



NARRATIVE OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN LOCAL MEDIA: HOW DOES SOLOPOS PROMOTE WASATHIYAH JOURNALISM?

Mokhamad Zainal Anwar*

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Abraham Zakky Zulhazmi

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Abd. Halim

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Nur Rohman

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

Keywords:

Khazanah; local media; religious moderation; Solopos; wasathiyah journalism

Although many agencies have carried out campaigns for and socialization of religious moderation, cases of intolerance still occur locally. These socialization agents are religious groups and university academics, and the media play a significant role because they produce information and influence people's perceptions to take action. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with Stuart Hall's content analysis. Hall believed that meaning is constructed through language. Meanwhile, the primary data source is religious moderation narrative articles published in the Solopos. This paper aims to describe the discourse on religious moderation produced by Solopos, published every Friday through the Khazanah rubric from March 2020 to March 2022. This research focuses on three aspects: firstly, who are the agencies used as references by the Solopos media in producing moderation narratives?; secondly, what are the issues contained in the Khazanah rubric?; and thirdly, how does the editorial policy present the discourse of religious moderation in Khazanah

rubric? The conclusions of this study are: Firstly, Solopos uses teachers, lecturers, and religious leaders as references. They come from Islamic organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah. Secondly, the issue of religious moderation raised by Solopos revolves around fiqh, muamalah, and aqidah. Thirdly, the editor of Solopos is committed to maintaining harmony by continuing to display articles that reflect moderate Islam. We call the journalism practice implemented by Solopos through the Khazanah rubric the wasathiyah journalism.

Kata kunci:

Khazanah; media lokal; moderasi beragama; Solopos; jurnalisme wasathiyah

Abstrak

Meskipun kampanye dan sosialisasi moderasi beragama sudah dilakukan banyak pihak, tapi kasus intoleransi di level lokal masih saja terjadi. Agen sosialisasi ini tidak hanya kelompok agamawan maupun akademisi perguruan tinggi, pihak media juga punya peran yang signifikan karena memproduksi informasi dan memengaruhi persepsi warga untuk melakukan tindakan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif-deskriptif dengan analisis konten Stuart Hall. Hall menyebut bahwa makna dikonstruksi melalui bahasa. Sedangkan sumber data primernya berupa artikel narasi moderasi beragama yang dipublikasikan melalui harian Solopos. Tulisan ini bertujuan menggambarkan wacana moderasi beragama yang diproduksi oleh Solopos yang dipublikasi setiap Jumat melalui rubrik *Khazanah* periode Maret 2020 hingga Maret 2022. Ada tiga hal yang menjadi fokus tulisan ini. Pertama, siapa saja pihak (individu atau organisasi) yang dijadikan rujukan media Solopos dalam memproduksi narasi moderasi. Kedua, apa saja isu yang dimuat dalam rubrik *Khazanah*. Ketiga, bagaimana kebijakan redaksi dalam menghadirkan wacana moderasi beragama pada rubrik *Khazanah*. Kesimpulan penelitian ini adalah: *Pertama*, Solopos menggunakan guru, dosen, dan tokoh agama sebagai rujukan. Mereka berasal dari organisasi Islam seperti Nahdlatul Ulama dan Muhammadiyah, serta dari universitas Islam, semisal UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta dan Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. *Kedua*, isu moderasi beragama yang diangkat Solopos berkisar pada tema fiqh, muamalah, dan aqidah. *Ketiga*, redaktur Solopos berkomitmen menjaga harmoni dengan terus berupaya menampilkan tulisan keagamaan yang moderat. Praktik jurnalistik yang dilakukan Solopos melalui rubrik *Khazanah* kami sebut sebagai jurnalisme *wasathiyah*.

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INTRODUCTION

Tolerance and violence issues in correlation to religion remain to attract serious attention from various parties at both local and global levels. In Indonesia, this issue has become one of the shared problems. It is inseparable from the challenge of a multicultural nation and state. Many attempts have been made by a number of groups, including governmental institutions, educational institutions, self-help groups, and local communities, as well as mass media (Aspinall, 2008; Hadisaputra, 2020; Hefner, 2013; Mujani, 2019; Saeed, 1999; Widayati & Maulidiyah, 2018).

Joko Widodo, as he is usually called Jokowi, the Indonesian president, has issued various policies. One of the important policies exerting massive effect is the religious moderation package implemented by the Ministry of Religion. Religious moderation is also included in State Medium-Term Program Plan (RPJMN/ *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional* 2020-2024). At the same time, this issue is voiced simultaneously to the public. However, despite being expressed widely, intolerance and violent practices on behalf of religion still occur widely, particularly in Surakarta (The Greater Solo Area or *Solo Raya*).

