

# Religious Moderation in Digital Media Discourse: A Study of the nu.or.id Portal from the Perspective of Communicative Rationality

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## Abstract

The rise of popular Islamic media in the digital age has shifted the influence from traditional to popular religion, impacting society's mindset. Interestingly, the digital space is predominantly occupied by conservative and radical forms of Islam. In response, this study examines the strategies employed by moderate groups to promote religious moderation, particularly through the Islamic portal nu.or.id. This portal aims to provide reliable information about Nu-an and Islam. The study analyzes articles, concepts, and viewpoints published on the portal to evaluate their promotion of moderation. Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative rationality is used to assess moderate tendencies, while essays on nu.or.id are evaluated based on truth, accuracy, and honesty. The study concludes that nu.or.id's efforts to promote religious moderation have a significant impact on filtering news content or thoughts that do not align with Islamic values. Writers consistently use logical and religious arguments to challenge the conservative-radical narrative of Islam. The strategy implemented by portals such as nu.or.id appears to resonate with middle-class Muslims, who are often targeted by fundamentalist groups. Therefore, targeting a general audience through nu.or.id is seen as a positive step.

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## INTRODUCTION

The rise of the digital age, coupled with the widespread use of social media platforms, has led to significant changes in socio-religious discussions in Indonesia, especially in terms of religious understanding. According to Solahudin and Fakhruroji, the increased use of new media has also brought about a shift from traditional sources of religious authority to modern or digital forms of authority (Solahudin & Fakhruroji, 2019). Conventional channels for conveying religious ideologies, such as religious gatherings, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic educational institutions, have witnessed the dissemination of loosely structured religious concepts as a result of the digital revolution (Nisa, 2018). This transformation has fundamentally altered the dynamics of producing and consuming religious knowledge and understanding.

Religious content circulating in the digital sphere has acted as a catalyst for conflict and discord over the past two decades. The digital media landscape has emerged as a favored platform for constructing narratives that deliberately juxtapose religious doctrines or teachings (Campbell, 2020; Akmaliah, 2020; Peterson & Campbell, 2020; Aydin et al., 2021). Numerous religious figures in online platforms frequently advocate for conservatism and radicalism within Islam. Additionally, advancements in technology have triggered an echo effect through the algorithms of social media platforms (Cinelli et al., 2021; Auxier & Vitak, 2019; Kitchens et al., 2020). Some scholars have linked this echo effect to the process of radicalization in online media, as algorithms ensure that users' homepages are populated with content that aligns with their beliefs, interests, and perspectives (Istadiyantha, 2018). Consequently, this phenomenon reduces the likelihood of social media users encountering diverse viewpoints (Bozdag, 2020).

A study carried out by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) delineated five categories of religious comprehension within the digital realm. These categories include

conservative, liberal, Islamist, moderate, and extremist or radical perspectives. While there exist associations and disparities between Islamist and extremist or radical factions, both predominantly espouse conservative ideologies stemming from a conservative framework. PPIM's investigation on Twitter, a prominent social media platform, illustrates that conservative religious narratives exert a dominant presence in the digital sphere, alongside alternative religious viewpoints (Halimatusa'diyah et al., 2020).

Another investigation revealed that the digital space has contributed to the increase in religious intolerance in Indonesia. The end of the New Order regime led to a period of political reform marked by the freedom to express religious beliefs, which resulted in the resurgence of Islamic conservatism. However, this newfound freedom also led to the emergence of radical Islamic groups (Diprose et al., 2019). In response, the State Intelligence Agency (BIN) was established to monitor the proliferation of conservative ideologies within governmental institutions. According to BIN reports, approximately 1300 civil servants, academics, military personnel, and police were associated with Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). The proliferation of new media platforms has further amplified the unregulated dissemination of viewpoints, fueling religious intolerance and exacerbating conflicts in public discourse (Hadiz, 2021). Paterson warned that this phenomenon could heighten the likelihood of social and political unrest, posing a threat to Indonesian democracy (Paterson, 2019).

The restrictions were imposed due to the observed counter productivity among users and readers of Islamic portals. Moreover, numerous intolerant religious statements in cyberspace related to religion were identified. Preaching on social media is perceived as an avenue to enhance socio-religious practices based on the application and normativity of Islamic texts. Consequently, the voice of the moderate majority is viewed as indifferent to issues that have tangible impacts on the real world (Khisbiyah et al., 2018; Zamzami et al., 2023). Several websites, including [www.nu.or.id](http://www.nu.or.id), [islami.co](http://islami.co), [arrahim.id](http://arrahim.id), [ibtimes.id](http://ibtimes.id), [alif.id](http://alif.id), [chatsyariah.com](http://chatsyariah.com), and [Iqra.id](http://Iqra.id), actively oppose religious conservatism by advocating religious moderation. Conversely, others serve as crucial platforms for offering moderate Islamic resources to young people, thus undermining the influence of conservative Islamic websites. These platforms include sites such as [rumaysho.com](http://rumaysho.com), [islampos.com](http://islampos.com), [muslim.or.id](http://muslim.or.id), and [hidayatullah.com](http://hidayatullah.com) (Zamzami et al., 2023).

This research examines [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id), one of Indonesia's leading Islamic portals, which holds the top position in the country according to IB Times' social media ranking. The study aims to promote religious moderation among readers, particularly targeting the middle-class Muslim demographic. [Nu.or.id](http://Nu.or.id) is chosen for analysis due to its status as one of the most visited Islamic portals. According to [alexa.com](http://alexa.com), a global ranking site, [Islami.co](http://Islami.co) ranks among the top 122 most visited websites in Indonesia and holds a global ranking of 3,242. Therefore, it is essential to assess the significant role of these Islamic portals in propagating moderate narratives in Indonesia.

