



Islam Nusantara and Local Wisdom for Strengthening Religious Moderation against Cyber Radicalism in Indonesia

Ujang Sunarya*, Endi Suhendi²

¹Universitas Islam Nusantara, Bandung, Indonesia

²Universitas Islam Nusantara, Bandung, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: sunaryau85@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Article History:

Received 2026-June 09

Revised 2026-July-06

Accepted 2026-August-22

Keywords:

Islam Nusantara; religious moderation; local wisdom; digital religion; cyber radicalism

DOI:

10.71280/jotter.v4i1.591

ABSTRAK

The expansion of digital religious communication has created new challenges for religious moderation in Indonesia, particularly through the circulation of exclusive, intolerant, and radical narratives in digital spaces. This study examines the praxis of Islam Nusantara as a cultural basis for strengthening religious moderation and developing counter-narratives to cyber radicalism through the integration of Islamic values and local wisdom. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through document analysis and digital observation of religious content across social media platforms and were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The findings reveal three interrelated patterns. First, Islam Nusantara praxis has expanded from community-based religious traditions into digital spaces through culturally contextualized religious communication. Second, the integration of Islamic principles with local values, particularly tolerance (*tasamuh*), balance (*tawazun*), moderation (*tawassuth*), social solidarity, and respect for diversity, provides a cultural foundation for promoting inclusive religious narratives. Third, these values contribute to the construction of counter-narratives that challenge exclusive and radical religious discourse by employing contextual, dialogical, and culturally familiar messages. The study suggests that Islam Nusantara can provide a culture-based framework for strengthening religious moderation in digital environments. These findings highlight the importance of integrating religious values, local wisdom, and digital religious literacy in developing context-sensitive strategies to address cyber radicalism in Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the last two decades has brought fundamental changes to the social, cultural, political, and religious life structure of global society. Digital transformation has not only expanded access to religious information sources, but also significantly changed the pattern of production, distribution, and consumption of religious knowledge. Through various digital platforms such as social media, video channels, podcasts, and instant messaging applications, people can now access religious information quickly, massively, and without time and space limits. This condition creates great opportunities for strengthening Islamic da'wah that is more inclusive, adaptive, and moderate, but at the same time also opens up space for the spread of exclusive, intolerant, and potentially radical religious narratives (Mandala et al., 2024; Al Hariri et al., 2024).

In today's empirical context, the digital space no longer functions only as a medium of communication, but has evolved into a very complex arena of ideological contestation. Various studies show that social media has become the main space for the production of religious discourse, where religious authority is no longer entirely in traditional institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and ulama, but has also shifted to digital figures who gain legitimacy through algorithmic



popularity (Hasan, 2021; Abdullah, 2023). This situation has led to significant changes in the structure of religious authority that have an impact on the way people understand and practice religious teachings.

This phenomenon is increasingly complex with the increase in cyber radicalism that uses digital space as a means of spreading extreme ideologies. Cyber radicalism develops through persuasive, fragmented, and attractively packaged communication strategies that make it difficult to recognize as harmful content by ordinary users, especially the younger generation. Recent research shows that social media algorithms also strengthen information polarization through an echo chamber mechanism that narrows the space for dialogue and strengthens the ideological bias of users (Yuliana, 2024; Firmansyah, 2022).

In Indonesia, this phenomenon has more serious implications because the society is multicultural, multiethnic, and multireligious. The high penetration of the internet has made access to religious information very open, but it is not always balanced with digital literacy and adequate religious literacy. This condition makes some people vulnerable to exposure to intolerance narratives, hate speech, and religion-based extremism that can threaten social cohesion and national integration (Nurjanah, 2024; Junaidi, 2024).

In responding to these conditions, the concept of religious moderation is present as an important strategy in maintaining a balance of religious life in a pluralistic society. Religious moderation emphasizes the principles of *tawassuth* or middle way, *tasamuh* or tolerance, *tawazun* or balance, and *i'tidal* or justice in religious practice. This concept does not aim to reduce the substance of religious teachings, but directs religious practices to remain inclusive, peaceful, and contextual in social life (Al Hariri et al., 2024; Syarif, 2024).