Some researchers stated that Surakarta region belongs to a zone of radicalism (Zamani, 2018). This association, of course, is inseparable from the presence of influential groups in disseminating intolerance (Ahyar, 2015; Kafid, 2016; Kafid & Rohman, 2018; Qodir, 2014; Wildan, 2013a,

2013b). The group network in Solo has been affiliated with some groups abroad. Even disseminating intolerance tenet now shifts from regeneration in study groups to digital platforms (Ahyar, 2017; Duraesa & Ahyar, 2019; Sugihartati et al., 2020).

The appearance of a number of terrorist and extremist actions characterizes the cases of intolerance occurring in Solo. There have been some suicide-bombing trials, at least in the last five years. In 2016, a suicide bombing occurred in a police office in Surakarta (Ali, 2019). Two years later, a suicide bombing case occurred again in Kartasura, committed by a graduate of *Madrasah Aliyah* (Islamic Senior High School) who disavowed Pancasila as an ideology (Hastuti, 2019). In 2021, another case happened in which an act of destruction toward non-Muslim graveyards was committed by under-12 year children (CNN, 2021). Most of these religion-linked violence occurs mostly due to the perpetrators' belief which deviates from Indonesia's legitimate ideology (Anwar et al., 2021).

It can be said that there is a serious problem related to the entrenchment of nationalist values among the young generation in Solo. Propaganda made by Islamic groups worsens it. These groups attempted to attack the government and to provoke the *umat's* (members of Islam religious community) sentiment by exaggerating issues they considered in contradiction with Islam precepts, for example, they protested the appearance of a Cross-like ornament in front of Balaikota Surakarta (the office of Surakarta City's Mayor) (Rafiq, 2019). Similar actions still occur until today. The arrest of a number of terrorist suspects still occurs frequently (Batubara, 2022; Wibowo, 2019). In addition, in March 2022, the people of Pasar Kliwon Solo were shocked by the finding of an object that was assumed to be a bomb around the Office of Denpom 4 Surakarta (Wardani, 2022). Those cases indicate that Solo still has significant issues in coping with intolerance and extremism.

At the same time, Solo has an influential and fairly big media known as Solopos, a print media now expanding to digital media. Local media plays a substantial part in the process of disseminating information and educating people. Solopos specifically targets the Islamic marketplace in constructing its contents. They then create *Khazanah* rubric, specifically posting Islamic information published every Friday. In correlation to the importance of Solopos, this article aims to see the narrative of moderation voiced by Solopos through *the Khazanah rubric regarding intolerance issues*.

Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel suggest nine essential points in journalism. These nine points are: truth, loyalty to the public, verification of discipline, independence, monitoring of power, public critique forum, attractiveness and relevance, comprehensive and proportional, and conscience (Kovach & Rosentiel, 2007). These basic elements are the guidelines for the journalist to do their job. It is true that journalism indeed moves very fast along with digitalization (Priyonggo & Adnan, 2021), but a journalist should keep holding on to the basic elements of journalism tightly. The important element that is highlighted in this research is the second element which states that journalism's first loyalty is to citizens. In the context of Solopos, the presence of *Khazanah* rubric and narrative constructed within it can be read as the form of Solopos' loyalty to the citizens.

Meanwhile, religious moderation is defined as an option to have view, attitude, and behavior to avoid extremism and to adhere to religion not excessively (Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019). Religious moderation or *wasathiyah* is defined as the balance in all secular and spiritual life problems and the attempt to adapt to the situation faced based on religious instruction and the condition encountered (Shihab, 2019).

Religious moderation, in the last five or three years, has become the concern of a number of scholars in Indonesia (Abdillah, 2021; Azra,

2021; Bakti, 2021; Hidayat, 2021). Previous research has analyzed the dynamics of religious moderation in Indonesia. Most of the research is about strategies to strengthen religious moderation (Fuadi et al., 2021; Hadiat & Syamsyurijal, 2021; Hamdi et al., 2021; Irama & Zamzami, 2021; Manshur & Husni, 2020; Rahmayuni et al., 2022; Saputera & Djauhari, 2021) especially academics. Moderation means in the middle-center, neither to the right nor the left. In religious issues, religious moderation does not involve radicalism, fundamentalism, and liberalism. It is congruous for religious higher education to be a laboratory of religious moderation. It embeds national ideas, critical thinking constructs, multiculturalism values cultivation, and the peaceful delivery of spiritual messages. This research discusses the implementation of religious moderation at IAIN (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri*/State Islamic Institute) Surakarta. The internalization of moderation values to students is channeled through *Bilik Moderasi Islam dan Adab* (BIMA). An important principle of strengthening religious moderation is the adaptive ability of agents and actors to utilize all communication channels, in this case, including optimizing conventional media and social media.