Religious moderation in the digital age has become a focal point for understanding how moderate religious discourses contend with conservative counterparts online. Zamzami et al. (2023) explore the role of moderate Islamic websites, including [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id), in countering religious conservatism within Indonesia's digital landscape. Their study emphasizes how such platforms combat conservative narratives, focusing on the broader contestation between moderate and conservative digital voices. Conversely, Kamaludin et al. (2021) contextualize religious moderation within the framework of Industry 4.0, highlighting the challenges posed by technological advancements to traditional religious values. Their research provides insights into the intersection of digital media and religious moderation, but it does not delve deeply into specific platforms or their impact on religious discourse.

Umi Musyarrofah and Zulhannan (2023) examine religious moderation within the discourse of Nahdlatul Ulama's dakwah in the era of Industry 4.0, illustrating how this movement incorporates the acceptance of religious diversity into its teachings. This approach mirrors the focus of [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) on promoting religious moderation among Indonesian Muslims. Subchi et al. (2022) analyze religious moderation in fostering social harmony in Indonesia's pluralistic society, while

Daheri et al. (2023) discuss how moderation practices contribute to interfaith tolerance and peaceful coexistence. These studies collectively contribute to the understanding of religious moderation, yet they do not specifically address the role of digital media platforms in shaping and disseminating moderate religious discourses. Humaizi's (2024) analysis of the *Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama* (FKUB) in creating digital harmony further complements this discourse by focusing on FKUB's dual role in physical and digital moderation efforts.

This research distinguishes itself by specifically examining the nu.or.id portal's role in shaping religious moderation narratives through digital media. Unlike the studies by Zamzami et al. (2023) and Kamaludin et al. (2021), which address broader aspects of religious moderation and its interaction with conservatism or technological advancements, this research provides an in-depth analysis of nu.or.id as a case study. By employing Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative rationality, this study offers a novel perspective on how digital communication facilitates the construction and dissemination of moderate religious discourses. This approach not only fills a gap in the literature regarding the specific impact of digital platforms but also introduces a theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of online religious moderation.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach by applying Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative rationality. The research is informed by a worldview grounded in communicative rationality, which aligns closely with constructivism (Creswell, 2014). Data for this research will be collected from various sources, including articles, books, and reports relevant to the theme of religious moderation in digital media, specifically focusing on the nu.or.id portal. Data collection methods will include observation of communication practices in digital media and document analysis related to religious moderation narratives. Data analysis techniques will involve coding, data presentation, and drawing conclusions using the Miles and Huberman (1984) analytical model. Data validation will be achieved through triangulation of data sources and methods.

This research applies Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative rationality to enhance public communication effectiveness. According to Habermas, while the rationality paradigm is suitable for objective processes, it may not fully encompass inter-subjective social realities in communicative contexts (Habermas, 1991). In his work "The Theory of Communicative Action", Habermas suggests that all societal elements can engage in communication with rational ideas (Habermas, 1991). He advocates for social relationships to be based on rationality rather than random occurrences. This rationality should be evident in reality, where actors aim for mutual understanding through instructive methods (Ahlhaus, 2022).

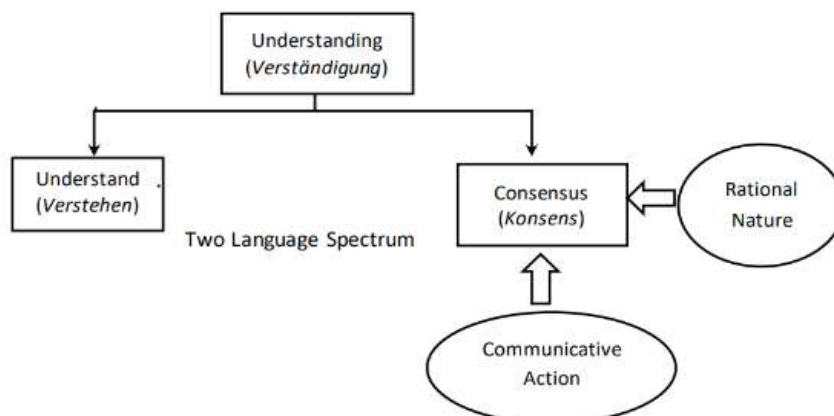


Figure 1. Flow of a Rational Communication to Jurgen Habermas

Habermas also contends that the locus of communicative rationality is more fundamental than its objectives, being inherent within the structure of language. Moreover, participants in communication must adhere to three claims in discourse. Firstly, appropriateness involves

individuals' ability to express their desires clearly. Secondly, sincerity is paramount, while thirdly, truthfulness necessitates the absence of deception when presenting arguments. Despite communication's occasional failures, articulate individuals grasp successful communication's essence, thus possessing an understanding of communicative rationality (Aubert, 2021).

Communicative rationality, the epistemic basis of ethical discourse, not only bridges disparities among citizens' identities, including cultural and religious diversity, but also upholds the sustainability of communal life without compromising their identities in pluralistic societies. In rational dialogues, participants aim to challenge their adversaries and uncover truth through knowledge or practice. However, these rational discussions are rooted in the pursuit of autonomy and responsibility '*mündigkeit*'. Essentially, they promote freedom in communication, devoid of any constraints or domination, enabling participants to engage in rational and critical discourse (Blau, 2022).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Religious Moderation on The nu.or.id Portal

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia advocates for the mainstreaming of religious moderation, which encompasses understanding and practices aimed at fostering harmonious coexistence in Indonesia. This approach represents a middle ground between far-right and far-left extremism (Ropi, 2019). Far-right groups adhere to a literal interpretation of religion, resulting in conservative and radical religious ideologies. These factions seek to establish an Islamic State '*Daulah Islāmiyyah*' and an International Islamic Caliphate (Suharto, 2019; Zuhdi, 2018). This rigid interpretation gradually leads to intolerance toward other Muslims and followers of different faiths. Conversely, the far-left tends to apply liberal principles to Islam and prioritizes individual freedom of thought over religious authority (Bourchier, 2019).

