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Cultural Reconstruction of the Communicative Approach at the Rumah Moderasi Beragama of Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara in the Projection of Wasathiyyah Culture

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ABSTRACT

This study examines cultural reconstruction through the communicative approach of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) in projecting the culture of wasathiyyah (moderation) within the academic environment. Motivated by the phenomenon of increasing intolerance despite the rising Religious Harmony Index, this research employs a qualitative methodology with an ethnographic approach grounded in the constructivist paradigm. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with five key informants, consisting of RMB administrators and students, supplemented by secondary sources such as books, scholarly articles, and academic journals. Data collection techniques included interviews, participant observation, and documentation, with informants selected using purposive sampling. Data analysis followed the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, encompassing stages of reduction, display, and conclusion drawing, while data validity was ensured through source triangulation. The findings reveal that RMB UINSU's communication strategies such as curriculum

integration, training programs, and the use of social media and dialogue spaces have significantly fostered the internalization of wasathiyyah values. However, the effectiveness of communication is highly dependent on the communicator's capacity, equitable information distribution, and the alignment of messages with the audience's moral foundations. The discussion highlights the importance of communication accommodation and moral resonance as crucial factors in successful message delivery. The study concludes that RMB UINSU has functioned as an agent of moderate religious cultural reconstruction, although there remains a need to strengthen multimodal communication strategies and expand outreach to less-engaged student communities.

Keywords: Cultural Reconstruction, Communicative Approach, Religious Moderation, Wasathiyyah Culture

1. PENDAHULUAN

Indonesia, as a country with extensive religious diversity, continually faces challenges in maintaining interfaith harmony. The latest data from the 2024 Religious Harmony Index (KUB) indicates an increase to 76.47, marking a rise of 0.45 points compared to 2023. This improvement reflects a positive trend in interfaith tolerance across Indonesia, supported by various efforts to strengthen religious moderation spearheaded by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Barjah, 2024).

The Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs, Saiful Rahmat Dasuki, stated that this positive trend is the result of various programs and activities implemented to promote and internalize religious moderation. The strengthening of religious moderation includes reinforcing moderate perspectives, attitudes, and religious practices among state officials and the wider public, as well as safeguarding religious rights within public programs and services (Aprionis, 2024; Kholil et al., 2024).

However, despite the increase in the Religious Harmony Index (KUB), incidents of intolerance and non-moderate attitudes persist in several regions

of Indonesia. For instance, the case of the rejection of the Elim Christian Indonesia Church (GEKI) worship site at Suzuya Marelan, Medan, illustrates that tensions rooted in issues of tolerance and acceptance of religious diversity remain. The action coordinator, Muhammad Ilyas, expressed disappointment over the conversion of Suzuya Marelan into a place of worship, which sparked tensions within the local community (Redaksi, 2023).

According to Nur Cholis Majid, a progressive Muslim scholar, interreligious harmony is not merely an ideal but a necessity that must be realized in everyday life. Majid emphasizes the importance of mutual respect and appreciation among followers of different religions, which serves as the foundation for building a harmonious and tolerant society (Buton et al., 2021; Gultom, 2022).

In the context of UINSU, the communicative approach implemented through the Rumah Moderasi Beragama offers a model that can be adapted to promote religious moderation among academics and students. This approach involves dialogues, discussions, and activities that facilitate the exchange of ideas and a broader understanding of religious moderation, which is expected to influence the wider community. (Akbar et al., 2022; Rahmania, 2022; Syafieh & Anzhaikan, 2023).

The culture of Wasathiyyah, which signifies a moderate attitude in religious practice, serves as a key concept in efforts toward cultural reconstruction and the promotion of religious moderation (Pratama & Harahap, 2024). This concept not only emphasizes balance and the avoidance of extremism but also values diversity and promotes interfaith dialogue, which is crucial in a higher education environment such as UINSU (Sugiarti & Roqib, 2021; Wibowo & Kurniawan, 2023).

In efforts to achieve interfaith harmony, there must be a deep understanding of both the current realities within society and the ideals envisioned for the future. In line with present conditions, the phenomena of intolerance and non-moderate attitudes in several regions remain serious challenges (Subchi et al., 2022). This reflects a social condition that still requires improvement in the understanding and practice of religious tolerance (Rouf, 2020; Wibowo & Kurniawan, 2023). From an ideal perspective, the envisioned goal is a community where all religious groups can respect one another and interact peacefully, in accordance with the principles of moderation promoted through various government programs.

The protection of religious rights, as implemented through public services and government programs, must also be upheld within the university environment. This includes academic and student activities that support the practice of moderate religiosity and seek to prevent discrimination based on religion (Afwadzi & Miski, 2021; Priyanto et al., 2022). The utilization of religious and cultural celebrations to strengthen tolerance, as outlined in the

religious moderation strengthening program, can be integrated into the academic calendar of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU). Through such celebrations, UINSU can promote understanding and appreciation of cultural and religious diversity.

In the context of literature exploring religious moderation, previous studies have highlighted the importance of communicative approaches in facilitating interfaith dialogue and reducing religious conflicts. Such approaches are often found in research focusing on the implementation of inclusive education and religious activities within higher education institutions (Mahamid, 2023). Studies on Wasathiyah, or religious moderation, emphasize the role of education in instilling values of diversity and tolerance. Activities such as dialogue and open discussions are regarded as effective tools for fostering understanding and reducing prejudice. This model has been applied across various geographical and cultural contexts, demonstrating that dialogue-based approaches can enhance interfaith harmony and tolerance, particularly within university environments, which are often seen as microcosms of the broader society (Kasturi et al., 2024).

