

# **The Influence of Wasathiyah Islam (Moderate Islam) in Mitigating The Phenomenon of Islamophobia in Indonesia**

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**Abstract:** *Being the country with the biggest Muslim majority, Indonesia is often perceived as a peaceful, diverse, and non-violent society that values variety and harmony above all else. Moderate Islam is viewed as a means to promote peace, especially in the context of the Islamophobia that arose in Europe due to racism after the events of September 11. The prohibition of the niqab at Islamic-based colleges in Indonesia sparked a debate within society, revealing diverse opinions and highlighting the rise of Islamophobia in the country. This study employed a descriptive analytical research design as its approach, which is classified as qualitative. The study utilized both secondary data culled from a variety of pertinent sources and primary data collected through interviews. Islamophobia, according to this research, may take many forms, including hostility and physical aggression. The principles of compassion, fairness, tolerance, and peace are to be upheld by Islamic organizations in order for them to advance social welfare. As a result, Islamic groups in Indonesia are working to combat Islamophobia via initiatives including civic engagement, positive message dissemination through social media, education, and interfaith dialogue. Harmony in a varied community may be achieved via religious moderation, which promotes mutual respect and tolerance across different communities. It is acknowledged that one way to promote tolerance and prevent misconceptions is to increase knowledge of other religions and beliefs via religious literature and interfaith dialogue.*

**Keywords:** *Islam; Islamophobia; Wasathiyah*

## **Introduction**

One of the world's most renowned examples of a mostly Muslim nation is Indonesia. Religion and culture in Indonesia are also unifying forces, but they have nothing to do with violence. A nation that values peace above all else seeks to unite its diverse population in harmony, with diversity and harmony being two of its most prominent features (Tsaniyah, 2018). Indonesia strongly practices moderate Islam, also known as Islam Wasathiyah. One definition of moderate Islam is an interpretation of the religion that avoids romanticizing violent, extreme, or extremist aspects of Islam. Conservative Muslims maintain the belief that toghut is fundamentally incorrect, while moderate Muslims maintain the opposite perspective. As a result, the existence of moderate Islam and the initiatives taken to moderate Islam in Indonesia will serve as a valuable asset that can be shared with other regions grappling with the problem of Islamophobia.

Racism against non-Muslims in Europe, which is often mistakenly associated with Islam, gives rise to Islamophobia. The 9/11 attacks in the United States cemented Islam's reputation as a violent faith and a fertile ground for terrorists in the eyes of the world. This phenomenon is the basis for the incredible anguish that nearly every Western country, including Indonesia, endured at the hands of Islam. This trauma manifested itself in several ways, including the societies' doctrines, the symbols themselves (the veil, the beard, and the wearing of pants above the ankles), and the practices themselves. Also making waves in Indonesia was the recent upsurge of Islamophobia. An Islamic campus's regulation that forbade female students from wearing the headscarf during classes a few years ago caused quite a stir in the academic community. Political watchers and members of other communities were quick to weigh in on the matter.

This provides the groundwork for the Islamophobic narrative, which has managed to influence public opinion to the point that Muslims are now being viewed with mistrust due to the fact that they wear certain emblems associated with the jihadi movement in Europe. Because of this framework, there has been never-ending controversy, and it has affected many parts of Muslim communities' social lives. This is especially true for Muslims who wear the veil or wear pants that reach their ankles, as they are often associated with extremist movements in Indonesia.

Whether it's acknowledged or not, most of the world, including Indonesia, jumps to the conclusion that the veil and ankle-length trousers are defining characteristics of terrorism. Extreme comprehension is not only evaluated by outward characteristics but also by the

philosophy that ought to raise suspicion but is really masquerading as Islam. True, there are those that aren't like that. Another possibility is that extremist groups infiltrate society while disguising themselves as regular citizens in order to brainwash and shape public opinion. People in Indonesia who express views that are liberal, communist, or socialist are viewed as fleeting fads; therefore, such behavior is much more insulting to them. But all the while, the story of Islamophobia is everywhere: in the media, in policies, and even in the restriction of some people's mobility, as if it were a form of censorship that denied them the ability to speak.