Moderate understanding serves as a middle ground between the two extremes, steering clear of far-right extremism's mission to establish an Islamic State while also avoiding secularism. It emphasizes the authority of revelation through rational interpretation methodologies, reinforcing Islamic values within the modern political system (Fossati, 2019).

In the digital space, religious moderation is cultivated through various information technology tools such as articles, videos, and photos. These serve as counter-narratives to conservative and radical discourses, playing a crucial role in enhancing religious tolerance. Hefni suggests that moderate groups play a significant role in shaping the future of tolerance, particularly due to their dominance in the digital sphere (Hefni, 2020). When widely reinforced in digital content and messages, these narratives influence moderate thinking and behavior. As a result, Islamic portals containing religious moderation introduce balanced religious thinking and practices into society, ultimately reshaping religious discourse in Indonesia.

Lukman Hakim Saifuddin defines religious moderation as understanding the core principles and scope of moderation and then developing quality knowledge about religious teachings. This knowledge helps individuals differentiate between universal and particular issues within their religion. Religious moderation encourages inclusivity, facilitating mutual learning and adaptation among individuals and religious groups. It promotes responding to diversity without extremism and fosters justice and balance in approaching religious values. This virtue aims to achieve social harmony and balance in various aspects of life, including individual, family, community, and broader human relations. It emphasizes the importance of finding a middle ground between personal perspectives and universal religious values (Arifin, 2023).

In line with this definition, nu.or.id, established in 2003, serves as an Islamic portal aimed at providing moderate Islamic knowledge '*waṣaṭiyyah*' to Muslims. It advocates for the concept of a good state '*baladah ṭayyibah*' by disseminating religious information and serves as a platform for graduates of Islamic *pesantren* to counter the influence of intolerant websites and blogs (Siddiqi & Fernandy, 2022). The portal offers inclusive interpretations of Islam and has extended its reach to popular social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.



Founded by Mohamad Syafi' Alielha, also known as Savic Ali, [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) targets urban Muslims and the middle class. Ali is also behind the creation of the [Islami.co](http://Islami.co) portal, which targets graduates of *pesantren* and readers, especially young adults aged 20 and above from diverse backgrounds (Trifita et al., 2023). The portal embodies Islam-friendly attributes, tolerance, and inclusive interpretations, aiming to counter conservative, violent, and radical narratives often propagated by extremist Islamic portals, which could potentially undermine societal ideologies, especially among those less acquainted with Islam.



Figure 2. The [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) Portal View

The [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) addresses themes revolving around Islam, worship, and current news, offering members a platform to discuss contemporary issues from an Islamic perspective. These themes are distributed across eight sections: news, columns, studies, stories, worship, wisdom, and features. The portal publishes around seven to eight articles daily, featuring green and white-themed articles accompanied by photos, locations, events, and graphic images. Writers hail from diverse backgrounds, including Muslim scholars, religious leaders, teachers, and students.

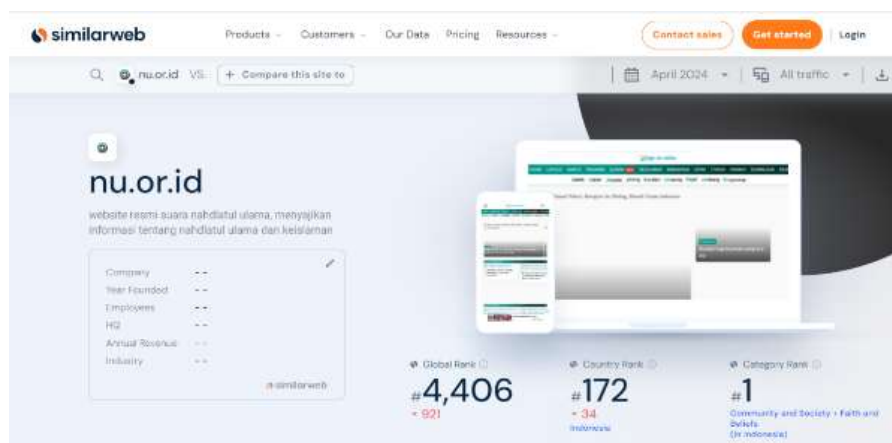


Figure 3. The [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) Portal Ranking Data

The design of [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) is straightforward, ensuring ease of access and user-friendliness to assist readers in seamlessly navigating the content. Its popularity is noteworthy, as evidenced by its visitor count. According to website ranking platforms like [Alexa.com](http://Alexa.com), as of June 8, 2020, [nu.or.id](http://nu.or.id) was ranked 3,242 globally and 122 nationally. Similarly, in April 2024, Similar web ranked it at 4,406 globally and 172 nationally.

### The Character of Communicative Rationality in Islam on nu.or.id Portal

The nu.or.id portal must carefully consider its interpretation and dissemination strategies to uphold a narrative that promotes peace and inclusivity. In the midst of the prevailing conservatism in the digital sphere, maintaining a moderate stance necessitates a nuanced perspective to avoid extreme portrayals of religious life (Daheri et al., 2023). Therefore, the portal also needs to reflect the diverse backgrounds present in Indonesia.

The nu.or.id portal plays a pivotal role in disseminating religious moderation (Musyarrofah & Zulhannan, 2023), which can be evaluated based on concepts and perspectives using Habermas's criteria of communicative rationality. Communicative rationality, serving as the foundation for communicative action, only succeeds when its practice is not solely understood as an instinct used to generate blind behavior in humans as social beings. Islamic scholars assert that both print and online mass media serve as effective instruments for educating society and upholding their social, moral, and rational values (Guorong, 2013).

Access to comprehensive information and ideas is essential for individuals to attain truth through reasoning, ultimately leading to social change without resorting to violence but through discourse and persuasion. In this context, discourse assumes significant importance (Tejera, 1988). According to Habermas (1991), discourse aims to achieve inter subjective consensus through verbal or written dialogue. When consensus on communicative action has been spontaneously accepted and utilized by communication participants without reflection, efforts must be made towards achieving a more reflective consensus (Tejera, 2022).

