

BUILDING A DIGITAL-BASED (POST-PANDEMIC) MODERATE MUSLIM URBAN COMMUNITY: REFLECTION ON THE INTERPRETATION OF DA'WAH VERSES

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Abstract

Extremism is a common problem that needs to be resolved by various parties. One of the causes of extremism is the paradigm of primordialism and ethnocentrism. This paradigm holds that individuals or groups themselves are the best and tend to demean other groups. Socio-religious changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic have exacerbated the situation of a pluralistic Indonesian society. This has even permeated through the cyberspace. This article reflects on the interpretation of the verses calling for a response to the post-Covid-19 condition of Muslim urban communities. This article aims at maintaining the harmony of Indonesian society, especially urban Muslims, while at the same time reinforcing a moderate attitude after the outbreak. This study uses a qualitative research method with a content analysis approach. This article concludes that the reflection of these da'wah verses leads to the importance of digital da'wah as a means of building (post-pandemic) moderate urban Muslim communities by upholding the goals of Islam, namely *rahmatan li al-'alamin*, and collective benefit. There are six ways to build a moderate, digital-based Muslim urban community: First, through media literacy and digital literacy; second, a preacher must have the courage to expose his potential; third, grounding the content of moderation on social media; fourth, forming a group of moderate-minded digital media account managers; fifth, strengthening collaboration with influencers (people who are influential in social media); sixth, courteous communication.

Keywords: Covid-19, Da'wah Verses, Moderate, Urban Muslims.

A. Introduction

The emergence of Covid-19 (*Coronavirus Disease-19*) at the end of 2019 (Suryahadi *et al.* 2020) have implicated various sectors of human live internationally, including Indonesia. Not only the health aspect, but also economic, religious, social, educational,

and tourism aspects were also affected (Lin *et al.* 2020, Suryahadi *et al.* 2020, Isalamy 2021). Another coinciding problem with the emergence of Covid-19 occurred in society is the weakening of moderation, which Simultaneously triggers the rise of extremism. Exaggerated attitudes or extremism have become the main motive for global or local violence and terrorist attacks (Rahman 2018, Suprianto 2022). The interpretation of "violence" is not only illustrated physically but also in non-physical forms, such as verbal. Both physical and non-physical violence have caused psychological and physical impacts on victims resulting in life stability disruption. In certain circumstances, people experience anxiety (Murtiwiidayanti & Ikawati, 2021) and live in fear of becoming victims of violence or being unable to meet the necessities of life. In the end, they will experience the phenomenon of "overprotecting-self" which tends to create too much protection toward themselves or their group.

This phenomenon, from the perspective of sociology, is called primordialism and ethnocentrism. These two terms are often interpreted with high loyalty to their ethnicity, race, religion, and culture. Apart from having a positive impact, in the form of gripping the group principles and its own culture so that its essence and existence emerge predominantly, excessive portion of primordialism or ethnocentrism will also create negative impacts. Degrading, intolerance, and insults, even in the physical realm can occur because of primordialism and ethnocentrism. Societies that are unable to maintain this attitude with the multicultural reality of Indonesian citizen will trigger social conflicts that can break the harmony of Indonesia as a nation (Prayitno *et al.*, 2018). This phenomenon does not only occur in the social realm but also in religious life. Not surprisingly, the paradigm of primordialism and ethnocentrism have become the embryo of such complex problems, especially in relation with the existence of Covid-19 which requires everyone to maintain their will of life and continue to live despite the limitations.

The urge to survive and respond to situations and circumstances caused by Covid-19, on one hand, can be used as a medium to hone creativity to live in a limited life situation such as distance learning. On the other hand, it can be used as a momentum for extremists to spread their understanding. Based on a study conducted by *The Habibie Center*, extremist groups responded to Covid-19 by building a narrative that the pandemic was a punishment from God caused by unjust local or global governments (Rasyid *et al.*, 2021). These findings may lead the public to understand extreme behavior and government sentiment. At the highest level, there will be violence and terrorism. If this continues, it will hinder the government's goal to declare 2022 as the year of tolerance. Research conducted by Syatar *et al.* said that at the basic level of emergency moderation in religion is caused by shallow interpretation upon the term moderation, guarding the soul (*hifdz al-nafs*), fiqh, and the rule of "*al-ashl fi al-mudar al-tahrim*" (the original law stating that something that is not useful is forbidden) (Abdul Syatar *et al.*, 2020).