In the development of the latest academic studies, religious moderation is not only understood as a normative policy of the state, but also as a social practice influenced by local cultural factors. This shows that strengthening religious moderation cannot be separated from the context of local wisdom that lives in society. Therefore, a culture-based approach is one of the important strategies in strengthening social resilience to the penetration of extreme ideologies in the digital space (Ridwan, 2023; Siregar, 2022).

One form of local wisdom that has strong relevance in this context is Islam Nusantara. Islam Nusantara is the result of a historical dialectic between Islamic teachings and the socio-cultural reality of Indonesian society which produces an adaptive, dialogical, and inclusive pattern of religiosity. In practice, Islam Nusantara is reflected in religious traditions, pesantren education, cultural da'wah, and patterns of social interaction that emphasize the value of mutual cooperation, deliberation, and respect for diversity (Mahfud, 2023; Anwar, 2022).

Theoretically, the phenomenon of Islam in the archipelago can be explained through the theory of social construction developed by Berger and Luckmann. This theory explains that social reality is formed through the process of externalization, objectification, and internalization. In this context, Islam Nusantara is the result of a social construction born from the interaction between the normative teachings of Islam and the local cultural context of Indonesia, which then forms the socio-religious identity of the community in a sustainable manner (Yusuf, 2023).

In addition, Islam Nusantara is also closely related to the concept of religious moderation because both emphasize the importance of balance, tolerance, and justice in social life. Thus, Islam Nusantara not only functions as a cultural identity, but also as a social mechanism that has the potential to strengthen people's resilience to radicalism and extremism in the digital era (Zulfikar, 2021; Rahman, 2023).

Nevertheless, existing academic studies still show the dominance of conceptual and historical approaches in discussing Islam in the archipelago. Most of the research has not specifically examined

how the praxis of Islam Nusantara transforms into a digital space and plays a role in dealing with cyber radicalism. On the other hand, the study of religious moderation in the digital era still focuses more on policy aspects, digital literacy, and counter-narrative strategies, without integrating an approach based on cultural praxis in depth (Syarif, 2024; Mandala et al., 2024).

The gap in the research shows that there is a difference between the expected ideal conditions and the empirical reality that occurs. Ideally, Islam Nusantara is expected to be a cultural base in strengthening religious moderation in the digital era. However, empirically, there have not been many studies that systematically explain how these values are implemented in the digital space as a form of resistance to cyber radicalism. Therefore, a more comprehensive study is needed to bridge the gap between theory, practice, and contemporary digital dynamics.

Based on these problems, this study aims to analyze the praxis of Islam Nusantara as the basis for strengthening religious moderation in the digital era through the integration of Islamic values and local wisdom in dealing with cyber radicalism in Indonesia. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of Nusantara Islamic studies and religious moderation, as well as practical contributions in strengthening the socio-religious resilience of Indonesian society that is inclusive, tolerant, and adaptive to the development of digital technology.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design that aims to deeply understand the practice of Islam Nusantara as the basis for strengthening religious moderation in the digital era in the context of the increasing phenomenon of cyber radicalism in Indonesia. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore socio-religious phenomena holistically, contextually, and deeply within the boundaries of the specific social system that is the focus of the research.

This research was carried out through a study of Islamic practices in the archipelago in the digital space as well as scientific literature relevant to religious moderation and cyber radicalism. The time for the research was carried out in a six-month data collection period, namely January to June 2026. The location of the research is not limited to one specific geographical area because the object of the study is in the form of digital phenomena spread in cyberspace, especially on social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Telegram, as well as digital religious communities in Indonesia that produce da'wah content based on religious moderation.