Discourse serves as a reflection of communicative action, employing argumentation processes to advance media. It represents a form of modern communication where reliance on tradition to test rational considerations is diminished. This underscores the openness and critical nature of discourse (Zamzami, 2023). The nu.or.id, with its vision of "Becoming a Provider of Refreshing and Trustworthy Nuance and Islamic Information," embodies an Islamic portal that aligns with discourse and supports communication conducive to human interaction. The published writings indicate a platform for dialogue between administrators and readers, conveying messages about nu.or.id as an independent portal striving to foster tolerance and peace in Indonesia.

One of the articles scrutinized in this research is an essay by Syifa Arrahmah, published in the national section on November 26, 2021, entitled "UI Statistical Expert: Social Media Becomes a Radicalism Incubator for Millennials." The article delves into the proliferation of radicalism movements through social media and the susceptibility of millennials to such influences.



Figure 4: Article of "UI Statistics Expert: Social Media Becomes an Incubator of Radicalism for Millennials"

Syifa Arrahmah reports that young people are becoming radicalized or even joining militant groups through invitations on social media. She views this phenomenon as a result of the vulnerabilities of millennials, making them susceptible to radical ideologies (Zaid et al., 2022). Several influencing factors include the lack of literacy in non-violent religious messages, dissemination of religious moderation reinforcement, lack of narratives promoting peaceful and harmonious living, and rejection of violent actions or terrorism. The clash between moderate and conservative viewpoints involves Muslim preachers and individuals frequently advocating conservative and radical ideologies (Mulyana, 2020). This poses a threat to major moderate Muslim groups in Indonesia, notably Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Radical Islamic ideologies can undermine the moderate Islamic beliefs held by the majority of Muslims in Indonesia. Hence, Muslim involvement in moderating Islam in the digital sphere is imperative to guide dynamic Islamic thought and counter radicalism and conservatism promoted by extremist groups (Blakemore & Awan, 2016).

Articles on nu.or.id are meticulously crafted with references ranging from classical to contemporary literature. The inclusion of authoritative sources in the portal's content reflects its commitment to meeting academic and journalistic standards (Zhen, 2010). The arguments presented on nu.or.id resonate with Habermas's concept of communicative rationality, drawing from authoritative Islamic sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly opinions. Furthermore, the articles offer contextualized arguments grounded in reality, providing solutions and reflections aligned with the values of justice and human welfare as espoused by Islam.

In accordance with communicative rationality, communicators should facilitate communication among diverse perspectives to achieve a consensus beneficial to society. Muslim groups must act as mediators in the digital realm, bridging the gap between conservative and radical narratives to foster a moderate understanding of Islam rooted in noble principles and religious values. Engaging in dialogue is essential for mediators in the digital space. Habermas emphasizes that communicative communities reject violence and prioritize argumentation (Blotta, 2020). Dialogues should adhere to minimum standards such as breadth of knowledge, deep understanding, critical thinking, profound insight, and heightened awareness.

Since its inception, the founder of nu.or.id has been dedicated to establishing it as a platform offering friendly and enlightening Islamic discourse, serving as a resource for individuals seeking to learn about Islam and advocate for a peaceful and tolerant society. The articles featured on the portal analyze contemporary Islamic issues through a moderate and non-conservative lens, fostering dialogue between textual analysis and contextual understanding to elucidate Islam's enduring values in modern life.

## **Issues of Islam and the Public Addressed by Writers on nu.or.id Portal**

### ***How Should Jihad Be Understood?***

This study utilized several preliminary investigations to promote mainstream moderation on religious topics related to the understanding of jihad within the Muslim community in Indonesia. The term "jihad" is not always comprehended as physical warfare due to its multifaceted definition. Consequently, Muslims may occasionally misinterpret it as a form of worship secondary only to monotheistic belief and prayer (Chishti, 2015).

Jihad is defined as the exertion of one's best effort to achieve predetermined goals. Thus, any individual's endeavor to overcome challenges is categorized as jihad, as it involves actions to uphold, build, and propagate the laws of Allah. From a Sharia perspective, jihad represents a form of resistance against non-believers of Islam. Some fighters refer to this as *jihād fī sabīlillāh*, interpreting it as warfare to retaliate against the hostility of unbelievers towards Islam. They often cite Qur'anic verses such as 9:36, 2:194, 16:126, 2:216, and 8:39 (Bachtiar et al., 2019; Cook, 2015).

Articles on nu.or.id, referencing perspectives on jihad such as "Moderatism and Extremism in Religion," are employed to dispel misconceptions regarding the interpretation of jihad. According

to Frias, these articles serve as guidelines or references that can be formally applied to regulate and critique the dissemination of practical thought (Lopez Frias, 2021). By utilizing reference perspectives from this ideal community, individuals can assess and discern the validity of any truth claim based on stronger arguments. This study found that the articles on the portal consistently convey moderate religious views that define jihad as non-physical violent activity.

In the article "Gus Baha Explains Jihad in the Current Era Differs from the Era of the Prophet" published on June 28, 2021, Syarif Abdurrahman elucidates the definition of jihad according to the renowned scholar Bahaudin Nur Salim. According to Yakhsyallah, Bahaudin Nur Salim explains that the verse "And strive with your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah" was previously interpreted as an exhortation to fight against injustice with financial support, as done by Sayidina Usman in the Battle of the Trench and the Battle of Tabuk. In the modern context, jihad could mean utilizing wealth to build strength and influence, such as financing worship facilities or establishing mosques to support the Muslim community (Chishti, 2015). This indicates that those who carry out suicide bombings are mistaken.

In line with this view, the concept of jihad according to Bisri Mustofa states that the interpretation of jihad encompasses several principles, namely tolerance, *tasāmuḥ* 'forbearance', and worship (Aziz & Abidin, 2017). According to him, the meaning of jihad, when implemented in religious, national, and state life, must be carried out with the principles of tolerance, mutual assistance, and worship in accordance with the true essence of jihad itself (Mustofa, 1960).



