakarta, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Rizqi Handayani ([rizqi.handayani@uinjkt.ac.id](mailto:rizqi.handayani@uinjkt.ac.id))

#### Abstract

*This research examines the dissemination of religious moderation discourses through digital platforms, particularly YouTube, by analyzing lectures from two moderate dai, Gus Baha and Adi Hidayat. In light of social change and the evolution of digital media, the study aims to identify the values of religious moderation reflected in their messages. Key research questions address the various da'wah approaches utilized on YouTube and how these pillars such as commitment to national unity, respect for diversity, rejection of violence, and openness to local wisdom are communicated to audiences. Employing a qualitative approach with content analysis, the study selects lecture videos through purposive sampling based on view count and thematic relevance. The findings reveal that both Gus Baha and Adi Hidayat effectively use digital platforms to convey moderation messages, albeit through different strategies. Gus Baha focuses on cultural narratives familiar to the community, while Adi Hidayat employs a scientific, structured approach rooted in religious texts. The analysis indicates that YouTube serves not only as a channel for disseminating moderate religious information but also plays a critical role in preventing radicalization by providing inclusive content. In conclusion, this study offers contribution to digital literacy policy by highlighting the role of digital media in enhancing religious moderation in Indonesia amidst complex information flows and underscores the importance of digital literacy in amplifying the positive impact of moderation messages online.*

**Keywords:** Religious Moderation, YouTube, Religious Discourses, Gus Baha, Adi Hidayat

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#### Introduction

Religious phenomena in Indonesia in recent decades have taken center stage in public discussion, mainly due to significant changes in patterns of religious understanding (Masykur et al., 2024 ; Musyarrofah & Zulhannan, 2023; (Arifinsyah et al., 2020) These changes include a growing diversity of religious understanding which is the result of shifting attitudes and behaviors of society in response to ongoing social, political, and cultural transformations (Hernawan et al., 2021; Wardi et al., 2023) These changes create space





for more flexible interpretations of religion, but also pose a risk of fragmentation within religious communities. In particular, religious discourses presented in digital public spaces affect people's perception of the values of religious moderation, which plays an important role in maintaining harmony in a pluralistic society. These values are reflected in four key pillars established by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia: national commitment, which emphasizes loyalty to shared national principles; tolerance, which promotes respect for diversity and peaceful coexistence; anti-violence, which rejects any form of coercion or aggression in religious expression; and accommodation of local culture, which values local wisdom as long as it aligns with core religious teachings. Integrating these pillars into digital religious content is essential to fostering a more inclusive, peaceful, and united society. (Sihombing et al., 2020). These changes arise not only from social and political factors but also from technological advancements that facilitate the dissemination of religious information. Before digital media, religious communication was limited to direct interactions in places of worship, such as mosques and study groups. Now, with technology, individuals can access religious information anytime and anywhere through mobile phones and computers. This shift marks a transition from traditional religious authority to a more individualized approach to information-seeking, presenting challenges regarding the authenticity and accuracy of the content accessed (Saiful Máarif et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, which is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, the phenomenon of spreading religious information through online platforms is increasingly prominent. One of the most influential platforms in spreading religious information is YouTube. This platform has become an important space for the spread of religious thought, both from moderate and conservative perspectives. YouTube allows individuals across the country, even those living in remote areas, to connect with religious leaders through the video lectures presented (Zaid et al., 2022). However, the existence of this platform has also sparked a debate about how religious content on YouTube can lead to polarization (Tran et al., 2022). The diversity of religious information on YouTube has the potential to reinforce extreme views, especially because the platform's algorithm tends to recommend similar content to users, so it can deepen bias and exclusive religious perspectives.

This flexibility provides an advantage in obtaining religious information and allows the audience to choose content that suits their spiritual needs (Mustafa, 2023). However, the dissemination of religious information through this platform also brings its own challenges. Content that presents religious information with extreme or unmoderate views can be easily accessed by anyone. Al-Zaman (2024) Bangladesh has been experiencing frequent online religious misinformation, inspiring violence against minorities and threatening interreligious harmony. Following an exploratory sequential mixed-methods analysis combining a qualitative thematic analysis and a quantitative content analysis, we answer two pertinent research questions. We found three ways users engage with misinformation: their topics of discourse, reactions, and appraisal. Users' discourse revolves around religious, radical, and political issues. Radical issues (60.4% noted that misinformation or narrow interpretations of religious teachings can significantly impact public perception of an inclusive and tolerant religion. In this context, the ability to critically evaluate and filter information becomes essential. Without this skill, audiences may be easily swayed by content that undermines moderation, potentially leading to a distorted understanding of religion (Udoudom et al., 2023).