The Communication Accommodation Theory, developed by Howard Giles (Giles et al., 1987), The Communication Accommodation Theory, developed by Howard Giles, explains how individuals adjust their speaking styles and communication behaviors to minimize differences and enhance understanding in social interactions. In the context of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, this theory is relevant for examining how lecturers and students can effectively adapt and adjust their communication to accommodate religious and cultural diversity. Through the practice of accommodation, the Rumah Moderasi Beragama has the potential to strengthen interfaith dialogue, reduce communication barriers, and create a more inclusive and tolerant environment. The application of this theory in higher education can facilitate the development of moderate attitudes and help prevent belief-based conflicts, thereby reinforcing the university's role as a mediator in shaping tolerant religious character and habits among students. (Giles et al., 1973).

In this context, the application of the Moral Foundations Theory by Jonathan Haidt can serve as a complementary framework by providing insights into the diverse underlying reasons such as care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and sanctity that influence individuals' religious values and attitudes (Haidt & Joseph, 2011). The combination of these two theories enables the development of dialogue methodologies that not only address conflicts and differences but also foster the formation of consensus and appreciation for ethical and moral diversity, which is crucial in supporting the culture of Wasathiyah,

emphasizing moderation and balance in religious practices.

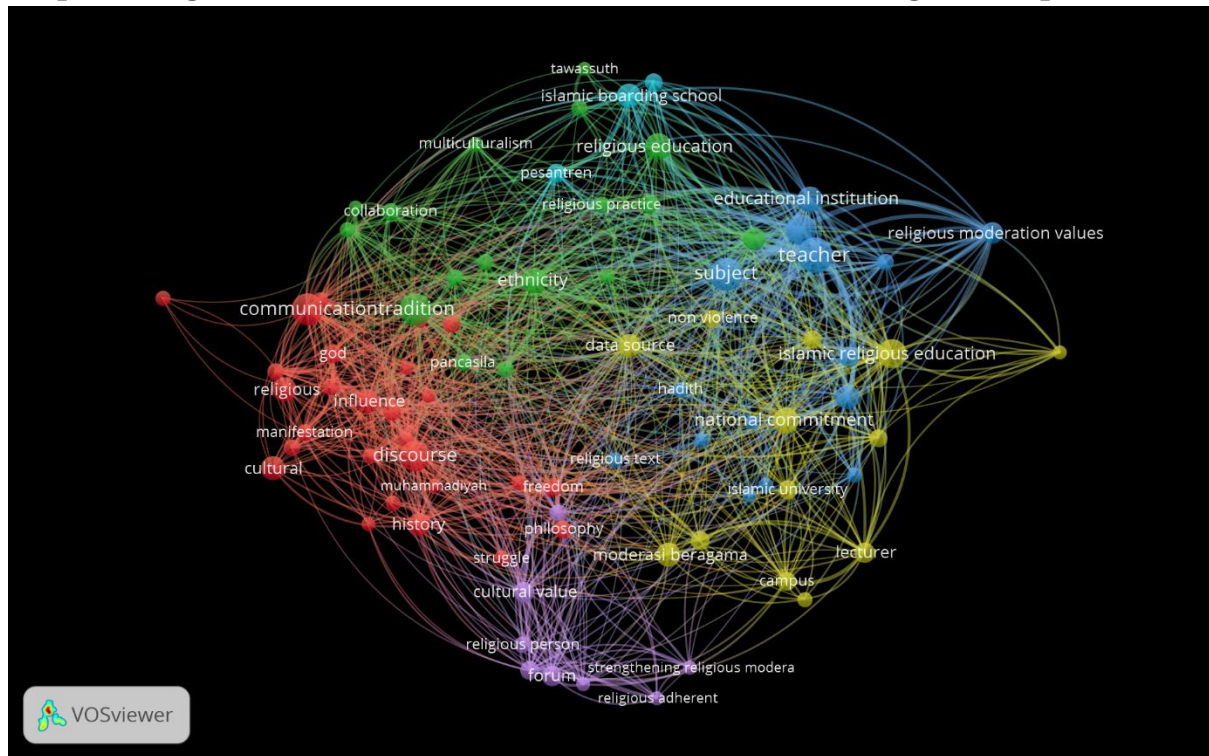


Figure 1. Network Analysis of Previous Research

Source: Vosviewer (2024)

The network analysis above projects the complex interconnection between religious moderation, religious education, and multicultural values within the context of Islamic higher education. Within this network, "Pancasila" and "religious moderation" emerge as central nodes, emphasizing the importance of national ideological principles and moderation in interfaith dialogue in Indonesia. Religious education in institutions such as pesantren and Islamic universities plays a crucial role in educating the younger generation by prioritizing tolerance and diversity. The interaction between 'tradition,' 'freedom,' and 'Islamic religious education' highlights how inclusive and dialogical educational approaches can contribute to the formation of a more moderate religious identity, supporting peaceful coexistence and reducing religious conflict (Syam et al., 2024). Furthermore, the presence of nodes such as 'multiculturalism' and 'religious education' within the network indicates a shift toward more global and open approaches in religious teaching and practice, potentially transforming religious narratives and practices at both

national and local levels.