Figure 5. Article of "Gus Baha Explains Jihad in the Current Era is Different from the Prophet's Era"

According to mufasssirs, jihad does not always mean a command for physical warfare but is interpreted as the implementation of values contained within the Quran with full sincerity (Tahir, 2017). Muslims need to understand teachings that follow the benevolent and non-violent character of Islam to avoid giving a literal meaning to a verse with narrow univocal truth (Chishti, 2015). Here are the indicators of the three validity claims according to the prerequisites for communicative rationality by Habermas:

Table 1. Indicators of Validity Claims on Religious Topics

Validity Claims	Indicator
Truth Claim	In Gus Baha's statement, the verse " <i>Wa jāhidū bi`amwālikum wa anfusikum fī sabīlillah</i> " is adapted to contemporary context, where jihad not only means physical warfare but also involves using wealth for benevolent purposes. This implies that jihad is not just a command for war



Validity Claims	Indicator
Accuracy Claim	but also living sincerely. Muslims need to embody the friendly and non-violent character of Islam. The article explains that victory in Islam is not always achieved through physical combat but also through economic and civilizational triumph, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of how the context of jihad can be applied in contemporary situations. The statement about how Muslims who become investors in minority areas can freely practice their religion illustrates accuracy in understanding the dynamics of power and economy in religious contexts.
Honesty Claim	The claim of honesty is substantiated by Gus Baha's use of his own experience in Palestine and Tel Aviv to provide concrete examples, demonstrating honesty and transparency in conveying his observations. Gus Baha emphasizes the importance of power in protecting religious practices and creating a conducive environment, indicating honesty in expressing his views on the relationship between power and religion.

Additionally, there is an article titled "Interpreting the Jihad of *Santri*, Advancing the Nation". This piece by Puji Raharjo Soekarno discusses how the concept of jihad among *santri* is not limited to physical struggle as it was during the independence era but also encompasses their roles in education, da'wah (Islamic preaching), and community empowerment in contemporary times.

During the independence era, the jihad of the *santri* took the form of a physical struggle to defend the nation's sovereignty, as exemplified by the Jihad Resolution by Syeikh Hasyim Asyari. However, in the modern era, this jihad has evolved into efforts to contribute to various fields as a way of fulfilling the independence. In education, *santri* focus not only on religious studies but also master science and technology to face contemporary challenges (van Bruinessen, n.d.). Their da'wah emphasizes a moderate and inclusive approach, spreading the teachings of Islam as a blessing for all creation '*rahmatan lil 'alamīn*' (Pribadi, 2019). Meanwhile, in the economic sector, *santri* actively engage in community empowerment through innovation and the development of the creative economy. The spirit of jihad among today's *santri* is not only a reflection of past struggles but also their commitment to continue advancing the nation through education, da'wah, and community empowerment. Thus, jihad in the contemporary era is a concrete effort to realize a more advanced, just, and prosperous Indonesia.



Figure 6. Article of "The meaning of 'Jihad students, make the country victorious'"

Puji Raharjo's depiction of the jihad resolution emphasizes the transformation of jihad from physical struggle during the independence era to the *santri's* contribution in education, da'wah, and community empowerment in contemporary times. As outlined in Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari's Jihad Resolution, jihad was once expressed through resistance against colonial powers to defend national sovereignty (Rifa'i & Asy'ari, 2009). However, in the modern context, the *santri's* jihad has evolved into efforts to strengthen the nation through mastery of knowledge, moderate da'wah, and innovation in the economic sector (Ridwan, 2019).

Puji Raharjo's perspective expands the understanding of jihad as a collective commitment of Muslims to advance the nation, aligning with the principles set forth by Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari (van Bruinessen, n.d.). Today, jihad is not only a spiritual obligation or physical struggle but also an active contribution to Indonesia's social and economic development. Thus, this jihad resolution remains relevant in addressing contemporary challenges, reinforcing the role of *santri* as agents of change driving national progress.

Table. 2 Indicators of Validity Claims on Religious Topics

Validity Claims	Indicator
Truth Claim	The truth claim in this article is evident in the author's effort to base the narrative on historical facts. For example, the mention of the role of santri in Indonesia's independence struggle, particularly through the Jihad Resolution by Syeikh Hasyim Asyari in 1945, is a claim supported by historical evidence. The article asserts that <i>santri</i> actively contributed to defending Indonesia's independence, especially in significant events like the Battle of Surabaya on November 10, 1945.
Accuracy Claim	The appropriateness claim in this article reflects the alignment and relevance between the values conveyed and the prevailing socio-cultural context and norms. For instance, the article emphasizes how the jihad of <i>santri</i> in the modern era is no longer a physical struggle but is carried out through education, da'wah, and economic empowerment, all of which are relevant and appropriate to the contemporary challenges faced by Indonesian society.
Honesty Claim	The sincerity claim can be seen in the way the author depicts the genuine spirit of santri in fulfilling their roles in society, both in the past and present. The article underscores that the jihad undertaken by santri is not just an obligation but also a sincere moral and spiritual commitment, reflected in their ongoing efforts to make real contributions to the nation.

Thus, the article substantiates its truth claim by grounding its narrative in historical facts, such as the significant role of *santri* in Indonesia's struggle for independence, as illustrated by the Jihad Resolution of Syeikh Hasyim Asyari in 1945 (Thohir et al., 2021). The article also highlights how the concept of jihad among *santri* has evolved from physical struggle to modern practices such as education, da'wah (Islamic preaching), and economic empowerment, which are pertinent to contemporary societal challenges. The sincerity claim is reflected in the depiction of the *santri's* genuine commitment to their roles, demonstrating that their jihad represents a moral and spiritual dedication that contributes meaningfully both historically and in the present context.

