



Increasing Understanding of Religious Moderation Through Bahtsul Masaa'il Activities

Ahmad Muzakki¹, Sholahul A'mal², Saifur Rizal³, Nur Alam⁴, Inayaturohman⁵

^{1,5} Zainul Hasan Islamic University Genggong, Probolinggo, Indonesia.

Email: muzakkipasca@gmail.com, ajoo110402@gmail.com, inayaturr716@gmail.com, rizalulya@gmail.com, sagalam@gmail.com

Abstract:

Religious moderation is a crucial aspect in building a peaceful, harmonious, and tolerant society, especially in Indonesia, which has a rich diversity of religions and cultures. One of the efforts to strengthen religious moderation is through the activity of bahtsul masa'il, a religious discussion forum held by scholars, intellectuals, and religious leaders to address various religious issues with a moderate, inclusive approach in accordance with the social context. Bahtsul masa'il serves as a platform to find solutions to religious problems that are relevant to contemporary issues, so that religious teachings can be accepted universally without denying diversity and pluralism. This activity is also highly effective in bringing together different religious views, producing fatwas that can be accepted by various parties, and preventing religious radicalism and extremism that could lead to conflict. In the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) environment, bahtsul masa'il not only functions as a means for deepening religious knowledge but also teaches the values of religious moderation, tolerance, and respect for differences. This study aims to explore further how bahtsul masa'il can address the various challenges in society and how this forum can strengthen religious moderation in Indonesia's pluralistic context.

Keywords: Religious Moderation, Bahtsul Masa'il, Pesantren, Fatwa, Tolerance, Radicalism, Religious Dialogue, Islam, Pluralism, Inclusivity.

Abstrak:

Moderasi beragama merupakan aspek penting dalam membangun masyarakat yang damai, rukun, dan toleran, khususnya di Indonesia yang kaya akan keragaman agama dan budaya. Salah satu upaya untuk memperkuat moderasi beragama adalah melalui kegiatan bahtsul masa'il, sebuah forum diskusi keagamaan yang diselenggarakan oleh para ulama, cendekiawan, dan pemuka agama untuk menyikapi berbagai isu keagamaan dengan pendekatan yang moderat dan inklusif sesuai dengan konteks sosial kemasyarakatan. Bahtsul masa'il menjadi wadah untuk mencari solusi atas permasalahan keagamaan yang relevan dengan isu-isu kontemporer, sehingga ajaran agama dapat diterima secara universal tanpa menafikan keberagaman dan kemajemukan. Kegiatan ini juga sangat efektif untuk mempertemukan pandangan keagamaan yang berbeda, menghasilkan fatwa yang dapat diterima oleh berbagai pihak, dan mencegah radikalisme dan ekstremisme agama yang dapat menimbulkan konflik. Di lingkungan pesantren, bahtsul masa'il tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sarana untuk memperdalam ilmu agama, tetapi juga mengajarkan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama, toleransi, dan menghargai perbedaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi lebih jauh bagaimana bahtsul masa'il dapat menjawab berbagai tantangan di masyarakat dan bagaimana forum ini dapat memperkuat moderasi beragama dalam konteks kemajemukan Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Moderasi Beragama, Bahtsul Masa'il, Pesantren, Fatwa, Toleransi, Radikalisme, Dialog Keagamaan, Islam, Pluralisme, Inklusivitas.

*Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: muzakkipasca@gmail.com,

INTRODUCTION

Religious moderation is a concept that is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of national and state life, especially in countries with religious and cultural diversity like Indonesia. Religious moderation teaches the importance of tolerance, mutual respect, and balance in practicing religious teachings, so that social harmony and unity can be created amidst differences. In an effort to strengthen religious moderation, various methods and approaches are needed, one of which is through Bahtsul Masa'il activities.

Bahtsul Masa'il is a religious discussion forum held to address religious issues, both those related to Sharia and those related to social issues that are developing in society. This forum involves scholars, intellectuals, and community leaders to provide solutions to the existing problems. The Bahtsul Masa'il activities play an important role in creating a more moderate and inclusive understanding of religion, as well as serving as a means to counter radical and extreme religious views. Through this forum, religious communities are expected to be more open in understanding differences and more easily find common ground in addressing the increasingly complex challenges of living together.

