Pagar Nusa Endeavors to Knitting Towards a Moderate Society

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the role of Pagar Nusa, an autonomous body of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Indonesian traditional martial arts, in realizing a moderate society. Pagar Nusa is dedicated to exploring, developing and preserving the Nahdlatul Ulama martial art, which has deep spiritual and cultural values. This study uses a field approach, including a type of qualitative research. Data was obtained through observation, interviews and documentation to explore the programs implemented by Pagar Nusa in fostering moderation. Data analysis techniques are processed, presented, and inference or validation. Through training, competitions and seminars, Pagar Nusa aims to introduce pencak silat to the broader community and educate the younger generation about the importance of cultural heritage and ethical self-defence skills. This study emphasizes the principles of religious moderation, such as balance, justice, kindness, and wisdom, which form the basis of Pagar Nusa's activities. The findings of this research contribute to the understanding of how pencak silat can be an effective instrument in promoting moderation and fighting radicalism in a multicultural society which ultimately encourages positive social change.

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji peran Pagar Nusa sebuah badan otonom Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) dalam bidang seni bela diri tradisional Indonesia, dalam mewujudkan masyarakat moderat. Pagar Nusa didedikasikan untuk menggali, mengembangkan, dan melestarikan seni bela diri Nahdlatul Ulama, yang memiliki nilai spiritual dan budaya yang mendalam. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan lapangan termasuk jenis penelitian kualitatif. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, untuk mendalami program-program yang dilaksanakan Pagar Nusa dalam membina moderasi. Teknik analisis data dilakukan pemrosesan, penyajian, dan inferensi atau validasi. Melalui kegiatan seperti pelatihan, lomba dan seminar, Pagar Nusa bertujuan untuk memperkenalkan pencak silat ini kepada masyarakat luas sekaligus mengedukasi generasi muda tentang pentingnya warisan budaya dan keterampilan bela diri yang etis. Kajian ini menekankan prinsip-prinsip moderasi beragama, seperti keseimbangan, keadilan, kebaikan, dan kebijaksanaan, yang menjadi landasan aktivitas Pagar Nusa. Temuan penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman bagaimana pencak silat dapat menjadi instrumen yang efektif dalam

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mempromosikan moderasi dan melawan radikalisme dalam masyarakat multikultural yang pada akhirnya mendorong perubahan sosial yang positif.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Nahdlatul Ulama is a religious organization that, in aqidah, follows the teachings of expert sunnah wal jama'ah Imam Abul Hasan Al-Asy'ari and Imam Abu Manshur Al-Maturudi, in fiqh follows Imam Syafi'I, and in the field of tasawuf follows Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi and Imam Al-Ghazali (PBNU, 2019);(Taufiq & Harisudin, 2022).

Based on this religious understanding, it produces societal attitudes, while NU's social attitudes are as follows: **First**, the attitude of *tawasuth* and *'itidal*, which are always on the central axis to avoid the extreme attitude of *tatharruf*. **Second**, is the attitude of *tasamuh*, namely tolerance towards differences, especially in religious matters. **Third**, the attitude of *tawazun*, namely the attitude of being balanced or not exaggerating in worshipping Allah SWT. These three attitudes can prevent the spread of radicalism in Indonesia. Given the importance of moderation in maintaining the integrity of the unitary state of Indonesia, moderation in religion or religious moderation must be understood and implemented by all religious communities in Indonesia (Cao et al., 2018);(Yani et al., 2022).

Pagar Nusa is one of the autonomous bodies of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), which has the extraordinary task of exploring, developing, and preserving the Nahdlatul Ulama Pagar Nusa martial arts. Pencak silat is a traditional Indonesian martial art that has deep spiritual and cultural values. Nahdlatul Ulama Pagar Nusa plays a role in maintaining and developing the Nahdlatul Ulama martial art as part of the cultural heritage left by the *wali songo*. Founded at the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School, Kediri, on January 3, 1986, by KH. Maksum Jauhari or better known as Gus Maksum. (PBNU, 2019);(Sholeh et al., 2022).