### **Islam and Nationalism**

An article discussing the Islamic perspective on nationalism titled "Love for the Homeland in the Islamic View", authored by Patoni, was published in the opinion section on April 28, 2022. This article elaborates on the response of an Indonesian scholar, Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari (1871-1947). According to him, love for the homeland is part of faith, contrary to the views of extremists who often overlook or even demean the values of nationalism. By integrating patriotism into religious teachings, Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari offers a narrative that rejects radicalism and extremism. Islam

requires the homeland as a field of preaching, while the homeland needs religious values to thrive. This perspective reinforces that nationalism grounded in religious values is a true form of love for the homeland.



Figure 7. Article of “Love of the Homeland in the Islamic Perspective”

The articles featured on nu.or.id play a pivotal role in reinforcing individuals' sense of nationalism under the banner of religion, as corroborated by insights from authoritative scholars like Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari. Contemporary Muslim scholars, exemplified by Muhammad Abduh from Egypt, underscore the significance of defending the nation in the context of religious duty (Wahab et al., 2024). It is imperative to comprehensively grasp these issues in alignment with the perspectives delineated in the Qur'an, Hadith, and the insights of religious scholars concerning societal challenges. This entails engaging with religious sources in a textual manner and scrutinizing the contextual nuances alongside scholars' interpretations (Shihab, 2002). Hence, the articles disseminated by nu.or.id on this subject epitomize the essence of communicative rationality.'

Table 3. Indicators of Validity Claims on Religious Topics

Validity Claims	Indicator
Truth Claim	The claim to truth in the article is evident as it is objective and contains responses from prominent scholars regarding love for the homeland. This article not only refers to the perspectives of authoritative scholars but is also related to the Qur'an and Hadiths. Various religious evidence such as verses from the Qur'an and Hadiths, for example, Surah An-Nisa' 66 and Al-Bukhari hadith, are cited. This demonstrates that the claim is based on religious texts recognized for their truthfulness by Muslims. Additionally, Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari utilizes this principle to instill a sense of nationalism in the context of the struggle against colonizers. These historical facts are also widely acknowledged in Indonesian history.
Accuracy Claim	The content of the article on nu.or.id can be categorized as a claim of accuracy as it meets one of the requirements of legality, namely adhering to the prevailing norms in society. The article also illustrates how love for the homeland can be manifested through everyday actions such as diligent learning, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting parents and others. This reflects the social norms prevalent in society. In the article, there is a connection between love for the homeland and the religious values relevant to the social and cultural context of Indonesia. The article

Validity Claims	Indicator
Honesty Claim	<p>emphasizes that religion without nationalism can become extreme, and nationalism without religion can become barren. This aligns with the social norms that prioritize harmony between religious beliefs and nationalism.</p> <p>What is mentioned in the text is real, not a drama. The views of Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari and other scholars on love for the homeland as part of faith are conveyed with genuine conviction. This claim is supported by the consistency between their words and actions in the history of Indonesia's struggle for independence. Additionally, the article reflects a sincere intention to unite religious values with nationalism. For example, the use of the term "<i>ḥubbul waṭani minal īman</i>" indicates that love for the homeland is not just a slogan but an integral part of faith practiced with full awareness.</p>

In strengthening this statement, the concept aligns with the understanding of jihad as articulated in Tafsir al-Mishbah. This interpretation reflects a broad perspective on jihad, which can generally be summarized into two meanings: first, dedicating one's full capabilities or enduring sacrifices, and second, earnest effort in carrying out tasks. According to Quraish Shihab, the concept of jihad against one's desires demonstrates that jihad is not solely associated with armed conflict (Shihab, 2002; Aziz & Abidin, 2017). This expanded understanding of jihad supports the article's claim that love for the homeland, as part of religious faith, encompasses a broader and more nuanced application beyond mere physical struggle

Moreover, there is also an article titled "Indonesia as a Consensus-Based Nation". This piece, written by Muhammad Syakir NF, discusses the importance of consensus as the fundamental basis for the formation of Indonesia, a nation composed of various ethnicities, languages, religions, and cultures. This consensus was achieved through a process of deliberation that involved various groups from different backgrounds, such as the Second Youth Congress, which resulted in the Youth Pledge in 1928. In this congress, youths from various regions united to create a single national identity, encompassing the recognition of a common homeland, nation, and language—Indonesia (Foulcher, 2000). This consensus demonstrates that diversity is not an obstacle but rather a strength that unites Indonesia.

Furthermore, the article also discusses how the consensus in formulating the state foundation, Pancasila, has become a crucial cornerstone for the Indonesian nation. The debates that occurred within the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Independence (BPUPK) reflect a collective effort to find a common ground acceptable to all, despite differing viewpoints. This consensus is evident in the change of the First Principle from "Belief in God with the obligation to implement Islamic law for its adherents" to "Belief in the One Supreme God". This change was made to maintain national unity, respecting the objections of non-Muslim groups in Eastern Indonesia, who felt marginalized by the initial formulation.





Figure 8. Article of “Love of the Homeland in the Islamic Perspective”

The consensus and deliberation that underpinned the formation of Indonesia reflect Islamic values that also emphasize the importance of consultation in decision-making, as stipulated in the Qur'an. This consultation not only serves to achieve a fair agreement acceptable to all parties but also to maintain harmony and unity within society. Thus, Indonesia as a consensus-based nation is a manifestation of the blend between nationalism and Islamic teachings, together forming a strong foundation for the nation's diversity and unity (Adinugraha et al., 2021).