The two research findings above illustrate that society is not moderate due to the inability to harmonize its religious teachings with the situation and circumstances during the pandemic era. This will generate the issue of SARA (ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group relations), social inequality, and intolerance in the name of religion, which gives the impression that there is no equality and unity as a nation. Nowadays, these problems are not only present in the real world but also are transformed in the virtual environment. For example, the era of digital disruption, on one hand, can stimulate someone to be more creative and innovative. On the other hand, it will develop the seeds of extremism. Issues of religion, politics, and socio-culture are used as weapons in bringing the masses. Fake news (hoaxes), provocative, hate content, and

hate speech also continue to appear in cyberspace. Ironically, extremism is now dominated by young people who incidentally are pioneers in this country's extra demographic. A weak understanding of *wasathiyah* and the rapid flow of information resulted in an inclusive society and the depletion of moderate attitudes. These conditions have touched transcendental and social values so that people do not take the path of *tabayyun* (clarification) and verification in responding to news content. If left unchecked, such conditions will threaten the life ecosystem of a pluralistic society.

Based on data released by databoks.katadata.co.id. as of January 2022, internet users in Indonesia reached 204,7 million or 73,7 percent of Indonesia's total population (Pahlevi 2022). The high data does not only construct positive attitudes but also transform them into tools that are used to spread and practice extremism. Data from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology Republic of Indonesia (*Kominfo RI*) shows that as of April 3, 2021, there was 20.443 accounts indicated as terrorist content on social media (Rizkinaswara, 2021). According to commissioner general (*Komjen*) Boy Rafli Amar, 50 percent of social media postings contain expressions of intolerance and evil plan. The above conditions have become a bitter reality toward the concept of religious and cultural diversity of Indonesian society. Even the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* and "religious society" are under a scrutiny.

The crisis must be immediately responded in a good, efficient, relevant, and creative ways. The absence of quick responses toward these issues, will retain the problem of moderation in urban society after the pandemic era. Therefore, the urgency of this study is as an endeavor applies to building a post-pandemic moderate urban society. Through the reception of da'wah verses as an interpretation of optimizing digital da'wah, this paper is to delve into the interpretation of these verses to produce realistic digital-based steps. Digital da'wah is interceded for forming a society based on the principles of Islamic teachings; ideally it should be representative, innovative, and interactive (Nasution, 2019). Optimizing digital da'wah is not only a delivery method that is adapted to the conditions of modern society but also as an actualization of religious teachings. As the hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Amr Ra. He said; Rasulullah saw. said, "Convey from me even if only one verse" (Narrated by al-Bukhārī) (Al-Bukhārī 1993). The hadith above indicates that every human being is obliged to convey the teachings of his religion, including moderation and tolerance within the religious framework. This paper also aims to reflect on the interpretation of da'wah verses as a way of responding to post-Covid-19 situations and conditions. This situation is socially related to optimizing digital da'wah toward a moderate society, by asking the question of how to reflect on da'wah verses? How to build a moderate Muslim urban society after Covid-19?

B. Method

This paper is a qualitative research that uses various literature as the basis data. This research approaches the data using ethnographic and content analysis approach. In addition to collecting data using library research, the author uses a virtual ethnographic perspective. The principle of this virtual ethnographic approach is how to recognize and discover the continuity of phenomena that have taken root in the offline world and transform it into the online world. After the data is collected, it is then analyzed using content analysis techniques. In selecting da'wah verses, the author traces and selects verses that contain the ways of da'wah. The results of this interpretation are reflected to respond as well as create solutions in building a moderate urban society after Covid-19 pandemic.