Religious moderation relates to journalism in the context of mass media's role in creating social harmony and peace (Wibowo, 2018). It is on a certain point, of course, similar to the concept of peaceful journalism (Alam, 2020; Darmadi, 2021; Nusyur, 2017; Rengkaningtyas, 2017). Although peaceful journalism specifically relates to conflict reporting, it has the same spirit to create harmony and to report an event more equally and accurately.

Through this paper, we want to introduce a new style of journalism, *wasathiyah* journalism. While peaceful journalism is present in the context of conflict, *wasathiyah* journalism voices moderation and peace in harmonious conditions (as a preventive measure). The reference of *wasathiyah* indicator is taken from the indicator of religious moderation introduced by the Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Religion, including

Nationalist commitment, tolerance, anti-violence, and accommodating local culture (accommodative).

The term *wasathiyah* journalism is present when (online/printed) media claims to produce positive journalism products instead of producing provocative content. The provocative example can be seen, among others, from the contents of *arrahmah.com* media posting news entitled: *Ketua FPI Garut: Kami FPI Siap Perang Melawan Syiah* (The Head of FPI Garut: We, FPI, are ready to fight against Syiah). Such provocative content is often found in Islamic media. Such a point of view posted by media tends to be destructive and injure the peace. On the other hand, we can find media with moderate (*wasathiyah*) perspective as reflected in their works.

In Indonesia, contestation between conservative and moderate Islam media has occurred since long ago. It can be seen from the establishment of by the appearance of JITU (*Jurnalis Islam Bersatu*) and SMI (*Sindikasi Media Islam*). JITU represents conservative Islam, while SMI is a medium for moderate Islam media to assemble. The Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Information and Informatics blocked several radical media in 2015 (Ningrum, 2015). The fact suggests that Islamic media feature the non-moderate point of view. Therefore, the term *wasathiyah* journalism needs to be introduced, institutionalized, campaigned for, and reinforced further.

METHODS

This paper aims to describe the discourse on religious moderation produced by Solopos, published every Friday through the *Khazanah* rubric. This paper focuses on three aspects. Firstly, this article examines the agencies used as references by Solopos in their religious moderation contents. Secondly, the issues contained in Solopos are examined. Thirdly, and lastly, the discourse of religious moderation in *Khazanah* can be abstracted.

Examining how the local mass media reinforce moderate behavior is important to be done. This is considering the important role of the mass media as a medium for public education. Moreover, the mass media studied was Solopos, a media developed in a very dynamic city. Solo is a city that is closely related to Javanese culture, which is portrayed as a city full of peace and harmony, but on the other hand, acts of intolerance and even terrorism have occurred several times.

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method by incorporating Stuart Hall's content analysis. Hall believed that meaning is constructed through language. The primary data source was articles published in the Solopos (*Khazanah* rubric) from March 2020 to March 2022 (97 articles). Furthermore, from 97 articles, the data were reduced to 18 articles. These articles were spread from the time range of March 2020 to March 2022. In a pandemic condition, the time setting of the news being analyzed, the potential for immoderate action could occur, for example, anti-vaccine movement, disobeying health protocols and going against government policies.

The data for this research also came from interviews with the person in charge of the *Khazanah* rubric, Damar Sri Prakoso. Interviews were conducted to determine editorial policies related to the *Khazanah* rubric. The data obtained were then sorted and categorized or further analysis and conclusion was drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interview with Damar Sri Prakoso, *Khazanah* rubric is one of the rubrics in Solopos daily, a local media in Solo (Surakarta). The rubric is posted every Friday by featuring semi-feature writing. Islamic theme is the typical characteristic of *Khazanah* rubric. At the local media level, Solopos is the only media featuring weekly Islamic rubrics on a full page. Furthermore, this rubric originally got a four full-page space.

Damar Sri Prakoso is now the single organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric. The procedure of organizing *Khaṣṣanah* rubric starts on Thursday. Damar presents a theme to be raised on *Khaṣṣanah* rubric on Thursday. Generally, the theme raised is around *fiqih*, *aqidah* and *muamalah*. He usually selects the theme himself, but sometimes he consults the senior editor and gets input from editorial meeting. The presence of repeated themes such as Ramadan, Eidl Fitr, Eidl Adha, *Maulid Nabi* facilitates him. The themes are of course the same every year, but the informants interviewed will be different to support the writing.