The dissemination of religious information through digital platforms is seen by some as enhancing accessibility and inclusion, enabling broader discussions without geographical limitations. According to Caidi et al. (2023) improved access to religious content can foster tolerance and moderation among the younger generation. However, concerns arise regarding the potential for this open access to facilitate the growth of extremism. by Zareie & Sakellar-

iou (2021) highlight that much of the content on platforms like YouTube is unverified, often spreading unmoderated ideologies. This underscores the need for effective content monitoring and information curation to uphold religious moderation. Furthermore, algorithms that recommend similar videos can reinforce extreme views, as noted by Le Minh (2024) emphasizing the risk of extremist groups exploiting these platforms to propagate their ideologies.

Open access on YouTube makes it easier to spread distorted views because anyone can become a content creator without special authority or expertise in the field of religion. According to him, low digital literacy among the audience, especially the younger generation, exacerbates this problem because they tend to consider information on digital platforms as truth without a verification process. Therefore, although the digitization of religious information improves accessibility, it is necessary to monitor content and increase digital literacy so that people can be more selective in consuming religious information (Al-Zaman, 2024b). Bangladesh has been experiencing frequent online religious misinformation, inspiring violence against minorities and threatening interreligious harmony. Following an exploratory sequential mixed-methods analysis combining a qualitative thematic analysis and a quantitative content analysis, we answer two pertinent research questions. We found three ways users engage with misinformation: their topics of discourse, reactions, and appraisal. Users' discourse revolves around religious, radical, and political issues. Radical issues (60.4%.

Therefore, public awareness to sort and understand the information received is very important in maintaining religious moderation in the public space (Jati, 2023). Religious moderation is the main principle to foster harmony and tolerance in a pluralistic society. In the Indonesian context, religious moderation is increasingly relevant in dealing with contemporary issues that have the potential to trigger divisions. This concept emphasizes the importance of inclusiveness, tolerance, and respect for diversity of views in religious teachings (Amri et al., 2024). In the digital context, the discourse of religious moderation requires a deep understanding of how digital media affects audiences and how information is presented and consumed by the public.

In the digital era, understanding the application of religious moderation in daily life is crucial. (Aziz et al., 2024) emphasize that religious education should prioritize moderation to help the younger generation internalize and practice these values. Similarly, Sulvinajayanti et al., (2024) highlight the significant role of religious leaders in promoting moderate messages via digital platforms. Figures like Gus Baha and Adi Hidayat exemplify this through their influential YouTube content. Gus Baha adopts a cultural and logical perspective on religious understanding, whereas Adi Hidayat focuses on a scientific approach grounded in religious texts. Their distinct communication styles effectively reach diverse audiences both domestically and internationally. This study explores how religious moderation is reflected in their YouTube content, aiming to assess its impact on public perception and to offer insights into YouTube's role in fostering moderate religious discourse in Indonesia. The research addresses key questions on their methods and impact on promoting moderation.

## Method

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze the dissemination of religious moderation information through content on Indonesian YouTube channels. The object of the study is the transcript of a lecture delivered by two moderate religious figures, Gus Baha and Adi Hidayat, who have a significant influence on the production of religious discourse on YouTube. The method used is content analysis, which aims to examine the understanding of messages, symbols, and meanings contained in religious lectures related to the themes of religious moderation. In data collection, this study uses documentation techniques by conducting observations and video documentation. Data were taken from samples selected by



purposive sampling, focusing on lecture videos that have a significant number of views and high relevance to the theme of religious moderation. In addition, the videos used as samples are videos that have the largest number of viewers and directly raise issues such as tolerance, hate speech, and inclusivity. Data collection was carried out through in-depth observation of lecture recordings, including <https://www.youtube.com/@AdiHidayatOfficial>, <https://www.youtube.com/@NUCHANNEL>, <https://www.youtube.com/@gayengco>.