C. Findings and Discussion

1. Findings

Tracing the Roots of Urban Community Extremism during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The term “extremism” is a religious phenomenon stemmed from a rigid interpretation upon religious sources. Another factor that shapes extremism is the paradigm of primordialism and ethnocentrism. Primordialism is a firm attitude towards local values and norms since birth, including race, religion, customs, and beliefs. This attitude may affect positively and negatively on nationalism. The positive effect of this attitude is the formation of patterns of life and social interaction based on one’s own beliefs and cultural norms. However, it will turn negative when one doesn’t want to accept differences in the surrounding environment, as are the circumstances. Not surprisingly, this primordialism is closely related to nationalism, either as a strengthening or weakening factor. Primordialism is seen as an element of nationalism, not as an explanation of nationalism. Meanwhile, ethnocentrism is a way of life that thinks that one’s own culture or group is the best. The five elements that cause these traits are biological differences, geography, social status, beliefs, and social norms (Coakley, 2018; Prayitno et al., 2018; Sari & Samsuri, 2020).

Primordialism is an exaggerated attitude toward self-locality, in terms of race, religion, belief, and culture. Even though Indonesians have a way of life that is embodied in the values of Pancasila, they are faced with two alternatives. The first alternative is to create a tolerant society so that differences can coexist; secondly. It will lead society to self-based values. This ego-trait will not accept opinions, views, and choices of others. When Covid-19 hit Indonesia, many paradigms became the foundation to interpret the situation, including various public responses (Hilmy & Niam, 2021). Someone with a rigid understanding of fiqh will argue that the government is preventing people from praying in congregations and worshipping. However, people who have a flexible fiqh conviction believe that the government is trying to protect people from death. These two facts depart from the individual’s belief in his religious teachings. Some people maintain the egoism of belief regardless of situations and conditions, while others are tolerant of other people’s decisions. If society cannot adapt itself to various conditions, the attitude of primordialism may trigger the social conflicts disrupting the harmony between humans (Rizqi, 2020).

The effects of the above matters cannot be taken lightly. The results of excessive primordialism and ethnocentrism may trigger a belief that other people must adopt to his or her opinion, which may lead to a domino effect. As a result, activities that include beliefs, attitudes, feelings, actions, and strategies from one character go beyond the normal (Aliah et al., 2018). The benchmark of “going beyond the bounds of the ordinary” can be reflected in the absence of conformity to the essence of religion itself or the type of government in a country to people’s behavior. There is a relationship between the quality of understanding religion and social reality. It is this attitude of extremism that is engendered by a bad understanding of one of these two elements. Balance and collaboration of perspectives are important to campaign to create a moderate society. Excessive belief in their religious views and behavior and judging other people’s religions as wrong is the first root of extremism. According to Masykuri Abdillah, extremism is religious understanding and behavior that believes only in its understanding while considers others as wrong and must be resisted or oppressed, while the adherents express it with violence (Alkatiri, 2018).

This picture picks up momentum in the realm of urban society. The religious diversity of urban society gives rise to various forms of ways to express their religious teachings, especially Islam. The implication is that there is competition in highlighting

religious characteristics which are a representation of each other's identity. This will turn into a parasite in the socio-religious realm and be exclusive because they consider their understanding to be most correct. One of the factors that gave rise to such urban society's religious views is the instantaneous acquaintance with religion without any strong scientific link. The situation is even exacerbated by the massive use of the internet by urban communities. Since 2013 urban communities still dominate internet use (Kominfo 2013). The impact of this spontaneous and partial understanding of religion is that urban society does not have a comprehensive view of the essence of religion.

Someone who understands the essence of religious teachings namely maintaining human dignity, worth, and civilization cannot be free from extremism, if it is not balanced with a comprehensive understanding of the state consensus. For example, people who have studied and understood their religious teachings for years, but violate the points of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), which have become the consensus of the Indonesia people, are included in acts of extremism. Religion should not be used as an excuse to destroy civilization because, since it was passed down, religion has been directed to build civilization (Kemenag RI, 2019). Understanding Indonesianness and nationalism is important to be voiced to balance the understanding the essence of the religion they are adhered to. Religious beliefs that teach affection and love must also be instilled in urban society so that they have a perspective within them which signify that all things that are not based on love are not religious teachings, but "under the guise" of religion. One of the elements to practice this belief is to realize that every individual has a homeland. The absolute state consensus is carried out as long as it goes hand in hand with the basis of each religion and does not interfere with the beliefs of its adherents. Extremism does no such thing. The implication is that they do not agree with and follow the government's directives for handling Covid-19.