Damar's religious perspective is a moderate one. It is reflected on the choice of theme, narrative, and informant used in *Khaṣṣanah* rubric he organizes. He thinks that strengthening religious moderation is the common duty of everyone, including mass media.

“I think the campaign for religious moderation is the theme that will not end soon. It is still very long and becomes our shared job. Our duty is to make the people adhere to religion moderately, and live in concordance with Muslims and other religious communities. There are so many people playing with racist and religion issues out there.” (Interview with Damar Sri Prakoso, 2022).

Being responsible for organizing *Khaṣṣanah* rubric, Damar is committed to avoid from writing controversial themes. He wants to feature safe and peaceful themes acceptable to everyone that will not provoke pros and cons around Islam *rahmatan lil alamin*. He holds on a principle to maintain the preexisting harmonious situation and not to disturb it. He believes it is in line with the ethical code of a journalist he has obeyed so far.

Narrative Of Moderation In Khazanah Rubric

In this research, we reduced data and studied 18 out of 97 articles posted during March 2020-March 2022 entitled: *Kasih Sayang kepada Sesama* (Love to Fellow Human Beings), *Lemah Lembut dalam Berdakwah* (Proselytizing Gently), *Iman dan Cinta Tanah Air* (Faith and Love for Homeland), *Cinta Tanah Air* (Love for Homeland), *Pemimpin yang Menyayangi Rakyatnya* (A Leader Who Loves His People), *Dari Benci Menjadi Cinta* (From Hate to Love), *Cinta dan Kasih Sayang* (Love and Affection), *Islam Menyayangi Semua Makhluk Allah* (Islam love All Allah's Creatures), *Refleksi Kebinekaan dan Kesetaraan* (Reflection of Diversity and Equality), *Hidup dengan Prasangka Baik* (Living with Good Prejudice), *Meneladani Akhlak Rasulullah SAW* (Emulating Rasulullah SAW's Noble Character), *Wasathiyah Sebagai Dasar Pemikiran Islam* (*Wasathiyah* as the Foundation of Islam Thinking), *Membangun Toleransi Sebagai Dasar Kebinekaan* (Building Tolerance as Foundation of Diversity), *Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin*, *Reaktualisasi Ajaran Islam* (Reactualization of Islam Precepts), *Pendidikan dan Moderasi Beragama* (Education and Religious Moderation), *Ruang Digital dan Konten Agama* (Digital Room and Religion Content), *Islam Santun dan Toleran* (Polite and Tolerant Islam).

Generally, the themes often featured in *Khazanah* rubric are those related to *muamalah*. *Muamalah* theme discusses the relationship between human beings. Closely observed, religious moderation emphasizes social interaction between fellow human beings. For example, it discusses the relationship between a Muslim and a Non-Muslim. Many Muslim groups try to avoid interaction with Non-Muslims and even hate them. The spirit of the religious moderation campaign is to make Muslims more tolerant and moderate in relation to Non-Muslims.

Based on the observation of the articles posted in *Khazanah* rubric, some religious moderation contents are found, as presented in more detail in the table 1.

Table 1.

Narratives Of Religious Moderation In “Faith And Love For Homeland”
(*Iman Dan Cinta Tanah Air*)

Title	Narratives
<i>Iman dan Cinta Tanah Air</i> (Faith and Love for Homeland)	A Lecturer of Islam religion who often makes speeches in Quran Study (<i>pengajian</i>), Ahmad Yani, said that having a nationalist spirit is very important in this era. The struggle to safeguard the state is an art of worship that should be implemented daily. “If the residents do not want to take care of it, who will do so? As long as it does not contradict religion, we should follow it. Moreover, this nation was built on the struggle of heroes and religious leaders,” Ahmad Yani said. In Islam precepts, Allah instructs us to do <i>tasamuh</i> . It means that we should be tolerant and respect each other. Islam communities should carry out worship in the attempt of <i>habluminallah</i> and <i>hablumminannas</i> .

Narratives about faith and love for homeland belong to religious moderation. In the context of Indonesia, some groups are still found confronting religion with the state. These groups want Islam law to be the state’s foundation, so Pancasila and UUD/*Undang-Undang Dasar* 1945 (1945 Constitution) should be replaced. They argue that Pancasila and UUD 1945 are man-made and unreasonable to follow. These groups intersect with those fighting for *kbilafah* (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, which the Indonesian government has dismissed). Narratives about love for the homeland are important to balance the narrative of Islamic groups who want Islam state amid Indonesian plurality.

Articles about love for the homeland are also found in *Khazanah* rubric edition of August 14, 2020, as presented in the table 2.