In order to address different deep-seated traumas in society, especially among Muslims in Indonesia, the presence of moderate Islam, or Islam wasathiyah, is constantly brought up as a result of that incident. Diversity and tolerance are strongly promoted by the moderate Islamic movement, and Indonesians of all faiths are free to sit down and talk to each other without fear of persecution. This means that moderate, or wasathiyah, Islam may help bring about interfaith concord, which in turn helps dispel myths of anti-Western, anti-Jewish, or anti-Christian Islamic animosity. It is believed that the existence of Islam wasathiyah can help bring about religious unity and peace in Indonesia and throughout the world. Thanks to its Islamic transnationalism, which aims to create a moderate society, Indonesia is a world leader that other nations may look up to.

Finding out what causes Islamophobia in Indonesia, how Islamic groups there promote Islam wasathiyah (moderate Islam), what tactics they use to combat Islamophobia, and how they put their grounding in religious moderation into practice are all goals of this study.

The originality of this study is characterized by a revolutionary attitude, and not just because it sticks to the tried-and-true methods of determining how Islam Wasathiyah might help reduce Islamophobia. On the other hand, this study promotes the idea as a revolutionary force that may alter people's perspectives and ways of thinking about tolerance in society. This research takes a fresh approach by delving into uncharted territories of knowledge and uncovering novel insights, going beyond the usual goal of finding practical answers. This research has the potential to open up new avenues of inquiry into diversity in Indonesia by using a fresh perspective, which should lead to the discovery of novel solutions and the introduction of progressive ideas that may help the country's society progress.

This study also delves into the substantial ways in which Islam Wasathiyah might impact public policy for the better. That is why this study's results may underpin all-encompassing policies that encourage collaboration across Islamic groups. Therefore, this research not only helps to provide a firmer basis for diversity and peace, but it also opens the door to a more comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of Islam Wasathiyah's role in creating an inclusive society in Indonesia.

## **Methods**

The study framework employs a qualitative approach, specifically using descriptive-analytical research, to clarify and examine the facts and data related to the impact of Wasathiyah Islam on reducing Islamophobia in Indonesia. Primary data is gathered through in-depth interviews with relevant sources, while secondary data is culled from a variety of relevant literature sources. This project will collect data using a combination of questionnaire construction approaches and field observation.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Factors Underlying the Phenomenon of Islamophobia in Indonesia**

One definition of Islamophobia is an intolerance or hostility against Muslims and the Islamic faith. Often involving unfavorable preconceptions about this faith, this word describes prejudice or irrational fear directed towards Muslims. There are several ways in which Islamophobia shows itself, from bigotry to physical aggression against Muslims. The term is mirrored in popular opinion, political discourse, and the media, which portray Islam as the root of all evil and an easy target for charges (Irpan & Muradi, 2021). A more intolerable attitude is the root cause of Islamophobia. In reality, Islamophobia merely functions as a political tool to create division within

the community. For instance, it appears that the latest shooting at the MUI building was a deliberate act. Despite the United Nations' efforts to label Islamophobia as a worldwide trend, the discourse around it is still a hotly contested and presented issue in Indonesia (Interview with Amirsyah Tambunan, Secretary General of the Central MUI, May 26, 2023, 10:37 WIB., 2023).

Opposition to Islamophobia is not reflective of national or societal norms as a whole, but rather of the beliefs and practices of a vocal minority. Unchecked takfiri thinking fosters intolerance and rigidity, leading to the emergence of Islamophobia. Such attitudes can pave the way for extremists to gain support and possibly radicalize others. Taking a stance like this, which seeks to question the sharia and dismantle its foundation, might be harmful to Islam. Islamophobia and other forms of takfiri ideology stem from a rejection of religious authority in favor of reasoned thought (Interview with Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a Muhammadiyah Figure, on August 7, 2023, at 10:00 WIB., 2023). We must all do our part to oppose harmful forms of discrimination and prejudice, increase knowledge of other faiths and cultures, and encourage intercultural dialogue if we are to succeed in our fight against Islamophobia. Assumptions that all Muslims engage in terrorism or support extremism are examples of the false negative stereotypes that Muslims frequently face.