The subject of this study is the phenomenon of Islamic religious praxis in the archipelago in the digital space, including da'wah content, moderate religious narratives, and forms of socio-religious interaction that reflect the value of local wisdom and religious moderation. Supporting informants in this study came from academic literature, institutional publications, and official policy documents related to religious moderation. The subject selection technique was carried out by purposive sampling based on relevance criteria, namely sources that explicitly discuss Islam in the archipelago, religious moderation, and cyber radicalism in a digital context.

The type of data used in this study is qualitative data consisting of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through analysis of official policy documents, institutional publications, and digital content of Islamic da'wah Nusantara accessed through social media platforms and credible online sources. Secondary data were obtained from academic books, scientific journal articles of the last five years, seminar proceedings, and research reports relevant to the focus of the study. All data were collected taking into account academic validity, novelty, and relevance to the research issue.

The data collection technique was carried out through documentation studies and digital observations. The documentation study was carried out by examining various scientific literature and

official documents related to religious moderation and Islam in the archipelago. Meanwhile, digital observation was carried out by observing the pattern of the spread of religious content in the social media space to understand how the values of Islam of the archipelago are represented in digital da'wah. The research instrument used in this study is the researcher himself as the main instrument, assisted by document analysis guidelines and digital observation sheets that are compiled to classify data based on the research theme.

The research procedure was carried out through several systematic stages, namely the first data collection through the search of scientific literature and relevant digital content, the second was the selection of data based on inclusion criteria which included the relevance of the theme, the novelty of the source, and the academic credibility, the third was data reduction to focus on aspects of the Islamic praxis of the archipelago, religious moderation, and cyber radicalism, and the fourth was the presentation of data in the form of a thematic narrative for further analysis. The final stage is to draw conclusions inductively based on the pattern of relationships between concepts found in the data.

The data analysis technique uses qualitative content analysis that refers to the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The analysis was carried out by interpreting the meaning of each data finding to see the relationship between the practice of Islam Nusantara and the strengthening of religious moderation in a digital context. Data interpretation is also associated with social construction theory and religious moderation theory to strengthen the academic argument of the research.

The presence of researchers in this study is active as the main instrument in the process of data collection, selection, and analysis. Researchers play a role in interpreting data critically based on an academic perspective while maintaining objectivity through the triangulation process. The validity of the data was tested through source triangulation, which is comparing various scientific literature, official documents, and digital observation data, as well as theoretical triangulation using the perspective of social construction and religious moderation. In addition, time triangulation is also carried out by limiting sources to publications in the last five years to maintain the actuality of the data.

Thus, this research method is designed to produce a comprehensive understanding of how the praxis of Islam Nusantara transforms in the digital space and contributes to strengthening religious moderation in facing the challenges of cyber radicalism in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Transformation of Nusantara Islamic Praxis in Digital Space as a Form of Contemporary Religious Adaptation

The results of the study show that the Islamic praxis of the archipelago has undergone a significant transformation in line with the development of digital technology and changes in public communication patterns. If previously the practice of Islam in the archipelago was more expressed through social-religious activities based on local communities, Islamic boarding school traditions, taklim assemblies, and religious cultural rituals, now these expressions are increasingly developing through various digital platforms. The findings of the study show that the values of Islam in the archipelago do not undergo a reduction when entering the digital space, but rather undergo an adaptation process that allows moderate religious messages to reach a wider audience.

This form of transformation can be seen from the increasing production of cultural-based da'wah content that features a narrative of tolerance, respect for diversity, and the strengthening of national identity. Various religious communities, Islamic educational institutions, and Islamic boarding schools use social media as a means of spreading the values of religious moderation rooted

in the archipelago's Islamic tradition. Digital da'wah not only contains religious normative material, but also raises social, national, and humanitarian issues that are relevant to the life of contemporary society.