Table 4. Indicators of Validity Claims on Religious Topics

Validity Claims	Indicator
Truth Claim	The truth claim in this article is evident in the writer's effort to assert that Indonesia as a consensus-based nation is founded on real and widely recognized historical facts. The writer references significant events such as the 1928 Youth Pledge and the formulation of Pancasila as the state ideology, which illustrate the process of deliberation and agreement among various groups with different backgrounds. These historical facts are used to support the argument that Indonesia's unity was built on a consensus involving all elements of the nation, rather than merely being an administrative legacy from Dutch colonialism.
Accuracy Claim	The accuracy claim is reflected in the way the writer adapts the concepts of consensus and deliberation to the socio-political context of Indonesia. The article highlights the relevance of consensus as a fundamental principle that can preserve unity amidst Indonesia's ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. The writer connects the concept of consensus with Islamic teachings on deliberation, emphasizing that this principle not only aligns with the nation's history but also with the religious values upheld by the majority of Indonesians. This claim demonstrates the alignment between the principles promoted in the article and the existing social and cultural realities.
Honesty Claim	The honesty claim in this article is seen in the writer's portrayal of Indonesia as being built on genuine deliberation and consensus among its founders. The writer honestly depicts the process of debate and compromise that took place during the formulation of the state ideology, including the removal of seven words from the First Principle of Pancasila to preserve national unity. By highlighting the importance of transparency and deliberation in decision-making, the article reflects the writer's commitment to honesty as a fundamental value in maintaining unity and justice in national life.

Muhammad Syakir NF has made a significant contribution to the understanding of Indonesian nationalism through his article. By outlining the importance of consensus in the formation of the Indonesian state, Syakir emphasizes that ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity is not a hindrance but a strength that unites the nation. The article highlights that the consensus achieved through deliberative processes, such as the 1928 Youth Pledge and the formulation of Pancasila, forms a strong foundation for national unity (Foulcher, 2000). Syakir links this principle of consensus to Islamic teachings that stress the importance of consultation and deliberation, as stipulated in Surah Asy-Syu'ara, verse 38 of the Quran (Mastuki, 2014). He demonstrates that consensus not only reflects religious values but also the need to maintain harmony amidst the diversity of Indonesian society. Through this argument, Syakir underscores how consensus and deliberation can serve as effective tools in building and sustaining national unity within a framework of inclusive nationalism grounded in religious and historical principles.

### ***Muslim and Non-Muslim Relations***

In an article published on nu.or.id on March 30, 2021, titled "Ethics towards Non-Muslims" written by Alhafiz Kurniawan, Islam's inclusive and tolerant views on relations with non-Muslims are presented. Islam teaches the importance of good social interaction, respecting religious differences, seeking common ground, avoiding hostility, and ensuring justice and kindness towards all believers. All of these depict the peaceful and inclusive spirit taught in Islam, in line with the principles taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) (Wahab & Sa'adah, 2015).



Figure 9. Article of “Morals towards Non-Muslims”

In proposing a narrative of peace, the article asserts that Islam does not restrict the social interaction of its adherents with non-Muslims, especially in common issues such as economy, social, and environment. This interaction is known as "*mu'āmalah*" in Islamic literature, which encompasses various forms of cooperation and social relations recognized and justified by the religion (Wahab & Sa'adah, 2015). This process is related to the discourse ethics of Habermas, which is material aimed at achieving a satisfactory point of diversity. Additionally, the article examines to what extent Muslims tend to interact and emulate non-Muslim cultures, aligning with the communicative rationality of Jürgen Habermas.

Table 5. Indicators of validity claims on the topic of relations

Validity Claims	Indicator
Truth Claim	In the article, claims of truth can be observed in sections that refer to the history and teachings of Islam regarding social interactions with non-

Validity Claims	Indicator
	Muslims. The article provides concrete historical examples such as: the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) hiring the services of Abdullah bin Uraiqith, a polytheist, as a guide during the hijrah; the Prophet borrowing an axe from a group of Jews for the purpose of war; Shafwan bin Umayyah, a polytheist, joining the ranks of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) during the Battle of Hunain. These examples strengthen the claim that Islam does not restrict social interactions with non-Muslims and promotes peaceful relations and cooperation. These historical facts support the claim of truth that Islam teaches inclusive and tolerant interactions.
Accuracy Claim	The article also demonstrates claims of accuracy through Islamic teachings that value and respect the beliefs of other religions, such as: Surah Al-Kafirun emphasizes respect for religious diversity and teaches Muslims to respect the teachings of other religions; Surah Al-An'am verse 108 prohibits Muslims from insulting the beliefs of other religions to avoid hostility; Surah Al-Baqarah verse 256 emphasizes that there is no compulsion in religion. These norms indicate that Islamic teachings align with moral and social principles that value diversity and avoid conflict. The claim of accuracy in this article reflects how the actions and teachings of Islam align with inclusive and peaceful norms.
Honesty Claim	The legal basis for the claim of honesty is through the attitudes and teachings taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding relations with non-Muslims. The examples provided demonstrate that these actions were carried out with good intentions and sincerity to create peace and cooperation. For example, accepting gifts and offerings from non-Muslim rulers demonstrates an open and friendly attitude. Islam teaches to seek common ground and points of agreement with followers of other religions. The sincerity in these teachings is evident in how the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Muslims were instructed to respect and treat non-Muslims well, without hidden intentions to impose beliefs or create conflict.

Thus, Alhafiz Kurniawan's article reveals that Islamic teachings on interactions with non-Muslims are inclusive and tolerant, in line with the principles taught by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). By highlighting historical examples of peaceful interactions between the Prophet and non-Muslims and relating the principle of "*mu'āmalah*" to the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, the article demonstrates that Islam does not restrict but rather encourages interfaith cooperation. The emphasis on consensus and dialogue within the framework of Habermas's discourse ethics and Jürgen Habermas's communicative rationality adds an academic dimension that reinforces the claim that Islamic teachings support mutually beneficial dialogue and cooperation. Quraish Shihab's views as outlined by (Daheri et al., 2023; Wahab & Sa'adah, 2015) support this perspective by showing that Islamic values focused on justice and respect for diversity align with the prevailing social and moral norms. Therefore, this article is not only consistent with Islamic teachings but also aligns with academic principles emphasizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation in fostering harmonious interfaith relations.