The legacy of the *wali songo* refers to the teachings and values handed down, Islamic figures who played an essential role in the spread of Islam in Java in the 15th century (Slama, 2014). Pagar Nusa recognizes the importance of the Nahdlatul Ulama martial arts as an aspect of the cultural and spiritual heritage of the Wali Songo and aims to maintain, develop, and perpetuate the practice of martial arts (Anita, 2014);(Phung & Goldberg, 2021).

Pagar Nusa seeks to introduce the Nahdlatul Ulama martial arts to the broader community through training, competitions, seminars and performances. Pagar Nusa also educates the younger generation about the importance of maintaining the cultural and spiritual heritage and developing excellent and ethical self-defence skills. In addition to focusing on self-defence, Pagar Nusa also supports NU's vision and mission in promoting moderation, inter-religious harmony, and respecting differences uniquely from other organizations (Li et al., 2023);(Liu et al., 2023).

Pagar Nusa Lamongan has achieved extraordinary achievements, including becoming the general champion in the East Java Pagar Nusa NU Cup event (Muzaki, 2023).
achievement shows the extraordinary dedication and ability of Pagar Nusa Lamongan members in martial arts. Apart from that, Pagar Nusa Lamongan also faces more complex challenges. Lamongan City was once a place for several radical theorists. Therefore, special attention is needed to prevent the influence of radicalism on the people of Lamongan (Hidayatullah, 2021).

In this context, Pagar Nusa Lamongan plays a role in creating a tolerant society. Through activities focused on developing the martial arts of pencak silat (Saraiva et al., 2023), Pagar Nusa Lamongan can strengthen the identity and moderate spirit of the Lamongan people. In order to spread the notion of moderation and support the Nahdlatul Ulama policy (moderate attitude), this paper attempts to reveal the programs carried out by Pagar Nusa Lamongan in creating a moderate society in the Lamongan district.

It cannot be denied that research on religious moderation and Pagar Nusa has been carried out by many previous researchers, such as Agus Akhmadi's research on Religious Moderation in Indonesia's (Akhmadi, 2019). Second, Mohamad Fahri and Ahmad Zainuri, with the theme of Religious Moderation in Indonesia (Fahri & Zainuri, 2019). Third, Elma Haryani's research entitled Religious Moderation Education for the Millennial Generation: A Case Study of the Lone Wolf in Children in Medan (Haryani, 2020). Fourth is Nurdin's research on Religion and Education in Preventing Terrorism (Nurdin, 2013). Fifth, Nur Salim, Suryanto, and Agus Widodo entitled Prevention of Radicalism and Terrorism through Multiculturalism Education for Students of MAN Kediri 1 (Salim et al., 2018). Sixth, Arif Hidayat and Lega Sugiarto's research with Strategy of Deterrence and Countermeasures of Radicalism Through Cultural Reinforcement of Central Java Communities (Hidayat & Sugiarto, 2020). Seventh, Lana Umi Fauziyah and Mutrofin's research entitled Reading of Surah Yasin Verses 9 and 83 for Asma Pamungkas and Panglimunan in Pencak Silat Nahdlatul Ulama Pagar Nusa (Fauziyah & Mutrofin, 2021).

Based on the results of previous searches, research has yet to specifically examine Pagar Nusa's role in creating a moderate society in the Lamongan Regency. Therefore, this study aims to fill this knowledge gap by providing theoretical contributions regarding the application of moderation in the Lamongan context. Through this research, Pagar Nusa Lamongan's programs will be revealed in creating a moderate society, as well as how the Nahdlatul Ulama Pagar Nusa martial arts can be an effective instrument in developing an attitude of moderation. In the context of Lamongan, which was once a place for radical theorists, this research has significant relevance in countering influences that undermine social peace and harmony. The results of this research are expected to provide valuable theoretical contributions and become guidelines for public policy in promoting religious moderation and overcoming radicalism in Lamongan Regency, creating positive changes in society.