These findings show that Islam Nusantara has a high adaptive capacity in dealing with social changes due to digitalization. The results of this study are in line with the findings of Hasan (2021) who stated that digitalization has changed the pattern of religious authority while opening up new opportunities for the development of a more contextual Islamic da'wah model. These findings also corroborate the research of Rahman (2023) who explains that the digital space is a new arena in the formation of religious identity in modern society.

In the perspective of Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory, this phenomenon shows the ongoing process of externalizing the Islamic values of the archipelago into the digital space. Values that were previously lived in the social practices of society are then reproduced through digital media and experienced objectification in the form of content, narratives, symbols, and virtual interactions. Furthermore, these values are internalized by society as part of a moderate religious identity. Thus, digitalization does not eliminate the Islamic character of the archipelago, but instead expands its social reproductive space.

Integration of Islamic Values and Local Wisdom as a Basis for Religious Moderation

The results of the study show that the main strength of Islam Nusantara lies in its ability to integrate the universal values of Islam with local wisdom that lives in Indonesian society. This integration is reflected in various socio-religious practices that emphasize respect for differences, deliberation, mutual cooperation, and social solidarity. In the digital space, these values are represented through da'wah narratives that highlight the importance of tolerance, dialogue between groups, and respect for cultural and religious diversity.

The findings of the study show that Islamic Nusantara-based religious content uses a more persuasive approach than a confrontational approach. The narrative built is not oriented towards judging other groups, but rather on strengthening social ethics and human values. This approach is different from the characteristics of radical religious narratives that tend to be exclusive, dichotomous, and place other groups as parties to be opposed.

The results of this study support the findings of Siregar (2022) who explain that the integration of Islam and local wisdom is able to create a pattern of religion that is more adaptive to social change. Ridwan's research (2023) also shows that local cultural values have an important contribution to strengthening religious moderation because they are able to be a bridge between religious teachings and the social reality of society.

From the perspective of religious moderation theory, these findings show that the values of *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *tawazun*, and *i'tidal* are not only present as normative concepts, but have been embodied in concrete social practices. Islam Nusantara is an example of how the values of religious moderation can live and develop through cultural mechanisms that are close to people's lives. Therefore, religious moderation does not only depend on state policies, but also requires the support of a cultural value system that develops in society.

The findings of this study also modify the theoretical understanding of religious moderation which has been more widely understood as a normative and institutional approach. The results of the study show that religious moderation can also be built through cultural mechanisms that are sourced from local traditions. Thus, Islam Nusantara can be positioned as a model of culture-based religious moderation that has high relevance in the context of a multicultural society.

Islamic Praxis of the Archipelago as a Counter-Narrative to Cyber Radicalism

The findings of the study show that one of the important contributions of the Islamic Nusantara praxis in the digital era is its ability to build a counter-narrative against the spread of cyber radicalism. The counter-narrative is manifested through the dissemination of content that prioritizes the values of peace, tolerance, brotherhood, and respect for diversity. Various digital da'wah accounts affiliated with the moderate Islamic community actively produce content that responds to issues of intolerance and extremism with educational approaches and contextual religious arguments.

The results of the study show that the counter-narrative strategy based on Islam Nusantara is more effectively accepted by the community because it uses cultural language that is close to daily life. The narrative built is not only based on theological arguments, but also utilizes cultural symbols that have long been known to the public. This approach creates a stronger emotional closeness than formal narratives that are purely normative.

This finding is in line with Arifin's (2023) research which states that counter-radicalization efforts in the digital space will be more effective if carried out through a contextual approach and in accordance with the social characteristics of the community. Research by Mandala et al. (2024) also shows that digital-based religious moderation has a strategic role in filtering the spread of radicalism and extremism on social media.

In the perspective of social construction, the existence of the Islamic counter-narrative of the archipelago shows the existence of a process of reproduction of meaning that functions as a mechanism of social protection against the penetration of radical ideologies. The community is not only an object of receiving information, but also acts as an agent who reproduces the values of moderation through digital interaction. Thus, the digital space is not solely an arena for the spread of radicalism, but also a space for social resistance to extreme ideologies.