Table 2.
Narratives Of Religious Moderation In “Love For Homeland” (*Cinta Tanah Air*)

Title	Narrative
<i>Cinta Tanah Air</i> (Love for Homeland)	<p>Prophet Ibrahim prioritized the safe country first, then prayed and asked Allah to keep his children and grandchildren far from worshipping <i>berbala</i> (idol). In a <i>tafsir</i> it indicates the importance of maintaining the state’s security and tranquility. In a safe country, everyone can quietly do their activities calmly, including worship.</p> <p>Agus Himawan, a teaching staff in Al Muayyad Islamic Boarding School, said, “In a safe and calm state, we can do worship and learn some knowledge”.</p> <p>Cultivating nationalism by maintaining the state’s safety is a part of love for the homeland. Loving homeland as the place where our feet stand is the teaching of Prophet Muhammad SAW, just like him who loves his birthplace (Mekkah) and the place to which they <i>hijrah</i> (move) (Madinah).</p>

Cinta Tanah Air and *Iman dan Cinta Tanah Air* articles equally discuss nationalism. Both of them relate nationalism to Islam precepts, that nationalism and loving homeland are not in contradiction with religion, instead, they are in line with Prophet’s teaching. Such a moderate view breaks the extremists’ argument that loving homeland is not religion’s teaching nor a necessary proposition for nationalism. Through two articles about love for the homeland, the position of Solopos has been obvious in positioning relations and religion. Those articles show the moderate position of Solopos as a mass media.

The theme similar to the love of homeland is that about Unity in Diversity (*Bhineka Tunggal Ika*) It is the nation’s philosophy, which means the state whose people come from various backgrounds but keeping in

unity. *Khazanah* rubric posts two articles about *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), as shown in the narratives of the two articles in the table 3.

Table 3.

Narratives Of Religious Moderation In “Reflection Of Diversity And Equality” (*Refleksi Kebinekaan Dan Kesetaraan*) And “Building Tolerance As The Foundation Of Diversity” (*Membangun Toleransi Sebagai Dasar Kebhinekaan*)

Title	Narrative
<p><i>Refleksi Kebinekaan dan Kesetaraan</i> (Reflection of Diversity and Equality)</p>	<p>Sukidi, an activist of Muhammadiyah, states that there are two important points to be the foundation of nation’s life. The first is a dream to uphold diversity, and the second is the realization of equality in Indonesia.</p> <p>“Almost 76 years celebrating this independence, our diversity is torn recently. It is reflected on the character of people replete with prejudice and suspicion. The suspicion against each other will attenuate the spirit of diversity,” he said.</p> <p>Islam emphasizes the importance of maintaining diversity as God's mercy to the entire universe. Despite many differences, humans are asked to love and know each other.</p>
<p><i>Membangun Toleransi sebagai Dasar Kebhinekaan</i> (Building Tolerance as the Foundation of Diversity)</p>	<p>The importance of tolerance in religion and state lives is suggested by the Coordinator of Gusdurian Solo, Ajie Najmuddin. He thinks that tolerance is the acceptance of the difference as characterized by respecting and accepting other cultures and then respecting human rights. Its end goal is to achieve a peaceful life.</p>

Title	Narrative
	<p>Tolerance, according to Ajie, is the main foundation for achieving diversity. He then exemplifies a simple activity encouraging tolerance, such as <i>gotong royong</i> (mutual cooperation) and community service in a community environment. Another example is helping fellow human beings regardless of their background and helping the impoverished. Tolerance should also be built in the context of religion. It can be accomplished by respecting other religious communities to worship according to their creed, appreciating their holy days, and not compelling our teaching against others.</p> <p>“Loving each other despite different religions, not discriminating people based on religion and creed, and not disturbing or insulting other religious communities. That is important as well,” Ajie said.</p>

The two articles discussing *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* confirm the importance of tolerance in state and religious lives. Respecting other religious adherents is one of the fundamentals of religious moderation. In the context of Solo, and Indonesia in general, suicide bombing targeting the church has occurred more than once. Acts of intolerance, such as prohibiting establishing non-Islam worship places also occur. The moderate religion implementation should remain to be voiced. As a local mass media, Solopos contributes to strengthening religious moderation.

The spirit of strengthening tolerance and appreciating difference can also be found in the articles posted in other *Khazanah* rubrics, as shown in the table 4.

Table 4.