II. METHOD

This research is field research. This study uses a qualitative approach. This approach is used to understand humans in an environment, including others and their relationship with the environment. The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the programs carried out by Pagar Nusa in realizing a moderate society in Lamongan Regency. Researchers used three data collection techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made directly to observe the Pagar Nusa
program in creating a moderate society in Lamongan Regency. In addition, researchers also conducted in-depth interviews using special interview techniques to obtain additional data. Data sources also involve literature and documentation to complement and strengthen the data obtained from observations and interviews. This study used Miles & Huberman's qualitative analysis technique. This analysis technique consists of three activities, namely data processing, data presentation, and inference or validation. Reduced data will provide a clearer picture and make it easier for researchers to collect additional data and trace back as needed. The results of the data analysis will be presented in the form of a description that describes the research findings. Using the research methods mentioned above, this research can better understand Pagar Nusa's programs in realizing a moderate society in the Lamongan Regency.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Principles of Religious Moderation

The basic principle of the concept of moderation is fair and balanced. One of the basic principles in religious moderation is to always maintain a balance between two things, for example, the balance between reason and revelation, between the physical and spiritual, between rights and obligations, between individual interests and the benefit of the communal (general people), between necessity and voluntarism, between texts. Religion and the ijtihad of religious figures, between perfect ideas and reality, and the balance between the past and the future.

The principle of balance is a term to describe a perspective, attitude, and commitment to think about justice, humanity, and equality constantly. The tendency to be balanced does not mean not having an opinion. Those with a balanced attitude mean being firm but not harsh because they are always on the side of justice. It is just that their alignment does not take other people's rights to the detriment. Balance can be seen as a form of perspective to do something in moderation, not too much or too little, neither conservative nor liberal. Other principles must be understood and implemented in addition to the principle of balance to realize a moderate society (Khairan, 2020).

*First* is the principle of justice. This principle emphasizes that there is no moderation without justice because *alwasath* means justice (QS. Al-Baqarah: 143). Thus moderation must give birth to justice and goodness. Because if a religious thought and attitude give rise to controversy, slander, and tyranny, then it can be ascertained that those thoughts and attitudes do not reflect a moderate attitude. *Second*, is the principle of kindness. Some commentators define *wasathan* as kindness (QS. Al-Baqarah: 243). Moderation is kindness itself. If an attitude does not bring goodness and benefit, then it is inevitable that this attitude is not moderate. On the contrary, an extreme, radical, and liberal attitude will give birth to evil and even evil for the perpetrators and others.

*Third* is the Wisdom principle. Besides containing the meaning of justice and kindness, religious moderation also means wisdom or wisdom. This is in line with the opinion of Ibn Qayyim, who said: "Indeed the main building of sharia is standing on the wisdom and benefit of the servant, both in the life of this world and in the life hereafter, he is all justice, all grace, all benefit, and all wisdom. Every problem that comes from justice to tyranny, from mercy to vice versa, from goodness (*maslahat*) to damage (*mafsada*), and from wisdom to futility, then it is not shari'ah, even though trying to include *takwil.*" *Forth*, Consistency principle. *Washatiyah* is consistent or
istiqomah thinking and attitude in a middle and moderate position, not easily carried away by extreme, excessive, or liberal currents. In other terms, wasathiyyah is a consistent attitude to staying on the straight path (Min & Shen, 2023).

The Basic Values of Pagar Nusa Martial Arts

As a martial arts school with ties and umbrellas for the movement of a religious organization, Pagar Nusa does not only teach self-defence (Lafuente et al., 2021). More than that, there are fundamental values that must be understood and applied by prospective warriors. These fundamental values are akhlak al-karimah, justice, honesty, openness, togetherness, independence, and modesty guided by the behaviour of the Prophet Muhammad, his friends, the aulia’, scholars, and mujahideen. The Pagar Nusa program policy is the embodiment of these values originating from the decisions of the Nahdlatul Ulama organization and the Islamic teachings of Ahlusunnah Wal Jamaah. These values will become a guideline and the basis for all efforts to build Pagar Nusa.

Within the Nahdlatul Ulama environment, Pagar Nusa developed following the culture and customs of the area where arts, culture, martial arts, and sports of pencak silat were developed. The direction of its development often followed the dynamics and situation of national and regional security. This is understandable because the cultural and martial arts were originally dedicated or assigned as a traditional effort to create security and defence of a nation. In its journey, Pagar Nusa has been running to accommodate the potential for martial arts and martial arts in the Nahdlatul Ulama environment. As well as carrying out complicated movements or moves that have been formulated into several basic movements or moves which, in the end, have become the hallmark of Pagar Nusa, because these moves and moves are characteristic of the Nahdlatul Ulama Pagar Nusa martial arts, all schools under the auspices of Nahdlatul Ulama are required to follow and implement it, provided that the motions or moves that all the pencak silat schools have owned can still be treated as assets that are still worth defending.