As social and religious issues continue to evolve dynamically, Bahtsul Masa'il makes a significant contribution in strengthening religious moderation. The discussions that take place in this forum not only provide religious solutions that align with the principles of moderation but also encourage a broader understanding of the importance of living together in diversity. Therefore, Bahtsul Masa'il has become an important tool in reinforcing the values of religious moderation in Indonesia, which in turn can support the creation of a peaceful and harmonious society.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research on religious moderation through Bahtsul Masa'il activities requires a comprehensive approach to uncover how this discussion forum plays a role in shaping moderate religious understanding among the community. The research method used in this service is the Qualitative Method with the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) approach.

The Qualitative Method was chosen due to the nature of the research, which aims to understand social and cultural phenomena that cannot be measured quantitatively. Qualitative research provides space for more in-depth data collection regarding how Bahtsul Masa'il activities are conducted and their contribution to religious moderation.

The ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) approach is a community development approach that focuses on the strengths or assets possessed by the community itself, rather than just the problems or needs they face. This approach aims to empower communities by exploring existing potential and utilizing internal resources within the community.

The main concept in the ABCD method is that every community has assets that can be utilized for development, such as skills, knowledge, social networks, culture, and natural resources. By strengthening and optimizing these assets, the community is expected to create sustainable change and improve their quality of life.

Therefore, this approach was chosen because it aligns with the goal of mentoring the students at Pondok Zainul Hasanain, where the main focus is to identify and utilize local resources to improve their quality of life.

a) Building Awareness and Commitment

Building a collective understanding and awareness among community members about the importance of asset-based development and long-term goals. Before starting the ABCD process, the first step is to ensure that all community members and related parties have a shared understanding of the basic principles of this method. This awareness is crucial so that the community actively participates in every stage and supports the changes that will take place. This alignment is evidenced by the socialization of KKN members with the Head of Pondok Zainul Hasanain.

b) Identification and Asset Mapping

Analyzing and prioritizing existing assets to maximize their impact. This step aims to explore and map all the assets within the community that can be utilized for further development. Assets in ABCD are not only physical wealth but also the skills, knowledge, and social relationships possessed by individuals or groups within the community. The Bahtsul Masaa'il program at Pondok Zainul Hasanain is one of the activities chosen by KKN members because it is considered highly relevant to strengthening the students' understanding of religious moderation.

c) Planning and Implementing the Action Plan

Developing a clear action plan to develop and utilize the assets that have been mapped. This step focuses on concrete planning regarding how to use the prioritized assets to achieve the development goals for the students. The plan must include operational steps, task assignments, and the necessary budget. This was realized by KKN members through mentoring Bahtsul Masaa'il activities, both in the search for concepts, understanding, and implementation.

d) Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessing the progress and results of the projects or activities that have been carried out. The monitoring and evaluation process is used to ensure that activities are running according to plan and generating positive impacts. Evaluation is also useful for improving and adjusting strategies that are needed to achieve better results. Below is how KKN members realize this step:

1. Conducting regular monitoring to assess whether the activities are aligned with the plan and achieving the desired outcomes.
2. Evaluating the social and environmental impacts of the activities that have been carried out.
3. Identifying obstacles or challenges that arise during implementation and taking corrective actions.

e) Improvement and Sustainability

Ensuring that the initiatives that have been implemented can continue and provide long-term benefits. This step ensures that the sustainability of the project or initiative is maintained. The community must continue to manage and develop existing assets so that the positive changes that have occurred persist in the long run. One of the reasons KKN members chose the Bahtsul Masaa'il activity to strengthen religious moderation is because it is a regular

and continuous activity at Pondok Zainul Hasanain, so some of the members can continue to accompany and support the ongoing activity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the situational analysis gathered in the field, KKN members decided to focus their mentoring efforts on activities at Pondok Zainul Hasanain. The activities carried out were centered around improving the students' abilities and understanding of religious moderation through the Bahtsul Masaa'il program. Raising awareness of the values of Bahtsul Masaa'il became the main priority in developing the character of the students at Pondok Zainul Hasanain. This decision was based on the observation that the values of Bahtsul Masaa'il are very effective in strengthening the students' understanding of religious moderation. Therefore, involving the students in Bahtsul Masaa'il activities to develop their character became a strategic choice.

Religious moderation is an attitude that places religious teachings in a balanced position, avoiding extremism, while maintaining peace and tolerance among religious communities. In the context of Indonesia's highly diverse society, religious moderation is crucial for preserving unity and preventing social conflict caused by differences in beliefs.

In essence, religious moderation is not a completely new concept. It has long been discussed and even practiced. However, as a term, it has only recently gained prominence. The essence of religious moderation is very crucial in our religious life today. Currently, religion, religious practices, and religious communities seem to stand alone and turn their backs on each other. In reality, religion was created so that people can practice their faith according to the essence of its teachings.