Narratives Of Religious Moderation In “Gentle Proselytism” (*Lemah Lembut Dalam Berdakwah*), “Wasathiyah As The Foundation Of Islam Thinking” (*Wasathiyah Sebagai Dasar Pemikiran Islam*), “Islam As Allah’s Mercy To Entire Universe” (*Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin*), “Polite And Tolerant Islam” (*Islam Santun Dan Toleran*)

Title	Narrative
<p><i>Lemah Lembut dalam Berdakwah</i> (Proselytizing Gently)</p>	<p>Hamdan Maghribi, a lecturer at IAIN Surakarta, said that proselytization containing violence and hate should be avoided. It represents the less gentle face of Islam in others’ eyes. Moreover, the concept of proselytizing is to invite without compulsion. Other religious communities may not be compelled to adhere to Islam. We should show the kindness of Islam and hope they will adhere to Islam volitionally.</p>
<p><i>Wasathiyah Sebagai Dasar Pemikiran Islam</i> (<i>Wasathiyah</i> as the foundation of Islam Thinking)</p>	<p><i>Wasathiyah</i> practice in Indonesia, according to Azyumardi Azra, can be seen in harmonious nation and state lives. Indonesia has diverse ethnicities, religions, and cultures, but its people can care for each other despite some shortages. The effect of local tradition on Indonesians’ Islam characteristics is even larger than that in Islam states like Arab and Egypt. Amir Adullah stated that peace and pluralism should be defined as peaceful life. The ultimate goal of justice and tolerance is living quietly and peacefully. Some attempts are still taken to rekindle harmony in Muslim government.</p>

Title	Narrative
<i>Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin</i> (Islam as Allah's Mercy to Entire Universe)	Abdullah Faishol added one of the theories to living in a nation, <i>ablussunah wal jamaah</i> (aswaja), meaning to live in synergy and completely agreed with Pancasila. <i>Aswaja</i> combines the teachings of <i>aqli</i> or mind, <i>naqli</i> originating from Quran and hadith, and <i>waqii</i> or reality. “We need to be a friendly rather than angry Islam. Islam does not always contradict the cultural values of a region. Islam keeps human beings in the struggle for humanity's values. Islam upholds moderation and diversity,” He said.
<i>Islam Santun dan Toleran</i> (Polite and Tolerant Islam)	Soloraya is actually a peaceful, polite, and tolerant region. However, the appearance of youth groups voicing tolerant issues gives it an image of the city as the base of extreme radicalism. In such a situation, the initiative of the polite and tolerant Islam movement becomes so important that should be taken care of continuously. This movement is a zero-violence activity as the response to various extreme radical events is usually done violently.

There is a similar idea in the narratives presented in the four articles above: Islam should be implemented gently, politely, without violence and by respecting differences. These four articles confirm the religious view of Solopos editor, in this case, the organizer of *Khazanah* rubric. Mass media contributes to educating people. Through *Khazanah* rubric, people are educated to adhere to religion moderately.

Informant Of Khazanah Rubric

The organizer of *Khazanah* Rubric cites the opinion of a number of informants to confirm their writings. Closely observed, the distribution of informants selected by the organizer of *Khazanah* rubric can be seen. The informants selected can be classified as follows.

Firstly, informants belong to religion leader or community leader category. The informants in this category are, among others: Haidar Bagir (*Gerakan Islam Cinta* or Love Islam Movement), Muhammad Quraish Shihab (a Muslim intellectual), Sukidi (an activist of Muhammadiyah), Habib Novel Alaydrus (the caretaker of *Majlis* (Council) Ar-Raudhah), Ajie Najmuddin (Gusdurian Solo), Abdullah Faishol (Rois Syuriah or Chairperson of Nahdlatul Ulama Sukoharjo, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia/ Indonesian Ulama Council Sukoharjo*), Ahmad Bahauddin Nursalim (Rais Syuriah Pengurus Besar (Chairperson of) Nahdlatul Ulama)

Secondly, the informants come from academicians of Islam University. They include, among others: Azyumardi Azra (*Universitas Islam Negeri/State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta*), Amin Abdullah (*Universitas Islam Negeri/State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*), Mudofir (*Universitas Islam Negeri/State Islamic University Raden Mas Said Surakarta*), Hamdan Maghribi (*Universitas Islam Negeri/State Islamic University Raden Mas Said Surakarta*), Nur Kafid (*Universitas Islam Negeri/State Islamic University Raden Mas Said Surakarta*), and M. Zainal Anwar (*Universitas Islam Negeri/State Islamic University Raden Mas Said Surakarta*).