The Urgency of Religious Moderation in the Context of a Multicultural Society

Indonesia, as a nation consisting of various cultural, religious, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, shows that it is a nation that has a multicultural society. Diversity is a blessing in itself. If managed properly, it becomes uniqueness and strength, but such plurality can be a challenge if it is not handled wisely and wisely. It can become a threat of division and conflict that can tear apart social security. Cultural diversity is a natural event because various cultural differences meet in a place. Every individual and ethnic group meets by bringing their cultural behaviour and distinctive way of life. The multicultural concept is different from the cross-cultural concept, as is the experience of the American people who are culturally diverse because of the presence of various cultures and gathering in one country. Individual differences cover a wide range of meanings in the multicultural concept, while in the cross-cultural concept, ethnic differences are the focus of attention.

In a multicultural Indonesian society, an exclusive religious attitude that only unilaterally recognises truth and safety can cause friction between religious groups. Religious conflicts that occur a lot in Indonesia are generally triggered by exclusive religious attitudes, as well as a contestation between religious groups in gaining the support of the people, which is not based on tolerance because each uses its power to win, thus triggering conflict (Dawing, 2017).
In order to avoid disharmony, it is necessary to cultivate a moderate way of religion, an inclusive way of practising Islam, or an open religious attitude, which is called an attitude of religious moderation. Moderate religion promotes tolerance, and mutual respect, while still believing in the truth of the beliefs of each religion and sect so that all can accept decisions with a cool head without having to get involved in anarchic actions. Moderation is an archipelago culture that goes hand in hand and does not mutually negate religion and local wisdom.

Moderation must be understood and developed as a shared commitment to maintain a perfect balance in which every member of society, regardless of ethnicity, ethnicity, culture, religion, and political preferences, wants to listen to one another and learn from each other to train the ability to manage and overcome differences between them. In order to achieve moderation, inclusiveness must be avoided. The concept of inclusive Islam is not only limited to recognizing the diversity of society but also must be actualized in the form of active involvement in this fact. The attitude of inclusivity understood in Islamic thought is to provide space for a diversity of Islamic thoughts, understandings, and perceptions.

In this understanding, truth is found in one group and other groups, including religious ones. This understanding departs from a belief that all religions carry the teachings of salvation. The difference between one religion under a prophet from generation to generation is only the Shari’a. So it is clear that religious moderation is closely related to maintaining togetherness by having an attitude of tolerance, an ancestral heritage that teaches us to understand each other.

The Role of Pagar Nusa in Creating a Moderate Society in Lamongan

In addition to instilling these fundamental values, Pagar Nusa has several practices that must be carried out internally by Pagar Nusa itself, such as warriors and potential warriors who are excluded from learning moves. Among these practices are the following:

Tahlil

Tahlil is a religious ceremony usually carried out by traditional Muslim groups (mainly the NU community) by chanting praises to Allah and accompanied by reading verses of the Qur’an. This religious ceremony is carried out to commemorate the day of someone's death and to pray for the deceased's spirit to be forgiven of all his mistakes and sins and accepted by His side in peace.

Some consider the tahlil tradition to originate from the Hindu tradition, a religion that had roots before the advent of Islam in Indonesia. A historical observer named Agus Sunyoto challenged this assumption. In his research conducted among Hindus in Bali, Sunyoto found absolutely no religious ceremonies in Balinese Hindu society which could be used as an indication of the origins of the tahlil ceremony.