Religion and practicing religion are two different terms. Religion is the teaching of God, while practicing religion refers to how one understands and applies those teachings. However, despite having different meanings, both are interconnected. This is where the challenge lies for religious communities, especially for the students. There are various differences in interpreting religious teachings, just as there are various religions and beliefs. Conflicts among religious followers arise when religious practice is understood as an absolute representation of religion, and people try to impose their claims of truth about diverse practices onto others, sometimes resorting to violence. The presence of religious moderation is an antidote to these conflicts and serves as a solution to the dynamics of religious life, particularly for the students who, by nature, have a deep understanding of religious matters. Furthermore, To realize the program of religious moderation, there are many activities that act as bridges, one of which is the Bahtsul Masaa'il program.

However, religious moderation is certainly not everything. It is not a cure for every problem. Therefore, we should never expect that religious moderation is the solution to all issues. Moreover, not all religious conflicts stem from religious matters. There are many religious conflicts where the root cause has no relation to religion, such as political struggles, economic competition, rivalries over identity influence, and even romantic disputes. Religious moderation has several dimensions. First, it applies to the external realm, which involves interfaith community life, rather than the internal realm, which is personal. Second, it produces significant results when practiced, or conflicts fail to be resolved if the moderation approach is not used. Third, it can serve

as an instrument with legal power in conflict resolution. Fourth, it can be replicated to resolve similar cases.

Religious moderation never uses terms like 'enemy', 'opponent', 'fight', or 'eliminate' for those considered excessive or extreme in their religious practices. This is because the goal of religious moderation is to invite, embrace, and bring those who are seen as excessive or extreme back to the middle ground to practice religion more fairly and balanced. Furthermore, in religious practice, there is no place for adversaries and hostility, but rather guidance and protection, even for the extremists.

Religious moderation is the attitude of practicing religious teachings in a balanced and wise way, without falling into radicalization or extremism. In this regard, religious moderation plays an important role in maintaining social harmony, fostering tolerance among religious communities, and avoiding conflicts caused by differences in belief.

From this, the KKN members realized the urgency of religious moderation in the lives of the students and made mentoring Bahtsul Masaa'il activities the bridge to realize a life of religious moderation. One way to promote religious moderation is through Bahtsul Masaail, a religious discussion forum held to address various legal and social issues in Islam. Bahtsul Masaail plays a very important role in developing a moderate, rational, and inclusive understanding of religious practice, as well as serving as a platform to bring together various religious perspectives in society.

Education plays a crucial role in shaping a moderate understanding of religion, especially in a diverse society with varying views. Education, both formal and non-formal, not only aims to transfer knowledge but also to shape character, attitudes, and values that promote harmony, tolerance, and mutual understanding among religious communities. In the context of religious moderation, education functions as a tool to introduce a more inclusive understanding of religion, one that respects differences, and prevent radicalization that can undermine social peace. Below are the urgencies of education in strengthening religious moderation:

1) Building a More Inclusive Understanding

Education plays a role in teaching the importance of respecting differences in beliefs, cultures, and traditions. In religious education, a moderate understanding teaches that differences do not have to lead to conflict but can instead be a source of strength to enrich social and religious life. Therefore, religious education based on religious moderation will encourage people to live peacefully alongside one another, even if they have different views and beliefs.

2) Preventing Radicalization and Extremism

One of the major challenges in society today is the rise of radicalization and extremism based on religion. Proper education can serve as a strong defense in preventing this. By providing a deep understanding of moderate, critical, and rational religious teachings, individuals can be protected from the influence of deviant and extreme teachings. Education that prioritizes values of tolerance and mutual respect will create individuals who are wiser and more open to differences.

3) Instilling Values of Tolerance and Empathy

Education also teaches important values such as tolerance, empathy, and mutual respect. In the context of religion, these values are crucial for fostering harmony among religious communities. By getting accustomed to respecting

and accepting differences, whether in beliefs, religious practices, or traditions, society will find it easier to achieve peace and social harmony.

4) Encouraging Interfaith Dialogue

Education also serves as a means to facilitate interfaith dialogue. Through education, individuals are encouraged to openly discuss and engage with differences in beliefs with good intentions. This not only builds a better understanding of other religions but also strengthens social bonds between different groups. Interfaith dialogue is crucial for reducing negative prejudices and tensions that may arise from ignorance or existing stereotypes.