Thirdly, informants work as teachers or *ustadz* in Islam education institutions. They come from *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) or schools organized by Islam mass organizations, including, among others: Sri Mulyana (*Sekolah Dasar/Elementary School Muhammadiyah 24, Solo*), Agus Himawan (Al Muayyad Islamic Boarding School, Solo), and Wahyu Widodo (Special Program of SD Muhammadiyah, Kota Barat, Solo).

The selection of informants to support the process of writing articles in *Khazanah* rubric in Solopos is considered to have reflected moderation. The informants represent moderate Islam mass organizations in Indonesia such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Similarly, the selection of informants from campus environment also reflects moderation. The

campuses selected are the state Islam campuses under the Ministry of Religion. The Ministry campaigns for religious moderation intensely today. Then, community and religion leaders selected to be interviewed represent no radical-indicated or problematic religious group.

In relation to the selection of informants, Damar Sri Prakoso explains that the organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric intentionally selects informants affiliated with credible and acceptable institutions. He exemplifies Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah as Indonesia's largest moderate Muslim organizations. According to him, informants from Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have obvious capacity to give information about certain Islam characteristic themes and share one vision with Solopos. In addition, he avoids the informants with comments generating controversy and conflict.

The selection of informants is important to observe because the opinions they express will support the idea of an article in *Khaṣṣanah* rubric. The organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric in Solopos combines local (Solo) and national leaders in selecting informants. Information can derive from the result of direct interviews and/or the citation of book or news. The selection of informants is also based on the informants' knowledge, authority and comprehension of a certain theme.

In addition to interviews with informants, the organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric also cites books written by credible authors. Sometimes, the organizer carries out an article citation from the official websites of Nahdlatul Ulama or Muhammadiyah. It means that the organizer attempts to get an authoritative reference for *Khaṣṣanah* rubric. The rubric should deliver constructive and educative ideas. Damar believes mass media is still powerful in disseminating ideas and educating people.

Wasathiyah Journalism In Solopos Daily

Observing journalism featured by Solopos through *Khazanah* rubric as elaborated above, it can be said that the rubric follows *wasathiyah* journalism. Solopos presents Islamic rubric and prefers featuring *wasathiyah* Islam. They post content about tolerance, nationalism, anti-violence, and appreciation of local wisdom. Solopos' choices become significant in recalling that the media bases in Solo, the city often known for intolerance and terrorism movements.

The religious moderation displayed in the *Khazanah* rubric is summarized in the following table 5.

Table 5.

Categories Of Religious Moderation In *Khazanah* Rubrics, Solopos

Narrative	Source	Religious Moderation Indicator
Ahmad Yani said that having a nationalist spirit is very important in this era. The struggle to safeguard the state is an art of worship that should be implemented daily.	<i>Iman dan Cinta Tanah Air</i> (Faith and Love to Homeland)	Nationalist commitment
In Islam precepts, Allah instructs us to do <i>tasamuh</i> . It means that we should be tolerant and respect each other. Islam communities should worship in the attempt of <i>habluminallah</i> and <i>hablumminannas</i> .	<i>Iman dan Cinta Tanah Air</i> (Faith and Love to Homeland)	Tolerance

Narrative	Source	Religious Moderation Indicator
<p>Cultivating nationalism by maintaining the state's safety is part of love for the homeland. Loving homeland as the place where our feet stand is the teaching of Prophet Muhammad SAW, just like him who loves his birthplace (Mekkah) and the place to which they <i>hijrah</i> (move) (Madinah).</p>	<p><i>Cinta Tanah Air</i> (Love for Homeland)</p>	<p>Nationalist commitment</p>
<p>Sukidi, an activist of Muhammadiyah, states that there are two important points to be the foundation of nation's life. The first is a dream to uphold diversity, and the second is the realization of equality in Indonesia.</p>	<p><i>Refleksi Kebinekaan dan Kesetaraan</i> (Reflection of Diversity and Equality)</p>	<p>Nationalist commitment</p>
<p>The importance of tolerance in religion and state lives is suggested by the Coordinator of Gusdurian Solo, Aje Najmuddin. He thinks that tolerance is the acceptance of the difference as characterized by respecting and accepting other cultures and respecting human rights. Its end goal is to achieve a peaceful life.</p>	<p><i>Membangun Toleransi sebagai Dasar Kebhinekaan</i> (Building Tolerance as the Foundation of Diversity)</p>	<p>Tolerance</p>
<p>Hamdan Maghribi, a lecturer at IAIN Surakarta, said that proselytization containing violence and hate should be avoided. It represents the less gentle face of Islam in others' eyes.</p>	<p><i>Lemah Lembut dalam Berdakwah</i> (Proselytizing Gently)</p>	<p>Anti-violence</p>