On August 7th, I interviewed Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a prominent person in the Muhammadiyah. One example of how the media unfairly portrays Islam is the al-Zaytun case. One of the reasons Islamophobia evolved to be is Taqaruf Yamini, which is where this case originated. In particular, Panji Gumilang's radicalism is on full display in the founding of NII. But it got incredibly permissive overnight once this instance went viral. As an example, in the prayer chapter, there is a specific reasoning for putting women in the front row, ostensibly out of respect for them. Liberalization is also characterized by the introduction of Jewish greetings that are believed to atone for sins and by approaches to law like zakat fitrah that adhere to certain regulations. The change from Taqaruf Yasari to Taqaruf Yamini raises concerns about the strengthening of Islamophobia in Indonesia (Interview with Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a Muhammadiyah Figure, on August 7, 2023, at 10:00 WIB., 2023).

Islamophobia is a global issue that extends beyond Indonesia. To combat Islamophobia, several organizations, including the government, must work together to raise public consciousness, foster tolerance, and increase knowledge of the world's many faiths and civilizations. A more equitable, peaceful, and welcoming society can be ours if we follow these steps. While the history of Islamophobia is a never-ending tale, the origin of the term "Islamophobia" is firmly established. Not only is terrorizing Islam a growing problem, but the targeting of religious academics is also intensifying. The al-Zaytun case is having an ever-increasing effect as a product that incites anti-Islam sentiment among internal parties. Particularly among the general population, the incident served as a catalyst for the development of hostile attitudes about Islam. For parents concerned about the prevalence of abuse, violence, and deviant organizations associated with pesantren, the trend of sending their children there is creating a new source of fear (Interview with Amirsyah Tambunan, Secretary General of the Central MUI, May 26, 2023, 10:37 WIB., 2023). Some of the causes of Islamophobia in Indonesia may be identified by looking at the following:

1. Extremism and terror

Even while most Muslims in Indonesia condemn violence and extremism, they are understandably wary of Muslims in general due to terrorist assaults by groups claiming Islamic ties. The complicated and perilous phenomena of terrorism and extremism plague modern civilization. Acts or threats of violence committed with the intent to instill fear and exert influence on governments or society as a whole are collectively referred to as terrorism. Extremism, on the other hand, is a set of beliefs or ideologies that calls for the destruction of the current order and the establishment of new, more radical ones. Religious and political ideas are just two of many possible origins of extremism and terrorism. However, individuals frequently encounter severe religiously motivated beliefs or behaviors within the Islamic context. Keep in mind that radical Islam and terrorism do not represent Islam or Muslims in general, but rather the extreme ideologies of a vocal minority who misunderstand the religion's teachings.

Media framing is one way in which radicalism and terrorism contribute to Islamophobia. Terrorist actions perpetrated by people or groups claiming to be Muslims frequently receive substantial publicity in the media. The public may mistakenly believe that all Muslims are involved in terrorist activities due to sensationalized or inaccurate reporting, which in turn can foster Islamophobia. Terrorism committed by a small number of extremists does not, however, constitute a reflection of Islam as a whole. Unfortunately, judgments about Muslims as a whole are frequently based on prejudice or lack of knowledge. Consequently, this terrorist attack instilled a great deal of panic in the community. As a result, Muslims may face increased isolation and unwarranted suspicion from the wider population, who may be afraid of additional assaults.

## 2. Islam and Its Misunderstandings

Fear and mistrust of Muslims might result from inaccurate portrayals of them in the media or from a lack of familiarity with Islamic principles. Misunderstandings of Islam have a complicated historical, social, cultural, and political foundation. A major contributor to misunderstandings about Islam is the media's penchant for covering stories about terrorist attacks or violent incidents involving people who identify as Muslims. Terrorist attacks against Muslims are carried out by a tiny percentage of the population, although the public may mistakenly believe otherwise due to biased and exaggerated news coverage.