Extremists have sentiments against the government and are increasing because they have attitudes towards Covid-19 itself. Including having to adapt to government policies regarding pandemics (Said en Santosa 2021). There are three views of extremists towards the Covid-19 outbreak; *first*, to keep sympathizers from leaving their area and group; *second*, Covid-19 is a medium for Allah's punishment that was revealed to disbelievers; *third*, the momentum to build a narrative and attack the enemy (Rasyid *et al.* 2021). Even though this view is a form of global extremism, in the realm of Indonesia, the picture is not much different. For example, the leadership of *Jamaah Ansharut Daulah* (JAD) in the Java region affirmed that Covid-19 is a part of God's army; it is even positioned as God's punishment for Indonesian citizens. In line with this narrative, extremist groups continue to carry out their actions to influence society with digital media, especially social media. This choice is justified and in line with the enactment of PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) by the government in almost all regions. Not surprisingly, urban people spend more time at home with their internet.

The movement of community activities from the real world to the virtual world provides an opportunity for extremists to spread their teachings in the digital world. The content displayed by them tends to be an imbalance between the understanding of religion and the existing reality. Therefore, straightening and balancing "understanding" is the foundation for building a moderate society. This is in line with the purpose of Allah SWT. creating Muslims as a moderate society. Allah SWT. said in QS. Al-Baqarah verse 143: "Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you".

According to al-Baghawi (d. 510 H), the word *wasathan* (middle) means fairness and choice (Al-Baghawi, 1997). In line with this interpretation, al-Zamakhsyari (d. 683 H) (Al-Zamakhsyari, 1407 H) stated that the word *wasathan* can be used in a singular (*mufrad*), plural (*jama'*), female (*muannath*), and male (*mudzakkar*). Through the analysis of his language, al-Zamakhsyari constructs that a just or moderate attitude is not only in religion, but must also cover all aspects of life. This is indicated by the pronunciation of *wasathan* which applies to all types of words; fair and balanced in its use. From the perspective of tafseer maqashidi, the presence of the word *wasathan* aims at giving the impression that a "balanced nature" is not confined to just one aspect of life. The broad definition of justice does not generalize things but can position something according to the situation and circumstances. Likewise in the verse above, Allah wants people on this earth to be able to give something according to their portion. The challenge is that this must be done amid the diversity that Allah has created. For example, in the context of knowledge comprehension. A just person will be able to use that understanding deeply in any circumstance and situation. It is this fair attitude that escapes extremists when responding to the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic. The implication of having a just nature and being the chosen people is the formation of a good society. The community can position itself between extremists and liberals, between *al-ghuluwwu* and *al-taqsir*.

The urgency of having fairness in all aspects of life means maintaining one's religious principles. Not only Islam, but all religions also teach that one must act fairly. Therefore, fairness and balance are the principles of moderate religion. Fair means putting everything in place. Meanwhile, balanced is an attitude that is always in the middle between the two poles. Extreme people are willing to act in the name of their God but ignoring the human aspect. People like this are willing to kill each other "in the name of God", even though protecting humanity is the core of just religious teachings. A just person knows his position as a human being and must respect his neighbor.

One of the actions that are not based on humanity is intolerance. It is human nature to be created as diverse and plural creatures which necessitates tolerance in all matters. Moreover, in Indonesia, there is not only diversity in religion, but ethnicity, race, culture, and language are also not single. This fact is still used as the seed of extremism in religion. Events that are still remembered, for example, are a group of people who disturbed a church congregation in Bekasi Regency in 2020 and the expulsion of Muslims who were worshipping a holiday (Eid al-Fitr) in Tolikara in 2015 (Said 2017, Indonesia 2020).