5) Strengthening Islamic Boarding Schools and Bahtsul Masa'il in Moderation Education

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and activities like Bahtsul Masa'il are part of the Islamic education system in Indonesia that play a crucial role in strengthening religious moderation. In pesantren, students (santri) are taught to think critically and deeply about religious teachings, and they are expected to address social issues with a moderate approach. Bahtsul Masa'il, as a religious discussion forum, serves as an important platform to discuss religious issues in a moderate and inclusive way, thus producing solutions that align with the demands of the times.

Bahtsul Masa'il (Arabic: بحث المسائل) The term "Bahtsul Masa'il" comes from the words "bahts," which means search or research, and "masa'il," which means issues or problems. Literally, Bahtsul Masa'il refers to the "research or discussion of religious issues." In Indonesia, Bahtsul Masa'il is typically organized by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) or other religious organizations, such as FKPP-PRO (Forum Kajian Pondok Pesantren Probolinggo), to address issues related to Islamic law, social matters, and culture.

The Bahtsul Masa'il activities focus on finding solutions to various issues faced by Muslims in an increasingly complex life. The discussions in Bahtsul Masa'il are expected to provide answers to religious problems that are in line with the context of the times, while adhering to moderate and non-extreme Islamic teachings.

As a forum for religious discussion and reflection, Bahtsul Masa'il plays a significant role in promoting religious moderation for several reasons:

a) Providing Rational Explanations: Bahtsul Masa'il serves to provide rational and contextual explanations to religious issues that may be considered controversial. For example, issues regarding Islamic law in a modern context or emerging social phenomena. With a moderate approach, Bahtsul Masa'il can offer guidance that is more easily accepted by the wider society.

b) Bringing Together Various Opinions of Scholars: In Bahtsul Masa'il, various opinions from scholars and religious intellectuals are gathered and discussed openly. This is important to show that in Islam, there is room for differing views, and these differences can be understood in a moderate way without compromising the unity of the Muslim community. This approach helps avoid polarization that could lead to conflict.

c) Addressing Radicalization: Bahtsul Masa'il can reduce the potential for radicalization by providing more moderate solutions to social, cultural, and

religious issues. One of the ways is by teaching the importance of diversity, tolerance, and respecting differences.

d) Addressing Contemporary Social Challenges: Bahtsul Masa'il provides a platform to examine social and cultural issues that develop in society and find solutions that align with religious teachings. Issues such as early marriage, gender equality, or human rights are often discussed in this forum with a moderate and solution-oriented approach.

Bahtsul Masaa'il is one of the important intellectual traditions in Islam, especially in Indonesia, in an effort to maintain social harmony through a moderate religious approach. Bahtsul Masaa'il comes from the Arabic language, which means discussion about religious issues (*masaa'il*), often focusing on contemporary religious problems. This forum typically involves Islamic scholars and intellectuals to find solutions to religious issues with a non-extreme approach, emphasizing tolerance, and always considering the evolving social context.

In the context of religious moderation, Bahtsul Masaa'il plays a key role as a mechanism to balance between textual religious teachings and the changing social dynamics. Bahtsul Masaa'il becomes an important tool in bringing together various views and ideas, seeking a middle ground between differing opinions in society. It functions as a tool to prevent radicalization and extremism, as well as to introduce the principle of moderation in Islam, upholding values of tolerance, mutual respect, and harmony among religious communities.

The Role of Bahtsul Masa'il in Religious Moderation Bahtsul Masa'il strengthens religious moderation by providing space for students (*santri*) to think critically and express their views openly. This forum brings together diverse perspectives and provides inclusive and moderate solutions that align with the principles of Islam, which is full of mercy (*rahmatan lil'alamin*). The discussions held in Bahtsul Masa'il address various issues in daily life, both related to Islamic law, social ethics, and the application of religious teachings in a broader context.

For example, issues related to women's rights, interfaith diversity, and social interaction between different groups can be raised in Bahtsul Masa'il. In this way, Bahtsul Masa'il is not just a forum to answer religious questions but also serves as a tool to promote tolerance, pluralism, and moderate understanding of religion.

Bahtsul Masa'il in the Indonesian Context Indonesia, as a country with religious and cultural diversity, faces challenges in maintaining balance and harmony among religious communities. Therefore, Bahtsul Masa'il is highly relevant in Indonesia. This forum can address social tensions arising from differences in religious and cultural perspectives and encourage society to be more open to dialogue and cooperation between religious groups. Moreover, Bahtsul Masa'il also helps create better understanding between Islam and other religions, which is essential for fostering religious harmony among different communities.