Data collection was carried out by identifying the main ideas of the lectures that discussed themes around the issue of religious moderation. Furthermore, the data analysis process was carried out in three stages, namely data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is carried out by summarizing and selecting important keywords in the lecture, then the data is classified according to the theme and pattern. Furthermore, data display, namely presenting data so that the data obtained is organized and can be easily understood. This data presentation aims to describe the thematic patterns and approaches used by the speaker, as well as to analyze messages regarding the values of religious moderation conveyed in the lecture. The last is conclusion drawing, namely drawing conclusions.

## Results and Discussion

### Various Da'wah Discourses on YouTube

YouTube has emerged as a powerful platform for modern da'wah, allowing religious teachings to reach a broader audience through digital media. Influential figures like Ust. Adi Hidayat (UAH) and Gus Baha utilize this platform to convey Islamic teachings in engaging ways. Despite their different approaches and themes, they share the common goal of providing religious enlightenment to the community. The diversity of content on YouTube reflects the richness of Islamic traditions. For instance, Adi Hidayat employs a scientific and structured method, offering detailed interpretations and explanations of hadith and fiqh. In contrast, Gus Baha adopts a simpler, more accessible style, making classical texts easy to understand. Through these varied discourses, the *dai* provide unique perspectives within the framework of Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah. Thus, YouTube not only enhances public access to religious content but also caters to the audience's diverse needs and preferences.

### Adi Hidayat and the Scientific Approach in Da'wah

Adi Hidayat is one of the most popular preachers on social media, especially YouTube, with diverse and rich content. Through his channel "Adi Hidayat Official," he presents a variety of topics, from religious lectures and tafsir studies to murottal and talk shows. His flagship program, STUAH (Open School for Memorizing the Qur'an), attracts millions of viewers. In his da'wah discourse, Adi Hidayat often explores Qur'anic interpretations, such as *Tafsir Al-Maraghi* and *Tafsir Rūh al-Ma'ānī* by Al-Alusi. He also delves into hadith studies, including *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, a key reference in Islamic law. Additionally, Adi Hidayat reviews classic texts like *Adab al 'Alim wa al-Muta'allim* by Shaykh Muhammad Hasyim Asy'ari, often at dawn readings at Jami Al-Azhar Mosque, Bekasi. His discussions on prayer jurisprudence are particularly popular, combining depth with accessibility for a wide audience.

### Gus Baha and Classical Studies

Gus Baha is one of the most renowned preachers on social media, known for his deep yet approachable style. He interprets various Qur'anic surahs, including *Tafsir Jalalain* and *Mafātīh al-Ghaib* by Fakhruddin ar-Razi, in ways that resonate with the general public. His da'wah themes cover fiqh and aqidah, which are central to his content's appeal. Gus Baha addresses topics like "The Secrets of Prayer in the Qur'an" and "How to Speed Up Answered Prayers," offering fresh insights for his listeners. He frequently references classical works,

studying *Tafsir Jalalain* with a logical and holistic approach. Following the ijmalī method for Qur'anic interpretation, Gus Baha provides an inclusive perspective. His clear yet profound style allows his da'wah to reach diverse audiences, making him one of the most respected preachers and fostering a deeper understanding of Islam in the digital age.

### **Values of Religious Moderation in the YouTube Gus Baha and Ust Adi Canal**

In today's digital era, social media platforms, especially YouTube, have become an important means for *dai* to convey religious teachings and religious moderation values. This channel not only presents educational content but also serves as a space for dialogue and discussion. The discussion of the values of understanding religious moderation through a study on YouTube is very relevant, considering the challenges and dynamics faced by the community in understanding Islamic teachings. Religious moderation is key to creating a balance between tradition and modernity, as well as promoting tolerance and mutual respect in the midst of differences. By examining the various approaches and content presented by *dai* on YouTube channels, we can understand how they explain and affirm the principles of moderation in Islam, as well as how the delivery of these messages can reach different groups of people. Therefore, this discussion will explore various aspects of understanding religious moderation carried out by *dai*, as well as its impact on religious understanding and practice in society.