These findings resulted in the theoretical development that the effectiveness of religious counter-narratives is determined not only by the strength of theological argumentation, but also by its proximity to the cultural identity of the community. Therefore, the integration of local religion and culture is an important factor in building social resilience against cyber radicalism.

Strengthening Socio-Religious Resilience through Islam Nusantara in the Digital Era

The results of the study show that the Islamic Prasantara contributes to building the socio-religious resilience of the community in the midst of increasing complexity of the digital space. The socio-religious resilience in this study is shown by the ability of the community to maintain the value of tolerance, maintain social cohesion, and reject various forms of extreme narratives that have the potential to divide social life.

The findings of the study show that communities that have a strong attachment to the archipelago's Islamic traditions tend to have a higher level of acceptance of social and cultural diversity. They also showed better ability to filter religious information circulating in digital media. This condition shows that the internalization of Islamic values in the archipelago functions as social capital that strengthens people's resilience to the influence of radical ideologies.

The results of this study reinforce the findings of Zulfikar (2021) who explains that religious moderation has a close relationship with social stability in plural societies. These findings also support the research of Al Hariri et al. (2024) which shows that strengthening religious moderation is an urgent need in the digital era to maintain social harmony and national integration.

Theoretically, the findings of this study expand the theory of religious moderation by adding a dimension of culture-based social resilience. If so far religious moderation has been more widely understood as an individual's attitude in religion, the results of the study show that religious moderation can also function as a collective mechanism that builds people's resilience to various

ideological threats. In this context, Islam Nusantara plays a role as a cultural instrument that strengthens the relationship between religion, culture, and nationality.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the praxis of Islam Nusantara not only has historical and cultural relevance, but also has strategic significance in facing the challenges of religious life in the digital era. Through the integration of Islamic values and local wisdom, Islam Nusantara is able to become a basis for strengthening religious moderation, building a counter-narrative against cyber radicalism, and strengthening the socio-religious resilience of a plural and multicultural Indonesian society. These findings also show that the success of strengthening religious moderation in the digital era requires synergy between religious values, local culture, digital literacy, and the active participation of the community in creating a peaceful, inclusive, and civilized digital space.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Nusantara Islamic praxis has a strategic role as a basis for strengthening religious moderation in the digital era through the integration of Islamic values and local wisdom in dealing with cyber radicalism in Indonesia. The results of the study show that the transformation of Islam Nusantara into a digital space does not eliminate its main characteristics as a moderate, tolerant, and inclusive form of religion, but rather expands the reach of these values through various media and digital platforms. The Islamic Prachis of the archipelago has proven to be able to represent the values of tawassuth, tasamuh, tawazun, and i'tidal in the form of a religious narrative that is contextual, dialogical, and adaptive to the development of the times. In addition, the integration of Islamic teachings with local wisdom which is the main character of Islam Nusantara contributes to building a counter-narrative against the spread of radical ideology in cyberspace and strengthens the socio-religious resilience of a plural and multicultural society. The findings of the study also show that the cultural approach inherent in Islam Nusantara has high effectiveness in instilling the value of religious moderation because it is close to the social experience of the community and is able to bridge the relationship between religion, culture, and nationality. Thus, Islam Nusantara is not only relevant as a religious identity and cultural heritage, but also as a socio-cultural strategy that is able to answer the challenges of cyber radicalism in the digital era. Therefore, strengthening religious digital literacy, optimizing da'wah based on local wisdom, and collaboration between religious institutions, educational institutions, communities, and the government need to continue to be developed to strengthen a sustainable religious moderation ecosystem. The next research is suggested to conduct a more in-depth field study on certain religious digital communities in order to obtain a more comprehensive empirical picture of the effectiveness of the Islamic praxis of the archipelago in building community resilience to various forms of extremism and radicalism in the digital space.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdullah, M. A. (2023). Religious identity construction in cyberspace: Challenges of digital religion in contemporary Muslim societies. *Journal of Religion and Society*, 25(2), 145–162.
- Al Hariri, M. A. M., Ma'ruf, M. A., & Huda, S. A. A. (2024). Moderasi beragama: Peluang dan tantangan di era digital. *Salimiya: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Keagamaan Islam*, 5(2), 112–128.
- Anwar, M. (2022). Islam Nusantara and cultural adaptation in Indonesian Muslim society. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Society*, 4(1), 55–72.
- Arifin, Z. (2023). Counter-radicalization in digital space through religious moderation discourse. *Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 8(1), 77–94.