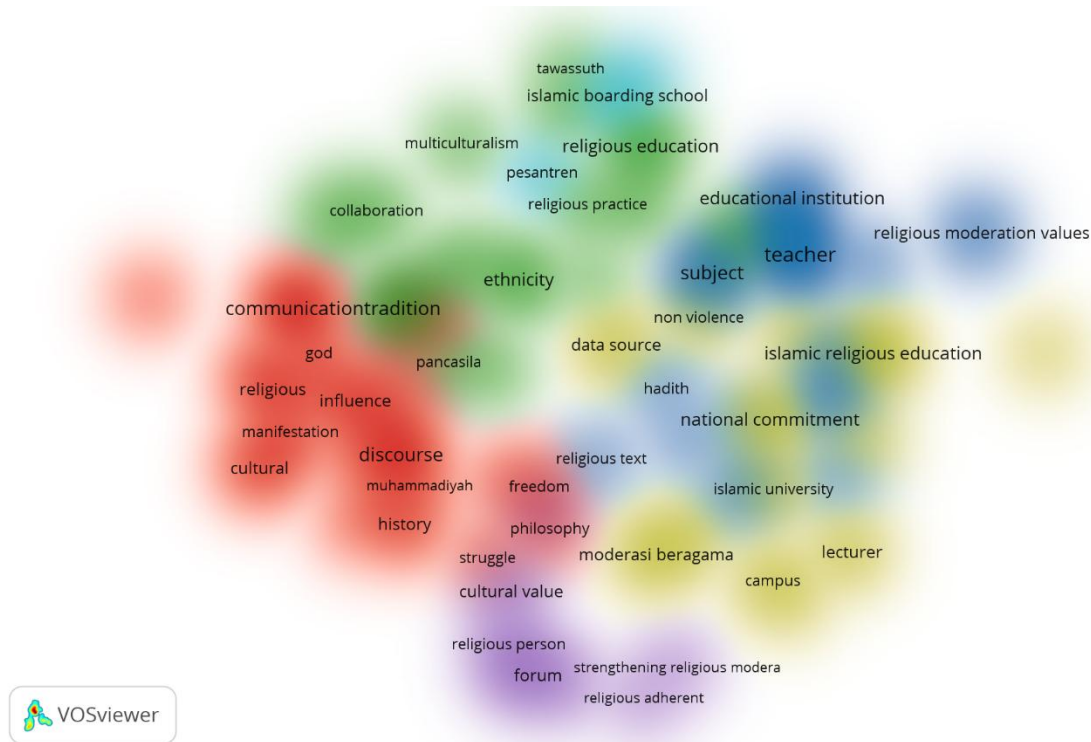


Figure 2. Previous Network Density Analysis
Source: VOSviewer (2024)

The density analysis of this conceptual network highlights Pancasila as the center of gravity connecting religious, cultural, and educational dimensions within the Indonesian context. Pancasila not only serves as the foundational ideology of the nation but also functions as an integrative tool that strengthens ethnic and religious diversity in educational institutions such as pesantren and Islamic universities. The emergence of nodes such as 'religious moderation,' 'religious education,' and 'multiculturalism' demonstrates the dynamic interaction between traditional values and the need for adaptation in the era of globalization. The presence of terms such as 'freedom,' 'discourse,' and 'Islamic religious education' indicates an ongoing dialogue between conservative and liberal religious practices, reaffirming the importance of education in shaping attitudes of tolerance and cross-cultural understanding. Thus, this visualization underscores the significance of religious education that not only teaches religion textually but also prepares individuals to participate in a pluralistic and democratic society. In addition to the two analyses above, the author also selects several relevant previous studies for critical comparison as follows:

In the study conducted by Hati et al (Hati et al., 2023), They explored the role of the Forum for Religious Harmony in Medan as an ideal platform for promoting religious moderation and fostering tolerance. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the study revealed that collaboration among religious leaders through this forum is crucial for maintaining peace and reducing

religion-based conflicts. In contrast to the present study, which emphasizes a communicative approach within higher education institutions to project the culture of *wasathiyyah*, the study by Hati et al. focuses more on the practice of direct interaction among religious leaders within the community.

The study conducted by Indainanto et al. (Indainanto et al., 2023) discusses Islamic communication in advocating religious moderation as a preventive measure against belief-based conflicts in Indonesia. Through a qualitative approach, the researchers identified that effective communication strategies can reduce misunderstandings and strengthen tolerance among religious groups. This contrasts with the present study, which focuses more on cultural reconstruction and communicative dialogue within the academic context to instill an understanding of *wasathiyyah*.

Mulyana (Mulyana, 2023), investigates the implementation of religious moderation within Islamic religious education in Indonesia, particularly through the use of textbooks. This study, which employed content analysis as its methodology, found that contemporary textbooks have begun to incorporate broader principles of religious moderation, aiming to educate students to appreciate pluralism and tolerance. This differs slightly from the present study, which not only focuses on educational content but also emphasizes the use of communication as a tool to facilitate interfaith understanding within the university environment.

The urgency of this research lies in the pressing need to address and understand the challenges arising from religious diversity in Indonesia, particularly within the context of higher education. Amidst the growing polarization and intolerance that threaten social harmony, this study is essential for identifying and analyzing the effectiveness of communicative strategies in promoting religious moderation. By focusing on the *Rumah Moderasi Beragama* at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, this research aims to develop a model that can be adapted by other educational institutions to foster dialogue, tolerance, and interfaith understanding, ultimately contributing to the formation of a more inclusive and harmonious society.

2. METODE

The methodology employed in this study is qualitative with an ethnographic approach, allowing the researcher to deeply explore the natural context and social interactions occurring at UINSU Campus IV, Tuntungan, Medan. This location was selected due to its distinctive implementation of religious moderation, influenced by the cultural dynamics of its diverse student and faculty populations. This ethnographic focus provides a broader

understanding of how the values of religious moderation and the culture of Wasathiyyah are internalized within campus life. (Creswell 2018).