In assisting with the Bahtsul Masa'il activities, it is not only about imparting knowledge, but also about teaching the importance of Bahtsul Masa'il within the community. This is because, with Bahtsul Masa'il, the community can gain clear explanations about various issues that might be confusing or lead to misunderstandings. This helps reduce the potential for differing interpretations or the

misuse of religious teachings that could lead to practices not in accordance with the Shariah.

Furthermore, it ensures that Islamic law remains relevant in the face of ever-evolving times. New issues arising from technological advancements and social changes can be addressed by referring to the core principles of religion and engaging in *ijtihad* (new interpretations), ensuring that Islamic law remains dynamic and applicable.

Life in society is highly complex, and many people are unaware of the laws of Shariah. As a result, many religious practices they engage in may not align with Islamic teachings. This poses the biggest challenge for *santri* (students) to respond to the various dynamics occurring in society with sound and easily accepted evidence. Certainly, finding these valid religious texts (*dalil*) is not easy. Therefore, the students conducting KKN (Community Service Program) at Pondok Zainul Hasanain are carrying out a series of activities to help solve specific cases, including:

a) Verification of the Problem Description

This step is a crucial part of the process of searching for the correct interpretation in order to fully understand the content of the problem description and identify the issue at hand. It starts with analyzing the case being discussed, followed by reviewing the text of the question in the description. This process will help the *santri* (students) determine which specific topics or chapters to examine in order to answer the problem description effectively. In this stage, it is important to have multiple options or approaches to address the case being studied, especially if the case is flexible in nature, such as in matters of *muamalah* (social transactions). By ensuring a thorough understanding of the issue and its context, the *santri* can better decide which legal and scholarly resources are most appropriate to resolve the case.

b) Studying the Chapter Content

After fully understanding the problem description and determining which chapter to study, the next step is to begin examining the entire content of the chapter from various classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*). The purpose of this step, aside from expanding knowledge and providing a deeper understanding through a comprehensive study of the chapter, is also to bridge the gap for the *santri*, helping them gain insights into the case at hand. By carefully studying the entire chapter, from beginning to end, the *santri* will be able to better grasp the details and principles discussed, ensuring they understand the context of the issue being faced. This comprehensive approach equips them with the knowledge needed to analyze and address the problem in a more informed and balanced way.

c) Searching and Collecting *Ibarot* (Quotations or Precedents)

The next step is to search for *ibarot* (quotations or precedents) that are relevant to the case previously studied. The collection of *ibarot* can be done through various methods, such as reviewing files or summaries if the case is similar to one that has already been discussed, searching in classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*), or referring to books that contain collections of *ibarot*. This process is quite complex, as it requires the *santri* not only to find the appropriate *dalil* (evidence or legal proofs) but also to carefully collect the relevant *ibarot* they come across. It is a long process that demands persistence and diligence to

ensure that the research does not consume excessive time. The santri must be thorough and patient in this phase, as finding and gathering the right precedents is essential for drawing accurate conclusions and offering the correct guidance for the issue at hand.

d) Analyzing the Collected Ibarot (Quotations)

The next phase involves guiding the santri in understanding and analyzing the ibarot (quotations or precedents) that have been collected. This process begins with interpreting the meanings of the ibarot using Arabic language dictionaries and identifying the intended meanings (murod) and broader understanding. The purpose of this stage is not merely to gain an understanding of the ibarot, but to train the santri in reasoning and visualizing the ibarot they have studied. By doing so, they will be better equipped to comprehend and apply these teachings when approaching the next phase of their study. This critical step helps deepen their grasp of the material, enabling them to more effectively relate and explain the ibarot in context, which ultimately leads to a clearer understanding and better application in practical scenarios.

e) Formulating Conclusions (Rumusan)

This phase represents the final step in the process of finding ibarot, where the santri are divided into groups based on the options or answers that were formulated earlier. Usually, a pro and contra team will be formed to engage in discussions, presenting arguments with the supporting evidence (dalil) they have prepared. This phase is fully guided by senior teachers and some members of the KKN team, who are also part of the LBM (Lajnah Bahtsul Masaa'il) management at the Zainul Hasanain pesantren. The goal of this process is to solidify the santri's understanding and strengthen their mental and intellectual preparedness when participating in the discussion forum. The formation of pro and contra teams allows the santri to explore multiple perspectives, making the debate more comprehensive. This strategy not only aids in deepening their insights into the subject but also enhances their ability to argue effectively, which is essential in the final stages of discussion and decision-making in the Bahtsul Masaa'il forum.