Trends in cases of acts of extremism before and during the Covid-19 pandemic have similarities that are not much different. For example, the case in September 2020 in Aceh involved the government banning religious leaders' houses in the form of a warning to stop construction (Admin 2020). A similar incident occurred in Mojokerto in the form of a ban on the heads of the community from putting up religious symbols and turning houses into places of worship (Santoso 2020, Rasyid *et al.* 2021). As for those that are in direct contact with the Covid-19 situation, a form of intolerance occurs in Bekasi which is experienced by one family because they are prevented from praying at home. The ban stems from social restrictions (Setiawan 2020). When viewed from the occurred cases, the problem of extremism is caused by disagreeing on their religious understanding upon others, despite the fact that Allah SWT. has outlined in the Qur'an how to interact with and respect other religions. This is stated in QS. al - An'am verse 108. "Do not curse (the worship of) what they worship besides Allah because they will later curse Allah by going beyond the limit without (basic) knowledge. Thus, we made

every nation consider their work good. Then to their Lord their return, then He will tell them what they have done”.

According to Ibn Abbas, the *asbab nuzul* of the above verse talks about the preaching of the Prophet and the believers who insult the God of the polytheists. After that incident, the polytheist spoke to the Prophet to stop preaching that tends to insult; if not, they will repay the abuse (Kašir 1419 H, Al-Ṭabarī 2001). Ibn 'Athiyah (d. 542 H), in his commentary on al-Muharrar al-Wajiz, emphasized that it is not permissible for a Muslim to insult religion and the cross -God- of infidels, denigrate other religions, and to insult certain religious figures or sacred symbols. Such activity was caused by religious fanaticism ('Aṭiyyah 1422 H). This attitude of religious fanaticism has the potential to lead to contempt for religion, violence, and discrimination, and will even divide unity in Indonesia (Nurjanah en Wibowo 2021). Therefore, insulting symbols of other religions is illegal because it hurts one's religion and the life of the nation and state.

Intolerance does not only occur in aspects of private worship rituals but also occurs in the social realm. Cases of rejecting the bodies of Covid-19, choosing the distribution of aid based on religion, and not even being motivated to help others are also included in cases of intolerance. The exclusion of patients is also included in intolerance. Both in terms of religion and society, intolerance occurs because people do not have extensive knowledge about the importance of building togetherness amid differences and awareness to maintain human values. In addition, extremist attitudes also arise because of the erroneous interpretation of "tolerant" in religion. Extreme people do not have a stand for their beliefs, so they are willing to follow the main rituals of worship of other religions for reasons of tolerance. Even though being moderate is enough to respect others and not disturb the peace of others.

Then, the problem of extremism above is transformed into a part of cyberspace. The freedom of digital space provides an opportunity for some groups to spread extremism. This certainly endangers the lives of people who are affected by digital media. The order of attitudes (personal norms) and social norms will be damaged so that it can have an impact on bad social and cultural systems. Based on data released by the equivalent institute (2021), in 2020 there were 32 cases of reporting religious blasphemy; as many as 27 were based online (in the network) (Setara 2021). The case that happened to Muhammad Kece emphasized that intolerance has become an acute problem (antarnews 2021). The impact will change the religious system and order of Indonesian society which is known as friendly and tolerant Islam. Allah SWT. creates diverse human beings is not to insult, insult, and disrespect each other. Rather, so that they know each other, build brotherhood, and spread love, as in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 13. “O mankind, verily We have created you from a male and a female. Then, we made you nations and tribes so that you may know each other. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah are the most pious of people. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Seerful”.

In general, the verse above talks about the etiquette of believers towards all human beings. This is a form of application of the science of *munasabah* (correlation) verses 11, 12, and 13 QS. Al-Hujurat. According to al-Zuhayli (d. 2015), this verse shows similarities between humans and at the same time prohibits boasting of offspring so that differences and multiculturalism are a necessity in life (Al-Zuhaili 1418 H). Islam itself respects this, as practiced by the Prophet in the Medina charter. Multiculturalism has relevance to Islamic teachings, including tolerance, peace, and justice (Akhmadi 2019). These three teachings are not only realized in the world. They are real but must be grown in life in cyberspace. Therefore, building a moderate urban

society must involve cyberspace which incidentally becomes a new space for interaction and building civilization. This proposition emphasizes that digital da'wah must continue to be endeavored and optimized.