The data sources in this study include both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through techniques such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation of activities related to the practice of religious moderation on campus. Interviews were conducted with various respondents directly involved in the activities of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama, including students, lecturers, and administrative staff. Participant observation enabled the researcher to experience and directly record cultural interactions and practices. Documentation, such as policy documents, activity archives, and published materials, was used to complement the collected data. Secondary data comprised a literature review related to religious moderation and the Wasathiyyah approach within the context of higher education.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The data reduction phase involved sorting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and organizing the data to prepare it for in-depth analysis. Data were presented through tables, flowcharts, or narratives that allowed the researcher to observe patterns and relationships within the data. Verification and conclusion drawing were finalized through critical reflection on the emerging findings (Miles, M.& , Huberman, 2016).

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques. Triangulation in this research involved the use of multiple data sources, data collection methods, and theoretical perspectives to verify the reliability and validity of the research findings (Flick, 2012). By comparing the information obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, this study aims to produce a more objective and in-depth understanding of the implementation of religious moderation within the UINSU Tuntungan campus environment.

3. HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

1. The Communication Strategies of RMB UINSU in Projecting the Culture of Wasathiyyah

To project the culture of Wasathiyyah within the academic environment, the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) at UINSU developed a range of structured communication strategies targeting various segments of the academic community. These strategies are not only focused on delivering information but are also designed to shape moderate mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors in religious life (Chotimah et al., 2022). The approaches employed encompass educational, participatory, and advocative communication, implemented through

various activities such as training sessions, seminars, curriculum integration, and the use of social media. To systematically understand the patterns of implementation and the effectiveness of these strategies, the following table summarizes the forms of communication strategies used by RMB UINSU and their projected impact on strengthening the culture of *Wasathiyyah* among students:

Table 1. RMB UINSU Communication Strategies in Projecting the *Wasathiyyah* Culture

No.	RMB UINSU Communication Strategies	Projection of <i>Wasathiyyah</i> Culture
1	Socialization through social media	Widespread dissemination of tolerance values, easily accessible to digital-native students
2	Integration of moderation values into specific courses and curriculum	Fostering balanced and critical thinking in understanding religious diversity
3	Training and orientation for students	Enhancing dialogical communication skills and building diversity competencies
4	Seminars, workshops, and interfaith discussions	Cultivating inclusive attitudes, openness, and strengthening cross-cultural and interfaith understanding
5	Community education through KKN programs and outreach	Instilling <i>Wasathiyyah</i> values in broader social spaces beyond the campus
6	Mediation and advocacy involving religious and community leaders	Resolving conflicts and reducing resistance to moderation values
7	Dialogue and discussion spaces among students from diverse backgrounds	Promoting collaboration and social cohesion in a multicultural campus environment
8	Ongoing curriculum development	Establishing a long-term learning system that promotes values of religious balance
9	Evaluation based on participation and attitude change	Measuring success through cultural transformation towards a more tolerant and harmonious society

The communication strategies implemented by the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) at UINSU reflect an active response to the dynamics of diversity within the academic environment, particularly in the digital era. The use of social media as a platform for disseminating the values of religious moderation represents a

strategic move to engage the student body, which predominantly consists of digital natives (Sikumbang et al., 2024). This medium enables messages of tolerance and inclusivity to be distributed quickly, broadly, and flexibly, aligning with the shifting patterns of student interaction into virtual spaces. In this context, social media serves not only as a tool for information delivery but also as an interactive space with the potential to shape opinions and cultivate a participatory Wasathiyah culture. (Hudiarini, 2021).

The integration of moderation values into the curriculum and specific courses reflects a structural and systemic approach. This strategy positions moderation not as an additional discourse but as an integral part of the learning process. Strengthening these values through the curriculum stimulates the development of balanced and critical thinking, particularly in understanding issues of diversity and religion. This strategy underscores that formal education serves as a key pillar in the cultural reconstruction toward a moderate and inclusive religious culture (Tuju et al., 2022).

The training and orientation provided to students strengthen their personal capacities to translate the values of moderation into social practices (Hadiat & Syamsurijal, 2021). The enhancement of dialogical communication skills and the ability to engage in dialogue across differences becomes a crucial element in anticipating social fragmentation caused by ideological polarization. Students are positioned not merely as objects within the RMB program but also as active agents of social transformation by strengthening their personal capacities in ways that align with the needs of a pluralistic society.

The organization of seminars, workshops, and interfaith discussions represents a concrete form of dialogical learning that fosters openness and inclusivity. These activities provide a safe space for exchanging perspectives, challenging stereotypes, and building interfaith understanding based on rational engagement and humanitarian values. Such forums also serve as platforms for dismantling ideological barriers that often lead to religious exclusivism, while promoting social integration founded on equality and respect for diversity. (Herman, 2020).

The participation of RMB in community education through Community Service Programs (KKN) and outreach activities represents an expansion of its strategy from the campus environment to the broader social sphere. This effort reflects an awareness of the importance of grounding the values of moderation in social realities, particularly within communities vulnerable to

radicalism and intolerance. The mainstreaming of Wasathiyah values through direct interaction with rural communities also highlights RMB's role as a campus-based agent of social transformation. (Sholeh, 2023).

The mediation and advocacy strategies involving religious and community leaders demonstrate a collaborative and dialogical communication approach. This collaboration is essential for reaching segments of society that may not be effectively engaged through purely academic approaches. The involvement of local figures also strengthens the legitimacy of RMB as an entity capable of building communication bridges between educational institutions and the wider community. This approach becomes crucial in addressing resistance or conflicts arising from the misinterpretation of religious values (Fadli, 2023).

Dialogue and discussion spaces among students from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds serve as strategies for fostering multicultural awareness within the campus environment. This practice of cross-identity dialogue helps to diminish prejudices and strengthen social cohesion. RMB has successfully facilitated the cultural transformation of the campus, shifting it from a previously homogeneous environment toward one that is more fluid and open to differences. Students not only learn within the classroom but also gain enriched insights into tolerance and diversity through social interactions (Muna et al., 2023).