#### **Gus Baha**

Gus Baha proposed four categories of values that are very important in building a harmonious and inclusive society. These categories include Respect for Difference and Tolerance, which emphasizes the importance of being open to diversity; The Importance of Forgiveness and Peace, which invites individuals to maintain good relationships through understanding and forgiveness; Leadership and Shared Responsibility, which highlights the important role of leaders in guiding society; and Wise Education and Dialogue, which serves as a tool to strengthen understanding and communication between individuals. These four value categories are an important foundation in building positive and mutually supportive social interactions.

#### **Respecting Differences and Tolerance**

In his lecture, Gus Baha emphasized the importance of respecting differences and Gus Baha, dalam ceramahnya, menekankan pentingnya menghormati perbedaan dan membangun toleransi antarkelompok. Pernyataannya bahwa "yang masuk surga dan neraka berkelompok" menggambarkan keberagaman sebagai bagian dari kehidupan, di mana tiap kelompok memiliki keunikan dan nilai tersendiri. Gus Baha mengajak pendengarnya untuk melihat sisi positif tiap kelompok, bahwa perbedaan itu ada untuk saling melengkapi. Ia menegaskan bahwa kualitas iman menjadi ukuran utama dalam berinteraksi, sementara perbedaan bukanlah penghalang untuk saling memahami. Gus Baha juga memberi contoh Nabi Ibrahim yang berbagi makanan dengan tamu dari agama lain, menekankan nilai kemanusiaan dalam membantu sesama, tanpa memandang agama atau suku. Dengan pandangan ini, Gus Baha mendorong terbentuknya komunitas inklusif yang menghargai perbedaan, menciptakan kesadaran bahwa harmoni dapat dicapai dengan komitmen pada toleransi di setiap aspek kehidupan.

*"Later people who go to heaven are in groups, people who go to hell are also in groups, so we have to understand that each group has a positive side that we need to appreciate."*

*"So, whatever our crimes are, because faith is still placed as the main measure, even*

*though there are differences between us."*

*"Every individual must have a sect leader or priest to follow, because the great responsibility is in their hands."*

*"Allah is more proud of His invisible servants, but still believes in his own way, even if they do not fully understand."*

*"Remember that life and death are in God's control, and our trust in Him is paramount."*

In this case, the discourse of religious moderation reflected in this lecture shows the important thing, namely respecting differences and tolerance, emphasizing that openness and mutual respect are the keys to creating a harmonious society. By emphasizing the importance of faith as the main measure of interaction, Gus Baha encourages us to see differences as wealth that can enrich relationships between individuals. Through the example of the Prophet Ibrahim, he showed that the act of helping and sharing knows no religious boundaries, so building an inclusive and supportive community is very possible to realize. By prioritizing human values above ethnic and religious differences, Gus Baha invites the community to embrace diversity and avoid exclusion. Tolerance is not only about not having conflict, but also being active in giving kindness to others. This thinking reinforces the importance of education and understanding in building tolerance, which can prevent prejudice and conflict in society. In conclusion, respecting differences and building tolerance are essential for achieving a harmonious and peaceful life in a diverse society.

### **The Importance of Forgiveness and Peace**

Gus Baha's teachings on forgiveness and peace illustrate a deep understanding of moral values in social interactions. He emphasizes that forgiveness is not just an act but a strategic choice to maintain good relationships despite differences. Drawing on the example of the Prophet Muhammad, Gus Baha highlights emotional restraint and tolerance in conflict resolution, showing that forgiveness strengthens societal bonds. Furthermore, he asserts that peace goes beyond merely avoiding conflict; it involves a proactive commitment to doing good for others. Simple gestures, like greeting neighbors, can create a harmonious atmosphere. This encourages individuals to cultivate peace through daily acts of kindness rather than waiting for it to happen naturally. Gus Baha also underscores that Allah values sincere faith, which can be quietly expressed through loyalty and dedication to spiritual principles. Gus Baha discourse on forgiveness and peace offers a moral foundation for a harmonious society, demonstrating that ethical principles in diverse settings can ease social tensions and foster unity.