Reflections on the Interpretation of Da'wah Verses: from Conventional to Digital Da'wah

Da'wah is the need of the people in expressing the teachings and principles of their religion. In fact, da'wah can also be used as propaganda or a moment to influence others. Da'wah is an attempt to convey something to others, both to individuals and groups about the view of human life according to Islam (Hasanah 2021). Meanwhile, according to Asman et al., da'wah is an effort to improve a new civilization for humans (Fathurrahman *et al.* 2021). This description provides an understanding that da'wah is an effort that is carried out by someone to spread his religion to improve and renew the life of the community. The function of preaching can be understood as an effort to preserve the life of the community so that it is harmonious and happy. In addition, it also works to save people from all things that can lead to destruction (Nasution 2019). Allah SWT. said in QS. Ali Imran verse 104. "There should be among you a group of people who call to virtue, enjoin (doing) what is good, and forbid what is bad. They are the lucky ones".

According to al-Maraghi (d. 1371 H), in Tafsir al-Maraghi, the verse above contains three commands, namely to perfect the individual; carry out all orders, and avoid prohibitions (Al-Marāgī 1946). Explicitly, the three commandments are the meaning of da'wah which aims to protect the law and sharia. In addition, da'wah is also one of the processes of achieving individual good in which there is a collective benefit. This is in line with Lestari's expression that da'wah is an activity that aims at inviting the community to goodness and forbid evil, either in verbal, writing, painting, as well as actions using methods and media that are bounded by Islamic principles to achieve human happiness in this world and the hereafter (Lestari 2020).

Lestari's statement above does not only position da'wah as a process, but also is directly related to the methods and media used by someone in preaching. Success in achieving goals necessitates one's creativity in achieving these goals. Therefore, the methods and media used in preaching cannot be separated from their goals. However, these methods and media must still rely on the basic concept of Islam, namely *rahmatan li al-'alamin*. This is reinforced by the word of God in QS. al-Nahl verse 125. "Call (humans) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good teaching and debate them in a better way. Indeed, your Lord is the one who knows best who strays from His way and He (also) knows best who got the hint".

The basic concept of Islam should be the basis for preachers to determine the methods and media used. In general, there are three methods of da'wah, namely verbal, written, and behavioral. Verbal methods include lectures, discussions, questions and answers, counseling, and propaganda (persuasion). While the writing method can be done with various printed mass media (books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and others). Behavioral da'wah can be practiced by doing good deeds (Rukmana 2018). This is in line with the hadith of the Prophet Saw. which reads: "If you see evil then change it with your hands; if you are unable to do it, then use it verbally; but if you are still not strong enough, then (must deny) with your heart, because that is the weakest faith" (Narrated Muslim) (Al-Ḥajjāj 1433).

This hadith indicates that there are steps that must be taken in preaching and Islam provides convenience by providing a choice of the method according to the ability of its people. The emphasis of the hadith above is the importance of each

individual being involved in improving and renewing society. Not a requirement to use all methods of da'wah, but choose one. If it is possible to use all the better. Qadhī 'lyadh said that the hadith is the nature of transformation. As for the necessity for the person who changes it is to arrange ways and methods that allow for changes in the object being changed, either verbally or in action (Al-Nawawī 1392). This interpretation opens the way for a preacher to be creative and innovative in conveying the contents of da'wah to change what is still not good, and strengthen what is already good. Along with the development and progress of the times, the changing nature conveyed by the hadith above experiences flexibility of interpretation. It is not surprising that digital da'wah, in the perspective of reflection on da'wah verses, tries to provide a touch and implementation of what has been expressed by Qadhī 'lyadh.

In addition to the method, the success of da'wah is also closely related to the media being used. therefore, the optimization of methods and media are two things that must be fulfilled in building good da'wah. One of today's da'wah media is digital. According to Santi et al., digital is something related to technology. The existence of "digital da'wah" shows that the delivery of Islamic religious teachings always blends with the progress of the times and is not rigid (Hadiono *et al.* 2021). This confirms that Islam is a religion that is open to something new, provided that it conforms to the universal values of Islam. In addition, digital da'wah can also be an alternative amid the massive needs of society to digital platforms toward digital culture.