The continuous development of the curriculum serves as a strategic foundation to ensure the long-term sustainability of moderation values. This process is not only academic but also ideological aimed at shaping students' frameworks of thinking so that they not only understand the theory but are also trained to practice moderate attitudes in their daily lives. (Fahrin Nisak et al., 2022). Various challenges, such as the uneven capacity of lecturers to integrate religious moderation (MB), constitute strategic issues that must be addressed through capacity-building efforts and the implementation of adaptive curriculum policies.

The evaluation of RMB programs, based on student participation and attitude changes, demonstrates an impact-oriented rather than activity-based approach. Active student engagement in moderate religious activities, increased tolerance attitudes, and positive feedback from stakeholders serve as credible indicators of success. This evaluation functions as a reflective tool to continuously refine strategies, adapt to social dynamics, and ensure the

sustainability of moderation values within UINSU's academic culture. (Kasdi et al., 2020) .

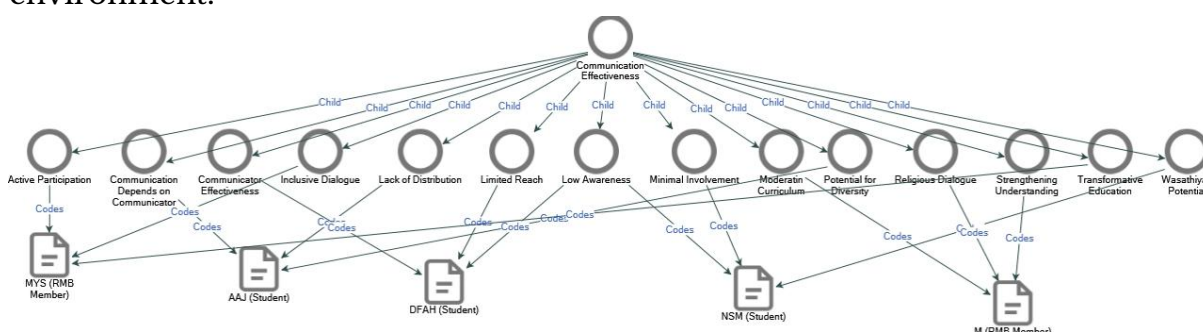
The communication strategies of RMB UINSU in projecting the culture of Wasathiyyah can be critically analyzed through the lens of Communication Accommodation Theory and Moral Foundations Theory. Within the framework of Communication Accommodation Theory (Howard Giles), RMB's strategies such as training sessions, interfaith discussions, and cross-identity dialogues reflect the process of convergence, wherein students and lecturers adjust their communication styles to bridge differences in religious and cultural identities (Abduh et al., 2023). This process strengthens social cohesion and encourages reciprocal meaning-making. Meanwhile, Moral Foundations Theory (Jonathan Haidt) explains how messages of religious moderation engage deeper moral dimensions, such as care, fairness, and sanctity, which are relevant to individuals with diverse value frameworks. When RMB employs communicative and educational approaches, they are not merely transmitting information but are also navigating and aligning the different moral frameworks held by students and the broader community. Thus, RMB's success in shaping a culture of Wasathiyyah lies not only in the breadth of message dissemination but also in the extent to which the message resonates morally and culturally with a diverse audience.

The overall strategies implemented by RMB UINSU reflect a cultural reconstruction that focuses not only on structural changes but also on the transformation of values and social behaviors (Sumintak & Sumirat, 2022). This strategy operates on multiple levels, targeting individuals, institutions, and the broader community. By positioning communication as the primary instrument, RMB UINSU does not merely convey messages but actively shapes an educational ecosystem that is more humane, dialogical, and appreciative of differences. This approach transforms the culture of Wasathiyyah from merely a theological slogan into a living and evolving social practice within the higher education environment.

2. Cultural Reconstruction: The Effectiveness and Evaluation of RMB UINSU's Communication in Projecting the Culture of Wasathiyyah

In assessing the effectiveness of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) UINSU's communication and evaluating its contribution to the cultivation of a

Wasathiyyah culture, it is essential to directly explore the perspectives of the actors involved—whether as program administrators, members, or student beneficiaries. Cultural reconstruction in this context does not merely involve discourse and strategy but also encompasses how RMB's communication is received, interpreted, and practiced by the UINSU academic community in daily life. Therefore, the following interview map is structured to identify key findings from field narratives, highlighting the dynamics of message reception, perceptions of RMB's communicative approach, as well as the challenges and opportunities in grounding the values of Wasathiyyah within the campus environment:



Gambar 3. Peta Wawancara Efektifitas Komunikasi RMB UINSU

The illustrated interview map reveals the complexity of the dynamics surrounding the effectiveness of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) UINSU's communication in fostering a Wasathiyyah culture. The primary indicators influencing communication effectiveness are the minimal involvement and low awareness among students, particularly at the Tuntungan campus. These factors are intertwined with limited reach and a lack of information distribution, which structurally hinder efforts to internalize the values of moderation. This suggests that although strategies have been formulated, the main weakness lies in the implementation of communication, which has yet to become widespread and evenly distributed.

The effectiveness of RMB's message delivery is also highly influenced by the communicator factor. The findings of communication depends on the communicator and communicator effectiveness indicate that the success of message transfer relies on the capacity of the individual delivering it. When communicators are able to convey messages through inclusive and communicative narratives, the likelihood of successful internalization increases. Conversely, a monotonous or exclusive approach tends to widen the gap between RMB and its target student audience (Sun et al., 2022). Thus, the development of competent communication agents

becomes key to overcoming perceptual barriers within the academic community.