*"Forgiving is important, because by forgiving we can maintain good relations even though we have different views, just like the Prophet Muhammad who was able to restrain himself when threatened."*

*"Peace is not only not fighting, but actively giving kindness to others, even just greeting neighbors has become a form of peace."*

*"Allah is more proud of His invisible servants, but still believes in his own way, even if they do not fully understand."*

"The Importance of Forgiveness and Peace" underscores that forgiveness and peace are two important pillars in creating a harmonious society. Gus Baha emphasized that forgiveness is the key to maintaining good relations despite disagreements, and emphasized

the importance of active action in promoting peace. In addition, he also reminded that faith can be expressed in diverse ways, and each individual has a unique spiritual journey that needs to be cherished. With an approach that prioritizes the values of tolerance, Gus Baha encourages us to not only refrain from facing differences, but also to contribute to creating an environment full of kindness. Through an invitation to pay homage to religious diversity, this message becomes relevant in the context of an increasingly pluralistic society. Gus Baha invites us to make forgiveness and peace part of our daily practices, to realize more positive and constructive social interactions. Gus Baha in this case not only provides an understanding of the importance of tolerance and mutual respect, but also implies that every individual has a responsibility in creating peace. By emphasizing that peace and forgiveness are active actions, Gus Baha shows that we all have a role to play in building a better society, where differences are not a barrier, but rather a force to complement and support each other.

### **Shared Leadership and Responsibility**

In the discourse "Leadership and Shared Responsibility," Gus Baha emphasizes the essential role of leaders in uniting society amidst political and social divisions. He urges individuals to actively participate in fostering harmony and collaboration, underscoring that leadership is not merely a title but a profound responsibility. Leaders must guide their followers spiritually while serving as role models in behavior and values, demonstrating accountability to the communities they serve. Gus Baha also highlights the importance of knowledge in shaping attitudes and actions. His statement, "Al science jurisul ahwal," signifies that knowledge is foundational to behavior. By understanding tolerance, individuals can better engage with diverse communities and reduce prejudice. He connects knowledge, tolerance, and social harmony, advocating that education is key to a balanced society. Justice is paramount, as illustrated by his assertion that property rights must be respected for all, regardless of background. Gus Baha's teachings call for a community rooted in mutual respect, tolerance, and social justice for everyone.

*"Every individual must have a sect leader or priest to follow, because the great responsibility is in their hands."*

*" science gives birth to attitudes. So if we have enough references about tolerance, God willing, we live wherever we have tolerance, because tolerance is also a religious teaching."*

*"If the mosque takes the land of the Jews, it must be returned to the Jews."*

In this lecture, Gus Baha emphasized that true leadership does not only lie in positions or authority, but also in the moral responsibilities that must be carried out by leaders and every individual in society. Gus Baha emphasized the importance of leaders as role models who must be able to provide good direction and examples, as well as strengthen the values of tolerance through deep religious knowledge. The importance of justice and respect for the rights of others is highlighted in this discourse, with Gus Baha emphasizing that a fair attitude is key in building relationships between diverse groups. Through the recognition that every individual has rights and respect, Gus Baha invites us to develop an inclusive attitude in social life. Thus, this discourse encourages us to play an active role in creating a harmonious society, where tolerance, justice, and shared responsibility are fundamental values. This message is a call for each individual to educate themselves, respect differences, and contribute to creating a better environment for all.



## Education and Thoughtful Dialogue

In his speech on "Education and Wise Dialogue," Gus Baha emphasized the importance of education and understanding as foundations for fostering tolerance in society. He noted that knowledge about others can help reduce prejudices often rooted in ignorance, enabling individuals to appreciate differences and diverse perspectives. Education serves as a bridge to encourage constructive dialogue across communities. Gus Baha also highlighted the need for diversity in leadership and public service, exemplifying this with the necessity of female police officers in addressing community needs. Furthermore, he underscored the role of education in dispelling harmful misconceptions, such as stigmas against infectious diseases. By promoting thoughtful dialogue, individuals can better understand each other, reducing conflicts and creating a safe space for exchanging ideas. His holistic approach to education emphasizes that learning occurs beyond formal schooling, urging active listening and responsiveness to community needs. Ultimately, education and wise dialogue are vital pillars for fostering tolerance and harmony in society.