The problem of Islamophobia is multi-faceted, as it stems from more than just anti-Islam sentiment. The interrelated elements include the political component and the right to free speech. Individual Muslims aren't the only ones that suffer because of Islamophobia. Democracy, religious and state sovereignty, and universal human values are all negatively affected by this situation. Amidst this, the Islamic group known as the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) is spearheading calls for anti-Islamophobia legislation from the world's most populous Muslim nation. March 15th has been declared Anti-Islamophobia Day by the United Nations (UN). But this must amount to more than simply words on a page. In order for the proclamation to effectively tackle the issue of Islamophobia, concrete measures must be taken on a worldwide scale (Interview with K.H. Muhammad Rasyid, Chairman of the East Kalimantan MUI, on May 19, 2023, at 3:52 PM WIB., 2023).

Misunderstandings about Islam can also result from misinformation and generalizations about the faith. As an example, consider the extremist and anti-Islamic ideologies that propagate the idea that Islam is inherently dangerous to other civilizations. Misunderstandings about the role of women in Islam may exacerbate Islamophobia and unfavorable views of the religion. Overcoming false impressions about Islam requires a thorough and correct understanding of this faith. Education from trustworthy sources, conversations with religious practitioners, or involvement in intercultural programs can foster a more positive and inclusive perspective of Islam. These can effectively dispel misconceptions and promote comprehension.

Some political actors utilize Islamophobia as a tool to achieve their goals by cultivating feelings of suspicion and terror. A political strategy known as "identity politics" involves organizing and mobilizing social groups according to shared characteristics, such as a person's religious beliefs, racial or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, or sociocultural milieu. As a whole, these communities band together in identity politics to defend what they see as fundamentally theirs. For marginalized or oppressed groups in society, achieving equality and justice is the primary objective of identity politics. Similar to the European mistrust of women who wear hijabs, the idea of Islamophobia is only a problematic fad. If we look closely enough, we can see that there are two extremes: one with women who wear headscarves or veils, and another with women who wear bikinis. We must break free from the unending cycle of Islamophobia. Consequently, Islamic groups play a crucial role in educating the public about this issue (Interview with Atip Latipulhayat, a Persis Figure, on June 15, 2023, at 4:00 PM., 2023).

Inequalities in opportunity and access that exist within a society are also known as social inequality. Issues with health, education, employment, safety, and participation in public policymaking are all potential causes of this disparity. Factors such as gender, race, religion, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status can contribute to societal disparities. Disparities in

socioeconomic status have the potential to worsen living conditions for marginalized communities and perhaps spark violent conflict.

Next, Indonesians may see Islam differently depending on global events, particularly if nations with Muslim majorities are at odds with the West. There are nuanced and supplementary effects of global influence. One positive aspect is that it has the potential to improve connectedness, which in turn may boost economic growth, innovation, and opportunities. But it may also set off problems like political unrest, economic inequality, and discrepancies in wealth. A more sustainable, inclusive, and peaceful world may be achieved if the international community bands together to tackle global issues and use global power for beneficial purposes. Ideologies that seek to dismantle Islam often result in Islamophobia, providing Persis with a unique perspective on the issue. Indonesia, like many other nations with Muslim majorities, will feel the effects of Islamophobia for a long time to come. In response, Persis uses the same tactic: establishing Islam Washatiyah as its essence (Interview with Atip Latipulhayat, a Persis Community Figure, on June 15, 2023, at 4:00 PM WIB., 2023).

### **The Role of Islamic Organizations in Promoting Moderate Islam in Indonesia**

Ormas Islam is an acronym for Islamic Community Organizations, which are societal groupings or institutions grounded in Islamic principles and teachings. In order to facilitate the social, religious, and political engagement of Muslims, Islamic organizations seek to coordinate and accommodate a wide range of Muslim activities. Members of Islamic groups can range from individuals and families to larger communities and even other smaller groups, and these groups can be either legally recognized or not. Education, social welfare, religious activities, politics, and da'wah (Islamic propagation) are some of the many things that can be housed inside them. Maintaining fidelity to the Middle Path of Islam without compromising principles or stifling reason is an important responsibility of mass groups that want to promote Wasatiyah Islam. Islam, in Persis's view, is nature, or rather, a harmony between reason and divine revelation. "An ad hoc effort" is a better way to describe Islam Washatiyah. Thus, why should Persis recount an already-natural event when it conforms to the doctrinal character of revelation? (Interview with Atip Latipulhayat, a Persis Figure, on June 15, 2023, at 4:00 PM., 2023).