Despite these limitations, the map also highlights the potential of inclusive dialogue and religious dialogue as key strategies positively received by students. These two elements possess a driving force toward strengthening understanding and fostering transformative education. By providing open discussion spaces across religious and cultural identities, RMB is seen as capable of reaching the inner dimensions of students, nurturing empathy, and constructing an inclusive religious narrative that extends beyond mere textual interpretation (Hanani & Nelmaya, 2020).

Furthermore, the interviews also reveal the significance of a moderate curriculum in strengthening the foundation for the values of Wasathiyyah. However, challenges persist due to the suboptimal integration of this curriculum across all faculties, as reflected in perceptions of minimal involvement. Meanwhile, the potential for Wasathiyyah remains identified as an ideal achievement that can be realized if communication is systematically strengthened. This highlights the urgency of building a potential for diversity by positioning RMB as a collaborative space that promotes diversity as a strength rather than a threat.

Ultimately, the active participation of RMB members (active participation) as well as other students emerges as a crucial driver of success. In the context of transformative education, participation is not merely physical presence but entails cognitive and affective engagement that encourages the reinterpretation of religious moderation (Dalimunthe et al., 2023). The map indicates that in order to cultivate a living culture of Wasathiyyah within the academic environment, RMB must expand its communication reach, sharpen the capacities of communicators, and firmly embed moderation as a value instilled through curriculum, dialogue, and

social

role

modeling.



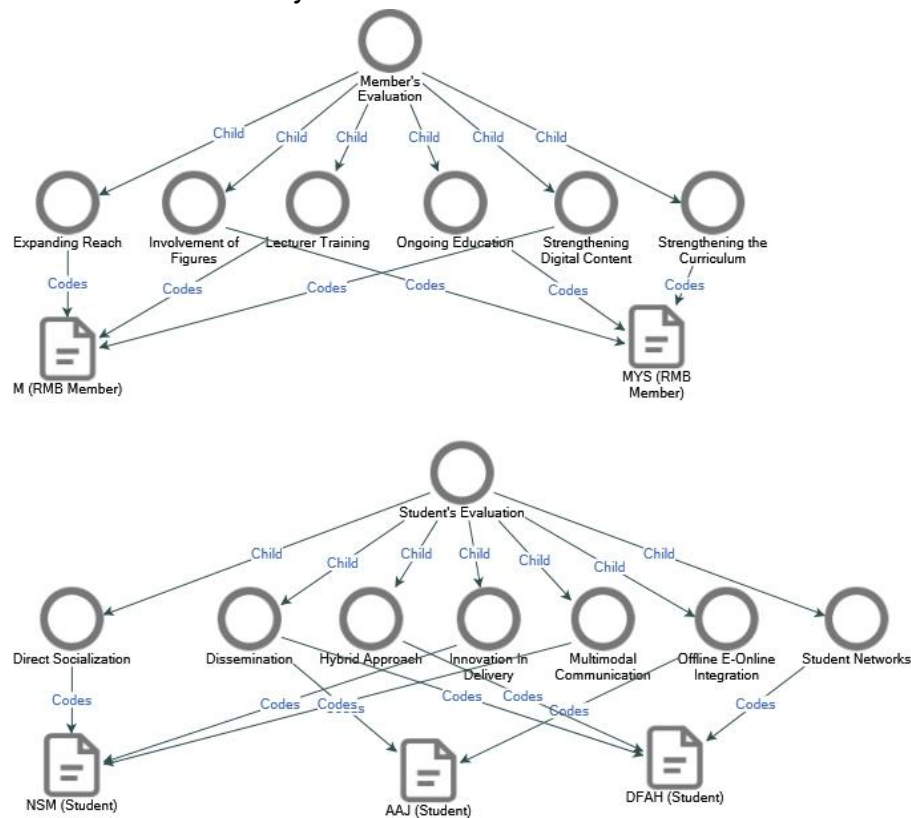
Gambar 4. Awan Kata Efektifitas Komunikasi RMB UINSU

This word cloud visualization highlights the dominance of terms such as "communication," "religious," "moderation," "wasathiyyah," and "effectiveness" as the central themes in the discourse of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) at UINSU. The recurrence of these words reflects the primary focus of RMB's strategies, namely building moderate and effective religious communication. The term "communication" emerges as a focal point, as all RMB programs are grounded in the successful delivery of messages across different identities. Within the context of a Wasathiyyah culture, communication serves as the main instrument for bridging differences, educating the academic community, and internalizing balanced and inclusive religious values (Mardatillah et al., 2023).

Words such as "students," "campus," "Tuntungan," and "UINSU" highlight both the local context and the primary target of RMB's strategies namely the academic environment of UINSU Tuntungan and students as agents of value transformation. The appearance of words like "understanding," "building," and "environment" emphasizes that the process of instilling moderation values cannot rely solely on cognitive approaches; rather, it must involve the creation of a supportive, relational, and participatory environment. These words reinforce the idea that moderation communication is not merely about delivering messages, but about building a shared culture through meaningful interaction.