*"Education and understanding are the keys to tolerance, if we know about others, we can avoid prejudice and live more harmoniously."*

*"Learning from experience and concrete cases, such as the need for female police to handle specific cases, shows that we must listen and adapt to the needs of society."*

*"It is important to educate the public about existing misconceptions, such as stigma against infectious diseases, so that they can have a wise dialogue."*

Regarding "Education and Wise Dialogue", Gus Baha pointed out that education and understanding are important foundations to build tolerance in society. By understanding others and appreciating differences, individuals can reduce the prejudices that often arise from ignorance. Gus Baha also emphasized the importance of learning from concrete experiences and adapting actions to the needs of society, which shows that good and constructive dialogue is the key to achieving social harmony.

Gus Baha highlighted the importance of education in dispelling misunderstandings within the community, especially concerning stigmas. Through public education, we don't just dispel myths; we foster spaces for thoughtful, inclusive dialogue. This approach encourages active participation in building a more harmonious society. Gus Baha's message goes beyond formal education, emphasizing the value of everyday experiences. Thoughtful dialogue, involving attentive listening and contextual adaptability, is essential for understanding complex social issues. By cultivating education, understanding, and dialogue, we can face social challenges and foster better relationships amid diversity. According to social construction theory, building knowledge and understanding requires social interaction and lived experiences.

On his YouTube channel, Gus Baha also emphasized respect for differences and tolerance among religious communities. He encourages audiences to see the positive aspects within each group and embrace their unique perspectives. In this context, he stresses that faith remains the ultimate measure in human relationships. Through examples like Prophet Ibrahim providing for guests of different faiths, Gus Baha illustrates tolerance and mutual aid as daily values, relevant in Indonesia's diverse religious and cultural landscape.

Moreover, Gus Baha underscores the value of forgiveness and peace, urging individuals to maintain positive relations despite differing views. He references the Prophet Muhammad's restraint in tense situations, showing that peace requires active goodwill, not just an absence of conflict. By noting Allah's pride in those who quietly uphold faith, he



presents peace as an inclusive, active principle—expressed through simple acts like greeting neighbors, regardless of faith.

Gus Baha also emphasizes the role of leadership and shared responsibility in fostering societal harmony, noting that everyone should have a role model or mentor to follow. His teachings illustrate justice in interfaith interactions, including respecting others' rights. Ultimately, Gus Baha's messages are a call to action, urging individuals to embrace religious moderation and become agents of peace and mutual understanding in society.

### **Adi Hidayat**

If in his lecture Gus Baha emphasized the four values of religious moderation, then Adi Hidayat in his podcast and lecture emphasized monotheism and the relevance of national values, religious tolerance, and popular culture. Monotheism in Islamic religious teachings emphasizes recognition of other religious entities, so that there is no compulsion to embrace Islam. This attitude strengthens religious tolerance, builds national awareness, and strengthens unity between religious communities in a multicultural Indonesian society.

### **Monotheism and Religious Tolerance**

Discourse is something that produces others, whether in the form of ideas, ideas, concepts, opinions, views on life, or effects. Thus, discourse is formed from a certain context so that it can affect the way a person thinks and acts. According to Foucault, discourse is generated in relation to power and knowledge. Where power is always destroyed through knowledge and knowledge always has the effect of power. Thus, the organizer of power always produces knowledge as the basis of power (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 2023). In the context of religion, lectures on religious narratives are knowledge produced by *dai* or speakers. The narrative of this lecture reproduces religious knowledge about religious reality as well as the rite of truth produced by the preacher or *dai*.

Religious moderation is one of the most basic discourses in the lives of religious people, especially Indonesian society consisting of various ethnicities, cultures, religions, and beliefs. The Ministry of Religion has also developed concepts and indicators that are a measure of religious moderation attitudes, so that *dai* or preachers as an extension of the Ministry of Religion participate in determining the process of reproducing the discourse of religious moderation that is understood by the public. In addition to mass media, social media is now the most effective and efficient medium to build and disseminate public knowledge about religious attitudes.