Additionally, there is an article titled "Moderation of Religion in the Implementation of the 2024 General Election", written by Masykurudin Hafidz and published in the opinion section on January 2, 2023. This article underscores the significant role that religion plays in politics, particularly in Indonesia. As noted by Qodir (2023) in the electoral context, religion should not be divorced from politics, as the political arena, often fraught with intrigue and deception, necessitates

robust moral guidance. The article further emphasizes that religion must be applied to ensure honesty, transparency, and accountability at every stage of the election process.

The article defines religious moderation as a balanced and non-extremist approach to politics (Arifin, 2023). It involves respecting others' political choices, upholding honesty through information transparency, and enforcing accountability among election organizers and participants. Respect entails appreciating differing political choices without discrimination, while honesty demands transparency in all aspects of the electoral process, from campaign funding to election outcomes.



Figure 10. Article of “Moderation of Religion in the Implementation of the 2024 General

By advocating for religious moderation, the article posits that the 2024 elections can be conducted fairly and with integrity, in alignment with the moral values taught by religion. It asserts that through respect, honesty, and accountability, the election process can reflect justice and humanity, resonating with Gus Dur's view that "humanity is more important than politics itself" (Arif et al., 2022)

Table 6. Indicators of validity claims on the topic of relations

Validity Claims	Indicator
Truth Claim	The truth claim in this article is evident in the author's effort to base arguments on universal principles and widely acknowledged facts within the socio-political context of Indonesia. For instance, the author emphasizes the importance of religion in Indonesian politics and critiques the secular view that separates religion from politics. This claim is supported by the argument that politics, being full of intrigue and corruption, requires strong moral guidance from religion to ensure justice and integrity in the conduct of elections. The article also mentions that the concept of religious moderation, or " <i>waṣaṭiyyah</i> ," is the best choice to maintain balance and avoid extremism in politics, which is a widely accepted view in Indonesian society.
Accuracy Claim	The accuracy claim in this article is reflected in the way the author aligns religious values with the context of elections in Indonesia. The article stresses that religious moderation should be applied in the conduct of elections to avoid extremism and promote respect, honesty, and responsibility. The author highlights the importance of mutual respect in political choices, transparency in the election process, and accountability for election participants and organizers. This accuracy claim demonstrates the alignment between religious teachings that advocate for honesty, trustworthiness, and civility, and the ideal political practices in the context of elections in



Validity Claims	Indicator
Honesty Claim	Indonesia. <p>The honesty claim in this article can be seen in the author's emphasis on the importance of transparency and integrity in the conduct of elections. The author underlines that honesty is key to achieving fair and credible elections. The article also critiques dishonest practices, such as lack of transparency and the spread of disinformation, and emphasizes the importance of digital literacy and critical thinking to combat hoaxes and hate speech. By underscoring the importance of openness and accountability, the article reflects the author's commitment to honesty as a fundamental value that must be upheld in the political process.</p>

In conclusion, Masykurudin Hafidz's article, "Moderation of Religion in the Implementation of the 2024 General Election", illustrates the critical role of religious principles in guiding political processes, particularly within the Indonesian context. The article argues that religion, far from being irrelevant to politics, provides essential moral guidance necessary to combat the prevalent issues of intrigue and corruption in the political sphere, as highlighted by Qodir (2023). Hafidz emphasizes that religious moderation defined as a balanced, non-extremist approach should inform political practices, ensuring respect for diverse political views, and promoting transparency and accountability (Arifin, 2023). This approach aligns with the principles of honesty and fairness, crucial for maintaining the integrity of the electoral process. By integrating religious values into political practices, the article supports Gus Dur's notion that "humanity is more important than politics itself" (Arif et al., 2022). This perspective is reinforced by the academic discourse on political ethics, which argues that moral frameworks rooted in religious traditions can effectively address the ethical challenges of modern electoral systems. Thus, the article not only upholds the significance of religious moderation in politics but also provides a framework for achieving a just and humane electoral process.

Based on the analysis of the aforementioned articles, it can be inferred that nu.or.id provides a balanced and inclusive interpretation of Islam. The materials on this platform adhere to the principles of communicative rationality by incorporating objective elements that address prevailing phenomena. Furthermore, the references utilized in the content draw from reputable sources endorsed by qualified scholars, thereby fortifying the validity of the arguments presented. The knowledge conveyed in these articles emanates from individuals or collectives with pragmatic and logical insights. Habermas posits that knowledge is subject to scrutiny, debate, critique, or refinement. Rationality, construed as dialogic discourse, facilitates consensus-building, transcending subjective viewpoints, and fostering reasoned trust (Feteris & Feteris, 2017).

Habermas posits that the ideal public sphere is a neutral space devoid of censorship (Habermas, 1991). Freedom, in this context, implies that every individual or group possesses the liberty to express themselves and engage in discourse, while critical insight involves responsibly and impartially scrutinizing all public decision-making processes. Thus, Habermas' conception of the public sphere aligns with the ethos of nu.or.id in disseminating its viewpoints. As an Islamic portal championing objective discourse in its publications, nu.or.id embodies the characteristics of the Habermasian public sphere (Jędrysiak, 2020). Furthermore, rational authors are expected to foster a moderate interpretation of Islam and facilitate ideal communication without coercion or bias.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, nu.or.id applies Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative rationality to promote religious moderation in a well-organized manner. By following the principles of rational

discourse, nu.or.id ensures that its articles are based on religious and logical arguments that align with norms of dialogue. This approach is visible in the portal's dedication to presenting Islamic narratives from authentic sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and reputable scholars. nu.or.id not only aims to promote moderate messages but also seeks to establish broad consensus through open and rational dialogue, in accordance with Habermas' idea of collective understanding. Moreover, nu.or.id's application of Habermas' theory involves carefully selecting references that support arguments with objective and credible criteria. The references used in its articles, including academically recognized sources, reinforce the claims made and provide a strong basis for the advocated moderate interpretations. This ensures that the discourse is not solely based on subjective views but is rooted in the principles of communicative rationality, emphasizing transparency, honesty, and inclusivity in constructing a moderate Islamic narrative.

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