The presence of terms such as "effectiveness," "dissemination," "curriculum," and "delivery" highlights the importance of the

strategic and technical aspects of the RMB program. The success of religious moderation heavily relies on the effectiveness of message delivery and information dissemination, as well as the extent to which these values are systematically integrated into the academic curriculum (Indainanto et al., 2023; Humaizi et al., 2024). Thus, the word cloud not only captures dominant terminology but also reflects the structural, sociocultural, and pedagogical dimensions of the cultural reconstruction of Wasathiyyah being pursued through the communication approach at UINSU. Moreover, despite certain strategic limitations, the informants collectively provided relevant evaluations to ensure that the projection of Wasathiyyah at UINSU can be successfully realized. The evaluations offered are as follows:



Gambar 5. Peta Wawancara Evaluasi Komunikasi RMB UINSU

The interview map regarding the evaluation of RMB UINSU's communication in projecting the culture of Wasathiyyah reveals two major categories: evaluations from the perspective of RMB members and evaluations from students as the recipients of the communication strategies. Evaluations from RMB members focus on five key aspects: expanding reach, involvement of figures, lecturer training, ongoing education, strengthening digital content, and strengthening the curriculum. Meanwhile, evaluations from students emphasize the need for direct socialization, dissemination, hybrid approaches, innovation in delivery, multimodal communication, offline e-online integration, and student networks.

communication, offline-online integration, and student networks. This mapping provides in-depth insights into the weaknesses and opportunities for strengthening the ongoing RMB communication strategies.

From RMB's internal perspective, there is an emphasis on the importance of expanding the communication reach, indicating that RMB's activities have not yet evenly reached all elements of the campus. Therefore, the involvement of religious and community figures serves as a social legitimization instrument that is considered capable of enhancing trust and acceptance of the messages of moderation. In this context, lecturer training becomes a priority to address the challenge of the limited capacity of instructors in delivering Wasathiyyah values integratively within the classroom setting (Az Zafi, 2020).

Furthermore, RMB members emphasize the urgency of ongoing education and strengthening digital content as strategies for addressing the dynamics of modern communication. Messages of religious moderation cannot be transmitted solely through conventional forums but must be designed in the form of adaptive, engaging, and contextually relevant digital content for digital-native students. At the same time, efforts to strengthen the curriculum represent a systemic aspect that contributes to the sustainability of Wasathiyyah value internalization within the formal educational processes at UINSU.

From the students' perspective, the evaluation indicates that RMB's strategies need to increase direct socialization, particularly within the Tuntungan campus, which is perceived as having received less attention. Students also advocate for more active and consistent dissemination of information so that religious moderation becomes not merely an elite discourse, but a living value shared broadly across the campus community. In addition, there is a growing need for a hybrid approach that combines the strengths of offline meetings and online platforms in delivering RMB's messages (Hamzah et al., 2023).

Another important element is the students' encouragement for innovation in delivery and multimodal communication, referring to the use of diverse media—visual, audio, and text—to avoid saturation and to reach various learning styles. The integration of offline and online activities (offline-online integration) also indicates that students do not perceive a separation between the physical and digital worlds; rather, they seek fluid and cross-platform continuity in communication.

Finally, the interview map highlights the importance of building student networks as a medium for community-based dissemination of RMB values. This strategy aligns with a participatory approach, wherein students are not merely objects of RMB activities but also agents who horizontally spread Wasathiyyah values among their peers. Thus, this evaluation emphasizes that the success of RMB's communication lies not solely in the design of its strategies but in its ability to adapt formats, actors, and channels to the sociocultural needs of students in the digital era (Mahfud et al., 2022).



Gambar 6. Awan Kata Hasil Wawancara

This word cloud reflects the main focus in evaluating the communication of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) UINSU regarding the projection of Wasathiyah culture. Dominant terms such as "students," "communication," and "strengthening" indicate that students are the central focus in assessing the effectiveness of RMB's communication. Communication is viewed as a key instrument that must be continuously strengthened to disseminate the values of moderation within the academic environment. This evaluation highlights the need to reinforce communication strategies that are adaptive to the campus context, with success or failure measured by the extent to which students understand and internalize the messages of religious moderation.

The emergence of terms such as "media," "delivery," "approach," and "dissemination" indicates that the method of message delivery is a critical focus in this evaluation. It is not only the substance that matters but also the medium and communication methods employed. RMB's strategies must consider a multimodal approach and the use of social media as tools to more effectively reach digital-native students. Thus, RMB's communication must not only be informative but also innovative and interactive. This evaluation highlights the necessity of diversifying communication channels and integrating both online and offline approaches to disseminate Wasathiyyah values more effectively.

Moreover, words such as "values," "understanding," "moderation," and "culture" reinforce that the evaluation of RMB's communication does not stop at the technical level but also touches on ideological and cultural dimensions. The evaluation is viewed as a strategic effort to strengthen the dissemination of religious values that are tolerant, inclusive, and contextually relevant within the UINSU environment. This word cloud reflects an awareness that moderation communication cannot operate in a linear manner; instead, it must take into account (Marfu'ah et al., 2021).

In the context of evaluating RMB UINSU's communication, the two previously discussed theories Howard Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory and Jonathan Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory offer sharp analytical frameworks for interpreting the dynamics observed in the field. Communication Accommodation Theory explains that message effectiveness heavily depends on the communicator's ability to adjust their style, language, and approach to the characteristics of the audience. This is clearly reflected in students' evaluations that demand a multimodal approach, innovative delivery, and online-offline integration aligned with the interaction habits of the digital generation. Meanwhile, Moral Foundations Theory helps explain why Wasathiyyah values such as balance, fairness, and care can only be accepted if the delivery of messages resonates with the diverse moral foundations of individuals. In this regard, RMB's communication is not merely an act of information transfer but a process of value accommodation involving moral resonance and the cultural identities of students. Therefore, RMB's success in cultivating a moderate culture at UINSU is highly dependent on its ability to build moral and communicative bridges that are adaptive to the complexity of its audience (Ashoumi et al., 2022).