As one of the youtube channels, AH Official contributes to building public understanding of religion, society, and religious moderation. The youtube channel presents a series of discursive events built in Adi Hidayat's lectures and of course serves to work in the realm of knowledge of the Muslim community, although it is possible that it will also have an impact on the wider community. Adi Hidayat's lecture has its own segment, ranging from ordinary Muslim communities who seek truth by surfing cyberspace through ustaz studies on their youtube channel, to critical worshippers who test religious truth. In this context, social media such as YouTube is very important to build the perception of worshippers.

Among the hundreds of lectures that are the content of Adi Hidayat's official content, there are two lectures that focus on the topic of religious moderation, namely "Tawhid and Tolerance" which has been watched 78,331 times. In the discussion of the oneness of God, he explained the logic of Godhead which refers to QS. Al-Ikhlâs about the teachings of monotheism in Islam. Although his explanation of monotheism explains God in the beliefs of Islamic teachings, he also conveys his confession of the gods of other religions before the advent of Islam. The recognition of the existence of religious entities other than Islam shown

by Adi Hidayat also emphasized that Islam is a religion that is rahmatan lil 'alamin, there is no compulsion to embrace Islam, everyone is free to choose and believe in their religion and beliefs based on their own beliefs. As in the following statement:

"...'Qul' said, 'huwa' who is deified, 'rabb' is Allah. It was Sunday. Even the name is special for "Allah". It can't be the same as the others. So in the past, the Arabs already had the names of their own gods: Latta, Uzza, Manaf, and so on. They asked the Prophet, "O Muhammad, what is the name of your Lord? Why is it called rabb... Rab... only, *Qul a'uzubirabbil falaq*, *Qul a'uzubirabbinnas*, what is the name of your Lord?. Say, Allah, huwa. The so-called rabb is Allah. It is directly from God." (minutes 00.41-01.21)

Through the interpretation of QS. Al-Ikhlâs is Ust. Adi is building the concept of tolerance that must be possessed by humanity. Acknowledging the existence of other religions also means respecting, respecting and loving others who have different religious views as fellow human beings. With his explanation of the relationship between the teachings of monotheism and the attitude of tolerance built at the beginning of his lecture narrative, he shows his position as a moderate and tolerant preacher. The acknowledgment he conveyed was a form of respect and acceptance for the differences in beliefs of people of other religions. Especially in the next narrative, he opened up a space for communication and discussion for others who have different views on the concept of monotheism that he discussed in this lecture, as he conveyed in the following narrative:

"... I'm not trying to question anything. We only sit on various problems as scientific values to be studied. Again, you agree, Alhamdulillah. You ask, we answer. We can discuss, but even if we disagree, we don't need to criticize. You can trust what you believe. This is your business, it is your choice and we will all be accountable before the creator of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala. So, we still respect each other, we still respect each other, we can still love each other in the context of the life of the nation, the state, the community...." (minutes 4.36-5.06)

The idea of tolerance in religion is then told as an attitude of brotherhood among fellow human beings. This can be seen in the following narrative:

*"What's the wisdom behind the verse wama unzila being fully revealed? One of them is teaching the value of tolerance. We're all brothers and sisters from the same human family. So, don't let there be disputes in our nation and society. In Indonesia, not all of our neighbors are Muslims—there are Christians, Hindus, Buddhists. Respect each other. Maybe share something. During the COVID-19 pandemic, if you have more, share it, don't let anyone be left behind. That's the beauty of Islam. If you're cooking food that smells good, the Prophet said, even if it's just soup, share with your neighbors. But don't get it wrong—this doesn't mean cooking soup just for show. It's about genuine sharing. And the hadith never limits this to Muslim neighbors. Whether your neighbor is Muslim or not, if you've got something to share, share it. That's how we build harmony, no matter where we live."*

In the production of the meaning of tolerance in religion, Adi Hidayat presents the reality of a pluralistic Indonesian society. Indonesian society consists of various ethnicities, cultures, traditions, and religions. With this diversity, it is very possible to clash and dispute between groups. However, by prioritizing mutual respect and appreciation between fellow believers and other religions, peace and harmony between religious people will be created.

He emphasized with the example given by the Prophet about the importance of sharing with the people around us. For example, when our neighbor is in trouble, even though we are of different religions, we are still commanded to help him. This is likened to when we cook and the smell is inhaled by our neighbors, then we are encouraged to share our food with our neighbors even if it is just the soup. This means that Islam encourages its people to share, respect each other, and respect each other, no matter how little they care.