In accordance with their stated purpose and vision, Islamic organizations frequently have a hierarchical structure with executives and directors, in addition to specific goals and objectives. The Islamic groups Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam (Persis), and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) are among the most prominent in Indonesia. Organizations within Indonesia's Islamic religious community play a crucial role and impact daily life there (Nurkholis, 2020). Even if they have their roots in Islam, Islamic organizations are also obliged to preserve human values, fairness, tolerance, and peace in order to advance social welfare and communal life in general. This is crucial for fostering peace and harmony in a religiously diverse community like Indonesia's. Muhammadiyah and other Islamic groups have made it their mission to promote religious tolerance, social peace, and unity in society. Tasbiyatul Manhaj, the equalization of the framework of thought in religious affairs, is constantly linked with the notion of Islamic moderation for this reason. Respecting one another's boundaries is crucial, particularly in matters that may spark disagreement and lead to divergent viewpoints. The qunut prayer is a good example of a problem that has previously been solved. However, things pertaining to Aqeedah and acts of devotion are the same. Like when someone thinks there was a prophet after Muhammad, or when we try to be different by force, I'll borrow a phrase from Mr. Ma'ruf Amin: it must be amputated. That is why Islamic groups should work to fortify the religion of the locals (Interview with Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a Muhammadiyah Figure, on August 7, 2023, at 10:00 WIB., 2023).

Islamic organizations often uphold democratic values and human rights while carrying out their tasks in accordance with the laws and rules of the countries in which they operate. Nonetheless, Islamic organizations' reputations and roles might differ from one another based on their individual histories, ideologies, and approaches. A patriotic outlook that values a harmony among Islamic brotherhood, human brotherhood, and national brotherhood is advocated by Islam Nusantara for Nahdlatul Ulama adherents. The national policy of Indonesia is in line with the



character of Indonesian society, which values moderation, nonviolent methods of achieving societal harmony, and harmonious interpersonal connections. Thus, NU's movement seeks to regulate the foundations of diversity in order to attain constant harmonization. So, it's not a stretch for Said Agil Siradj to say that Nahdlatul Ulama is a progressive and ever-changing group whose members uphold moderate moral principles (Interview with K.H. Muhammad Rasyid, Chairman of the East Kalimantan MUI, on May 19, 2023, at 3:52 PM WIB., 2023).

Indonesia is home to a number of Islamic groups that are actively working to spread a more moderate and inclusive interpretation of Islam. Islam, they want to demonstrate, is a peaceful and amiable faith that does not discriminate against its adherents or their different communities. Spreading a correct understanding of Islam, teaching tolerance, respecting differences, and honoring human rights are all part of their role in promoting wasathiyah Islam in Indonesia. They also work to create an environment of mutual understanding and harmony among religious communities by establishing dialogue and cooperation with other faiths. They collaborate with other organizations, both Islamic and non-Islamic, that share similar visions and missions to build a more just and tolerant society. They promote wasathiyah Islam through public forums like lectures, seminars, social media, and campaigns to reach a wider audience. They also raise public awareness about the importance of a moderate Islamic approach and combat extremism and intolerance.

The specifics of this function are up to the individual NGOs. Indonesia is home to the world's biggest Muslim population; thus, it's crucial that Islamic groups like MUI, NU, Muhammadiyah, and Persis work to promote Islam wasathiyah in order to foster an inclusive, peaceful, and harmonious society. When asked about Islamophobia, Persis member Atip Latipulhayat said, "Islam Wasathiyah is a hanif and textualist concept of Islam in my opinion, meaning it is consistent with the Sunnah." Indeed, adherents of this Washathiyah school of thought mistrust the hypocrites who seem to be moderate Muslims while actively working to undermine Islam. The phrases "tolerant" and "intolerant" should be outlawed altogether if the goal is to foster tolerance, in my view. This is due to the fact that there is still interest bias and no consensus on the idea of Islamic moderation (Interview with Atip Latipulhayat, a Persis Community Figure, on June 15, 2023, at 4:00 PM WIB., 2023).