3. Discussion

The communication strategies of the Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) at UINSU are not solely intended to deliver normative messages about religious moderation, but also function as a tool for shaping a new social construction rooted in Wasathiyah values. In this context, Communication Accommodation Theory provides a crucial framework for understanding how RMB's message delivery processes are received by students. The concept of convergence within this theory explains that the effectiveness of communication largely depends on the extent to which communicators are able to adjust their style, language, and strategies to their audience in this case, students from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds.

The interview results reveal that RMB's success is highly dependent on the communicator's ability to adjust their narratives in an inclusive manner. When the delivery is formal and normative, students tend to feel distant from the message. Conversely, the use of everyday language, interactive approaches, and delivery based on real-life experiences enhances the relatability of the message to students' lives. Here, communication accommodation serves as a bridge of understanding that reduces the psychological distance between the sender and the receiver of the message.

Jonathan Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory adds a deeper evaluative dimension to how students process messages of moderation. Students do not assess the validity of a message solely based on its content but also on how well it aligns with their moral foundations, such as values of fairness, care, and authority. RMB's strategies that overly emphasize the cognitive aspect (knowledge transfer) without considering the audience's moral framework risk creating resistance or even rejection. Therefore, moderation communication must be framed through a moral approach that resonates with the everyday experiences of students.

Field data reveal a gap in information distribution and low participation rates, particularly at the Tuntungan campus. This indicates that RMB has not fully applied the principle of accommodation across geographical and social contexts. Giles' theory emphasizes the importance of positive divergence, where differences are not avoided but bridged through specific and localized communication strategies. Therefore, RMB must develop communication patterns that are tailored to the social and psychological characteristics of students at each campus, ensuring

that Wasathiyyah values are genuinely embedded within their spaces of interaction (Wisnarni, 2023).

Programs such as student training, interfaith discussions, and curriculum integration hold significant potential for creating reflective spaces to absorb moderation values. However, their effectiveness heavily depends on communicative designs that do not merely deliver messages but also open spaces for two-way dialogue. This approach aligns with Moral Foundations Theory, which suggests that values should be taught through a process of dialogical internalization rather than through doctrinal transmission. Thus, RMB must expand its communicative function to serve as a facilitator of ethical and moral dialogue, rather than merely acting as an agent of information dissemination (Pajariato et al., 2023; Fauzan et al., 2024).

The results from the interview mapping also indicate that the success of RMB's strategies is influenced by the strengthening of digital content. This becomes crucial amid the cultural transformation of student communication, which is increasingly digital. Within the framework of Communication Accommodation Theory, digital media can be viewed as a new space of accommodation where students feel freer to express themselves and receive messages without the pressures of formal settings. By strengthening the Wasathiyyah narrative within digital content, RMB is not merely following trends but is actively shaping a new communication habitus that aligns with the moral orientations of the younger generation.

The evaluations conducted by students show that the success of RMB's programs is not measured solely by the activities carried out, but by the extent to which changes in attitudes and understanding are formed. This context reinforces the significance of applying the framework of Moral Foundations Theory in designing communication messages. If RMB's communication can resonate with students' dominant moral values, such as care for others or social justice, the internalization of moderation values will be more successful than if it relied solely on textual or symbolic approaches.

Students' demand for a hybrid approach (online and offline) and multimodal communication indicates that a one-size-fits-all communication model is no longer relevant. RMB must recognize that the diversity of learning styles and students' perceptions of religion necessitate differentiated communication approaches. Giles'

theory suggests that forms of accommodation such as linguistic matching and content flexibility can enhance audience trust and engagement. This means that RMB's communication design must be flexible, contextual, and dialogical.

From RMB's internal perspective, the strategy of involving religious leaders and providing lecturer training constitutes a crucial component in building moral authority and communicative competence. Within the framework of Moral Foundations Theory, authority that is accompanied by empathy and integrity is more readily accepted by audiences. Therefore, RMB's success in establishing moral and cultural networks on campus depends on communicative actors who are credible and genuinely representative of the values being promoted.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration of Communication Accommodation Theory and Moral Foundations Theory in examining the effectiveness of religious moderation communication strategies within the campus environment. Unlike previous studies that focused solely on aspects of message delivery or normative programs, this research positions communication as an arena for complex value reconstruction, taking into account both linguistic adaptation and moral resonance processes simultaneously. This approach offers a more comprehensive and adaptive model for analyzing RMB's communication strategies, capable of reaching the heterogeneous student audience within a dynamic religious and cultural context.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the communication strategies of Rumah Moderasi Beragama (RMB) UINSU have made a significant contribution to shaping the culture of Wasathiyah through a variety of communicative approaches, including training, curriculum integration, digital socialization, and cross-identity dialogue. The effectiveness of these strategies is largely determined by RMB's ability to accommodate the diversity of the student audience, both linguistically and morally. The integration of Communication Accommodation Theory and Moral Foundations Theory demonstrates that the success of moderating values internalization depends not only on message delivery but also on how well the message is received, understood, and resonated with the social and moral backgrounds of the audience. Thus, RMB UINSU not only functions as a disseminator of moderate religious messages

but also as an agent of cultural reconstruction through ethical, inclusive, and adaptive communication.

Going forward, RMB UINSU needs to expand its communication reach through a multimodal approach and more specific local adaptation, particularly at the Tuntungan campus, where participation and awareness remain low. RMB programs should also strengthen the synergy between online and offline strategies and build student networks as partners in the dissemination of values. Additionally, training for lecturers and local figures should focus on strengthening communicative competencies based on moral and cultural inclusivity. The limitation of this study lies in its focus, which remains confined to internal UINSU actors without incorporating cross-institutional perception mapping or regional comparisons. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the scope of respondents and explore the role of external actors such as religious organizations, civil society, or government agencies in supporting the culture of moderation in higher education settings.

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