The existence of an ideal digital da'wah requires awareness of the people concerned about the relationship between da'wah as an obligation and digital as a means of da'wah. This shows that da'wah has two principles, namely *tsawabit* and *mutaghayyirat*. *Tsawabit* is a fixed and definite principle of da'wah; for example, inviting the good, preventing evil, and prioritizing compassion, balance, and tolerance. Meanwhile, *mutaghayyirat* is a principle that can change and be flexibly adapted to the circumstances. For example, preaching through wayang media during *the Wali Songo* period and digital preaching in today's modern era.

Changes and replacements of da'wah media in Islam aim at maintaining the quality of the teachings, not merely destroy the da'wah principles themselves. In fact, the presence of digital preaching will make it easier for preachers to spread messages of compassion, moderation, and peace. This is because the nature of digital da'wah is flexible and not bound by time, so it can save more time. In addition, this digital da'wah is an endeavor of preachers to ground Islam that is not rigid and open. This is by the principle of renewal: "Maintaining the good old traditions, and making new things that are better."

The principle above should be upheld by everyone who is obliged to preach, especially preaching moderation. Moderation is described by religious groups that prioritize the balance of mind (and revelation), and pay attention to the basic principles of maintaining the common good (Kirana en Garadian 2020). The invitation to form a moderate Muslim urban community after the Covid-19 pandemic should be of concern to all levels of society and related institutions to utilize digital media. The tendency and habits of people during the pandemic to spend a lot of time in the "digital world" are the strongest reason for the importance of digital da'wah. In fact, if we trace back acts of extremism, it doesn't just happen in cyberspace, it happens in the real world. The movement is then displayed in digital space with the aim of existence or as a selection of group members. This shows that digital da'wah has a dual function in building a moderate society. The first function is moderate in interacting and acting in the real world; second, being able to make "digital" a healthy and moderate communication medium; not as an intermediary in instilling ideas and acts of

extremism. Therefore "digital" is free of values and laws, it is necessary to optimize it in its context and function as a medium of da'wah moderation.

2. Discussion

Intensification of Digital Da'wah to Form a Moderate Urban Society

Broadly speaking, the intensification of digital da'wah is a simple effort that is still abstract in optimizing digital media. Therefore, it needs to be shaped into concrete steps in the context of building a moderate Muslim urban society after the Covid-19 pandemic. These efforts can be realized in several ways: *first*, through media literacy and digital literacy. Literacy is defined as an individual's ability to read and write, characterized by the ability to make brief statements in life. In addition, literacy is also related to the ability to locate, evaluate, use and communicate through various resources, including text, visual, sound, and video resources (Sumadaria 2014).

Meanwhile, media literacy means that everyone must have the knowledge, interpretation, and ability to understand the content that appears in the media. Media literacy is directed at building a joint cultural and intellectual awareness movement about the importance of addressing the flow of media information so that it is beneficial to life. It is assumed that not all of the information presented is positive, but the opposite is true. The existence of media literacy builds "preachers" to produce counter-narratives of extremists in their preaching. Not only that, but the public must also have the ability to analyze, identify, and verify any present information, so that extremist content does not affect it. For example, preachers before producing their da'wah content must look at phenomena that occur in the digital world, especially those that have nothing to do with moderation. So that he can provide an overview and evaluation to the public about the negative content. Whereas in the context of society (as consumers of content/objects of da'wah), media literacy skills can be carried out by studying and diligently asking questions when there is information that is still sketchy.

Whereas digital literacy is the ability to use information technology to use digital tools/facilities appropriately to manage, evaluate, and utilize it in creating and communicating content or information effectively and properly (Restianty 2018). Digital literacy must be possessed by a preacher to maximize the moderation of content. This is because each digital media has different facilities. For example, preachers are smart in using social media and can take advantage of every menu presented by digital media, so they can provide content that is interesting and right on target. This first step is the actualization of the QS content. al-'Alaq verses 1-5 emphasize the activities of reading, writing, and observation.