### **Strategies Employed by Islamic Organizations in Mitigating the Phenomenon of Islamophobia in Indonesia**

Following a round of interviews with Muslim groups in Indonesia, we can say that one way to lessen the impact of Islamophobia is for Muslims to do the following: spread positive messages and tolerance-promoting values through social media; engage in interfaith dialogues with leaders and organizations of different faiths to foster understanding and tolerance; take part in a variety of social, economic, and political events; and most importantly, collaborate with other groups fighting religious discrimination and intolerance.

As a result, Islamic groups may resist Islamophobia with more clout and support from this coalition, and they can also reach a wider audience with their social and humanitarian initiatives. Dispelling negative misconceptions about Islam and highlighting the beneficial contributions of Islamic groups can be achieved through this. "The strategy to reduce Islamophobia must indeed begin with each individual," Amirsyah Tambunan, Secretary General of the Central MUI, said. We don't have to brazenly proclaim how Islam is this or that; other faiths will also understand that real Islam isn't as scary as they thought it was. Compared to the past, this is new. Religion seems to have gotten more nuanced in recent years, particularly in light of the rise of Islamophobia, in contrast to the stark racial divisions of yesteryear (Interview with Amirsyah Tambunan, Secretary General of the Central MUI, May 26, 2023, 10:37 WIB., 2023).

Islamist groups, particularly Muhammadiyah, are doing a number of theological studies as part of their aim to lessen the impact of Islamophobia. This is due to the fact that individuals from all walks of life tend to be more interested in academics. In addition, via teaching, particularly to the youth of today (Interview with Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a Muhammadiyah Figure, on August 7, 2023, at 10:00 WIB., 2023).

But according to Persis, "Regarding the strategy that can be implemented to ground Wasathiyah Islam while also curbing Islamophobia, it is by realizing it in accordance with the UN declaration." It should be stressed that while Persis maintains a hard stance on its ideas, it does not endorse harmful basic physical actions. In other words, we aren't quite as vocal as FPI in our opposition to the current state of affairs, but that's merely because all Islamic groups have a basic side. He is physically destructive, but only while arguing. Although every group has its set of core beliefs, when anything is labeled as "fundamentalist," it takes on a bad connotation (Interview with Atip Latipulhayat, a Persis Community Figure, on June 15, 2023, at 4:00 PM WIB., 2023). Spreading messages of beauty and the real teachings of Islam via various sorts of media and venues is one way Muslims are trying to avoid the growth of Islamophobic behavior. One of the ways Islamophobia may be spread is through the media, as already stated. Hence, Muslims should likewise use the media to counteract it. One way to achieve this goal is to spread the message of real Islam through articles published in newspapers, on television, and on social media. Muslims may highlight this endeavor as one of their methods. "And may there be a party among you who invites to good, enjoins what is right, and forbids what is wrong," Allah SWT says in Surah Ali-Imran, verse 104. Those people have achieved success (Interview with K.H. Muhammad Rasyid, Chairman of the East Kalimantan MUI, on May 19, 2023, at 3:52 PM WIB., 2023).

### **Implementation of Islamic Organizations in Grounding Religious Moderation**

#### **1. Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI)**

Fatwas issued by the Islamic organization known as the MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) are significant in Indonesian religion. Muslim scholars draw on the Quran, Hadith, and other religious texts to produce fatwas, which are legal opinions on specific matters based on Islamic law. The Central MUI's Secretary General Amirsyah Tambunan has said, "To ground religious moderation, we need very strong power." The reason being, religious moderation helps reduce Islamophobia. Aside from fighting ideological inequalities, Islamophobia is out to destroy the economy. As a result, advocating for a moderate Islam is crucial.