From the perspective of religious rites, tahlil, in the eyes of its practitioners, is a manifestation and form of a ritual procession that aims to deliver and pray for the spirits of people who have died so that their mistakes are forgiven. Their spirits are accepted by God with complete forgiveness and pleasure and are placed by Him in a shady place, quiet and calm. On the first, second, third, and so on, the souls of the deceased are prayed by the practitioners of tahlil to God so that the journey of his spirit to His presence will take place well and calmly and receive an abundance of His love, protection, and outpouring of His forgiveness. Big. From the perspective of the
sociology of religion, people who are still alive through a series of tahlil ceremonies want to do good to those who have died. By reciting the Qur'an's holy verses and the prayer ceremonies they offer in a series of tahlil rites, they wish to share goodness and virtue sincerely and sincerely with those who have passed away.

One of the ways to express their virtues and good deeds to people who have died is for them to gather in a place and hold a tahlil event together by saying a prayer offered to their soul. Thus, tahlil is a form of ritual practice and religious procession that reflects the desire of its practitioners to do good to someone not only while he is still alive but also when he has died.

**Tawassul**

The word tawassul comes from tawassala-yatawassalu-tawassulan, which means to make something an intermediary. Tawassala also means to beg. For example, when someone says divine tawassala, it means to beg him. At the same time, the word wasilah means everything used to get closer to others. Tawassul is related to the problem of begging or praying to Allah. In many verses of the Qur'an and hadith, Muslims are advised by Allah and His Messenger to ask Allah, ask for His mercy and pleasure, ask for salvation in the world and the hereafter, ask to be kept away from the fires of hell, from the evils of creatures, ask to be given sustenance that is lawful, abundant, and blessed, asking for physical and spiritual health, and so on.

The essence of tawassul, as conveyed by Sheikh Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki al-Hasani is first, tawassul is a way of praying and tawajjuh to Allah, which in essence, something that is aimed at Allah, while the goods used as intermediaries are means of getting closer to God. He is a polytheist who believes in anything other than that. Second, the person who performs tawassul must believe that the means used is something that Allah loves. Second, people who do tawassul are not allowed to believe that the means of tawassul can bring benefits or harm. Otherwise, he becomes a polytheist.

All Muslims agree that it is prescribed to do tawassul to Allah with pious deeds, such as fasting, praying, reading the Qur'an, and sadaqah. Something that is a source of difference in the matter of tawassul is when using other than mutawassil charity as an intermediary, such as tawassul, with one's essence or self. Some Muslims dispute the latter. Even if it is understood, someone who is thinking about using one's essence or self, in essence, is thinking about oneself safely. Because in essence, if someone uses the "that of the Prophet" or other pious people as a means, a mutawassil is an excellent person about the Prophet and pious people. Mutawassil deeds in the form of sahabah rasul or pious people are his actual deeds which are the means of tawassul.

**Istighasah**

Istighasah in Arabic means "to ask for help." The term istighotsah is found in the wiridan of members of the thoriqoh jama'ah (or commonly pronounced in Indonesian as tarekat), which reads: "ya hayyu ya qoyyum birahmatika astaghis", which means "o one who is alive and who does not need help, give me help". The difference between istighasah and prayer is that istighasah is only devoted to requests in complex and challenging situations. In contrast, prayer is more general because it can be done in difficult or other conditions. Therefore, all forms of istigasah are included in prayer, but not all prayers are intifadah.
Sholawat Nariyah

The definition of sholawat according to the meaning of language is prayer, whereas according to the term, shalawat is God's blessing on the Messenger of Allah in the form of grace and glory (rahat ta'dhim). Prayers from angels to the Prophet SAW are in the form of requests for mercy and glory to Allah SWT for the Prophet Muhammad, while blessings from others other than the Prophet SAW are in the form of requests for mercy and forgiveness. Salawat of believers (humans and jinn) is a request for mercy and glory to Allah for the Prophet SAW, such as Allahumma salli 'ala sayyidina Muhammad. Many benefits are generated from saying blessings and greetings to the Prophet SAW. Among them is mahabbah (love) for Him, a deep love that increases and is continuously embedded and fills the heart of a Muslim. Meanwhile, loving the Prophet SAW is an obligation for every Muslim, which is a test of faith for him.