The guidance will continue every day and night, held at the library of Pondok Zainul Hasanain, if an invitation is received from the pondok or other institutions. While waiting for such invitations, the time will be filled with the study of various classical books, starting from the study of the book *Fathul Qorib*, *Fathul Mu'in*, *Imrithi*, *Waroqot*, and the book *Safinatun Najah* written by Kyai Moh. Hasan Sepuh Genggong. This activity is carried out to support the knowledge and the development of the santri's critical thinking skills.

Certainly, the continuity of this activity is not as easy as flipping one's hand. There are various problems faced, both from the internal KKN group, the santri, and the administrators. All of this can be overcome thanks to the determination of the KKN members in educating the santri to remain active in following the available programs or activities. So, amidst the tiredness of the santri in participating in the various activities offered, the KKN members are also actively providing education.

In addition to the Bahtsul Masa'il assistance, there are various plans and activities that have been successfully implemented as part of the Community Service

(PKM). This synergy in community service involves students and various other parties. UNZAH students have several advantages in leading the various activities at Pondok Zainul Hasanain, such as experience in leading *burdah*, *istighosah*, *tahlil*, yellow book studies, English, Arabic, Quran tutoring, and more (in addition to general and religious knowledge). Awareness of the urgency of shaping the character of the santri and support from the administrators are the key factors in the success of the assistance performed by all KKN members. This is a privilege that should be appreciated, as it makes it easier for the KKN members to implement the programs that have been formulated together and to collaborate with the administrators of Pondok Zainul Hasanain in realizing various activities.

The role of students in community service is very important, especially in providing positive contributions to solving social, educational, health, and community empowerment issues. This service not only benefits the targeted community but also provides benefits to the students themselves in applying the knowledge they have learned at university and developing personal skills. The roles that have been realized include observing the abilities of the santri, creating and formulating activities, accompanying or implementing various programs, and evaluating.

The role of students in activities that have been implemented, such as Quran tutoring, *Bahtsul Masa'il* discussions, foreign language courses, and other religious programs, greatly helps in realizing the cooperation between students and santri. Thus, this program runs according to the plans that have been formulated, with the santri of Zainul Hasanain participating fully. The success of a mentoring program can be measured by several indicators that reflect the impact, effectiveness, and sustainability of the program.

CONCLUSION

Bahtsul Masaa'il is one of the most effective instruments in strengthening religious moderation, both at the individual level and in the broader social context. With the principle of moderation that emphasizes tolerance and mutual understanding, *bahtsul masa'il* plays a significant role in preventing religious radicalization and extremism, as well as building a more inclusive and harmonious society. This role of *bahtsul masa'il* is highly relevant, especially in facing the challenges of globalization and the increasingly complex religious pluralism in Indonesia.

Religious moderation through *bahtsul masaa'il* activities plays an essential role in shaping a moderate, rational, and inclusive understanding of religion amidst a diverse society. As a religious discussion forum involving santri (students), *bahtsul masa'il* provides a space to discuss religious issues with a non-extreme approach. This forum aims to find solutions to various religious problems that are relevant to the social context and the development of the times, so that religious teachings can be widely accepted while remaining in line with the principles of *rahmatan lil-'alamin* (mercy for all the worlds).

Through *bahtsul masa'il*, different religious viewpoints can be brought together and a middle ground can be found, resulting in fatwas or decisions that are moderate and not trapped in narrow or radical perspectives. *Bahtsul masa'il* also helps prevent

religious radicalization and extremism, encouraging the community to be more open to dialogue and to respect differences.

Thus, bahtsul masa'il serves as an essential educational tool in strengthening religious moderation, contributing to the creation of a more harmonious, tolerant, and inclusive society. This forum is an integral part of efforts to maintain social peace and reduce the potential for religious-based conflicts, as well as to strengthen values of tolerance among religious communities in the pluralistic context of Indonesia.

The assistance of Bahtsul Masa'il at Pondok Zainul Hasanain in developing the knowledge and critical thinking of the santri, using the ABCD approach and religious education on the values of religious moderation through various activity plans, has had a positive impact that can continue in a focused and sustainable manner. With this approach, the improvement of santri knowledge and their critical thinking abilities has become more accessible, in line with the pesantren's vision of producing a generation that embodies the spirit of Madinah and the logic of America. The active participation of santri in various bahtsul masa'il forums held and attended is one of the successes of this mentoring program.

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