### **Nationality, Tolerance, and Popular Culture**

In response to the discourse, Adi Hidayat interpreted the video showing students covering their ears while playing Western music as a natural and proportionate reaction. Two key concepts underpinning this phenomenon are nationality and tolerance. Firstly, regarding national commitment, the students' actions reflect their adherence to governmental regulations encouraging all Indonesians to participate in COVID-19 vaccination programs. Importantly, these students are Qur'an memorizers, and the focus required for their *muraja'ah* (recitation) is critical, as Qur'anic memorization and music demand different cognitive engagements. While music may distract them, covering their ears demonstrates their respect for the vaccination workers who are listening to the music during the process.

This response is an expression of tolerance, highlighting mutual respect within the community. Rather than demanding the cessation of the music, the students exhibit understanding by simply covering their ears. This national commitment to respect for others is explicitly outlined in Article 29, Paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution, which guarantees every citizen the freedom to practice their religion. For these students, the act of memorizing and reciting the Qur'an is integral to their faith and worship, further emphasizing the values of respect and tolerance in a diverse society. This narrative underscores the importance of understanding cultural practices and their implications for fostering harmony.

*"... The students may be attached to the values of learning in religion, they need to focus, which in some statements of wise men say that it is okay So they concentrate on the murojaah of the Qur'an. Yes, I also have students who are attached to the Qur'an, and when they attend certain events it is because they cannot be separated from murojaah. Murojaah repeats the Qur'an, repeating it until it is smooth. And indeed, the chemistry between the Qur'an and music was not found. Yes, so the transmission is different and the sides are different, so I also advise students who are memorizing the Qur'an to stay away from music, leave music because it does look different, the difference between the transmission of the Qur'an and music is different."*

The video depicts students practicing tolerance through their views, attitudes, and behaviors in society. They believe music is haram as it distracts from their focus on memorization. However, during a vaccination event, when music played contrary to their beliefs, they respected the vaccine committee by allowing the event to proceed. The students' primary goal was vaccination, not listening to music. By covering their ears, they avoided disrupting others who enjoyed the music, demonstrating tolerance. They fulfilled their responsibility to get vaccinated, respecting both the government and the vaccine officers. Ust. Adi offers a middle-ground perspective on such debates, providing solutions to counterproductive narratives that could cause societal discord. He emphasizes that the internalization of moderate values leads to a peaceful, non-violent religious life. This can be achieved when individuals remain fair, objective, and avoid imposing their views as absolute truths. Ust. Adi's interpretation of the students' actions highlights religious moderation, advocating for coexistence between conservative and liberal beliefs. His approach underscores the importance of tolerance and understanding in daily life, preventing

extremism and fostering harmony.

## Conclusion

This research highlights the strategic role of YouTube in disseminating moderate religious messages that reflect the core values of religious moderation, namely inclusivity, openness to dialogue, national commitment, and rejection of extremism. Through content analysis of selected lectures by Gus Baha and Adi Hidayat, the study shows how different rhetorical styles and narrative strategies can convey the same values of moderation in ways that resonate with diverse digital audiences. Gus Baha's culturally grounded storytelling and Adi Hidayat's methodical, scriptural approach illustrate how da'i adapt their content to suit varying levels of audience religiosity, knowledge, and social background. The findings suggest that digital platforms like YouTube have the potential to support religious moderation, particularly when preachers are able to present messages that are both religiously grounded and responsive to the dynamics of online communication. Strengthening digital literacy is therefore essential, as it enables audiences to more critically engage with religious content, filtering out intolerant or extreme narratives and reinforcing balanced religious understanding.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. The scope of the content analyzed is limited to selected YouTube lectures, and the study does not assess the actual impact of the content on audience perception or behavior. Moreover, the interpretive nature of content analysis means that findings are influenced by researcher subjectivity. Future research could expand the sample size and incorporate empirical data such as viewer engagement, comments, or surveys to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how moderate religious messages are received and interpreted in digital spaces. Despite these limitations, this study offers a timely contribution to discussions on religious moderation in the digital age.

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