The Program Guidelines of the Indonesian Council of Ulama aim to promote religious observance, education, and understanding of Islam. The ultimate goal is for Indonesian individuals and society as a whole to uphold high moral standards, honesty, justice, progress, solidarity, and tolerance. Additionally, they stress the importance of upholding the sovereignty and integrity of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia, which is based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (D. P. M. U. Indonesia, 2020). The function of MUI is crucial in the framework of establishing religious moderation. A religious moderate views religion in a way that promotes mutual respect and understanding among believers. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has multiple responsibilities in carrying out this principle. It is responsible for issuing fatwas that promote religious moderation in society, educating the public about the concept, mediating conflicts to reach fair resolutions, and making sure that ulama and Muslims obey the rule of law when it comes to religious moderation. The objective is to ensure the dissemination and implementation of tolerance and moderation teachings. Sertamenjadi is a catalyst for religiously diverse gatherings and dialogues. People of various religions may better understand one another and work together to create a more peaceful society via this type of conversation.

#### **2. Majelis Tarjih and Tajdid Muhammadiyah**

The Wasathiyah movement is one of the beliefs that Muhammadiyah has embraced and even internalized. The Wasathiyah Islam movement has grown in prominence, both in the context of religious matters within organizations and in the broader public arena. One definition of Ummatan Wasatha is a person's or a group's degree of affluence and civilization. According to verse 110 of Surah al-Imran, the term "Ummatan Wasatha" describes the greatest country. Islam

Wasathiyah, in this sense, refers to the core principles of the finest and most comprehensive Islamic law. It is a faith that offers a path to fulfillment for all people by maintaining a steady set of principles. With the help of Wasathiyah, mankind may follow in the footsteps of a decent and great community (Syifa, 2021).

Islam Wastahiyah, or "middle Islam," developed out of the National Conference. There were two main schools of thought regarding religion in Indonesia throughout the reform era, and this is where it all began. The Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) uses the word "Ta'qaruf Yamini" to describe this extreme right-wing position, which takes the text at face value and ignores context. Somewhat giving birth to takfiri thinking, their religious rituals are often inflexible, anti-tolerant, and hard. In contrast, the extreme left, or Ta'qaruf Yasari, takes a contextual approach and often ignores the text altogether. They frequently file lawsuits about issues, such as leadership and inheritance rules, that are already settled or Islamic according to the Quran and Hadith. This ever-changing phenomenon has the potential to cause chaos if nobody stops it. Islam Wasathiyah came from the National Conference, receiving research findings from many groups (Interview with Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a Prominent Figure in Muhammadiyah, on August 7, 2023, at 10:00 AM WIB., 2023).

This Islamic movement in Indonesia has several notable organizations, including the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council. When it comes to modern challenges, the Islamic legal system looks to the Tarjih Council for fatwas and other rulings. Like the MUI in the preceding context, the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council plays an essential role in anchoring Islamic moderation. Among the many ways the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council helps to establish religious moderation are by offering moderate interpretations of Islam, educating cadres, Muhammadiyah members, and the public about the importance of religious moderation, and taking part in interfaith dialogues to help people of different faiths understand each other and work together to solve problems.

Islamic Wasathiyah religious practices, as taught by Muhammadiyah, are characterized by qualities such as tawasuth (the middle path), balancing, I'tidal (straight and firm), tolerance, Musawah (egalitarian), Syura (consultation), Islah (reform), Aulawiyah (prioritizing what is most important), dynamic and innovative, tahaddhur (civilized), and Islah (reform) (M. U. Indonesia, 2015). Besides that. Different groups' terminology belies a shared viewpoint on Wasathiyah Islam; this is true of MUI, NU, Muhammadiyah, and others. Muhammadiyah refers to it as Progressive Islam, while MUI and NU refer to it as Islam Nusantara. Progressive Islam, which is an expansion of moderate Islam, aims to shape this concept. In my view, the result of Muhammadiyah, NU, and MUI's promotion of Islam Wasathiyah is identical, despite the fact that their emphasis is different. Believing that, if unquestioned, a strict, textual, or even takfiri paradigm of comprehension might be harmful is equivalent to the same thing in this context. In a similar vein, contextual information might be detrimental if not given proper focus. Hence, Islam Wasathiyah is considered an escape route (Interview with Muhammad Rafani Achyar, a Prominent Figure in Muhammadiyah, on August 7, 2023, at 10:00 AM WIB., 2023).