Asmaul Husna dan Ziarah

Al Asmaa-ul Husnaa is the perfect name of Allah. The function of Asmaul Husna is as a tool to pray. Al Asmaa-ul Husnaa is ordered to be read in prayer. The purpose of Al Asmaa-ul Husna is to get closer to Allah SWT. Moreover, the speciality is effective and efficient prayer because it is easy to read, short, and light. However, complete, comprehensive concerns the affairs of the world and the hereafter and obtains the guarantee of heaven. The death of a Muslim marks the end of his journey to live in the world and then enter another realm, namely the realm of barzah (waiting) to the afterlife. To pay respects to the deceased, Muslims must perform certain rites, as stated in the fiqh books: bathing, shrouding, offering prayers, and burial.

Tadabbur Alam

Tadabbur means to go. Tadaabur nature is the activity of visiting directly with nature. This is done so that members feel the beauty of Allah's creation. Tadabbur alam is held once a month which helps make extracurricular participants not feel bored. These activities are not solely for playing but also for carrying out exercises with repetition of moves, such as doing the greeting of the Indonesian fence. Tadabbur alam is often held together with Pencak Silat Pagar Nusa in other places.

Tadabbur alam is only in local places because it is also close to the Baturaden tourist attraction, so tadabbur often goes to the waterfall closest to the training ground. Human activities with industrial technology on a large scale in various sectors have greatly sacrificed beautiful nature. In the Islamic religion, humans must maintain good relations with nature. Therefore the tadabbur alam is held with one of its functions to show the authenticity of nature, which must be maintained together with full awareness.

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The activities mentioned above, such as tahlil, tawassul, istighasah, sholawat nariyah, asmaul husna and ziarah, as well as tadabbur alam, can play a role in forming a moderate society in Lamongan in the following ways:

**First, Strengthening Religious Values:** These activities are religious practices rooted in Islamic teachings. Through implementing these activities, Pagar Nusa seeks to strengthen the understanding and practice of moderate religious values among its members. This can help form individuals who have a balanced knowledge and are tolerant of differences in religion and belief.

**Second, Forming Social Concern:** Apart from religious aspects, Pagar Nusa also involves its members in social activities, such as providing social services to the community. This helps establish moderate social awareness and concern among Pagar Nusa members. By actively helping others and positively contributing to society, members of Pagar Nusa can set an excellent example in a moderate organisation.

**Third, Maintaining Relationships with Nature:** Through nature tadabbur activities, Pagar Nusa invites its members to maintain a good relationship with nature. Appreciating the beauty of nature and understanding the importance of protecting the environment can form a moderate attitude in living daily life. By strengthening their understanding of the importance of preserving nature, Pagar Nusa members can become pioneers in protecting the environment in society.

**Fourth, Dissemination of Moderate Understanding:** Besides internal activities, Pagar Nusa seeks to spread moderate understanding to the broader community. One way to do this is by optimizing the Pagar Nusa website to disseminate information and knowledge that align with moderate values. By providing a source of information that the general public can access, Pagar Nusa plays a role in forming a moderate understanding among the people of Lamongan.

By involving its members in religious, social, and nature conservation activities and spreading moderate understanding, Pagar Nusa plays a role in creating a moderate society in Lamongan. Through this approach, Pagar Nusa members can become agents.
of change who bring moderate values into their daily lives and contribute positively to building a harmonious and tolerant society.

IV. CONCLUSION

The principle of religious moderation emphasizes the importance of balance and justice. Religious moderation involves balancing reason and revelation, physical and spiritual, individual interests and communal benefits, and other aspects of life. A commitment to fairness, kindness, wisdom, and consistency marks it. Moderation does not mean not having an opinion but instead being firm while upholding justice and respecting the rights of others. Religious moderation is essential in a multicultural society like Indonesia to foster harmony and avoid conflicts between religious groups. Exclusive religious attitudes can cause friction and division, while moderation promotes tolerance, mutual respect and understanding. As a martial arts school and religious organization, Pagar Nusa puts forward fundamental values such as moral excellence, fairness, honesty, togetherness, independence and decency. He also practices rituals such as tahlil, tawassul, istighasah, sholawat nariyah, asmaul husna and ziarah, as well as tadabbur alam, further reinforcing the principle of moderation. These practices and values contribute to creating a moderate society in Lamongan and help build bridges between different religious communities.

V. REFERENCES


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