- Azra, A. (2019). Islam Nusantara: Jaringan global dan lokal Islam Indonesia. *Studia Islamika*, 26(3), 489–514. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v26i3.11162>
- Firmansyah, A. (2022). Social media and Islamic extremism discourse among Indonesian youth. *Journal of Media and Society*, 14(2), 120–138.
- Hasan, N. (2021). Digital Islam and shifting religious authority in Indonesia. *Contemporary Islam*, 15(3), 289–307. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-021-00483-4>
- Hidayat, R. (2023). Cyber radicalism and online religious movements in Southeast Asia. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 51(2), 165–181. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685314-bja10121>
- Junaidi, J. (2024). Digital literacy and strengthening religious moderation in Indonesian society. *Journal of Education and Religion*, 9(1), 31–48.
- Kurniawan, D. (2023). Online radicalism and youth vulnerability in the digital age. *Journal of Digital Culture and Society*, 5(1), 88–103.
- Laila, N. H. (2025). Religious tolerance in the digital era: Opportunities and challenges for Indonesian Muslims. *Journal of Religious Harmony*, 7(1), 1–17.
- Mahfud, C. (2023). Recontextualizing Islam Nusantara in contemporary Indonesian society. *Journal of Indonesian Religious Studies*, 6(2), 102–119.
- Mandala, I., Witro, D., & Juraidi. (2024). Transformasi moderasi beragama berbasis digital dalam memfilter radikalisme dan ekstremisme di era disrupsi. *Jurnal Bimas Islam*, 17(1), 127–160. <https://doi.org/10.37302/jbi.v17i1.1242>
- Mujiburrahman. (2020). Religious moderation and multiculturalism in Indonesia. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 58(2), 389–414. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2020.582.389-414>
- Nurjanah, T. (2024). Literasi digital dan penguatan moderasi beragama di kalangan generasi muda. *Jurnal Syariah dan Hukum Islam*, 12(1), 45–61.
- Prasetyo, H. (2022). Cyber theology and the transformation of Islamic communication. *Journal of Theology and Society*, 10(2), 133–149.
- Rahman, A. (2023). Digital religion and authority contestation in contemporary Muslim communities. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 34(1), 59–77. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etac067>
- Ridwan, M. (2023). Local wisdom and religious moderation in multicultural societies. *Journal of Cultural Studies*, 18(3), 210–227.
- Siregar, A. (2022). Integration of Islam and local wisdom in Indonesian Muslim communities. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 16(2), 315–338. <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.2.315-338>
- Syarif, U. A. (2024). Epistemic discourse of religious moderation in Indonesia. *Digital Press Social Sciences and Humanities*, 11, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.29037/digitalpress.11321>
- Witro, D., Putra, A. S., & Haryani, E. (2023). Religious moderation in the digital era: Strengthening social resilience through digital literacy. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 79(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8607>
- Yuliana, S. (2024). Algorithmic amplification and religious radicalization on social media platforms. *Journal of Digital Sociology*, 3(1), 41–58.
- Yusuf, M. (2023). Social construction of religion in the era of digital transformation. *Sociology of Religion Journal*, 12(2), 95–112.
- Zulfikar, M. (2021). Islamic moderation in plural societies: Indonesian experiences and challenges. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 41(4), 578–594. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2021.1995124>