### 3. Bahstul Masail Nahdatul Ulama (NU)

In its capacity as an Islamic social organization, Nahdlatul Ulama has mostly been instrumental in promoting religious tolerance and democratic governance. As a group, they are prepared to confront the complex social and political issues head-on and take many risks. The variables at play include, for instance, attempts by Islamist groups to undermine Nahdlatul Ulama through the rhetoric of Islam Nusantara (Fridiyanto et al., 2021). A shift in the new paradigm in national education is necessary due to the democratic ideals' significance in Indonesian society. To build a civilized, democratic society in Indonesia, universities are vital. Higher education institutions bearing the name "Nahdlatul Ulama" or imbued with the spirit of Nahdlatul Ulama should be established by the General Manager of Nahdlatul Ulama and other members of Nahdliyin who acknowledge the significance of higher education in maintaining the integrity of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

Nahdlatul Ulama is actively promoting religious moderation through education and implementing democratic principles in this manner. All of this is done to solidify their position as an Islamic group that helps advance Indonesia and create a more civilized and democratic society.



When it comes to the context of religious moderation, the Nahdlatul Ulama's Bahthul Masail fatwa institution plays a role in promoting and enforcing moderation in religion through fatwas, teaching Muslims and non-Muslims how to live in peace and tolerance, and creating forums for discussions of modern issues like gender equality, human rights, pluralism, and religious moderation. The attitude and worldview of the scholars and religious leaders associated with the Bahthul Masail Fatwa Institution significantly influence their promotion of religious moderation. If this organization persists in advocating for moderate religious practices, there is hope for a more peaceful and welcoming community among Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

#### 4. Dewan Hisbah Persatuan Islam (Persis)

In its capacity as an Islamic social organization, Nahdlatul Ulama has mostly been instrumental in promoting religious tolerance and democratic governance. As a group, they are prepared to confront the complex social and political issues head-on and take many risks. The variables at play include, for instance, attempts by Islamist groups to undermine Nahdlatul Ulama through the rhetoric of Islam Nusantara. 24 A shift in the new paradigm in national education is necessary due to the democratic ideals' significance in Indonesian society. To build a civilized, democratic society in Indonesia, universities are vital. Higher education institutions bearing the name "Nahdlatul Ulama" or imbued with the spirit of Nahdlatul Ulama should be established by the General Manager of Nahdlatul Ulama and other members of Nahdliyin who acknowledge the significance of higher education in maintaining the integrity of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) (Redaksi, 2022).

Nahdlatul Ulama is actively promoting religious moderation through education and implementing democratic principles in this manner. All of this is done to solidify their position as an Islamic group that helps advance Indonesia and create a more civilized and democratic society. When it comes to the context of religious moderation, the Nahdlatul Ulama's Bahthul Masail fatwa institution plays a role in promoting and enforcing moderation in religion through fatwas, teaching Muslims and non-Muslims how to live in peace and tolerance, and creating forums for discussions of modern issues like gender equality, human rights, pluralism, and religious moderation (Interview with Atip Latipulhayat, a Persis Community Figure, on June 15, 2023, at 4:00 PM WIB., 2023). The attitude and worldview of the scholars and religious leaders associated with the Bahthul Masail Fatwa Institution significantly influence their promotion of religious moderation. If this organization persists in advocating for moderate religious practices, there is hope for a more peaceful and welcoming community among Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

### Conclusion

Discrimination and violence are two ways in which Islamophobia may show itself. The principles of compassion, fairness, tolerance, and peace are to be upheld by Islamic organizations in order for them to advance social welfare. Islamic groups in Indonesia are working to combat Islamophobia through initiatives like public outreach, religious tolerance training, civic engagement, and the dissemination of positive messages through social media. Harmony in a varied community may be achieved via religious moderation, which promotes mutual respect and tolerance across different communities. It is acknowledged that one way to promote tolerance and prevent misconceptions is to increase knowledge of other religions and beliefs via religious literature and interfaith dialogue.

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