Narrative	Source	Religious Moderation Indicator
<p><i>Wasathiyah</i> practice in Indonesia, according to Azyumardi Azra, can be seen in harmonious nation and state lives. Indonesia has diverse ethnicities, religions, and cultures, but its people can care for each other despite some shortages. The effect of local tradition on Indonesians' Islam characteristics is even larger than that in Islam states like Arab and Egypt.</p>	<p><i>Wasathiyah sebagai Dasar Pemikiran Islam (Wasathiyah as the Foundation of Islam Thinking)</i></p>	Tolerance
<p>Abdullah Faishol added one of the theories to living in a nation, <i>ablussunah wal jamaah</i> (aswaja), meaning to live in synergy, and completely agreed with Pancasila.</p>	<p><i>Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin</i> (Islam as Allah's Mercy to Entire Universe)</p>	Nationalist commitment
<p>In such a situation, the initiative of the polite and tolerant Islam movement becomes so important that it should be taken care of continuously. This movement is a zero-violence activity as the response to various extreme radical events is usually done violently.</p>	<p><i>Islam Santun dan Toleran</i> (Polite and Tolerant Islam)</p>	Anti-violence

Based on this categorization, it can be seen that commitments towards nationalism, tolerance, and non-violence are the themes that appear most frequently in the *Khazanah* rubric. These three themes are indicators of religious moderation which are also indicators of *wasathiyah* journalism. Narratives about tolerance, non-violence, and nationalist commitments also emerge from figures in the city of Solo who have a moderate perspective. This fact further strengthens the implementation of *wasathiyah* journalism by Solopos.

The implementation of *wasathiyah*, according to M. Quraish Shihab, should consider three aspects: alertness, caution, right comprehension, and emotional control (Shihab, 2019). Solopos has practiced them in presenting articles in *Khaṣṣanah* rubric. The organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric states that his media has been committed not to feature “Violent Islam”, as it is not in line with the vision of media and the profile of their readers. Alertness and caution are also applied by the organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric, for example, in deciding the theme. The organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric avoids from writing a theme related to the conflict developing in the society at that time. Solopos prefers choosing “safe themes” to be involved in the debate or conflict (based on interview with Damar Sri Prakoso, 2022).

The organizer of *Khaṣṣanah* rubric said that at the beginning of his journalism career, he was indoctrinated to write something useful. He exemplifies that Solopos will not cover news on suicide bombing cases, as it is considered as useless. It means that media not merely delivers information but should also provide benefits to people widely. He still holds on to the doctrine tightly until today in organizing *Khaṣṣanah* rubric.

The practice of *wasathiyah* journalism in Solopos can also be seen more broadly from the *Mimbar Jumat* rubric on the same page on which *Khaṣṣanah* rubric is posted. Solopos features four writers from four different Islam mass organizations: Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, Majelis Tafsir Al-Quran and representatives of Arab descent community. Solopos’ selection of writers in this *Mimbar Jumat* rubric also reflects religious moderation (*wasathiyah*). The writers are intentionally selected not only from one particular group or mass organization. Accommodating influential religious groups is essential in the context of Solo to contribute to achieving harmonious life within society.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The conclusions of this paper are: Firstly, Solopos uses teachers, lecturers, and religious leaders as informants. They come from Islamic organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Solopos also uses lecturers from state Islamic universities (such as UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta) as informants. Teachers and *ustadz* from Islamic boarding schools and Islamic schools (such as Muhammadiyah Elementary School and Al-Muayad Islamic Boarding School Surakarta) also become informants. Secondly, the issue of religious moderation raised by Solopos revolves around *fiqh*, *muamalah*, and *aqidah*. However, the dominant theme presented is about *muamalah* (human interaction in the view of Islam). More specifically, in the context of religious moderation, the themes raised are tolerance between religious communities, nationalism (religion and state relations), gentleness, and non-violence movement. Thirdly, the editor of Solopos is committed to maintaining harmony by continuing to display articles that reflect moderate Islam. He avoids writing controversial themes. He wants the *Khazanah* rubric to present safe and peaceful themes, which are more acceptable to all groups and do not trigger pros and cons. Based on the observations and analyses we conducted on the *Khazanah* rubric, we call the journalism practice implemented by Solopos through the *Khazanah* rubric as reflecting *wasathiyah* journalism.

Suggestion

This research offers a new term, *wasathiyah* journalism, with Solopos as the research subject. The subsequent research is expected to be able to find *wasathiyah* journalism practices in other media. The term *wasathiyah* journalism is open to criticism and input for improvement. It is because the study of journalism will continue to develop, along with social dynamics and technological developments.

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