Second, a preacher must have the courage to expose his potential. The digital world that focuses on people's creativity and productivity encourage people to explore and maximize the abilities of each individual; no exception for a preacher. After building media literacy and digital literacy, preachers must have the courage to show their abilities and potential. This is also related to expertise in one field of knowledge and the ability to develop it. Such as the method of lectures, writing, or even seminars and talk shows, which are adapted to facilities in digital media. A preacher can convey a message of moderation that doesn't have to be done with video or sound but can be done in writing. This can be found on the Instagram account @nadirsyahosen_official, where the majority of the content contains photos of Gus Nadir and short posts. This second step is based on the obligation of preaching for each individual and human nature has its potential.

Third, optimize moderate content creation. Content is a digital world marketing strategy. The sophistication of "equipment" in the digital era should be used as an incentive to create more interesting content. Making this content requires an understanding of something to be conveyed. If the message of moderation is material, then you must have an understanding of moderation. After that, the preacher should understand the status and condition of the object or target of his da'wah, so that it will affect the creation of the content; whether in the form of text, sound, images, or video. In addition, this third step relates to the packaging of the content, whether it is packaged in a satirical, stilted, or even humorous form, but the message reaches the object of the da'wah.

Fourth, form a digital media account management group. Not only digital preaching but conventional preaching is also often found by management groups, especially in the digital world. Optimizing digital da'wah does not only talk about content and moderation messages; rather it relates to the group involved. This third step also emphasizes that digital da'wah will be efficient and effective if there is synergy between groups. This is based on the limitations of preachers in managing da'wah content in the digital realm. If anything, they don't have time to manage their content in the digital world. Moreover, for a preacher who incidentally is not a millennial, this digital preaching is often an obstacle. Therefore, young and old are required to form groups in realizing a moderate urban Muslim society.

Fifth, strengthen a cooperation with influencers (people who influence social media). Influencers have the power to influence other people's decision-making because of their authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with their audience (followers) (Anjani en Irwansyah 2020). The reach of a person's influence in the digital world, especially internet-based, is partly due to the number of followers (followers). If there are more and more followers, then the spread of the content is also able to reach many people. The potential of these influencers should be utilized by preachers to collaborate or even influencers themselves who preach and convey messages of moderation. For example, government agencies, Community Organizations (Ormas), and Youth Organizations (OKP) which are directly related to institutional responsibility can hook influencers in campaigning messages of moderation so that a moderate society can be achieved. *Sixth*, convey courteous communication. Reflection on the interpretation of QS. al-Nahl verse 125 provides a lesson that building a moderate Muslim urban community must be done with well-mannered communication patterns. Whatever media is used, conventional or digital, respectful communication is the main key.

D. Conclusion

The understanding and attitudes of extremism within society must be resolved properly and wisely. The presence of digital da'wah provides a convincing prospect for realizing a moderate society. This is because the concept of digital da'wah is an embodiment of the core teachings and goals of the Islamic religion, namely *rahmatan li al-'alamin* and collective benefit. Optimizing digital da'wah from an Islamic perspective adheres to the principle of maintaining good old traditions and adopting better habits. This principle is directed at making Muslim urban communities better, and prosperous in the world and the hereafter. This understanding is a reflection of da'wah verses that discuss the process and the importance of inviting conventional to digital-based. Reflection on the da'wah verses must then be realized concretely to create a moderate Muslim urban society. There are six ways: *First*, through media literacy and digital literacy; *second*, the preacher must have the courage to expose his potential; *third*, by

grounding content moderation on social media; *fourth*, forming a digital media account management group; *fifth*, by strengthening cooperation with influencers; *sixth*, courteous communication. It is hoped that these six efforts will be able to provide an injection of enthusiasm for the community, especially preachers, to optimize their digital equipment as a propaganda medium. When these five efforts are made, it is not impossible that the aspiration of declaring 2022 as the "year of tolerance" can be achieved soon.

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F. Author Contributions Statement

The author consists of three researchers who have their respective roles. Two authors live in Jakarta and one author lives in Manchester while completing his doctoral studies. Jauhar Azizy was the initiator of the study, compiled and designed the analysis, and proposed joint research with partners. Sihabussalam collaborated on data collection, work on reference management, and data contribution. Desmaliza collaborated to develop reference management research instruments and analytical tools. All authors cooperated in collecting data, analyzing data, and reading to approve the final manuscript.

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